

VISION Loughton | Edition 17



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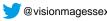
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CONTACT US

www.visionmagessex.com loughton@visionmag.co.uk | 0208 088 0386







FOUNDER | Nik Allen CREATIVE DIRECTOR | Misha Mistry

CO-ORDINATORS | Rebecka Fryer, Amy Pollard, Tim Green

CONTRIBUTORS | Tabatha Fabray, Amelie Gregory, Dean Shaw, Alex Pearson, Amelie Gregory, Jake Levison, Charlie Reynolds, Charles Rae

Editor's notes...



Hello and welcome to this month's edition of VISIONLoughton.

The days are becoming shorter and we are all looking for that last bit of sun. What a hot month it has been, not only

in temperature but the way VISION is being received in Essex. This month's edition is the biggest ever. Thank you.

The VISION titles are going from strength to strength with us now having six different titles in the county, including some established in

We are currently distributing to 41,000 homes as well as to hundreds of local businesses.

We are not stopping there, as there are more to come later this year. Watch this space.

Sara Davies MBE is our cover story this month. The entrepreneur has been named as the youngest ever dragon to join Dragon's Den. In local news, a woman has been charged for killing a woman after a botched cosmetic

procedure, a local care home hosts its first ever festival and students celebrate A Level SUCCESS

We welcome any of your stories for our local news pages. So, if you have a story to share please send it to loughton@visionmag.co.uk

I hope you all enjoy the September 2019 edition of VISIONLoughton.



13. ACCOST, 14. ADOPTS, 15. ATRIUM, 17. DYED DOMN: 1. PASS, 2. AFFAIR, 3. YEARBOOKS, 4. UGLIER, 6. ATTACH, 7. THRESHED, 11. FARMHOUSE, 12. FIVE STAR,

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E MAY HAVE NOT BEEN THE FAVOURED CHOICE, BUT RESERVE JUDGEMENT ON THIS OCCASION, AS NEW PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON MAY JUST BE THIS COUNTRY'S SAVING GRACE.

...............

Given that our political system has always existed while stuffed clumsily in the pocket of the ultimate organisational irony – that we are governed by a set-up of MPs whose very being means acting in opposition to one another – it's a miracle we've made it this far.

Sure, over the centuries, the Houses of Parliament appear to have bumbled, burst and bludgeoned their way through a variety of issues, but there is a sense that never before have a collected band of representatives been so unapologetically unhelpful towards each other, whilst displaying such plain disregard for those who put them there in the first place – the electorate.

We've been left in a parlous state, where even some of the most ardent Leave or Remain campaigners have had the last bit of political puff forced out of them by a string of events that has dragged on longer than the annual trot around the Eurovision juries.

And yet, now, it may be that finally our very own 'Euro vision' is forming, and thank goodness we have someone like Boris Johnson to drag it up on stage, stand it in front of the microphone and cover its ears as the rest of the continent offers a resounding 'nul points' to its little ditty.

In reality, Boris is the best we have. Theresa May's position was a poisoned chalice from the start, Jeremy Hunt you feel would have simply toed the same drab, pointlessly formal line, and Jeremy Corbyn has taken three years to finally decide he's a Remainer. And for the

respect of what little democracy we have left, a second referendum, however it was being dressed up, was never an option.

We are at a stage now where we need to put political allegiances aside and just get on with leaving the EU on October 31 in the most clinical way possible, and as BoJo has proved several times already in his career, he is a leader, a motivator and a driving force for positive, unerring, often brazen action.

Whether Boris will make a good Prime Minister should, at this point, be seen as secondary to the real job in hand, although even on that front, his merciless, almost dramatic dressing down of Corbyn in his first House of Commons debate at least shows a glimpse of a political future where humour, drama and liberal dashes of sarcasm may replace an overstayed period of shouting, shuffling, sneering and downright childish gameplay from those who should know better.

As yes, 55-year-old Boris may well still represent a cumbersome orator from another era, but during his time as London Mayor – and all those Boris bikes – as columnist and magazine editor, and as Foreign Secretary, he made very real change happen. The man is no fool.

Ultimately, what you get with Boris Johnson is charisma, action, and perhaps a little entertainment thrown in for good measure. Sure, he will speak out of turn, he will wobble precariously on the line of acceptability, but he will also put both barrels behind the country he loves, even at risk of throwing himself under the bus... or is it a bike?

Sessilent of HERO

or 60 years Marcel Marceau's talent for pantomime entertained audiences around the world.

He was also the man whose act inspired Michael Jackson's famous moonwalk. But few of his adoring fans realised that behind the mask of his most famous character, chalk-faced Bip the clown, there was a true hero.

During the Second World War he saved hundreds of Jewish children from the Holocaust. Masquerading as a boy scout, Marcel evacuated a Jewish orphanage in eastern France. He told the children he was

taking them on a vacation in the Alps, and led them to safety in Switzerland. Marcel made the perilous journey three times, saving hundreds of Jewish orphans.

He was able to avoid detection by entertaining the children with silent pantomime.

Born to a Jewish family in Strasbourg, France in 1923, young Marcel Mangel discovered Charlie Chaplin at the age of five and became an avid fan.

When Marcel was 16, the Nazis marched into France, and the Jews of Strasbourg - near the German border - had to flee. Marcel changed his last name to Marceau to avoid being identified as Jewish, and joined the French Resistance movement.

Documentary filmmaker, Phillipe Mora, whose father fought alongside Marcel in the French Resistance, said: "Marceau started miming to keep children quiet as they were escaping. It had nothing to do with show business. He was miming for his life."

Marcel's kosher butcher father perished at Auschwitz.

Marcel later said: "My name is Mangel. I am Jewish. Perhaps that, unconsciously, contributed towards my choice of silence."

In his first major performance, Marcel entertained 3,000 US troops after the liberation of Paris in August 1944.

In 1947, Marcel created his beloved character Bip, a childlike everyman with a stovepipe hat and a red carnation.

In 2001, Marcel was awarded the Wallenberg Medal for his acts of courage during the Holocaust.

Until his death at age 84, Marcel performed 300 times a year and taught four hours a day at his pantomime school in Paris. He died on Yom Kippur, 2007.

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MELLOW YELLOW

If the thought of wearing bright yellow brings you out in a cold sweat, then a butter shade is what you need. For the ladies, look out for a full-length cotton dress that will see you through this transitional season. Men should focus on accessories; a pale vellow tie will work wonders to spruce up a suit or layer up with a chunky scarf.

PALE ALE

For those who are really not sure about this colour, choose a shirt in the palest yellow you can find and wear it in place of a crisp white one. Team with a pastel tailored jacket and cropped trouser for an easy and bang on trend outfit.

DARK CHEDDAR

Want a bit of warmth? This shade can best be described as dark yellow with a hint of orange; think butterscotch. Perfect for both sexes this autumn; snap up a leather jacket and trouser combo or play it safe with a simple dark yellow shirt.

FLUORESCENT YELLOW

The high street is awash with neon this season: from flashy suits to casual sportswear to the simple tee. Women and men alike can't go wrong with a stylish head to toe electric yellow suit or for those wanting a slightly less obvious look a simple bright yellow vest top or t-shirt can work wonders on both your mood and your outfit.



Suit Up

ower suits are officially back in fashion and we couldn't be any more excited about this. With everyone from Emma Watson to Meghan Markle loving this versatile and fierce trend, we will definitely be snapping up a few (or as many as we can afford) of the below styles this season.

TIMELESS MONOCHROME

Perfect for showing you mean business in the boardroom, you can't go wrong with a classic black suit teamed with a crisp, white shirt. Choose a slim leg and close-fit jacket to show off your shape but stay professional with a high-buttoned shirt and pointy, patent black shoes.

NOTICE ME NEON

Autumn 2019 is all about neon with green, pink, orange and electric yellow all featuring heavily on the catwalks. Ensure you always stand out from the crowd in a head-to-toe neon suit in your preferred colour. We recommend keeping the cut simple with a basic blazer and cropped trouser; be sure to keep accessories to the minimum and let the suit do the talking.

BLAG ONE FROM THE BOYS

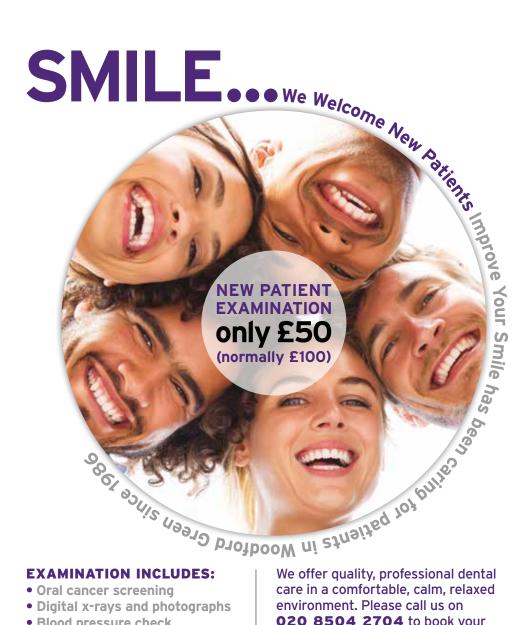
Think back to the '80s when the woman's power suit first hit the scene; over-sized blazers with statement shoulders were a must. Look out for jackets with a boxy silhouette and high-waist, darted trousers.

IF IN DOUBT, GO NEUTRAL

If you like to play it safe with your fashion choices, then you can't go wrong with a smart and sexy grey checked suit. We love this fabric in a tuxedo trouser and jacket with flap pockets: effortlessly smart and bang on trend.

LIGHTWEIGHT LINEN

Ideal for making the transition from summer to autumn, a linen suit is extremely versatile and can be kept simple and elegant for day wear or easily jazzed up with some accessories for a glamorous night out.



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hether you are a hair oil convert or are still suspicious of this product that promises to drive away dry locks for good, you can't fail to notice the hype that surrounds oils at the moment.

Are they too good to be true or is there an oil perfect for you?

Cocount Oil: Best for dry/damaged hair

A real multi-tasker, coconut oil contains fatty acids, vitamins and minerals that penetrate the hair leaving it smooth, silky and supple.

Argan Oil: Best for frizzy or coarse hair that is prone to greasiness

This oil is often referred to as liquid gold mainly due to its golden colour but also because of the benefits it offers. It is 100 per cent natural and contains antioxidants and vitamin E which helps nourish and protect your hair.

Jojoba Oil: Best for beards and dandruff sufferers

This oil has the clever ability to not mess with your scalp's natural balance of oils, but it still penetrates your hair's follicles, moisturising them from within.

Almond Oil: Best for hair growth or reducing hair loss

Like other oils it contains fatty acids and proteins that help protect and nourish your hair, but almond oil also contains magnesium which helps prevent breakages and aids hair growth.

Olive Oil: Best for brightening dull, frizzy hair

Most people have olive oil in their kitchen, but did you know you can also use it in the bathroom? Due to its protective and exfoliating properties, olive oil can be used in place of conditioner to create a smooth shine after shampooing.

Marula Oil: Best for sun exposed hair

Summer make feel like a distant memory but the effects on your hair are visible for all to see. Marula oil, which has a distinctively fruity aroma, is ideal for treating sun-damaged hair.

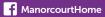
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Probably the best piece of gym equipment you never thought you had. Whether tucking your feet under when laying on the floor to perform sit-ups, leaning against it to push off against it in strengthening your core, or standing with your back to it as a guide for a single-leg squat, you can collapse onto your sofa post-workout in the knowledge you've earned the rest.



Staircase sprints are the power-packed way to get fit quick, but even descending slowly as a way of stretching out calves and tendons can be a really good method for getting flexibility flowing as a tool for injury prevention.



Moving a chair against a wall to perform stretches against is easy and effective, from calf raises to lunges to yoga-style leans.



Lay on the bed with your legs hanging off the edge, then extend them straight into the air so your body forms an L shape. Now lower them slowly back down so they return to the initial position, in a move that will brace your core, providing a workout for the entire bottom half of your body.



KITCHEN WORKSURFAC

If you have work surfaces less than a metre apart, lift and raise yourself between the two before lowering again, for a great way to build arm strength quickly.

PINEAPPLE HEAD

Why sleeping with a pineapple in your room can aid sleep

Arning... the next time your partner asks if you want to get fruity in the bedroom it may be that they have only one thing in mind – sleep.

Recent research from NASA, no less, suggests that sleeping with a pineapple in your room can stop you from snoring; and that, in turn, will help you – and anyone nearby – sleep better. It's thought one in four people are forced to kip elsewhere on nights when their loved one's sound effects get out of hand, but a simple trip to the greengrocer could unite couples again.

That's because pineapples produce huge amounts of oxygen, and the release of this improves air quality throughout the night and our own ability to sleep.

Scientists now believe a combination of air purity and a sensible quantity of well-regulated rest (7 to 8 hours) are vital for our daily wellbeing. Sleep not only improves our ability to function mentally, but serves to help the body fight off germs and infections.

While pineapples seem to be getting all the good press at the moment, there are a number of other plants that have a surprisingly buoyant effect on air purification. These include aloe vera, dwarf date palm, weeping fig, English ivy, Boston Fern and Chinese evergreen.

And one final tip when you find yourself in the local supermarket selecting your prickly night-time partner – pick up an extra pineapple to consume before you put your pyjamas on. That's because boffins have revealed that pineapples are high





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FRANKENFOOD THE STRANGEST FOOD MASH-UPS

Verified in a time of global culinary inspiration, yet where food mash-ups go, some of the recent trends appear to be not just from another country, but another planet.

What is certain is social media has accelerated the popularity of some frankly peculiar creations. Do you dare your tastebuds to stretch quite this far?

THE STARTER: PICKLES AND PEANUT BUTTER

Pickles as a starter are nothing new, but with a tangy peanut butter accompaniment they take on a flavour – and a texture – all of their own.

THE DRINK: COCONUT LEMONADE

Two cans of lemonade, 1tsp of coconut extract, a dash of blue food dye and ice cubes, makes a perfect summer drink with a tropical twist.

THE MAIN: MARMITE PASTA WITH CHEESE

Love it or hate it, yeast extract is a dynamic flavour that divides a nation. And in the form of a pasta sauce its controversy continues, although softened with cheese this is an absolute treat for those brave enough.

THE ACCOMPANIMENT: POPCORN WITH KETCHUP

While sugar and honey have provided the sweet option for popcorn fanatics up until now, ketchup's universal appeal now gives the ultimate cinema snack an even tastier appeal, as well as adding moisture to a notoriously dry snack.

THE DESSERT: VANILLA ICE CREAM AND SOY SAUCE

This dessert uses the same principle as salted caramel ice cream, adding a burst of flavour to the smooth, sweet predictability of vanilla ice cream, whilst masking that sometimes excessive fishy essence of this most characterically Asian flavour.

THE HEALTHY OPTION: SALT AND PEPPER ON APPLE

This simple, healthy break from the norm combines sweetness, salt, a power packed punch and all the crunch of our favourite fruit in a way that will keep the densist happy too.

THE SNACK: OREOS IN ORANGE IUICE

Chocolate orange as a taste is nothing new, but never before has dipping your faithful Oreo in natural orange juice been so rewarding, with rich, competing flavours, mesmerising moisture and a familiar crunch.





or some reason, even the most confident cook can feel some trepidation when faced with the task of preparing and cooking fish, but with these simple tips you will be cooking up a fishy storm in no time.

As a nation we love canned tuna, but we are definitely missing a trick by not experimenting with the fresh variety which is firm in texture and mild to taste.

A good marinade is essential when preparing fresh tuna as not only will it help the fish taste delicious; it will also keep it moist during cooking.

We recommend grilling your tuna steak for a quick and tasty meal. For a half-inch thick steak, grill for four to six minutes. The fish should flake when tested and still be pink in the middle.





Who doesn't love a piece of battered cod and chips on a Friday night? But that doesn't have to be the only time you enjoy this flavoursome fish.

For best results, we recommend baking your cod in foil with lemon and garlic. Simply preheat your oven to 180C and bake for 15 minutes for six to eight ounce fillets or 20 minutes for a whole fillet.

You will know your cod is cooked when it appears opaque and flaky.

A truly luxurious fish, salmon is also extremely versatile. It can be pan-seared, grilled, roasted, poached, smoked or cured.

Most salmon are sold with the bones removed but it is worth checking for any stragglers by rubbing your finger gently along the fillet.

If you are planning to pan-sear or roast the salmon, we advise keeping the skin on. Based on a half-inch thick piece, you should roast for six minutes or four if you prefer your salmon a touch rare.







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hether you've already been away this year or have been shaping your holiday away from the madness of the summer rush, the popularity of the autumn escape has really come into its own as people look to rework the way they holiday. Here are a few places to consider:

ROME

Notoriously busy during July and August, the Italian capital regains its resplendent simplicity as the autumn months come about. A drop in tourist numbers means you can fully appreciate Rome's stunning architecture, take your time over pizza or pasta, and explore winding backstreets without an accompaniment of trudging tourists. Of all Europe's cities, it is probably the one that feels most different in autumn.

CADBIIC

If sun and sand is still your thing, then Cyprus will hold its sizzling summer feel more than most other European destinations. Even in the echoes of autumn, temperatures remain in the high 20s, and

with an eclectic coastline, charming Mediterranean villages and a combination of vineyards and mountains, there are a variety of terrains and colours to ensure you stay charmed by your surroundings.

AFRICAN SAFARIS

For the perfect African safari, an autumn break is perfect. Temperatures all year round tend to vary very little – in Kenya, for instance, the lowest average of 27 in June is only four degrees off the January peak month. Other locations such as Botswana and its Okavango Delta can offer water-flooded expanses that cool hot limbs whilst offering incredible, expansive views over some of the world's most incredible creatures.

VIETNAN

Or perhaps for somewhere completely different, get in right at the start of Vietnam's dry season with an October escape to a land of rich wildlife, absorbing culture and complicated history that, these days, lures tourists looking for provenance and purpose as much as a place to relax and unwind.



HOW ROBOTIC PETS ARE BRINGING JOY TO DEMENTIA SUFFERERS

It's a disease more terrifying, debilitating and demeaning as any other; one that rips apart families and leaves victims often in a spiral of panic and fear, and yet we still seem to know desperately little about dementia, and within that Alzheimer's.

While progress in the research labs over the past decade has been impressive, not even the very best scientists could have predicted the dramatic impact robotic pets appear to be having when it comes to soothing the anxiety and loneliness of sufferers.

> "A stuffed, robotic dog or cat can be a companion throughout the day for an elderly individual with Alzheimer's disease or dementia. Social isolation is a very common problem among older adults, and having a pet is a really wonderful way to combat that," notes Dr. Mattan Schuchman, a leading authority on this new idea.

The robotic pet eliminates the need to care for a real pet, which is virtually impossible for those suffering with the disease, yet puts a position of responsibility back on the patient and reaffirms their ability to tend to and care for something, having often had that feeling of being relied upon taken away from them.

Recent studies discovered patients' sense of joy and well-being when looking after a robotic pet builds confidence into other areas, reaffirms love and affection, and slows what can sometimes be a rapid acceleration of the debilitating side effects of dementia.

While we still have a long way to go, the use of such a simple toy, which is cost-effective, long-lasting, companion-driven and precludes the unnecessary use of drugs, seems a very clever solution to a very profound problem.



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or a system initially associated with conducting eBay transactions at first, PayPal has grown to become the world's most trusted payment facility, but does that mean it's

We are firmly in the realms of the digital age, particularly when our business and personal transactions can all be conducted at the click of a mouse.

While few miss the inconvenience, clumsiness and delays associated with cash and cheque transactions, that's not to say we shouldn't look for protection and reassurance from internet-based systems such as PayPal, Skrill, Moneybookers, Google Wallet and others.

Certainly, in terms of numbers, PayPal's domination of the market is a good marker as to its reputation. This year it will top 300 million active

accounts, with sign-ups rising by 17 per cent year on year.

The organisation operate several layers of security behind each account, with recipients of money never receiving sensitive financial information such as credit card or bank account details. There is also the PayPal Purchase Protection scheme, which acts as an insurance policy for outgoing payments, and in general any disputes come down firmly on the side of the customer as opposed to the seller.

PayPal have even offered cash incentives to any buffs uncovering potential security flaws, vulnerabilities or breaches in the company's digital data defence system. And with the system draped in data encryption and

anti-fraud technology, it might be said that a PayPal account is actually safer to use than a credit card, bank account or a cheque book.

However, the premise isn't all on the corporation. There will always be someone wanting to tread in your digital footprint, and as with any security system, the set-up is only as tight as the actions of those using it, so users are frequently reminded to stay diligent when it comes to logins and passwords.





t's the thing that most of us view whilst visibly wincing, and yet you have more control over your credit rating than you probably think.

Maintaining or seeking to improve this score is essential if you're keen to gain credit, or ensure you can get approved by lenders or landlords, so here are seven handy hints to keep your numbers looking healthy.

You can't be certain you'll improve your score unless you know what it is in the first place, so check out your credit file – with the likes of Experian or Equifax – and know what you're dealing with.

✓ 2 DISASSOCIATE

If your partner has a chequered credit history it's wise to remove him or her from your file, as their activity will negatively impact on yours.

✓ 3 SIGN UP

If you're not already on the electoral roll, get on it. It's a great way for credit agencies to be able to verify who you are and adds a layer of authenticity to any application.

■ 4 SPRING CLEAN

Close all unwanted credit cards, store cards and debit cards, because the more of these you have, the bigger your perceived risk.

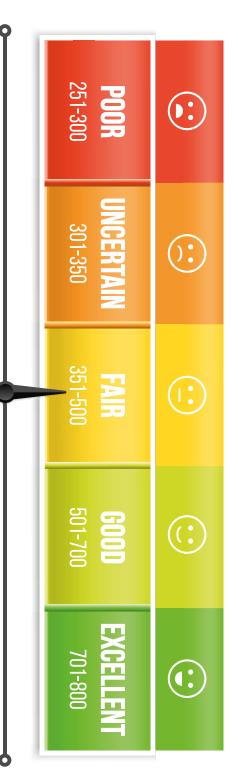
Using a credit card for everyday purchases, on the understanding you'll clear it at the end of each month, will boost your credit rating and prove to any lender that you can be trusted.

✓ 6 TIME IT

The worst damage to your credit rating is done when you miss or are late making payments, so stay on time.

■ 7 MINIMUM REQUIREMENT

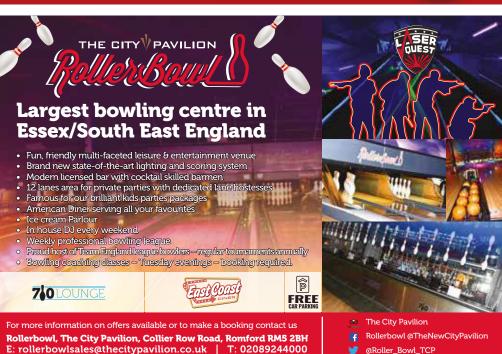
Ensuring you pay off your card at the end of each month signifies good behaviour to a lender. If you can't afford to do that, pay off more than the minimum payment.

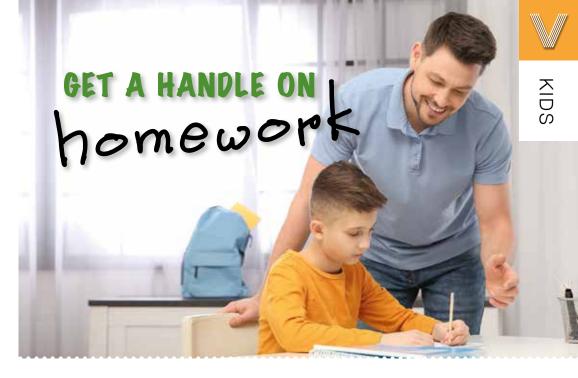












omework can be the bane of a parent's life; should you just let your little ones get on with it, micromanage the whole process or simply wing it each day?

BASE INVOLVEMENT ON THEIR AGE

Children who have only just been introduced to the concept of homework are going to need more help and motivation than an older child. Be present with younger children and help where needed but make sure your child is actively participating in the task at hand.

✓ TALK TO THE TEACHERS

Knowing what your child's teacher expects is an important step in managing home learning effectively. Set time aside to talk to them about their homework policies and how much they think you should be involved.

SCHEDULE FOR SUCCESS

Work out what time works best for your child; whether that be straight after school whilst they are still in the learning zone or after dinner once they have had time to relax and unwind.

✓ PLAN AHEAD

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This is especially important if your child has after-

school commitments or has been given a bigger project to do that will require more time and effort. Try breaking up their work into more manageable pieces or create a work schedule for additional quidance.

ELIMINATE DISTRACTIONS

An obvious one, but phones, TV and other electronic devices are a big no-no when it comes to homework time. Young children especially can be easily distracted so keep these devices out of sight.

MOTIVATE AND MONITOR

Make sure you are aware of any big tests or assignments and monitor your child's progress as they prepare for these. Be on hand to encourage and offer support but try not to take over; remember your child needs to make mistakes in order to grow as an independent learner.



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eptember is peak season for ticks; pesky little parasites that have a preference for pooches. Although they are persistent, there are steps you can take as a dog owner to protect your pet from these troublesome ticks.

Avoid long grass

Ticks love to lie low in tall grass or shrubs, so during tick season dog walkers should stick to paths or areas where the grass is short.

Be prepared

Prepare for the worse and always carry a tick removal tool and some antiseptic wipes in case you or your dog are bitten. Tick repellents are also available at most pet shops and should be applied to both your dog and their toys/accessories.

Keep your garden tidy

Long grass, fallen leaves or other organic litter in your garden are ideal places for ticks to hide; just waiting to pounce on your unsuspecting pooch. Keep on top of your garden maintenance to minimise the

appearance of these pesky pests.

Groom regularly

Make sure you thoroughly brush your dogs, both against and with their hair growth to find any hidden ticks. At the same time, you should check around their eyes, inside their ears and around their mouth.

Consider nominating a tick buddy

Not as fun as it sounds, but if you regularly walk with another dog owner or see other walkers whilst out and about, it can be worthwhile 'buddying up' to check each other and each other's dogs after each walk.

Tick Trivia 1: Ticks can survive a full washing machine cycle and some even make it out alive after a spin in the dryer. Be safe rather than sorry and remove all outer layers of clothes before entering your home.

Tick Trivia 2: Ticks cannot jump or fly; they simply drop onto you or your dog.





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ant can grow out up to

PLANT OF THE MONTH:

ntirrhinum is also known as dragon flowers or snapdragon due to the fact that its flowers resemble the jaws of a dragon that appears to be snapping when squeezed open and close. They are known for their vibrancy and are ideal for providing autumn and winter colour in your garden.

WHAT TYPE OF PLANT IS ANTIRRHINUM?

Antirrhinum is normally considered as a biennial and is available in dwarf, pyramid-shaped plants or tall towerlike ones. They have a light floral fragrance and come in many vivid colours including pink, crimson, yellow and white. They can grow up to three feet tall.

WHEN AND WHERE DO I PLANT ANTIRRHINUM?

This plant loves the sun and also needs rich, fertile soil with a medium amount of moisture to flourish. They enjoy the cooler autumn weather and can often survive a heavy frost so commence bedding in September for display in spring. Grow them in flower beds, planters or borders for best results.

HOW DO I PLANT ANTIRRHINUM?

Prepare the soil by mixing in manure or other organic matter. Each plug plant needs its own hole and must be deep enough to cover the roots but not the stem. Water regularly and feed weekly.

HOW DO I LOOK AFTER THIS PLANT AND HELP IT FLOURISH?

If looked after, each Antirrhinum plant can grow out up to eight flower spikes per season. In order to achieve this, make sure you pinch out the stem tips once the plants are established, cut the flowers to encourage new growth and keep on top of deadheading. Look out for 'rusting' - small brown spots on the leaves.

WHAT DOES THIS PLANT SYMBOLISE?

Snapdragon flowers are said to represent concealment and deception but on a more positive note, they also have connotations with graciousness.

also needs rich, fertile moisture to flourish VISIONLoughton edition 17 | to advertise call 0208 088 0386

1. Antirrhinum

n flowers are say to represent

concealment and deception

Sleeper

ailway sleepers have a mystery and charm all of their own... to the extent that an object originally recycled from the trackbed is now being produced from freshly felled trees, such is its popularity amonast gardeners.

While some people choose to leave the sleeper to extol its original rustic beauty, others like to explore the range of treatments that can brighten, soften or reshape this hunk of wood, from sanding back to varnishing or painting.

Here are a few uses for railway sleepers:

UNDER FOOT

Solid enough to hold the weight of a train, it makes sense that a railway sleeper's most accepted use is in the ground. As characterful steps - laid either sideways or pushed together lengthways - this is a great use that can guide an eye deep into a garden's charm.

EDGING

Flower beds and lawns can look smart and tidy when utilising the brilliant straight lines of a railway sleeper. For a rustic object, this hunk of wood can offer an unexpectedly contemporary line that will shape and present your plant life.

Alternatively, cut the sleepers and stack face up, experimenting with different lengths to give your beds a feel of ascending excellence.

WALLS

Railway sleepers presented as a wall not only makes a visually pleasing bank of wood, but will provide you with considerable strength at the same time. Whether housing a compost pile or offering a place for you to store garden objects out of view, these weighty objects will stand up

Consider drilling solar lights in too to make your garden a charming night-time escape.

BENCHES

Whether cut to form legs or otherwise propped on bricks, using railway sleepers as a bench will give you a chunky, rustic seat that will survive many









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Why new *Dragons' Den* enterprise impresario Sara Davies is a calling card for all businesses hoping to grow out of nothing.

Anyone who has seen the new series of *Dragons' Den* will have clocked a new face on the panel of fire-breathing business behemoths.

Terrestrial television's most successful new business show resumed its 17th series at the start of August. And with Jenny Campbell having stepped back from investment duties at the end of the last run of programmes, the much-vaunted seat two – once occupied by James Caan, Richard Farleigh and Hilary Devey – was instead filled by a new backer; and someone able to empathise with all areas of the entrepreneurial spectrum.

To the untrained eye, County Durham-born Sara Davies MBE represents a friendly, warm, welcoming, empathetic member of Britain's most feared panel. And so she should – the 35-year-old was brought up in rather simple surroundings in the north-east, and launched her debut business, Crafter's Companion, from her university student accomodation.

Her idea was simple – she offered a tool that could create bespoke envelopes for handmade cards. It came at a time when craft had begun to boom in the UK, and such an obvious gap in the market was there to be exploited. Sure enough, by the time Davies graduated, the enterprise was turning over £500,000 a year.

These days, Crafter's Companion exports to over 40 countries, employs 190 people worldwide, and can boast an annual turnover of £25million – not bad for an idea not just written on the back of an envelope, but was the envelope itself.

It all adds up to someone perfectly in touch with the qualities required to take a ground level business and move it to the next level. In

sympathetic yet system-driven.

PROFITS

"I think my background isn't too dissimilar to that of the other Dragons," she says.

the opening episodes we see Sara's approach as firm but fair,

"it's not like we were born into huge amounts of wealth. For us it's just been a case of having a good idea, going with it, then using the profits from that to try other avenues.

"As I say to a lot of young companies, sometimes getting that first idea right makes it 10 times easier to fuel all those that follow. That's because you have a springboard, you have experience, and the chances are you have contacts, as your next move is most likely to be in a familiar area."

As the 18th business wizard to step into the show, Davies is the youngest, proving that the world of modern business, even at corporate level, isn't the domain of those who have spent decades climbing up through the system.

"While it takes time to understand the mechanics of enterprise, I believe the spark to make money and to make a difference is there from childhood. That's not something you can learn – you either have it or you don't," she says.

Davies is already making a difference in the den. While, straight away, she put her hand in her pocket to make real the dreams of the next generation of business whizz, she is at the same time inspiring a brand of Sunday night armchair money-makers as well – are you one of them?

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood









Grove Fest Shows festivals are for everyone

You're never too old to enjoy a music festival, as a Loughton care home proved with its first ever 'Grove Fest'.

Woodland Grove on Rectory Lane entertained residents and members of the community with musicians, face painting, drumming and dancing. As well as being a chance to bring local people together, the event raised money for two dementia charities.

Festival organiser and Woodland Grove's lifestyles manager Eirlys Roff said: "We support people with dementia every day here. We know how vital music is to them so a festival seemed a perfect idea.

"Our residents who are living with the condition never seem to lose the joy of the sound or the memories songs from their past can bring."

The festival included entertainment from local acts One Man Banned, Dean Weedon and Sasha McIntosh, plus a Zen drumming performance where residents were encouraged to join in and drum along. Eirlys said the day had guite an impact.

She said: "One of our residents can be guite distressed but the drumming was very therapeutic for her and she sat calmly taking part. It's a challenge to encourage another of our residents to eat but she enjoyed the barbeque which was wonderful to see."

Woodland Grove offers residential, nursing, memory and respite care for up to 72 people.

Eirlys, together with lifestyles assistant Kiera Helsey raised £185 from the event towards their targets for the Alzheimer's Society and Dementia UK. The pair are also running the Brighton Marathon for the charities in April next year.

Home manager Hazel McGwyne added: "Woodland Grove Music Festival has been a fantastic event, and a brilliant way for Eirlys and Kiera to kick off their fundraising. We've already had some great feedback from families who loved the day so who knows, it could become a regular event."

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LOCAL NEWS Students are top of the class after A Level results

Students in Loughton were celebrating after they achieved some outstanding A Levels results.

History was made at Debden Park School as executive headboy Kai Melhuish became the first student from the school to go on to study at Cambridge after he achieved A*s in Sociology and English and an A in History. He will now read history at Trinity College.

Kai said: "I'm delighted to have got my place at Cambridge - it's been a nervous few weeks leading up to the results but it's an absolute dream come true. I am so grateful for all the support given to me by the school over the last seven years."

Students at Davenant Foundation School were also celebrating some exceptional results.

This year, the students did exceptionally well with a significant increase in A* grades.

Some 25 per cent of all entries were at A* or A with nine per cent of all grades being graded A*; 53 per cent of all grades were A* to B.

Headteacher Adam Thorne said: "The school and

their parents are very proud of the students and their exceptional results.

"Students have worked hard this year with our experienced teachers and the results are a reflection of that partnership.

"The most important thing is that the students have managed to get to where they want to go, whether that is work, apprenticeships or university courses.

"We wish them all the best with their next stage of education."

Students at Roding Valley High School were delighted with their A Level results with the vast majority securing their first choice places at university.

Headteacher Sharon Jenner said: "We are absolutely delighted with all of the students. I would like to thank all the teachers and the parents for supporting the students through this time.

"It is wonderful for us to see our students mature into the adults that they are and go off to achieve their dreams."

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Sister of man stabbed to death says it doesn't feel real

The sister of a man who was stabbed to death on a train in front of his son has said the family are still grieving nearly nine months after the tragedy.

Lee Pomeroy was stabbed 18 times in 25 seconds on January 4, on a London-bound train by Darren Pencille, 36, who has been jailed for life for the attack.

Kim Pomeroy, from Loughton, said due to the publicity surrounding the case, relatives haven't been able to grieve Lee's death which has had a profound effect on the family.

Kim described Lee as a "family man, who was devoted to giving everything and anything to his wife and son."

She said: "He was a really intelligent, funny and precious man. He was incredibly devoted to his family, especially his wife and son and had a real passion for music and sport. Honestly, it is really hard to sum him up. We want to keep the funny memories we have of him close to our hearts."

Kim opened up about the devastating effect Lee's death and the circumstances surrounding the murder case have had on the family.

She explained: "It was hard because it wasn't like any normal death - we had to prepare ourselves for every single stage. From the murderer's identity being released, to Lee's body being released by police two months after his death, to the court case - we haven't been allowed to grieve.

"We are finding it really hard. It is more the little things, one minute you think you're fine, then the next minute, you hear a song which reminds you of him and it brings it all back."

Lee loved sport and used to watch football and cricket with his mum, who now can't watch it because Lee isn't there with her.

Kim added: "He was very precious to us and we continue to think about him, we miss him and always will."

Campaign for green space gets big boost

Acampaign to save a popular Loughton green space has received a big boost from a planning inspector.

Plans to demolish Jessel Green were approved by Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) in 2017 and the 'Save Jessel Green' campaign has been implemented by the local community ever since.

That campaign received a boost on Wednesday, August 8 when the government planning inspector overlooking the council's Local Plan. Louise Phillips.

released a public review where she advised EFDC to leave the green space as it is.

She said that the loss of the public recreation area "would not be justified and it should be deleted from the plan accordingly."

The approved Local Plan shows the council's intention to build 11,400 homes within the district by 2033, with 154 of them on Jessel Green.

The campaign against the plans has also received backing from Loughton town clerk, Mark Squire.



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NEWS

Beautician charged with

killing woman after procedure temporary medical practice in the basement of a Far

Ahairdresser from Loughton who was charged with killing a woman in New York after a botched cosmetic buttock procedure has been remanded in custody.

Donna Francis (top left), 34, injected liquid silicone into the rear of Kelly Mayhew (top right) in May 2015 in the Queens area of the city.

On the third dose the 34-year-old 'turned purple' and went into shock, dving minutes later.

Francis remained on the scene while paramedics attended but then cleaned up her equipment and drove off before fleeing to the UK. She was brought back to the US to face charges last month.

Acting district attorney John M Ryan explained what had happened.

He said: "The defendant is alleged to have set up a

Rockaway home with a massage table and silicone gel purchased from eBay. The victim in this case travelled from Maryland with her mother and \$1,600 cash and the hope of returning home with the perfect

"Sadly, she never returned home. She died as the defendant allegedly pumped a clear liquid substance into the woman's backside, causing her to go into cardiac arrest. The defendant, who fought extradition, now faces prison time for these alleged egregious actions."

Francis' next court date is September 27, 2019. If convicted, she faces up to a year in jail, pursuant to the extradition order limiting a sentence greater than

Plans for playwright group underway

A Loughton resident has plans in the pipeline to start a group for actors and playwrights to share their talents and receive feedback.

With a few groups already scattered around London, Alice Josephs wants to bring Loughton the idea of bringing playwrights and actors together.

The initiative allows playwrights to test their material and receive feedback, which will give the actors a chance to play characters they may not have a chance to play, whilst working on their acting skills.

Alice said: "I'm still in the early stages of setting this up, but the idea is to get a group of playwrights and actors together in Loughton to meet regularly and work on their talents together.

"I am fairly experienced, I'm a writer, I've trained as a director and produced a few of my own plays, so I understand how important feedback is.

"From experience, playwrighting can be guite lonely sometimes and you're always thinking, how is this going to be read, so to have the opportunity to hear your work being read and being able to tweak bits that don't work is very worthwhile."

To find out more, email Alice at Scene1Loughton@ Outlook.com



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Diamond scam gang led by TOWIE star due in court

Reality TV star Lewis Bloor and men from Loughton and Brentwood were due in court last month to answer claims they plotted to defraud clients by dishonestly marketing and selling coloured diamonds.

The Only Way is Essex star Bloor, Joseph Jordan, 26, Simon Akbari, 25 from Loughton, Max Potter, 23, George Walters, 27, and Nathan Wilson from Brentwood, 25 were listed to appear at Westminster

Magistrates Court after they were charged with conspiracy to defraud.

Between May 2013 and June 2014, the group are 'accused of plotting to defraud investors by dishonestly marketing and selling coloured diamonds for investment purposes, knowing that those diamonds did not represent a legitimate investment opportunity' according to *The Evening Standard*.

Tom can help preserve your memories

Ayoung entrepreneur from Loughton has set up his own business to help people preserve precious memories.

After Joanne Linton's mother died, she bought a VHS converter to convert family tapes so her father could still watch the couple's wedding day and videos of Joanne and her brother when they were younger.

Her 10-year-old son Tom has turned the idea into a business.

She explained: "Tom sat with me and we worked out how to do it together. After we helped aunts, uncles and grandchildren, someone else got in touch to ask if we knew anyone else who could help. Tom said he could help other people see their memories."

Since setting up the business, called Tom's Transfers, Tom has converted around 150 videos at a price of £5 per cassette.

Joanne said: "I'm very proud of him. He's earning himself pocket money at the same time as being able to help others. He's learning business skills at same time"

Joanne has set a Facebook page for the business and is aiming to set up a website. She said that since venturing into the world of social media, there has been a good level of interest in the business

She added: "He's too young to do Facebook so I will monitor it. I also advertise on the groups I belong to and he manages to fit in with his schoolwork as well as being a child."

To celebrate his success, Tom has spent his wellearned money on yearly passes for him and Joanne for Legoland.

If you would like to have your tapes converted, go to www.facebook.com/tomtransfers

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NEWS School celebrates * their best results to date

oding Valley High School in Loughton received its best results ever for Year 11 GCSE results last month.

The school celebrated above average results compared to the national share of top grades.

Two star students Billy and Eloise did particularly well. Between them they achieved 15 grade 9s, two 8s and one 7 (A* to A).

During the school's A Level results, the majority of students secured their first-choice places at university.

Top performing student Igor Dasuzhau achieved A* and A grades in Biology, chemistry, maths, physics and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) and will now study natural sciences at Girton College, University of Cambridge.

Headteacher Sharon Jenner said: "Roding Valley High School celebrates above national share of top GCSE grades. Amazing and significant improvements - so proud to be headteacher."

The Chelmsford Learning Partnership congratulated the school.

They tweeted: "Delighted for all Year 11 students at @BoswellsSchool @RodingValleyHS following their amazing GCSE results today. Outstanding levels of achievement and progress. Every student should be incredibly proud — we know how hard you worked for these superb results."

Dopey drug user shocks police

↑ dopey drug user in Loughton has been arrested Aafter he admitted calling his dealer whilst driving when he was stopped by police.

Police were following a moped rider when they saw he was using his phone.

When they stopped him outside the Robin Hood pub in Epping New Road it's believed he was in fact checking social media site, Instagram.

However, to the officers shock the offending moped rider decided to tell them he was in fact on his phone to his drug dealer and he also admitted having drugs in his possession.

Shocked by what had happened the Essex Roads Policing Unit, who stopped the drug user, posted the exchange on their Twitter page.

It said: "Today's job of the day: man riding his moped, whilst checking out Instagram and then claims to police he was just clearing a call - from his drug dealer.

"'OK So where are your drugs then?' - in my pocket."

The amazing admission from the moped rider caused some social media users to question the intelligence of the man arrested.

Ton Bailey said: I've said it before and I'll say it again, we are not dealing with the brightest section of community."

While Keith Watson was more sympathetic. He said: "Give him some slack, partially an honest and cooperative answer."



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LOCAL NEWS Woman fears abusive boyfriend could be released

The former partner of an abusive boyfriend, who was iailed for attacking her at her home in Loughton. fears he could be granted early prison release.

Emma Bignall still suffers with trauma and physical pain from the abuse and is fearing for her life as her attacker could be soon released from prison.

Speaking to The Mirror, Emma said: "There is a fear he will try and come back, but that's one of the reasons I'm speaking out. I want everyone to know what he's done.

"He's a monster, he's pure evil, my message is stay away from him. I've found out he has applied for early release, he could be out in October. It's a disgrace."

On December 16 of last year, Emma was punched and repeatedly headbutted for two hours by her former partner, Jak Kosta, following a disagreement.

The couple met back in August 2018 through dating

app Tinder, when they began seeing each other. Kosta then moved to Emma's house just months into dating.

After discovering that her boyfriend had been having sexual relations with and messaging other women, Emma confronted him.

She told him their relationship was over. Kosta then started punching the walls before headbutting her and stripping her naked.

Her calls for help that followed were heard by a neighbour who called police.

At the time of the ordeal she said: "I passed out from the pain and woke to him stroking my face in what I found to be in a creepy and possessive manner."

Kosta pleaded guilty to the offences and was jailed for 15 months for causing actual bodily harm and criminal damage and was also made subject of a 10vear restraining order.

Policing team touched by heartfelt letter

The Loughton neighbourhood policing team said they were brought to tears after a resident posted a heartfelt letter through their letter box.

Following the death of a police officer in the Thames Valley, police forces have received messages of support but few compare to what Loughton police officers received.

A resident posted a letter through the police station letterbox along with a monetary donation which will be given to the Police Benevolent Fund.

The letter read: "Enclosed is £20 for the police fund as a 'thank you' to all the brave policemen and women who keep us safe in our everyday life.

"We, the general public, really do appreciate all you do for us on a day-to-day routinely basis. Thank you and god bless everyone of you."

The kind gesture led to Brentwood and Epping Forest Community police team posting on Twitter.

It said: "Found this morning in the post box at Loughton Police Station was this letter with a very kind donation which is being banked with the Police Benevolent Fund. The sender has been thanked in person on the phone and brought a tear to my eyes of how appreciative she was."



News from THE ROTARY CLUB

of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill & Chigwell



It was great to hear Rotary International being mentioned by Theresa May MP in her final Question Time as Prime Minister. She spoke about the good work Rotary had done in trying to eradicate polio.

Our next schedule of speakers and events include:

- > September 5 Speaker Georgia Michalopoulou: Understanding the power of clothes
- > September 12 Fellowship
- > September 13, 10am Loughton Club, Station Road: Memory Cafe
- > September 19 Speaker Jo Setterfield: A day in the life of an Undertaker
- > September 26 Business Meeting
- > October 10 Networking 'Soup' Launch Event

> October 11 - Grange Centre Quiz Night in aid of St Flizabeth School

Please contact us if you want to attend any of the

Our next free monthly Memory Cafe in Loughton is September 13, for people with memory issues and their cares. It's an activity session with singing, a guiz. bingo and games with free refreshments.

We hold it every second Friday of the month from 10am to 12pm at The Loughton Club, 8 Station Road, Loughton, IG10 4NX.

Please contact Pesh if you would like to get involved with Rotary in any capacity. Call 020 8500 2527 or 07973 166940 or email pesh@londonresidential.co.uk

Man arrested after two die in road crash

↑ man from Loughton was arrested on suspicion And causing death by dangerous driving after two people were killed in a crash last month.

The man was arrested following the collision at Goldings Hill, Loughton in the early hours of Saturday, August 24.

A 17-year-old girl from Chingford and a 16-yearold airl from Woodford are in a serious but stable condition in hospital after undergoing surgery.

The man was arrested at the scene on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving, causing serious injury by dangerous driving and perverting the course of justice.

He was discharged from hospital the day after the crash, and remains in custody for questioning.

A single vehicle, a silver BMW M3, was involved in the collision. It had left the road and struck a tree at about 2.05am on August 24.

Police want to speak to anyone who saw what happened, or saw a silver BMW M3 driving in the Loughton and Epping areas in the early hours of

They are also keen to speak to anyone who was driving in the area who has dash cam footage, or anvone who has CCTV.

Contact the Serious Collision Investigation Unit on 01245 240590 or email CollisionAppeal@essex. pnn.police.uk. Alternatively, contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111 or use the anonymous online form at Crimestoppers-uk.org



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↑ teenager from Loughton armed with a knife and Aanother unnamed youth chased a man round a youth club before killing him, The Old Bailey heard last

Glendon Spence (pictured), 23, was knifed in the thigh after he tripped over a table trying to get away from his attackers at the Marcus Lipton Youth Centre in Brixton on February 21.

An eyewitness said he saw two males armed with 18 inch knives lunge towards Mr Spence as he kicked out while trying to defend himself on the floor.

He was pronounced dead at the scene at 7.30pm after sudden blood loss.

Chibuzo Ukonu, from Loughton, and the 17-year-old who cannot be named for legal reasons, both deny the murder of Mr Spence.

They arrived at the scene in BMW 5 Series which had been bought days before the fight.

Hours later the car was found torched on the Peabody Estate, the court heard.

Ukonu got on a coach to Manchester the following day, while the 17-year-old was detained attempting to board a flight to Uganda from Heathrow Airport.

Earlier prosecutor Julia Evans told jurors: "From the CCTV footage alone, there can be no doubt that on the evening of February 21 Glendon Spence was chased into the youth centre and there is no doubt that he was attacked there, that he was stabbed and as a result of those stab injuries he died.

"He was the victim of a swift and merciless attack." Ukonu and the vouth both denv murder. The trial continues.

Homeowner angry at new parking restrictions

↑ householder in Loughton said he wants an Aexplanation after he returned from holiday to find double yellow lines had been added to the corners of his road.

Antony D'Andrea said the move on Durnell Way has made parking in the area very difficult. He lives on the Whitehill side of the road.

He said: "I have come back from holiday and they have put double yellows on the corners of our road at such a length that it is greatly reducing available parking space in a road where it is already limited. There was never a problem and no consultation with the residents here or warning that it was going to happen.

"It was lucky I wasn't parked there before going

away or I would have been fined."

Antony said he was only made aware of the parking restrictions when somebody sent him a picture of the signs advertising the new parking regulations.

He commented: "I can understand the parking on the corner but these extend up into the road and take up a space. It's made a difficult parking situation even

A spokesman for Essex County Council said The North Essex Parking Partnership is responsible for new parking restrictions and before these are implemented, the public are consulted by means of local press adverts and signs (usually on lamp posts)



Inspectors find ambulance trust continuing to improve

Ambulance staff who serve Loughton have been praised for their care, commitment and dedication. The praise comes from government inspectors the Care Quality Commission who inspected the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) earlier this year and published the results last month.

Inspectors commented that: "Despite factors such as high service demands and frequent callers, staff strived to always provide care that was compassionate, respectful, supportive, never timerushed and met patients' needs."

The Trust maintained an overall rating of 'Requires

improvement', however the Trust's rating for Responsive was improved to 'Good' and it maintained its 'Outstanding' rating for the compassion and kindness staff show to patients and their families.

Dorothy Hosein, Interim CEO, said: "I am delighted to see that this report rightly pays tribute to the outstanding care that our staff and volunteers deliver to patients on a daily basis. I am pleased that the inspectors noted the positive changes underway. Over the coming months my commitment is to ensure that our patients and staff really feel the impact of these improvements."

Success for student despite broken back

Acoughton school student achieved GCSE exam success despite missing crucial pre-exam school time after fracturing her back while skiing.

Phoebe Proud, of Davenant Foundation School, recorded four top Grade 9s, two Grade 8s, two Grade 7s, one Grade 6 and one Grade 4 in her 10 exams.

During the Easter holidays, Phoebe fractured three vertebrae in her neck and back and also broke a rib when she crashed head first into a pole while skiing in Maine, America.

She said: "At times it was very uncomfortable. It also hindered my work as I got tired very quickly and sitting in the same place for a long time was uncomfortable."

Phoebe was off school in the run-up to her exams but now, having enrolled to join Davenant Foundation School's Sixth Form this month, is keen to get back to her studies.

Phoebe will now study for A Levels in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Geography. She hopes to go on to study Biology/Bio-Medical Sciences at university.

Phoebe's mum, Kim Schofield, said: "When Phoebe collected her exam results I really had no clue as to how she might have done as she was taking strong pain killers during the exam period and wasn't quite herself because of those and the blow to her head.

"I honestly wouldn't have been surprised if she had flunked all her exams. When she opened her results she cried and all I could ask was 'good or bad?!'"

Davenant headteacher Adam Thorne said: "Phoebe has shown that if you have the right attitude and don't use bad situations as an excuse you can achieve your goals. We are all so proud of her. Her story should inspire others."





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So why not try one of the below cheap and chic

creations that can be made with just a few additional materials

Brighten up your garden with this super easy glow in the dark light. All you need is a mason jar and some glow in the dark paint. Create a splattering effect on the inside of the iar with the paint so that when it is dark it will glow as if filled with hundreds of tiny fireflies.

VINTAGE CUTLERY CADDY

Who doesn't love a bit of shabby chic in their home? Mason jars make great containers for cutlery; simply paint a rectangle onto each jar using black chalk paint and then write your labels using chalk.

HANGING HERB DISPLAY

Create your very own hanging herb collection in your kitchen by filling your jars with soil and an assortment of herbs. Display on the windowsill or hang on hooks on the wall.

CUTE COASTERS

Don't forget to utilise the iar lids too: all you need is a sheet of corkboard, some glue and a marker pen. Cut a circle of cork that will fit on the inside of the lid, glue in place and then write a phrase or message on the cork for your guests to enjoy.

AROMATHERAPY JAR

Create your own scents for your home. Simply add cotton balls that have been dabbed with a few drops of your chosen essential oil to a mason iar and then make a few small holes in the lid. Inhale and enjoy. This is a good one if you suffer from colds, use eucalyptus oil and place the jars around your home.



Alex Kemsley ...taking the PLINGE



o combine the pleasure of a favourite pastime with the satisfaction and comfort gleaned from making money and having a successful career... well, that's everyone's dream, surely.

To make that perfect life come true requires dedication, belief and an unrelenting pursuit of excellence, and for swimming pool designer Alex Kemsley that journey started way back at the age of nine.

It was whilst still in single digits - albeit with the help of his father - he built his first pool. And in the immediate years that followed, the young designer's eye for detail very quickly became evident, with a drive for business being complemented by his pursuit of the perfect balance between health and luxury.

"Any nine-year-old boy would enjoy operating an earth mover to dig out a hole big enough for a pool." Alex begins, "but I couldn't have guessed that day that it would become my life's work.

"To go from building a family pool with dad at my childhood home to designing the world's most talked about pool has been an incredible journey."

That iconic pool he references has been built by his company, Compass, and is named Infinity London. It is a 200m high - it sits on top of a 55-storey building - 360-degree roof-top pool set to tower over the capital's skyline. It is formed around cutting-edge design, powered by computer technology and with renewable values at its core... for instance, it is heated by the by-product of creating cool air in the very building it sits atop.

As you would imagine, the designer's level of client is already unparalleled in the world of pool design, with footballers, musicians and TV stars commissioning Kemsley to create, configure and install designs that start with six-figure price tags. And with double-digit growth, the evidence is that demand for going for a dip is Brexit-proof... if not waterproof.









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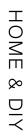
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Be wary of online reviews as these can be filled out by anyone - a genuine customer or perhaps just a mate of the contractor. That said, a great site to check is trustmark.org.uk, which offers government-endorsed tradespeople across multiple sectors.

Beyond that, see if www.youre-hired.com will provide phone numbers of previous customers who have had similar work done. You may even be able to do this with suppliers too.

TWO - WRITE TO REPLY

Make sure you ask the builders to put everything down in writing as regards payment terms, project timeframe and how the job will draw to a conclusion, including, for instance, who will dispose of waste materials.

THREE - MONEY MAN

You should never pay upfront for a job. Any good contractor should want to get the job finished before receiving full payment.

THREE - IMMEDIATE START? BE STARTLED

While we'd all like hired help to get to work as soon as we call, it's not always a bad sign to find a builder cannot start as quickly as you would hope, with a well-stacked calendar servicing other customers.

FOUR - ENSURE OR SHOW THEM THE DOOR

Enquire as to the insurance they offer over work done – what are you covered for in the event of them needing to come back?

FIVE - QUALIFYING TIME

Probably the best check of all is to run your preferred contractor's name past a regulating body. There are a number for each specialism but you can search quickly online to check they are verified.



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LOFTY Ambitions

here's more to converting your loft than just installing some insulation – find out what's what when it comes to attic aesthetics with our rundown of the most recognised types of conversion, and what they can bring to your building.

DORMER

Dormer loft conversions offer a greater amount of additional floor space by adding a structural extension which projects vertically from a sloping roof. By building a dormer, a cramped attic can be transformed into usable space

In some people's eyes a flat-roofed dormer might not provide the aesthetic appeal of other forms of loft conversion, but what it does provide is a greater gain in both floor space and headroom.

which is bathed in natural light provided by dormer windows.

Typical Cost: £20,000 - £35,000

Pros and Cons: No planning permission needed, but not as

aesthetically.

Time Frame: 6 - 8 weeks

MANSARD

Named after 17th Century French architect Francois Mansart. these conversions are often found at the rear of properties, and change the sloping side of your roof into an almost vertical side. Despite the fact that Mansard conversions usually require extra construction work compared to other types of loft, the resulting build affords you a great deal of extra living space.

Mansard roofs are particularly common in urban areas and can often be seen across whole rows of older terraced properties where space is tight. However, Mansard roofs are actually suitable for almost all types of properties.

Typical Cost: £40,000 - £46,000

Pros and Cons: Creates maximum space, but longer construction

and requires planning permission.

Time Frame: 6 - 8 weeks

HIP TO GABLE

Hip to gable loft conversions are becoming an increasingly popular way to create extra room in a property. Most houses have a roof with a sloping side, meaning that existing loft space is often limited. A hip to gable conversion extends your property on the sloping side, effectively replacing the sloping roof with a vertical wall at the end to the same height as the ridge.

If your property has two sloping sides you can replace them both with vertical walls, known as a double hip to gable loft conversion.

Typical Cost: £41,000 - £46,000

Pros and Cons: Creates large amount of head room but can only

be built on detached or semi-detached properties.

Time Frame: 5 - 6 weeks











Under Seu

HOW TO BRING THE UNDERWATER WORLD INSIDE

here is something tranquil, calming and reassuring about the sea, to the extent that a recent trend finds us recreating the gentle serenity of the coast within our own homes.

Where in the past an underwater theme would have been the domain of the kids' bedrooms, experimenting with maritime design even in our main living spaces – consider blues, turquoises and light greens – can add colour, complexion and an element of fun.

And you don't have to go all out on themed furniture. Sometimes just very subtle references to the sea can have the best effect, such as scallop-patterned chains or edging to drawers or units.

Wallpaper can add smart, subtle references to the coast, either in swathes of brilliant blue and subtle sandy brown, or as a detailed design that perhaps showcases boats, shells or beach huts. And while you're at it, rugs and carpets with irregular, fluffy edges can move and sway in much the same elegant, carefree way as a receding tide. Patterned cushions can add a very simple effect too – think traditional blue and white with perhaps a splash of yellow.

The subtle placement of objects and art can also really bring on that feeling of being in a sub-aqua wonderland inside of your home. Driftwood, for instance, is one of the most curious, curved, beautifully artistic things you can have, even as a stand-alone object or used as picture frames or stand-alone shelf decoration. And when adding watercolours, sculptures and other more covertly obvious nods to the beach, you can quickly build a mood that gives you everything the coast offers without the hassle of sand getting caught between your toes.



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ACROSS

- 1. Egg-laying mammal (8)
- 5. Vehicle pulled by a horse (4)
- 8. Capital of Bulgaria (5)
- 9. Less heavy (7)
- 10. Special ___: cinematic techniques (7)
- **12.** Passion (7)
- 14. Flotation device in water (7)
- 16. Released from a duty (7)
- **18.** Type of dance (3-4)
- 19. Bring together (5)
- 20. Mud grooves (4)
- 21. Respected and admired (8)

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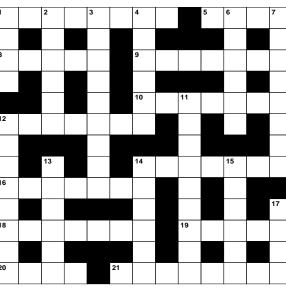
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Friday 13th December

Saturday 14th December

7pm till late

- 1. Elapse (of time) (4)
- 2. Matter (6)
- 3. Annual compendiums of facts (9)
- 4. Less attractive (6)
- 6. Join or fasten (6)
- 7. Beat out grain (8)
- 11. Type of dwelling (9)
- 12. Top quality (of a hotel) (4-4)
- 13. Address a person boldly (6)



- 14. Takes up (6)
- 15. Entrance hall (6)
- 17. Stained a fabric or hair (4)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ► A bear has approximately 42 teeth
- ► Koalas normally sleep from between 18 and 22 hours a day
- head
- Cockroaches can live without their heads
- It takes around 2 weeks for a sloth to digest its food
- ► No tiger has the same pattern of stripes
- ▶ Only males are called Peacocks. Females
- sleeping so they don't drift apart
- Flamingos can vary in colour depending

- A duck can't walk without bobbing its

- are called Peahens
- ► Sea otters hold hands when they're
- on their diet

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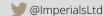
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here Brexit is concerned, the constant speculation that accompanies every interview, press release and set of research figures is something we've got used to. And yet, for the most part, the simple truth is we just don't know what will happen... apart from where the car industry is concerned.

Such is the nature of a market that encompasses 31 million vehicles that, whether buying new, or used (as a drop in new car sales will push up the price of second-hand motors), it seems we will all be affected, and the news isn't good.

It's all down to EU tariffs on cars. These threaten to add on at least $\mathfrak{L}2.7$ billion for imports and upwards of $\mathfrak{L}1.8$ billion for exports. That means at least $\mathfrak{L}1,500$ being added on to the cost of a car coming into the country.

This has been compounded by the lower value of the pound, caused by

uncertainty over Brexit, though that could correct itself in the months to come, with new Prime Minister Boris Johnson insistent that the October 31 deadline for the leaving the EU won't be missed.

Others have pointed to fuel costs, worries over how freely we will be able to drive abroad, and insurance premiums, but the majority view is these will settle down quickly as the market begins to stabilise again in the winter.

And while our cars may be more expensive in the short-term, no-one knows how the vagaries of new trade deals might perhaps set us up for better pricing in future.

Depending on which side of the fence you sit on, we're either about to embark on a period of unrestrained freedom... or we're plummeting into a financial, social and political abyss from which we will never recover. Either way, hold on to your steering wheel.



The perfect ENDORSEMEN



e all know the power of sport, but the might of merchandising is taking some sports stars to levels well beyond anything they could have achieved using their athletic prowess.

Here are the world's top three competitive conquerors who actually earn more from their advertising deals than they do from their sports earnings.

1. TIGER WOODS

Tiger stands out on his own in this exceptional field having earned over \$1bn dollars from sports advertising alone since turning professional in 1996. Shortly after his 21st birthday, Nike, American Express and General Motors were queuing up to offer him deals.

By age 25. Nike gave him a five-year contract extension and a \$105m bounty - the biggest contract of any athlete at that time. They saw Woods as "the ultimate endorser," and Nike Golf has grown to be the market leader, generating over \$600m in sales. This season, Tiger rolled back the years, winning his 15th major by picking up the prestigious Masters title. He won \$1.3m on the PGA Tour, but brought in over 30 times that through his sponsors.

2. ROGER FEDERER

Tennis legend Roger Federer may be in the twilight of his career on court, but he recently signed a 10-year deal with online clothing company Uniglo. That deal was worth £247m.

Federer earned £6.1m from tennis in 2018, yet received more than 10 times that amount through endorsements with Rolex, Credit Suisse, Mercedes-Benz, Moet and Chandon and pasta aiant Barilla.

3. LEBRON JAMES

Three-time NBA Finals winner Lebron James has joined the LA Lakers this year, along the way overtaking the legendary Michael Jordan on the sport's all-time scorers list. In the last 12 months, his on-court exploits earned him \$33.5m, but deals with Coca-Cola, Nike, Beats by Dre and Kia Motors saw him slamdunk, on top of that, a 'net gain' of over \$17m.



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WHAT'S ON in your area

Property Tuesdays

The Last Post, 227 High Road, Loughton, Every Tuesday, 7pm - 11pm



Looking for a free local and regular property networking event? Look no further, attendees are people who are passionate about all things property, so making money from property, interior design, property finance and much more.

Because it's an unmanned event wear something green. When you see someone wearing green at the right-hand side of the main bar say "Hello". For more information, visit www.propertytuesdays.co.uk

Loughton Breakfast Networking

The Skillet, 154 High Road, Loughton, IG10 4BE September 19, 8am - 10am

Your Business Community have set up a breakfast networking event taking place fortnightly at The Skillet in Loughton. Events are relaxed and friendly, to join, email info@yourbusinesscommunity.co.uk

The Loughton Family Feel Good Fair

Tennis Courts, Roding Valley recreation ground, Avondale Dr & Roding Rd, Loughton, IG10 3BS

September 22, 12pm - 5pm

This is a free community event run by the Rotary Club of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill & Chiqwell with Roots to Wellbeing to showcase all the activities/ clubs available in the area with taster sessions for you and your family to try out different activities.

A selection of charities will be there to advise on the support available locally. There will be health and wellbeing stalls and local craft businesses that will be demonstrating their craft.

Profoundly Blue

Loughton Methodist Church, 260 High Road, Loughton, IG10 1RB September 28, 2.30pm

Profoundly Blue is a concert celebrating the music of Louisiana-born clarinettist Edmond Hall.

The show stars clarinettist star Adrian Cox with his fine band; Joe Webb on piano, Simon Read on bass and Gethin Jones on drums.

Adrian's love for the clarinet is eminent in his soulful playing as you will hear in this fantastic tribute to one of the true legends of jazz.

Time Out has described him as 'London's most charismatic reeds man'.

Tickets available at www.wegottickets.com/ event/477924

Mini-headshot sessions

Newnham Close, Loughton, IG10 4JG Multiple dates available

Amanda Hall is offering a mini-headshot session in her home using both outdoors and indoors lighting for the photoshoot.

Sophie Matthews is a makeup artist and will be available to work her magic. The headshot itself will be no more than 45 mins long once you have had vour make up session.

Cost for the session is £125 with a chance to pick three images. A £50 deposit is required as a booking fee.

To book, visit www.amandahallphoto.com



The Only Way is Fit Camp

Ashton Playing Fields, 598 Chigwell Road, Woodford Bridge, IG8 8AA Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 6.45pm (camp runs 7pm - 8pm)

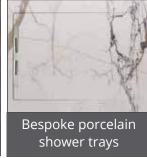
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