

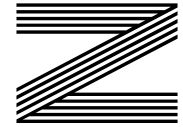
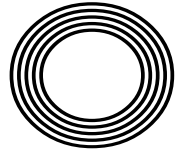


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Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

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

So, how is everyone? I am sure it has been a strange and difficult time for all. However, as mentioned in my last comments, we will

get through this and it looks like that will be quite soon.

It may not be the same as before, but change is not always a bad thing. Over the last few weeks, I have had to adapt how I operate my day to day, including how I communicate with friends, family and clients. But I have enjoyed it.

There has been a lot of sadness out there, with loved ones being affected and businesses closing. Please know that at **VISION** we are here for you.

When I speak to potential clients, I would never expect them to invest in their company with **VISION** if we did not believe and lead by example. What this means is we are investing more in **VISION** even in these strange times.

Why? Well, I believe this is the time to do what others may not think of doing so we come out even stronger on the other side.

In July, **VISION** breaks into Hertfordshire with the launch of two areas over the space of two months - **VISION**Hertford and **VISION**Bishop'sStortford. There will also be a new edition in Essex - **VISION**ChelmsfordBeaulieu. Get in touch if you require any information.

Brett

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

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The TV doctor whose finger has been on the pulse of the nation's health needs for more than three decades.

Readers of a certain age will best associate Dr Hilary Jones with the so-called golden era of daytime TV when, in the 1990s, producers presided over formats that would cement the careers of the likes of Chris Evans, Ulrika Jonsson, Richard and Judy, Nicky Clarke, John Torode and Gino D'Acampo.

As GMTV's softly spoken, likeable and, to some, slightly lusty healthcare pro with all the answers, Dr Hilary found himself answering questions on everything from puberty to piles in front of a watching television audience of millions.

Having qualified as a medical doctor at the Royal Free Hospital in London in 1976, he spent time practising abroad before becoming a junior doctor, then GP, in Basingstoke. The charisma and calm he brought to matters of the body and mind meant it was only a matter of time before the media spotlight came his way, and he has since spent a career supplementing TV appearances with magazine columns (notably *The Sun* on Sunday pull-out *Fabulous*) and radio appearances (he is a regular on Steve Wright's mid-afternoon Radio 2 show).

"When I was first asked to appear on television, the concept of people phoning in to discuss their problems was a peculiar one, and no one was quite sure if it was an idea that would take off," he says.

"But it did, and it has spawned a huge range of regular shows that encourage people to open up about many aspects of their lives, their bodies and their minds.

"As a medical professional, it can only be a good thing to see people being honest about what's going on, although I'm always wary that we don't want to cheapen the issues as this is real life."

Dr Jones' relatability to a wide demographic has certainly come to the fore in recent weeks as he has re-emerged centre-stage as one of the leading mainstream voices offering support and advice in light of the COVID-19 outbreak.

While championing the magnificent efforts of the public in the nation's fight to stem increases in coronavirus deaths, the 66-year-old also showed his tough side in the first week of May, when he took umbrage to a minority flouting regulations.

"We've all got to be in it together. Are those who refuse to self-isolate going to wear a t-shirt to hospital saying, 'Don't treat me, I didn't participate'? I don't think so.

"People who are careless are endangering not just their own lives but also the lives of so many around them," he continued, explaining that his colleagues on the frontline of hospital care are 12 times more likely to contract the virus than ordinary members of the public.

Current issues aside, the thrice-married TV personality has carved an impressive career out of his time at medical school. He has had six books published, participated in the fifth series of *Dancing on Ice*, and even appeared on a celebrity version of *The Chase*.

"I've had a lot of fun along the way, but the nuts and bolts of what I do will always come back to helping people get well and stay well – that's what I'm really passionate about."

Calling Dr Jones

THE *Positive*

Pandemic?

REFLECTING ON COVID-19'S SILVER LINING

While for an entire nation, the world around us has changed in ways more dramatic than we ever thought possible, there have been a couple of unexpected upsides to the terrifying global pandemic.

Firstly, we've seen society return to a much simpler way of life. Many work pressures – right down to the morning commute – have been removed, and with it, the hourly anxieties of jobs, tasks and duties lifted.

Children have enjoyed quality time with parents, and we've caught up with old friends more frequently than ever before, albeit online.

From bike rides to DIY, crafts to baking, health, relaxation and endless spurts of creativity and community spirit, the impact on us, as people, has been profound.

And yet, that is only half of the story. With our physical footprint on the environment lessened, we have seen nature reclaim great swathes of the country.

Car journeys have been minimised, meaning fewer harmful pollutants in the air (carbon dioxide levels have dropped 25 per cent); and there were 67 million fewer flights in the first three months of 2020 compared to the same period last year. Indeed, researchers at Stanford University estimated that improvements in air quality have saved the lives of 20 times the number of people killed by the virus.

Consider too that pollution levels in rivers are down – we all saw the pictures of the crystal clear canals in Venice – and even by Greta Thunberg's own admission, the Climate Crisis is "on hold".

While the positive environmental effects of coronavirus may only be temporary, perhaps the pandemic has opened our eyes to the very real impact we have on the world. And perhaps that, in turn, will ensure that while our investment in community, social distancing and hygiene is forever changed, so may we just give that little bit extra to the natural world too.

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Your safety is our priority.

OUR DOORS are reopening on 10th June and we are delighted to be serving our community once again. During lockdown, our whole team has been very busy behind the scenes so you can feel fully confident returning to us for your next appointment.

We have upgraded our clinical hygiene procedures to an even higher level than before. Our staff have received additional training and, as always, we are fully supplied with personal protective equipment. A new air purification system has been installed, which eliminates 99.99% of airborne respiratory viruses including the coronavirus.

We've also been caring for our patients by telephone and video consultations. A number of these patients have needed urgent attention which will be prioritised when we reopen. A new safer system for appointments is in place, and before you next come to see us we'll explain how the new system will affect your visits.

Meanwhile – a big **THANK YOU** to all our patients for the understanding and loyalty you've shown us during this difficult time for all.

When you return to our practice, you'll notice a few changes.

- An anti-viral clean air system is now installed throughout the practice
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Dr Malik and his team look forward to welcoming you back!

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HEALTH & FITNESS

STAYING FIT & HEALTHY AT HOME



Looking after yourself has never been more important, yet, sadly, it has never been more difficult. Fortunately, there are several ways that you can ensure you stay fighting fit and healthy at home.

EMBRACE #HOMEWORKOUTS

Missing your motivational gym classes? Fear not, social media is awash with free workouts that you can carry out from the comfort of your own home. Whether you fancy some stress-busting yoga or something a bit more hardcore, such as Peloton indoor cycling classes, there truly is a training session for everyone.

STEP UP YOUR CLEANING REGIME

Doing housework burns a lot more calories than you might think. Half an hour cleaning your windows? 150 calories. Digging up some weeds? Up to 200 calories per 30-minute session. Simply pop on some of your favourite tunes and get to work. The more effort you put in, the better the results.

FOCUS ON FEEL-GOOD FOODS

Nutrition is just as important as your activity levels if you want to stay fit and healthy at home. Try to incorporate foods that are rich in minerals like iron, zinc and selenium which will release 'happy hormones' and make you feel physically and mentally strong.

DO NOT BECOME TOO SEDENTARY

Understandably, most of us will be spending more time sitting rather than moving at the moment, but long periods of inactivity can have long-lasting effects on your body. Combat this by alternating periods of sitting with standing if you are working from home, running up and down the stairs a few times every hour and taking full advantage of your allowed outdoor exercise time each day.

OTHER FUN WAYS TO KEEP FIT IN YOUR HOME INCLUDE:

- 👉 Dancing
- 👉 Playing with your dog
- 👉 Skipping
- 👉 Playing games such as It and hide and seek with your kids





Fancy burning off some self-isolation boredom by popping to the local gym? Your luck's out. COVID-19 has ensured our time posturing and perspiring in the company of others is postponed indefinitely, but that doesn't mean you can't still get in shape.

RUNNING: It's the go-to exercise that we all come back to in the end – it's free, requires no expensive equipment, is endless in its range, and the more you do it the easier it gets. From pavement plodders to sparky park speed merchants, is the simple 'run' the best exercise option of them all?

FRONT ROOM WORKOUT: Joe Wicks may have cornered the market with his lithe lounge routines, but right back to Rosemary Conley on TV-am we were stretching, straining and sweating to workouts in the confines of our front rooms. There's never been a better time to take up the challenge.

TOUR DE UK: The bike succeeds where so many other forms of exercise fail by allowing its rider the rare pleasure of easing off the gas when things get tough. A venture out on your bicycle is not only pleasurable, but will also give your limbs a deserved rest whenever you can locate a downhill section.

THE WEIGHT IS OVER: Free weights at home can quickly boost muscle mass, and in the comfort of your bedroom, kitchen or garden, you can ensure absolute privacy where no unsuspecting audience will witness eye-popping strains akin to an episode of *World's Strongest Man*.

YES TO YOGA: If you feel your exercise regime is more of the mind than the body, start with a simple yoga or Pilates tutorial. You can ease yourself into positions you never previously thought achievable, while politely backing out at difficult moments or when you decide it's 'Pimms O'Clock'.

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Heavenly HOME-MADE HAND CREAM

Ensure your hands are silky smooth, no matter how many times you wash or sanitise them, with this simple and nourishing DIY, non-greasy hand cream recipe.

YOU WILL NEED:

- > 3oz shea butter – although both avocado and mango butter are good alternatives
- > 1 tbsp sunflower oil – organic if possible
- > 10 drops of essential oils – we love eucalyptus and lemongrass, but you can use whatever you have in the cupboard

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Add the shea butter and sunflower oil to a small pan
- > Gently heat until melted
- > Pour into a non-reactive bowl
- > Stir in your preferred essential oils
- > Place in fridge for 30 minutes to harden
- > Whip mixture with a hand mixer for 30 seconds until cream is fluffy and doubled in size
- > Do not overwhip as the mixture will turn stiff
- > Transfer cream into a sterilised jar

- > Use whenever your hands feel dry or in need of a moisture boost
- > Also use on rough patches of skin on your feet, knees and elbows

WHAT MAKES THIS HOME-MADE HAND CREAM SO EFFECTIVE?

Shea butter is the nirvana of skincare ingredients, having the ability not only to nourish your skin but also to heal it as it contains vitamins A and E. Plus, unlike coconut-oil-based moisturisers, shea butter will not leave your hands feeling greasy, just super smooth.

Sunflower oil is known for its calming effects on the skin, making it ideal for hands that are feeling sore and irritated from frequent sanitising.

Depending on what essential oils you choose to include, you can expect to experience a whole host of benefits. We recommend lemongrass for its ability to relieve stress and combat insomnia, and eucalyptus which can help heal sores, cuts and any other abrasions owing to its germicidal qualities.

Personal STYLIST



HOW A PERSONAL STYLIST CAN HELP YOU FIND YOUR TRUE STYLE PERSONALITY

You don't have to be a celebrity to employ the services of a stylist; it is a savvy investment which will save you money long term. By learning about your true style personality, what suits your body shape and what colours work with your skin, eye and hair colour, you can avoid costly fashion mistakes.

A personal stylist will work with you to understand your style personality and how you like to express yourself through clothes.

There are six style personalities. You may find that you fall into more than one, depending on your mood and the occasion you are dressing for:

CREATIVE – Loves to dress with an artistic edge and has a quirky sense of style. She likes to push the boundaries in what she wears and will mix and match different prints and looks within an outfit.

DRAMATIC – Likes to make a statement when she walks into the room, she is eclectic in her wardrobe choices and enjoys a statement print, bold colours and accessories. She is happy to experiment with the latest trends.

ROMANTIC – Adores pretty, feminine details such as lace, embroidery and ruffles. She will put a lot of effort into her appearance and enjoys dressing up.

CLASSIC – Enjoys being neat and tidy and doesn't like to buy into the latest trends. She likes her wardrobe to be functional and timeless in style.

NATURAL – Has a casual sense of style and likes her clothes to be comfortable and breathable. She likes her style to be a good balance of relaxed and minimalist, with low maintenance and natural fabrics.

CHIC – Very 'put together' and always looks immaculate. She enjoys a simple yet elegant style of clothing, tending to invest in her wardrobe rather than buying into current fast-fashion pieces.

Alex Standley is a Personal Stylist with 15 years' experience in the Fashion Industry. If you'd like to find out more, please visit www.luxeopardlifestyle.co.uk or get in touch at alex@luxeopardlifestyle.co.uk



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ANY GIVEN SUNDAE

Home-made sauces and ideas for superb summer treats



Let's be honest, we're all going to be spending a bit more time than we've been used to in the kitchen this summer.

While recreating that true summer vibe somewhere exotic may appear a pipe dream as things stand, that doesn't mean our limited outside space can't host a daring and dazzling array of summer treats, so here are some sauce ideas to get you going:

NUTELLA NICETIES

Perhaps the simplest sauce of them all – just melt three tablespoons of Nutella in a pan, adding a bit of water to keep the mixture moving.

When your sauce is smooth, runny and hot, add nuts, hundreds and thousands or any other textured topping and serve with ice cream or over some sliced banana pieces.



RASPBERRY SALTED CARAMEL SAUCE

This one takes a bit more effort but is well worth it. Take a cup of water and ½ cup of sugar and mix in a heated pan until it boils and the sugar turns brown.

Then add ½ cup of cream and the same quantity of raspberry purée, having first strained it to remove the seeds. Whisk, add 3 tbsp of butter, remove from the heat and add ¼ tsp of sea salt.

Use immediately for a thin sauce or refrigerate overnight for a thicker topping that's a belter on chocolate brownies.



COFFEE SALTED CARAMEL SAUCE

For a more adult twist, adjust the ingredients to create the perfect coffee sauce that's great on cakes, cookies, muffins and more. This time it's one cup of sugar, ½ cup of water (and a further ¼ cup to make your coffee), then ¾ cup of cream. Butter increases to 5 tbsp but sea salt reduces to just ¼ tsp.

Make in much the same way, adding the ¼ cup of coffee where you'd previously introduced the raspberries, with 1/4 tsp of vanilla extract which is the final touch to set the whole thing off in a smoky, dreamy, saucy complexion.



The Lunch Bunch

Send your kids back to school in style with lunch ideas they'll never get bored of.

Go bento

Bento is a great way of not only making your little one's lunchtime more exciting, but also keeping it fresh, as all the separate foods come in their own little compartments. To create your own, you may want to invest in a specially-designed bento lunchbox, but you can also just place cupcake papers in a traditional Tupperware variety. Include things like a sandwich or wrap, carrot sticks with a separate hummus dip, boiled eggs, chopped fruit or berries, and a small cake.

Make it fun

Brighten up their lunchtime with a fun surprise stowed in their box. For example, if your child likes pirates, give their lunch a theme and make fruit kebabs on plastic swords, or include a treasure map. Make them giggle with smiley faces drawn onto boiled egg shells and cut their sarnies with heart cookie cutters, or reward them for finishing their lunch with a sweet note hidden underneath the food.

Sneak in veg

Ensuring your children eat a balanced diet is hard, especially when they're out to school every day. The trick is to smuggle the good stuff into snacks they love. For example, if your child loves muffins, make a batch packed with fruit or bake savoury ones with spinach and goats' cheese. If they love pasta, make a batch of tomato spirals with hidden veggie goodness, or make oat bars loaded with fruit and seeds for an extra nutritional boost.

Mix it up

Kids love diversity, so don't feel the need to stick to sarnies and crisps. Savoury tarts, frittatas, couscous salads and sausage rolls are all yummy served cold, and can be made in bulk at the start of the week.

Ultimately, you know your child best, so what better way to give them a boost throughout their school day than with a lunch that's personal, tasty and full of goodness?



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We are a society increasingly surging towards apparent glorious cashlessness – and an increase in the allowed spending limit to £45 per transaction was greeted by a record number of card payments in April.

Of course, the government’s drive to limit the possible spread of coronavirus germs via the exchange of physical cash has been a defining factor in the latest spike, continuing an upward trend of contactless payments that was already up 16 per cent year on year. And yet, even before the pandemic, the ease with which we got used to the purchase of goods and services with a simple tap on a card reader means we are edging ever closer to a time when, in some situations, cash may become totally redundant.

Contactless payments offer a raft of benefits with very few downsides. There’s the time-saving element – an average of seven seconds are saved per transaction versus chip

‘n’ pin, and 15 seconds on cash, according to research by Barclaycard. Then there’s the removal of the need to carry heavy, dirty coins, or to head to the cashpoint to withdraw notes.

There’s also the convenience of having a digital record of all transactions, and even the option to pay using a phone or watch.

And yet, while the drive towards convenience suits most of us, it does not apply to everyone – there are still 1.3million people in the UK who do not have a bank account. Consumer groups have also noted the dangers of people idly ‘tapping’ away without any real thought about the money they are spending. And while fraud accounts for only 2.5p in every £100, the ease with which someone can spend on a stolen card is considerable.

What’s certain is that as much as the powers that be may want to encourage our spending habits towards a certain way, as with most things, it is the consumers who will decide.





zooming INTO FOCUS

WHY THE VIDEO-CONFERENCEING TOOL IS 2020'S BIG SUCCESS STORY

When it became clear the COVID-19 pandemic's presence was going to have a profound effect on society, speculating traders quickly went on the lookout for an investment stock that would pay big... after all, as the saying goes, there is money to be made out of a crisis.

Any who included video-conferencing tool Zoom in their portfolio may now be laughing all the way to the bank – or at least they will be when the banks reopen – after the Silicon Valley-based corporation announced triple-digit growth over the past three months.

Zoom is, of course, the perfect method for homebound people – and at the last count that's the vast majority of the population – to stay in touch with friends, family and work colleagues. It's not unique – rivals include

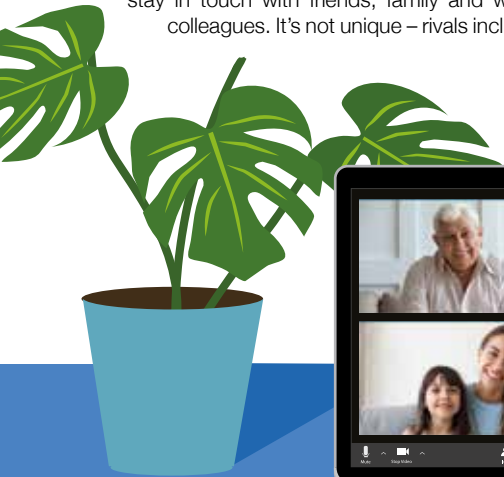
WebEx, BlueJeans, TeamViewer, Microsoft Teams and even Google Classroom – but what Zoom has thrown behind its product in a way rivals haven't are innovation, simplicity of function and a serious amount of reinvestment.

It's all led to first-time installations increasing five-fold in March, and an increase in the stock price of well over 100 per cent.

In reality, though, Zoom and the other video-conferencing tools cannot rest on their laurels. They may well be making hay while the sun shines given the restrictions placed on our physical interactions, but when these regulations are lifted, the danger for these firms is that the public will forget the software just as quickly as they downloaded it, and return to past habits.

The only way the tech boffins can prevent what will be an inevitable crash in user numbers is if their accompanying marketing team can convince us to change our habits long term, where speaking over an internet connection is preferred to face-to-face meetings.

In the new world, post-COVID, anything is possible.



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SOMBRE VE CELEBRATIONS

for our departed heroes



The street parties were present, Vera Lynn’s eclectic harmonies piped out of speakers, while generations paid emotional, wistful tributes to departed heroes, and yet VE celebrations this year took on a rather unusual feel.

That a nation still came together to commemorate and lay thanks on May 8, the 75th anniversary of VE Day, typified the fortitude and spirit that guided us to victory all those years ago. While we took seriously the distancing limitations of coronavirus, people across our county refused to have their tributes quelled by a modern pandemic.

Britons also encountered another challenge this year, and one that had nothing to do with the two-metre rule – millions of diaries and calendars were published with this, one of the key dates of the year, being wrong. It was as a result of the early May Bank Holiday moving back four days to mark those World War II celebrations. With the switch only being finalised in June last year, an estimated 30 million diaries and calendars were incorrectly printed.

While events this year weren’t allowed to feature mass gatherings, special events or the participation of pubs, perhaps it was fitting that on such a landmark anniversary people were offered the chance to make rather more sombre, personal tributes to those who fought for their country between 1939 and 1945. It’s a far cry from when hundreds of thousands of people marked the end of the bitter war with celebrations centred in The Mall, London, outside Buckingham Palace, as King George VI and Queen Elizabeth stood on the balcony to wave to the cheering crowds.

Missing on that day was a young Princess Elizabeth – one of the rare times that the future Queen slipped incognito to join in the revelries of her future subjects, as she and her sister, Margaret, accompanied by a 16-strong group of trusted members of the royal household, slipped out of the palace to sample first-hand the celebrations.

Recalling the event in an interview a few years ago, the Queen said: “I think it was one of the most memorable nights of my life.”

It was also memorable for one 15-year-old boy from Harrow, Ronald Thomas, who told his family how he had danced with the future Queen. For years he had trouble getting people to believe him.

This year, the Queen paid tribute to those fallen heroes, as well as referencing the profound challenges 2020 has brought, in an emotive speech, delivered in her usual impeccable style.

“Today it may seem hard that we cannot mark this special anniversary as we would wish. Instead we remember from our homes and our doorsteps.

“But our streets are not empty; they are filled with the love and the care that we have for each other.

“And when I look at our country today, and see what we are willing to do to protect and support one another, I say with pride that we are still a nation those brave soldiers, sailors and airmen would recognise and admire.”



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JUNE BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH:

Rose

For those born in the month of June, your birth flower is the rose. Roses are known for being the flower of love, and people born in June are said to be true romantics. Easy to grow, available in an abundance of colours and with a heavenly sweet scent, roses are a great addition to any garden.

WHAT DOES A ROSE SYMBOLISE?

Although roses are most commonly associated with love, beauty and devotion, each colour can be used to convey a different message or emotion.

The red rose means, "I love you." The pink rose symbolises happiness. White roses are used to convey innocence and purity. And a yellow rose symbolises friendship but can also be used to express jealousy.

classic and timeless look and can make elegance appear effortless.

HOW TO GROW ROSES

Roses crave sunlight, so you need to pick a spot that offers at least six hours of sun a day. Try to choose soil that is rich and well drained to ensure your flowers bloom.

The ideal time to plant roses is in early spring, and you can pick between a bare root variety or container-grown plants.

Water directly to the soil using a soaker hose or drip irrigation – do not water the foliage.

WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOU?

If you were born in June, you are definitely a sucker for romance, plus you are more likely to get on well with others and adjust to new situations with ease.

Style-wise, you favour a

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON PESTS FOR ROSES?

Aphids and caterpillars are the most common pests for roses and can be removed by hand in the early stages. Alternatively, the insecticide Rose Clear is highly effective.



Tree-lined



SIMPLE TREE IDEAS FOR GARDENS OF ANY SIZE

We all know the majesty of trees – decorative, oxygen-giving, protecting, privacy-offering and effortlessly evolving over time; they are perhaps the friendliest of nature's plants for the variety and variance they offer to both the biggest and the smallest spaces.

That means, whether you have a sprawling field out the back of your property or a simple back yard, clever use of trees can really shape a space.

PYRUS CALLEVRANA

An upright, tear-shaped tree that is perfect for gardens that have light up above, though perhaps are restricted in terms of square footage.

The green spread casts light down and the tree will self-maintain through all seasons.

ACER GRISEUM (PAPERBARK MAPLE)

This is a tree recently voted the most beautiful for gardens, given its characterful grey trunk and a spray of leaf colours that blend and weave into any foreground. Slow-growing, it won't consume the space.

MAGNOLIA GRANDIFLORA

A tree that bows out at the top to provide the perfect cover for something you wish to hide, like a street lamp or neighbour's basketball hoop. And of course, with a spray of white flowers that emerge as the year progresses, this is a variety that takes on an evolving personality.

CRAB APPLE TREES

So often the tree of our childhoods; as kids we contemplated whether to eat the apples that dropped from the tree. In garden terms, these small and perfectly formed beauties can be used to shield street-side windows from prying passers-by.

They won't grow to any extreme height, and flower attractively too.

BONSAI TREES

Of course, if space is really at a premium but you still crave the lure of a plant that has the rigidity of bark and the personality of a tree, bonsai are the way forward. While we mainly associate them as being very small, bonsai can grow well above head height.



Photo credit: gardeninghq.com



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ALWAYS ONLINE

Does the era of 'live chat' actually mean you're talking to a robot?

Any kind of online web chat experience has the potential to go sour – we've all ended up speaking to someone many thousands of miles away wondering if we'd be better off writing a strongly worded letter instead.

While the experience of speaking to someone in a call centre in a faraway land isn't always the best, the attempt at a pleasant exchange is usually flawless, and the reality that we are speaking to a real person is something we've grown to take for granted.

Yet the new era of customer service often means we're not talking to a human... not in London, Glasgow, nor Islamabad. Instead, while it may not be evident in the initial exchanges, we're conversing with a chatbot.

The technology that powers these computers has moved on in waves over the past decade or so. Intelligent, polite and immediate, these chatbots offer customers the chance to source answers and direct enquiries rather than having to endure the frustration of searching or waiting around for a real person to enter the chat.

Companies like chatbots because they are low cost and highly productive, though there are, of course, limitations to this latest wave of AI. Consumers can feel they are being fobbed

off and there is a good chance complex enquiries are just moved on to a real person anyway, in which case the process actually takes longer, and it's only really relatively simple queries that can be solved by a robot.

The jury is still out, particularly as it's difficult for companies to judge feedback – after all, satisfied customers will tell, on average, nine people about their experience, while for dissatisfied customers that number is 22.

Either way, just remember the next time you engage in a web chat, you might want to hold off on pleasantries about the weather... the robot you're conversing with really doesn't care.





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The truly inspirational SIR TOM MOORE



THE STORY OF THE WAR HERO WHO WAS CERTAIN HIS DAYS OF NATIONAL DUTY WERE BEHIND HIM

When social media is bad, it can be the source of an intense amount of ill-feeling, frustration and negative conjecture; but when it's good, it is life-changing, charming and the most wonderful reflection of the human spirit.

Ultimately, as the story of the newly knighted Sir Tom Moore unfolded towards the end of April, it was shown to be the latter, and how...

Here was a former British Army Officer who performed heroics in the India and Burma campaigns of the Second World War. Retiring from combat in the 1950s to become an instructor at the Armoured Fighting Vehicle School down in Dorset, his return to civilian life only once saw him raise his head above the parapet as a guest on the late Terry Wogan's 'Marmite' celebrity wordplay game show *Blankety Blank*, and even that was some 37 years ago.

So when the then 99-year-old decided to take on 100 laps of his back garden – 10 laps per day at 25 metres per lap – to raise money for the organisation NHS Charities Together, it was one of the very simplest and yet most precious gestures the father of two had made in an impressively rewarding life.

Hoping to raise £1,000, the fundraising project soon caught the imagination of social media, and, as with all things that go viral, a simple act grew to a magnitude that someone of any age, let alone a centenarian – a landmark Sir Tom reached on April 30 – would struggle to fully comprehend.

Surging onwards and having

broken the £39million barrier by the second week in May, Sir Tom's efforts have personified the heroic spirit the nation is witnessing and applauding in wake of the COVID-19 outbreak.

And sure enough, his rewards have been a delight for several million admirers to bask in. The inspirational role model was named an honorary Colonel, was rewarded with an RAF fly-past, and enjoyed a personal greeting from Prime Minister Boris Johnson, as well as, of course, receiving the obligatory telegram from the Queen marking his 100th birthday.

Sir Tom, who contracted skin cancer aged 98, said, "Reaching 100 is quite something. Reaching 100 with such interest in me and huge generosity from the public is very overwhelming.

"People keep saying what I have done is remarkable; however, it's actually what you have done for me which is remarkable.

"Please always remember, tomorrow will be a good day."

Sir Tom's immediate 'tomorrows' may still be spent trying to answer some of the 150,000 birthday cards he has received; while he may at least be consoled that the demise of *Top of the Pops* means he doesn't have to venture to Elstree to perform his duet *You'll Never Walk Alone* with Michael Ball, after their version leapt to the top of the singles chart.

But perhaps in the greatest tribute of all, Sir Tom was awarded a knighthood, an award fast-tracked through the walls of power.

As an exemplar for ordinary people performing extraordinary things, the veteran is the first to deflect praise towards others; but in troubled times a nation needs figureheads, focal points and friendly faces in order to make our collective efforts feel real, and in Sir Tom Moore we have all that and so much more besides.

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

LOCAL NEWS



Green-fingered care home residents get digging

A group of residents at a care home in Loughton have embarked on a unique challenge to raise money for care workers across the UK.

Inspired by the incredible story of Sir Tom Moore, who raised more than £30million for the NHS, staff and residents at Woodland Grove are aiming to transform an area in the home's garden. As there are 72 residents at the home, they set themselves the task of completing it in 72 hours.

As **VISION**Loughton went to press, the challenge was just four hours old and the gardening was due to start.

Elise Woolnough is lifestyles manager at the home and revealed more about the challenge, which is raising money for The Care Workers Charity.

She said: "The 72 hours will include everything from initial planning held by the resident-led garden committee, choosing the materials and even getting

out in the sunshine and making the magic happen.

"This project is highly inclusive, with individuals having the option to choose how involved they are, whether that be choosing wind chimes to order, digging up soil or potting a plant at the bedside. We will set a timer each and every time we do something towards the garden, and at 72 hours we will stop, even if the garden is not finished, so this will be a true race against the clock."

Elise said she was confident the challenge would be complete.

She said: "A lot of our residents were or are keen gardeners and they are all getting involved to some level, whether it is buying the plants or getting out there with a shovel."

Donations can be made through the home's JustGiving page, www.justgiving.com/fundraising/woodlandgrovegarden



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Victim thanks officers after ATM theft conviction

The elderly victim of a distraction theft at a cash machine in Loughton has thanked police officers after the man behind the crime was jailed recently.

The 69-year-old, who lives in the town, spoke out after Omar Naeem, 36, from Plaistow, was jailed for two years and two months recently for crimes including two counts of attempted theft, four counts of theft, breach of bail and driving while disqualified.

He was also disqualified from driving for two years. The man praised the actions of police officers.

He said: "I want to thank the Loughton Town Centre Team, particularly PCs Elton Borg and Warren Shepherd (pictured above with Lloyds Bank manager Alan Jeyes). From the outset, both officers responded with absolute determination and professionalism in supporting us in what was a really upsetting incident.

"My wife and I will be 70 later this year. We worked very hard throughout our lives and I cannot express just how upsetting it is that there are people out there that

feel entitled to take our money. It really makes you feel preyed upon."

Between October and December 2019, Naeem distracted two women and two men aged between 63 and 81 in order to withdraw their cash from an ATM outside Lloyds in Loughton.

On each occasion, he claimed that the machine was not working properly and that he had failed to withdraw his card. He then waved a piece of paper at the victims in order to distract them. Naeem then used the ATM to withdraw cash totalling £2,000.

Sergeant Robert Fitt said: "Naeem targeted elderly people who were innocently withdrawing their hard-earned cash. He tricked them into believing the machine was faulty before confusing the victims and taking their money.

"I'm pleased to say each victim received a refund and I'd like to thank Lloyds for their help in convicting Naeem, who clearly is a callous crook."



Councillor quickly obscures racist graffiti



Swastikas that were carved into a road sign in Loughton last month were quickly obscured by a local councillor so they didn't offend local residents, and it is hoped that the sign will be replaced.

Councillor Chris Pond represents Loughton Residents' Association on Epping Forest District Council and followed it up with them. When they said they wouldn't take action as the sign at the end of Shaftesbury/Forest Road belongs to the County Council, clr Pond contacted transport chiefs at County Hall.

He explained: "I reported it to the county council and another councillor said she saw a highways inspector attending the sign. I obscured them with white paint to make sure they don't offend anyway."

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LOCAL NEWS



Restaurant steps up to support key workers

Key workers in Loughton have been enjoying a well-deserved curry courtesy of an Indian-Bengali restaurant in the town.

When Abdul Karim, chef and owner of Forest Tandoori on Forest Road, decided he wanted to help key workers in the pandemic, he began offering them some of the delicious items on his menu at no charge.

Jessica Heff, promotions manager at the restaurant, said Abdul felt compelled to do something to help.

She said: "At the moment, we're having to rely on

takeaways and deliveries and we're using social media to try and support the restaurant, but we decided we wanted to give something back too. So far, we've given 30 meals to two shifts of police officers at Loughton Police Station and 10 meals to Loughton Fire Station. We'd like to donate to the NHS as well."

Jessica revealed Forest Tandoori are also delivering meals to staff at Loughton Hall.

Music nights which had been booked at Forest Tandoori will be held later in the year.

Military man retires after more than 40 years

A man from Loughton who served in the UK military for more than 40 years has retired. David Murray OBE, 60, had a distinguished military career which included operational service in the Falkland Islands, Bosnia and Sierra Leone and tours of duty in Germany, Cyprus and Australia.

After he was awarded an OBE and MBE for his service, David spent three years working directly for the Queen in Buckingham Palace as a senior adviser and was made a Commander of the Royal Victorian Order.

David retired after 33 years of service to the RAF and then worked in the charitable sector for nearly a decade leading the Armed Forces Charity as chief executive and then occupying the same role at the RAF Benevolent Fund.

David said he has been extremely lucky throughout his career and added that he is now looking forward to spending more time in his town.

He added: "Although I have been fortunate enough to have travelled the world and been privileged to have served my country in many ways in both the military and through charity work, it has always been good to come back to Loughton to see family and friends. Now I will hopefully have time to do more of that."





News from THE ROTARY CLUB

of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill & Chigwell

Pesh Kapasiawala of the Rotary Club of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell, Sonia Lard of Chigwell COVID-19 Volunteers, Julie Bristow of Voluntary Action Epping Forest and Shqiponja Jashari of Essex Children's and Families Wellbeing Services have partnered to distribute more than 700 meals every week to Epping Forest residents.



The nutritious meals have been distributed to residents of Epping Forest Districts Sheltered Housing Schemes Norway House, Pelly Court, Chapel Road, Buckhurst Court, Jubilee Court, Hyde Mead House, Leonard Davis House, Frank Bretton House, Abigail Court, Parsonage Court, Brookways Hall and Grove Court, Loughton Club, Loughton Hall, Loughton Fire Station and more.

Richard Bassett for their support.

A huge thanks to Epping Forest District Council and immediate past chairman of the council councillor

We're very grateful to Food4All (Anju Ahluwalia) and Compassion London (Leon Aarts) for their great effort in producing the wonderful meals. The residents are already looking forward to their next meal.

If you need support or would like to assist, please contact Pesh on 07973 166940.

Dynamos complete 550km challenge

A group of teachers from Debden Park High School set themselves a 72-hour challenge to raise money for the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance, bringing in nearly £7,000 for the charity.

The Debden Dynamos had planned to ride from Debden to Dublin in the 72 hours, but because of the lockdown decided to cover the same distance without leaving home.

They aimed to ride 550km together, but separate, using their bikes, turbo trainers and the virtual cycling platform Zwift.

The challenge started on Friday, May 22, and was completed on Monday, May 25.

Team member Alice Fonda said she was delighted. She said: "Everything hurts and I'm not sure I'm going to be able to sit down for a couple of weeks but the support we've been given from everyone who has donated, who's cheered us on, Max and Emily's amazing quizzing and commenting and everyone who has ridden with us has been really phenomenal."

The team posted a further message on its Facebook page.

It read: "We really do love riding our bikes, but we



would never have chosen to do this without such an incredible cause, and raising £7,000 has meant so much to us."

To donate, go to uk.virginmoneygiving.com and search 'Debden Dynamos'.



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School introduces new measures for reopening

A host of measures have been introduced for children at Hereward Primary School, Loughton, which reopened on a part-time basis for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 on June 2.

Each class returned for two days a week with the school open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. The school is closed on a Wednesday for deep cleaning.

Parents and carers have been allocated staggered drop-off and collection times. As children enter the building, they are asked to sanitise their hands.

Each class consists of up to 15 children only, with a teacher and teaching assistant in each class. Each child has their own desk, with desks being 2m apart. Reception children also have desks, but they do not sit for lengthy periods.

Each class has its own set of stationery which is sanitised throughout the day.

Cleaning is done throughout the day when children are at play and lunch.

All soft furnishings such as pillows and soft toys have been removed to ensure only easily cleaned equipment is left in the classroom. Children only have access to limited equipment.

Each group has its own designated 'break time' area which allows the children to play in that area only. Groups do not mix.

The field has been divided into three areas with a 2m gap between each. The front playground has also been divided into two parts so two different groups have their own designated space.

Acting headteacher Renette Fourie said: "Extensive plans are in place for keeping the children, their families and staff safe as much as possible in these exceptional circumstances."

There will not be any fines for non-attendance.

McDonald's plans approved by councillors

Plans for a McDonald's takeaway in Loughton High Road have been approved by district councillors.

A decision for the new use of the former Chong's Chinese restaurant and takeaway at 202 High Road was deferred by councillors in February so that more information could be obtained.

But the plans were given the green light at a meeting held in June after McDonald's came back with more details about various issues raised by councillors, such as litter and parking.

Ben Fox, speaking on behalf of McDonald's, said the

company wants to invest in Loughton with an active frontage.

He added it was expected that 70 per cent of the customers would be 'walk-in', increasing footfall to the town and improving the viability of the town centre.

Mr Fox said the previous use offered a delivery service and McDonald's worked very hard to ensure areas around restaurants were kept litter free.

Councillors added a condition that a refuse and education plan and litter management plan be submitted and approved before the new use begins.



Mum creates massive charitable network

LOCAL NEWS



A Loughton mum has worked tirelessly during lockdown to help the people who need it most, both locally and further afield.

Social media specialist, Sonia Lard, has used her contact list to create a network of companies and organisations to supply individuals, families and food banks with much-needed food and other necessities. So far, they've given out 34 tonnes of food and drink.

Sonia, who's been working with Chigwell COVID-19 Volunteers, Rotary Club of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill and Chigwell and other community mutual aid groups to deliver the food, said: "All of these groups and organisations were helping people separately, so I asked them to work collectively so we could distribute further afield to as many people who needed help.

"Initially, I started doing this to get food to hospital staff. But I was soon told they were getting so many donations that some of it was actually going to waste. So, I focused my efforts on getting donations to individuals, families and regularly open food banks."

The results have been astounding: McDonald's, Bakkavor Meals, Regal Food Products, Metrow Foods Ltd, Food Drop, Wombles and other charitable groups have donated, alongside schools, hospitals, hotels, care homes, police and ambulance services.

Sonia has taken it a step further than food now; with the help of Elvi and B girl Fashion, she's also having clothes donated to those in need.

An emotional Sonia continued: "As a parent, you can't help but put your children in the position of some of these kids in need, and their families. A lot of people can't afford food, clothes or a roof over their heads, and I'm just doing what I can to help."

To get involved, call Sonia on 07598 064709.

New youth council appointed

Students from schools in Loughton were among those appointed to Epping Forest Youth Council.

This year, the council has 29 members – four more than normal. That's because the decision was taken to appoint all candidates who put themselves forward in

local schools when the elections were interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic.

The new councillors are currently conducting meetings and training through video conferences every Tuesday.

Loughton councillors include Archie Flynn, Alec Ivanov, Martin Prinsloo, Oscar Prosser and Jamie Schooling, who all attend the Davenant Foundation School.

Matthew Carter, Daniel Turner, students at Debden Park High School, were also named councillors, while Hooren Ahmed, Ayaan Azam, Frank Cullis, Lauren Marks, Natalie Moffat, Bianca Nedelcu and Sydnae-Rose Smith will sit on the council too.

Last month, the new youth council made a video emphasising the importance of staying home and staying safe.

You can see the video by going to the Epping Forest District Council website.

Man arrested over fatal crash has bail extended again

A man arrested over the double fatal road crash on Golding's Hill, Loughton, in August last year has had his bail extended for a fourth time.

The man, aged 21, from Loughton, was arrested at the scene of the crash, which claimed the lives of former Roding Valley High School students Max Halcrow, 21 (pictured right) – who played football for Debden Park FC – and Sophia Khan, 16.

Two other girls, aged 16 and 17 at the time, were seriously injured in the single-vehicle crash which happened near the Wake Arms Roundabout at about 2am on Saturday, August 24.

The arrested man, who was suffered minor injuries, was originally bailed until September 20 and then December 20 last year.

That date was extended until May 22.

His bail has now been extended again until the end of June.

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



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HOME & DIY

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WHY WE HAVE BECOME A NATION OBSESSED WITH DOING UP OUR HOMES

While it's clear the year 2020 is set to be a disastrous one for the sales departments of estate agents, the trend for doing up rather than shipping out is one that began long before coronavirus changed our financial and lifestyle habits.

The lure for people to take what they have and improve on it has a lot to do with the growing escalation of the housing market. Across the UK, prices have increased, on average, by around five per cent each and every year over the past decade. While that doesn't sound much, it means a house bought for £200,000 in 2010 is now valued at £325,000.

That increase means it is unaffordable for many people to enter the market, while others who already own are happy to keep riding the wave in respect of prices continuing to rise, before considering selling as the curve lessens.

Of course, that tailing off could well happen by the end of the summer. The UK housing market is in something akin to cold storage at the moment, at a time when business is usually booming.

This COVID-19-driven change is enhanced by a 'stay at home' premise that is actually encouraging people to tend to all those home and DIY jobs that have typically been left. Sure enough, the more we 'mend this, change that, fix them', the more we paint, restyle, upcycle and redo, the less tendency we have to want to 'up sticks' and move somewhere else.

Put another way, an enforced and prolonged period of isolation could well make us one of the most creative nations in the world in terms of interior design and tending to our gardens. Now where are those *Amazing Spaces* and *Ground Force* books?



USE YOUR noodle in the home

FIVE WAYS TO USE A POOL NOODLE IN YOUR HOME

If you have children and they like swimming, then chances are you have a fair few pool noodles lying around the house, because even though they are fairly big and noticeable items, you never seem to be able to locate one when you need it. Thankfully, there are ways that you can upcycle these popular pool aids.

Help your boots keep their shape

Lovers of knee-high or thigh-high boots rejoice: you no longer have to worry about them losing their shape in the bottom of your wardrobe. Simply cut an old pool noodle down to size, insert a piece into each boot and voila. Your boots will retain their shape indefinitely.

Child-proof your home

If you have an explorative toddler on your hands, then you will be keen to protect them from any dangers in your home. Pool noodles make the perfect protective covering for corners as they are soft and shock-resistant. Just slice down the middle and place on any sharp edges.

Use for press-painting

Most little ones love to craft, but the constant trips to Hobbycraft can become expensive. Luckily, your children can enjoy a fun messy play activity using just a pool noodle and some paint. All you need to do is cut your noodle into small circles and let the press-painting commence.

Prevent trousers from creasing

If you tend to overcrowd your wardrobe, you may find that your clothes, especially trousers, become easily creased. Fortunately, a humble cut of pool noodle inserted over the bar of a hanger can solve this problem.

Use as a hose alternative

How often have you struggled to fill a big bucket in your sink? Avoid this issue by simply attaching a pool noodle to your tap and then placing the other end in your bucket.

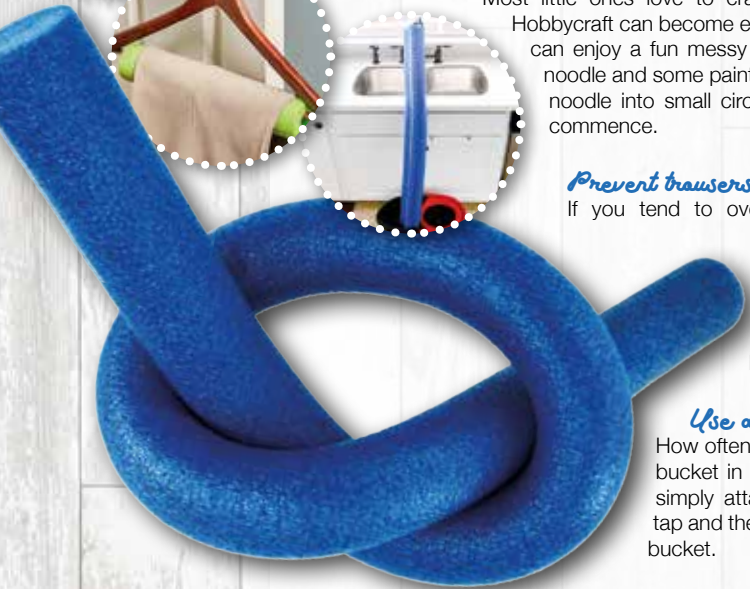


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CLADDING



Whether you are concerned about contributing to the supply shortage, are worried about the additional expense or perhaps you just fancy getting crafty, making your own face mask could not be simpler.

SEW OPTION

YOU WILL NEED:

2 of 10 inches x 6 inches rectangles of fabric – tightly woven cotton is recommended | 2 of 6 inches pieces of elastic or rubber bands | Sewing machine | Needle and thread

HOW TO MAKE:

Stack the two rectangles on top of each other | Fold over the long sides ¼ inch and hem | Fold the double layer of fabric over ½ inch along the short sides and stitch down | Run a piece of elastic through the wide hem on each side of the mask using a large needle | Fasten the ends tightly together in a knot | Gently pull the elastic so the knots are tucked inside the hem | Adjust to fit your face

DIY FACE MASKS SHOULD:

- ✔ Fit snugly and always be secured over the face
- ✔ Include multiple layers of fabric
- ✔ Allow you to breathe without restriction
- ✔ Be washed regularly

DIY FACE MASKS SHOULD NOT:

- ✘ Allow too much light to filter through the fabric
- ✘ Need to be adjusted continuously
- ✘ Be used as a replacement for social distancing and good hygiene practices

NO-SEW OPTION

YOU WILL NEED:

A bandana or square cotton cloth (22 inches x 22 inches) | Rubber bands or hairbands

HOW TO MAKE:

Take the fabric and fold the top and bottom into the centre | Fold the sides towards the centre and loop the rubber bands around the fabric | Tuck one end of the fabric into the other | Lift the mask to your face and loop the bands over your ears | Adjust as needed, ensuring that your nose and mouth are fully covered

Photo credit: www.sarahmaker.com



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Banish

BACTERIA

Did you know that bacteria can live for several months on surfaces within your home, as well as on other areas that you may not even have considered?

Handle the hotspots

When trying to keep their houses germ-free zones, people often forget crucial spots that everyone touches, such as doorknobs and tap handles. Spray these hotspots with a disinfectant, leave for 5-10 minutes and wipe clean.

Banish bed bacteria

With many spending more time in bed than usual, it is important that you wash your bedding on a more regular basis. To completely kill all bacteria, wash your sheets and pillowcases on a hot wash and dry on an antibacterial cycle.

Focus on your feet

If you have been heading out for your daily exercise, you could be bringing unwanted germs into your home. Take off your shoes before entering and wash the soles with hot, soapy water. Cleaning your doormat is also advisable.

Tackle technology

How many times a day do you touch your phone or your tablet? Probably more than you care to admit. Cleaning your technological devices with antibacterial wipes throughout the day is crucial if you want to stop the spread of bacteria.

Clean your cleaning equipment

Cleaning equipment such as mops and cloths are often overlooked when it comes to disinfecting items in your home. However, a failure to do this can lead to you spreading germs rather than eliminating them. Wash in hot, soapy water with a few drops of bleach for added oomph.

Home in on your home desk

Did you know that your home desk could contain up to 400 times more bacteria than your toilet seat? Prevent these germs from getting transferred to your hands by consistently wiping down any surfaces you work on with a disinfectant that contains at least 70 per cent alcohol.



KIDS



secondskin

Why building up your baby's skin layers with creams and moisturising is so important

It's true to say the best moisturiser a baby will ever have is its own. It's called vernix and is the creamy white coating it is born with. Yet past the first couple of months, helping a baby regularly coming into contact with a variety of surfaces and air elements can really protect it going forward.

Non-soap cleanser

Traditional soap dries out skin, so following your baby's daily bath - which shouldn't exceed 10 minutes - apply a mild cleanser. Best bought from the pharmacy, these are great moisturisers.

Avoid bubble bath as it removes natural oils from the skin, while antibacterial and perfumed soaps may irritate too.

Post-bath moisturiser

When out of the bath, smear over a thick, pH-neutral moisturiser. Not only will your baby love the massaging feel, but he or she will benefit from the enriching of pores that a quality applicant can provide.

Thicker creams and ointments are more effective than lotions, and you should avoid anything that contains plant or food products.

Barrier creams

For nappy rash or eczema, the process of constant changes and reapplying of cream is really important. For each baby it's different, but barrier creams, usually containing zinc, are a great way to prevent fabrics and clothes from irritating the area further.

Try to limit the use of baby wipes, don't use talcum powder, and let the baby go nappy-free for as long as possible, as allowing air to get to any sore area is the best thing for it.

Sun protection

Any baby below the age of one should be kept out of the sun. Past that, look for a SPF above 30 and smother your little one in protection. A hat, sunshades and light clothing will suit them well, and remember to reapply cream every two hours.



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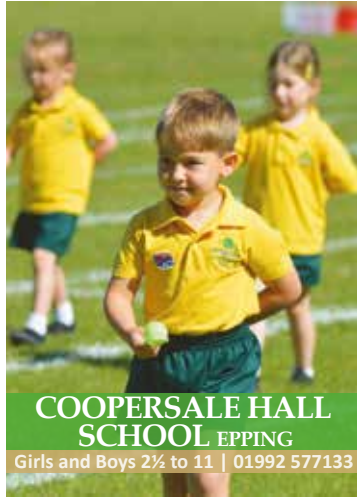
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A BIRD IN the hand...

While opinion is split over the ethics of keeping birds at home, in the right conditions, with dedicated human attention and interaction, and with room around them to spread their wings – both physically and metaphorically – our feathered friends can become the most cherished pets imaginable.

Here's your guide to the most popular types of birds:

COCKATIELS

The so-called 'entry level' pet birds, cockatiels are bright, friendly and sociable. They are happy in their own company, providing they get the benefit of human interaction, and are easy to maintain.

However, the females are prolific egg layers (even without the presence of males) and may require additional dietary attention resulting from a lack of calcium.

BUDGERIGARS

Happy with other budgies or by themselves, these wise birds can whistle, chirp and repeat phrases, and love to hang out with families around mealtimes – they've even been known to watch television.

Also known as parakeets, they're happy to be handled and will live for anywhere between five and 13 years.

CANARIES

Not birds that are likely to want to be snuggled up to late at night, canaries are happy to be left alone, but will reward being looked after with a delightful chorus of song.

They are territorial and should be kept by themselves, and will live for up to 10 years.

PARROTS

From African Greys to Quakers, the re-emergence of parrots as household pets has been noted in recent years.

Their very unique characteristic of shaking and bobbing reflects a big personality which kids love, though in return they require a large amount of mental stimulation.

With African Greys, their presence can imply a long-term commitment – it's not uncommon for them to live past their 40th birthdays.





TRAVEL

SNEAK PEAK

The unsung beauty of the Peak District



While the total population of the Peak District falls even to top 40,000, more than 20 million people live within an hour's drive, making it one of the UK's most accessible tourist areas. But what does it have to offer?

NATURAL WORLD

Clearly, the Peak District's most obvious selling point is its wild expanse of national park, with landscape, outward bound pursuits, hiking routes and picture-perfect villages nestling within stunning geology. Whether on foot or in your vehicle, the green and grey wilderness offers a wholesome connection with the majesty of Mother Nature.

BELOW GROUND

If you're willing to delve below the surface, the Peak District's caving network is something to be admired. Organised caving and potholing experiences – from walk-in routes to vertical drops from ground level – reveal the mysteries of thousands of years, with passageways, streams and chambers testing physical durability and mental strength.

HISTORY

From the resplendent and regal Chatsworth House to museums, temples and mills, the history and heritage of what in some places was a heavily industrial area provides a remarkable step back in time to rather simpler ways, long departed.

FOOD AND DRINK

Derbyshire's connectivity is what gives its pubs, bars, restaurants and cafes a rich combination of southern and northern flavours. Certainly, the trend for gastro and high-end dining in remote converted cottages has given the Peak District a versatile base on which to build its culinary power, with Eyam, Castleton and Bakewell doing more than most to lure in tourists.

The real hidden beauty of the Peak District, however, is not in the big tourist attractions or the places that attract visitors of all persuasions – it's in the period picture postcard properties, the drystone walls, the rolling vistas that appear out of nowhere and, of course, its people. It is a place and a spirit all in one.



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PARK LIFE

PENALTY CHARGE VS PARKING CHARGE – WHEN TO PAY AND WHEN TO PLAY

The scourge of the modern motor car is arguably not the cost of petrol, the maintenance or insurance premiums – it's the fact that once we've paid out for all of those elements that keep it on the road, there's actually nowhere to park the damn thing.

But millions of motorists are paying excessive, unfair and exploitative parking charges in the belief that they have committed an offence, when in reality all that's happening is they're being presented with an invoice. Welcome to the vagaries of a penalty charge versus a parking charge.

A penalty charge is a ticket issued by your local authority – usually the police or the council. Chances are you've committed a genuine offence, such as overstaying parking or showing an invalid permit. In these instances you're banged to rights and, while appealing is a decent option in asking for leniency, in most cases the penalty stands.

A parking charge, on the other hand, is something issued by an independent parking operator – perhaps you've parked in a private car park, in a space adjoining a building, or even in a leisure park. This issuer actually has no authority to issue a ticket – all you're being given is an invitation to pay what amounts to an invoice.

Sure, it's an invoice that looks very much like a penalty charge, and intentionally so; and the wording will have you believe dire consequences will follow if you fail to pay.

The reality is that virtually no cases ever get to court, and these unscrupulous businesses profit only from those who respond. So the next time you get a parking charge, search for the issuer online and check carefully exactly what it is you have in front of you. Motorists are now getting smart to filing these charges where they belong – in the bin – and saving millions in the process.

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SPORT



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5. CLIMBING

In the final instalment showcasing sports set to debut or return at the now postponed Tokyo Olympics, we take a look at climbing.

Climbing's debut in Tokyo reflects our growing love for strength-based pursuits that also require precision, strategy and focus.

That the sport has, over the past two decades, accelerated itself from the most basic of human endeavours to a physical challenge enjoyed both outdoors and indoors by participants of all ages, is testament to the number of activity centres that now provide walls to scale. Many have felt it was only a matter of time before the IOC opened its doors.

A dynamic challenge, the Olympic format will be split into three disciplines – Speed, Bouldering and Lead.

In Speed, it's a straight two-competitor race to the top of a 15-metre wall, in a set-up that is expected to excite spectators most, and, for a certain generation, will undoubtedly offer echoes of an ITV *Gladiators* finale.

In Bouldering, it's a more challenging 4.5-metre wall, while in Lead, it's a case of

getting as high as possible in a set time.

Every competitor will take on all three formats, with the best overall performer being crowned Olympic champion.

As ever, the vertical walls offer handholds and footholds, as well as shapes, sizes, positive sections (slabs)

and those with negative aspects (steeps or overhangs), meaning competitors will need to be at their best from the off.

Safety ropes are allowed, though the best competitors will try to limit any lost time and will be harnessing flexibility, skill and no small amount of mental decisiveness in tackling a new Olympic sport expected to thrill at every grab.

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PUZZLES

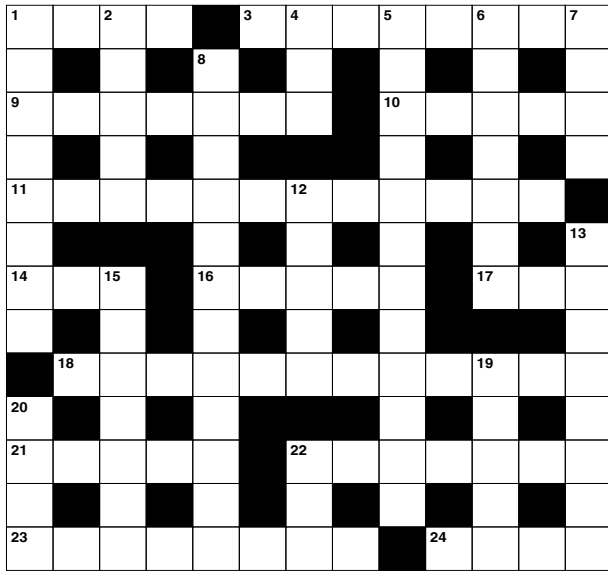
Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

ACROSS

- 1. Pretty (4)
- 3. Battered (8)
- 9. Act of turning up (7)
- 10. Arboreal primate (5)
- 11. Directions (12)
- 14. Silent (3)
- 16. Scale representation (5)
- 17. Be unwell (3)
- 18. Vehemently (12)
- 21. Female relatives (5)
- 22. Circular hall (7)
- 23. Comes into flower (8)
- 24. Type of wood (4)

DOWN

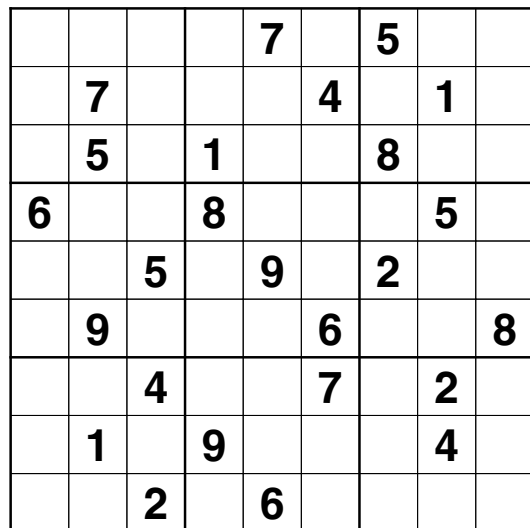
- 1. Personal magnetism (8)
- 2. Conditions (5)
- 4. Entirely (3)
- 5. A large number (12)
- 6. European country (7)
- 7. Mend with rows of stitches (4)
- 8. Excessive stress (12)
- 12. Military trainee (5)
- 13. Reproduce recorded sound (4,4)
- 15. Keepsake; reminder (7)
- 19. Spear (5)
- 20. Young sheep (4)
- 22. Strong spirit (3)



DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ When cranberries are ripe, they will bounce like rubber balls
- ▶ Pound cake got its name from the ingredients – you typically use a pound of flour, butter, sugar and eggs
- ▶ Fruits such as apples, pears and apricots are all part of the rose family
- ▶ Apples can float because they are made up of around 25 per cent air
- ▶ The word potato came from Spanish patata
- ▶ Bananas grow in large hanging bunches
- ▶ Grapes explode when you put them in the microwave
- ▶ A strawberry has an average of about 200 seeds and a pomegranate can contain up to 1,000 seeds

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