

2020  
V

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EFFECTS  
OF COVID-19  
ON BUSINESS**

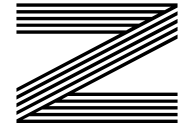
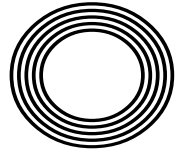
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**SIR CLIFF RICHARD OBE**  
A look back at his career as he turns 80

*Kirsty*  
**GALLACHER**

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November 2020

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# Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

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

I truly hope everyone is doing well, especially when, COVID-wise, things are beginning to feel disheartening again.

However, I don't want

to be too doom and gloom -

many of you will no doubt be reading **VISION** as an escape of sorts - but I would just like to say that it's an absolute honour for us to serve the businesses in our community. At a time when local high streets are eerily quiet and many business owners are struggling, we are proud to be giving them some form of lifeline.

Despite being physically separated as per the guidelines, we must remember to stay unified as a community. I've noticed when I go to visit local businesses in our towns, because we're all wearing masks, we're looking into each other's eyes more and reading them for emotion. It means there's been more of a connection between us, and I do hope that's something we retain after the pandemic.

Another hope of mine is that we can all spend Christmas with the people we love. I've been waiting three months for a dining table I've bought to turn up, in the hope that, as well as making me feel a bit more 'grown up', it can be fully surrounded by my family (and occupied by a turkey!) this December.

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

*Brett*



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# YOU'RE THE VOICE

AS SIR CLIFF

RICHARD OBE PASSES 80, HIS STAR IS STILL CHARTING HIGH

Let's begin with a stat: for a long while, Sir Cliff held the record for scoring number one songs in consecutive decades in the UK. He'd hit the top spot twice in the 1950s and on seven occasions in the 1960s. The following decade he left it late, with *We Don't Talk Anymore* his solitary chart-topper in the summer of 1979.

Reinventing himself for the 1980s, spoof track *Living Doll* hit the heights in 1985, followed by *Mistletoe and Wine* in 1988; before *Saviour's Day* in 1990 and *The Millennium Prayer* in 1999 ensured he preserved a most unique chart first.

"I became aware of the run back in the 1970s but it was never an intention to churn out tracks just to keep it going," he says. "I think if you focus too much on that it becomes a bit of a vanity project and you're losing sight of the music itself; but while it went on, it was fun."

These days, the charts aren't for the likes of Sir Cliff. In 2020, they are almost solely the domain of youngsters, both in terms of the record-buying public and the artists themselves.

"Obviously the internet has created major change in the record industry and revised entirely how everything operates.

"It's a shame the charts don't represent the excitement of old when new releases would move around and we'd all follow their progress at home on our radios. I know a lot of people are sentimental about the change that's happened, but as long as people are out there making good music, that should be enough."

---

**'YOU WORK HARD. YOU DO YOUR BEST. AND YOU JUST WANT  
SOME PEACE: AND THAT'S ALL I WANTED'**

---

For Sir Cliff these days, new music often takes the form of festive tracks.

"I have inadvertently built a reputation for putting Christmas music out there," he admits. "It really all started with *Mistletoe and Wine*.

"Do I mind the association? Of course not – it's such a magical time of the year."

Of course, recognition solely as a musician does a disservice to so many other things Sir Cliff has become renowned for in a celebrated career that began way back in 1958 as lead singer of British group The Drifters. As his pop career exploded, film roles also came his way (famously in *Summer Holiday*) and, beyond that, a passion for wider showbiz projects, faith, philanthropy and a clean-living bachelor lifestyle, even though he came close to marrying on more than one occasion (notably to former British tennis number one Sue Barker).

A proud, kind-hearted and sincere exemplar of a golden age of British entertainment, Sir Cliff found himself in the news for the wrong reasons in 2014 when the darkness surrounding Operation Yewtree began enveloping a number of well-known names.

Almost immediately it became clear that there was no story to be had, and he successfully went on to sue South Yorkshire Police and the BBC for their parts in the media pursuit that followed.

"You know, you get to the point, especially after all these years, where you just want a quiet life," he says. "You work hard, you do your best, and you just want some peace; and that's all I wanted."

Whether Sir Cliff gets peace as he passes 80 is unclear. In socially distancing terms, he will, but as a worldwide base of adoring fans continues to follow his every move, it's clear this is someone who will stay in our admiring consciousness for quite some time yet.



# THE WORLD AROUND US

## Part 1

In the first of a new four-part environmental series, we look at the key drivers in the health and well-being of the planet. In this issue, it's animal life, and in particular, the humble cow.

It's not easy being a cow. While farmers are eyeing you up for a trip to the abattoir, those on both sides of the eco debate are ready to slap the blame tag on a little embarrassing flatulence.

Scientists believe the average cow releases between 70kg and 120kg of methane per year. A greenhouse gas, like carbon dioxide and nitrous oxide, methane forms a dangerous blanket around the planet.

A molecule that lasts a decade, in real terms what it contributes to the atmosphere can be equated to little more than two cups of water inside a swimming pool, yet its chemical shape is remarkably effective at trapping heat, thus it has a big impact on how much, and how quickly, the planet warms.

And with 1.5 billion cows on the planet, it's clear there's real environmental interest in reducing the emissions of these animals, who can also lay claim to being the source of two-thirds of all

ammonia in the atmosphere.

In 2019, an experiment in New Zealand saw cows given a vaccine to rid them of certain gut microbes responsible for producing methane. Further development of this could drastically reduce cows' impact on the planet, while still allowing our ravenous consumption of meat and dairy foods.

In the UK, farmers mainly use grass-based silage. By changing to a maize compound, a one-tenth drop in methane production could be achieved.

As ever, environmental aims must be balanced with commercial sense. The UK agricultural industry is worth £25 billion per year, yet it's clear less-fibrous diets, further vaccine research and other subtle changes – such as introducing seaweed and higher-quality constituents into the food mix – can lead to more refined systems... and less windy livestock!



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FASHION

# Shoe care

Whether you live in your trusty trainers or you favour a more sophisticated leather shoe, caring for your chosen footwear can be a bit of a nightmare. Fortunately, we are here to help.

## Suede & Leather

The first thing you should do if you buy a pair of leather or suede shoes is to treat them with a specialised spray protector, as this will help preserve them for longer.

In terms of cleaning, suede should be gently brushed with a suede brush to remove any dirt or dust without damaging it.

Leather is best cleaned with shoe polish as this will not only clean but also moisturise it, which helps to lengthen the lifespan of the shoes.

If your leather shoes get caught in the rain, place them upside down on dry paper (not newspaper) and leave to dry naturally.

## Canvas & Fabric

Slightly easier to take care of, most canvas shoes can be washed in the washing machine, although be sure to let them air dry and never place them in the tumble dryer as this will ruin their shape. If there is only one spot of dirt on your fabric or canvas shoes, simply brush it off with a toothbrush or wash with a sponge dipped in soapy water.

## Trainers

Some trainers can be washed in the washing machine, although always check their label before doing so. It can be a good idea to place your trainers in a pillow case before washing and to wash them with a few towels to avoid your footwear banging around and becoming damaged. Liquid detergent is preferable as powder can get stuck in your trainers.

## Signs your shoe soles need replacing

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- > They start to feel thinner in some areas
- > You notice a circle emerging



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# 5 natural BATH SOAKS

Is there anything more relaxing than soaking in a warm bubble bath during the winter months? Arguably not, but have you ever stopped to think about all the harsh chemicals that you are exposing your skin to each time you reach for your preferred products? Here are five natural alternatives to try.

## 1. Honey

Honey is an antibacterial substance that can help prevent infections and heal minor skin abrasions. It is also full of natural antioxidants that can help boost your immune system and help combat the signs of ageing.

Simply add two tablespoons of raw honey to a running bath and then soak for a minimum of 15 minutes.

## 2. Green tea

A popular choice for a bath soak, green tea can help to reduce muscle pain, soften skin and reduce any redness. Loaded with antioxidants, it also has anti-ageing benefits. Just fill your bath as normal, pop in six green tea bags, leave to steep for 15–20 minutes and remove.

## 3. Lavender

You may already be using a lavender-scented bath product owing to this herb's ability to instantly soothe and relax. However, why not cut out the chemicals and use pure lavender essential oil instead? All you need to do is add between six and eight drops to running water.

## 4. Baking soda

A store cupboard essential, also known as sodium bicarbonate, this natural ingredient is found in most bath products owing to its exfoliating properties.

Simply mix five tablespoons of baking soda into a warm bath and allow to dissolve.

## 5. Epsom salt

Not actually a salt but a naturally occurring mineral, Epsom salt is made up of magnesium and sulphate. Ideal for counteracting stress, Epsom salt can also help to ease pain and alleviate sore muscles. Add one or two cups to your bath five minutes before you plan to get in.



Mr J S Chawla

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# Are you getting enough VITAMIN D?

**A**fter enjoying an unseasonably warm and sunny spring and a pretty typical British summer, people's thoughts are now turning to the cold, and probably wet, winter ahead. Yet have you thought about how you are going to get sufficient vitamin D into your body during the months when sunlight is sparse?

## Why is vitamin D important?

Vitamin D helps to regulate the amount of calcium and phosphate in the body, both of which are needed for maintaining healthy teeth, bones and muscles. It is also known for improving brain development and reducing inflammation.

A vitamin D deficiency can lead to a loss of bone density which makes you more prone to fractures and osteoporosis. In children, it can cause rickets.

## How much sunlight do I need to get sufficient vitamin D?

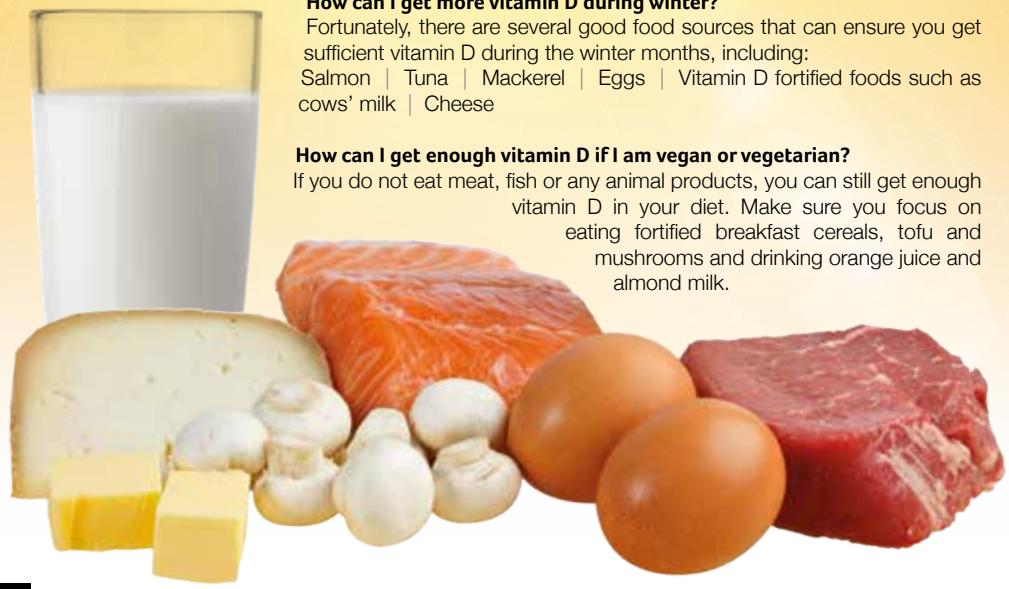
The main source of vitamin D for our bodies is the sun, yet in winter in the UK we do not get sufficient sunlight to meet our daily requirement of this vital vitamin. In the summer months, a mere 15 minutes of sun at midday is enough exposure, although people with darker skin, such as those of African or South Asian origin, may require a little longer.

## How can I get more vitamin D during winter?

Fortunately, there are several good food sources that can ensure you get sufficient vitamin D during the winter months, including:  
Salmon | Tuna | Mackerel | Eggs | Vitamin D fortified foods such as cows' milk | Cheese

## How can I get enough vitamin D if I am vegan or vegetarian?

If you do not eat meat, fish or any animal products, you can still get enough vitamin D in your diet. Make sure you focus on eating fortified breakfast cereals, tofu and mushrooms and drinking orange juice and almond milk.



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# Eating right ISN'T COMPLICATED

*Top tips on how you can achieve a healthy and balanced diet*

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an important part of maintaining good health, and can help you feel your best. Some basic rules to follow are:

- > **Have a meal or small snack every three to four hours.** This fuels your metabolism and helps prevent binges, and blood sugar levels stay balanced.
- > **Combine protein and fibre at every meal.** This formula provides long-lasting fuel and necessary nutrients for brain, bone and muscle growth.
- > **Get up, move around.** Sitting for long periods slows the metabolism, which affects the body's ability to regulate blood sugar and blood pressure and to break down body fat.
- > **Drink water often.** There are specific times throughout the day when drinking water can boost your overall health and cognitive functioning. Drink one glass of water 30 minutes before a meal to help digestion. Remember not

to drink too soon before or after a meal as the water will dilute the digestive juices.

Remember to vary your diet because healthy eating isn't necessarily that healthy if you eat the same things over and over again. Having a healthy, balanced diet is about getting the right types of foods and drinks in the right amounts.

As a rough guide, try to base your portions, with 200g (one cup) being one portion, around these healthy food groups:

- > **Fruit and vegetables:** 5+ portions per day
- > **Starchy carbohydrates:** 3-4 portions per day
- > **Beans, pulses, fish, eggs, meat and other proteins:** 2-3 portions per day
- > **Dairy and alternatives:** 2-3 portions per day

Ultimately, in the short term, eating a healthy diet can help us to feel good, look our best and stay at a healthy weight. In the long term, a healthy, balanced diet can reduce our risk of heart disease, diabetes, osteoporosis and some cancers.



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If you don't have the time, energy or expertise to make a home-cooked meal every night of the week, these six surprising snacks can be cooked to (almost) perfection in the humble toaster.

## POTATO WAFFLES

Loved by parents across the nation as a quick and filling accompaniment to your kids' lunch or dinner, no longer do you have to wait for the grill to heat up. Simply pop them directly from your freezer into your toaster.

## VEGETARIAN BURGERS

Although you don't want to be putting beef burgers into your toaster owing to their high fat content, veggie burgers work just fine. No soginess in sight.

## SWEET POTATO CHIPS

If you love chips but are looking for a healthier option, this sweet potato variety is just what you need. Simply cut your sweet potato into 1cm wide slices and toast for 10-15 minutes. Alternatively, why not try sweet potato toast? Slice thickly, toast and top with avocado and feta.

## LEFTOVER PIZZA

Who hasn't been indulging in a few too many takeaways in recent months? Rather than throwing away leftover pizza, or worse still, heating it up in the microwave, simply pop it into a toaster bag, toast and you're good to go.

## HOMEMADE TORTILLA CHIPS

If you have ever made your own tortilla chips in the oven using wraps or flour tortillas, you will know how much tastier these are than the shop-bought ones. However, for a real time-saver, tear a wrap in half, put in the toaster and then break into snack-sized bites.

## ASPARAGUS

Arguably the most surprising ingredient that you can cook in the toaster. Place a few pieces in a toaster bag with a drizzle of oil and your preferred herbs or spices, and hey presto, delicious roasted asparagus.



FOOD & DRINK



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FOOD & DRINK

Last month we celebrated the carrot, praised the parsnip and tackled the turnip. Now it's time to explore the culinary delights of three more tasty and nutritious root vegetables.

### BETROOT

Instantly recognisable by its bright purple hue, the beetroot often gets a bad rap as some believe that it tastes a little too much like the soil in which it is grown. However, it is worth sampling for its health benefits alone, with this root vegetable being rich in antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties.

**HOW TO STORE:** Place beetroots in a perforated plastic bag in the vegetable drawer of your fridge. Lifespan: 3 weeks.

**HOW TO COOK:** The most famous beetroot dish is borscht, an eastern European winter warmer. Alternatively, roast in olive oil and cumin seeds.



### JERUSALEM ARTICHOKE

Full of iron, potassium and vitamin B1, the Jerusalem artichoke is reported to be both an aphrodisiac and a natural digestive. In season from November to March, choose artichokes that are firm to touch and pale brown in colour.

**HOW TO STORE:** Keep in the fridge or in a cool, dark place. Lifespan: 1–2 weeks.

**HOW TO COOK:** Cook Jerusalem artichokes in the same way that you would a potato or parsnip: roasted, sautéed, dipped in batter and fried or puréed into a soup.



### SWEET POTATO

Seen as a healthier alternative to potatoes, this root vegetable contains iron, calcium, selenium, vitamin A and C, plus it's full of fibre.

**HOW TO STORE:** Avoid storing in the fridge as this will result in an unpleasant taste; instead, place in a dry, well-ventilated container away from heat. Lifespan: 3–4 weeks.

**HOW TO COOK:** Although baking sweet potatoes will result in a richer taste, when boiled they have a low glycaemic index (GI).





# THE perfect pud

**P**acked with delicious dried fruit, drenched in brandy and served with lashings of cream, it wouldn't be Christmas without a rich and decadent Christmas pudding. Although you can purchase a shop-bought variety for as little as £2, there is something special about taking the time to make your own.

## YOU WILL NEED:

120g suet | 20g breadcrumbs | 100g flour | 175g soft dark brown sugar | 500g dried fruit (raisins, sultanas, etc) | 25g flaked almonds | 25g candied peel | 1 tsp mixed spice | ½ tsp nutmeg | ½ tsp cinnamon | 1 grated cooking apple | zest of ½ orange | zest of ½ lemon | 150ml brandy | 2 eggs  
optional: coins

## HOW TO MAKE:

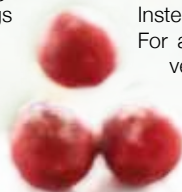
Combine suet, breadcrumbs, flour, sugar, fruit and spices in a bowl | Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well | Butter

a heatproof pudding bowl | Pour in the mixture | Cover with baking paper and tie on securely with string | Place the pudding in a large pan and pour in boiling water until it reaches halfway up the outside of the bowl | Cover with a lid | Steam the pudding for 4 hours making sure it does not boil dry (add water if necessary) | Test if the pudding is cooked by inserting a skewer into it; if it comes out dry, it is done | Leave to cool | Cover with fresh baking paper and wrap tightly in cling film | Store in a cool, dark place for up to 6 weeks | When ready to serve, steam for a further 2 hours | Light using a ladle of warm (not boiling) brandy

## VARIATIONS ON THE TRADITION:

Instead of brandy, try adding rum, stout or sherry | For a vegan pudding, leave out the eggs and use vegetable suet with a little bit of soya yogurt | Substitute traditional raisins, currants and sultanas for cherries, figs or crystallised ginger

If you are going to add coins, wrap them in tin foil first to avoid choking.



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# Jump on the bandwagon



Kids love making music. From the moment they are able to hold a spoon and start banging it on your pans, to the time when they are able to learn a real instrument.

So why not encourage this natural passion and challenge them to make their own band?

## Get organised

This initial step will be dependent on your children's ages, although it can be a good idea to get your older kids to help the younger ones. You can set them the task of deciding what type of music they would like to make, what name they want to give their band and who is going to play what.

## Make your own instruments

- Some great ideas for DIY musical instruments include:
- > **A HARMONICA.** This can be easily made by sellotaping different-sized straws together and blowing in the holes.
  - > **SENSORY BIN SHAKERS.** A great option for little ones. Fill different-sized containers with rice, buttons, pasta or anything else you have to hand, secure and shake.
  - > **CEREAL BOX GUITAR.** If someone is keen to be the lead guitarist in the band, then all you will need is an old cereal box, a pair of scissors and a few elastic bands.
  - > **CAN DRUMS.** Simply take some old tin cans, stretch a cut-up balloon over the open ends and hit with a spoon or stick.

## Start practising

Again, this will be dependent on your kids' ages and attention spans and can range from half an hour to a full day. Keep them motivated by creating a 'show time' when they will be able to perform to the rest of the family.

Ideas for simple songs that they can try to play along with:  
Jingle Bells | Twinkle, Twinkle | Hickory, Dickory, Dock | Incy Wincy Spider | Baby Shark

**NB:** Please make sure all instruments are safe for babies and young children. Avoid or cover safely all sharp edges and small choking items. Remember to secure or seal all tubs tightly.

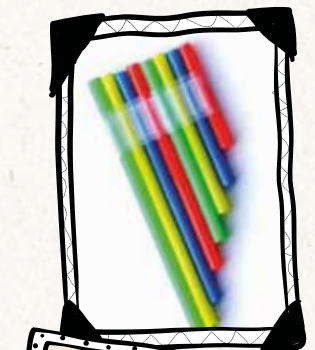


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# Thrills ON WHEELS



TRAVEL

## CORONAVIRUS FUELS A RECORD RISE IN CAMPERVAN HOLIDAYS IN THE UK

It's been a year like no other, where overseas travel has either been ruled out completely or become fraught with danger and the threat of quarantine.

So with that in mind, it's little wonder the UK has experienced an exponential rise in campervan holidays. They offer freedom, seclusion in safe groups, affordability and safety, plus a wanderlust that was sparked in most of us from having spent so many weeks in lockdown.

Consider as well what has been a beautiful British summer, and experts believe our appetite for UK holidays on wheels has truly been reignited thanks to coronavirus.

The numbers speak for themselves – the rise in people hiring campervans is up 170 per cent, and that's despite a lack of bookings that would usually come from trips to Glastonbury and other music and culture festivals. And the caution that

appears to have been placed on every aspect of our lives hasn't stretched as far as four wheels, with 69 per cent trying out a campervan for the first time.

Perhaps we shouldn't be so surprised – these vehicles are virtual mobile hotels and a far cry from the flimsy caravans of decades past. With the ability to comfortably accommodate up to seven people, with large kitchen spaces and almost as much internet access as you'd get at home, people can feel detached from real life, yet still perfectly connected.

The biggest draw, however, is almost certainly the thrill of waking up in a new location each day. And as for where we're headed to in these magnificent motorhomes, the Highlands, predictably, top the list. Cornwall and the Peak District are other go-to locations for families and groups looking to get away, with the trend for campervan holidays now on the increase all year round.





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The right headboard has the power to transform a boring bed into a thing of beauty, but with many shop-bought varieties costing hundreds of pounds, surely there must be a cheaper alternative?

Fortunately, there is.

Simply check out these DIY designs that will help you create a stylish sanctuary without busting your budget.

## DIY Pillow Headboard

To create this super simple and soft headboard in less than an hour, all you need is a copper pipe, some leather or faux leather and two floor cushions or several smaller cushions.

Simply use the leather to create two straps for each of your chosen cushions, thread them along your copper pipe and attach above your bed.

## DIY Woven Headboard

To make this rustic, home-made headboard, you need six woven placemats, two jute table runners or small rugs, a hammer and some small finish nails. Once you have your supplies, all you need to do is secure the

two runners directly above your bed, one on top of another, and then attach a placemat next to each end of the runners and you are done.

## DIY Lego-inspired Headboard

Create this cool kid's headboard using just four 3D wall panels, some plywood, caulk, paint and four pieces of decorative wood trim. Start by gluing your 3D panels to a 40x40-inch piece of plywood. Once dry, glue your chosen trim around your plywood and seal with caulk. Paint your panels in your preferred colour. Hang using a French cleat.

## DIY Plywood Headboard

Natural wood is the ideal material for those wanting to create a minimalist vibe in their bedroom. Simply purchase a pre-cut sheet of plywood for the headboard and then add three shelves for additional functionality.

## Other DIY Headboard Ideas

Jute headboard | Pallet headboard | Pegboard headboard | Woven vertical blinds headboard





# DUST *be gone!*

**D**o you know your microfibre from your feather? Your vacuum from your air compression? If not, you are not alone. We too have been guilty of using whatever fabric we have to hand to remove dust from our home, whether that be a tea towel, a cloth or even an old pair of pants. However, using the right duster for the job is vital if you want optimal results.

## FEATHER DUSTERS

Commonly associated with maids in stately homes, feather dusters are best for cleaning delicate or expensive objects such as artwork, figurines or jewellery.

**Pros of feather dusters:** Will not scratch surfaces, objects or furniture | Offer non-invasive contact

**Cons of feather dusters:** Not the best at collecting dust | Unethical as feathers are plucked from live animals

## MICROFIBRE DUSTERS

Becoming increasingly popular in recent years, microfibre dusters are great for general cleaning and dusting wooden furniture, tile counters and any other hard surfaces.

**Pros of microfibre dusters:** Excellent at picking up dust and dirt | Hypoallergenic | Environmentally friendly and sustainable

**Cons of microfibre dusters:** We couldn't find any!

## VACUUM DUSTERS

By attaching the dusting piece to your vacuum cleaner, you can enjoy fast and effective cleaning of larger surface areas in your home or to clean up after building work.

**Pros of vacuum dusters:** Ideal for concentrated areas of dust and areas that are hard to reach | Dust can be disposed of easily

**Cons of vacuum dusters:** Handheld vacuum dusters are not very powerful | Can be expensive

## COMPRESSED AIR DUSTERS

This type of duster is used to remove dust from electronics, plug holes and other small, inaccessible areas. Perfect for dusting your keyboard if you are working from home.

**Pros of compressed air dusters:** The best option for all computer accessories, electronics and office equipment

**Cons of compressed air dusters:** Can be expensive



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# BRICKING it



HOME & DIY

LEARN HOW TO  
EXPOSE, PREPARE  
AND LOOK AFTER A  
BRICKWORK FEATURE WALL

It's the design feature that flipped on its head the old adage of plastering over walls for a smooth, 'complete' finish.

These days, exposed brickwork is all the rage – a modern take on a feature wall that circumnavigates modern, industrial and rustic.

Preparing an exposed brick wall and looking after it isn't difficult if you follow a few simple steps.

#### Exposing

Chip away a small section of plaster to check your brickwork is in good order. Cover the floor with sheeting, as removal of plaster will throw up considerable dust. Wearing a dust mask, chisel away sections and finish using a wire brush.

#### Preparing

Use a mild solution comprising equal parts water, dish soap and salt. Use a clean cloth to apply, allowing the solution to soak into the wall. Leave for 10 minutes so the salt dissolves any remaining plaster particles, then wipe the entire wall using a sponge or wet cloth.

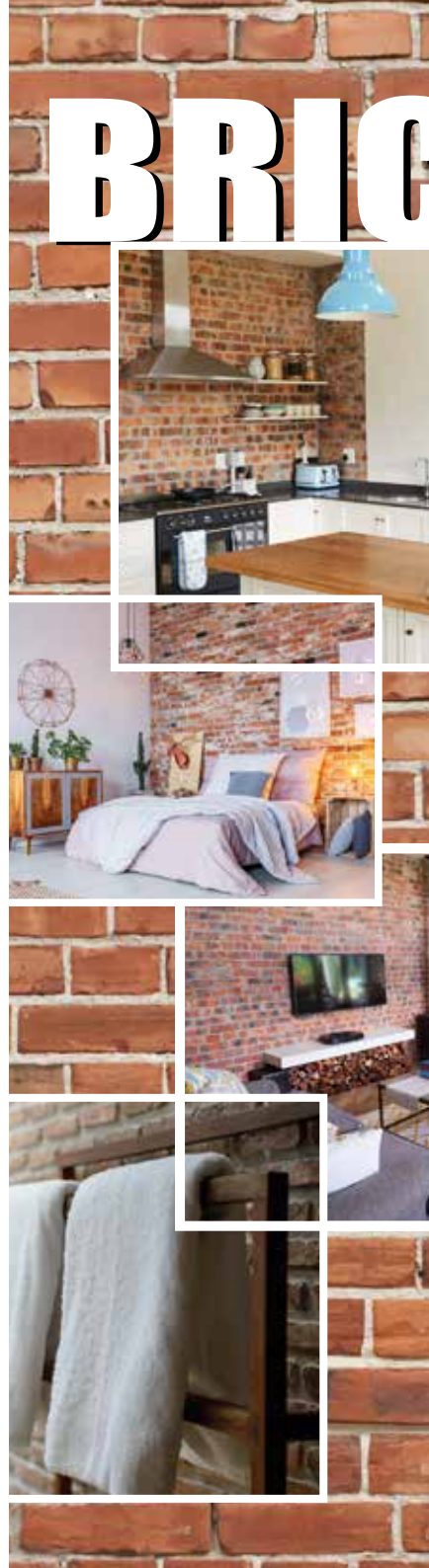
When dry, use an industrial sealant across the entire wall. An acrylic-based application will mean your wall is resistant to scratches, spills and dirt. You'll need to apply at least two coats, ensuring you work the solution into all the gaps.

#### Looking after

With your pristine wall the envy of visitors, you'll need to make sure you look after it properly. It's inevitable that parts may be fragile and flake off over time, but light cleaning (even with something as simple as a feather duster) will keep particles at bay.

Remember, all brick walls are different, and how they respond will depend on their age, the room temperature and whether they are interior or exterior walls.

The good news is that the matt finish and unpolished look most go for will hide a multitude of sins.





# BEST UK HOTELS FOR INTERIOR DESIGN LOVERS

S taycate in style with these hip UK hotels that offer inspiring interiors and decadent designs. Choose from chic and contemporary, rustic and rugged or something a little bit quirky. Whatever your preference, you are guaranteed to come away with your creative juices flowing.

## ARTIST RESIDENCE, LONDON

Based in the diverse Pimlico area, this unconventional hotel mixes vintage chic with a modern twist. Ideal for those who want a bit of luxury, enjoy its stunning roll-top baths and tin ceiling tiles. It is owned by stylish couple Charlotte and Justin Salisbury, who also have three other hotels which can be found in Cornwall, Brighton and the Cotswolds, with another in Bristol opening in November.

## THE PIG-IN THE WALL, SOUTHAMPTON

With 12 unique bedrooms, deli-style dining and plenty of cosy corners to relax and unwind in, THE PIG-in the wall is quite unlike any hotel you have been to before. In terms of interior design, enter with an open mind and take in the eclectic range of rooms that boast original wooden beams, slanted ceilings and walk-in monsoon showers.

## STRATTONS, NORFOLK

If you hate generic hotels, you will love Strattons. Located in a quiet lane in a conservation area within the town, this family-friendly hotel prides itself on offering luxury, comfort and inspiring interior design. With 14 individual rooms, expect open fires, original period features, a free-standing bath at the foot of the bed and even mermaid mosaic.

## CRAZY BEAR, BEACONSFIELD

Flamboyant and luxurious, Crazy Bear combines dramatic architecture with never before seen features such as the copper bath that is filled directly from the ceiling. Perfect for leather lovers, more than 50 different types were used to create its unique atmosphere, with leather featuring on the upholstery, walls, ceiling and even the doors.

Photo credit: artistresidences.co.uk, thepighotel.com, strattonshotel.com, crazybeargroup.co.uk

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# CANCEL CULTURE

**The BBC TV licence –  
do you need to pay?**



The BBC has never felt pressure like it: a new director general looking to shake things up, accusations of political and social bias, and the move to begin charging over-75s for TV licences – it has left 'Auntie' scratching about for relevance in a changing world where digital and premium channels are taking our attention... and our money.

While the BBC remains one of our country's finest institutions, and excellent value for those who regularly enjoy its diverse range of programming, there have been recent moves to defund the organisation – a Twitter campaign rapidly gained 100,000 followers and continues to apply pressure across social media.

This has led to many looking at the criteria for paying the licence; namely, whether you do indeed need to pay the £157.50 annual charge (£53 for a black and white TV). The answer is yes, if...

> ... you watch or record live TV as it is being transmitted, on any channel

> ... you watch or stream programmes live on an online service (such as ITV Hub, All 4, YouTube, Amazon Prime Video, Sky Go, etc)

> ... you download or watch programmes on iPlayer And the above applies to use on any device, from television to computer to games console.

The good news is that the BBC's brilliant range of national and regional radio is exempt.

If you believe you don't need a licence, the process for opting out is simple – simply declare to TV Licensing via its website and cancel any direct debits. That will stop what many describe as a barrage of threatening letters. However, the onus is, of course, on you to reapply for a licence if your watching habits change.

What's clear is that in a changing world the BBC's stranglehold on compulsory payment may well be coming to an end – even more so if Prime Minister Boris Johnson's move to decriminalise non-payment continues to gather pace.



Kirsty Gallacher



## ...A GOOD SPORT

From fashion undergraduate to Sky Sports presenter, it was a curious career trajectory for Kirsty Gallacher, who seemingly had the world of light entertainment at her feet.

That was, until a series of events knocked the Edinburgh-born beauty off track.

Her recent return to the limelight is tribute to the strength and perseverance of the 44-year-old, but also a marker for us all in these difficult times.

The die was cast relatively early for Kirsty, as the daughter of Scottish Ryder Cup champion Bernard Gallacher, with a career in sport seeming the obvious choice. In reality, however, the presenter endeavoured for the cut and thrust of fashion, even when, still a youngster, the family upped sticks and moved to Wentworth to help her father's golfing ambitions.

Swapping Scotland for Surrey, Kirsty came to count Bruce Forsyth as a neighbour when growing up. And with a golf star for a dad, she was hardly unfamiliar with larger-than-life personalities popping in for coffee.

"I think maybe there was a pressure for me to do something grand," she begins, "but for many years that wasn't really me. I guess in the end I fell into it, but there was no nepotism going on – I was just lucky."

Kirsty recalls the time as a broadcaster with BSkyB when, having climbed to the position of editorial assistant, there came the opportunity to do a screen test.

"I was horribly nervous, but I've always been of the mind that once you are offered something you should always give it a try. Plus, back then, there was still a sense of adversity from traditionalists who didn't believe in women fronting sport, although that has clearly changed now."

Her time on *Sky Sports News* led to onward recognition as she went on to front shows including *Kirsty's Home Videos*, *Kirsty and Phil* and *Soccer Extra*.

So for someone so happy, it was perhaps surprising to see Kirsty's light fade in the midst of her father's poor health, and a painful divorce to ex-rugby pro Paul Sampson, her partner of 13 years, of which they were married for five.

"There were some tough things to process, though rather than take some time off to regroup and look after my boys, I threw myself into work, into new ideas and new projects."

A stint doing *Strictly Come Dancing* saw Gallacher looking desperately thin, and when a drink-driving incident saw her lose her driver's licence for 18 months, the star had hit a new low.

"It's actually really interesting how just when you think you are calm and settled, the carpet can be swept from beneath you," she admits. "It was horrific at the time, truly horrific – but at least now I can see that it was just a few life events colliding together. We are human beings for our ability to ride the rough waves and emerge out the other side stronger, and that's what I've done."

Her focus these days is on celebrating a return to the front line of presenting duties. Her successful podcast, *Stripped Back Sport*, is back on our screens at prime time, and even in a few short years she has witnessed a real evolution in television.

"As far as gender goes, it's definitely played out on more of an equal footing now," she says. "Broadcasting has really undergone a fantastic change over the past 20 years and British television remains the very best in the world. From a purely selfish perspective, it's so great to be back."





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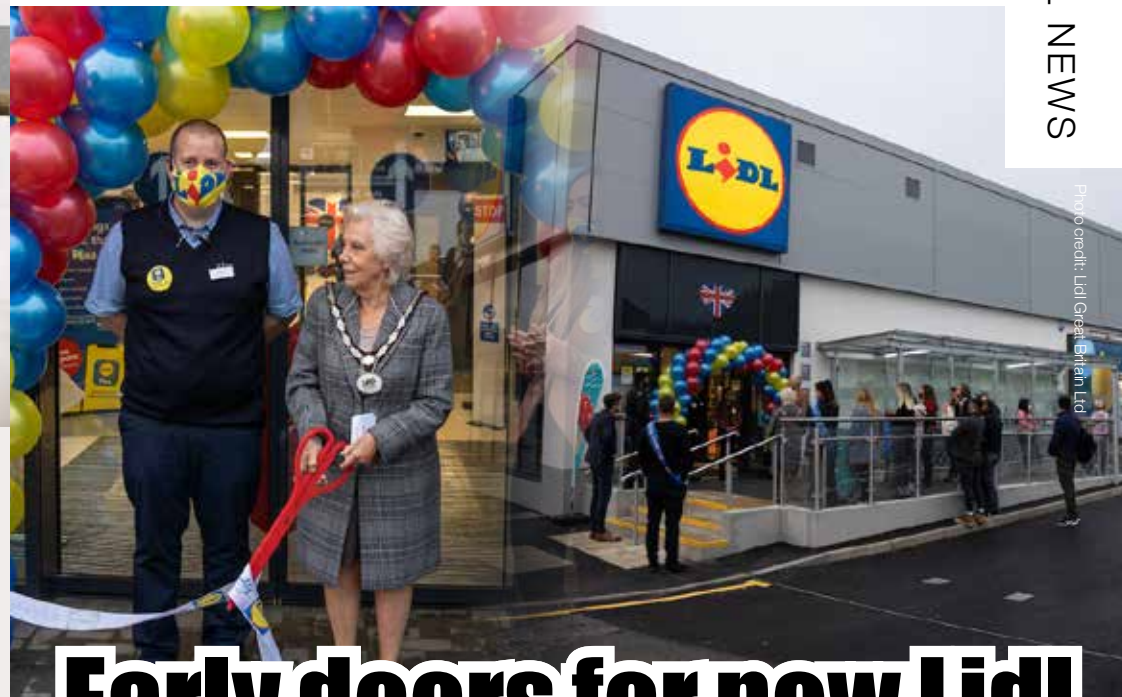
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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*

LOCAL NEWS



## Early doors for new Lidl as store opened by mayor

German supermarket chain Lidl opened a new branch on the former Homebase site on Church Hill at 8am on October 1.

The ceremony was attended by Loughton mayor, councillor Stella Murphy, who said she was "delighted to see a good turnout of eager residents" who braved the early morning.

Cllr Murphy said: "I felt honoured to cut the ribbon, in what has become a very challenging year."

During the ceremony, a blue plaque was unveiled, commemorating the building's former use by the London General Omnibus Company as a bus garage from 1923 until 1953.

The new store covers an area of 1,158 square

metres, with parking for cars and bikes, and will employ some 80 staff.

Social distancing measures include floor markings, cleaning stations and protective screens at checkouts.

This is Lidl's second supermarket in the area, after Waltham Abbey, and its 760th branch in the UK, with 25 new stores planned for 2020, creating 1,000 new jobs nationally.

Loughton resident Mrs Nicky Howson said: "The shop is clean, the bakery is brilliant and the fruit and veg are high quality."

Cllr Murphy praised the COVID-19 friendly measures and said: "Lidl has provided an excellent shopping experience for the residents of Loughton."





# Early Friday closure for Oak View following cuts

Funding cuts will see Oak View School in Loughton close early on Fridays from January. Dame Eleanor Laing MP for Epping Forest said that while she appreciates parents' concerns and has discussed the matter with the headteacher, she sees this as "probably the best option" for the school, given its financial situation. The school, which caters for children with moderate to complex special needs as well as for those on the autistic spectrum, advised parents that it will be closing at 1pm every Friday after Christmas. In her letter, Maureen Gould, chair of the school's governors, described it as "an extremely difficult

decision to make". Epping Forest District councillor Steven Neville said: "This is entirely the fault of the government, and the decision was forced on the school by funding cuts." Councillor Stephen Murray added that he was "shocked and angry" by the news. Dame Eleanor Laing MP said: "Oak View is a vital part of our local community. I am continuing to do all that I can to try to resolve the situation." A joint statement from Essex County Council (ECC) and the school said: "Oak View school and ECC are working closely together on a solution and will ensure that parents are kept updated on progress."

# Hand-knitted poppies on display in town



Residents have responded with tremendous enthusiasm to Loughton Town Council's (LTC) appeal to 'remember from home' by making poppies for a display, so that Remembrance Sunday (November 8) can be observed in a COVID-19 friendly way. Hundreds of hand-knitted and crocheted poppies have already been dropped at LTC's offices, with more expected by the deadline of November 6. Pippa Bryce, assistant town clerk for LTC, said: "We thought it would be a good idea to encourage residents to be active during lockdown and get knitting or crocheting at home, and so far we've got hundreds." The poppies are already on a wire display in the foyer of the library, with further donations to be added as they arrive. The town's VE Day celebrations were cancelled because of the pandemic and there will be no official ceremony on November 8, but individuals, organisations, groups and businesses are being encouraged to lay their wreaths at the War Memorial on King's Green. Mrs Bryce said: "We are mindful of people respecting the day [under restrictions]. "Many poppies have arrived anonymously, so the council wants to extend a general thank you to everyone who has contributed."

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Photo credit: Buckhurst Hill Baptist Church

# Church lit up to raise awareness of baby loss

Buckhurst Hill Baptist Church was lit up in pink and blue last month to mark Baby Loss Awareness Week. The building on Palmerston Road was illuminated between 6pm and 10pm from October 9 to 15 and culminated in a global Wave of Light on October 15, International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day.

The inspiration came from local mum Louise Moniatas who crowdfunded the cost of lighting the church through her Facebook page after she and her family were supported by Pastor Kevin and his wife when their baby Clara Iris died.

Chairman of Epping Forest District Council, councillor Helen Kane, said: "Throughout Baby Loss Awareness Week, bereaved parents, and their families and friends, have an opportunity to unite with others across the world to commemorate the lives of babies who died during pregnancy, at or soon after birth and in infancy.

"2020 has been a difficult year for us all, but now more than ever we need to come together as a community to let those affected by pregnancy and baby loss know they are not alone and that we are all here to support them."

## Plaque honours Kipling and Baldwin

Loughton has gained its 44th blue plaque but will wait until COVID-19 restrictions are relaxed for the dedication ceremony.

Debra Paris, administration officer for Loughton Town Council (LTC), said the plaque commemorates the so-called 'Loughton idyll' of 1877 spent by writer Rudyard Kipling and his cousin, the future Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, when they were boys.

The plaque can be seen at 3 Stanmore Way, the site of Goldings Manor Cottage, which was part of the original Goldings Hill Farm estate where Kipling and Baldwin spent a carefree summer.

Mrs Paris said that this plaque and another on Staples Road, commemorating Barbara Harmer (the first female supersonic pilot), will be dedicated when lockdown is lifted.

She said: "Loughton is proud to be associated with these people who enrich our history."

A book by Kipling Society member Janice Lingley is available from Loughton Library, priced £6.50.



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## Pupils affected by COVID-19 attend classes online



If Year 12 pupils at Davenant Foundation School thought they could relax at home when one member of the year group was infected by COVID-19, they were in for a surprise.

The day after Year 12 pupils were sent home following news that one student had tested positive, all their lessons were delivered online, with full attendance.

Headteacher Adam Thorne said: "The school has had one positive case in the Sixth Form and, following Public Health England advice, [we] sent Year 12 students home for the designated time.

"Full online lessons started the next day, with 100 per cent attendance in all areas and [pupils] enjoying their studies."

Mr Thorne said that the school has an "excellent" online platform and that students had full access to their teachers and curriculum during lockdown.

He said that year-group bubbles and staggered break times help keep pupils safe and "bring as much normality" to school life as possible.

## House fire on Stonards Hill

A fire in a cupboard under the stairs required two fire crews to extinguish it.

Firefighters were called to a small electrical fire in a house on Stonards Hill just after 2.30pm on Tuesday, September 29.

The fire started when an electrical distribution board

overheated in the cupboard under the stairs and caught fire.

The cupboard was empty so the fire did not spread and caused only minor damage.

Firefighters put out the smouldering unit by 2.53pm, using a dry powder extinguisher.

A spokesperson from Essex Fire and Rescue Service confirmed that two crews from Loughton and Waltham Abbey attended and that the cause was recorded as "accidental".

## Keep your granny safe: youth council campaign

Pupils from two Loughton schools are among the members of Epping Forest Youth Council (EFYC) who are campaigning to help their grandparents stay healthy.

In response to reports that young people are not heeding COVID-19 guidelines, the 29 youth councillors are urging their peers to consider elderly relatives, with a poster campaign bearing the words, "Keep your Granny Safe".

The youth councillors (who range in age from 12 to 18) met on Zoom and worked with a graphic designer to produce a colourful poster that emphasises the need to wash hands, wear a mask and maintain social distance.

Matthew Carter, 15, a pupil at Debden Park High School, described his experience on the youth council as "an amazing opportunity".

He said: "It was incredible to see how much passion young people had to keep people safe."

Fellow EFYC member, Davenant Foundation School pupil Archie Flynn, 15, said: "With the easing of lockdown and people returning to school [in large numbers], the poster is a nice message to help young people remember to keep others safe."

The poster has been sent to all schools, youth clubs, and town and parish councils in the district.







News from

# THE ROTARY CLUB

of Loughton, Buckhurst Hill &amp; Chigwell



We're so grateful for all the assistance and support in getting us to three community surplus hubs in just three months.

This has started from nothing, just a vision and ethos of treating people humanely with dignity and respect. We are so proud of our volunteers.

We had a fantastic launch of our Loughton community surplus hub on September 29, supporting dozens of families/individuals. Massive thanks to Loughton Town Council for grant funding the hub and to Loughton Club for the use of its wonderful venue.

We are offering free food, home essentials, clothes, toys and more without assessment or referral to anyone who needs it – just drop in.

We need all kinds of donations of food and essential household items as soon as possible (not fresh produce). Please call Pesh on 01992 842642 or email [info.3food4u@gmail.com](mailto:info.3food4u@gmail.com) for further details.

To donate, visit [www.give.net/3food4u](http://www.give.net/3food4u)

## Plans for COVID-19 memorial

A bench, a fruit tree or a fountain are among the ideas being considered by Buckhurst Hill Parish Council (BHPC) as a way to remember residents who died from COVID-19.

BHPC chairman Smruti Patel (pictured) said that several ideas have been put forward after a memorial was suggested by resident Laura Green, whose father died in April.

Mrs Patel said that following a unanimous decision taken by BHPC, a working party will be established that will include Ms Green and members of Epping Forest District Council, in order to decide on the type and location of the memorial.

She said: "We are looking for somewhere and something appropriate for people to reflect and to offer a focus for their grief."

Mrs Patel added that the parish council has not yet made a firm decision as to the timing or type of memorial.

She said it could be a plaque, a flower garden, a water feature or a seat and that one area under consideration is the corner of Westbury Lane and



Photo credit: Gav Patel

Palmerston Road.

"The working party will explore options as to what it might look like and also its timing, because we need to be sensitive and can't rush in," said Mrs Patel.

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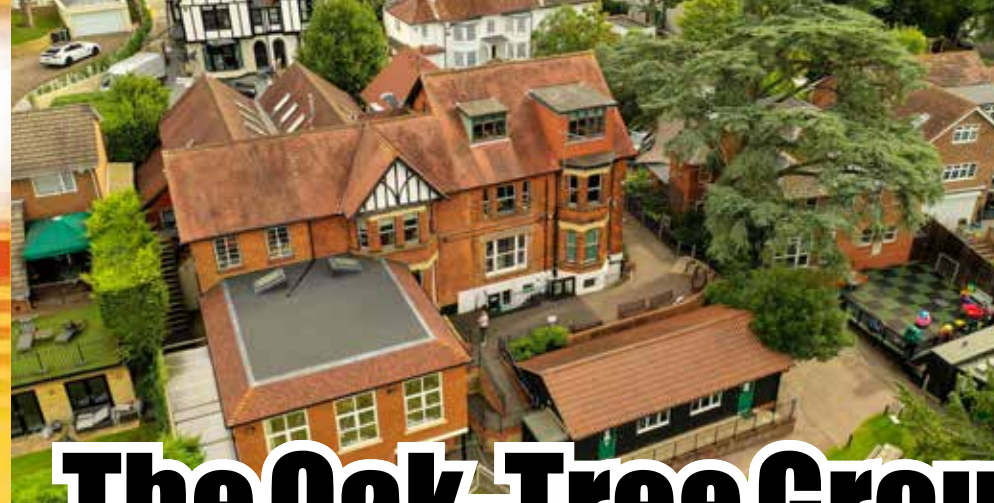
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LOCAL NEWS



## The Oak-Tree Group goes virtual for open days

With coronavirus guidelines preventing large groups of face-to-face meetings and new visitors on site at the same time, schools are having to develop more creative ways to welcome potential families who are looking to join.

The Oak-Tree Group of Schools hosted a series of Virtual Open Events for potential parents at the beginning of October. Parents and children were able to explore these four local independent schools from the comfort of their homes while gaining a valuable insight into school life.

Each school in the Group enjoyed the opportunity to showcase the outstanding teaching, excellent pastoral care, facilities and the enthusiasm of the pupils.

Matthew Hagger, group managing principal, said:

"We understand that choosing the right school is a critical decision for any family, and our Virtual Open Days presented an innovative way to use a variety of technologies to help parents make the right choices."

"We were delighted with how positively the Open Events were received by the hundreds of prospective families who accessed our virtual world over the course of the week."

"All resources were made available on the schools' websites at the end of the week, and our admissions teams have been making contact with families to arrange for individual personalised visits."

The Oak-Tree Group comprises Oaklands in Loughton, Coopersale Hall in Epping, Braeside in Buckhurst Hill and Normanhurst in North Chingford.

## Police apologise for mistaken identity

The police have issued an apology to a man who was wrongly detained on Loughton High Road.

Essex Police confirmed that at around 1.40pm on October 3, a man was detained because his clothing matched the description of that worn by the driver of a suspected cloned car, who had run away just moments earlier, having failed to stop for the police.

The spokeswoman said that, based on the description of the driver's clothing, officers asked to speak to a man, who pulled away from officers despite being asked to stand still and remain calm.

She confirmed, when it was established that the

man was not connected to the cloned vehicle, "he was allowed to go on his way shortly afterwards".

A second man whose clothing matched the description was arrested nearby, interviewed and released under investigation.

The police spokeswoman said: "The circumstances surrounding the detention of the first man, including the use of handcuffs and incapacitant spray, are now the subject of an ongoing investigation."

"Essex Police have made a voluntary referral to the Independent Office of Police Conduct (IOPC) in relation to this."



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# Microsoft celebrates 25 years of Windows

Microsoft's launch of Windows back in 1995 marked a true turning point in personal computing. Not only was it fresh, accessible and affordable, but as something called 'the World Wide Web' gradually came into focus, it connected us with the rest of planet Earth in a way we'd never before thought possible.

In many ways, Bill Gates and his team of boffins simply took a customer-focused approach to software, where previously it had been the domain of tech nerds and those who loved the intricacies of computing. A start button, a menu, a task bar and better naming and labelling systems for files do not today seem like revolutionary steps, but as the Millennium approached, our reliance on computers increased, and with that, a need to make them as user-friendly as possible.

Perhaps the most defining feature of Windows, however, was MSN. Offering chat rooms, email,

newsgroups and, crucially, the ability to type those holy characters 'www' into a URL box, we were truly the masters of our own tech destiny.

Windows' popularity also saw use of the Internet Explorer browser exceed anything else out there, and by 2003 a whopping 95 per cent of consumers were using it to access the web. While its decline since owes much to rivals Mozilla and Google Chrome upping their game, Windows itself has stuck.

Yes, Mac and Linux have mixed things up in a market that is distinguishable by its refusal to sit still, but what is certain is that Windows 95 (and its various updates over the years... 7, 8, 10, XP, Vista and 2000 to name a few) is regarded as being as innovative and revolutionary today as it was then.



Photo credit: Roland Magnusson/Shutterstock.com





# DöggY TECH

**From basic microchipping to gadgets that can detect your dog's moods, pet ownership has never been more advanced.**

It's fair to say that man now has two best friends: the beloved pooch and the trusted smartphone. It makes sense, then, that our canine companions ought to have their own line of gadgetry to keep them on trend.

For many mutts, the tech adventure begins when they are just a few weeks old when they are implanted with a microchip. Now a legal requirement in the UK, these grain-of-rice-sized tags will save you much heartache should you ever lose your beloved pet. Better still, they are inexpensive and will last a lifetime, enabling you to update your personal information through the microchip database.

For dog owners seeking a more comprehensive device, there is a variety of activity trackers on the market that can be attached to your pup's collar. Fully waterproof, these 'Fitbits for Fido' not only boast advanced location services, but they can also give you an idea of how much exercise your dog is getting each day, as well as logging sleep patterns.

Many of us have one-sided chats with our dogs, and while the dream of reciprocal conversation is yet to be realised, we are now one step closer to at least understanding how they feel, thanks to Japanese company Langualess that has developed the Inupathy harness. Using data based on heart-rate patterns, this snazzy wearable changes colour to interpret your dog's moods.

Finally, there is a piece of kit designed purely for the owner's amusement – the dog harness that mounts an active camera. Retrace your pet's paws as they trample through the undergrowth and excitedly chase balls. Beware they don't catch you in an uncompromising position, though, or you just might end up being the star of your dog's very own YouTube channel.

Photo credit: wearable.com, kron4.com, thegadgetflow.com



NOVEMBER BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH

# Chrysanthemum

For those born in November, your birth flower is the cheerful chrysanthemum. Often referred to as just "mums", these beautiful blooms have a long and rich history. One of the most popular autumn garden flowers, chrysanthemums are easy to grow and will come back year after year.

## WHAT DOES THE CHRYSANTHEMUM SYMBOLISE?

Native to Asia, the chrysanthemum is considered by both Japan and China to be an emblem of youth. The flower is also said to help prevent grey hairs, and a single petal placed at the bottom of a wine glass is believed to aid longevity.

When presenting the chrysanthemum as a gift, the colour you choose conveys a particular meaning:

- A red or pink chrysanthemum means "I love you"
- A white chrysanthemum symbolises innocence and purity
- A yellow chrysanthemum represents unrequited love

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

If your birth flower is the chrysanthemum, you are said to be friendly, cheerful and loyal. Although at times you may appear tough on the outside, you are a compassionate person who is fiercely protective of your loved ones.

## HOW CAN I GROW CHRYSANTHEMUMS?

If you love these vibrant flowers, you will be pleased to hear that they are relatively easy to grow. They thrive in moist but well-drained soil, so choose a sheltered and sunny spot and add plenty of compost or well-rotted manure. However, chrysanthemums do tend to break at the base, so they will need staking. Once they finish blooming in autumn, mulch them with straw to protect them from frost.

## ARE CHRYSANTHEMUMS POISONOUS TO PETS?

Unfortunately, chrysanthemums are toxic to pets, and to cats, dogs and horses in particular. If your animal does ingest the flower, they may experience vomiting, skin inflammation and hyper-salivation.



# HORTICULTURE HEROES: Frances Tophill



It speaks volumes when someone who has ascended the horticultural heights of Alan Titchmarsh tips you to become the next big thing in green-fingered greatness; though to her credit, Frances Tophill hasn't yet allowed the praise to go to her head.

Tophill, a regular on *Gardeners' World*, offers a fresh, young, dare we say stylish take on the earthy, sometimes grubby surrounds of our lawns, beds and shrubbery. She is a presenter who articulates and conveys a sense of calm, with a modus operandi that is always to embrace anything that comes her way. That is, after all, how she got into gardening in the first place.

"I was 19 years old and desperate really just to reach out and do anything. I'd never given gardening a second thought, nor did I know much about it, but I saw an apprenticeship advertised and, when I read up further, quickly fell in love with everything to do with the outdoors."

Frances' energy on screen is infectious.

"My advice to people is just to get out there and enjoy yourselves," she says. "Get some dirt under your fingernails, perhaps pull up some weeds, or even just lie down on a lawn and soak up what it feels like to be in a pure, green space."

"Our gardens are very different environments to our local parks, and for the most part are private spaces where we can create our own world. I think that's what excited me the most, and once I realised how much was there and available, I never really looked back."

That brand of enthusiasm and endless excitement has seen her move to the top table of terrestrial gardening.

"I am the example of someone making it up as they go along, and we all know that's the secret to great gardening."

Photo credit: Pinterest



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# Nasty Niffs

HOW TO KEEP CATS (AND WHAT THEY LEAVE BEHIND) OUT OF YOUR GARDEN

For those of us lucky enough to have an English country garden, the greatest joy is being surrounded by the many delights of nature. However, some of the guests that wander through our outdoor spaces are prone to leaving smelly little surprises in their wake. While there are chemical aids that can be used to deter these funky felines, these natural alternatives are equally effective...

**SHARP OBJECTS:** No one likes finding poo in their flower beds, which is why you need to make these secluded, cosy spots a little less appealing to Felix. Egg shells, branches and holly cuttings are a simple way to deter the defecator, without disrupting your plants.

**MOTION-ACTIVATED SPRINKLERS:** Cats hate getting wet. Fact. And while this may not be the cheapest option, it is incredibly effective and a sure-fire way to protect your wildflowers from being watered by other people's pets.

**CERTAIN SCENTS:** Cats have keen noses and a natural dislike for some smells. Lavender, citrus and mint are among these, which is ideal as lavender and mint plants make glorious additions to your herb garden. Alternatively, you could try simply spritzing these particular fragrances about the place, though this requires constant maintenance.

**ULTRASONIC SOUNDS:** Like a feline burglar alarm, these motion-activated devices emit a high-pitched sound when disrupted, which is very unpleasant to cats.

**LION POO:** Want to keep away the small cats? Then why not use the mighty power of the big cats? Fortunately, this organic and efficient method of repellent doesn't require you to trek around the Savannah with a pooper scooper as it's available as a natural fertiliser. And yes, it contains authentic lion whoopsies.



GARDENING



# THE BATTLE OF BERLIN

REMEMBERING THREE DECADES SINCE MODERN GERMANY WAS UNITED ONCE AGAIN

Celebrating the collapse of the Berlin Wall signifies something so expansive and important in the context of both the past and the present, that even some 31 years on, it is a milestone that must not be forgotten.

The Wall has now been removed for longer than it stood – it was constructed in 1961 and pulled down some 28 years later – but the social and political explanation of everything it stood for lives on. Indeed, it shapes the way Germany and Western Europe is today.

To understand the Berlin Wall, it's first necessary to know its purpose, and to discover its foundations ultimately had a lot to do with us here in Britain.

At the cessation of the Second World War, Germany was divided into zones, reflecting the four Allied powers: the United Kingdom, the United States, France and the Soviet Union. Berlin, the capital, despite being fully in the Soviet zone, was similarly split up.

While the principle was to keep the country under the administration of four 'allied' powers, in truth they all stood for very different things. In the developing years under Joseph Stalin, the Soviets attempted to place a firm communist imprint on their East Germany territory, which included the eastern part of Berlin.

Britain, the US and, to a lesser extent, the French, adopted a fierce consumer- and business-driven capitalist method, where control, freedom, ambition and self-improvement was presented to the people.

In the decade after the end of the war, East Germans could see their Western counterparts not just rebuilding, but flourishing under new principles, in the same way that on mainland UK the green shoots of recovery really took hold in the 1960s.

What logically followed then was a mass migration from East Germany to West, much to the chagrin of Stalin, who began to impose tougher restrictions and quotas on those wishing to relocate.

Things reached a head when, in 1952, Stalin created an inner-German border, thus cutting off travel between the two. Berlin, however, represented a major loophole in this plan, given that movement was easily facilitated, not least by train.

When these routes were eventually removed, the Soviets accelerated plans to limit further movement – by 1961, 3.5 million East Germans had fled, totalling 20 per cent of the population. Left behind was an older, poorer demographic, hamstrung by a regime that repressed and stifled capitalism.

The Berlin Wall (in many places two walls and a no man's land) therefore came to represent a physical and social barrier for a divided nation. At a height of 3.6 metres, it spanned 96 miles around West Berlin, containing 20 bunkers and more than 300 watchtowers. Across 28 years its 'death strip' accounted for the lives of 140 people desperate for freedom, yearning to be reunited with loved ones.

However, the opening of the Iron Curtain between Austria and Hungary in August 1989 set in place a chain of events whereby the Eastern Bloc had disintegrated and East Germany, as an entity, was no more. By November 9, the call came for guards to allow free passage of movement, and by that evening tens of thousands took to the streets to begin breaking, hammering and dismantling the Wall.

The united Germany is now an even more enriched, prosperous and tolerant country for its past ills, and the Wall, still present in places, sits as a reminder of past mistakes.



Photo credit: Noppasin Wongchum/Shutterstock.com



**Getting  
back to**

# BUSINESS

*The unexpected upturns coronavirus brought about for small businesses*

One has to be careful with any mention of a global pandemic in some way being good for business. Clearly what enveloped the world over the course of 2020 was a set of circumstances and outcomes we would never want repeated, and they carry on today. Yet while COVID-19 called time on the legacy of thousands of businesses, for others it has provided new vision, renewed focus and a world of opportunity.

Most of these have come in the form of directors, managers, sole traders and other decision-makers having a rare opportunity to step back and reassess.

In the early days of the lockdown, so profound were the circumstances around us and so urgent was the need to strip back, downgrade and economise, that businesses reverted to skeletal structures just to survive.

So when the UK began to emerge out of the famine of lockdown, many owners realised they could survive on these new,

low levels of efficiency. From reverting to four-day weeks to cancelling direct debits for subscriptions, software and other resources we actually didn't use; from encouraging working from home, embracing tech such as video conferencing, right through to enriching staff by asking them to adopt fresh ideas, tackle wider tasks or embrace new skills in order to get additional jobs done, there was a new take on what we needed.

In total, we found that COVID-19 brought about a need for transparency none of us could pull a curtain across. Unequivocally, it changed our attitudes towards everything from money to socialising to personal space, but also altered our perception of business – what it is, how we utilise it and, in some cases, how little we need the bells, whistles and fanfare. We are a simpler, more efficient nation because of coronavirus, and once we're out of the woods that will surely help us to flourish again.

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H2SJP31578 03/19

# SEO 101

## A beginner's guide

To the uninitiated, SEO, or search engine optimisation, can seem like a daunting task, and enlisting the services of a professional can be expensive. However, there is no reason why you can't learn to master the art of SEO yourself.

### SEARCH FOR KEYWORDS

The foundation of any SEO campaign, keywords are ideas and terms that describe what your content is about and they are designed to help increase your visibility online. You can come up with the right keywords for your business by:

- > Brainstorming with your team
- > Checking out your competitors' sites
- > Using Google Ads Keyword Planner

### OPTIMISE YOUR TITLES AND META DESCRIPTIONS

This is where it gets a little bit more technical. Once you have your list of keywords, you need to optimise your page titles using these keywords in as natural a way as possible. Page titles and meta descriptions are shown in search engine results and therefore these need to clearly convey what each page is about. You can optimise these via your content management system or in your SEO plug-in.

### OPTIMISE YOUR PAGE CONTENT

Your next step is to add your keywords to your website text. These include your header tags (your headings and subheadings) and the rest of the text on the page. Again, try to do this in as natural a way as possible and don't overstuff your content with keywords as both Google and searchers are put off by this technique.

### BUILD LINKS

If you want your site to get on that much-coveted first page of Google, you need to focus on getting high-quality backlinks, i.e. hyperlinks from other websites to your own. There are several techniques that you can use to build backlinks, including:

- > Be active on social media
- > Write competitive content
- > Create an infographic
- > Write testimonials for other websites





Tesla Model S

Toyota Camry LE

Chevrolet Bolt EV

Hyundai Kona

Jaguar I-PACE



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# Extending ELECTRIC

What's the furthest you can go in an electric car without recharging?

The concept is great – cleaner, cheaper, some may even say smoother driving. Electric cars have given us a new way of getting from A to B, but for many considering investing in one of the greenest advancements ever conceived, the need to recharge at such regular intervals has been a major stumbling block.

And yet, improvements in technology have meant the range of our electric vehicles is better than ever. Take this year's Tesla Model S, for instance. Elon Musk's pioneering vehicle brand is ripping up the rule book and this shimmering, humming piece of tarmac tech will take you 402 miles on a single charge... that's right up there with petrol and diesel vehicles. The only downside is the £75,000 price tag.

And if you fancy a hybrid of electric and traditional fuel, check out the 2018 Toyota Camry LE. This will get you an almost mind-boggling 689 miles – that's the equivalent of driving from London to Amsterdam... and back.

If you want to go for a purely electric car without needing to remortgage the house – in other words, steer clear of Teslas, who occupy four of the top five positions for range, with their X (351 miles), 3 (322 miles) and Y (316 miles) models – then have a look at the Chevrolet Bolt EV. You'll be looking at around £30,000 for a car that will take you well over 250 miles on one charge.

Hyundai (the Kona Electric also hits 250 miles) and Kia (the Niro Electric will take you 230 miles before you plug in again) both represent good value, and 2018 models can be picked up second-hand for around £15,000. For those seeking a bit more status, there is of course the ever-popular Jaguar I-PACE. Up to 300 miles in a car that balances eco and image perfectly... what's not to like?

# The PARTEY IS OVER

Arsenal's decision to lay off club mascot Gunnersaurus on the day they splashed £45million on midfielder Thomas Partey has furthered the debate of just how connected our Premier League sides are to the real world.

The decision to release the Gunners' iconic mascot, who has been parading around home games for 27 years, was announced at the start of October. That meant lifelong fan Jerry Quy would have to find something else to do on matchdays.

In the club's defence, it was accepted that dressing as a dinosaur and parading around the pitch in front of empty stands was probably a waste of time; but Arsenal, just like so many other clubs who have cut back in the wake of coronavirus, have scored a spectacular own goal in their failure to see the bigger picture.

From north London neighbours Tottenham Hotspur to Premier League champions Liverpool, an insistence on micromanaging rarely ends well when we are, as a nation, looking for togetherness and unity as we are during the time of this pandemic.

When players' astronomical wages are paid in full yet staff on the minimum wage are furloughed and, in some cases, made redundant, you wonder if the disconnect can ever be bridged.

When a 126-year-old club such as Macclesfield Town, who played in the Football League last season, are allowed to be wound up for the sake of less than two weeks of Arsenal midfielder Mesut Özil's wages, surely we've lost sight of the game.

Speaking of Özil, who hasn't played competitive football for the club in seven months but continues to pick up his full wage, the German did at least begin to repair his reputation with Gunners fans perennially underwhelmed by his energy and application, by offering to front up Gunnersaurus's wage himself.

It's troubling that a player has to make that move, and that his employers cannot see that abandoning the little man – or in this case, dinosaur – is a PR faux pas that becomes far more costly.



Photo credit: Javier Garcia/BPI/Shutterstock





# TOEING *the line*

COULD TOE WRESTLING REALLY BECOME AN **OLYMPIC** SPORT?

It's the younger, slightly cheesier cousin of arm wrestling, but is a sport to be taken seriously, with a sizeable rise in competitions year on year. Toe wrestling, created in the foothills of the Peak District in the 1990s, is here to stay.

In combat, competitors sit across from one another with the big toe interlocked into their opponent's on a cleverly named 'toedium'. On the shout of "Toes away", battle commences, with the aim of using toe strength to push the other person's foot to a vertical board a few inches away. The non-wrestling foot must be in the air at all times, while each competitor's bottom must be grounded.

The sport requires good foot strength, obviously, but also strong thighs and the mental strength to second-guess, defend and attack an opponent. Bouts usually take the form of 'best of threes', with right, left and right toes engaged in toe-tal combat.

While it is a fun, summer sport played usually in pub locations and with a detectable whiff of light-hearted British Bulldog spirit

that also embraces cheese rolling, gut barging and gravy wrestling, competitors actually take the challenge rather seriously. Some have been known to have their toenails surgically removed so as to prevent opponents from gaining added grip, while the founder of the sport's governing body, the World Toe Wrestling Federation, based in Staffordshire, shaved his buttocks as a method for gaining extra floor grip.

While the sport is popular in pub environments, its elevation into a recognised pursuit is now in conversation, given the formation of an official hierarchy, and the leaders are in dialogue with chiefs about its presentation as an Olympic sport.

Undoubtedly, to elevate the battle from a simple Peak District pub-floor activity to a global entity, it would be no mean feat.

Photo credit: Emma Wood/Caters News Agency



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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

## PUZZLES

Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

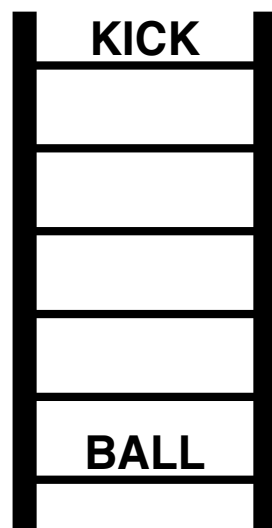
- ▶ ARCHERY
- ▶ ATHLETICS
- ▶ BADMINTON
- ▶ BOXING
- ▶ DIVING
- ▶ EQUESTRIAN
- ▶ FENCING
- ▶ FOOTBALL
- ▶ GYMNASTICS
- ▶ HANDBALL
- ▶ HOCKEY
- ▶ JUDO
- ▶ ROWING
- ▶ SAILING
- ▶ SHOOTING
- ▶ SWIMMING
- ▶ TENNIS
- ▶ VOLLEYBALL
- ▶ WATER
- ▶ POLO
- ▶ WEIGHTLIFTING



## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Vatican City is the smallest country in the world
- ▶ The Gotthard Base Tunnel in Switzerland is the longest rail tunnel in the world
- ▶ E is the only vowel not used as the first letter in a US state name
- ▶ Russia is the largest country in the world
- ▶ The African continent has three deserts: Sahara, Kalahari and Namib
- ▶ Peninsulas are surrounded by water on three sides, for example Spain and Portugal
- ▶ Angel Falls in Venezuela is the world's largest uninterrupted waterfall
- ▶ Canberra is the capital city of Australia
- ▶ The Trafalgar Square Christmas tree is donated by Norway every year

## WORD LADDER



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

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

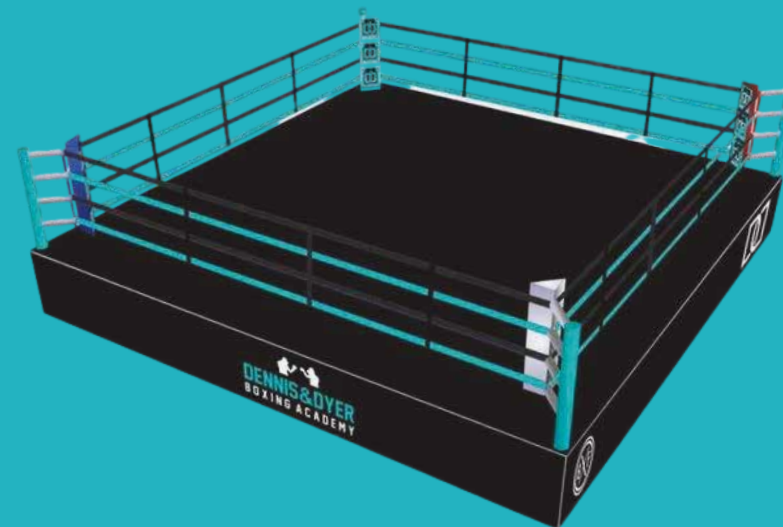
DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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



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