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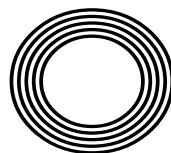
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Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

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

Happy New Year everyone. Sometimes, I have to remind myself to do nothing; to stop. Don't worry, it's not some medical condition. It's actually to take a moment to reflect.

It's healthy to see where you are and how things have changed, and over our shutdown period between Christmas and New Year I considered how well 2019 has gone.

Our portfolio has never been in better shape. We're now printing more than 50,000 magazines a month, launching new titles, and the feedback we receive from our advertisers has been really positive.

This success speaks to me in multiple ways. It tells me I have a great team, it rewards the long, painful, grinding hours I have put into my passion for publishing, and it confirms to me that the hard work does pay off.

It also reminds me that it's okay to fall off the horse. There have been some years where I've looked back with disappointment, frustration and a feeling of failure; but I've got back up, battled hard, and I am the evidence that if you want it, you can get it.

If you've had a great year, well done. If you're looking back feeling disappointed, I sympathise and empathise, but it's time to start again. Your horse is standing there waiting; now up you get.

Enjoy reading the January edition,

Nik

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THE STORY OF BEN STOKES' CLIMB FROM ZERO TO HERO

The history of sport is filled with tales where triumph has emerged out of failure, yet very few have tasted both sides in such quick succession as England cricketer Ben Stokes.

The 28-year-old was the standout winner of the BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award in December, a fitting culmination for a sportsman who had been forced to reach deep into mental and physical reserves of strength in order to drag his career back from the depths.

He also received an OBE in the New Years Honours List to end a remarkable year.

Just two years previously, Stokes' fracas outside a nightclub in Bristol had seen the all-rounder arrested, splashed across the front pages, removed from a lucrative New Balance sponsorship deal and facing the very real prospect of his cricket career being brought to a premature end. In the aftermath of a police prosecution that dragged on for some 11 months, the Durham-based powerhouse may eventually have been exonerated of blame, but he'd missed the England Ashes tour down under, and was facing a huge climb back into national team contention.

Perhaps it was the catastrophic way the national team performed in their 4-0 drubbing in the Southern Hemisphere that necessitated Stokes' acceleration back to the front line, but the person who returned was not only smarter and wiser, he also brought with him a calmness and humility, qualities that immediately began permeating through to his teammates.

No better was this seen than in our World Cup campaign of 2019. In the opening match he scored 89 against South Africa and claimed two wickets, as well as taking what was labelled one of the greatest catches of all time in dismissing Andile Phehlukwayo. And yet, after surprise defeats to Pakistan and Sri Lanka, with two matches remaining, England were faced with the prospect of seeing off India and New Zealand in order to guarantee a semi-final spot.

The mercurial Stokes stepped up with a 79 against India to help guide his side through to the knock-out finale, where they effortlessly brushed aside the Aussies in the semis.

And then the final. To seasoned, age-old watchers of the sport, the way Stokes constructed an imperious 84 not out, the way he batted through a 15-run super-over to lead England to World Cup

glory was breathtaking; and to a new generation switching on for the first time, his contribution will be felt going forward in the tens of thousands of kids picking up a cricket bat for the first time.

As if his efforts in the short-form version of the game weren't indelible enough, just a month after his Lord's heroics, he brought England's 2019 Ashes challenge back from the dead with a stunning 135 not out in the third test at Headingley, where his side recovered from being bowled out for 67 in their first innings to pull off an almost inconceivable run chase of 359 in the second innings to level the series.

In the past, where victories in cricket were often long-fought, hard-grafted, attritional battles, Stokes has invigorated a sport that is more modern, engaging and aspirational than ever before. More than that, he has proved to a watching world that even in a generation of computers, social media and digital lives, true heroes are made on the outdoor tracks, pitches and greens, and he is truly one of ours.

What's the score?



Introducing

THE NEW £20 NOTE, COMING TO A BANK NEAR YOU... SOON!

As far as physical currency goes in the UK, everyone continues to talk about the perfection of the polymer. Once just a thing of curiosity when taking a trip to Australia, the polymer note is now a key component of our money stocks, and its versatility and durability – it lasts two and a half times longer than a paper note – will again be on show when the new £20 note is launched in February.

It was back in 2016 that JMW Turner was announced as the face of the new note, and some four years on – and, more pertinently, 221 years after the painter was born – he'll be rolled out across the UK on February 20.

The featured quote, "Light is therefore colour", originates from a lecture he gave in 1818, and is a reference to his innovative use of light, shade, colour and tone.

The note has all the usual bells and whistles we associate with the note denominations, from a security window that reads "Twenty" on one side and "Pounds" on the other to a metallic image over the main window that appears grey, before switching to blue and gold on the reverse.

With other effects, such as the Queen's image showing through, a number that shows up under ultraviolet light, silver and purple foil patches and raised print on both sides, this purple-themed £20 note is surely the most decorative and high-tech yet.

Attributing the note to Turner is a fitting and somewhat belated way for us all to give something back, after the artist left a number of paintings in his will "to the nation".

While he'd certainly be proud of this little piece of art, you can pick up your very own Turner original for just 20 quid.


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HOME & DIY



If the recent festivities have left your oven looking a little grubby (to put it lightly), then these three chemical-free, and budget-friendly, home remedies are exactly what you need. Say goodbye to grease and hello to a squeaky-clean cooker.

Easy Peasy Lemon Squeezy

Lemon is a natural bleaching agent as well as having the ability to degrease. Simply:

- Take two lemons and cut them both in half • Squeeze the juice into the baking tray and place the rest of the lemons on the tray • Fill the tray halfway up with water • Place the tray in the oven and turn on to 120 degrees • Leave for 30 minutes • Remove the tray, turn off the oven and wait for it to cool slightly • Scrub your oven and rinse



Baking Soda Saviour

This store-cupboard staple is abrasive, plus it naturally absorbs grease, making it the ideal ingredient for cleaning your oven. Simply:

- Remove the oven racks • Make a paste with ½ cup baking soda and 3 tbsp water • Apply to the inside of your oven wearing gloves • Leave for a few hours and overnight if possible • Use a damp cloth (or spatula if needed) to wipe off the paste • Optional – spray oven with white vinegar and wipe clean again to remove any leftover grease



Salt and Vinegar (solution, not crisps)

Common table salt can act as an abrasive, whereas white vinegar is great for removing stubborn stains. Simply:

- Turn on your oven to 65 degrees to heat • Sprinkle a thin layer of salt onto the bottom of the oven • Put on gloves and scrub the bottom with a sponge until the grease starts to lift • Spray white vinegar into the oven • Use a wet rag to remove the rest of the grease and dirt

BACK TO BLACK

WHY DARKER SHADES FOR YOUR INTERIORS ARE GOING TO BE ALL THE RAGE IN 2020

In decades past, the use of black for interiors was strictly the domain of goths, emos, moody teenagers and nightclub owners.

But 2020 may well be about to turn all of that on its head, with dark shades set to stand up for themselves as slick, stylish and luxurious layers in the coming year.

Here's your five-step guide to using black:

BLACK ISN'T ALWAYS BLACK

Our perception of the colour "black" is pretty ubiquitous, but for the purposes of interior design, you should experiment with an array of different shades, from medium greys right the way through to the inkiest, flattest black.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

The majority of colours really shine when they're used in contrast, and dark shades are no different. For a look that embraces polar opposites, try black and white; while for something slightly more considered, opt for wood shades as a way of offsetting your base colour. Light greys,

reds, yellows and light blues work equally well in providing the contrast that sets a room off.

A WINDOW TO A NEW WAY OF THINKING

A dark grey or black room will only work if you can show it off with light, preferably natural light, so choose a room that will display your daringly dark style by splashing it with natural niceness.

TEXTURE OVER TONE

Visual satisfaction goes well beyond the colour itself, so using a textured finish (perhaps a mottled or bevelled wallpaper, or wood panelling that offers a glorious three-dimensional take) with clever lighting can produce an array of shades, tones and shadow that's a world away from a basic black.

COMPLEMENTING YOUR TASTE

And, of course, using an array of fabrics and fashions in terms of furniture, cushions, lampshades, carpets and rugs will add to the intensity of detail that only black can provide.



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DIY bed canopies



If you want to bring a touch of elegance to your bedroom while at the same time creating a cosy focal point, then look no further than a bed canopy.

Bed canopies are fairly expensive to buy, but incredibly cheap to make. If you decide to do one home DIY project in the new year, this should be it.

CHOOSE THE CANOPY FABRIC

With canopies being available in a wide variety of materials, colours and textures, the world really is your oyster. For a luxurious vibe, opt for velvet or silk, or if you favour a more laid-back look, opt for linen or mesh.

CHOOSE THE CANOPY HANGING ELEMENT

Arguably the easiest way to hang your canopy is with an embroidery hoop; simply unscrew the hoop, pass the fabric through it, ensure it is even and reseal the hoop. Alternatively, you can utilise copper pipes to create a larger canopy that cascades

around your whole bed.

Or, if you are wanting a more natural vibe, you could even use a simple (but sturdy) branch which can be hung from the ceiling with a few chains and basic hooks.

INSTALL THE HOOKS & HANG THE CANOPY

As a bed canopy will be hanging above your head, it is important that all the screws are secure; drywall anchors are a good idea and will ensure that your bed canopy does not fall down. Enlist a helper when attaching the fabric to ensure it is hung evenly.

ADD SOME CREATIVE TOUCHES

Once your bed canopy has been installed, you can personalise it with accessories to ensure that it matches the décor of the rest of your room. Fairy lights are a great idea for a child's room or even for adults who want to feel like they are sleeping under the stars. Curtain tie-backs are another popular option.

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Inspirational Freya wins Sports Personality of the Year

An inspirational Great Britain para ice hockey, rugby and basketball player from Rayleigh has described winning an award as a “dream”.

Freya Levy was crowned as this year’s Sports Personality of the Year at the Active Essex Sports Awards on December 5.

The winners were picked by public vote, with awards also handed out for categories such as Coach of the Year, Young Sports Personality of the Year and much more.

The event celebrated the county’s sporting achievements from grassroots to a professional level.

Freya, who is no stranger to picking up titles, has previously won Rochford District Sports Personality of the Year, highlighting her inspirational story.

Freya earned her gong following an impressive year of sporting achievements as a member of the GB Women’s Para Ice Hockey team, the GB Wheelchair Basketball U25 team and the England Wheelchair Rugby Sevens team.

Her entry also highlighted her support in encouraging more people with disabilities to participate in sport.

Freya said: “To win the award this year is just a dream and I’d like to say a big thank you to everyone who voted – it feels great to be recognised by your local community and it will really power me on through to the next season.

“There are so many opportunities to take part in sport in Essex and I’m a true believer that there is something out there for everyone.”

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MARK FRANCOIS MP



Member of Parliament for Rayleigh and Wickford



Now that the dust has settled on the General Election, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank the people of Rayleigh for kindly re-electing me to represent you in the House of Commons as your Member of Parliament.

Out of interest, you may like to know that this was the second largest Conservative majority in the whole of the United Kingdom. I am humbled to have been re-elected by so many constituents and, while I realise that not everyone voted for me, I will endeavour to continue to do my best on behalf of all of my constituents, whatever their individual politics.

Just prior to Christmas, I voted on the Second Reading of the Brexit Bill, in order to help Get Brexit Done, so that we can, finally, leave the European

Union – at the fourth time of asking – at 11pm GMT on Thursday, January 31, 2020. I realise it is very important that we as politicians in the House of Commons now honour this pledge to the people of this country, in a way that some other MPs (most of whom are no longer with us) so clearly failed to do.

Once Brexit is safely concluded, we can then move on to addressing a whole range of other priorities, including reinforcing our police, investing in the NHS and increasing resources for pupils in our schools.

I have done my level best to serve my constituents in Parliament for 18 years and I am very grateful to my electors, including those in Rayleigh, for giving me the opportunity to continue working hard on your behalf in the future.

Play area to be transformed after funding

Rayleigh play area is to be transformed after it was awarded funding to improve its facilities.

In total, £45,000 will be spent on the play area at Bedford Close after it was awarded a slice of funding from Rochford District Council (RDC).

The plans have been shaped by residents after the Rochford District Youth Council consulted them before plans were drawn up.

The improvements will see the installation of a large multi-play unit, a toddler trim trail, a basket swing and a roundabout designed to be inclusive for those with disabilities.

The play area upgrade in Rayleigh is part of £125,000 worth of funding, with other parks in the district also benefitting.

RDC's portfolio holder for environment, councillor Arthur Williams, said: "This transformation will give local children new opportunities to keep active and make friends, which is essential for their physical and mental well-being.

"This is part of a programme worth up to £1million, which will see investment in play areas from across the district, through council investment, parish councils and grant funding, and I am delighted that so many of our funding applications have proved successful as they will make such a difference to children and young people who live and play in this area."



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News from THE ROTARY CLUB Rayleigh Mill

The run-up to Christmas always gives the members of the club an opportunity to get out into the community to spread a little festive cheer and publicise the club and what we do.

On Thursday, November 28 the members of the Rotary Club of Rayleigh Mill spread delight among its many young customers at its soft toy tombola stall at the Rayleigh Christmas Lights ceremony.

For the third year running, president Jackie Wellman collected, catalogued and numbered more than 300 cuddly toys which, to the delight of many of the young customers, were offered at the stall where every child won a prize.

The members of the club were pleased to be able to make lots of children very happy and make some money for the club's charity fund.

The Rayleigh Christmas Lights ceremony was quickly followed by the Hockley Christmas Lights Ceremony, where the members again turned out to test the crowds with Roger Allen's Speed Reaction Game "Bop the Cop".

The game proved to be as popular as ever, with many youngsters eager to prove their sporting prowess, and many parents equally eager to prove their fitness and agility to their fiercely competitive offspring.

The club members again had an enjoyable and



satisfying day providing an entertaining competition and connecting with the community of Hockley.

On Saturday, December 14 the members of the club got together for their annual Christmas celebration. This year it was decided to forgo the usual Christmas dinner dance and settle instead for a pre-Christmas celebration dinner at The Rose Garden in Hockley, where the members enjoyed the excellent food followed by a light-hearted quiz, all held in the usual Rotary Club of Rayleigh Mill festive, convivial atmosphere.

If you would like to find out more about all the things that we do as a club, please see the club website at www.rayleighmillrotary.org.uk

Town to receive electric vehicle chargers

Rayleigh will soon be home to electric vehicle chargers as part of a map published by the Department for Transport recently.

Within the first phase, which commenced last month, Rayleigh will see chargers installed in The Approach Car Park, Websters Way Car Park and Market Car Park.

The second phase will include installation of a taxi charging point in Rayleigh.

The installations have been made to improve air quality along the A127 between Basildon and Rochford District.

Basildon Council is working in partnership with Rochford District Council on this project through the early measures grant fund, also working together with

SWARCO UK/eVolt. The aim is to reduce the levels of nitrogen in the shortest possible time.

This partnership led to the councils being awarded a £1.25million grant from the Department for Transport, of which £470,000 is specifically for the installation of rapid charging points for electric vehicles. This will not have an impact on local taxpayers.

Rochford District Council's portfolio holder for community, councillor Mike Webb, said: "Rochford District Council is continually exploring options to make our district 'greener'.

"I'm delighted that these new electric charging points will now be installed across the district and hope that it will encourage more drivers to seriously consider the use of electric vehicles in the future."

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Popular attraction looking for new volunteers



One of Rayleigh's most popular attractions is on the hunt for new volunteers to keep it running.

Rayleigh Windmill relies entirely on volunteers to welcome visitors to its Visit England Quality Assured visitor attraction and educational attraction which contains a museum, exhibition space and information about Rayleigh Mount.

The Windmill opens on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays between April and September each year, and also opens especially for group visits and the occasional out-of-season open day.

It is particularly looking for volunteers who are available to help out on Sunday afternoons.

Volunteer Michelle Collins said: "I am really interested in history and old buildings so when I saw that you could volunteer at the Windmill in Rayleigh that really sparked my interest.

"I didn't realise so much went on in Rayleigh, and listening to the reminiscences of the other volunteers, who for the most part have lived in Rayleigh and the surrounding area most of their lives, is fascinating."

No formal skills are required for the volunteer roles, but you must have a general enthusiasm for local history and have a friendly and pleasant manner.

For further information please visit Rochford.gov.uk/windmillvolunteer or call Elizabeth Lake for an informal chat on 01702 318120.

Child abuser tried to meet 10-year-old for sex

A 62-year-old pervert who tried to meet a 10-year-old girl in Rayleigh for sex has admitted his guilt.

Keith Banks, from London, pleaded guilty to one count of attempting to arrange and facilitate a child sex offence at Basildon Crown Court on Thursday, December 5.

He admitted trying to arrange to meet the girl, who cannot be named for legal reasons, with the pursuit taking place between September and November last year.

Following his guilty plea, Banks has been remanded in custody until he is sentenced on January 27, which will allow the court to prepare a pre-sentence report.

In court he spoke only to confirm his name, age and nationality.

Fresh call for "legend" to be honoured

A petition has been launched calling for a walkway to be named in honour of a man from Rayleigh, affectionately known as Laughing John.

Laughing John, whose real name was John Daines, died in June 2019, and since then the community has been campaigning to recognise the positive impact he had on Rayleigh.

More than 200 people have signed a petition calling on the council to consider naming a walkway between The Olive Brunch and Castle Road car Park in his honour.

The petition has been set up by Kevin Laidlow, who previously helped organise the fundraising bid for John's funeral.

Kevin said: "We are trying to erect a lasting memorial to local legend Laughing John Daines.

"After several setbacks from the council regarding a new bench or a wall plaque we have decided on a new approach and know something similar has been done in the town previously.

"We would like to name a walkway, ideally to be called Laughing John Way.

"We would appreciate your support by signing this petition if you agree with our plans and would like to see it put in place as a lasting memory to a Rayleigh legend."

To view the petition visit www.bit.ly/2Qweacn



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THE QUEEN VIC

The life and times of one of our strongest monarchs



HISTORY



You may have missed it, but the middle of 2019 marked what would have been the 200th birthday of Queen Victoria.

The May 24 milestone came and went without too much commotion, probably because the five-times great-grandmother to Prince George, Princess Charlotte and Prince Louis – who now reside in the palace where she was born – died way back in 1901.

Regardless, her influence on modern London and the world beyond is nothing short of remarkable, from the underground Victoria Line and the V&A Museum, to a spectacular lineage that sees five of her direct descendants currently sitting on thrones overseas.

Victoria's name was actually Alexandrina Victoria, and she wed her first cousin, Albert, at the age of just 20. During her lifetime she had nine children. She was fiercely strict, and admitted to hating being pregnant.

Her strange habits included having all windows open, even in winter, as well as insisting on proposing to husband Albert, in a break from tradition.

She stood just 5 feet tall, and was a widow almost twice as long as her marriage lasted (Albert died in their 22nd year wedded), and during Victoria's lifetime she survived eight assassination attempts. None of those occurred on the royal train – she was lucky enough to come to the throne at a time of significant technological and industrial advancement and was the first royal to take the new mode of transport when in 1842 she travelled from Windsor to Slough.

While Queen Victoria went through life ticking off a number of “firsts”, there is one she can no longer claim as her own, and that is the amount of time spent as the longest-reigning monarch. Previously she held the record with a total reign of 63 years and seven months, but Queen Elizabeth II broke that record in 2015 and continues to add on the years.



PUZZLES & TRIVIA

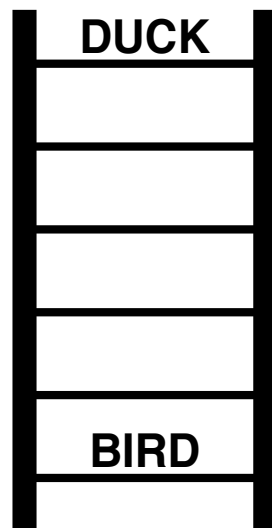
- ▶ ANNIVERSARY
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- ▶ GOOD NEWS
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- ▶ PROMOTION
- ▶ SAINT'S DAY
- ▶ WEDDING
- ▶ WELCOME PARTY



DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ A male ostrich can make a roaring noise, similar to a lion's roar
- ▶ Annually, cows kill more people than sharks do
- ▶ Butterflies taste with their feet, as their taste senses are located there. They can taste by standing on food
- ▶ Wolves can go for more than a week without eating
- ▶ Under their fur, polar bears' skin is black
- ▶ A fox can use its tail to communicate with other foxes
- ▶ A typical panda eats for half the day
- ▶ Cheetahs are the only big cats that can't roar

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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STAR QUALITY



“
THE LIST OF
THINGS I’VE
EXPERIENCED
MAKES ME
A BRILLIANT
CASE STUDY
FOR A LOT OF
PEOPLE
”

Jameela Jamil

It’s unusual for a radio or TV star to have such a handle on the more sensitive issues relevant to the fast-paced generation we live in today, but Jameela Jamil’s evolution from model, photographer and fashion scout to someone speaking out over abortion, cancer, eating disorders and mental health is rapidly making her one of our most important ambassadors.

Ask where Jameela Jamil’s passion for tackling the tough questions in life has come from and the 33-year-old Londoner is left in no doubt. “It all started for me as a journalist and a broadcaster – it has been about a passion I have for interviewing people and asking questions,” she says.

“In the early days that was all about fashion and socialising, and looking into other people’s lives. But then, I think the older you get, the more you really want to scratch below the surface, and if you do that with other people, you need to be prepared to look inwards as well.”

Jameela believes that although the internet has helped in making private problems public, we could still be doing more to help each other. “We walk past each other in the street and really have no idea what is going on under the surface, and through my own personal experiences I have found being open is one of the best therapies available. If I can encourage other people to do that, and it has even 10 per cent of the positive benefit I have taken from sharing my issues and worries, we’ll be able to overcome even greater challenges.”

For Jameela, those challenges began in earnest quite soon after she broke through on the E4 show *Music Zone*. Discovering she was pregnant, the presenter took the decision to have an abortion. She has said since, “It was the best decision I have ever made... both for me and for the baby I didn’t want, and wasn’t ready for, emotionally, psychologically and financially.”

Since then, she has been a stolid ambassador for hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, a genetic disorder causing loose joints, joint pain, stretchy skin and abnormal scar formation; has beaten cancer twice, and recently spoke up about eating disorders, something she encountered in her early 20s.

Jameela also revealed that she survived a suicide attempt in 2013, and has suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder.

“The list of things I’ve experienced makes me a brilliant case study for a lot of people,” she laughs. “No matter what you have, no matter what you look like, we all struggle, and we all need help from time to time.”

Indeed, as far as style and appearance goes, Jameela – who is in a relationship with musician James Blake – believes we are slowly finding ourselves capable of ignoring some of the unrealistic icons splashed across the internet.

“We all have things we want to change and we can all work towards that. We are all self-critical – I absolutely hated my height for a long time... it was a real challenge to my mental health as I felt so exposed.

“What I’ve learnt over time is you shouldn’t let any part of your shape influence you negatively, only positively. If I only wore flat shoes or trainers then I’d be running away from my height.

“Instead I want to embrace it, and everything else I need to change about myself. That’s got to be the right way to go.”



PETS

The ultimate WINTER SURVIVAL guide for pets

YOU MAY NOT LIKE WINTER AND THE COLD WEATHER THAT IT BRINGS, BUT FOR YOUR PET, THIS TIME OF YEAR CAN BE DEADLY

1. DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS OUTSIDE UNATTENDED

When it is particularly cold your dog should not be left outside unattended as it could quickly develop frostbite or hypothermia. The same goes for cats: if the temperature drops too much, try to keep your feline friends indoors. Rabbits and guinea pigs should be moved to the shed if the weather is particularly bad.

2. INVEST IN A DOGGY JUMPER

If you have a short-coated breed of dog, then consider purchasing a jumper or coat to keep it warm when out and about. It is also worth noting that if your dog keeps lifting its paws or stopping walking, it may be because the ground is proving too cold for it.

3. CHECK THAT YOUR CAT FLAPS DOES NOT BECOME FROZEN SHUT

If your cat is still going outside, make sure you check that the cat flap does not become frozen shut. It is also a good idea to have a litter tray inside for your cat during the colder months.

4. COLD PETS NEED MORE SUSTENANCE

You need to ensure that your pets are getting sufficient calories to keep themselves warm, especially if they are outside often. You should also keep them hydrated and check that your guinea pig's or rabbit's water bottle has not frozen.

QUICK PET PROTECTION CHECKLIST:

- * Wear reflective clothing (you and your dog) when walking in the dark.
- * Fit your cat with a microchip.
- * Check your garden for foxes/badgers.
- * Keep anti-freeze products out of reach.
- * Be vigilant of cats under cars.



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PLANT OF THE MONTH:

Raspberry Canes



GARDENING

January is one of the few months of the year where you might think there is nothing to be done or grown in your garden, but that is not the case. Raspberry canes are suitable for planting in the colder months, as long as the ground is not frozen, and will result in plump and juicy berries come the summer.

WHAT TYPE OF RASPBERRY CANES TO BUY?

There are two types of raspberry canes available: summer-fruiting varieties and autumn-fruiting varieties. Summer-bearing raspberry canes produce just one crop in May/June, whereas autumn ones can produce one or two crops each year, often in early summer and then again in late summer/early autumn.

HOW TO PLANT RASPBERRY CANES:

- Look for well-drained soil that also retains water well. Avoid heavy, clay soil.
- Choose a position that is partly shady to avoid full sun on the hottest days of the summer.
- Plant your canes 20 inches apart, with each row being around 5 feet apart to avoid overcrowding and for access.

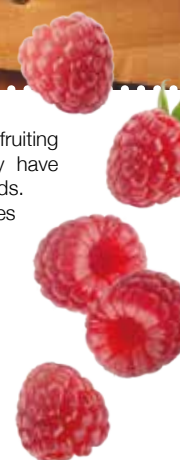
- Do not plant autumn- and summer-fruiting varieties next to each other as they have different maintenance and pruning needs.
- Alternatively, you can plant your canes in a raised bed with plenty of organic matter.

WHY GROW YOUR OWN RASPBERRIES?

Raspberries are sweet, delicious and versatile; however, they are also expensive to buy in the supermarkets. Why? Because raspberries do not continue to ripen once picked, so they are a bit of a nightmare for commercial growers. But for growing in your own garden, they are ideal.

ARE RASPBERRIES EASY TO GROW?

The plants themselves are low maintenance, and, as long as they have the right growing conditions, will provide enough fruit for your family all summer long, making them ideal for introducing children to the joys of growing your own produce.



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The sight of a shot glass may send minds racing back to Friday nights in Ritzy's. However, on this occasion, the end result is health, not a hangover, with "shots" and "shots" rapidly gaining in popularity for those who want to cram as much goodness into a thirsty thimble.



The Antioxidant

To reduce the risk of infections, diseases and cancer

INGREDIENTS

½ cup apple cider vinegar (120ml) • ½ cup filtered water (120ml) • 1 inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled • 1 tbsp honey • ¼ tsp Ceylon Cinnamon

PREPARATION

Combine the apple cider vinegar, water, ginger, honey and cinnamon in a blender and blitz until smooth • Divide among four shot glasses



The Daily Wellness Wonder

To boost immunity and aid alertness

INGREDIENTS

¾ cup filtered water (180ml) • 3 cups fresh kale (195g), chopped • ½ cup fresh parsley (15g), loosely packed • 2 large carrots, chopped • 2 cloves garlic

PREPARATION

Combine the water, kale, parsley, carrots and garlic in a blender and blitz until smooth • Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a liquid measuring cup. Discard the solids • Divide among four shot glasses



The Anti-inflammatory

To limit the prospect of pain arising from inflammation and swelling

INGREDIENTS

2 oranges, juiced • 2 lemons, juiced • 1-inch piece fresh turmeric, peeled • ½ tsp black pepper • ½ tsp cayenne

PREPARATION

Combine the orange juice, lemon juice, turmeric, pepper and cayenne in a blender and blend until smooth • Divide among four shot glasses

Photo credit: Inspiredtaste.com



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Skin: DEEP

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Looking after our outer shell these days really is a skin-deep exercise, and luckily there are a number of gadgets on the market that make our complexions a considerable pleasure to maintain:

FOREO IRIS

A strange-looking contraption that's held to the eye. It vibrates gently, gradually stimulating the lymphatic system so that puffiness around the area is reduced. It also feels quite nice.



ZIIP BEAUTY

If you're au fait with nano-currents, you'll know that these little impulses are renowned for burrowing into the skin and aiding the increase in collagen and elastin production. Collagen is the most abundant protein in our bodies, and aiding its supply will strengthen your bones and add structure to your skin.



REVIVE LIP THERAPY

While "a moment on the lips, a lifetime on the hips" may be a rather crueller reflection of putting on weight, we should at least glory in our perfect pouts. While going down the Leslie Ash route could be deemed a step too far, the ReVive Light Therapy Lip Care tool will send a ray of infrared light onto your mouth, promoting collagen growth for thicker, fuller lips.



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FACEWARE PRO LED FACE MASK

It's got a Freddie Kruger-type look that's as off-putting as its long-winded name, but this somewhat sinister-looking face mask can do wonders to your entire visage. It fires almost 200 red and blue lights onto the skin, zapping acne-producing bacteria, reducing redness and stimulating collagen... and it does it all in three minutes, so your hammer horror look needn't be taken out in public.



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THE FUTURE OF FASHION is fluid

Gender-free fashion is set to become even more popular in 2020, with well-known high street brands such as H&M and ASOS showcasing their gender-neutral fashion collections as well as more high-end designers such as Chanel leading the way in this fashion forward movement.

WHAT IS GENDER-FREE FASHION EXACTLY?

Gender-free fashion, in a nutshell, is clothing that can be worn by all genders: male, female, transgender and any other type of gender that a person may class themselves as.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GENDER-FREE FASHION?

> Gender-free fashion is more sustainable.

Gender-free fashion garments can be shared among the sexes, meaning an item has more chance of being reused and recycled rather than ending up in landfill.

> Gender-free fashion can help put an end to stereotypes.

Gender-free fashion strives to eliminate common stereotypes by creating clothes that can be worn by anyone; no more delicate fabrics that are only for girls or strong lines that are designed exclusively for men.

> Gender-free fashion is all inclusive.

You may have always coveted one of your boyfriend's shirts, but chances are it just doesn't fit you properly. Gender-free fashion provides both women and men with the opportunity to wear all styles regardless of their gender.

HOW CAN I WEAR THIS STYLE OF CLOTHING?

- > Shop around online and check out gender-neutral fashion on Instagram to see what you like.
- > Start by adding just one gender-free item to your outfit.
- > Don't be afraid to experiment with different styles.
- > Women – opt for a loose-fitting boiler suit in a neutral colour or an oversized dress shirt paired with unisex trousers.
- > Men – take it slow and steady with a handbag, or be bold with a lace top or pussy-bow blouse.



FASHION

Photo credit: H&M

God's OWN COUNTRY

THE TOP FIVE TOURIST ATTRACTIONS TO VISIT IN YORKSHIRE

NATIONAL RAILWAY MUSEUM, York

A railway buff's dream ticket, with a museum showcasing the very finest trains that have adorned the UK's spiderweb of tracks – from stunning, inconceivably powerful locomotives to miniature trains on narrow-gauge railways. This celebration of British engineering is complemented by exhibitions, galleries and outdoor play areas.

YORK MINSTER, York

One of the world's most magnificent cathedrals, it has been drawing advocates of faith, solitude and mind-blowing architecture since the 7th century. Put another way, when the foundations were laid at Paris's Notre-Dame, York Minster had already been welcoming people in for 500 years.

In 2020 it offers multi-sensory services, exhibitions, events and open days in a celebration of contemplative contentment.

ROYAL ARMOURIES MUSEUM, Leeds

A £42.5million purpose-built museum constructed in Leeds dock, the Royal Armouries looks at the passages and processes of war across the globe, with weaponry, artefacts, re-enactments

and tributes to those who have fought for their principles. And, as with all national museums, entry is free.

TROPICAL BUTTERFLY HOUSE, Sheffield

Whoever thought York would become renowned for its blend of tropical animals, from lizards to tarantulas, birds to snakes? Add in otters, owls and creepy-crawlies... oh, and a few thousand butterflies, and the Tropical Butterfly House in Sheffield – which also doubles as a falconry centre – is a natural world wonder. Last year it celebrated its 25th birthday.

THE BOTANICAL GARDENS, Sheffield

Situated very close to the city centre, Sheffield's Botanical Gardens are every bit the paradise of calm and serenity we associate with the likes of Kew or the Eden Project. The 19-acre site slopes majestically, offering wonderful views from green spaces, tree-clustered woods, bespoke gardens and spectacular Grade II-listed glass pavilions. With music, theatre, art shows and Christmas events, this is truly an all-year-round attraction for open-air enthusiasts.

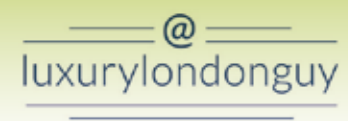
Photo credit: Pecold/Shutterstock.com, Jeanette Teare/Shutterstock.com



My luxury is
a room with a view

Photo courtesy of
Virtuoso traveller, Amy Goetsch

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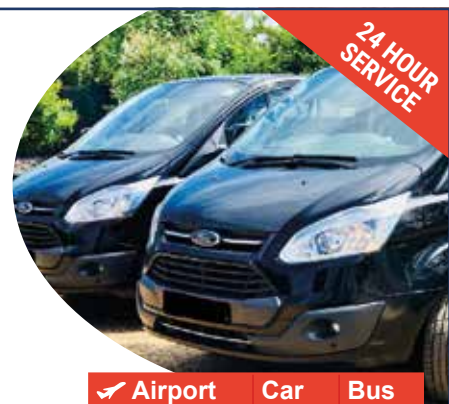
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Jumping for JACKFRUIT

Veganuary is upon us once again, and for the carnivores among us, the thought of going meat-free (not to mention all the other tasty animal products that we are asked to forgo) can be an unsettling thought.

However, what if there were a vegan ingredient you could cook with that mimicked the meat-eating experience?

What is jackfruit?

Jackfruit, also known as jack tree, is a relative of the fig, mulberry and breadfruit family. Originating in southwest India, this bulbous fruit is most famous for its ability to imitate pulled pork or other meat-based meals.



Jackfruit Curry

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 onion ● 1 tsp ginger ● 3 garlic cloves ● 2 tbsp curry powder ● 1 tbsp flour ● 1 cup vegetable stock
- 1 can coconut cream ● 1 can tomatoes ● 1 can jackfruit – drained and rinsed

HOW TO MAKE:

- Cook onion until soft ● Add ginger, garlic and other spices ● Lower heat and add flour
- Pour in stock, cream and tomatoes, cook for 3 minutes ● Add jackfruit ● Cook for 20–25 minutes ● Shred the jackfruit



BBQ Pulled Jackfruit

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 red onion ● 1 tsp cinnamon ● 1 tsp cumin ● 2 tsp smoked paprika ● 2 tsp chipotle Tabasco ● 1 tbsp apple cider vinegar ● 4 tbsp BBQ sauce ● 1 can chopped tomatoes ● 2 cans young jackfruit in salted water

HOW TO MAKE:

- Cook onion until soft ● Add spices ● Add Tabasco, vinegar and 3 tbsp BBQ sauce ● Add tomatoes, jackfruit and 200ml water ● Simmer for 30 minutes (lid on), stirring to break up jackfruit ● Remove lid and cook for a further 10 minutes ● Shred jackfruit and add 1 tbsp BBQ sauce



Jackfruit (no tuna) Sandwich

YOU WILL NEED:

- 1 can young jackfruit in water ● ¼ cup finely chopped red onion ● 1 tsp Dijon mustard ● 4 tbsp Veganise (vegan mayo) ● Relish

HOW TO MAKE:

- Rinse jackfruit and pat dry ● Shred with a fork ● Mix with all other ingredients ● Season to taste



Photo credit: www.veganjournal.com



TOKYO 2020 THE NEW SPORTS



1. SKATEBOARDING

In the first of a new series, we look at five sports preparing to debut at the Tokyo Olympics in 2020

Considering that, over the course of the last 120 years, the Olympics have embraced such bizarre sports as tug of war, rope climbing and pistol duelling, it seems somewhat perverse that it's taken until the year 2020 for organisers to have put in an order for some halfpipes and knee pads.

Better late than never, skateboarding debuts in Tokyo in 2020, with a watching world keen to see what the quirky pursuit will do for the reputation of such an iconic global tournament. And therein lies the rub – that while the IOC is keen to expand its reach into sports that resonate so readily with people all across the globe (and let's be honest, you'd be hard pressed to find someone who hasn't stepped onto a board at some point), the professional skateboarders are reportedly nervy about appearing under the somewhat formal, mainstream, structured Olympic tag.

With that in mind, it will be

interesting to see how the Japanese present the sport, which will debut from July 24. There are 80 spots open to competitors – 38 men and 38 women from outside nations, and two each for the hosts.

Judges will rate boarders on speed, difficulty, timing, stability and the overall flow of the performance, while special attention will be paid to the performers' ability to suspend in mid-air.

Qualifying for the Olympics continues right up until June, which means an intensive period of competition, with the male and female winner staking the kudos of being their country's sole representatives.

At the moment, the British number one is Sam Beckett from Norfolk (pictured), although with a global ranking of 92 he'll have to go some to get in the medals, in a sport typically dominated by the Americans.



Photo credit: skateism.com



WHAT'S THE DEAL

with Deborah?



How has Deborah Meaden achieved cult status in the reality business show that has inspired a nation of entrepreneurs?

We've all seen it – the idea, the pitch, the raised eyebrows, the fluttering of notebooks, the casual panning of the camera across wads of cash, the inquisition, and finally, a handshake... or two, or more.

Since *Dragon's Den* first leapt onto our screens in January 2005, the format of the show has remained largely the same, with Deborah Meaden present in seat four since series three.

"Of course, at its heart, it's a television show, and we shouldn't look too far beyond that," says Meaden. "Yes, it would be lovely to think cash is handed over in the green room and new business partners retire to a local hostelry for a celebratory pint, but the rigours and demands of production schedules mean relationships on the day are brief and incredibly hands off, with even those successful deals.

"It is a strange concept for a few reasons,"

continues Meaden. "In real life, you would rarely shake hands on a deal just 20 minutes after first meeting someone, and the level of due diligence that is liberally cast aside during negotiations makes it a peculiar way to do business.

"However," she states, "real deals do get cut, and on occasions the format really does permit the instinct and desire to 'take a punt' over applying rational business sense, and I do feel we all need a bit of that from time to time."

Certainly, there has been nothing conventional about the 60-year-old's own path to an estimated wealth of £40million. Even today, she sleeps in until 8.30am then walks around her Somerset garden bare-footed in order to establish a feeling of being grounded.

In the past, the holiday park queen of the south-west took on all manner of jobs while working her way up, building finances and embracing the value of experience that accompanied roles as diverse as a bingo caller, pony ride supervisor and salesroom model.

"I'll never look back on any experience and say it

was a waste of time," she says.

"We build knowledge all the time, and learning on the job is by far the most valuable of all."

As for Meaden's advice for those either setting out for the first time or looking to inject renewed vigour into their business lives, she has the following five tips to consider:

ONE: You are the boss – the organisation will behave as you do, so be driven at all times.

TWO: Don't be distracted – only focus on the elements that will take your business forward.

THREE: Adapt your plan – be flexible and willing to change your way forward.

FOUR: Believe the dream – be passionate, authentic and optimistic at all times.

FIVE: Forgive yourself – you don't have to get everything right.

"The thing is, whether we are in a television studio at Salford Quays shooting *Dragon's Den* or sat in an office in Canary Wharf, what we're talking about is, essentially, all the same thing – business involves real people, these are life ambitions and livelihoods at stake, and there are few things more fulfilling in life than cutting a deal."

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Got your NUMBER

WE ARE IN THE MIDST OF AN ELECTRIC CAR REVOLUTION, BUT WILL GREEN NUMBER PLATES REALLY KEEP SALES RISING?

If you consider all the benefits of purchasing an electric car, screwing on a green number plate would probably be well down the list, except environmental boffins believe otherwise.

In a scheme that could come into effect as early as next year, a lairy green registration may be another step towards convincing people to swap petrol for electric power. That's because local authorities may allow green-plated vehicles to drive in bus lanes, or perhaps to park for free in otherwise paid-for bays.

However, in response to the plans, less than a quarter of drivers supported the idea, suggesting the real incentives to go green should come in the form of a more plentiful supply of charging points, better incentives for existing car owners and cheaper entry-level vehicles.

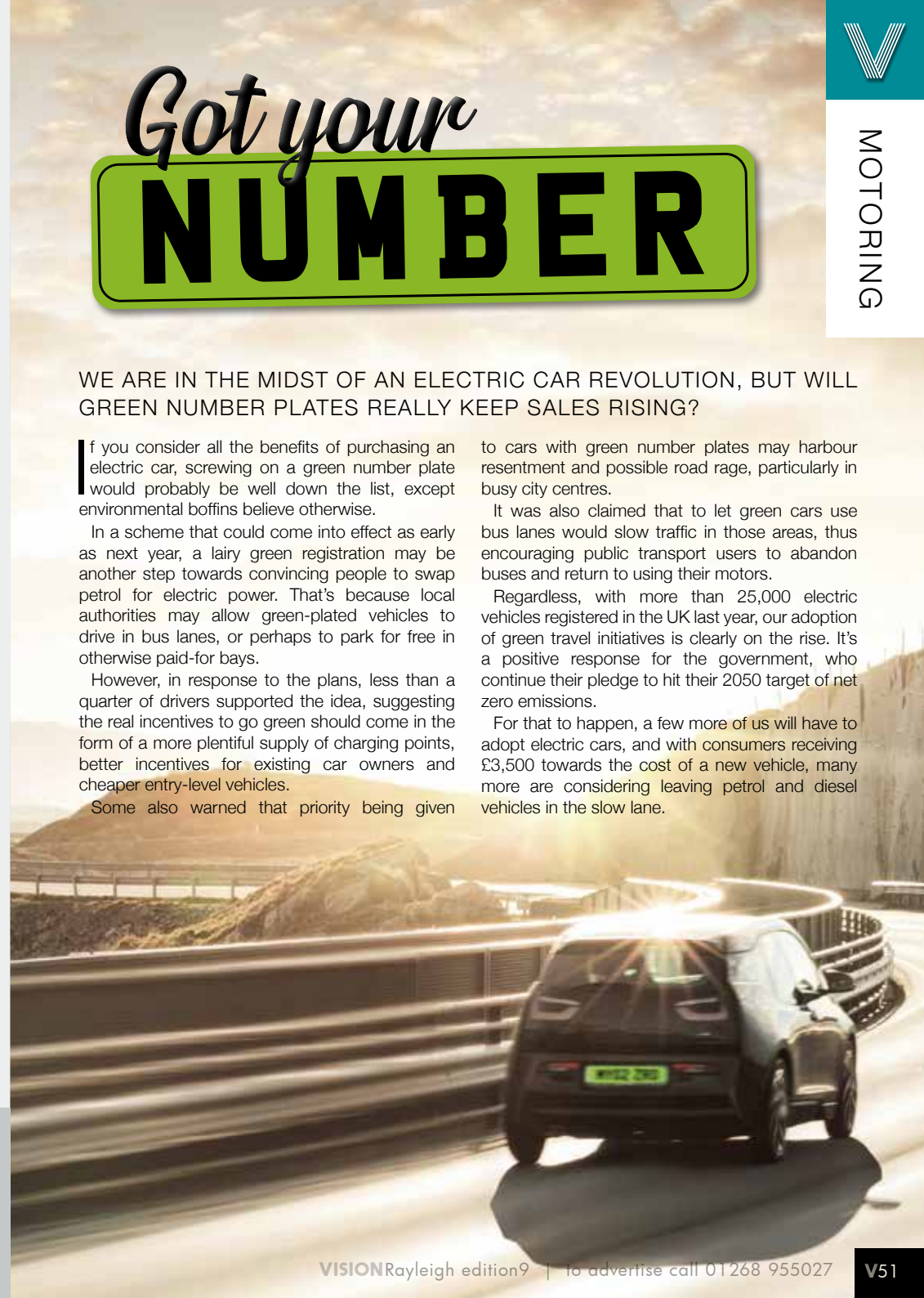
Some also warned that priority being given

to cars with green number plates may harbour resentment and possible road rage, particularly in busy city centres.

It was also claimed that to let green cars use bus lanes would slow traffic in those areas, thus encouraging public transport users to abandon buses and return to using their motors.

Regardless, with more than 25,000 electric vehicles registered in the UK last year, our adoption of green travel initiatives is clearly on the rise. It's a positive response for the government, who continue their pledge to hit their 2050 target of net zero emissions.

For that to happen, a few more of us will have to adopt electric cars, and with consumers receiving £3,500 towards the cost of a new vehicle, many more are considering leaving petrol and diesel vehicles in the slow lane.



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Preparing for Potty Training

The Snug, 100A High Street, Rayleigh, SS6 7BY
January 22, 10.30am – 12.30pm

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This session aims to help take the stress out of
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This session is £20. Book spaces online at www.littlelifesteps.com/bookings-checkout/preparing-for-potty-training-6

Masters Performing Arts Free Girls Day

Masters Performing Arts College, 2-4 Totman
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The directors of Masters will be scouting during
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audition for full directors scholarships for a three-year
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Spaces are limited. For more information and
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