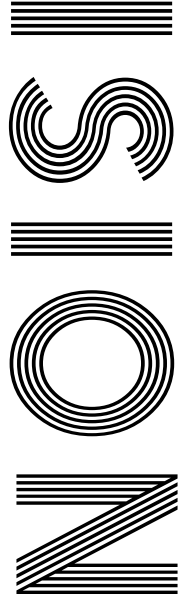


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At the time of print all content in **VISION** was relevant and up to date according to COVID-19 government guidelines

Editor's notes...



Nik Allen, Editor

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

It seems now that with every passing day, normality - that is, the 'new normal' - moves closer. Of course, the world around us, our

community and the life we lived before aren't the same, and won't be for quite some time. However, we hope, eventually, that the shops, football stadiums, cafes, theme parks, nightclubs, pubs, workplaces and shopping thoroughfares will be bustling with people going about their business... without distancing, without masks, without fear.

I know that's some way off, but I am encouraged by what I see. And inspired by a new sense of kindness the nation has adopted, from big gestures to more people saying "hello" in the street. The siege mentality we adopted in fighting the COVID-19 peak has united the country as if we were in wartime.

And yet, for now, we still need to keep our distance, maintain optimum hygiene, and stay safe and sensible. Recently we have seen complacency creep in, with overcrowded beaches and mass demonstrations. I can understand why breaking free from three months of restrictions has been so appealing, but we would never forgive ourselves if we got so far down the line only to be dragged into the turmoil of a second spike and the retightening of restrictions that could follow.

We owe it to the memory of those who have lost their lives to coronavirus to fight it for good.

Until next month, enjoy this month's **VISION**.

Nik



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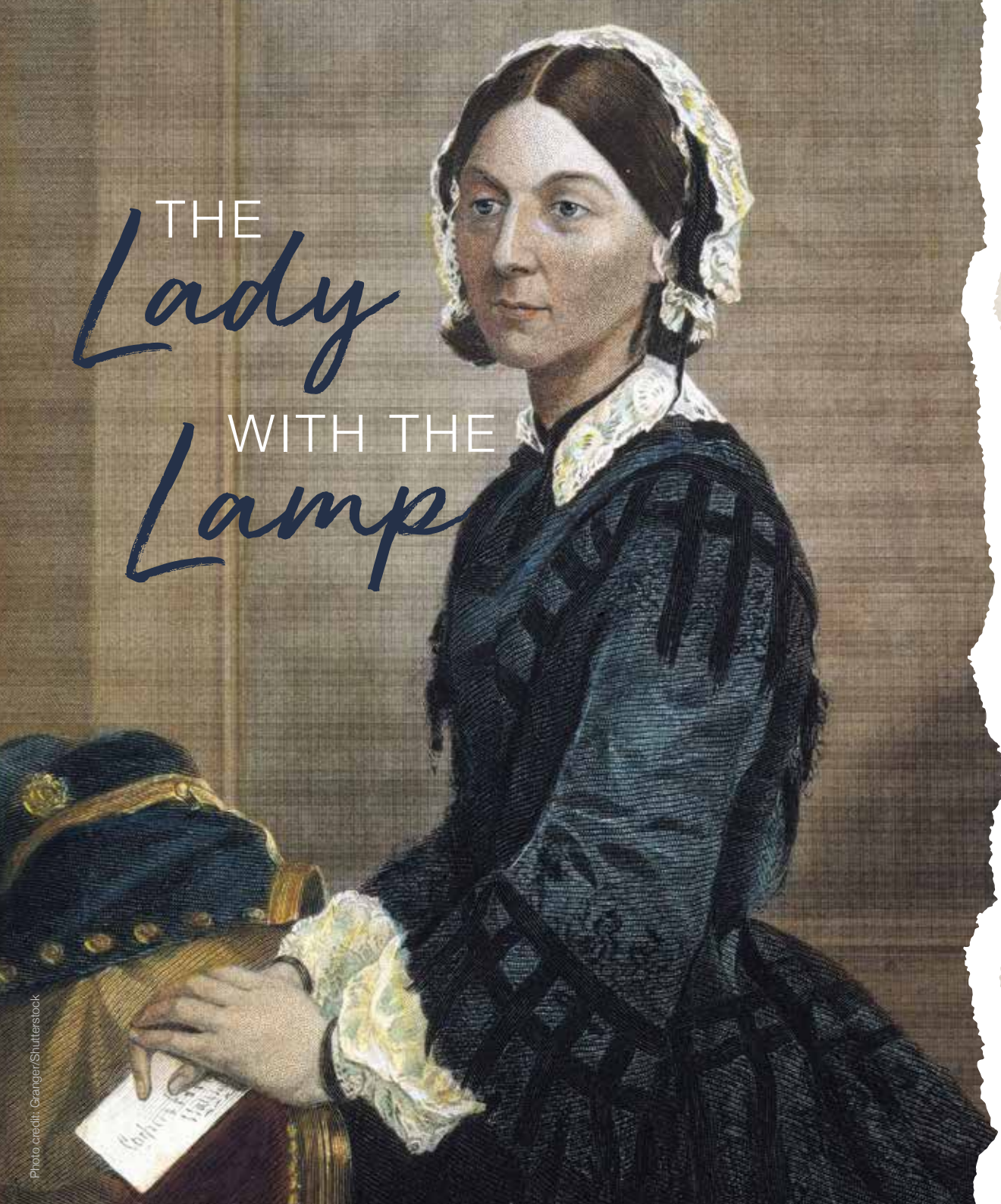
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THE Lady WITH THE Lamp

How much do we really know about Florence Nightingale, as celebrations marking the 200th anniversary of her birth continue?

We are living through a period where those in all corners of the National Health Service are experiencing acclaim, admiration and no small amount of empathy in ways rarely seen before.

True, it may have taken a global pandemic for the universal admiration of our healthcare heroes to fully be appreciated. However, as the spectre of COVID-19 continues to sink further into the background, so now we should ensure those doctors, nurses, consultants, paramedics, porters, reception staff, phonenumber operators (and everyone else in the mould of Florence Nightingale) will always be appreciated.

Nightingale, born in May 1820, is regarded as the pioneering force in modern nursing, and yet the iconic nature in which her image is celebrated – the Lady with the Lamp, going round at night tending to those wounded in the Crimean War – only actually tells half the story.

That's because while, first and foremost, Nightingale was a nurse working on the ground in then the most desperate of conditions, she was as well a woman of strong mind and powerful opinion. From an upper-class background, and well travelled prior to exploring nursing as a career, she was a brilliant mathematician, an organiser and an advocate for statistics.

Having such an analytical mind transformed a rather unstructured, 'make do' and manual process of caring for the sick into a slick, regimented process where structure could be directly linked to saving lives.

From graphs to pie charts and even infographics, Florence Nightingale's take on the duties that lay in front of her were revolutionary. Indeed, she is credited with the invention of the polar area diagram, and would work these and other visual explanations into nursing reports. As a result, in 1859 she became the first female member of the Royal Statistical Society, and 15 years later was announced as an honorary member of the American Statistical Association.

With every new study there was an even more expressive method for understanding and acting upon the statistics in hand, from accompanying the British Army in India in the 1850s, where she slashed mortality rates caused by drinking toxic water, to returning home to promote literature and feminism in a way that was scientific and exacting.

That feminism link is slightly at odds with her opinions on the fairer sex. She was, at times, brutally disparaging towards women, and even referred to herself in masculine terms, as "a man of action" and "a man of business".

In her defence, Nightingale was perhaps just rallying against a world in which men had the upper hand. To consider what she achieved then, it's interesting to think how much impact she might have now, in an era when equality, technology and innovation are key parameters in healthcare.

To celebrate what our medical key workers have achieved now is, ultimately, to thank Florence Nightingale for setting up, styling and steering modern-day nursing to what it is today... something we are all proud of.

WHEN THE *Bluebirds* FLEW AWAY

Celebrating the life of the 'Forces Sweetheart', Dame Vera Lynn

When news came in the middle of June of Dame Vera Lynn's death, it was a case of reflecting on, rather than mourning, the life of someone so intrinsically linked to those courageous troops who led us to victory in World War II.

That the singer, songwriter and entertainer was in her 20s when her iconic ode to our soldiers, *(There'll Be Bluebirds Over) The White Cliffs of Dover*, became such an emotional and inspirational marker for the war effort, shows the longevity she achieved right up to her passing.

Born in East Ham, Dame Vera's performing debut came with the famous Joe Loss Orchestra in 1935. By the time war broke out four years later she was signed to Decca Records, and agreed to venture deep underground to sing with those sheltering in tube stations from the danger of German air raids.

Her *Sincerely Yours* radio programme in 1941 was a vehicle for messages to be sent out to

troops on the front line, and she soon joined the Entertainments National Service Association – which hosted open-air concerts – with whom she travelled to Egypt, India and Burma.

Post-war, Dame Vera's popularity stuck, with extensive TV performances, a star talent at the Royal Variety shows, and countless live concerts.

A dedicated philanthropist, she continued to raise money via her self-titled children's charity right up until her death on June 18, at the venerable age of 103.

What Dame Vera would have made of the recent furore concerning Winston Churchill's statue is unclear – we suspect, in embodying all the same spirit, resilience and fortitude of the wartime, of which she was a crucial part, she would have simply diverted her attention to those fallen heroes again.

"Not a day goes by when I don't think of those brave men, and what they gave to this country... and one day we'll meet again."

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BACHELOR Pad Style



You're suave, independent and effortlessly cool. How do you go about creating the bachelor pad to match the perfect eligible bachelor image?



It would be churlish to suppose designing the ideal bachelor pad should start off with the bedroom, but given that we spend one-third of our lives in one, it's actually a strong consideration. A bloke's bedroom should have white sheets and luxurious, stylish bedding, with simple and inviting artwork reflecting intelligence, travel and the odd hint of romance.



Just as important is the first impression when you enter the house or flat, and with the male penchant for a 'man drawer', a hallway should have sensible space for stylish storage of jackets, keys, cash and all those other essentials guys have. Rather than hide these away, make a statement of the fact (a key and cash bowl is a great idea), with metal, wood and greenery all combining well for a big welcome.



For the main living space or lounge, a statement piece of art will express more in one picture than a hundred words. A leather sofa looks great against anything, with lamps and throws a must.

Consider as well your everyday items – cutlery, cups, pots and pans. Pulling out an old Stella pint glass procured from the pub in 2014 won't look good – think clean, white, matching, statement-like pieces that show you don't need anyone else's rejects.

And the bathroom space should be similarly masculine. Matching towels, sparing wash items, aftershave and moisturiser, and certainly not a hint of leftover Head & Shoulders.

The ultimate allure for any bachelor pad is cleanliness. Relaxing in your own company or inviting someone else in should be a reflection of homeliness and health. Keep windows shiny, the music classy and even invest in a hotel-level air freshener, and your bachelor pad is ready to impress.

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DIY Macramé

PLANT HANGER



Photo credit: fhd.com, missadorned.com

Do you remember the 1970s' trend that was macramé? If not, you are in for a treat. This simple yet highly visually attractive knotting technique can be used to create many beautiful items for your home. In this article, we are going to show you how to make a macramé plant hanger.

YOU WILL NEED:

- 8 pieces of 15ft cotton cord | A 2-inch brass ring
- 2 pieces of 5ft string

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Take all 8 pieces of 15ft cord, fold in half and loop through the ring
- > Using your 5ft long pieces of string, tie a loop knot directly below the ring
- > Take 4 strands and tie a square knot
- > Repeat this last step 6 times
- > Repeat this pattern with the next group of four cords and repeat for the remaining cords
- > Leave a 2½-inch gap and tie a half square knot
- > Repeat the half square knot until you have created a 5-inch spiral
- > Repeat for remaining knot groups
- > Leave a 6-inch gap and create a crossover square knot using the 2 right cords from your first group and the 2 left cords from the adjacent group

- > Repeat the process for the remaining knot groups
- > Leave a 6-inch gap and create another crossover square knot by alternating the cords from the previous step
- > Leave a 3½-inch gap and tie a loop knot
- > Cut off any excess cord to create a stylish tassel

The above requires a basic knowledge of three different types of macramé knotting techniques: a square knot, a half square knot and a loop knot. You can find simple tutorials for all of these online.

DECORATING IDEAS:

- > Dip-dye
- > Embroidery floss
- > Silk or leather instead of cotton cord
- > Fill with fresh flowers, succulents or a battery powered candle



Loop knot



Square knot



Half square knot

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From the Middle East to middle England, Noor Charchafchi's unique design palate

Given that Noor Charchafchi, the owner of London-based interior designers Celine Estates, hails from the Middle East, it's unsurprising to find such dedication to bright, clinical, uncomplicated styles of design.

In an interiors world that often tries to complicate the equation, either in creating a menagerie of conflicting ideas or in going the other way with a perplexing excess of contemporary nothingness, the 39-year-old attempts to tread a sensible line between Arab air and lightness and the reflections of a childhood in London – it all offers design values that are based in both tradition and heritage.

"I must admit I've always been a bit nervous about new ideas and experiments," she admits. "Design comes very much from the heart, and while no one could ever tell me I was wrong in what I was attempting – because we are all correct in the sense of what we feel works – my designs aren't to everyone's tastes."



The key elements are:

- > WHITES AND BEIGE...** celebrating subtleties of shade is very important, with harmony and heavy fabrics complemented with wooden or stone floors. Neutral is seen as a positive thing, where other colours can be in around it, rather than being in conflict.
- > BEADING AND TRIM...** framing furniture, bedsteads or tables in bevelling and added detail is a great way to draw the eye to a piece, as well as adding detail.
- > FOCAL POINTS...** each room should have a key point where the attention is centred. For the bedroom, it's the bed, and everything should be created around it. For the front room, perhaps a table, sofa or fireplace.

The trick is to start with one thing and work outwards.

> CURTAINS AND DRAPES... to enhance the idea of air and flow, curtains are pivotal, not an afterthought.

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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

LOCAL NEWS



Devastating blow for family as dad told brain cancer is incurable

It was around 18 months ago when life for this Rayleigh family took a massive blow.

Life for dad of three, Trevor Wood, was turned upside down after he was given the devastating diagnosis of a grade 4 brain tumour.

From that point onwards, the family has been on an emotional roller coaster as most recently they were told there was nothing more doctors could do.

After being given the diagnosis, Trevor went into life-threatening brain surgery just before Christmas to remove the tumour and endured brain radiotherapy and chemotherapy.

Unfortunately, the tumour grew back and Trevor then faced more surgery and operations.

Trevor, along with his family, friends and wife Leanne, was told the heartbreaking news last month that three more tumours had been discovered and they are incurable.

Speaking about the heartbreak, his wife, Leanne, described him as her best friend and soulmate.

She said: "My heart has broken, Trev is my best friend, my soul mate, my everything.

"I don't know how I will carry on without him but

we've got three beautiful children who are also heartbroken and I need to be strong for them.

"My whole life has been turned upside down and I will never get over this."

To support the family, their best friend, Becky Crocker, set up a fundraising page to help take the pressure off them financially.

On the page, she said: "I'm doing this to try and help take the pressure off both Trevor and Leanne so they don't need to worry about the bills or if they want to get a takeaway, a treat for the kids, or anything.

"Any donations will be greatly appreciated."

As **VISION** Rayleigh went to print, £3,461 had been raised for Trevor and his family.

Becky posted a thank you message on the GoFundMe page.

She wrote: "I am overwhelmed with the amazing kind donations you have all so kindly given. Trevor is a loyal West Ham supporter so a massive thank you to the West Ham supporters for your amazing donations. Please please keep sharing."

To support, the fundraising page can be found at www.gofundme.com/f/help-for-trevor-and-leanne



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LOCAL NEWS

Rayleigh is gradually getting back to normal after the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The government programme of gradually lifting the lockdown has continued and on Saturday, July 4, hospitality businesses, including pubs and restaurants and other outlets, such as barbers and hairdressers, have finally been allowed to reopen to the paying public.

Since that time, I have enjoyed a pint in The Roebuck and also a much-needed haircut at Hudsons the barber, both on the High Street. (Incidentally, I was at school in Laindon with Mark Hudson, who owns the business, back in the 1970s, so I have the advantage of being able to wallow in nostalgia from time to time, while I am getting my locks trimmed.)

The government has dropped the recommended

social distancing limit from two metres to one metre plus (one metre with certain precautions), without which these businesses could not have realistically reopened to customers. The government has provided financial support to many local businesses during the pandemic, but to be truly viable in the long term, they obviously have to reopen and start serving customers again.

It is good to see our local economy beginning to revive itself, albeit still with a number of precautions, and it was good to see the High Street bustling again on a recent summer weekend. We are not completely out of the woods yet, but hopefully things will continue to improve in our town in the weeks and months ahead.

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Author who embraced life in lockdown



An author from Rayleigh has published a new book to help overcome the stresses and anxieties of life in lockdown.

Janine Agombar spent the early days of lockdown thinking of ways she could combine her two passions of writing and mental health and came up with *Embracing Life in Lockdown*.

She explained: "I regularly write blog posts online and had written one on the practice of gratitude and was planning another on the benefits of meditation, when the thought occurred to me that I could actually collate these in to an e-book. A few more chapters and six days later I had completed the book.

"My motivation was the thought of how many people are struggling to cope with life in lockdown. As I am training to become a counsellor, I wanted to combine my knowledge of mental health with my own personal insights, and my goal was to help people feel less overwhelmed and alone. My little book may not change the world, but it may change the world for one person."

In the book, Janine gives lots of tips and suggestions about ways to overcome the stresses and anxieties associated with this new normal – from meditation and mindfulness to losing yourself in creative activities.

She revealed: "My biggest advice on staying positive is to try to adopt a grateful mindset, as the practice of gratitude is said to enhance our resilience and well-being and make us more positive in general."



News from THE ROTARY CLUB

Rayleigh Mill

On February 24, Lindsay Hurrell from the charity Re-cycle visited the Rotary Club of Rayleigh Mill to tell the members about the work of recycling unwanted bicycles and shipping them to communities in Africa where they can transform the lives of the recipients.

The members of the club were keen to help the charity, but the coronavirus pandemic suddenly put a halt to any immediate action to collect bicycles.

The lockdown, however, proved to be an advantage, as many people turned their attention to clearing out their garden sheds and, with the rubbish tips closed, were looking for ways to dispose of unwanted bicycles. The president of the club, Jackie Wellman, set about finding these unwanted bikes. The results were almost overwhelming but she collated all the donors' data and, when the restrictions were eased, set about collecting the bikes.

Another Rotarian, assistant district governor Steve Gale, of Steve's Self Drive, from the Rotary Club of Thorpe Bay, lent the club a van, complete with a full tank of petrol, and on Tuesday, June 2, Jackie and fellow Rayleigh Mill Rotarian, Sertac Yilmaz, planned their route, collected 40 bicycles and delivered them to the reopened Re-cycle warehouse in Colchester.



The following day they collected a further 42 unwanted bikes and again delivered them to the thankful volunteers at the warehouse.

The collection was so successful that offers of bicycles kept pouring in and Jackie has now received enough offers of bikes to have another collection.

The need for these unwanted cycles is ongoing. If you have a bike that you want to donate, please get in touch with the Rotary Club of Rayleigh Mill at president@rayleighmillrotary.org.uk

Police alerted after a large group incident



Last month, Essex Police rushed to a park in Rayleigh after reports of a large group 'fighting'.

The incident happened at King George's Park at around 7.40pm on Tuesday, June 9.

After the police had attended the incident, the group dispersed and no arrests were made.

Officers then stayed in the area and patrolled the park shortly after. The park is a short distance away from the police station.

A spokesperson for Essex Police said no offences were disclosed. The spokesperson said: "Officers responded to reports of a disturbance at King George's Park in Rayleigh.

"We were called shortly after 7.40pm to reports that around 20 people were believed to be fighting.

"We attended and dispersed the group. No offences were disclosed.

"A search was conducted afterwards and we remained in the area to patrol and reassure residents."

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Food bank on the lookout for donations



Volunteers at Rayleigh Food Bank are inviting people to donate some in-demand items so it can continue to support the community.

The food bank based at the Rayleigh Evangelical Church on Eastwood Road opened in June last year, and since then it has quickly grown from helping 10 to 20 people to more than 65 people.

It has a team of volunteers and is open from 10am to noon on Wednesdays and Fridays.

Volunteer Stephanie Wheeler said: "We need tinned meat, fruit and desserts, cooking sauces and cereals. We are also low on crisps, biscuits, tea and coffee.

"We can also use tinned or packet food, any toiletries, baby wipes or nappies and any household cleaning products."

Anyone can benefit from the Rayleigh Food Bank. For more information visit www.recchurch.co.uk/rec-foodbank

Stunning summer sunset



Photo credit: Helen Watson

Here at VISIONRayleigh we like to share not only fascinating lifestyle features and hyperlocal news but also pictures that capture Rayleigh in all its glory.

This stunning summer sunset was captured by Rayleigh resident Helen Watson on June 19.

It was shared on Facebook, where she simply

captioned it, "Fab sky tonight over Rayleigh."

It led to many people commenting on the stunning colours on display, and we agree.

Have you taken a stunning photograph in Rayleigh which you would like to share? If so, we would love to feature it.

Email your pictures to rayleigh@visionmag.co.uk

Campaign provides boost to town centre

Rayleigh town centre has benefited from a campaign aimed at encouraging shoppers to return as lockdown restrictions are eased.

As part of the We Are Back campaign launched by Rochford District Council (RDC), posters and signage have been introduced to encourage visitors to shop safely and enable socially distanced queuing.

The We Are Back material has been made available thanks to the government's Reopening High Streets Safely Fund.

Colin MacLean, director of Amos Estates in Rayleigh, said: "The We Are Back campaign has encapsulated the mood of the business community perfectly.

"Like our customers, we have spent weeks of frustration stuck at home looking forward to a return to normality, and the relaxation of the restrictions has provided the opportunity to rebuild the local economy from the high street."

RDC's councillor Simon Wootton, portfolio holder for enterprise, said: "I would like to thank our residents who have supported the We Are Back campaign by visiting local businesses in their first week of operating, taking care to adhere to the signage and advice to shoppers.

"It is reassuring to see visitors returning to our high streets, demonstrating that they have confidence in the safety measures we have put in place."

To find out more please visit www.weareback.co.uk



LOCAL NEWS

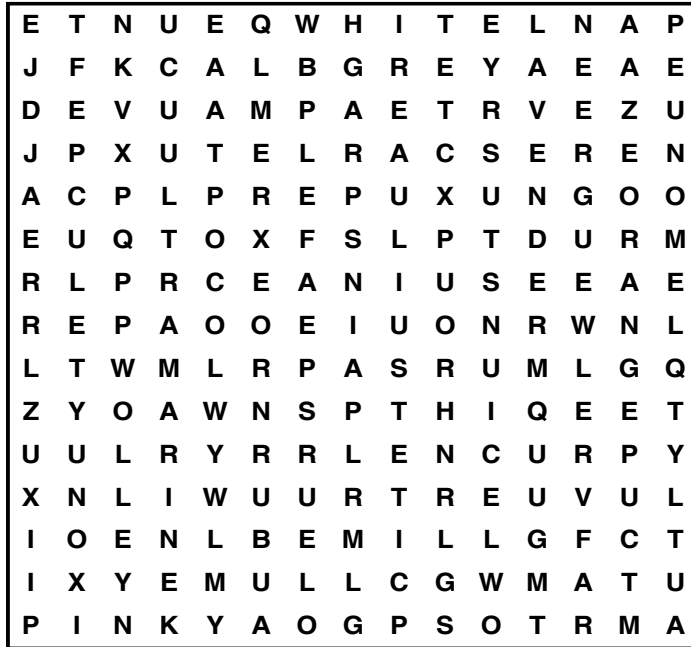


PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers can be found on the Contents Page 4

- ▶ AUBURN
- ▶ BLACK
- ▶ COPPER
- ▶ FUCHSIA
- ▶ GREEN
- ▶ GREY
- ▶ LAVENDER
- ▶ LEMON
- ▶ LIME
- ▶ MAGENTA
- ▶ MAUVE
- ▶ MINT
- ▶ ORANGE
- ▶ PINK
- ▶ PURPLE
- ▶ SCARLET
- ▶ TURQUOISE
- ▶ ULTRAMARINE
- ▶ WHITE
- ▶ YELLOW



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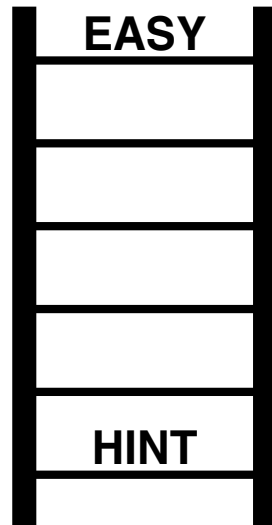
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DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ The killer whale belongs to the dolphin family
- ▶ Some animals sleep standing up, including horses and elephants
- ▶ Elephants are the only animals to have four forward-facing knees
- ▶ Tigers are the largest wild cats in the world
- ▶ Female kangaroos have a pouch on their belly to transport baby kangaroos, called joeys
- ▶ There are three different species of zebra, which are all native to Africa
- ▶ A male reindeer's antlers can grow up to 1.4 metres in length
- ▶ Butterflies can taste with their feet

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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Tricky RICKY

HE'S THE CELEBRITY THAT CELEBRITIES AVOID,
AND ONE OF OUR FINEST EXPORTS

In many respects, Ricky Gervais is a pretty bad version of a celebrity. He looks like someone who works in a hardware store, has been fiercely loyal and faithful to partner Jane Fallon for the past three decades, doesn't live in a 15-bedroom mansion, and couldn't undertake a spate of brazen virtue signalling if he tried.

There's also the small matter of him calling out other celebrities for their greed, corrupt dealings, bullying, two-facedness and hypocrisy at any available opportunity. A habit that began when he started naming and shaming the great and the good during his debut hosting of the Golden Globes back in 2010 – remarkably, they keep inviting him back! – has now extended fully into everyday discourse.

And at the start of the recent coronavirus lockdown we were treated to a brilliant display of Gervais bashing a bevy of film stars, musicians and models who felt the need to take to social media to inform us just how tough life was.

"After this is over I never want to hear people moaning about the welfare state again; I never want to hear people moaning about nurses again, or porters," he said.

"These people are doing 14-hour shifts and not complaining. Wearing masks, and being left with sores, after risking their own health and their families' health selflessly. But then I see someone complaining about being in a mansion with a swimming pool. And, you know, honestly, I just don't want to hear it."

Gervais's 'man of the people' status is, of course, nothing new. From his early breakthrough days in the late 1990s as a segment host on

ITV's *The Sketch Show* and on Channel 4 hit *The 11 O'Clock Show*, he has always led with an aura of honest and normality. There was the addictive 9–5 banality in *The Office*, then *Extras*, with its ground-breaking parodying of the movie industry, featuring A-list contributions from Kate Winslet, Ben Stiller, Patrick Stewart and Samuel L. Jackson.

Success followed with *The Ricky Gervais Show*, then the snappy *Life's Too Short*, comedy reality series *An Idiot Abroad*, bittersweet Netflix part-funded drama *Derek* and the rather darker, touching undertones of *After Life*.

The one thing that permeates everything Gervais touches is his unapologetic honesty. Whether discussing the "scourge" of religion or the majesty of the natural world, whether calling out nationalities, races, genders or persuasions, Gervais takes offence at people being offended.

"It's a disease that's getting worse," he says. "It's not healthy and it's not even real. Most of the people who claim to have taken offence at a statement someone made on Twitter are actually some of the most offensive people I have ever encountered," he laughs.

Some regard him as a national treasure, others a national disgrace. Either way, it's hard to avoid the magnitude of Ricky Gervais.

A one-time aspiring singer and band manager – he looked after indie outfit Suede back in their earliest incarnation – Ricky is the type who is always working on the next project. Whether self-penned or tagging on to big-budget comedies – *Ghost Town*, *Night At The Museum*, *The Invention of Lying* and *The Muppets* – he accepts the industry and its unpredictability.

"Nothing is a given. You just have to keep trying, keep things original, keep the creative processes rolling, and stay ever so slightly controversial."

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Delphinium

JULY BIRTH FLOWER OF THE MONTH

For those born in the month of July, your birth flower is delphinium. A striking flower that is available in several colours, although most notably a deep bluish-purple, delphinium is associated with openness and positivity, making people who were born in this month as charming as they are humorous.

WHAT DOES DELPHINIUM SYMBOLISE?

The Greek name Delphinium is derived from the shape of its flower buds, which are similar to a dolphin, and its intense blue colour makes it a very special flower indeed. In romanticism, the blue flower was said to be a symbol of yearning and ardent attachment.

However, a pink delphinium conveys contrariness, a white one means happiness and a pure purple flower is said to signify first love.

WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOU?

If you were born in July, you are a natural entertainer, always wanting to be seen as the funny one. Your

charm and sense of humour make others feel both welcome and appreciated. You also value family above all else.

HOW TO GROW DELPHINIUMS

Although you can grow delphiniums from seed, this can be quite challenging, so you may want to start off using cuttings instead. This flower enjoys moist but well-drained soil in full sun and, as it grows tall, does best at the back of a sunny border.

HOW TO HELP DELPHINIUMS THRIVE

Delphiniums are hungry plants and need a liquid fertiliser applied every couple of weeks to encourage strong growth. It is also a good idea to use canes or a frame so that the plants can grow up through them. Delphiniums only flower for a short amount of time, but by cutting back the spikes you can encourage further growth.



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GARDENING

HAWAII FIVE OH!

You may not be able to enjoy the usual beach experience this summer, but with these fabulous outdoor furnishings and lighting tricks you can certainly create that same blissed-out vibe.

While they're not entirely out of bounds, the restrictions surrounding trips to the coast have numbed somewhat the appeal of the seaside.

Sure, you may struggle to recreate a vista of rolling waves and painful pebbles underfoot in your humble back garden, but there are a number of outdoor effects – beyond the basics of a sun lounger and umbrella – that can bring the breathless brilliance of the beach to your home.

Shelling out

It's perhaps the simplest move of all, but a few handfuls of shells and pebbles, and perhaps a stray sprig of seaweed or a sprinkle of sand, can instantly give your garden

space a neat, nautical feel. Remember, though, removing beach matter (stones, sand) is in fact illegal, so please source your props responsibly.

Wicked wicker

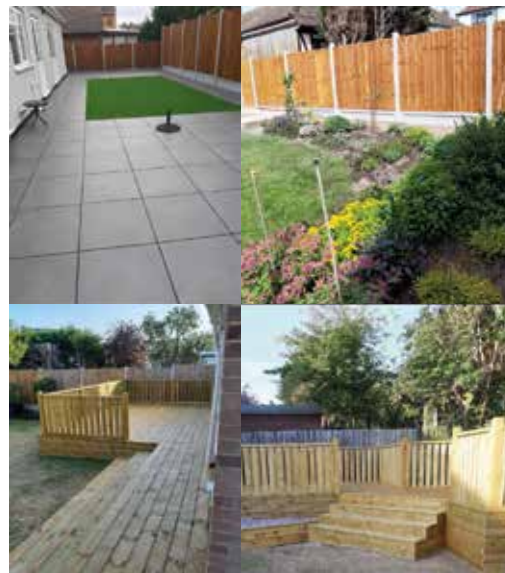
Nothing shouts 'beach' like wicker windbreaks, umbrellas and mats. As a fabric it's versatile, cooling and good to look at, and wrapping your yard in this light material will soon have you dreaming of the Mediterranean or Caribbean.

A win on the pools

For those of us lucky enough to have a swimming pool (either permanent or foldaway) to cool off in, consider adding sandy banks and trails leading into it or immediately as you step into the water. A sand gradient will remove harsh, clumsy edges while offering a water feature that blends in perfectly with the beach vibe.

Amazing ambience

When the sun begins to set, there is no nicer feeling than settling down to watch the day fade away. And with some clever string lights, you can bring about a seaside ambience that will chill you out as well as light up the night.




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HORTICULTURE HEROES:

Joe Swift

GARDENING

Joe Swift, the gardener, designer and TV personality best known for presenting *Gardener's World*, is also revered as someone who cares a lot about allotments.

Joe Swift takes a hands-off path to gardening that many of us will endorse.

"To be honest, I'm more of a designer than a doer," he chuckles. "I hide behind a computer and let others do the real work."

Typically understating his imprint and knowledge on modern gardening, Swift is famed for his love of container planting, and permanently has an eye on DIY.

"Some of the ins and outs of plants, trees, flowers and ecological intricacies are beyond me, but if you're looking for a platform or a plan on which to construct your garden, then that's where I'm at my best."

Joe's 'best' serves as a reminder to every gardener that DIY and hardware is a pivotal part of every plot. "Really, the greenery in your garden is just the final layer of the plan, and I always encourage gardeners to think of a garden like they would a front room or a bedroom. Plan out every corner, every view, every comfort, then finish it off with furnishings... or, in this case, plants, flowers and the like."

The popular gardener's admiration for allotments has also been a defining part of his appeal. He fronted the series *The Great Allotment Challenge*, and says a simple, manageable space is the best way to get started. "Allotments are brilliant value for money; even mine, at £65 a year, is one of the most expensive, and that's less than a cup of coffee a week.

"I made all my beds out of plant pallets, made a compost heap and found a second-hand shed on eBay for £20.

"Everyone on allotments is fairly frugal. You can recycle lots of things – every time you drive past a skip, it's always worth a look! What you get in return is a creative space like no other."



Summer SAFETY TIPS

FIVE TIPS TO KEEP YOUR PETS SAFE THIS SUMMER...

As if there weren't already enough safety concerns for pet owners in the summer months, this year you also have the additional worry of coming out of lockdown and how this profound change will affect your animals. Don't worry – we are here to help.

GO TO THE VET IF NEEDED

If your pet is poorly or becomes injured, you should not put off going to the vet. Call first as you normally would and, if advised, take your pet in for a check-up. Social distancing will still apply, and you will most likely be asked that only one member of the household attends the consultation.

BE PREPARED FOR SEPARATION ANXIETY

For those who have been furloughed or working from home, this will seem like Christmas to your pet. What could be better for them than seeing their owners every day when they are usually alone? However, you now need to be prepared for when you leave. Expect naughty behaviour, continual barking or whining and/or destructive actions.

PRACTISE SOCIAL DISTANCING IN THE PARK

Although there is no evidence of animal-to-human transmission of the COVID-19 virus, it is still a good idea to keep your dog close to you when you are in a public area. This is not only for their safety but also to avoid confrontation with other dog walkers.

DO NOT FORGET THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD HYGIENE PRACTICES

One of the most effective ways of keeping yourself and your pets safe from COVID-19 is good hygiene practices. You should wash your hands with an antibacterial gel whenever you take your dog for a walk, go out to purchase pet food and after you have played with your animal.

AVOID CONTACT with your pets if you show symptoms of COVID-19.



4 common INGREDIENT SUBSTITUTIONS

If lockdown has taught us anything, it's how we can cope without restaurants, takeaways and other quick food fixes. In fact, 38 per cent of Brits have said that they are now cooking from scratch, but what do you do if you can't get hold of a key kitchen staple?

Baking soda & lemon juice for yeast

Yeast has been quite difficult to get hold of in recent months, but thankfully two other common store cupboard staples will ensure the same effect.

½ tsp baking soda + ½ tsp lemon juice = 1 tsp active dry yeast



Ground flaxseed & water for eggs

If you need eggs to emulsify a set of ingredients, the below will work just as well. Alternatively, bananas and apple sauce can be used to add moisture, although they will not have a raising effect.

1 tbsp ground flaxseed + 3 tbsp water = 1 medium egg



Baking soda & cream of tartar for baking powder

For those who love baking, it can be incredibly frustrating to find that you have run out of baking powder, but quite often you may have other ingredients that will do the job.

¼ tbsp baking soda + ½ tsp cream of tartar = 1 tsp baking powder



Alternatively, if you have a little bit of baking powder left, yogurt or buttermilk can help your rations go further.

Vegetables for pasta

Whether you have run out of pasta, noodles or rice, or you are simply looking for a healthier alternative, there are so many vegetables that you can use in their place.

Why not try eggplant lasagne sheets, cauliflower rice, spiralised courgette spaghetti or celeriac couscous?

Other helpful substitutes

Cracker crumbs for breadcrumbs | Lemon juice for vinegar | Plain flour and baking powder for self-raising flour





Staycate IN STYLE

Just because you may not be able to go abroad this summer doesn't mean that you can't still enjoy the holiday experience. Why not save money and still have fun by staycating within the confines of your own home?

GO CAMPING

In your own garden, of course, or your home if you don't have sufficient outdoor space. Simply get out your camping gear or borrow a tent from a friend or neighbour, toast some marshmallows, tell a few ghost stories and finish off with some traditional campfire songs.

SPOIL YOURSELF WITH A SPA DAY

If you love nothing more than indulging in a luxury spa break to recharge your batteries, you will be pleased to know that you can recreate this experience at home. All you need are a few high-quality face masks, some mani-pedi supplies and a selection of scented candles. You could even fill your paddling pool with warm water and bubbles and enjoy an outdoor spa experience.

FEAST LIKE A FOODIE

For those who love to sample the local cuisine

while on holiday abroad, why not throw a selection of themed food nights? Mexican, Indian, Spanish, Italian, Japanese: the choices are endless. If you are feeling particularly creative, you could go the whole hog and plan a multi-course meal complete with authentic beverages and decorations.

HOST A FESTIVAL

Whether you are a music lover or a film fanatic, hosting your own festival creates fun for the whole family. Invest in a projector or a new set of speakers, lay out some deckchairs or blankets, hang some fairy lights and set out some snacks. Don't forget, you must socially distance if you invite anyone from outside your household.

TOP TIPS FOR A STAYCATION

- > Ban household tasks
- > Let go of your usual routine
- > Disconnect from technology



Bad Booze

FOUR WAYS ALCOHOL AFFECTS THE APPEARANCE OF YOUR SKIN

Most people are already aware that alcohol has a dehydrating effect on the skin. Anyone who has woken up the morning after the night before will be all too familiar with the tell-tale signs of boozing, including sallow skin, sunken bloodshot eyes and a bloated face. However, you may not know that even just a few daily drinks can have a detrimental effect on your complexion.

ALCOHOL CAUSES DEHYDRATION

If you regularly drink two or more drinks in one day, then your skin will become dehydrated. In fact, you may not know this, but alcohol actively takes all the fluids out of your skin, leading to a dry and parched complexion, as well as one that is more prone to ageing.

ALCOHOL CAUSES INFLAMMATION

Do you ever notice how your face becomes flushed or red after a few too many drinks? This is because alcohol inflames your skin tissues. Although your skin will go back to normal once the alcohol is out of

your system, prolonged drinking can lead to permanent facial redness.

ALCOHOL CAUSES BREAKOUTS

Whether you suffer with the occasional spot or actual adult acne, drinking alcohol can lead to more skin breakouts. All alcohol contains sugar, with some boozy beverages containing more than others, such as cocktails and white wine. Furthermore, the high levels of sugar in alcohol can lead to less plump skin cells and, in turn, a duller complexion.

ALCOHOL CAN AGGRAVATE SKIN CONDITIONS

If you suffer with an ongoing skin complaint such as eczema, psoriasis or rosacea, alcohol will only exacerbate these issues. This is because alcohol has the ability to reduce the healthy bacteria in your gut that helps to regulate your immune system.



FASHION

Gorgeous



GLASSES

TO FIT YOUR FACE SHAPE

If you have just found out that you need to wear glasses, or even if you have worn them for years but feel like you have never found the perfect pair, keep reading to discover the ideal frame to fit your face shape.

Oval Face Shape – a well-balanced face with a slightly wider forehead than jaw and cheekbones. If you have an oval face shape you are in the lucky position of being able to suit most styles of glasses, so you can simply choose whatever shape you prefer.

Top pick for men: Hugo Boss, Boss 1129
Top pick for women: Kylie Minogue Never Too Late

Rectangle Face Shape – a deeper forehead with a long nose and strong jawline. Pick a deep, square shape that will complement your angular features.

Top pick for men: Tom Ford FT5584-B 56
Top pick for women: Karen Millen KM 111

Square Face Shape – a broad and deep forehead with a wide jawline and square chin. To create more length, go for narrower styles that will offset your strong features.

Top pick for men: Ray-Ban RX5154
Top pick for women: Ted Baker Lyla

Heart Face Shape – a small chin coupled with a broad forehead and wide cheekbones. Opt for frames that are a little wider than your forehead to offset the natural wideness of the top half of your face.

Top pick for men: Ted Baker Grover
Top pick for women: Love Moschino LM21

Round Face Shape – full cheeks and a round chin, often with a wide forehead. Choose rounder frames rather than angular ones to complement your round, soft facial features.

Top pick for men: Tom Ford TF5485
Top pick for women: Will.i.a.m W10V Gold



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DBT

VS

ANXIETY



HEALTH & FITNESS

Many of us may be feeling anxious during these uncertain times, but these tips, based on Dialectical Behaviour Therapy techniques, can be really useful tools to help combat the fear to live a happier, calmer life.

PRACTISE MINDFULNESS

This term can sometimes seem vague, but at its core it simply means paying attention to the present to stop intrusive thoughts from sneaking in. Begin by sitting in the garden for five minutes and notice all the sights, smells, sounds and sensations around you. Practise this skill regularly and you will soon find yourself automatically living more in the moment.

PLAY NICE WITH OTHERS

Stressful periods such as the current lockdown can take their toll on even our closest relationships as tensions build up and then overboil, which is why DBT encourages us to nurture our relationships both with others and with ourselves. In conflicts, it suggests we take time to listen to the other person, validate that we have heard them, and then practise empathy to further deepen our understanding.

A VERY USEFUL TIPP

DBT is particularly useful when we are in times of crisis and need a quick and effective way to soothe our minds and bodies. TIPP is an acronym of skills that help reverse feelings of distress:

- > **TEMPERATURE** – splash cold water on your face or hold an ice cube; anything to take the heat from your body
- > **INTENSE EXERCISE** – run around the block, do star jumps or jog up and down the stairs to work the tension out
- > **PACED BREATHING** – take long, steady breaths to stimulate your parasympathetic nervous system
- > **PAIRED MUSCLE RELAXATION** – tense and relax muscles throughout your body until you feel calm

RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

Life can feel painful and out of our control, but DBT encourages us to accept rather than push back against our reality. Accepting, however, doesn't mean you have to like what is happening; it simply steers you away from what you can't control to focus on what you can.



Default DANGER



What are the real consequences of not being able to pay a loan or credit card?

In the past few months, many of us may have strayed closer than we would want to financial trouble. Money worries put more stress on us than anything else in life, though often our tendency is to fear the worst when we needn't.

The truth is that lenders – be that in the form of loans, credit cards or mortgages – are regulated to work with you, not against you, when it comes to ensuring your commitments are affordable. And, contrary to what you may see on reality television programmes, falling behind on payments won't suddenly land you with a bailiff at the door.

Below is a 'typical' debt timeline (note: not a definitive outline), based on being unable to make repayments:

- > **MONTH 1:** Failure to pay loan or credit card.
- > **MONTHS 2-4:** Creditor makes contact and will usually agree to hold charges and interest, effectively freezing the account (although this will mark your credit score).
- > **MONTHS 4-6:** Either resume payments or the

creditor may sell the debt on to a collections company.

- > **MONTHS 6-9:** New 'owner' of the debt will make contact to attempt to agree with you a new (interest-free) repayment plan – they will work with you to check you are prioritising key commitments (such as utilities) and they need to accept any reasonable offer (which could be as low as £10/month).
- > Your account will be reviewed regularly but you will have a new agreement in place going forward.
- > Only if you default on this new agreement will the prospect of a court order or CCJ come about, and only failing that provokes bailiff action.

If you are worried about debt, speak to charity stepchange.org

The most important thing is to address the issue, be upfront with those you owe money to and keep communicating at every stage.

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As technology advances, so we find many memories left in the past... or more accurately, left in a box in the loft. From weddings to old episodes of *Saint and Greavsie* to the Top 40 countdown, whether on VHS or audio cassette, a trip down memory lane is good for the soul, and often provides a few belly laughs at the same time.

What holds us back is the redundancy of so many formats. While vinyl has reinvented itself as a cool, trendy, left-field product that's worthy of the investment in a turntable, it's safe to say audio cassettes and VHS tapes are never going to come back into fashion, meaning our memories are locked away unless we can free them.

Thankfully, with downloadable computer software, a couple of leads and, of course, the required hardware to play the format in the first place, we can digitise, unveil and even improve the quality of content that may not have seen the light of day in decades.

A decent software programme will cost around £40, and most come with advanced editing suites, as well as the ability to release a final file on respected storage sources such as Google Drive, iCloud (for Apple users), or Dropbox... or head straight to YouTube or Vimeo if you believe your Year 6 *The Pied Piper of Hamelin* recital is worthy of a wider audience.

The alternative, of course, is to leave the technical matter to an expert. There are countless businesses who can take your raw material through the post and digitise it for you – prices start from as little as £10, but you'll need to know exactly what's on that three-hour VHS tape before you hand it over.



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MOTORING



HOW LEAD LED THE WAY IN A MOTORING REVOLUTION

The motoring industry sees itself as one of the true pioneers for a better, cleaner, more eco-friendly environment; and quite right too given the estimated 1.4 billion cars on the road across the planet.

With a move towards carbon neutrality, the acceleration of the sector is visible as much on blueprints, bar charts and graphs as it is in getting its latest models from 0 to 60, but how much cleaner are vehicles now compared to their older counterparts?

Unleaded petrol only went on sale in the UK in 1986, but within 15 years it was the only option other than diesel. Rightly so, as at its peak we were pumping 3,000 tonnes of the stuff into the air. The results? Brain damage in children; hypertension, high blood pressure and heart attacks in adults.

Levels of lead in the air decreased by 94 per cent between 1980 and 1999 – a huge proportion of that pollution having been caused by cars, with

almost 0.9g of the toxin in a litre of petrol in the 1970s. The permitted level is now 0.01g/l.

Add in better engine efficiency thanks to systems such as air injection and catalytic converters, plus the development of better diesel systems – even if manufacturers such as Volkswagen were found to have overstated efficiencies – and car output efficiency has moved into levels we could only have dreamed about in the 1970s and 1980s.

It's not all good news, though. Over the past five years the industry has seen demand switch back towards bigger, premium vehicles, despite conscious government moves to make such vehicles less appealing at the fuel pump.

It has caused a seven per cent increase in carbon dioxide output in the year up to 2018, with cars accounting for just over 18 per cent of total UK emissions.

The evidence suggests that while our desire to be green is genuine, the need for comfort and convenience is still the biggest 'driver' in our lives.



MOTORING

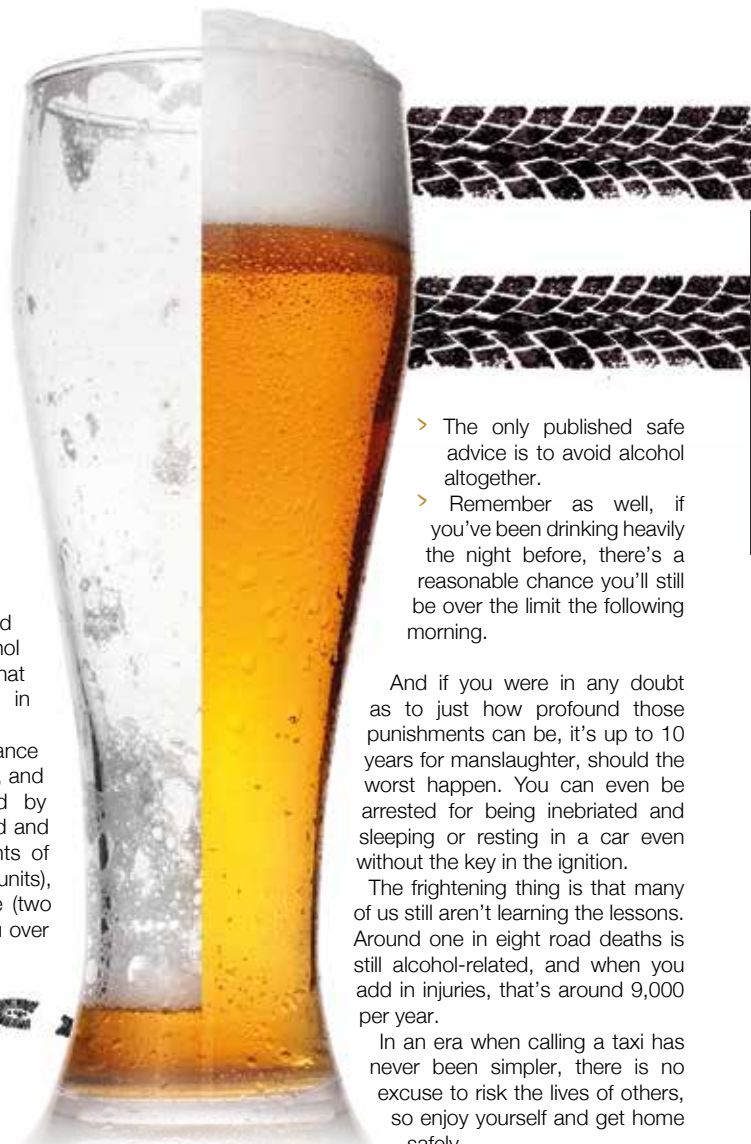
A GLASS *and a half*

THE DRIVE OF YOUR LIFE... WHY NOT TO TAKE A CHANCE AFTER A DRINK

As if you didn't know it were true, drinking and driving are completely incongruous. Not only has it been illegal to be over the limit when behind the wheel of a car since the Road Safety Act was introduced in 1967, it's also insanely dangerous, to yourself, passengers and other road users.

The issue with drink-driving is that, in many people, the confidence, bravado and bullishness that alcohol provides actually reinforces a belief that it is okay to 'push the limits' a little; and yet, the guidelines are set, the recommendations realistic and the punishments severe.

- > Get stopped in England and your limit is 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood, and that allowance drops to 50mg in Scotland.
- > In real terms, everyone's tolerance and reaction to alcohol varies, and can be additionally affected by weight, sex, metabolism, food and stress; but for men, two pints of medium-strength lager (four units), or two small glasses of wine (two units) for women, will see you over the limit.



- > The only published safe advice is to avoid alcohol altogether.
- > Remember as well, if you've been drinking heavily the night before, there's a reasonable chance you'll still be over the limit the following morning.

And if you were in any doubt as to just how profound those punishments can be, it's up to 10 years for manslaughter, should the worst happen. You can even be arrested for being inebriated and sleeping or resting in a car even without the key in the ignition.

The frightening thing is that many of us still aren't learning the lessons. Around one in eight road deaths is still alcohol-related, and when you add in injuries, that's around 9,000 per year.

In an era when calling a taxi has never been simpler, there is no excuse to risk the lives of others, so enjoy yourself and get home safely.

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