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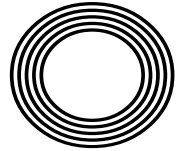
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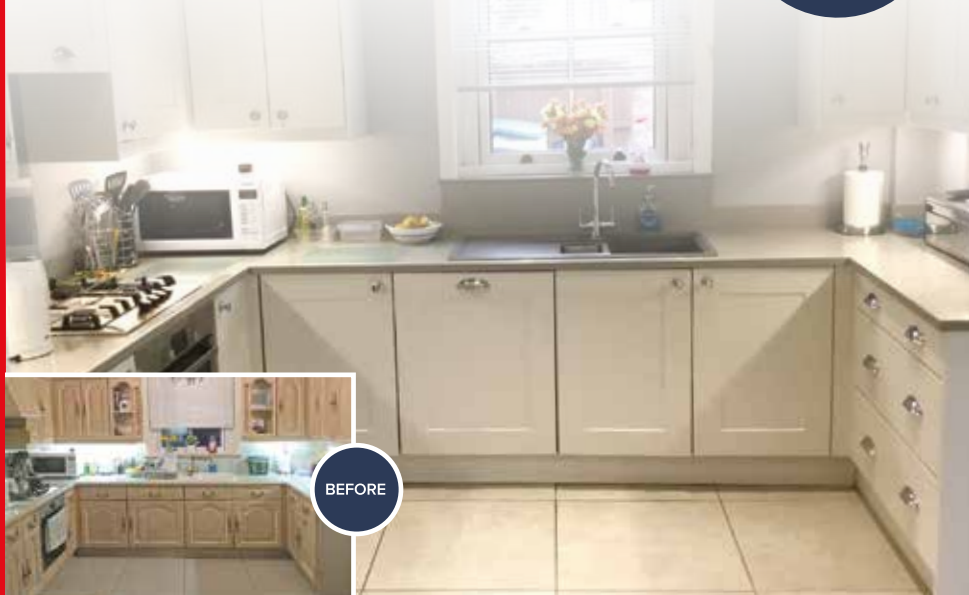


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Editor's notes...

DECEMBER 2021



Nik Allen, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION**RayleighWickFord. I will start by wishing you all a merry Christmas, and I pray it is a better one than last year.

Last December, we were told we could not visit our Friends and Family. Plans being cancelled at the last minute was a tough pill to swallow, especially after the challenges we faced in 2020. But hopefully this winter, we won't face any more lockdowns.

It's at this time of year that I always like to look back on the past 12 months, and for most of our clients, it's been a great recovery year.

We have all tried not to get too carried away, as 2020 taught us to be cautious. But as long as you have your health and the love of Friends and Family, I would say you have had a pretty good 2021.

In this month's edition, we feature Adele, who is making her musical comeback with her new album. We also report on the new emergency fraud hotline, 159, as well as marking 80 years since the Pearl Harbor attacks. Wishing you a wonderful end to the year and a fantastic 2022.

Nik Allen

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GOOD COP, BAD COP

WHAT DID WE LEARN FROM THE UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE?

For a gathering of global minds, each driven and committed to making huge strides forward in the preservation of the Earth and everything that exists on it, there was no shortage of conflict surrounding the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, which was held in the first two weeks of November.

A 26th Conference of Parties (hence the COP26 title that most people referenced the event by), the event invited world leaders to commit to enhanced ambitions in terms of mitigating climate change. They arrived in their droves – more than 25,000 delegates from 200 different countries, including 120 heads of state. That meant there was an immediate pointing to the hypocrisy of a convention configured to help the planet, yet whose carbon footprint was one of the largest in history.

Regardless, included in the number of high-profile attendees were US President Joe Biden, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, French President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and English broadcaster and natural historian Sir David Attenborough.

Those not in attendance courted similar headlines – China's leader Xi Jinping decided not to participate and instead delivered a written address to the conference, while Russian President Vladimir Putin cited COVID-19 concerns as his reason for staying in Moscow.

Air travel aside, the summit was the cleanest in history, with 70 per cent of electricity being supplied from low-carbon nuclear power from plants in Torness and Hunterston B, while the rest mostly came from wind power. All that energy led to some impressive take-outs from COP26:



DECARBONISATION. There was the ubiquitous acceptance that decarbonisation is the way forward, and on that front a variety of targets were accepted and signed up to across the board.



1.5°C, NOT 2°C. Recognition of 1.5°C (the temperature at which we must limit global warming) as opposed to 2°C is now a revised and real climate pact target adopted by those at COP26. Scientists believe this altered figure is a far safer limit for potential global temperature increases.



THE ONE-YEAR RATCHET. Previously, a five-year ratchet system was in place, where countries were conditioned to effect positive change across a multilateral system. This has now been transformed into a yearly ratchet. The accelerated pace from making annual adjustments is thought to be a much more realistic way of succeeding in halving global emissions by the year 2030.



NATURAL RESOURCES. As a final take-out from COP26, significant attention has been placed on the preservation of natural resources, including \$20billion in commitments of public and private money for forest protection.

While critics will say these initiatives are tarnished by some of the climb-downs from the conference – including scaled-back ambitions on the phasing out of coal, and various conditions around China's role in climate change not being enforced owing to its leader's non-attendance – there are clear targets and promises in place that offer renewed hope for the planet.

Yet words will only go so far – as swathes of protesters noted as they marched through the streets of Glasgow and across hundreds of other cities around the world: now is the time for action.





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STOP, HANG UP AND

CALL 159

Fraudsters stole £4million a day in the UK in the first half of 2021, with the banking trade body, UK Finance, describing the level of fraud as a national security threat.

What is the 159 service?

A new emergency hotline has been launched in the UK to stop people becoming victims of fraud. Run by an industry body called Stop Scams UK, this service is supported by the Financial Conduct Authority and Ofcom.

When a potential victim dials 159, they will be automatically connected to their bank's fraud prevention service. Initially, this project is being run for a year, with the intention for it to eventually become a universal service.

When to call 159

- > Someone contacts you saying they are from your bank
- > You receive a call asking you to transfer money or make a payment
- > You receive a call about a financial matter and it appears suspicious.

The 159 number will never call you, and only a fraudster will object to you using this service.

Is the 159 number free?

Calls to 159 are charged at the national rate and are usually part of the included minutes in most phone tariffs. You can call 159 from your phone if your contract is with BT, including EE and PlusNet; Gamma; O2, including Giffgaff; Talk Talk; Three; Virgin Media; and Sky.

Which banks are taking part?

High street banks that are currently taking part in this service include Barclays, Lloyds (including Halifax and Bank of Scotland), NatWest (including Royal Bank of Scotland and Ulster Bank), Santander, and Starling Bank. TSB plans to implement the number from January 2022.

Nationwide isn't participating in the pilot 159 scheme. However, it does have its own Scam Checker Service which allows you to check a payment you are worried about with a member of its trained fraud team, either in branch or by phone on 0800 030 4057.



KIDS

Tasty titbits for Rudolph

If your children love to leave a treat for Santa's reindeer, why not have a go at making your own this Christmas?
A fun, festive activity for all ages, the below wildlife-friendly snacks can be created with just a few simple store cupboard staples and some wild bird seed.

REINDEER FOOD MIX: YOU WILL NEED:

- > A handful of wild bird seed – may include sunflower hearts, yellow millet, kibbled peanuts and black sunflower seeds
- > A few rolled oats
- > A sprinkle of dried fruit such as cranberries, raisins, sultanas and currants
- > Small amount of grated cheese
- > Some dried insects (optional)
- > A small pinch of chilli powder – this will stop the squirrels from eating the mix before Rudolph arrives

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Simply mix all of the above ingredients together and then sprinkle all over your garden or leave in a small bowl by the front door before you go to bed.

REINDEER COOKIES: YOU WILL NEED:

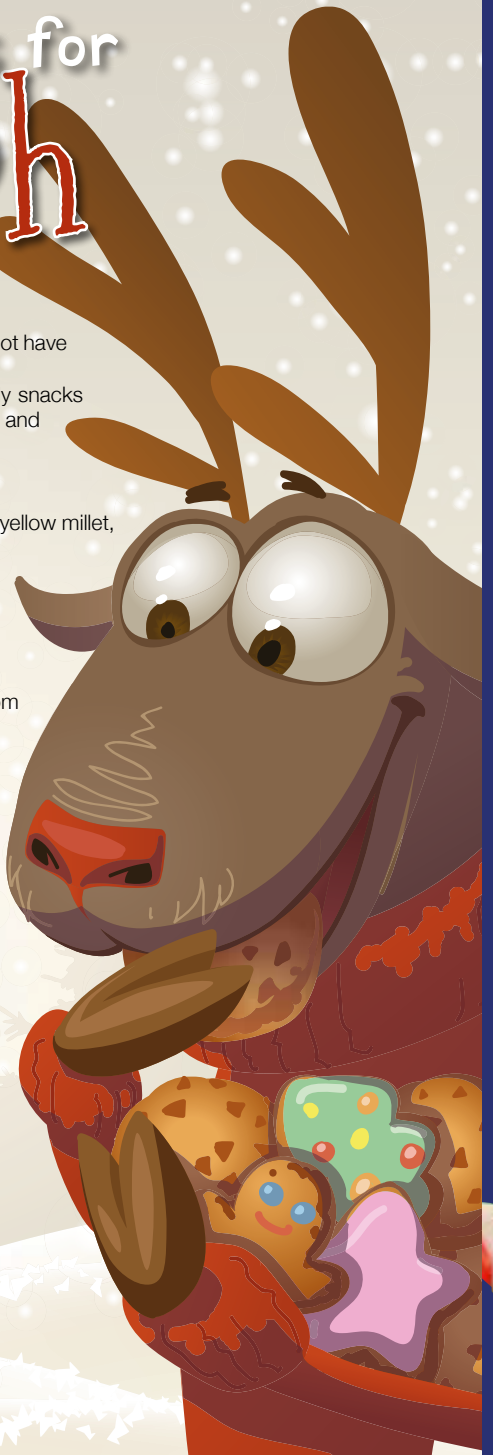
- > 250g lard, suet or vegetable shortening
- > 500g wild bird seed mix
- > A handful of dried cranberries
- > Christmas-shaped cookie cutters

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Melt the lard or suet in a saucepan over a low heat – do not boil. Make sure to supervise children to avoid injury
- > Stir in the wild bird seeds, making sure the mixture sticks together
- > Leave to one side for 10 minutes to start to set
- > While still soft, spoon the mixture into a baking tray
- > Spread evenly, at least 2cm deep
- > Place in the fridge to cool for 30 minutes
- > Remove mix from the tray and place on greaseproof paper
- > Use your cookie cutters to cut out your shapes
- > Leave them to chill in the fridge overnight
- > Place them on your bird table or hang in a tree.

What NOT to put out for Rudolph

- > Anything with sparkles/sequins or that contains plastic
- > Cake sprinkles or edible glitter.



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OH CHRISTMAS TREE



Get ready to break the status quo this festive season and reimagine the traditional Christmas tree. Whether you are short on space, hate the hassle of a real tree or you just want to break the mould, check out the below Christmas tree alternatives that promise to deliver the wow factor.



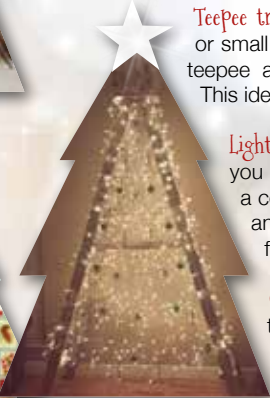
Minimalist metal: If you love minimalism and you don't have a lot of space in your living room, then this is the perfect Christmas tree alternative for your home. Choose to buy one online that comes complete with baubles, or make your own using some copper pipes.



Christmas crates: A budget-friendly option, you don't need to have any DIY skills to stack a selection of wooden crates into the shape of a Christmas tree. Fill each crate with your favourite Christmas décor items, such as mini wreaths, candles and stockings, and you are good to go.



Teepee tree: For households that can't have a real tree owing to pets or small children, this is a great alternative. Simply erect a child-safe teepee and decorate with Christmas ornaments and decorations. This idea has the added benefit of doubling up as a play area.



Light-up ladder: If you don't mind a tree that looks a bit rustic and you don't want to have to spend a penny, this DIY ladder tree is a cool idea. Simply use an old stepladder to create a tree shape and then hang baubles, fairy lights and whatever else takes your fancy.

Christmas card tree: Do you save all your Christmas cards from the year before? Or perhaps you always seem to get more than you know what to do with? Put these cards to good use and stick them on the wall in the shape of a Christmas tree. Hey presto – an instant contemporary tree.

Photo credit: Pinterest



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PERFECT planning

Are you always forgetting family commitments? Let us introduce you to the DIY family planner that promises to transform your life from chaotic to calm in a matter of minutes.

All you need is a few supplies and a door – this could be in a kitchen cupboard or even the whole side of a door.

WHAT YOU NEED:

Chalkboard paint | A paintbrush | Sandpaper | Old guttering and gutter clips (for shelf) | Old copper pipe and pipe clips (for rail) | Handsaw | Electric drill or screwdriver | Hot glue gun | Spray paint – colour of your choice | A bulldog clip | Paper roll

HOW TO MAKE:

Step 1: Prepare the space – If using a cupboard door, remove it from its frame using a screwdriver or electric drill.

Step 2: Sand the wood – Sand the door down before you paint it as this will ensure a smoother surface. Wipe down with a wet cloth to remove any dust.

Step 3: Paint the door – Apply 2-3 coats of chalkboard paint, making sure you leave the door to dry in between each coat.

Step 4: Create a shelf – Measure the width of the door and subtract a few centimetres from each side. Cut the guttering to this size and sand down any rough edges.

Step 5: Spray paint the shelf – Spray paint your guttering in your preferred colour. Apply fine coats gradually to avoid drips.

Step 6: Attach the shelf to the bottom of the door – Screw the gutter clips to your chosen position on the door and place the guttering inside the clips.

Step 7: Make a hanging rail – Cut the copper piping to the same width as your shelf. Screw the pipe clips to the door at least 30cm above the gutter shelf and attach your rail. Add your paper roll.

Step 8: Add a bulldog clip – Attach a bulldog clip to the door using a hot glue gun. This will hold the end of your paper roll in place.

Step 9: Draw your planner – Use a whiteboard pen to draw a grid at the top of the door and then add each week's activities/appointments with chalk.



Photo credit: cassielairny.com



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MAD about the HOUSE

Update your home with inspiration from the multi-award-winning blogger, Kate Watson-Smyth

If you're going to look to anyone for interiors advice, who better than leading property, interiors and design journalist Kate Watson-Smyth?

Kate enjoyed a long career as a journalist, including writing for *The Independent* and the *Financial Times*, before developing her blog, *Mad About the House*.

She has also written a series of *Mad About the House* books, which are your must-have guides to styling your home.

Kate's own home, which is often featured on her blog, is the result of renovating two former rental flats. It is the perfect reflection of Kate's effortless, timeless and elegant style.

Fuel your own home décor inspiration with Kate's expert interior eye. Let's break down her philosophy:

Your home should tell your story. It should make your heart sing when you open the front door

Your home is unique to you. So instead of following all the interior trends, help your home tell your story. When you walk in through the door, what you see should make you feel happy and comforted; it's your place to relax, after all. Incorporate your favourite colours to reflect your personality, and get creative with your artwork.

Something old, something new, something black, something gold

Decorating a room involves a lot of different elements. By mixing up some vintage or second-hand pieces with new elements, you'll create a style that's all your own.

Black is the perfect accent shade for any room, so don't be afraid to bring in black detailing, hardware and accessories. Meanwhile, a little gold can provide a touch of glamour, making a room look more expensive and stylish. It's a look that Kate calls 'urban glamour'.

And always some natural wood

Natural wood is beautiful and timeless, and it can really bring your home together. Whether you have natural wooden floors or some wooden furniture pieces, adding a little natural wood to your home will create that picture-perfect space.

Check out www.madaboutthehouse.com for more interior style tips and advice.

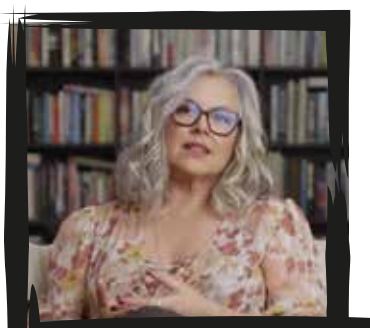


Photo credit: www.madaboutthehouse.com



6 USES FOR Toothpaste

Toothpaste is not only good for cleaning your teeth but it can also be used to refresh and revitalise items in your home, as well as to remove stubborn stains.

1. WHITEN YOUR TRAINERS

If your trusty trainers are looking more grimy than glowing, some spare toothpaste is exactly what you need. Simply apply a small amount of non-gel toothpaste to the rubber parts of your trainers and scrub using an old toothbrush. Then wipe clean with a wet cloth.

2. CLEAN YOUR IRON

There is nothing worse than ironing clean clothes with a dirty iron. Fortunately, you can quickly remove any gunky build-up on the bottom of your iron with toothpaste. Just unplug your iron, leave to cool and then scrub the bottom with toothpaste on a cloth and wipe clean.

3. REMOVE CRAYON FROM WALLS

Kids love to draw on the walls, but most parents are not so keen on this creative activity. However, all you need to remove waxy crayon stains is a scrubbing brush and a little toothpaste. Plus, because toothpaste is non-toxic, you can even get your little ones to help you.

4. RESCUE DVDS

If you still love to watch DVDs but many of your much-loved discs have become scratched, toothpaste can save the day. Simply dab a tiny amount of paste onto the scratch and then rub all over the disk in circular motions with a soft towel. Wipe away any excess.

5. PREVENT FOG

From foggy bathroom mirrors to foggy headlights, toothpaste is great at preventing fog from clinging to glass or plastic. Just rub a non-gel toothpaste onto the area and then wipe off with a damp cloth.

6. ELIMINATE TEA AND COFFEE STAINS

Apply a dab of toothpaste to any stubborn tea and coffee stains and then wash as usual. Hey presto! No more stains.



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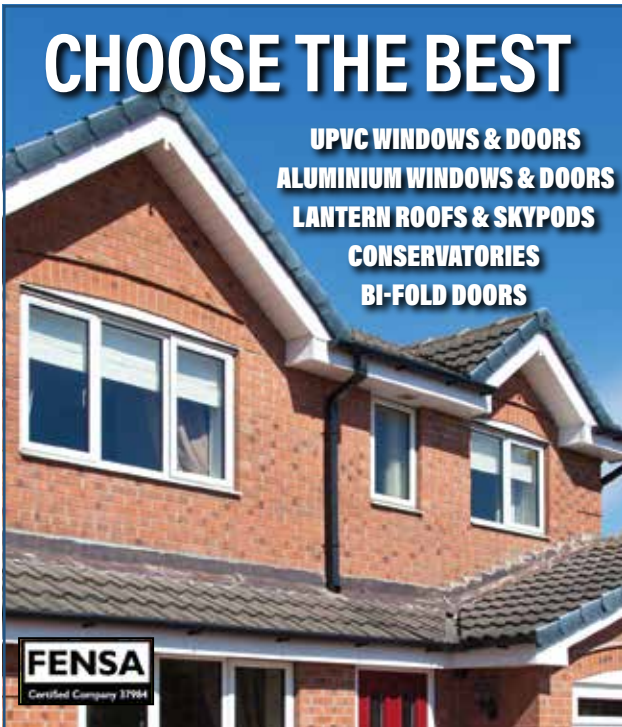


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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS RAYLEIGH



Refurbishment project on 701-year-old church begins

Work has started on the interior refurbishment of a 701-year-old Rayleigh church.

Rayleigh's Holy Trinity Parish Church refurbishment project is designed to make the church building more welcoming by improving and updating the heating, lighting and accessibility.

After the tower and windows were restored in 2011, the interior is now due for an update.

The building has been loved and cared for by many generations, and the current church members wish to

play their part in securing it for generations to come.

To be more energy efficient, the heating, lighting and electrical systems will all be completely replaced. The new lighting will provide improved reading light while also adding to the building's aesthetic appeal.

The walls will be cleaned and repainted with limewash, as is correct for this historic building. The east end of the church will be opened to allow more natural light and will be enhanced with new stone flooring and an accessibility ramp.

Tributes are paid after county councillor dies

Tributes have been paid to a Rayleigh councillor who sadly passed away.

Councillor Craig Cannell, a local Liberal Democrat, passed away suddenly on November 14, aged 32.

Born in Beverley, raised in Boston and educated in Sheffield, Craig moved to Essex in 2014 to start his career. He was drawn to Rayleigh because of its historic buildings, green spaces and community feel; traits he also enjoyed when living in Lincolnshire.

Craig was elected to Rochford District Council (RDC) in 2018 to represent residents of Downhall and Rawreth. In May 2021, the community also elected Craig as their Rayleigh county and town councillor.

Jonathan Stephenson, chief executive of RDC, said: "All our thoughts and prayers are with Craig's family at this very difficult time."

RDC held a tribute to Craig during a meeting on December 7.

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MARK FRANCOIS MP



Member of Parliament for Rayleigh and Wickford

Sir David Amess MP, my great friend and colleague, served in parliament for 38 years. He won nine consecutive General Election contests, from 1983 to 2019, first in Basildon and then Southend. But he cut his teeth fighting in Newham North West in 1979.

I did much the same when I fought 'Red Ken' Livingstone in Brent East in 1997.

During a hustings at Willesden Green Library, Livingstone said something I have never forgotten: "As an MP, a General Election is an opportunity to commune with your 67,000 employers."

As constituencies vary, I have some 79,000 employers in Rayleigh and Wickford and Sir David had 68,000 in Southend West. Our electors do employ us to represent them, in a contract renewable every few years. We work for them, not the other way around - and no one was ever more conscious of that than Sir David.

But boy, did Sir David honour the contract with his employers - and in his own, inimitable style. He was

the original Essex 'cheeky chappie'. In short, Sir David Amess MP had more front than Brighton.

Before he was so cruelly taken from us, he broke the world record for the most centenarians at one lunch, in Southend, just a few years ago. He recorded an album with Banarama, and even 'went platinum'. He promoted too many charities to mention, assisted tens of thousands of constituents with their problems, and undertook literally thousands of constituency engagements over four decades of dedicated public service.

Despite this awful tragedy, we are going to 'keep calm and carry on', because I earnestly believe that is exactly what he would have wanted us to do.

And so, we say farewell to Sir David Amess MP, a wonderful husband and father, a fine parliamentarian and an absolutely brilliant constituency MP.

Driver behaviour monitored

Essex County Council's (ECC) scheme to monitor drivers' behaviour at school crossings is being extended to a site in Rayleigh.

The new four-week trial started on November 15 and is running in London Road, Rayleigh, and near Longwood Primary in Paringdon Road, Harlow.

It follows a previous trial in October, when ECC issued body cameras to school crossing staff in Cloes Lane, Clacton, and Whitmore Way, Basildon.

School crossing patrol officers at the new sites will wear body cameras while they help children cross the road, with the scheme aiming to reduce abuse towards officers and improve safety.

Information from both trials will help judge the success of the body cameras. Once the trials have been evaluated, a decision on the future implementation of cameras will be made.

Councillor Tony Ball, ECC cabinet member for education excellence, lifelong learning and employability, said: "We want to make sure we have as much information available to us as possible before



evaluating the trial, which is why we're rolling this out to other parts of Essex.

"Once this second trial period is complete, we'll be able to make an informed decision on whether the use of body cameras is necessary at school crossing patrol sites going forward."

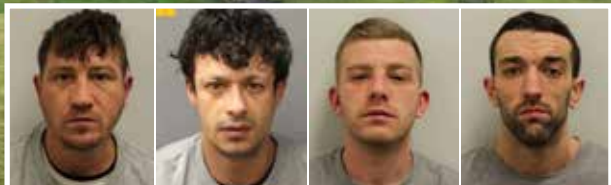
The law says drivers must stop when a school crossing patrol officer holds a stop sign upright.

Drivers who do not stop at a school crossing patrol can be given a fine of up to £1,000 and three points on their driving licence.



LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



Four jailed for armed burglary of cannabis factory

A Wickford man has been jailed, together with three others, for attempting to rob a cannabis factory in Forest Gate.

Kris Tiller, 39, (pictured inset on far left), of Meadow Lane, Wickford; Edward Nadif, 33, of Victoria Dock Road, E16; Dominic Fowls, 27, of Southend Road, Maldon; and Daren Cohen, 33, of Vignoles Road, Romford, all pleaded guilty to aggravated burglary.

Nadif also admitted an offence of possession of an imitation firearm.

On Thursday, November 11, at Snaresbrook Crown Court, all four men were handed prison sentences – Tiller seven years, Nadif nine years, Fowls six-and-a-half years, and Cohen seven-and-a-half years.

An investigation was launched after police were called to a residential address in Reginald Road, E7, in the early hours of January 14, 2020, following reports of a disturbance.

Officers attended and Nadif was arrested inside the address. A search of the area was carried out and Fowls, Cohen and Tiller were detained.

All four had forced entry into the address and Nadif had threatened the sole occupant with an imitation firearm before they began stealing the cannabis plants. However, they were disrupted by officers who had rushed to the scene.

Detective Sergeant Keith Faris, of the Northeast Area Burglary and Robbery Team, said: "Following a painstaking and diligent investigation which compiled a weight of evidence, all four men were left with no option but to plead guilty to their crimes.

"Criminality, in particular that which involves drugs, brings misery to our communities and I would ask anyone with information about such offending to come and speak to police. We will listen to you and act accordingly to ensure those responsible face justice."

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Photo credit: Durham Constabulary, Love Grace

Family upset over 'rough sex defence' sentence

The family of a murdered backpacker from Wickford has expressed anger and frustration following a similar case earlier this year.

Grace Millane, 22, (pictured) of Wickford, was strangled to death by Jesse Kempson during sex in 2018. He claimed she had asked to be strangled.

Her family has since been campaigning for the 'rough sex defence' to be banned, and they have spoken of their disappointment following a similar incident.

Earlier this year, Sophie Moss, 33, died after Sam Pybus, 32, (pictured inset) applied prolonged pressure to her neck. He told police that Sophie would encourage him to strangle her during sex.

Pybus admitted her manslaughter and was jailed for four years and eight months in September.

His sentence was reviewed at the Court of Appeal on November 12, after the Attorney General agreed that the sentence may be unduly lenient.

The court rejected the appeal and decided Pybus's sentence should not be increased.

The family of Grace Millane said: "We are so disappointed that despite the changes to the law, the sentencing doesn't reflect that a life has been taken.

"Sophie Moss did not consent to her own murder. Our thoughts are with her family; they deserve justice."

The organisation, We Can't Consent To This (WCCTT), has also emphasised the need for change.

Fiona Mackenzie, from WCCTT, said: "We were horrified to see the court accept Pybus's claim that Sophie had consented and was a willing participant."

Investigation after man injured in collision

Police are investigating after a man was taken to hospital with serious injuries after a collision in Wickford.

Police were called by colleagues in the ambulance service to a collision between a car and a pedestrian on the High Street, which took place at 9.45am on Thursday, November 18.

Officers arrived and found that a man aged in his 80s had sustained head injuries.

He was taken to hospital for treatment and is now expected to make a full recovery.

An 86-year-old man from Wickford has been released under investigation.

Anyone who witnessed the incident or has dashcam or CCTV footage should get in touch with police as soon as possible by calling 101 and citing incident 272 of November 18.

You can also submit a report online at www.essex.police.uk or use the live chat button to speak to an online operator between 7am and 11pm.

Information can also be given anonymously to Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

3 Reasons Why Selling Before You Buy Could Save You Thousands!



A lot of homeowners who are thinking of moving are making some big mistakes. Below are the three main reasons getting your home on the market now will put you in pole position when it comes to finding your dream property.

1 It's a Sellers' Market

Soaring demand for local homes is outstripping supply. This means homes are selling fast and often for over the asking price.

2 Become an Attractive Buyer

Buyers whose homes are already under offer are MUCH more attractive to sellers who want to reduce the risks of delays and pull-outs.

3 The Wrong Move Can Cost You ££££

Often when people decide to delay selling until they find somewhere they love, it costs them thousands of pounds. That's because they offer over the asking price for it while accepting less for their current home because of fear of missing out.

If you're thinking of moving, now is a great time to make that move. And EweMove is here to help you.

If you want to know how to achieve a premium price for your property and move successfully to your next home, call us (24/7) on 01268 437 525 for expert, honest advice. Or visit www.EweMove.com/WickfordRayleigh

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TECHNOLOGY



ARTIFICIAL EYES, BIONIC VISION AND OCULAR PROSTHETICS THAT ARE REVOLUTIONISING HOW WE SEE THE WORLD

For people who suffer trauma or serious eye disease, the reality of losing an eye or significant sight can be a harrowing one. In the past, the solution of replacement with a glass eye was the only way of restoring some level of aesthetic appearance.

In 2021, those aesthetics have moved forward significantly. The prosthetic implants involved in eye surgery are at the very peak of artificial eye technology, with a completely natural look and the ability for the patient to resume normal activities, such as driving, swimming and other forms of exercise. They can also apply make-up and mascara to the area without damaging the prosthetic.

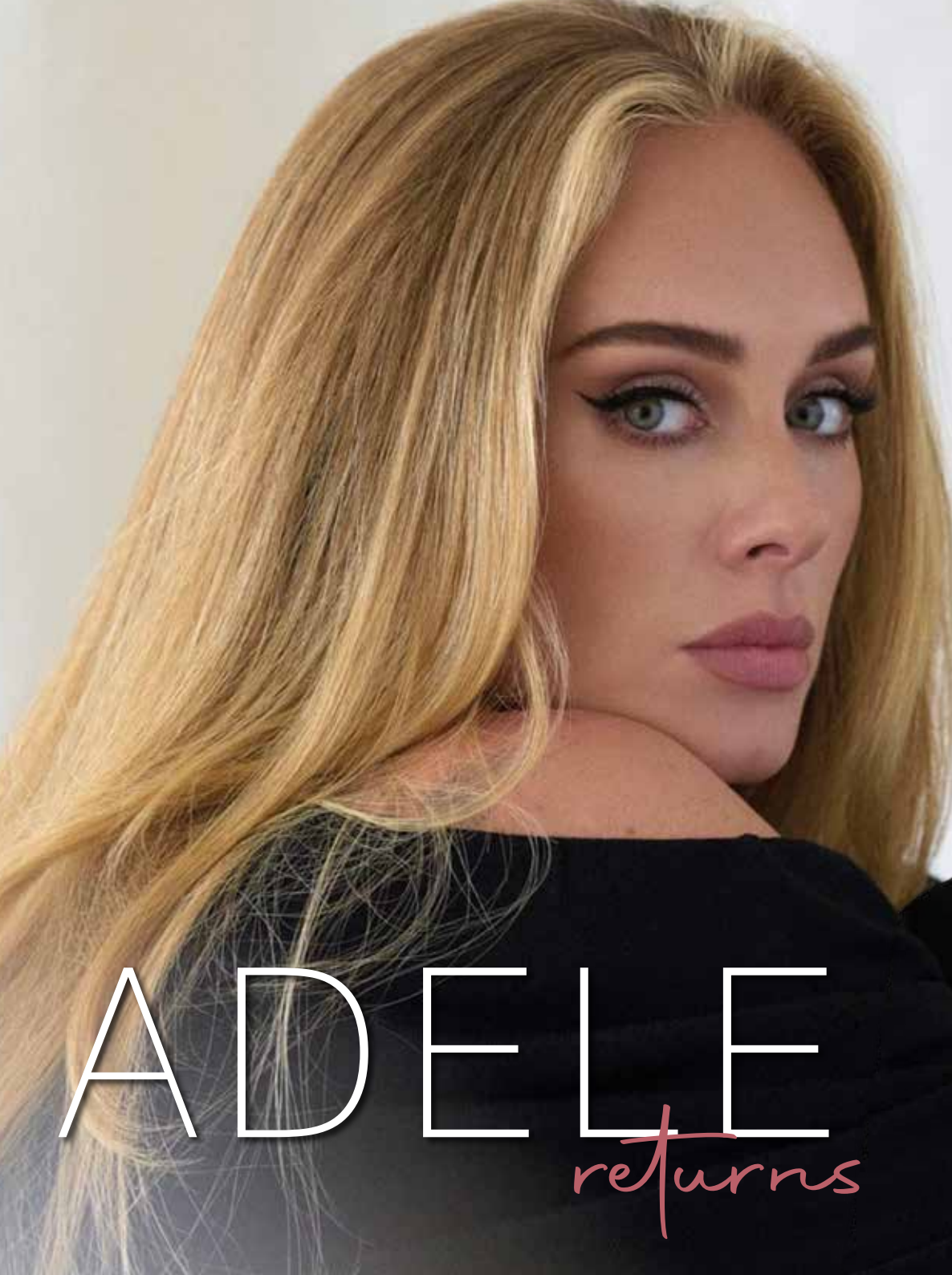
Of course, the next level of eye technology is the bionic eye. When science can replace so many other parts of the body, are we really so far away from replacing artificial eyes with fully working machines that restore sight, or even offer it to people who,

from birth, have never been able to see?

Scientists in America are currently working on the bionic eye, although the technology is still in its infancy. It uses a retinal implant to mimic the function of the retina. When connected to a video camera, it converts images into electrical impulses. These, in turn, stimulate existing retinal cells which carry the signal back to the brain for processing.

At present, the bionic eye would produce sight as basic shapes and depth, and in black and white. It would be possible to read a book, though with only 60 electrodes – a fully working eye has a million – the quality of vision is limited.

The good news is this is only the start. Just as the technology behind cochlear implants accelerated quickly to give sound to those who thought their hearing was lost forever, so too may there be a light at the end of the tunnel for those who yearn to be able to see.



ADELE

returns

Adele is one of the most successful female artists in history, and the universal acclaim behind *30*, her new album and the first in six years, reinforces beyond doubt the fact that in a changing, fragile, often artificial music industry, raw talent will always find a path to the top.

Perhaps what makes Adele, the Tottenham-born singer/songwriter, a cultural icon in the modern music world is an admission of her own frailties.

From relationships to confidence, through philanthropy and inclusion, the star's honesty in terms of how she positions herself is admirable. Yet there is always something real to back up the message – from the music to the five stunning *Vogue* magazine covers (three in the US, two in the UK, and the first person to achieve both at the same time), which continue to document the star's visual transformation.

From the moment the first melancholic and soulful opening lines of Adele's *Chasing Pavements* reached the world's airwaves, it was abundantly clear that the British songstress would go on to achieve big things, even if the eventual scale of her success was impossible to predict. The first single released from her 2008 debut album, *19* – named after the age at which she composed it – *Chasing Pavements* announced the beginning of a career that, some 13 years on, has seen Adele become an instantly recognisable name, face and voice across the globe.

“The first thing is to be happy with myself. to appreciate yourself – only then can you try to change things”

19 earned the star – born Adele Laurie Blue Adkins – the first of 15 Grammy Awards. More importantly, the album marked a point in time from which came the star's ever-growing list of popular records. Each is named in the same manner – *19*, *21*, *25* and *30* marking her musical milestones – and as well as the ever-increasing plaudits heaped upon their creator, each can be seen as a distinct point in Adele's journey to the elite of the musical world, littered as it was along the way with all of life's struggles.

“Every album is a phase in my life,” she says. “Each comes with a different reputation and pressure and baggage, and that can make things tough.”

Romantic relationships have often affected Adele's more melancholic musical musings, and her new album has its fair share of these. Debut single *Easy on Me* went to number one across the world, and reflected mistakes made both in childhood and adulthood; while tracks *Cry Your Heart Out*, *To Be Loved* and *Love is a Game* offer similar themes. But the singer insists she now has the ability to focus on herself, rather than dwelling on mistakes.

“I have a greater resilience to myself nowadays,” she says.

“That's just something that comes with age. In the past, I'd sit in darkness and feel sorry for myself. I loved the drama of it all.”

Now 33, things have certainly changed for Adele. The birth of her son, Angelo, in 2012 has been stated as a real turning point in her ability and willingness to call the shots; certainly the failing of her marriage to Angelo's father, Simon Konecki, doesn't seem to perplex her.

She adds: “The first thing is to be happy with myself – only then can you try to change things.”

“My career's not my life; it's my hobby, but I'm glad I have it.”



PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

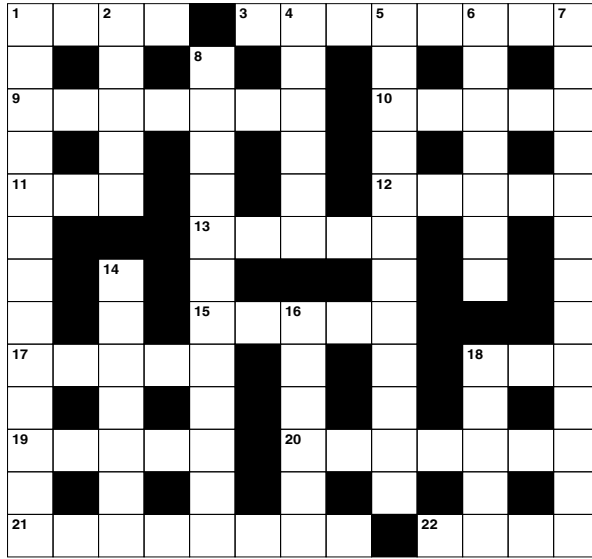
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

- 1. Skin irritation (4)
- 3. Assembled (8)
- 9. Allocations (7)
- 10. Small dust particles (5)
- 11. Drivel; nonsense (3)
- 12. Exit (5)
- 13. Long-handled spoon (5)
- 15. Ellipses (5)
- 17. Steep slope (5)
- 18. Intentionally so written (3)
- 19. Buffalo (5)
- 20. Become less intense (4,3)
- 21. On the outer side (8)
- 22. Examine by touch (4)

DOWN

- 1. Not capable of being restrained (13)
- 2. Destroy (3,2)
- 4. Utterly senseless (6)
- 5. Vagrancy (12)
- 6. Take back (7)
- 7. Rude and discourteous (13)
- 8. Metal device for removing tops (6,6)



- 14. Receiver (7)
- 16. Ratio of reflected to incident light (6)
- 18. Heating apparatus (5)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ An adult male lion's roar can be heard up to five miles away
- ▶ Elephants often use their trunks as 'snorkels' when swimming to help them breathe when they're underwater
- ▶ Female turkeys can occasionally develop their eggs into embryos without the need for sperm. This is a form of reproduction called parthenogenesis
- ▶ Owing to the position of horses' eyes, they can see almost 360 degrees. Their only blind spots are directly in front and behind their body
- ▶ Leopards' tails are so long so they can act as counterbalances when running, jumping or climbing trees
- ▶ Honey badgers have been listed in *Guinness World Records* as the most fearless animal on the planet.

SUDOKU

9			7					4
7			8		5			
	4			2				6
			6			7		1
				9				
1		8			3			
	2			3				5
			2		6			3
6					8			2

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HOW TO MAKE YOUR OWN

Eggnog

Although not as fashionable as it once was, eggnog is still synonymous with the festive season. Easy to make and with a real boozy kick, help us keep this Christmas tradition alive by giving these eggnog recipes a try.

Eggnog cocktails to try...

BAILEYS EGGNOG

What you need:

200ml eggnog | 35ml Baileys | 1 cinnamon stick | 1 sprinkle of nutmeg

How to make:

Mix the eggnog and Baileys, pour over ice, add a cinnamon stick and sprinkle with nutmeg.

SPICED EGGNOG

What you need:

45ml vanilla vodka | 30ml amaretto | 55ml eggnog | Ground nutmeg and cinnamon stick to garnish

How to make:

Add the ingredients to a cocktail shaker filled with ice, shake for 20 seconds and strain into a martini glass. Garnish with a cinnamon stick and nutmeg.

HOMEMADE EGGNOG: SERVES 4-6

What you need:

50g caster sugar | 4 egg yolks | 1 tsp vanilla essence | 400g can condensed milk | 100ml brandy

How to make:

1. Add the sugar to a saucepan with 75ml water.
2. Simmer until the sugar has dissolved and leave to cool.
3. Beat the egg yolks until smooth and add the vanilla essence.
4. Mix in the milk, brandy and cooled sugar syrup.
5. Pour into a jug and chill in the fridge for 2 hours.

ALCOHOL-FREE EGGNOG: SERVES 4-6

What you need:

50g caster sugar | 1 vanilla pod – seeds removed | 4 egg yolks | 100ml double cream | 500ml whole milk

How to make:

1. Add the sugar to a saucepan with 75ml water.
2. Simmer until the sugar has dissolved and leave to cool.
3. Add the eggs, cooled sugar syrup and vanilla seeds to a bowl and whisk until pale.
4. Add the cream and milk and beat until combined.
5. Fill a large jug with ice and strain the eggnog mixture into it.
6. Stir and serve in tumblers.



FOOD & DRINK

LOVE YOUR LEFTOVERS:

Christmas pudding



While no Christmas dinner would be complete without it, if there is one thing that you are guaranteed to have leftover after the big day, it's Christmas pudding.

Christmas Pudding Ice Cream – serves 10

You will need:

4 large egg yolks | 100g caster sugar | 175g leftover Christmas pudding | 2-3 tbs brandy | 300ml double cream

How to make:

1. Whisk the yolks and sugar until pale and thick.
2. Stir in the pudding.
3. Pour in the brandy and mix.
4. In a separate bowl, whip the cream until it holds

soft peaks.

5. Fold the cream into the mixture.
6. Pour into a freezer-proof container, cover and freeze until set.

Mini Christmas Pudding Cheesecakes – makes 12

You will need:

300g ginger nut biscuits | 100g unsalted melted butter | 250g soft cheese | 300ml extra thick double cream | 50g icing sugar | Zest of 2 clementines | 150g leftover Christmas pudding | 12-hole muffin tray

How to make:

1. Line the tray with paper cases.
2. Crush the biscuits and stir in the melted butter.
3. Pour into the cases and press down. Chill in fridge.
4. Whisk the soft cheese and fold in the cream.
5. Sift in the sugar and add the zest of the clementines.
6. Combine the mixture with the leftover Christmas pudding and then spoon over the biscuit bases.
7. Top with fruit and chill for at least 2 hours.
8. Remove from the fridge half an hour before serving and remove the paper cases.

Christmas Pudding Souffle – serves 4

You will need:

1 tbs golden caster sugar, plus extra for coating | 4 egg whites | 150ml custard | 85g Christmas pudding | Caramel sauce to serve

How to make:

1. Heat oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas mark 4.
2. Grease 4 x 150ml ramekins.
3. Coat each one with sugar.
4. Whisk the egg whites until stiff peaks form.
5. Add the sugar and whisk again.
6. In a bowl, mix the custard and pudding.
7. Stir in ¼ egg whites and gently fold in the rest.
8. Pour into the ramekins.
9. Bake for 12-15 minutes until risen and golden.
10. Top with caramel sauce.



Photo credit: thefoodpocketguide.com, waitrose.com, greatbritishchefs.com

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PETS

Doggy DOWNTIME

Have you ever noticed your dog watching the TV? If yes, you may want to try DogTV, a unique streaming service designed just for dogs.

WHAT IS DOGTV?

DogTV is a television channel that has been specifically created for dogs and their owners. It can be particularly useful for dogs that suffer with separation anxiety and stress. Its programmes are divided into three categories that are designed to meet a dog's typical daily cycle and to enrich their environment.

- 1. Relaxation:** Soothing music, sounds and visuals will help keep your dog calm and reduce their stress levels.
- 2. Stimulation:** Stimulating scenes with and without other animals, animation sequences and moving objects to encourage playfulness even when your dog is home alone.
- 3. Exposure:** Special sounds and visuals to help habituate your dog and make them feel more comfortable in their environment.

DO DOGS REALLY WATCH TV?

Yes, they do! There are thousands of videos on YouTube featuring dogs watching and responding to TV programmes, with most paying attention when they see other dogs, animals or moving objects. Some dogs will respond best to visuals, while others will lie down and relax when they hear calming music.

HOW DO I SUBSCRIBE TO DOGTV?

You can select what type of subscription package you would prefer via the www.dogtv.com website. Choose an annual subscription for £59.99 or a monthly subscription for £6.99, both of which include a free seven-day trial. There is no contract and you can cancel at any time. Alternatively, you can sign up through the DogTV app on Roku, Apple TV, Amazon Fire TV or iOS/Android devices.

DOES DOGTV HAVE PROGRAMMES FOR OWNERS?

Yes, it does! There are hundreds of fun, educational and entertaining programmes for dog owners, including *The Dog Chef*, *Road Dogs*, *Paws For Love* and *Meet The Breed*.



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SING FOR A HEALTHY NEW YEAR

Funky Voices
co.uk

As Christmas approaches, people's thoughts turn also to the New Year. It's a time that we think about resolutions – being more health conscious, learning a language, etc. But how often do we think of doing something for our mental health, well-being and quality of life? One thing that mental health experts all agree on is the many benefits of choral singing, but many people think of choirs as being purely devotional.

While such singing is very popular, local choir Funky Voices are all about taking great pop & rock classics and arranging them to suit collective voices, making them accessible to anyone.

Musical Director Sandra Colston explains how Funky Voices is open to all ages and walks of life: "Anyone is welcome to join, with no audition. All you have to do is attend a

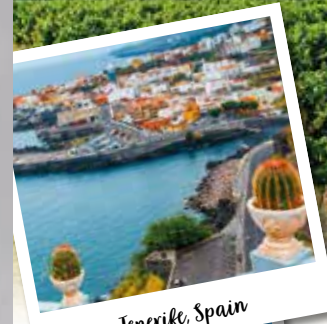
free taster session & we're sure you'll love the atmosphere!"

Over the 14 years that Funky Voices has been meeting, members have performed at festivals and gigs all over Essex & beyond, toured abroad, represented the UK at international choir competitions, & just two months ago, members had the once in a lifetime experience of closing the show at London's O2 Arena with pop legends Erasure.

There are so many varied and exciting opportunities for members, but at the heart of it, they meet once a week & experience the joy of singing great tracks in gorgeous harmony.

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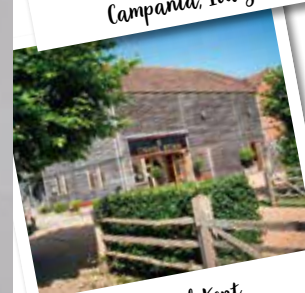
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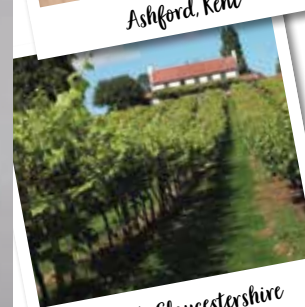
Tenerife, Spain



Campania, Italy



Ashford, Kent



Newent, Gloucestershire

Wine o'clock DESTINATIONS

Do you love travelling and also consider yourself a wine connoisseur? Or perhaps you just love quaffing vino? Either way, there are so many exciting destinations for wine lovers, both abroad and in the UK.

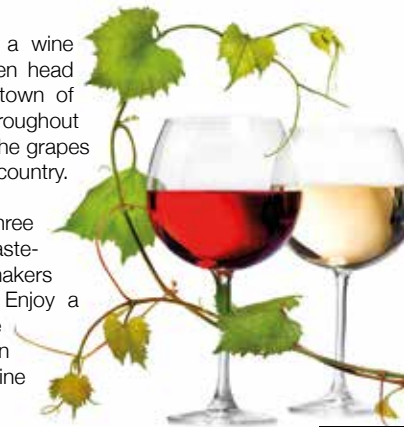
Languedoc-Roussillon, France: A stunningly scenic wine region, within Languedoc-Roussillon is the Corbières AOC, a famous appellation that boasts five established wine routes featuring dozens of first-rate wineries. Perfect for red wine lovers, as 85 per cent of all wine produced here is red.

Tenerife, Spain: While Tenerife might not seem like a great destination for wine drinkers, Spain is currently undergoing something of a winemaking renaissance, with this popular island making some of the most compelling bottles around. Head to the northeast of the island, close to the city of San Cristóbal de La Laguna, and hit its well-established wine route.

Campania, Italy: If you want to experience the welcoming culture of South Italy, then a Campania wine tour should be your first port of call. Campania is home to the famous Taurasi red wine, as well as fine white wines including Greco di Tufo and Fiano. Plus, you can sample the mouth-watering mozzarella from the water buffalo of the region.

Ashford, Kent: If you are looking for a wine destination a little closer to home, then head to the Chapel Down Winery near the town of Tenterden. It is open for tours and visits throughout the year, and you can find out more about the grapes that make the best Sauvignon Blanc in the country.

Newent, Gloucestershire: Visit the Three Choirs Vineyards in Newent and listen to taste-tling tales from one of the oldest winemakers from the 1970s UK wine movement. Enjoy a grape-to-glass experience, a tour of the vineyard, fine dining with tapas, and an exclusive tasting of its award-winning wine collection.



TRAVEL

Photo credit: winepair.com, chapeldown.com, three-choirs-vineyards.co.uk



BRUCE KING

on how to sell yourself and what you do



In his latest column, sales mentor and personal growth coach, Bruce King, discusses how to speak and present – in any setting and situation – with confidence.

I started public speaking more than 25 years ago at the insistence of the BBC, who had just published my first book and wanted me to travel around the country promoting it.

I was terrified – so much so that I hired a speaking coach to help me learn how to present with confidence.

Here are three tips, which were the most valuable she gave me:

First of all – be prepared and practise. The larger the audience you're speaking to and the more important your presentation, the more you need to prepare. There was never a truer expression than 'practice makes perfect'.

Secondly, to overcome nerves, she told me to imagine all the audience were sitting on toilets with trousers rolled down or skirts pulled up. That worked a treat.

I did it every time I first walked on stage. I paused, saw a sea of people sitting on their toilets with their trousers down and their skirts up, and it put such a big smile on my face that the audience warmed to me immediately.

Of course, they didn't know what I was smiling at.

The third thing she taught me was not to get intimidated by people you are presenting to with impressive job titles. They are just people like you and me. And they also go to the toilet.

Big businesses are nothing more than the sum total of many individuals, all working under the same umbrella. They have the same or similar concerns as you and me.

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More information:

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SELLING AND THE 'C' WORD!

With November and December usually being the months when the housing market quiets down ready for the Christmas celebrations and then January boom, this year due to the many market altering factors throughout the year we are still seeing an active market heading into the festive period.

Thirty million house hunters are expected to hit Rightmove between Christmas and New Year and 150 million throughout January so this would suggest preparing your home for marketing prior to big fella delivering the presents is great idea.

So when do you market your property and more importantly - what do you about your decorations?

Well, first and foremost decide on the best agent for you and arrange for them to visit the property to take measurement and photographs, hold off putting up your dec's until after your professional photographs have been taken, these will date the marketing in the new year and even if your home is in full festive swing when viewers come round to see the property, the marketing photos will show it as it usually is.

When you do put your decorations up be mindful of potential buyers, don't make them too personal, let viewers imagine themselves their next year. Don't have any particularly large decorations so viewers can still the space you have available. If you home suits hosting a big family Christmas now is the time to show that off.



IF YOU ARE LOOKING TO MARKET YOUR PROPERTY, HIT THE MARKET ON BOXING DAY AND GET YOUR HOUSE IN FRONT OF TONS OF BUYERS ON WHAT IS ONE OF THE BUSIEST DAYS OF THE YEAR ON RIGHTMOVE.



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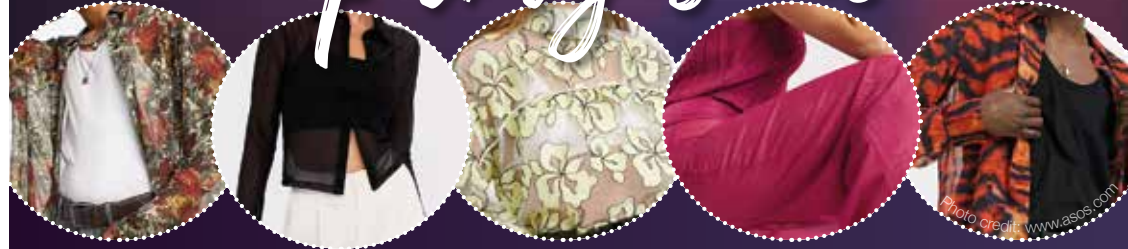


FASHION



HOW TO WEAR

THIS
Sheer party season



Both alluring and sexy, sheer tops have always been a fashion staple, especially during the Christmas party season.

However, there is no denying that it takes guts to rock this style.

WEAR A CAMISOLE UNDERNEATH

If you don't dare to bare and you can't think of anything worse than having your bra or chest on show, why not wear a cami or vest top underneath? Enabling you to wear sheer with confidence, this look can be worn to the office and then rocked all night long.

COMBINE WITH HIGH-WAISTED GARMENTS

For those who are worried about flashing their midriff, high-waisted trousers or a high-waisted skirt offer the perfect solution. Complete this sleek and sophisticated look with a simple crop top or bralette.

THINK ABOUT YOUR CHOSEN COLOURS

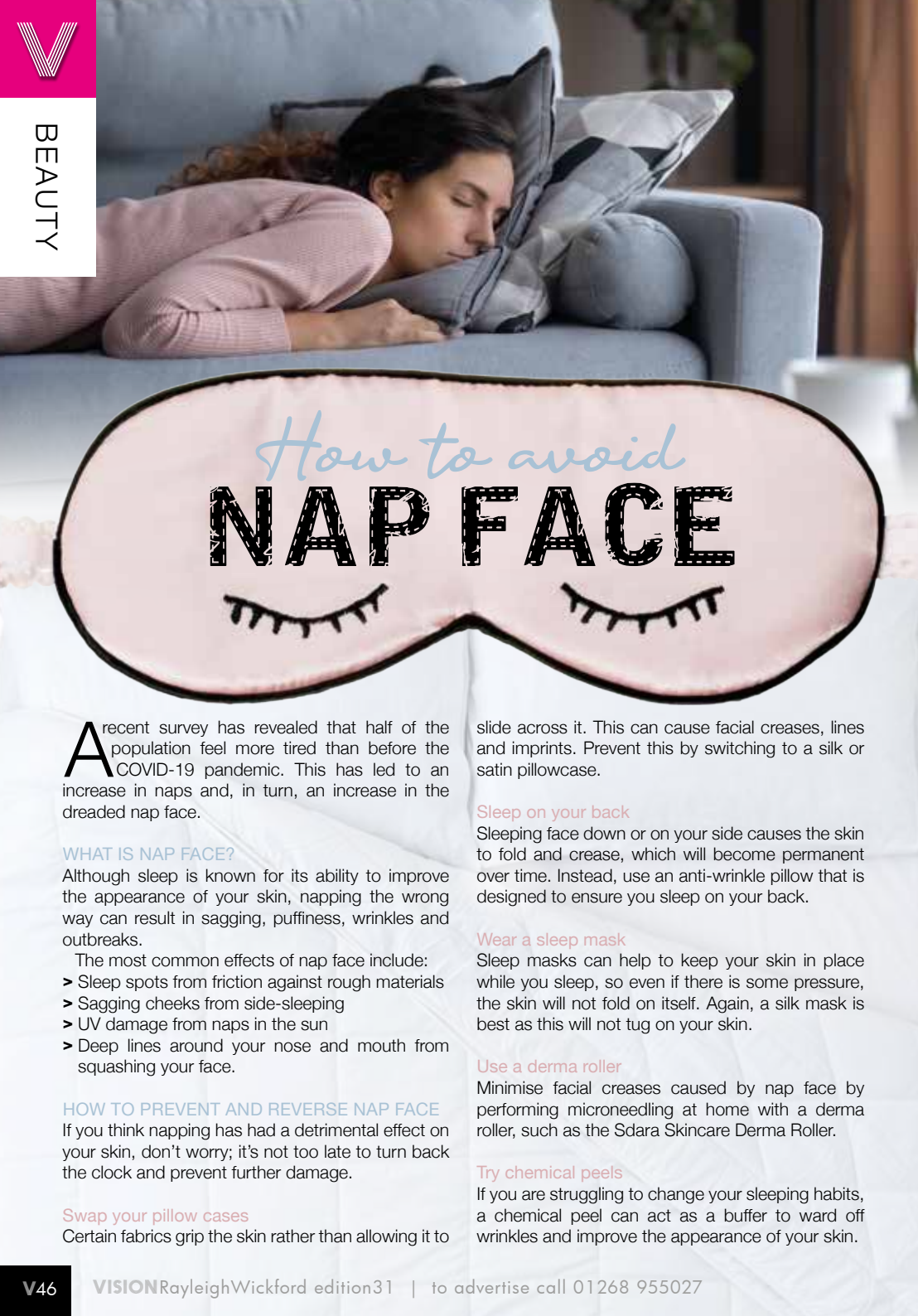
While it seems to be an unwritten rule that the undergarment you choose to wear under a sheer top should be the same colour, why not mix it up a bit? Whether you wear black under a sheer white top or you embrace colour blocking and clash bright colours such as blue and red, it's 'go bold or go home' this party season.

USE EMBELLISHMENTS

Embellishments create visual interest which can trick the eye and give the illusion of more coverage. They are particularly useful for sheer trousers that can leave you feeling exposed. Don't be afraid to experiment with sequins, glitter and embroidery.

EMBRACE SHEER PRINTS

This clever trick makes a sheer top appear less see-through; the busier the print, the better. Plus, animal prints are bang on trend for autumn/winter 2021.



How to avoid NAP FACE

A recent survey has revealed that half of the population feel more tired than before the COVID-19 pandemic. This has led to an increase in naps and, in turn, an increase in the dreaded nap face.

WHAT IS NAP FACE?
Although sleep is known for its ability to improve the appearance of your skin, napping the wrong way can result in sagging, puffiness, wrinkles and outbreaks.

- The most common effects of nap face include:
- Sleep spots from friction against rough materials
 - Sagging cheeks from side-sleeping
 - UV damage from naps in the sun
 - Deep lines around your nose and mouth from squashing your face.

HOW TO PREVENT AND REVERSE NAP FACE
If you think napping has had a detrimental effect on your skin, don't worry; it's not too late to turn back the clock and prevent further damage.

Swap your pillow cases
Certain fabrics grip the skin rather than allowing it to

slide across it. This can cause facial creases, lines and imprints. Prevent this by switching to a silk or satin pillowcase.

Sleep on your back
Sleeping face down or on your side causes the skin to fold and crease, which will become permanent over time. Instead, use an anti-wrinkle pillow that is designed to ensure you sleep on your back.

Wear a sleep mask
Sleep masks can help to keep your skin in place while you sleep, so even if there is some pressure, the skin will not fold on itself. Again, a silk mask is best as this will not tug on your skin.

Use a derma roller
Minimise facial creases caused by nap face by performing microneedling at home with a derma roller, such as the Sdara Skincare Derma Roller.

Try chemical peels
If you are struggling to change your sleeping habits, a chemical peel can act as a buffer to ward off wrinkles and improve the appearance of your skin.



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INDIGESTION *be gone!*



SEVEN NATURAL WAYS TO BEAT INDIGESTION OVER THE CHRISTMAS PERIOD



While the festive season is the perfect time to overindulge, you may soon regret that extra mince pie or glass of champagne when indigestion comes knocking at your door.

PEPPERMINT TEA

Known for relieving stomach problems, peppermint tea is a great natural remedy for indigestion as it has an antispasmodic effect on the body. However, if your indigestion is caused by acid reflux, avoid this treatment as it can worsen your symptoms.

GINGER

A commonly used natural remedy for morning sickness, ginger in the form of tea, ginger ale or a boiled sweet can help to soothe indigestion. Alternatively, boil 1-2 pieces of ginger root in 4 cups of water and flavour with honey or lemon before drinking.

APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

Indigestion is sometimes triggered by not enough stomach acid, which is why apple cider vinegar is such an effective cure for this common ailment. Add 1-2 tsp of raw, unpasteurised apple cider

vinegar to a cup of water and drink for instant relief.

FENNEL SEED

Another antispasmodic herb, fennel seed can help to combat indigestion and to soothe other stomach ailments such as cramping, nausea and bloating. Drink fennel tea after a heavy meal or chew on a few fennel seeds.

BAKING SODA

Baking soda can quickly help to neutralise stomach acid, which in turn will relieve indigestion and gas after eating. To make this remedy, add ½ tsp baking soda to 4oz of warm water and drink.

LEMON WATER

Lemon water has an alkaline effect on the stomach, which can improve digestion. Simply mix 1tbsp of lemon juice in a cup of hot or warm water and drink a few minutes before eating.

WARM BATH OR HOT WATER BOTTLE

Heat can help to relax tense muscles and ease the symptoms of indigestion. Either take a warm bath or apply a hot water bottle to your stomach.

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Ways to recycle your REAL CHRISTMAS TREE

An estimated eight million Christmas trees are bought every year, yet sadly, once the festive season is over, most end up in landfill. Not only does their disposal cost the taxpayer £100 per 40 trees, but each tree generates around 16kg of carbon dioxide. Here are six ways to recycle your tree – better for the planet and your pocket.

TURN YOUR TREE INTO MULCH: Use a shredder to turn your Christmas tree's branches into mulch and place around the base of your garden trees and shrubs to help prevent soil erosion and treat compaction. Make sure you wear safety glasses and gloves.

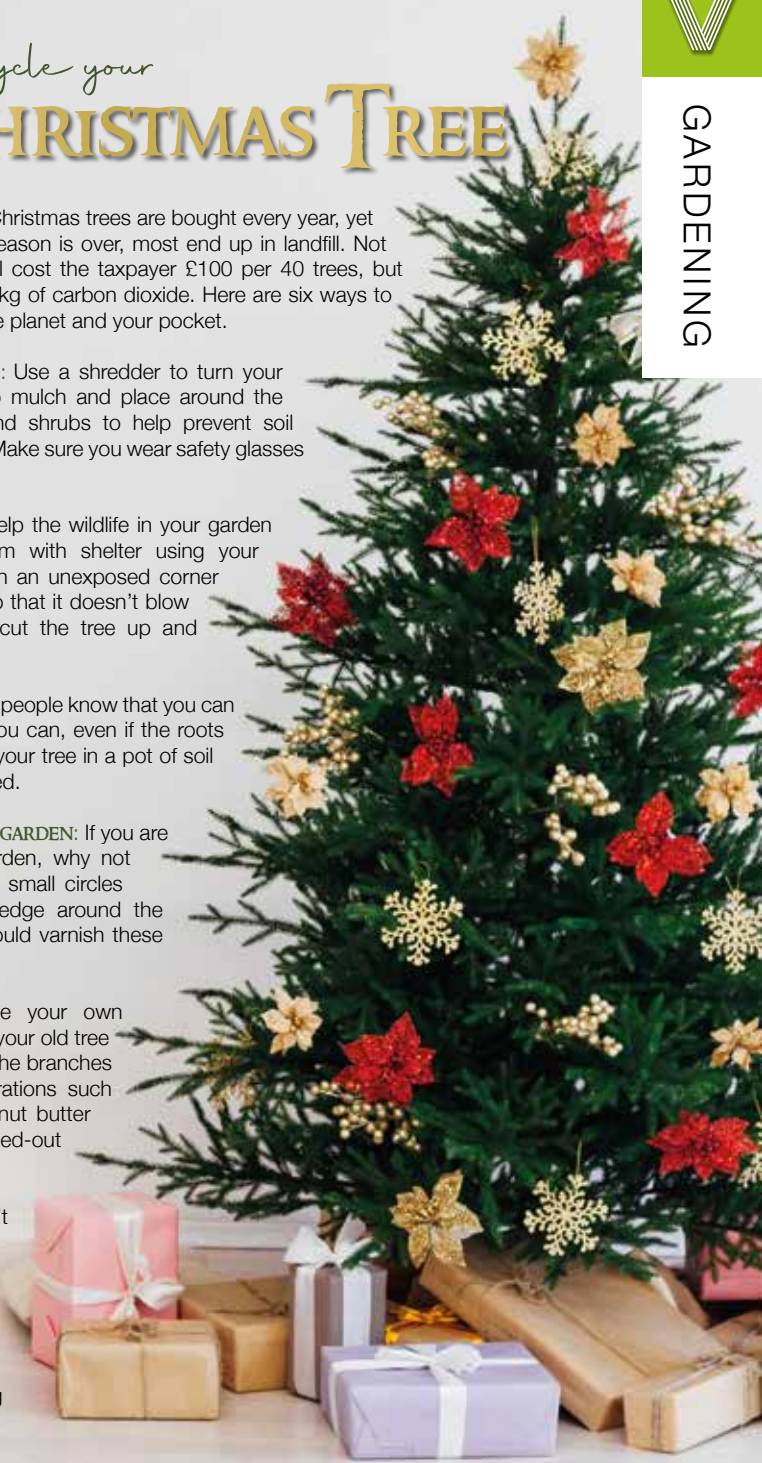
USE AS AN ANIMAL HABITAT: Help the wildlife in your garden over winter by providing them with shelter using your Christmas tree. Simply place in an unexposed corner of your garden and secure it so that it doesn't blow over. Alternatively, you could cut the tree up and create a hotel for insects.

REPLANT YOUR TREE: Not many people know that you can replant a Christmas tree, but you can, even if the roots have been chopped off. Place your tree in a pot of soil and leave to become established.

CREATE EDGING AROUND YOUR GARDEN: If you are looking to landscape your garden, why not cut the trunk of your tree into small circles and use them to create an edge around the perimeter? Alternatively, you could varnish these circles and use as coasters.

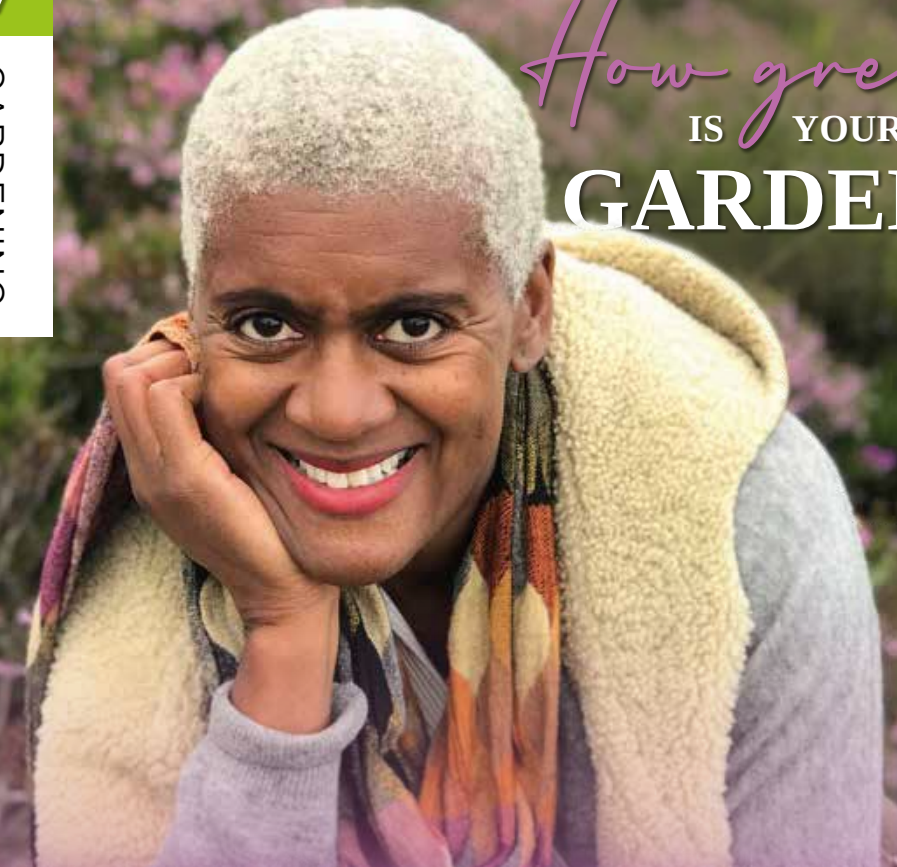
MAKE A BIRD FEEDER: Create your own superior bird feeder by placing your old tree in a heavy pot and decorating the branches with bird-friendly, edible decorations such as pine cones covered in peanut butter and bird seed, or half a scooped-out orange filled with nuts.

DONATE YOUR TREE: If you don't want to do anything with your old tree yourself, the next best thing is to donate it to your local garden centre, who will use it for chippings. Some local councils also offer Christmas tree recycling schemes.





How green IS YOUR GARDEN?



Presenter Arit Anderson and a celebration of open spaces

Arit Anderson is the garden designer, writer and presenter who takes the resplendent, relaxed vibes of our outdoor spaces and wraps them in an extra layer of green-fingered greatness.

Perhaps it's her soft voice, her welcoming tone, or just the fact that the 55-year-old flora and fauna fanatic has such a deep and delightful knowledge of the subject in hand. Whatever it is, Arit is one of a modern breed of horticulturalists taking a holistic view of our open spaces.

"For me, it's as much about enveloping yourself in the space around you, as it is focusing on individual flowers or plants or species," she says.

"The outdoors is a celebration in its totality – I think, in many ways, we are all a level on from the real precision prettiness of gardening that we used to have in the 1980s. We're a bit more rugged and

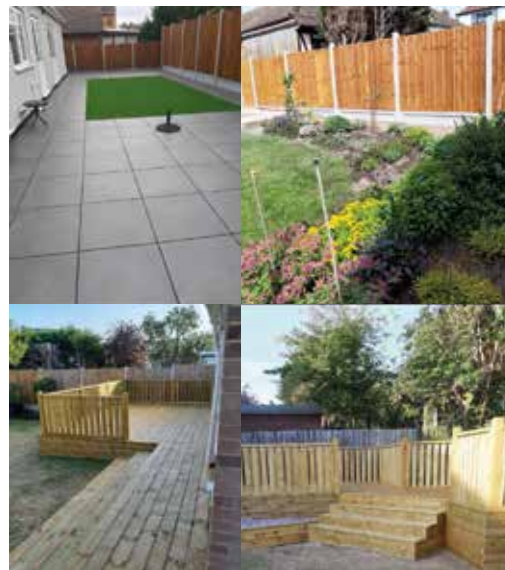
rustic now, and I love that."

That rustic element certainly helped as far as reshaping, restyling and breathing new life into people's gardens went on the hit BBC show *Garden Rescue*. With a simple premise to reinvent a homeowner's outdoor space, Arit and her trusty team worked craft and creativity in abundance.

While fans were disappointed to hear of Arit hanging up her secateurs on the series, the spare time gained does reinforce her focus on *Gardeners' World*. The presenter is also set to co-host the Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival next year.

She added: "Our gardens have been one of the things that have felt ever-present through the mire of lockdown, but being out, talking about them and sharing everything that's so exhilarating about the outdoors is the most special thing, and it's a pleasure to be doing that again."

Photo credit: Arit Anderson via thatsthenormyde.com



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DRIVERS FACE NEW MOBILE PHONE FINES FROM 2022

New laws are set to come into force from next year to crack down on mobile phone usage while behind the wheel, with 81 per cent of people supporting the tightening of driving rules in the UK.

HOW MANY ACCIDENTS ARE CAUSED BY DRIVERS USING MOBILE PHONES?

According to the Department for Transport, 17 people were killed on the road last year in crashes that involved drivers being distracted by their mobile phones. A further 114 were seriously injured and 385 were slightly injured. More than one in six of those killed or seriously injured were either pedestrians or cyclists.

HOW IS THE LAW CHANGING?

Under current UK laws, drivers are banned from making a phone call or texting using a handheld device, unless there is an emergency. However, from 2022, drivers will also not be allowed to take photos or videos, scroll through music playlists, or play games on their phones when driving. This includes

when stationary in motorway jams and at traffic lights.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU ARE CAUGHT BREAKING THESE NEW LAWS?

Anyone caught using their handheld device while driving will face a £200 fixed penalty notice and six points on their licence.

ARE THERE ANY EXCEPTIONS TO MOBILE PHONE USAGE WHILE DRIVING?

Drivers can still use devices such as sat navs and mobile phones using satellite navigation, but these must be secured in a cradle. They can also make contactless payments using their mobile phones when stationary.

WHEN DO THESE LAWS COME INTO EFFECT?

These new laws will start to be implemented from next year, with the government planning to revise the Highway Code to clearly explain the new measures to drivers. More information on the new changes to road mobile phone usage can be found at www.gov.uk

FROM 2022, DRIVERS
ARE NOT ALLOWED TO...

- ✗ Make a phone call/text
- ✗ Take photos/videos
- ✗ Scroll through music playlists
- ✗ Play games



PEARL HARBOR

remembered

LOOKING BACK TO THE BATTLE AT PEARL HARBOR, 80 YEARS AGO IN DECEMBER

Pearl City in 2021 is a pleasant enough place. It is clean, sunny, and remains very proud of its reputation as both an early site for Benjamin Franklin's railway network and a jazz hotbed in late 19th-century Hawaii.

Yet such a peaceful reputation is at odds with events in its harbour, when it came under the attack of one of the most vicious airborne onslaughts in military history.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was actually a pre-emptive move designed to limit the US army's ability to defend other areas, which were earmarked in phase two for later that day. Essentially, by ripping apart the US Pacific Fleet, it would be unable to stem the tide of attacks on British, Dutch and US territories in southeast Asia.

The Japanese began the assault on December 7, 1941. They rained down bombs on hangars and aircraft around the island, while launching torpedoes at US airships in Pearl Harbor.

Four battleships were hit immediately, with the USS *Arizona* sinking after a bomb hit its explosives stores. A total of 1,177 crew members perished.

The Japanese retreated, though as US troops began to survey the damage and regroup, a second barrage was on its way. Around 90 minutes later, 170 aircraft entered the area, again firing a devastating

array of artillery on the harbour.

By the end of the second wave, 18 US warships had been sunk or damaged, while almost 200 aircraft were destroyed.

The total number of casualties was 2,403 – all American servicemen or women.

While the attack on Pearl Harbor was monstrous and clinical, crucially the Pacific Fleet's aircraft carriers were not in the area at the time. The fact that these survived became pivotal in the Pacific War that followed, as the US made major moves in restoring balance. Eventually, they helped to tip the scales back towards the Allies and, ultimately, victory, four years later.

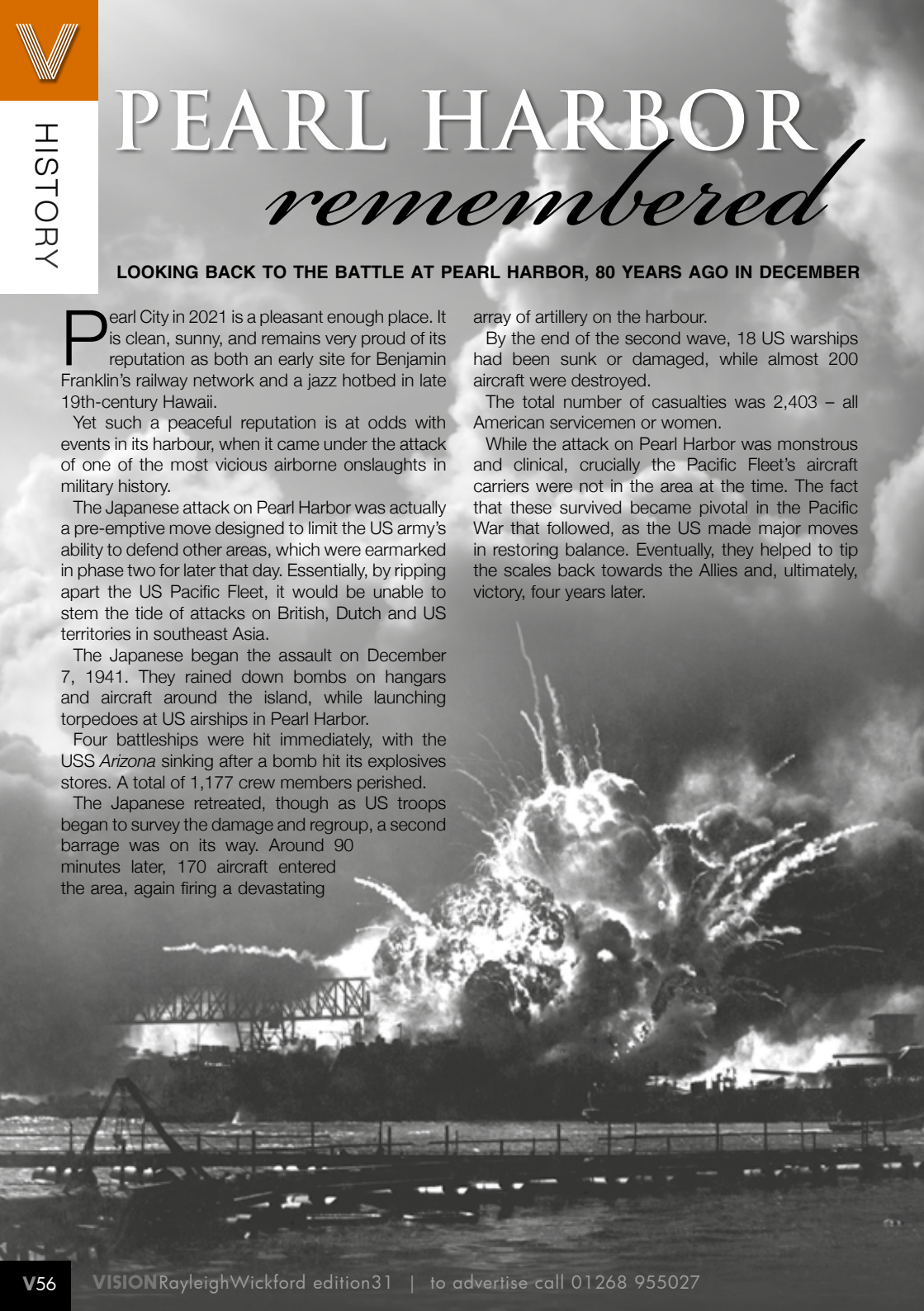


Photo credit: Tom Oldham/Shutterstock

Nicola Adams: HEAR HER ROAR

In her riveting new documentary, *Lioness: The Nicola Adams Story*, it's revealed that the boxing champion was both a fighter and a survivor long before she ever stepped foot in the ring.

The 2012 Summer Olympics were remarkable in so many ways for the UK, as host city London became the global epicentre for sporting greatness. Medals were won, young athletes were discovered and legends were forged in the eternal flames of the Olympic torch. But of all the many moments of glory, 29-year-old Leeds native, Nicola Adams, becoming the first female boxer ever to win a gold medal is surely one of the most memorable.

Since her triumphant debut as an Olympian almost a decade ago, the charismatic firebrand has cemented her status as a national treasure. After winning a second gold at the Rio 2016 games, Adams turned professional, where she held the World Boxing Organisation female flyweight title two years in a row and retired undefeated.

Then, in 2020, the LGBT icon made history once

more by starring on the 18th series of *Strictly Come Dancing* as part of the show's first same-sex couple, alongside professional Katya Jones. Sadly, Adams's dancing dreams were cut short when she tested positive for COVID-19.

Yet despite her acclaim, very little has been known about Adams's journey before that momentous day in 2012, until now...

Named after Nicola's nickname in the ring, 'Lioness', the Amazon Prime Video documentary – which is available to watch now – not only features exclusive early footage of her career, but also paints a tragic portrait of her childhood, including a violent father and her mother's struggle as a single parent.

It becomes evident that the boxing ring was a refuge for the young athlete, and though she may have faced many challenges since – misogyny, racism and homophobia all feature in her quest for greatness – it was there in that Leeds boxing club where Nicola Adams found her true self, and several years on, became an inspiration to others.

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