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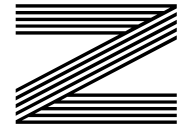
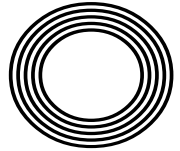
**HOW TO  
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KITCHEN**

**TAKING A DEEP DIVE**  
into Tom Daley's success

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The TV presenter celebrating 40 years in television



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# Editor's notes...

APRIL 2022



Nik Allen, Editor

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

It's fair to say we've all been shocked and saddened by events in Ukraine, as Putin's military offensive tears apart the lives of millions of innocent people.

It's difficult to see any silver lining in skies filled with the rain of artillery shelling, yet there is perhaps one, and it is significant in protecting us from the catastrophe of a full-on world war.

The answer is the digital age. In the past, wars were fought with tanks and guns, whereas we now live in an age where disincentives for conflict can be laid by freezing of funds, removal of services and banning of oligarchs.

Russia's army pursued Ukraine through bloody warfare, yet back in Russia, the everyday trades, services and liberties that were afforded their citizens are being squeezed.

It gives me hope that wars these days are about more than who has the biggest weaponry. We are so interconnected by the digital age, that threatening to flick a switch might be the most dynamic deterrent.

I can only hope that Putin realises quickly that while punishing the people of Ukraine, he is doing the very same thing to his own.

*Nik Allen*

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# SEWING THE SEEDS OF SUCCESS



Photo credit: BBC and Comic Relief



## FROM NOSE CLIPS TO KNITTING NEEDLES, TOM DALEY OBE'S DIVE FOR DELIGHT GOES ON

There is a perennial youth about Tom Daley OBE that sets him apart from so many of our other stars of the pool.

Sure, he possesses all the boyish good looks and charm he had when first making waves – although, as a diver, preferably not too many – back in 2008 with his first of four Olympic appearances.

The shelf life for a competitive diver is usually preciously short, particularly when combined with constant invitations to engage in media duties, campaign work and promotional activity.

Yet Daley has maintained focus, kept an eye on the prize and, in what may well be regarded as the heyday of his career, is arguably more successful than ever, having scooped gold in the Tokyo Olympics last year on the 10m board.

"I love what I do, and while it's great to have a

career in the media, that's never what I set out to achieve," he says. "What I wanted, from day one, was to be successful, and I'm not going to give that up until my body tells me it's time to."

It has been a whirlwind 12 months for Daley, who was named Best Male Diver at the LEN Awards this year and came second in BBC Sports Personality of the Year. Yet it was in partnering Matty Lee on the 10m board at the 2020 Tokyo Games last year – the event being delayed by a year because of COVID-19 – that Daley recounts as his greatest Olympic performance of them all.

He says: "It was a case of eighth time lucky, you might say. It was one of those events where you start well, hold your momentum, then it suddenly comes into focus that you might have a real chance of doing something special.

"It validates everything I have put into the sport."

And while Daley is a public figure with a hugely marketable profile – "I don't really think of myself as anything other than a diver... fashion photoshoots always involve me wearing more clothes than I do for my day job" – much of his desire to keep achieving in the sport he loves has been at the expense of other professional opportunities, as well as a proper home life. He wed American screenwriter, director and producer Dustin Lance Black in 2017, and a year later the couple had a son together, named Robbie.

"There is a huge toll on your private life in a sport such as this, but I try my best to balance things," says the double world and six-time British champion.

Daley, who recently launched knitting website Made With Love, is a passionate philanthropist. Recently,

he completed a gruelling four-day challenge in which he rowed, cycled, ran and, of course, swam the distance between the Olympic Park in Stratford and his home town of Plymouth, to raise money for Comic Relief.

When Tom finally reached the finish line, he said: "If you can, please donate what you can to Red Nose Day because it would make a world of difference to so many families all across the country.

"To come home and see all my family here, as well as so many people, is pretty special, so thank you. I don't really know what else to say other than I just need to go and sleep for about six years. Thank you all so much and love you.

"It was one of my toughest challenges yet, but epitomises how I just want to keep pushing myself forward."



# STORM CHAOS

**STORM EUNICE MAY HAVE BLOWN ITSELF OUT, BUT THE AFTER-EFFECTS ARE LONGER LASTING**

Storm Eunice came, saw and conquered. She may have taken the name of someone your grandmother used to bump into at the local jumble sales, but there was nothing charitable about this confrontational weather system that wreaked havoc over the course of a three-day period, causing damage estimated at more than £350million.

Eunice was one of the most powerful to hit the south coast of England since the Great Storm of 1987. A top wind speed of 122mph whipped round The Needles of the Isle of Wight, while inland trees were felled, roofs damaged – including that of The O2 arena – transport routes closed, and major incident warnings issued by the emergency services.

More than a million homes were left without power at various points across a 72-hour period, beginning on February 17.

Ultimately, Eunice blew herself out, and gradually things have got back to normal; although for the

families of the three fatalities of the UK storm, things will never be the same again.

The naming of storms has always provoked interest, although the practice is relatively new and only dates back to November 2015, when Abigail was the first to be named. The Met Office decided labelling them would do more to alert people to how dangerous they could be, as well as making the reporting and following of them an easier task. There is real science behind the theory too – the human brain attaches a stronger emotional tie to a name than it does to a concept.

What we shouldn't do is confuse a relatively gentle title for something that, at its worst, can be fatal. Dudley, Gladys and Ruby may sound sweet and unassuming, but they're anything but at 3am as tiles are ripped from your roof.

The best news is that the Met Office invites people to send in their own suggestions of names – email [nameourstorms@metoffice.gov.uk](mailto:nameourstorms@metoffice.gov.uk) with your own cute (or totally terrifying) choice.

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# NICK OF TIME



## NICK KNOWLES CELEBRATES 30 YEARS ON OUR SCREENS

When Nick Knowles said an emotional farewell to his *DIY SOS* show at the end of 2021, it brought the curtain down on an impressive period of renovating, refreshing and reviving people's living spaces.

It's a shame the 59 year old's tenure ended in such acrimonious fashion – the presenter was unceremoniously binned after appearing in an advert for Shreddies. In mimicking his role in *DIY SOS*, he had broken a BBC contract rule, and the axe fell. Comedian Rhod Gilbert replaced Knowles, who has since not been short of offers for new work. So it appears that life – and home improvements – continue.

Knowles got his break in television back in the early 1990s as a reporter on nightly news show *Coast to Coast*, which aired on TVS, the precursor to ITV Meridian.

From 1994, he presented a motorcycle programme called *Ridge Riders* for eight years, before the BBC saw Knowles' potential and

matched him up with Lowri Turner for a new-launch DIY show that would ride on the coattails of the hugely successful *Changing Rooms*.

The format of *DIY SOS* was fast-paced and usually leant on solving property issues for those in need of help, rather than people simply wanting a change of decor.

The success of *DIY SOS* led Knowles into daytime shows such as *Real Rescues*, *Wildest Dreams* and *Last Choir Standing*. However, it was becoming a game show host, notably through the lottery programme, that shaped the charismatic Southall-born frontman. *Who Dares Wins*, *Secret Fortune*, *Perfection* and *Break the Safe* guided him to star presenter status, and the inevitable *I'm A Celebrity* invitation. He subsequently finished sixth in the 2018 show, which was won by Harty Redknapp.

As for what comes next, Knowles's *Heritage Rescue* show on Quest looks at historic buildings in need of restoration – proof that there's always another DIY project lurking just around the corner.

Photo credit: Jake Morley/BAPTA/Shutterstock



# WALK-IN SHOWER vs



# WET ROOM



**W**alk-in showers and wet rooms have never been more popular, with families, professional couples and people with mobility issues all taking advantage of their stylish and practical designs.

However, what exactly is the difference between a walk-in shower and a wet room? And which one is right for your home?

### WHAT IS A WALK-IN SHOWER?

Walk-in showers typically exist on a shower tray that has been installed directly onto the floor. They are not an extension of a bath and instead have their own cubicle. They are built as low to the main surface of the bathroom as possible so that you can enjoy a seamless transition from one space to the next.

### WHAT IS A WET ROOM?

A wet room is a completely waterproof bathroom space that features a shower area that is flush with the rest of the floor. Water drains through a drain that is usually located in the shower section, and the room can include a shower screen to reduce spray in the bathroom.

### WHAT ARE THE MAIN DIFFERENCES?

While a wet room is an open-plan space in which the floor has been altered to allow water to drain from it, a walk-in shower features a low-profile shower tray that has either one or two glass screens. Both options provide easy access and style. Often, homeowners opt for a walk-in shower if they do not have the budget for a wet room.

### WHY CHOOSE A WALK-IN SHOWER?

- > Ideal for smaller bathrooms or en suites
- > Perfect for people with limited mobility due to the low shower tray
- > Offers a minimalist design
- > More affordable than a wet room
- > Low maintenance

### WHY CHOOSE A WET ROOM?

- > Easy access for the elderly and disabled
- > Incredibly luxurious
- > Suitable for small and large bathrooms
- > Easy to clean
- > Can add value to your home.

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### HOW TO CALCULATE HOW MUCH PAINT YOU NEED WHEN DECORATING

Painting is one of the easiest DIY jobs you can do around the house. There's not much skill involved, materials are cheap, and it's easy to do once you get the time.

But one thing that frustrates DIY painters is not knowing how much paint is enough for their project. This leads to repeat visits to the decorating supplier, delays to your job, and frustration.

We're here to help you work out how much paint you need for your next project. Take a look at this simple guide for our top tips.

**MEASURE YOUR SPACE:** Knowing your figures will make the process of buying paint much simpler. Multiply the height and width of your walls to give you a square metre measurement to work with.

**CONSIDER HOW MANY COATS YOU NEED:** The number of coats you will need will depend on the type of paint you use. Some paints may only need one coat, but the majority will need two or three coats to achieve the desired look.

**MAKE YOUR CALCULATION:** Your paint tin should tell you how much coverage per square

metre it provides. Divide the square metre number for your space by the suggested coverage amount on the tin, to work out how many tins you'll need.

For example: If you're painting a wall that's 10mx2m (20m<sup>2</sup>), and a 5-litre tin of paint covers 10m<sup>2</sup>, you'll need two tins of paint. Et voilà, it's that simple.

**SOME QUICK AND HANDY TIPS:** These tips can provide you with a rough guide for calculating paint for different spaces:

- > 1 litre of paint will cover a feature wall (approx 2.5m<sup>2</sup>)
  - > 2.5 litres of paint will paint an entire small room (approx 2mx2m)
  - > 5 litres of paint will paint an entire medium room (approx 4mx4m)
- This is for two coats of paint, for a standard wall height of 2.4m.

Knowing how much paint you need will help you get started on your projects, help you save money, and avoid the frustration of having too little or too much paint.



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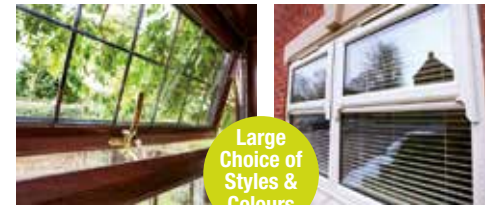
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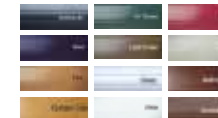
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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



LOCAL NEWS RAYLEIGH



Photo credit: visitesssex.com



## Join the Heritage Train

A train from Shenfield to Rayleigh will be the first Heritage Train to run in Essex.

The special event on Sunday, April 24, has been organised by Rayleigh Town Museum and the Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership. It will see Greater Anglia's 10.17am train from Shenfield take people to Rayleigh, where they will receive a guided tour of the town's heritage sites.

The walk, led by guides from Rayleigh Town

Museum, will take in the Dutch Cottage (pictured top right), 200-year-old windmill (pictured bottom right), high street and castle mount, and includes a visit to the town's museum. The event will finish by lunchtime, giving attendees the rest of the day to explore.

Tickets cost £5 for adults and £3 for children. The price includes return travel, a walking tour and access to the windmill, mount and museum. To book, visit [esscrp.org.uk/events/rayleigh-heritage-train](http://esscrp.org.uk/events/rayleigh-heritage-train)

## Appeals for donations to aid struggling people

A Rayleigh group is appealing for new members to join them, as well as donations of wool.

The Hug in a Shrug Project came about during the COVID-19 lockdown, when it became apparent how many Essex residents were struggling with isolation. The project creates blankets for people to give to others to let them know they are loved and cared for.

Anyone is welcome to join the group between 12pm and 2pm on Tuesdays at the Rayleigh Megazone, whether you can knit or crochet or would like to learn.

A spokesperson said: "This is a really worthwhile initiative that has brought comfort to many people."

For more information, contact Corrina O'Donnell on 07305 007622 or [corrina.odonnell@ceessex.org.uk](mailto:corrina.odonnell@ceessex.org.uk)



# MARK FRANCOIS MP



Member of Parliament for Rayleigh and Wickford

Last year, I received around 40,000 emails as your local MP. They covered a whole variety of topics. However, even during COVID-19, I received more emails and complaints from constituents on one topic than on any other – namely the performance of Essex County Council's (ECC) Highways Department.

I am well aware that ECC is Conservative run, but that does not mean that it is above criticism, including from me as a Conservative MP. After years of trying to raise Highways problems with ECC, the time has come to well and truly 'call Essex Highways out' for providing such a shoddy service in return for the ever-increasing level of council tax.

at ECC Highways appears to be the long-term contract with its main highways contractor, Ringway-Jacobs. The contract appears to have been poorly designed, which often leads to work being carried out unsatisfactorily, at least as far as my constituents are concerned. If the residents of Essex are to see an improvement in the state of their roads, it is crucial that when the contract approaches its end, the new one is put out to a full and rigorous competitive tender.

Alongside this, the seemingly endless stream of roadworks and infrequent pothole repairs across Essex epitomises ECC Highways' speciality of providing excuses, rather than actually doing the necessary work. What is clear is that Essex residents deserve a much better service than they are getting.

At the heart of the seemingly deep-seated problems



## WC could become micropub

A derelict public restroom in Rayleigh could be converted into a microbrewery bar.

A licence application has been submitted to Rochford District Council for a micropub and craft beer supplier at the former public conveniences on Crown Hill in Rayleigh.

The micropub and craft beer company, according to paperwork posted on the council website, seeks to sell alcohol between midday and 11pm from Monday to Thursday, and between midday and midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

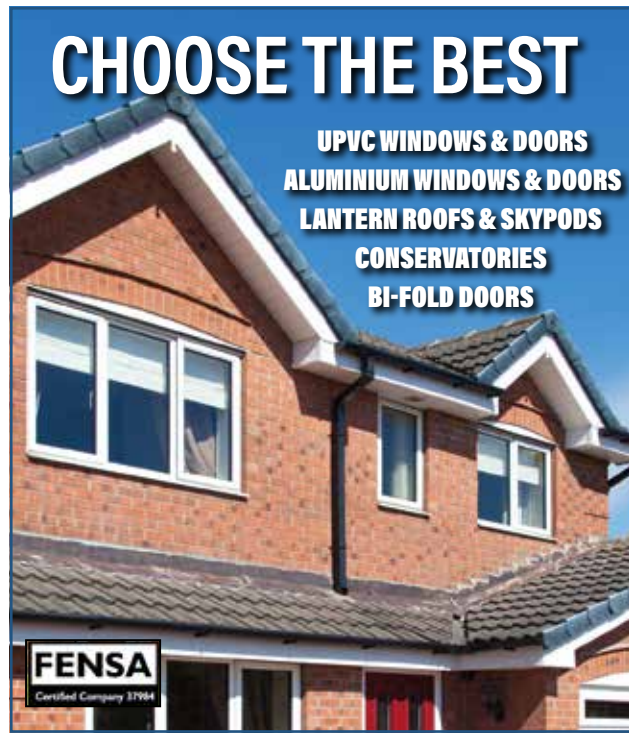
Planning permission for change of use was granted in 2018.

However, according to the Local Democracy Reporting Service, the licence to convert the toilets into a store, restaurant, café or takeaway has expired, and any new company would need new planning approval from Rochford District Council.

The council, which owns the facilities, has said that it wanted to see the structure put to good commercial use as part of the Rayleigh Centre Area Action Plan – a study that guides development in the town centre.

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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



Photo credit: BoxersBarbers/Twitter



## Veteran raises more than £28k for refugees

A war veteran who works in Wickford has raised more than £28,000 for a trip to Poland to help Ukrainian refugees.

Steve Parker (pictured bottom centre in top photo), 53, who is a staff member at Boxers Barbers, has worked with the Wickford community to send trucks full of supplies to refugees fleeing Ukraine owing to the ongoing Russian invasion.

Boxers Barbers has set up a Crowdfunder and successfully raised more than £28,500 to transport essentials to the Polish border.

The Crowdfunder page says: "As a result of humbling community support and generosity, we have at least three lorry loads of essential supplies.

"Lorries are arranged, and a group of willing drivers are on standby to head across Europe to Poland on this mission.

"We urgently want to deliver these goods to the Ukrainian people. We're hoping to smash our target to cover the operational costs to get this convoy on the road and to the people who are in need of these essential supplies.

"We're a community of people from Wickford, led by Steve from Boxers Barbers, who have joined together to make this happen. A huge thank you for your support."

To donate, visit [www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/boxers-barbers-ukraine-appeal](http://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/boxers-barbers-ukraine-appeal)

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## Appeal launched after kittens found in car park



Photo credit: RSPCA

The RSPCA is appealing for information after two kittens were found abandoned in a box in a Wickford car park.

The animals were discovered in the car park at Barn Hall Park last month by a child, who carried them to his home before his parents contacted the RSPCA.

The kittens – a ginger male and a tortoiseshell female – are thought to be six months old.

RSPCA Inspector Jack Taylor, who is investigating, said: "These kittens had been left alone and exposed to all sorts of risks in the car park, and were lucky to have been found and kept safe.

"Luckily, they seem to be in fair health, but they are understandably quite frightened still."

Jack took the kittens to RSPCA Danaher Animal Home in Wethersfield. If nobody comes forward to claim them, they will be found a loving new home.

Anyone with any information about the kittens can contact the RSPCA on 0300 1234 999.

## Council approves school's plan for new sports hall

A Wickford school's planning application for a new sports hall has been approved by Basildon Borough Council.

Castledon School, which specialises in children with special educational needs or disabilities, submitted a planning application at the beginning of this year and the council approved the plans last month.

The council planning application reads: "It is apparent that the school is under-size for its current capacity. This application is submitted to address the severe overcrowding issues across the school as evidenced in the application to vary planning conditions."

Headteacher Simon Holliday said: "We are pleased that the recent planning permission has been approved by Basildon Planning Committee. It is worth

noting that this is to support an application for a Condition Improvement Fund bid to the Department for Education (DfE) to level up the opportunities we can offer to young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

"We hope that the application to the DfE will be successful as we believe a sports hall would help enhance our young people's emotional, physical and mental wellbeing and allow us to offer a more extensive PE curriculum."

## Drug dealer who had £400k worth of cocaine jailed

A man from Wickford who was arrested by specialist officers as part of a targeted drugs operation has been jailed for eight years.

Luke Connor (pictured below), 28, of Riverside Place, Wickford, was arrested close to his home on July 15, 2021.

During a search of his home, officers from the Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) uncovered three 1kg bricks of cocaine, around 1kg of loose cocaine in a number of containers, a substantial amount of cannabis, around £140,000 in cash, a number of weapons and several mobile phones.

The cocaine had a street value of around £400,000.

During a further search of Connor's Audi vehicle, officers found a bag containing around £80,000 in cash.

Connor was arrested on suspicion of several offences and subsequently charged with possession with intent to supply class A drugs, possession of criminal property, possession of a prohibited weapon and possession of cannabis.

Connor admitted all charges and was sentenced to a total of eight years at Basildon Crown Court.

All the drugs have been destroyed and a proceeds of crime hearing will be held in due course.

Detective Inspector Yoni Adler, of the SOCU, said: "The drugs which we seized were bound for the streets of Essex and, as a result of this operation, none of them will cause harm to our communities."



Photo credit: Essex Police



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MOTORING

# MAGNIFICENT MOTORS

## THE MODIFICATIONS BEING MADE AHEAD OF THE 2022 FORMULA 1 CHAMPIONSHIP

The evolving entity that is Formula 1 is undergoing perhaps its most rapid change ever in 2022, with a blueprint for the future (and the new season which began in Bahrain on March 20) based on two principles – greener and more competitive racing.

On the eco side, the fact that the world's exemplars of motoring excess have signed up to increasing bio-components within the fuel system is impressive. The new season has seen this increase from 5.75 per cent of fuel load to 10 per cent, via the new E10 fuel. The E stands for ethanol, which has a near-zero carbon footprint, and sets a precedent for even cleaner fuel in the future. F1 experts are already working hard to formulate a fully sustainable product in the near future.

Combining this eco drive with more competitive, exciting racing – the like of which we saw at the conclusion of the 2021 championship when Lewis Hamilton had an eighth world title snatched from his

grasp – is a win/win for F1. To aid this, the new cars set to be launched are rounder, slicker and more stunning to look at.

Included in their structure are moves to make them more equipped for closer racing (with the removal of excessive downforce), notably through over-wheel winglets and wheel covers. They also have 18-inch low-profile tyres, reducing overheating when they slide, plus entirely new front wings and noses so as to generate consistent downforce when close to a car in front.

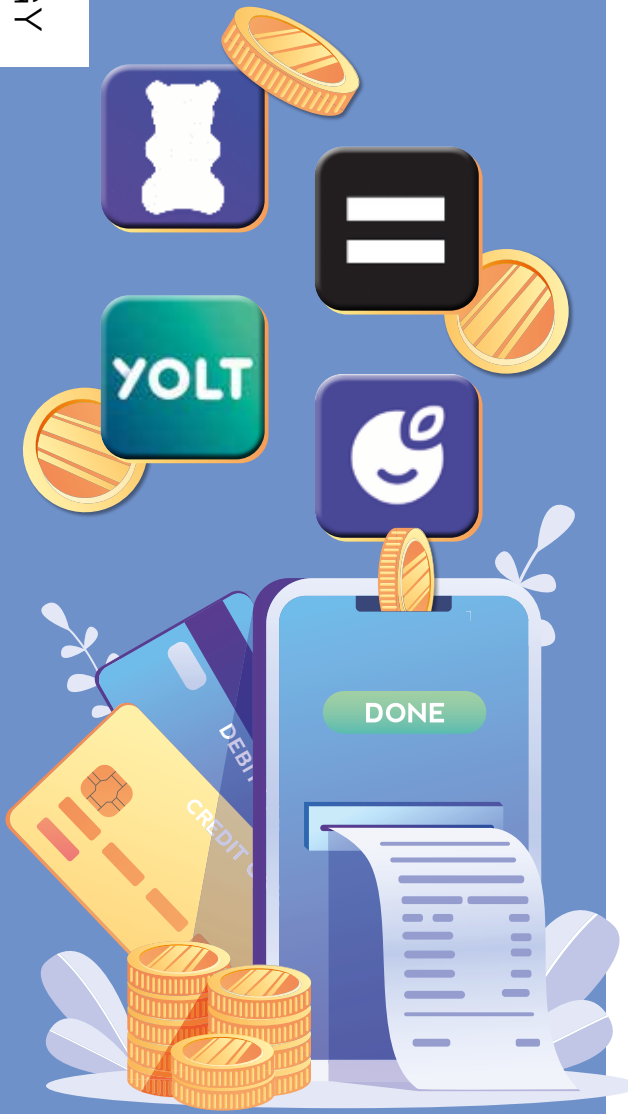
Finally, rolled tips on the rear wing will allow clean air for chasing cars to drive through.

Further good news for F1 fans is that the existing power units – the 1.6 turbo-hybrid – remain. These are the most advanced engines on the planet, and are designed so that the unit will separate from the chassis without exposing the fuel tank. This also makes it the safest racing car ever made.

All we need now are the drivers...

Photo credit: Alessio De Marco/Shutterstock.com

# CASH WISE



We're living in an uncertain era prompted by a pandemic, lockdowns and insecurity for the future. The result of all this is, more than ever before, a desire in people to take greater responsibility for their own actions – across health, employment and, of course, finances.

So while we can't be totally sure of what's to come, we can at least organise our money and budget according to what's laid out in front of us, and that has made cash management apps really popular. Here is a selection of some of the best on the market:

### EMMA (free or £59.99 for enhanced annual subscription)

Emma assesses all spending, including loan and credit card repayments, and works out a full schedule of income and expenditure so that you can restrict or extend depending on where you are at certain points of the month.

Handily, it integrates with the likes of Boots, B&Q and Gousto to offer cashback initiatives. However, the constant pushing to upgrade to the paid product can become annoying.

### MONEY DASHBOARD (free)

This app operates in much the same way as Emma, but plots graphical representations to take a deeper dive into personal finances.

### YOLT (free)

This app comes with a prepaid debit card as well as a set of money management tools. This gives greater control and enables a 360-degree solution for consumer spending that is reported directly back into the app, meaning no money will mysteriously go missing.

### PLUM (free or up to £3 per month for premium)

An app for savers, this tool is great for those who want to know, on a month-by-month basis, how much they can afford to put to one side.

Premium options even offer opportunities by which money can be invested directly from the app.



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Photo credit: Ken McKay/ITV/Shutterstock

# OUT OF THE BROOM CUPBOARD... *and onto centre stage*

## CELEBRATING THE CAREER OF PHILLIP SCHOFIELD

The title 'first in-vision continuity presenter for Children's BBC' perhaps isn't one he'll want as his epitaph, and yet the role that set Phillip Schofield on the path to becoming one of daytime and primetime TV's true modern icons is perhaps one of his most significant.

It's September 1985 and a 23-year-old Schofield has just returned to the UK after four years in New Zealand. Having already worked at the BBC as a bookings clerk and teaboy when he was a teenager, the charismatic, charming, chipper broadcaster was thrust into the not-so-glamorous surrounds of *The Broom Cupboard*, on Children's BBC.

Sitting at a cramped, squalid, cluttered desk, he was accompanied by Gordon the Gopher, and was a kids' TV first as the dull lead-in screens between programmes were replaced by a chatty, sociable presenter who offered personality and no small amount of humour.

The formula was an instant hit and set Schofield on the way to broadcasting brilliance. *Going Live!*, in which he appeared opposite Sarah Greene, came along two years later.

Adult programming followed – from four years hosting the *Smash Hits Poll Winners Party* to *Talking Telephone Numbers* and *Test the Nation*, Schofield's versatility bridged genres of entertainment as effortlessly as it did the range of demographics who would marvel at his calm and charisma.

No better has that been seen than when in full flow with sidekick Holly Willoughby on ITV's leading daytime show, *This Morning*. When the duo first worked together back in 2009, few would have expected such natural chemistry to emerge. From endless innuendos to heartfelt and touching interviews and reports on all manner of issues, the pair have been at the epicentre of *This Morning's* steely grip on the National Television Award for Best Daytime/Live Show, which it has won every year under their stewardship.

Of course, for someone who has been in front of the camera for so long, controversies will ultimately come along – from an ill-conceived set-up of then-Prime Minister David Cameron live on air, to a more light-hearted revelation from Schofield that he had been dyeing his hair since the age of 16 to ward off grey, something he now embraces.

Then, in February 2020, the personal revelation that the married father-of-two was coming out as gay proved a sensational storyline. In true *This Morning* style, the presenter and Willoughby conducted what amounted to an open counselling session – his heartfelt admission only serving to endear us to him further.

Away from the show, Schofield, who turns 60 this month, continues to pick the prime slots in ITV's entertainment programming, with quiz and challenge shows such as *Dancing on Ice*, *All Star Mr & Mrs*, *5 Gold Rings* and *The Cube*. There has also been a raft of factual programming, including coverage of royal events – The Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the weddings of Princes William and Harry, and a tribute to Prince Philip.

And in February, daytime doyenne Lorraine Kelly dedicated her show to Schofield's 40 years in the business.

In a rapidly changing television industry where personalities come and go, Phillip Schofield has proved himself a man for every occasion. He is someone who can put an arm round a guest one day and laugh at his own failings the next, as well as being arguably the greatest thing to ever emerge from a broom cupboard.



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### ACROSS

- Creative act (6)
- Pertaining to vinegar (6)
- Nerve impulses (7)
- Not solid or liquid (7)
- Send money in payment (5)
- Country in North East Africa (5)
- Loathe (5)
- Sense of seeing (5)
- Wrong (5)
- Light shoes (7)
- Prior (7)
- Enjoy greatly (6)
- Large eel (6)

### DOWN

- Wish for (6)
- Propelling the body through water (8)
- Haggard (5)
- Small mat (7)
- A group of three (4)
- Form-fitting garment (6)
- Sea beacons (11)
- Giving way under pressure (8)

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|    |    |   |    |   | 20 |    |    |   |    |
| 21 |    |   |    |   |    | 22 |    |   |    |

- Reaches (7)
- Female sibling (6)
- Listener (6)
- Refrain from (5)
- Invalid (4)

### DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ The heart of the average blue whale is approximately the size of a car
- ▶ The Chrysopelea snake can leap from trees and 'fly' distances of around 300 feet
- ▶ Dogs can sense human emotion, knowing when people are feeling sad, happy or something else
- ▶ The platypus is one of the few living mammals to produce venom
- ▶ Some spider species try to eat their partners after mating
- ▶ The unicorn is the national animal of Scotland
- ▶ Every tiger and zebra has a unique stripe pattern
- ▶ A flamingo's head has to be upside down when it eats

### SUDOKU

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|   | 9 |   | 5 |   | 4 | 2 |   |   |

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# Reaching for REPTILES

## THE REPTILES THAT MAKE GREAT PETS... AND THOSE THAT DON'T

The lure of sharing time and space with reptiles links us back to a rugged and prehistoric past – after all, these creatures date right the way back to when dinosaurs were roaming the planet.

An acquired taste, certainly, reptiles can be great pets, are largely self-sufficient, and act as a constant source of wonder for kids and adults alike.

### Bearded dragons

A dragon by name, but in truth more of a lizard, this gentle creature isn't the most sociable of its kind, but enjoys being handled nonetheless. They have a varied diet, including vegetables, crickets and worms, and can live for more than a decade.

### Leopard geckos

Leopard geckos can live twice as long as the bearded dragon and are nocturnal, so will stress if not allowed time to relax in dark spaces. You'll need to ensure they have cover in their terrarium, and keeping two males together is a strict no-no as they are known to fight.

### Box turtles

Box turtles may look cute, but they are a lifelong commitment and can live for more than 40 years. This pet is not suitable for kids – despite their sluggish demeanour, the turtle has complex care requirements, can suffer from anxiety, and requires cleaning out each week.

### Chameleons

We know chameleons are ever-changing, ever-evolving creatures, and that extends right the way through to liking different temperatures at different times of the day, so as maintenance goes, they require more than most.

Factor in a need for good ventilation and natural sunlight, and a preference for living in trees, and it all points to this being a tricky reptile to maintain unless you can ensure plenty of foliage and a clean, non-toxic surrounding.



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GARDENING

# Create your own OUTDOOR KITCHEN

The COVID-19 pandemic meant that many of us turned our attention to our gardens to create the perfect outdoor living space. Great for entertaining, hosting in the garden has become the ideal way to entertain family and friends. Creating an outdoor kitchen gives you a stylish space to cook outside so you can make the most of the warmer weather with your family and friends. Learn how to create an outdoor kitchen on any budget, ready for summer entertaining.

**MEASURE YOUR SPACE:** You can design an outdoor kitchen to suit all kinds of spaces. Measure your designated area to establish what you have to work with. A basic kitchen will need space for an appliance, like a barbecue, and some workspace. The larger your space, the more you'll be able to add.

**FIND THE RIGHT APPLIANCES:** Find cooking appliances that will suit your budget. Pizza ovens are bang on trend and can be used for all cooking. However, if that doesn't take your fancy, barbecues and grills are available in different sizes according to your needs. Some people even add fridges and microwaves to their outdoor spaces.

**GET YOUR CONNECTIONS IN PLACE:** You may need to bring in professionals to provide electricity, lighting and plumbing to your space. Keep everything secured away for safety and to make sure the space looks neat and organised.

**BUILD A SHELTER TO COVER ALL WEATHER:** A shelter is a must if you're dealing with electrical equipment, but it will also help you make the most of your space. Having shelter will let you use your outdoor kitchen in any weather, for year-round entertainment.

**MAKE SURE YOU'VE GOT ENOUGH STORAGE:** Storage is a must for your outdoor kitchen. Shelving, trolleys and cupboards can keep your utensils, tableware and other supplies safe and clean, ready for when you need them.

An outdoor kitchen is a must if you like entertaining at home. Start now to get yours ready in time for summer.

Photo credit: Grillo via housebeautiful.com, Moriso/Landform Consultants/ikea via idealhome.co.uk



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GARDENING



## PLANTS THAT STAVE OFF SLUGS AND SNAILS

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**FERNS:** Ferns are low-maintenance, hardy, and make an attractive addition to any sized garden. Plus, they are way down on the list of the favourite foods of slugs and snails as their thick leaves are hard to chew. Plant in a moist, well-drained spot for optimum results.

**HYDRANGEAS:** Instantly recognisable by their pretty pink, blue and white flowers, hydrangeas may appear beautiful to us, but, fortunately, this is not the case for slugs and snails. With the ability to create the ultimate barrier against these slimy creatures, hydrangeas thrive in moist, well-drained spots with some shade.

**LAVENDER:** While this sweet-smelling herb does attract the attention of bees, its strong fragrance is off-putting for slugs and snails. Place lavender strategically around your garden to help protect your other plants from the destructive habits of gastropods.

**GERANIUMS:** Geraniums are not an attractive option for slugs and snails as travelling across their hairy stems and leaves is too uncomfortable. There are more than 300 species of geraniums, so you are guaranteed to find one that complements your garden.

**FOXGLOVES:** Foxgloves can be perennial or biennial and produce stunning bell-shaped flowers that sit on long, swaying stems. Toxic when eaten by slugs and snails, as well as humans, foxgloves look lovely in borders around your garden.

### OTHER WAYS TO DISCOURAGE SLUGS AND SNAILS

- > Create barriers with crushed eggshells, pine needles or thorny cuttings
- > Remove slug shelters such as bricks and large logs
- > Lay down copper tape around your plants
- > Sprinkle a little salt on your most valuable plants.





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SPORT

BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

# THE GREAT Dame

Each month, we look at one of the most significant events in British sporting history. This month, it's Dame Kelly Holmes DBE and her double Olympic gold



It's possible to strive for so long for something that you imagine it may never arrive, and that's certainly true in the case of Dame Kelly Holmes DBE.

An athlete who turned professional in 1993, she initially enjoyed a number of successes, including winning the 1,500m title at the Commonwealth Games in 1994.

Injuries – notably stress fractures – marred the years that followed, and while interspersing her time on the sidelines with silver and bronze medals, Holmes believed she may never return to gold medal contention.

"It was always silvers and bronzes," she says. "I was proud to be picking up World Championship medals, and of course my first Olympic medal – the 800m bronze in Sydney in 2000 – was wonderful. But I was never close enough to think I could move myself up."

At the Athens Olympics in 2004, Holmes, by then 34, was in the heyday of her career. Her form

going into the 800m and 1,500m events had been good – she'd scored her first major gold in five years at the Commonwealth Games in 2002, with three silvers the following year.

And, sure enough, everything clicked in Athens. For once injury-free, she powered past rival Maria de Lurdes Mutola on the final bend in the 800m to take a gold medal in a victory celebrated up and down the country. She had only decided to enter the race five days previously.

Her specialist event, the 1,500m, proved another dream race. She ran from the back of the field, advanced, and this time held off World Champion Tatyana Tomashova of Russia on the home straight, setting a new British record in the process.

Holmes had become only the third woman in Olympic history to do 'the double', and, to prove it was no fluke, won gold at the IAAF World Athletics Final later in the year, before hanging up her spikes.

A true people's champion, Dame Kelly now undertakes fantastic work as an athletics and mental health ambassador.

Photo credit: sipa/Shutterstock

# BOWLED out

**A SPORTING ICON LIKE NO OTHER  
LEAVES US ALL TOO SOON**

There are some deaths that confound logic, sense and, in many ways, fairness. The passing of Shane Warne, one of cricket's all-time icons, surely falls into that category.

The 52 year old's contribution to the game was almost immeasurable. There were the Ashes triumphs, the World Cup wins, the record wicket hauls and the exemplary media career that saw him transition from Aussie baddy to one of the game's truly loved characters.

Warne had been misunderstood at times during that golden era of the 90s, which began in earnest in 1993 at Old Trafford when he bowled what became known as the 'ball of the century', in taking the wicket of Mike Gatting.

For the years that followed, Warne was every bit the posturing, scheming, bleached-blond Aussie who toiled, tricked and turned over English batsmen with alarming regularity. He almost singlehandedly made spin bowling cool, and sparked a generation of others looking to perfect the art.

And as partisan as he was, this was someone respectful to the game, as ready to praise rival sides as he was happy to bemoan the failings of his own. He never concealed his love affair with the UK, and as a result we took his passion and honesty into our hearts.

It made the shock of his death, owing to a suspected heart attack, so much more devastating. There was also a dreadful irony at play where Warne's final tweet, from March 4, gave tribute to the death of another Aussie cricketing great, Rod Marsh, who died just hours before Warne.

That Warne was about to join him on the magnificent wicket in the sky represented the same unexpected turn akin to one of his bewildering leg-spinners.

In his death, we have lost not just an Australian sporting great, but also someone whose craft, passion, enthusiasm and humility made the game of cricket what it is today.

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This year, Her Royal Highness, Queen Elizabeth II, will celebrate her Platinum Jubilee, marking 70 years of service on the throne and cementing her as Britain's longest-serving monarch.

After reigning for so long, the Queen has had a wonderful and interesting life. But how much do you know about the Queen? Here are some facts you may not have heard before.

### THE QUEEN HAS TWO BIRTHDAYS

I'm sure we'd all love two birthdays, especially if only one adds another year to our age. The Queen has two birthdays: April 21 – the day she was born – and her 'official' birthday, which takes place on the second Saturday in June with a celebration known as Trooping the Colour. This is so that her birthday can be celebrated when the weather is better.

### THE QUEEN SUPPORTS ARSENAL

Whoever knew Her Majesty is a Gunner?

### THE QUEEN DOESN'T NEED A PASSPORT...

British passports might be issued in her name, but the Queen herself doesn't need a passport. She's never needed a passport to travel, but has visited more than 100 countries.

### ...OR A DRIVING LICENCE

The Queen is the only person in the UK who doesn't

need a licence to drive. She continues to drive at 95 years old.

### THE QUEEN LIVES AT WINDSOR CASTLE

Windsor Castle is one of 26 royal residences and also has the title of being the largest castle in Britain.

### THE QUEEN OWNS STRANGE PETS

The Queen is famous for owning corgis, but she also owns an elephant, two giant turtles, a jaguar and some sloths. They were all gifts from overseas and live at London Zoo.

### THE QUEEN'S NICKNAME IS 'LILIBET'

Which is the name Prince Harry and Meghan Markle chose for their first daughter – Lilibet Diana Mountbatten-Windsor.

And there you have it. Now you know a bit more about Her Majesty ahead of her Platinum Jubilee.

Photo credit: Alessia Piantadoménico/Shutterstock.com



# HOW TO COOK PERFECT ROAST



**D**oes your roast beef always end up dry and overcooked? If so, don't despair. Here's how to cook the perfect roast beef.

### WHAT YOU NEED:

- > 1.5kg topside of beef
- > Selection of vegetables such as carrots, garlic cloves, onions, celery, etc
- > Olive oil

### HOW TO MAKE:

- > Preheat the oven to 240°C/475°F/gas 9 and take your topside of beef out of the fridge and let it come to room temperature.
- > Chop your chosen vegetables and layer on the bottom of your roasting tray, drizzled in oil.
- > Oil and season the beef, before placing it on top of the vegetables.
- > Place the tray in the oven, then turn the heat down immediately to 200°C/400°F/gas 6 and cook for an hour for medium beef. If you prefer it medium-rare, take it out 5 to 10 minutes earlier. For well done, leave it in for another 10 to 15 minutes.
- > Baste the joint halfway through and add water to the veg as necessary.
- > When cooked, place your joint on a chopping board to rest for 15 minutes.
- > Use the juices and vegetables to make gravy.




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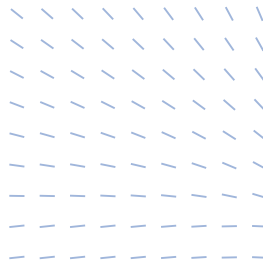
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# Laughter

THERAPY IS A MUST-DO

They say that laughter is the best medicine, but is there any truth to this classic saying? The answer is yes.

Get ready to bring laughter therapy into your life to boost your health and wellbeing.

## THE LAUGHTER CLUB

Laughing helps to boost your endorphins, which are your body's feel-good hormones. Back in the 1990s, Dr Madan Kataria conducted research into the health benefits of laughter by forming a Laughter Club that brought people together in Mumbai parks to share funny jokes and stories. The club grew and soon they ran out of stories, so instead they tested the theory of laughing alone, which provided the same uplifting benefits. Now, people all over the world practise laughter yoga, a laughter therapy designed to boost your mood.

## HOW LAUGHTER THERAPY WORKS

In a laughter therapy session, you'll do stretches

and breathing exercises to help you relax. Your instructor will then guide you through various exercises to encourage different types of laughter, such as prompting you to think of funny memories and interacting with others.

Even forced laughter can eventually turn into real laughter so that you can enjoy the benefits.

## THE BENEFITS FOR YOUR HEALTH

Laughter can provide a lot of health benefits. It can help you reduce stress and anxiety, elevate your mood and reduce tension. It could even help to boost your immune system and help you sleep better, owing to better oxygen levels in the blood.

Researchers continue to look at the benefits of laughing, and it's generally accepted as a good way to improve your overall health. Why not make laughter therapy a key part of your self-care routine so that you can experience all the amazing health benefits of laughter?





TAME THE

# CURLS

**D**oes your curly hair drive you to distraction? Does the mere hint of heat or humidity turn your luscious locks into a frizzy frenzy? As one of the most precarious months of the year, April can bring sun, rain and wind, all of which can wreak havoc with your curly hair. Find out how to manage your mane below.



*Avoid hair-styling tools*  
Although you may be tempted to use your trusty straighteners, blow dryers and hot combs even more when the heat and humidity are ruining your usually sleek curls, this is the worst thing you can do. Instead, let your curly hair dry naturally or use a diffuser and invest in a good air-dry styling cream.

*Deep condition frequently*  
When the weather can't make its mind up, now is the time to embrace conditioning treatments, as these will help your hair to stay in optimal condition. If you usually deep condition once a week, change this to every other day when the weather starts to heat up.

*Try the pineapple trick*  
If the heat and humidity tend to attack your curls while you are sleeping, then the pineapple trick is just what you need. All you need to do is loosely gather your curls at the highest point of your head and secure them with a band. This will guard against frizz.

*Layer up products*  
If the forecast is rain, then you need to be prepared by applying the right products for your type of hair before you leave the house. For medium-textured curls, opt for a water-based mousse, or if your hair is fine, an alcohol-based one is better. Once dry, spray your hair liberally with an anti-humidity product.



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# GETTING *Shirty!*

THE HISTORY OF THE SLOGAN T-SHIRT

Since the first slogan t-shirts were worn in the 1950s, our desire to shout messages – without the use of a megaphone – has never relented.

Across political statements, pop culture (think Frankie Says Relax), Fila and Champion leisurewear, the slogan t-shirt has become a fashion icon that goes beyond visual appeal. It is used to express opinion, reference popular culture, and has accelerated campaigns, initiatives and product sales for its ability to unite people with similar perspectives.

The popularity of the casual t-shirt came to prominence some 70 years ago, prompted by a young Marlon Brando in the film *A Streetcar Named Desire*.

In the years that followed, innovations in print technology saw everyone from Disney to Andy Warhol decorate the fronts of our chests with a desire to make statements.

By the 1970s, and led by designer Katherine Hamnett, the slogan t-shirt was being adapted for more political purposes.

She said: "It seemed as if democracy was slipping through our fingers. The slogan t-shirt was something to give you a voice... something to believe in that you could wear on your chest that could be read from 200 yards away."

In recent years, the visual t-shirt has become as much a reference to being fashionable as it is an indicator towards a political or social movement. From Nike to Hugo Boss, French Connection to Fortnite, the signifier of a brand or product is a nod to our own preferences.

And yet, in these challenging social times, the expectation is of a return to stronger statements around gender, Brexit, diversity and general politics.

Whatever the message, the slogan t-shirt is here to stay.

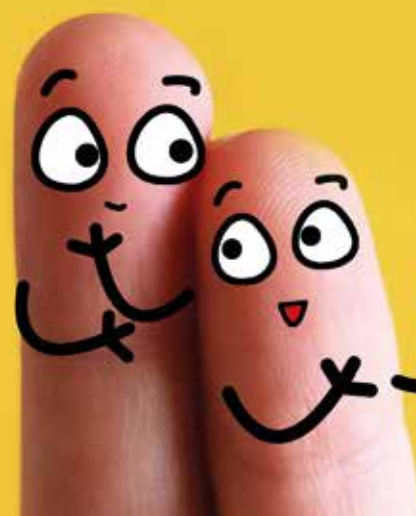


Photo credit: ASOS.com



# BRUCE KING

*on why people buy*



What shall we buy?

**In his final column, sales mentor and personal growth coach, Bruce King, discusses why people buy and how to stop yourself buying things you don't need.**

We all buy for emotional, not logical, reasons, although we'll create logical reasons to justify our decisions.

For example, did you buy or were you sold a new pair of shoes when you had plenty already and your favourite pair just needed a good polish? You bought a new pair because you love new shoes and they make you feel good, or the salesperson said you looked great in them.

Maybe you justified your decision with logic on the basis that if someone saw your expensive new shoes, you would create a better impression.

Ever bought a new car when there was nothing wrong with your current model, but the look, feel and smell of a new car makes you feel wonderful, and the salesperson said you looked so impressive in the driving seat?

Perhaps you justified your decision on the basis

that a new, more expensive car would impress your customers and make them more likely to do business with you.

Why do we do this? The answer lies in how the brain works – it has an emotional part and a logical part. All decisions we make start in the emotional part – that's how our brains work.

If the emotion is strong enough, we'll usually ignore the logical part. Love and want are both strong emotional reasons for buying something.

To stop ourselves being sold to, switch on the logical part by asking a question – something as simple as, 'Do I really need this new car or these new shoes?' your brain will probably respond with a resounding 'NO!' and save you a lot of money.

*More information:*

Bruce King is recognised internationally as a leading sales, marketing and personal growth strategist, addressing audiences and coaching sales teams and managers in 23 countries. For more information, visit [bruceking.co.uk](http://bruceking.co.uk)

## ESTATE AGENCY FEES: DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH YOU ARE REALLY PAYING?

Once you have made the decision that you are going to move one of the first things you will think about is how much your property is worth and demand for it, and for this you will need your local estate agent.

### How many valuations should you get?...

Even as an estate agent I would recommend getting agents round to give you a valuation, in all honesty it is easy these days to use the tools online to get a rough idea of how much your property is worth but this meeting should also be about the agent themselves and how their company works and if they provide the service you want, you could be working with this person or team for months you need to trust they have your best interests at heart and that you can get what you need from their service

And then there will be the cost...

### Flat fee vs percentage of sale...

Often with the agent in front of you quoting a fee of a percentage of the selling price, you would be forgiven for not knowing immediately exactly what you are going to be paying for this service but having a few agents round you will at least know that it is competitive. This percentage based fee gives the agent an incentive to get the highest possible price for the property and means if you get less, you pay less however many like a fixed fee, this way you know from the outset exactly how much you are going to be paying for this service which makes your overall budgeting much easier.

### Which is better?...

Well this like most things in property is down to personal choice. If you like a particular agent and you think you will work well together but would prefer to pay a flat fee rather than percentage or vice versa make that clear to them, a good agent will be flexible to your wants and needs.



### TOP TIP:

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BUSINESS & PROPERTY

# How to choose an ESTATE AGENT

If you are looking to sell your home, the right estate agent is worth their weight in gold. However, how do you weed out the weak from the wonderful?

- > What would they do if your property was not selling as quickly as you would like or at the price you expected?
- > Do they carry out viewings at weekends?

### COMPILE A SHORTLIST

Don't just decide upon the first estate agent that you see or the one that puts the most leaflets through your door. Instead, compile a shortlist using recommendations from family and friends, online reviews and testimonials. You should also look for an estate agent that has experience selling properties similar to yours.

### CHECK THEIR PERFORMANCE

Once you have your shortlist, invite each estate agent round to your home to discuss their offerings and to conduct a valuation. This is the perfect opportunity to find out more about how they operate. You may want to ask:

- > How quickly do they sell homes?
- > Are they a member of an accredited independent ombudsman service?

### FIND OUT THE FEE

You need to know what percentage of the sale price each estate agent would take upon completion. Currently, the average estate agent fee in the UK is 1.18 per cent for a sole agency agreement. Going with a sole agency usually means a lower fee, but this does mean that you only have one agency marketing your property. Remember these fees are negotiable.

### HIGH STREET VS ONLINE-ONLY AGENT

Online-only estate agents such as Purplebricks make up only five per cent of the overall property market, yet they are increasing in popularity. These typically have a fixed fee that needs to be paid up front, rather than the 'no sale no fee' commission charged by high-street companies.

Photo credit: Neil Lang/Shutterstock.com

# TITANIC'S WATERY

*Grave Remains*

**SOME 110 YEARS ON FROM THE SINKING OF THE MOST FAMOUS SHIP IN HISTORY, TITANIC'S WATERY REMAINS ARE STILL VIRTUALLY UNTOUCHED**

**A**pril 15, 1912, will be a date forever etched in the annals of maritime disaster as, at 2.20am, the RMS Titanic sank into the icy depths on its maiden voyage from Southampton to New York.

It is a ship made famous by its demise, and as another anniversary passes, the sinking of this 'unsinkable' vessel continues to fascinate, terrify and, dare we say it, even entertain the world in every bit the same way as it always has.

This year marks the 110th anniversary since the ship sank to the bottom of the North Atlantic, taking 1,517 poor souls with it.

The ship remains 13,000ft beneath the surface, as any attempt to retrieve it would see it break up, while diving to the wreck can only be performed by registered scientists.

And while companies OceanGate and Bluefish have both developed state-of-the-art submersibles

that can take explorers on the 90-minute descent, the price tag of £100,000 per person means this is one disaster best viewed through the eyes of documentary-makers and film directors.

The Titanic sank when it struck an iceberg. Spotted at the last minute, First Officer William Murdoch attempted to turn the ship to avoid it – experts believe if it had hit the iceberg head on, it probably would have survived. Instead, while it could reportedly stay afloat with as many as four of its 16 compartments filled with water, five were breached, with the dipping of the bow causing water from the ruptured spaces to spill over into forward compartments.

It wasn't until 1985, during an expedition led by Robert Ballard, that the Titanic was finally discovered. However, bacteria eating away at the wood and metal of the ship mean that, within 50 years, the wreck will be almost unrecognisable.



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