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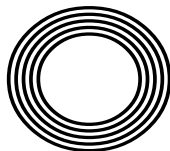
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Editor's notes...

AUGUST 2022



Nik Allen, Editor

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

When is Fast Food not Fast? When it takes 18 minutes for a cheeseburger and chips to be served, or when you're asked to park up and wait after ordering a solitary Happy Meal in the drive-thru.

McDonald's has a problem; and it is not alone. The root of this mass inefficiency that has swept through our fast-food joints comes in the form of those with large boxes strapped to their back, and their accompanying electric bikes and L-plate-adorned scooters.

The appeal of Just Eat, Uber Eats and others is decimating the experience of those who still want to eat the old-fashioned way... in person.

On my last visit to McDonald's, where so great was the population of huddled delivery drivers that I was forced to queue outside.

At that point, I decided enough was enough. No more of this nonsense - I am now ordering my food from the independent local restaurants and cafés that I know value my custom, who prioritise real people, and who can empower their staff to stick to their establishment's blueprint, because Fast Food that takes 15 minutes is no longer Fast Food!

Nik Allen

This is your town's hyperlocal magazine, delivering to homes and businesses every month.

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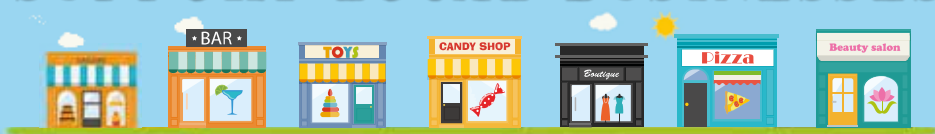
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B^{OWEL} babe

THE AMAZING IMPACT DAME DEBORAH JAMES DBE HAD ON OUR AWARENESS OF BOWEL CANCER, AND THE COURAGE TO FIGHT THIS DISEASE

It's a marker to the strength and resilience of Dame Deborah James DBE that, even in her final days fighting against cancer, she was still able to laughingly refer to herself by a nickname that had done more than just provide a natty piece of alliteration for headline writers.

The self-confessed Bowel Babe, Dame Deborah James, had immersed herself in a wholly public battle with cancer after being diagnosed with the illness back in 2016. She was just 35 at the time. When she received the news that she had stage 4 bowel cancer, Deborah immediately threw herself into work as a patron for Bowel Cancer UK.

And rather than recoil at the shock of the news, Deborah, who at the time was working as a teacher at The Matthew Arnold School in Staines-upon-Thames, found incredible support across social media. Her outspoken voice was picked up by *The Sun*, for whom she began working as a journalist and columnist.

BBC 5Live stepped in shortly afterwards to take on her original, no-holds-barred podcast, entitled *You, Me and the Big C*, with its unapologetic, graphic and unrelenting portrayal of the many elements of cancer gaining admirers from all quarters.

'Find a life worth enjoying; take risks, love deeply, have no regrets, and always, always have rebellious hope. And finally, check your poo—it could just save your life'

In October 2018, her book, *F*** You Cancer: How to Face the Big C, Live Your Life and Still Be Yourself*, became a cult read. However, while she publicly continued to show strength and courage, the scourge of her disease sometimes made the easiest parts of everyday life difficult.

Two years on, she revealed that her body's tolerance to the drugs was waning. By May 2022, she posted on social media that she was receiving hospice-at-home care and was, ultimately, entering the final stages of the disease. Within 48 hours, more than £3million had been raised for her Bowel Babe campaign, and just two days after that she was awarded the title Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire. Her damehood was conferred on her by Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, at her parental home.

Dame Deborah passed away on June 28, 2022, leaving behind a husband and two children. At the time of her death, she had raised a colossal £7million to fund clinical trials and research into personalised medicine for cancer patients, and to support campaigns raising awareness of bowel cancer.

This inspirational person used her platform to put perhaps the most candid slant on cancer treatment we have ever seen in the public space. As she said: "Find a life worth enjoying; take risks, love deeply, have no regrets, and always, always have rebellious hope. And finally, check your poo – it could just save your life."

For more information, please visit www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk



Photo credit: Ken McKay/TV/Shutterstock

Neighbours ...NO LONGER

IT'S THE SOAP OPERA THAT PERMEATED BRITISH CULTURE – AND OUR POP CHARTS – LIKE NO OTHER, BUT THE RAMSAY STREET ERA IS APPROACHING AN END

Some of us are old enough to remember the early episodes of *Neighbours* in the UK, when a sparky mechanic named Charlene (AKA future global superstar Kylie Minogue) was caught apparently breaking and entering the home of Madge Bishop by her son, Scott (Jason Donovan, no less).

As the storylines unfolded, so the characters became part of our teatime routines, as Aussie life seemed a sun-drenched fantasy world that became all the more accessible as its stars swapped Erinsborough for record contracts and model photoshoots in London.

When the Reg Watson-produced series was first picked up by the BBC in 1986, the UK was some 18 months behind episodes being created Down Under, yet such was the efficiency of the team in Melbourne that it would take three years for UK viewers to catch up.

The success was extraordinary, however. At its peak, 16 million UK viewers watched

the daily lives of these cool kids and their parents – that's more than the population of Australia.

Yet the advent of the internet brought a new era of TV consumption, where viewers no longer wanted to be tied by time. In 2008, the BBC gave up the rights to *Neighbours*, and only Channel 5's interest kept production alive in Australia.

When Channel 5 stated its aim to end the commitment, the death knell finally sounded in Ramsay Street.

Across almost 9,000 episodes, hundreds of stars – including Margot Robbie, Holly Valance, Guy Pearce, Liam Hemsworth, Natalie Imbruglia and more – have gone on to impressive careers in entertainment, and with an instantly recognisable theme tune, *Neighbours* has occupied a special place in our hearts.

And there was no better way to go out than to see Kylie, Jason and a host of other alumni return on July 29 for a special reunion show.

Fair dinkum!

Photo credit: Fremantle Media/Shutterstock, mediaset, ja media



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HOME & DIY



Did you know that dusting sprays contain toxic ingredients that are bad for the environment and your health? Fortunately, there are several natural alternatives that promise to banish dust without any negative side effects. Plus, all you need is a few storecupboard staples to make them.

DIY CITRUS SPRAY

Ideal for all types of surfaces, this homemade citrus spray will eliminate dust and make your home smell wonderful.

You will need:

1 cup water | ¼ cup white vinegar | 2 tsp olive oil | 10-15 drops orange essential oil

Pour all the above ingredients into a spray bottle and shake vigorously.

DIY VINEGAR SPRAY

The simplest DIY dusting spray available, vinegar is a versatile all-purpose cleaner which cuts through grime and acts as a disinfectant. Ideal for use in the kitchen and bathroom.

You will need:

½ cup water | ½ cup white vinegar

Add both to a spray bottle, shake, and spray where desired.

DIY ESSENTIAL OILS SPRAY

Similar to the citrus spray, this DIY recipe will

effectively get rid of any dust and fill your home with lovely scents.

This spray is perfect for creating a relaxing vibe in the bedroom.

You will need:

1 cup water | ½ cup of witch hazel or vinegar | 1 tbsp olive or sunflower oil | 1 tbsp unscented liquid soap | 15 drops of lemon essential oil | 1 drop tea tree oil

Add all ingredients to a spray bottle and shake vigorously.

DIY WOOD DUSTING SPRAY

This DIY dusting spray is specially designed for use on wooden surfaces and will effectively remove both dust and dirt.

You will need:

1 cup water | ½ cup vinegar | 2 tbsp olive, sunflower or grapeseed oil | 10 drops lemon essential oil | 5 drops cedarwood essential oil

Mix the ingredients together in a spray bottle and spray directly onto any wooden item or surface.

Once sprayed, all of the above DIY dusting sprays should be wiped with a clean cloth, preferably a microfibre one.



Colour Code

Banjo Beale INTERIOR DESIGN WHIZZ AND HIS DRIVE FOR DESIGN

Anyone who has seen the BBC's *Interior Design Masters* series will have been wowed by the verve, voracity and vision of some of the country's most impressive amateur interior designers.

The series was eventually won by sparky designer Banjo Beale, and the Australian revealed after the show that he employs an unconventional technique when it comes to styling the perfect space.

"I still feel like a fraud when it comes to colour," he said. "I always picked my colour last. I don't know if that's what interior designers do, but because I'm a collector and curator first, I like to take a step back and look at my pieces, then pick a colour that might tie it all together."

Beale's confession, that his priority in a room is always to provide a base of variety and personality that inspires and entertains the mind, may not be a first for interior design, but it's an original perspective as far as the expected norm of makeover shows goes. Previously, there has been an almost assumed start point that the colour of a room is the first thing, not the last, that's decided upon.

Subverting that expectation not only meant the visionary won first prize, but it has also set him on the path to potentially a full-time career in the design world from his sleepy home on the Isle of Mull in Scotland.

He added: "I always say interior design is 99 per cent logistics and one per cent design, and through the contest hopefully I've given others the chance to look at projects from a different angle too. It's been a brilliant ride."



Photo credit: banjobeale.co.uk, BBC and Darlow Smithson Productions



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Praying for REINVENTION

MONASTERIES FINDING NEW LIFE THROUGH SENSITIVE REINVENTION

Dare we say it, there may just be something godlike about the way British designer John Pawson has masterminded an incredible range of renovations across Europe.

The realities of religion's dwindling appeal (at least in the sense of parishioners needing to congregate in a towering space) has created an availability of incredible buildings – churches, monasteries and more – the sensitive reinvention of which into extraordinary, iconic hotels has certainly saved them from disrepair and, in some cases, total collapse.

Pawson represents a breed of architects taking the best traditional features and enveloping these former religious spaces in a veil of luxury and style.

With huge ceilings, elegant windows, sumptuous arches and a wondrous feeling of space and freedom, these are structures so extroverted and unrestrained that they would never make it past first base were they designed as hotel spaces from scratch today.

Pawson says the technique used is almost at odds with itself. "You need to accentuate what is already a huge space," he says, "yet at the same time be respectful and cautious that you are not interfering with the sensibilities of generations who have gone there for comfort and solace."

"I think if we were turning these buildings into nightclubs or shopping precincts, we may encounter more pullback, but the reality is we're repurposing them with a similar goal – to offer those who go there calm, hope and mindfulness."

From the Jaffa Hotel in Tel Aviv to the conversion of an old chapel in Antwerp by Belgian architect Vincent Van Duysen, to all manner of ecclesiastical bases across famously religious countries like Italy and Romania, the sweeping tide of change is creating incredible travel experiences for those on a pilgrimage looking to try something a little different.



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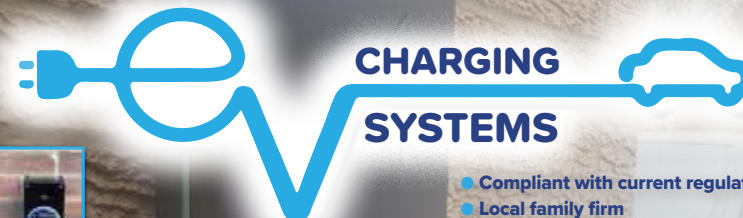
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THE WORST COLOURS TO USE IN YOUR BATHROOM (AND THE BEST)

Decorating a bathroom can be tricky, as you need to create a space that is restorative, practical and stylish. When it comes to colour schemes, there are certain colours that you should avoid at all costs.

PEACH

The colour peach can make a bathroom feel both outdated and unappealing. It may also make you want to spend less time in the room owing to its ability to decrease energy and make a space feel uninviting.

RED

You don't see many red bathrooms, and there is a good reason for this. While this vibrant shade can bring about feelings of empowerment, it is not very good for creating a relaxing atmosphere, which is paramount in a bathroom.

OLIVE GREEN

Although green bathrooms are becoming increasingly popular, you need to make sure you select the right shade of green. While dark greens such as forest green and bottle green can create a great contrast with white bathroom furniture, olive greens can make the space look drab and dull.

GOLD

Goldish yellow and beige colours are a big commitment for a bathroom as it can be hard to find tiles and finishings that go with these tones. These shades also date quickly, so you may find yourself having to redecorate sooner than you would like.

BROWN

As you might expect, brown is not a great choice of colour for a bathroom. Not only can it create dark corners which can make it more difficult to clean, but it is also not very visually appealing.

BEST COLOURS FOR BATHROOM

- > Rich greens – these are bold and provide a fresh and vibrant feel.
- > Black – this can add contrast and depth when paired with a lighter colour.
- > Blue-grey – this is airy and tranquil without being overpowering.

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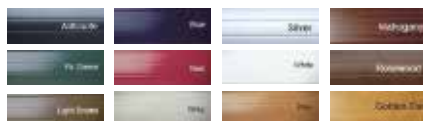
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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

LOCAL NEWS RAYLEIGH



Man charged with arson after igniting rubbish

A Rayleigh man has been charged with arson following several fires in rubbish bins in the town.

Chris Weedon, of Waltham Road, Rayleigh, was charged with one count of arson endangering life and six counts of arson, at Southend Magistrates' Court.

He is due to appear at Basildon Crown Court on August 18.

Emergency services were called after fires were discovered in rubbish bins belonging to shops and other businesses in Eastwood Road and High Street

between 11pm and 11.30pm on Monday, July 4.

The Yard Coffee & Kitchen was one of those affected. Owner David Wallis told **VISION**RayleighWickford: "My wife Serena and I are so thankful for the fast reaction of the local fire brigade in stopping the fire, which could have had a far more devastating impact on our coffee shop."

The Yard Coffee & Kitchen suffered fire damage to decorative perimeter fencing and decking at the front of the premises. No one was injured.

Church organises events to reduce loneliness

A church in Rayleigh is offering wellbeing activities to give local people the chance to meet other members of the community.

Christ Church URC's coffee and chat morning, taking place from 10am to 12pm every Wednesday, is a great opportunity for those who are lonely to interact with others.

The church also provides a monthly art club on the first Saturday of every month between 10am and 12pm so members can socialise while taking part in a fun activity.

Reverend Young-Rodas said: "We are a sight-loss-friendly, dementia-friendly and inclusive church. We also have a lot of children's activities."





MARK FRANCOIS MP



Member of Parliament for Rayleigh and Wickford



Around a decade ago, work commenced on the £60million-plus scheme to rebuild the junction at Sadlers Farm in South Essex. The scheme created a completely new layout at Sadlers Farm at considerable cost to the taxpayer. Nevertheless, once the works had been completed, it slowly emerged that there were a number of engineering defects with the original design.

These works, which have now been ongoing for some five years, are still not complete and entail speed restrictions and narrowing of lanes. Balfour Beatty apparently stated in December 2021 that the final phase of the planned works was due to be completed in spring 2022. Despite this, Essex County Council Highways has confirmed that work is now likely to be

delayed again until later this year. Yet again, a series of bridge and lane closures will continue to disrupt the lives of my constituents, and indeed of thousands of other people living in and around South Essex.

Unfortunately, this is by no means the only failure by Essex County Council's Highways Department. I now receive approximately 40,000 emails a year – and while some of these are spam, the vast bulk are actually from constituents, raising one issue or another. In terms of local issues, complaints about Essex County Council Highways are now my most popular issue by a country mile (no pun intended).

On behalf of all of my constituents, I very much hope that someone will knock heads together between Essex County Council Highways and Balfour Beatty so that we can get the problems at Sadlers Farm resolved once and for all.

Teddy bears take jump at event

A family fun day at a Rayleigh church saw teddy bears equipped with parachutes launched from the top of the church tower.

More than 200 bears took part in the parachute jump at Holy Trinity Church, Rayleigh, which was organised by the church's friends group and raised more than £3,000 for its ongoing work.

The children in attendance without bears were allowed to adopt one from the bear adoption agency at the church gate.

Mark Francois, MP for Rayleigh and Wickford, attended with his bear, who is a regular at the event.

The chair of the Friends of Holy Trinity, Jane Brown, said: "We are delighted that so many bears brought their families to the jump and that they were able to see the newly refurbished church interior which is now light, bright and welcoming.

"The event takes a lot of support to run and we thank everyone who helped. More than £3,000 was raised, for which we are most grateful. After two years of curtailed events, this sum is most welcome for our ongoing work."



Photo credit: Becky Coventry



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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

LOCAL NEWS WICKFORD



Cannabis farm found during industrial unit search

Police recently discovered a cannabis farm in Wickford that was cultivating more than 1,000 plants with a street value of £1million.

Officers from the Billericay and Wickford Community Policing Team made the find during a search of an industrial unit in Hurricane Way on July 6.

Essex Police have confirmed that a total of 1,200 cannabis plants were seized during the search.

The police investigation is ongoing.

Councillor David Harrison, leader of Wickford Independents, said: "Well done to the police for finding

and closing down this cannabis farm – anything that takes drugs off the streets is all well and good.

"I think Joe Public, me included, is surprised when we hear of farms growing cannabis like this."

There was a mixed response when news about the cannabis farm was posted on the police's Facebook page. Some supported the police action, with one comment describing the raid as "great proactive and investigative police work". However, another comment called the operation "wasted man hours", while others called for cannabis to be legalised.

Hotel's closure wrecks couple's wedding plans

Family and friends have launched a fundraising appeal after a young couple's wedding plans were dashed by the closure of a Wickford hotel.

Daniel Bing, 32, and Amy Oxborrow, 29, were to marry on August 6, but the Chichester Hotel has cancelled the wedding as well as several other events.

A GoFundMe page has now been set up by their families to help pay for another wedding venue, as the

£4,800 already paid for the event will not be refunded.

The page reads: "Venues have been found that would be able to accommodate the wedding with minimal delay if only they could find the funds."

At the time of print, the page had raised more than £1,400. To donate, visit bit.ly/3o1qlK8

The Chichester Hotel has been contacted for comment.



Photo credit: Tina Wing Photography

Girlguides' mural helps brighten up High Street

A new mural has been installed that shows key moments in Wickford's history over the past 100 years.

Designed and created by Wickford Girlguides, the mural features 10 large boards, one for each decade, and has been installed along the walkway under the High Street railway bridge.

Cheryl Falder, Girlguiding Wickford district commissioner, said: "We've had comments about the colourful design brightening up the subway. Various people have commented about it being a lovely idea and thanking Wickford Girlguiding for all the hard work that went into the project."

The original plan was for all the members of the town's different Girlguiding groups to take part in painting the mural, but the painstaking artistic work was eventually carried out by adult members as a COVID-19 precaution.

Cheryl added: "The feedback from the girls has been great. My Brownies are very proud to say they are Girlguiding members, and some have commented on the image of the Zoom call on the 2020 board and how they remember doing Brownies on Zoom."

Wickford Girlguiding is currently looking for new volunteers. To register your interest, please visit www.girlguiding.org.uk

Transformation of Memorial Park continues

The 26-acre extension to Wickford Memorial Park continues to make progress, with two new ponds the most recent additions. The improvements by Basildon Council include the planting of more than 3,500 trees and the creation of a new wildlife meadow.

A Basildon Council spokesperson said: "The 26-acre extension to Wickford Memorial Park has been an ongoing project since the beginning of 2021, after Beauchamps School handed back the keys to the site which had been operating as the school's playing fields."

"A total of 3,500 trees were planted in March 2021 on the site, with 12 feature trees also planted to create a new parkland area."

"In recent months, two inline ponds have been created, and in the autumn we will be planting a hectare of wildflower meadow."

"Later this year, we will be planting more than 200 fruit trees, which will signal the end of the extension works. The site will be managed and maintained by the council moving forwards."



Photo credit: Basildon Council

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KHAN'T *stop Adil*

ADIL RAY OBE CELEBRATES 25 YEARS IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

We're in an era where some claim the path for ethnic minorities is blocked by prejudice, bias, racism and more. Adil Ray OBE, the DJ, presenter, scriptwriter and unashamed cricket fanatic, is one man who roundly disputes that assumption.

In fairness, the 48 year old need only look at the success of his own career to see how a constant battle to innovate, inform and enthuse an audience will not only create great TV or radio, it will also keep an ambitious career moving forward.

"I'm not blind enough to suggest there aren't challenges for a lot of people in our society, pretty much all across the board," begins Adil, "and that applies to indigenous members of the population too.

"Yet my own experiences are that if you are original, open, confident and malleable to the norm while also looking to push beyond it, you really can get on, and when that happens, life gets exciting."

Adil kicked off an impressive voyage through the entertainment world in pirate radio during his degree at the University of Huddersfield. Before graduating with a 2:1 in marketing in 1997, the son of a Pakistani father and Kenyan mother had already landed a gig with Choice FM, and he was swiftly to move on to Galaxy 105, Century Radio in Manchester, and Ministry of Sound.

Things really began to accelerate when he joined BBC Asian Network in 2002, with the station having just gone digital to a nationwide audience. His award-winning stint included hosting the *Breakfast Show* and led him to BBC 5 Live, where he quickly worked his way across to TV projects, with presenting duties on *The One Show*, as well as taking on a number of documentary commissions, notably about community, Asian integration and, of course, cricket.

Versatility had always been at the heart of what Adil preached, and back in 2012 he co-wrote the comedy *Citizen Khan*, featuring central character Mr Khan and his long-suffering family. The sitcom was taken up by the BBC and went primetime, and to date has returned for five series and 34 episodes, clinching four Royal Television Society Awards along the way.

In recent times, Adil has switched allegiance to ITV, filling in for former host Piers Morgan on *Good Morning Britain* and, as if to push his versatility even further, has entered the space of quiz show host, as in 2021 he began fronting *Lingo*.

Fans of the cult word game Wordle, which has gone viral over the past year, will recognise the format, where contestants have to identify a word using correctly and incorrectly placed letters from past attempts.

"I've always loved words and wordplay, so this one has fitted into my portfolio nicely, to be honest," laughs Adil.

"Mostly, what interests me is moving forward with new ideas. I've still got a big box of them at home – most are rubbish, but you only need to get one right, and that could lead to a lucky break.

"TV execs these days are looking for something a bit different. Shock factor will work, for a while at least, but courage and charisma will always carry people forward the furthest."



Ring MY BELL!

The inventor of the telephone, Alexander Graham Bell, who died in Canada 100 years ago this month, was born in Edinburgh in 1847. In his early twenties, he moved with his parents to Canada. He'd just recovered from tuberculosis, which had killed both his brothers, and his parents were desperate to move to a healthier environment.

After a few years in Canada, Bell settled in Boston. And in 1875, he and his American business partner, Thomas Watson, invented a simple telephone. The machine converted sound into an electrical signal. This signal travelled down a wire to a receiver, which converted it back into sound.

In 1876, Bell was granted the first telephone patent for his machine, giving him the exclusive rights to the technology. But this caused something of a commotion because several other scientists said they'd invented the phone before him. In fact, Bell faced more than 500 court challenges in 20 years – but none were successful.

Surprisingly, Bell was a distinctly average school pupil even though he loved solving problems. His mother was deaf and his father was a linguistics professor, which without doubt triggered the young Bell's interest in sound and communication. Using a system devised by his father, he taught deaf children. And like his father, he married a deaf woman.

The Bell Telephone Company he established in 1877 eventually became the Dallas-based multinational known as AT&T, now the largest telecoms company in the world.

As well as the telephone, Bell invented several devices, including a rudimentary metal detector, a hydrofoil, an early version of an iron lung and a photophone, which transmitted the human voice over wavelengths of light.

Bell's main invention made him wealthy, but he sold most of his company shares early on. Like many inventors, after successfully developing one idea, he wanted to move on to the next.

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Home Office/Studies

5 unspoken rules of BOTTOMLESS BRUNCH

Bottomless brunches seem to be popping up everywhere – at chain restaurants, luxury hotels, your local pub... the list goes on.

However, how do you navigate these events with dignity and decorum? Or at least without waking up the next morning with the dreaded 'beer fear'. Find out below.

1. DO NOT MAKE PLANS FOR AFTERWARDS

Think you are going on a bar crawl after a bottomless brunch? Planning to take a leisurely walk around the shops? You are sadly mistaken. If you are attending a bottomless brunch, do not make any plans for afterwards as you'll most likely want to spend the rest of the day catching up with the same friends and family you went to brunch with.

2. ARRIVE ON TIME

Whether it's one, two or three hours, bottomless brunch hosts can be ruthless, and they will stop serving you when your time slot is over. Therefore, if you want to get maximum bang for your buck, make

sure everyone in your party arrives on time and that you order asap.

3. BE POLITE TO YOUR SERVER

Manners cost nothing, but they can help you to have a more enjoyable bottomless brunch experience. Even if you and your friends are getting a little rowdy, that doesn't mean that you can't be polite when ordering your drinks.

4. CHOOSE YOUR FOOD WISELY

Although brunch conjures up images of scrambled eggs, smoked salmon and avocado on toast, most bottomless brunch packages offer much more substantial food choices such as burgers, pizzas and even pancakes. To avoid all that fizz going to your head, make sure you stock up on plenty of stodge.

5. HAVE FUN

Rather than stressing about your empty glass or worrying about how much time you have left, just sit back, relax and have fun with your family and friends.



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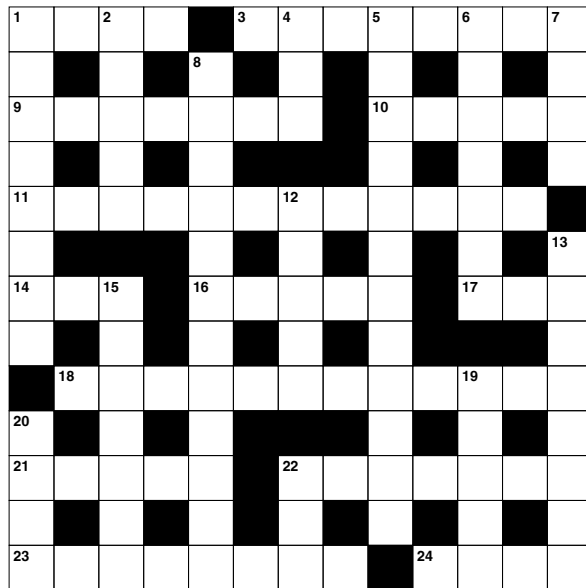
PUZZLES & TRIVIA

ACROSS

1. Guinea pig (4)
3. E.g. resident of Cairo (8)
9. Cause to absorb water (7)
10. Wanderer (5)
11. Large Brazilian city (3,2,7)
14. Short sleep (3)
16. Explore or examine (5)
17. Our star (3)
18. Someone skilled in penmanship (12)
21. Pale orange tropical fruit (5)
22. State emphatically (7)
23. Estimating (8)
24. Change (4)

DOWN

1. Orderly and logical (8)
2. Record on tape (5)
4. Command to a horse (3)
5. Persistence (12)
6. Turns upside down (7)
7. Standard (4)
8. Butterfly larvae (12)
12. With a forward motion (5)



13. Most annoyed (8)

15. Appease (7)

19. Detected a sound (5)

20. Highly excited (4)

22. Animal lair (3)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Art competitions used to be part of the Olympic Games from 1912 to 1948. This included disciplines such as mixed painting, sculpture, literature and music.
- ▶ The Olympics have been hosted by several countries that no longer exist, including Yugoslavia who hosted the Winter Olympics in 1984.
- ▶ The netball final at the 2018 Commonwealth Games was the first time since 1998 that the final did not feature both Australia and New Zealand. Australia and England faced off in the final, with England taking the gold.
- ▶ Sergio Agüero holds the record for the highest number of goals scored in the English Premier League by a football player for one club. He scored a total of 184 goals for Manchester City between August 15, 2011, and May 23, 2021.

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However, UK manufacturer McLaren is at least aligning strong portions of its competitive arm as it enters the Formula E championship in place of reigning champion Mercedes, who is quitting to focus on road car development.

The switch enables McLaren to take on the progress Mercedes has made so far, as well as claiming the fourth quarter of its competitive motoring proposition – it will now have vehicles racing in Formula E, Extreme E (the off-road spin-off), IndyCar and, of course, Formula 1.

What's more, the team announced a new strategic partnership with NEOM, a sustainable region in northwest Saudi Arabia, with the combined e-teams

known as NEOM McLaren Electric Racing.

While leading the charge, literally, in electric car competition may seem like the work of marketing and PR, the truth is that Woking-based McLaren wants to push its competitive research edge as far as possible in creating a car that's great on the track, while adapting an engine that can be used for everyday road vehicles.

Certainly, the efficiencies gained in both specialisms lend faith to the incredible advances that continue to evolve, from the simplicity of quicker charging times and better batteries to the reality that electric sports vehicles are no longer derided or disrespected by fervent racing fans.

In this sense, Mercedes' loss is most definitely McLaren's gain, with Formula E set to make further ground on motor racing's showpiece, F1, this season.





How to Bakewell



National Bakewell Tart Day falls on August 11 this year. But let's face it, any day is a great day to enjoy this delicious treat. Legend has it that these lovelies originated in Bakewell, Derbyshire, in the 1860s. A pub landlady asked a member of staff to make a jam tart, but instead of mixing the almonds and eggs into the pastry, the cook poured the mixture

on top. The result was a baking sensation. So much so that a local lady got hold of the recipe and made a handsome living off the back of it. It's a great story. However, the recipe had apparently already featured in a cookbook published 15 years previously.

Food historians also squabble over the tart's topping. Viewers of *The Great British Bake Off* took to social media to share their outrage when the bakers decorated their tarts with white icing and glacé cherries. Your traditional Bakewells are apparently topped with just a smattering of flaked almonds. Those other ones are Cherry Bakewells.

THE RECIPE

Ingredients for shortcrust pastry base:

- 175g plain flour
- 75g cold butter
- 55ml water

Ingredients for filling:

- 1 tbsp raspberry jam
- 125g butter
- 125g caster sugar
- 125g ground almonds
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ tsp almond extract
- 50g flaked almonds

Method:

Make the shortcrust pastry in the normal way and use it to line a 20-cm flan tin. Chill for 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 200°C/180°C fan/gas mark 6. Bake blind (using foil and baking beans) for 15 minutes. Remove beans and foil and bake for another 5 minutes. Spread the jam all over the base. Melt the butter. Then stir in the sugar, ground almonds, egg and almond extract. Pour the mixture into the tin over the pastry and sprinkle over the flaked almonds. Bake for 30-35 minutes (cover with foil if the almonds are browning too quickly). Chill and enjoy.

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Go crazy for COURGETTE



FOOD & DRINK

Incredibly underrated, the humble courgette is in abundance this month, so why not step outside your veg comfort zone and try one of these tasty and nutritious courgette recipes?

COURGETTE PIZZA

Pizza is a family favourite in most households, but there are several ways that you can incorporate courgette into a pizza. Thinly slice and use as a topping, make some courgette pizza boats, or bake your own courgette pizza base using the below recipe.

You will need: 3 medium grated courgettes | 30g cornflour | 2 cloves crushed garlic | 1 large egg | 300g shredded mozzarella | 50g parmesan

How to make: Add the courgette, egg, garlic, cheese and cornflour to a bowl, mix and season with salt and pepper | Stir until completely combined and make into a dough | Transfer to a baking tray lined with parchment and pat into a crust | Bake for 25 minutes at 230°C/210°C fan/gas mark 8 until golden | Add your preferred toppings and bake for a further 10 minutes.

COURGETTE FRITTERS

For fussy kids who don't like to eat their greens, this is a simple dish that allows you to sneak in one of their five-a-day with ease.

You will need: 2 medium courgettes | 2 tbsp self-raising flour | 25g parmesan or vegan alternative | 1 tbsp olive oil

How to make: Grate the courgette and combine in a bowl with the flour and cheese | Shape into walnut-sized balls and then flatten | Heat a non-stick frying pan over a medium heat and add the oil | Fry each fritter for 2-3 mins on each side until golden.

COURGETTE NOODLES

If you are looking for a low-carb version of spaghetti, then courgette noodles are a great idea. All you need is a julienne peeler or a spiralizer to cut your courgettes into courgetti.

You will need: 2 medium courgettes | 2 cloves garlic | Zest of 1 lemon | 150g crème fraîche

How to make: Add your courgetti to a hot pan with oil | Add all the other ingredients | Cook for 2-3 minutes | Serve as you would spaghetti with ragu or a tomato sauce.



HORTICULTURAL HERO:

ADAM FROST



Photo credit: BBC

Speak to almost any horticulturalist and they will praise the considered, calming and relaxing virtues of spending time in the garden – an escape from everyday life.

Yet for most of us, when we bring out the shovel and the spade, our first reaction is to embark on a tornado-like tour of our beds, lawns and pots.

Gardeners' World presenter Adam Frost is one man looking to change things. With an eye on grindingly slow green-fingered activity, Frost declares that good gardening is all about letting nature dictate the pace at which our wild spaces evolve.

Adam, who is a popular face at the Chelsea Flower Show, explains: "How do I treat problems in my garden? I don't. Even if you get greenfly on a plant, you can guarantee that within one or two weeks, something will come in and clear it. The moment you start interfering, you are unbalancing what's going on."

Instead, the award-winning gardener would rather we undertake a more passive approach to all aspects of our garden, even if encouraging wildlife to undertake jobs we would otherwise do ourselves means slightly scruffier spaces.

He continues: "Of course, there is always the lure for perfection, but even the best manicured garden requires regular maintenance; and rather than always chasing that perfect look, why not see the beauty in how nature takes over a space?"

While mowing and weeding can still be added to the checklist, slow gardening is about letting your garden discover its own voice. Assuming you have provided it with good soil, plenty of water and the right shade in certain areas, Adam believes the flora and fauna will do the rest.

He adds: "Nature has always known what it's doing, and seeing it make its own decisions, rather than having us lead, is a real thrill."

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GARDENING



OUTDOOR PLANTS

you can't kill

Not particularly green-fingered but still want a thriving garden? Check out these outdoor plants that promise to grow in spite of you rather than because of you.

Plus, our top tips for creating a stress-free, low-maintenance garden.

GERANIUMS: Geraniums are a popular choice for the garden owing to their vibrancy, vivid colours and stunning scents. However, they are also known for coping with even the most inhospitable situations and will thrive in the sun or shade.

EUONYMUS: Euonymus is an evergreen shrub that can bring brightness to your garden all year round. Ideal for climbing up walls or alongside brickwork, this vibrant plant requires little to no maintenance and will tolerate inferior soils, exposed areas and windy corners.

PRIMROSES: Primroses make a stunning addition to any garden and come in a wide variety of colours. This flowering plant loves both the sun and shade and will seed itself about the garden without ever becoming a nuisance.

BAMBOO: Bamboo is a versatile plant that can survive in most conditions and is ideal for bringing a touch of the exotic to your garden. It comes in a variety of colours, heights and foliage types and is great for creating bold focal points or living screens.

ASTRANTIA: If you have damp soil in your garden, then Astrantia, also known as Hattie's pincushion or masterwort, is a great choice. Boasting attractive blooms, astrantia is another self-seeding plant that is perfect for low maintenance and wilder garden schemes.

HOW TO CREATE A LOW-MAINTENANCE GARDEN:

- > Keep plant variety to a minimum
- > Replace fine turf with hard-wearing seed or turf mix
- > Focus on hardscaping
- > Ditch the decking
- > Add a thick layer of mulch to your garden beds to reduce the need for weeding.





KIDS

DIY SUMMER

GARDEN GAMES

FOUR GARDEN GAMES YOU CAN MAKE FOR YOUR KIDS TO ENJOY THIS SUMMER

Worried about how you are going to keep the kids entertained all summer long? Check out the below DIY garden games that you'll have fun making and children will love playing with.

JUMBO KERPLUNK

You will need:

A bucket | Cage mesh or tomato plant cages | 2 wooden planks | Wooden sticks | Soft play balls

How to make:

- > Roll the mesh into a cylinder and secure with black tape.
- > Place the two planks on top of the bucket and rest the mesh cylinder on them.
- > Push the wooden sticks through the holes in the mesh.
- > Fill with coloured balls.

GIANT LAWN DOMINOES

You will need:

28 ft of 2-inch x 6-inch wood board | Chalk paint | Saw | Hand sander | White paint

How to make:

- > Cut the wood into 28 individual dominoes and sand down to prevent splinters.
- > Paint using chalk paint.
- > Paint on the dots using the white paint.
- > Leave to dry.

POOL NOODLE TENNIS

To make two rackets you will need:

2 foam pool noodles | Mesh vegetable or fruit bag | Duct tape | Lightweight sponge rubber ball

How to make:

- > Cut off 4 inches from one end of each noodle.
- > Make an angled cut on each end.
- > Fold the noodle so that the two angled cuts meet to make the head of the racket and secure with duct tape.
- > Use one of your 4-inch cut-offs to create a handle by securing to the base of the racket head with duct tape.
- > Insert the noodle racket into the mesh bag and secure with more duct tape.

BOTTLE RING TOSS

You will need:

10 glass bottles (wine, milk, etc) | 6 wooden rings or bangles | Bottle crate | If you would like to paint the bottles you will also need gloss paint and a paintbrush

How to make:

- > Remove all the labels from the recycled bottles.
- > If you wish, paint each bottle in a bright colour and leave to dry.
- > Place the bottles in the crate.



Photo credit: scout.org, ironandtwine.com, ziggityzoom.com, playpartyplan.com



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A WILL WRITER'S WORDS OF WISDOM

WORRYING PROBLEMS

Unless it has a Contemplation of Marriage clause, marriage or re-marriage invalidates a Will, requiring a new arrangement

Without a Will, spouses and civil partners are NOT automatically entitled to all of the estate assets on death, and the Government could inherit your estate if you die with no surviving traceable relatives.

Without a Will, even grandparents have NO automatic Legal Guardianship of their orphaned grandchildren

Without a Will, the Rules of Intestacy, ie 'The Government

Will', could land the children with an IHT liability

A beneficiary or their spouse should not be a witness to a Will, or they will disinherit themselves

Although divorce does not invalidate a Will, marriage will indeed invalidate a Will, unless a marriage clause has been embedded

If you have no surviving parents, siblings, grandparents, uncles or aunts, then under the Intestacy Rules, the whole estate goes to the Crown or the Duchy of Lancaster or the Duke of Cornwall

PEACE OF MIND SOLUTIONS

Always appoint charities as your final beneficiaries, to avoid your estate being claimed by the Government

By the use of a Property Protection Trust, you can ensure that if you pre-decease and your spouse re-marries and has more children, your own children benefit from your share of your home, and not the new spouse. BUT if Probate is not completed, the Trust Deed will not be set up and notified at the Land Registry

If children have special care needs, an appropriate Discretionary Trust could avoid loss of State benefits on them inheriting your estate

A Grant of Probate confirms to Executors that they have the authority to act and carry out the wishes of the deceased

Provide in your Will for continuity of your business on your death

If you own property abroad, you should arrange a Will for your assets in that country, to avoid costly fees and much Probate delay

If a Named Beneficiary, Executor, Trustee or Legal Guardian changes their name, e.g., on marriage or by Deed Poll, it is not necessary to amend the Will: documentary evidence, eg Decree Absolute, is sufficient

A properly worded Will could ensure that half the value of your home is potentially protected against Local Authority care home fees

There is no Inheritance Tax liability if the deceased spouse has left their entire estate to their surviving spouse or civil marriage partner

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**FANCY BUYING A
BEACH HUT?**

According to recent statistics, beach huts are now one of the most popular property purchases in the UK. However, are they really a good investment? Discover the pros and cons of buying a beach hut below.

PROS OF BUYING A BEACH HUT

✓ Access to prime coastal locations

If you love going to the beach when holidaying in the UK, then a beach hut can give you access to stunning beach spots without the need to lug your belongings back and forth each day.

✓ Income from summer rentals

Renting out a beach hut to tourists during the summer months offers a great way to earn a little bit of extra cash. This is particularly true if you live near a popular holiday destination.

✓ Enjoy the outdoors

Beach huts are not just for summer; you can enjoy them all year round so you and your family can get out in the fresh air and away from screens.

✓ A solid investment

Beach huts are in short supply in the UK, despite them being high in demand. This means that they tend to hold their value over the long term.

CONS OF BUYING A BEACH HUT

✗ High maintenance costs

As beach huts are located near the coast, they are more susceptible to damage from harsh weather conditions such as heavy rain and strong winds, as well as the close proximity to sea water. This can mean higher maintenance costs than other types of properties.

✗ Limited space and facilities

Beach huts are typically small, which means there is not a lot of space to store your belongings. Also, some do not have basic facilities such as water and electricity.

✗ Seasonal availability

Some local councils only permit the use of beach huts during the summer months, which means you get less use out of your investment.



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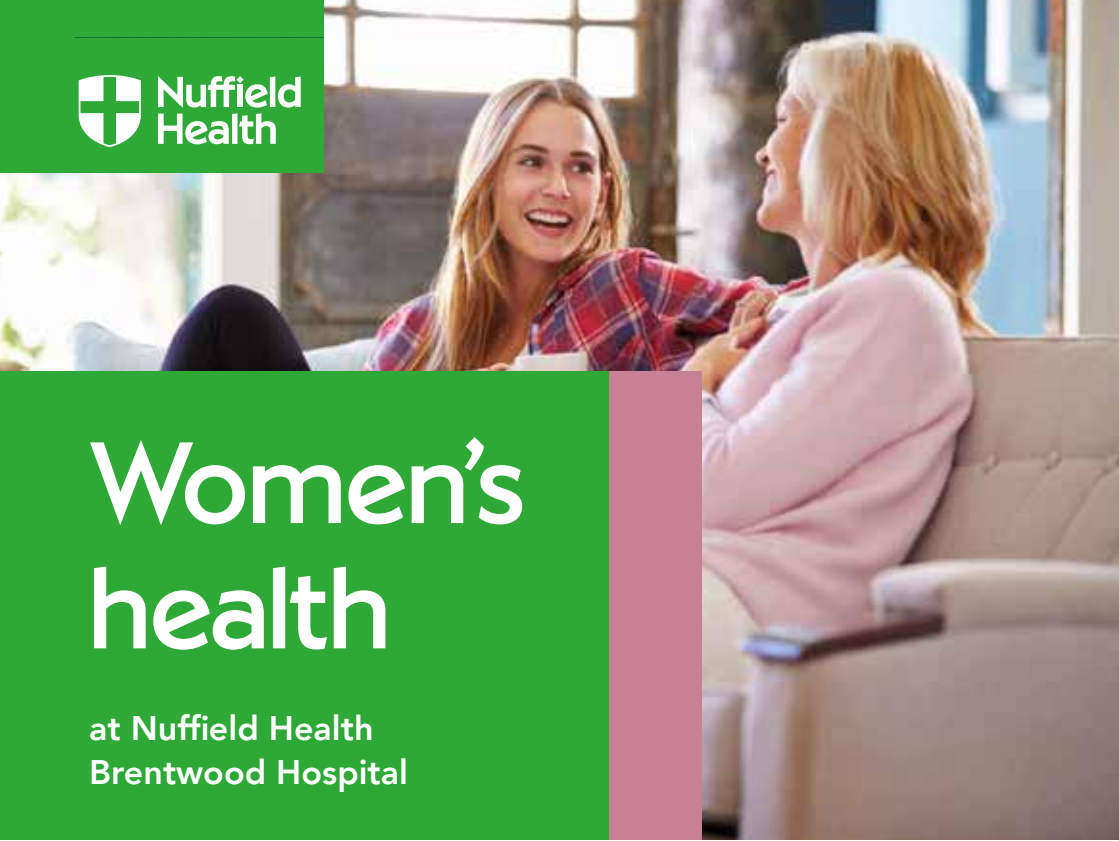
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MAKING FRIENDS *later in life*

While it can be easy to make friends at school, it can become increasingly difficult to reach out and meet new people as you get older. Here are five ways to begin making new friends.

1. TAKE UP A NEW HOBBY

If you often feel bored as well as lonely, then why not kill two birds with one stone and take up a new hobby? Whether you fancy trying a local painting class, would enjoy a book club, or want something more physically challenging, partaking in a new hobby offers many opportunities to make new friends.

2. PUT YOURSELF OUT THERE

New friends are not going to knock on your door and introduce themselves, so you need to take the initiative to actively seek out new friendships. This could be by sparking up a conversation with someone new or by inviting an acquaintance on an outing. If you have mobility issues, Age UK offers transport services for the elderly and disabled. Call the charity's free, confidential advice helpline on 0800 678 1602 to find out about local services.

3. JOIN A VOLUNTEER GROUP

For those who need a little bit more time to get to know people, a volunteer group or community project allows you to gradually build up a rapport over time. This can also help you to build deeper friendships. Try reaching out to your local community centre to find out how you can get involved.

4. GO ONLINE

There are so many ways that you can meet people and make new friends online, from social media sites to online forums to blogging. If you are not overly confident in your technical abilities, many libraries offer courses for people wanting to explore the world wide web.

5. REACH OUT TO LOST FRIENDS

Have you lost touch with friends over the years? Instead of trying to build new friendships from scratch, you may find it easier to try to reconnect with faces from your past.



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How's it HANGING?

Have you ever tried exercising upside down? Also referred to as an inversion, there are many physical and mental health benefits to upside-down exercises. Discover them below.

1. ENHANCED MENTAL FOCUS

When you hang upside down, oxygen-rich blood flows directly to your brain. Although it may feel weird at first, as you adjust, you should start to experience better brain function and enhanced mental focus.

2. TO TREAT BACK AND JOINT ISSUES

Inversions are the ideal exercise for back and load-bearing joint issues as they help to reverse the harmful effects of gravity. Focus on straight alignment exercises such as headstands and handstands and you should notice a significant improvement.

3. REDUCED STRESS LEVELS

If you suffer with unhealthy levels of stress, then upside-down exercises can help you to unwind and relax. Enabling you to let go of any negative thoughts and feelings, even 10 minutes a day of inversion exercises can make you feel less stressed.

4. STRENGTHENED CORE MUSCLES

Upside-down exercises can help to push your body out of its comfort zone as many different muscle groups are needed to hold these types of positions. As well as strengthening your core, inversions can help to improve your balance, flexibility and posture.

5. POSITIVE INFLUENCE ON ALL FOUR BODY SYSTEMS

When you carry out inverted exercises, you can enjoy a positive effect on all the four main systems within the body. These are the cardiovascular system, the lymphatic system, the nervous system and the endocrine system.

BEST UPSIDE-DOWN EXERCISES TO TRY:

- > Headstand – this requires you to activate your core and builds upper body strength
- > Forearm stand – this pose builds strength and needs a lot of mental focus
- > Handstand – this requires concentration, technique, strength and flexibility. It can be done against a wall to give you more stability
- > Plough pose – this can relieve tension in the neck, shoulders and back
- > Inverted V plank – this tones your core and improves stability and flexibility.

YOU SHOULD NOT DO INVERSIONS IF YOU HAVE:

High blood pressure | A heart condition | Glaucoma | A back or leg fracture | Osteoporosis | A hernia | You are pregnant, obese or overweight.



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