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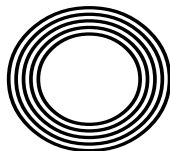
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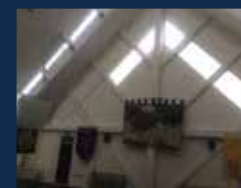
AFTER



AFTER



AFTER



BEFORE



AFTER





# Editor's notes...

JANUARY 2024



Nik Allen, Editor

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

I trust your Christmas was Fantastic. With my kids aged three and five, the holiday becomes truly magical. No one warns you about their rapid growth in this fast-paced world. It's a reminder to be present, and I strive to cherish these moments as much as possible.

I've recently been immersed in new documentaries about Ronnie O'Sullivan OBE, Robbie Williams and David Beckham OBE. Their expertise shines unmistakably and their charisma, dedication and work ethic are inspiring to see. Regardless of personal feelings, their mastery in their respective fields

is completely undeniable.

Success often intertwines with personal battles - demons, quirks and vices - which are the potential cost of fame. Yet I contend that these struggles serve as the catalyst to propel them forward. Through adversity, genuine potential surfaces.

As we begin the new year, let's channel our own challenges into the energy that creates success, rewriting the narrative of 2024. Here's to embracing hardships, finding strength, and crafting a triumphant story for you to be proud of. Happy New Year!

*Nik Allen*

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Photo credit: BBC Studios/Simon Pantling

# Nice one NEVILLE

HOW GARY'S POST-PLAYING REINVENTION HAS WON HIM A SEAT IN THE DEN

When the worlds of the ex-footballer and business collide, the results are not always impressive. In the 1970s, a slew of former pros ploughed their retirement funds into the pub trade, with varying outcomes. Yet with the image of the modern game so much more polished, it follows that those who once acquired trophies and international caps are now looking to do the same in commerce.

The latest to chance his arm in the corporate space is Gary Neville, who this year is set to become the first ex-sportsman on the panel of *Dragons' Den*. The former England and Manchester United defender may only be lowering himself onto one of the prized five chairs as a temporary guest on the show, but in many ways, the 48 year old's televised reinvention from his usual work as a pundit on Sky Sports makes a lot of sense.

Despised by many an opposition supporter while playing, Neville these days gleans admiration and respect for his punditry – he offers clarity, honesty, intelligence and charisma as he surveys the game's issues, be they tactical events on the pitch, or political events off it.

An ability to conduct a broad sweep of issues, with an approach that displays succinctness and wit, is of course the perfect fuel for any business environment. Neville's starring role on the BBC's standout reality show is reward for an already impressive track record in business.

His first investment actually came as a 21 year old, when he put money into property development. Since then, his company, Relentless, has delved into hospitality, notably through two hotels – Hotel Football and the Stock Exchange Hotel – plus award-winning Leeds restaurant The Man Behind the Curtain.

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“ YOU WILL NEVER REPLICATE THAT THRILL OF  
WALKING OUT OF THE TUNNEL ON A MATCHDAY ”

---

He also owns a production company, Buzz 16, and his time travelling around the world as a footballer provided the perfect insight by which his GG Hospitality brand now looks to take client and consumer excellence forward to the next level.

“People sometimes ask me if I am more excited by business these days than I was being a footballer, and I can only answer that by saying they are entirely different specialisms,” says Neville.

“You will never replicate that thrill of walking out of the tunnel on a matchday, and when I retired, I made the decision to try to get as close to it as I could, so here I am. The good part of being in business is you don't need to run around a pitch every day!”

The *Dragons' Den* experience sees Neville – and fellow newbie Emma Grede, who made her name in fashion – put prospective entrepreneurs through their paces alongside established heavyweights Peter Jones CBE, Deborah Meaden, Touker Suleyman, Sara Davies MBE and Steven Bartlett, with the 21st series rumoured to begin on January 4, 2024.

With filming now wrapped, Neville can return to another side project, the award-winning chat podcast *Stick to Football*. Does the devoted husband and father-of-two, who also part-owns League Two side Salford City, ever crave a day off?

“For me, the thought of doing nothing is terrifying,” he laughs. “I actually admire people who can sit around and enjoy their retirement, because they must have more mental strength than me.

“I have to keep on, and it helps that I love the work I do, so why would I not?”



# SQUIRRELS:

## DON'T YOU JUST LOVE THEM?

On January 21, people around the world will be celebrating all things squirrel because it's Squirrel Appreciation Day. But will you be joining in the celebrations?

In the UK, squirrels can divide opinion. And it's not all about digging up spring bulbs.

### WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

According to the nation's Wildlife Trusts, there are about 2.5 million grey squirrels in the UK. But there are only around 140,000 red squirrels. Red squirrels are native to the UK, while grey squirrels were introduced from America by the Victorians in the 1800s. The problem is that greys compete with reds for food. Grey squirrels also carry a virus known as squirrel pox. They're immune to it themselves, but it's lethal for their red cousins.

### IS THAT ALL?

Grey squirrels also strip the bark off trees and raid bird feeders. Sometimes, they even raid birds' nests. And they can gnaw through plastic hosepipes and netting.

### DO GREY SQUIRRELS HAVE REDEEMING FEATURES?

Both types of squirrel are intelligent and agile. Amazingly, they can leap 10 times their body length. Their eyesight is fantastic, and their double-jointed legs mean they can run up and down trees at incredible speed.

### DO GREY SQUIRRELS DO ANYTHING USEFUL?

Grey squirrels help regenerate forests by collecting and burying seeds in both the US and the UK. But, on balance, grey squirrels certainly do more harm than good.

### SO HOW CAN I HELP RED SQUIRRELS?

If you're lucky enough to have red squirrels visit your garden – and you don't have grey squirrels – here's how you can help them.

Leave out some hazelnuts in their shells, sweet chestnuts, sunflower seeds or pine nuts. You can also cultivate red squirrel-friendly plants such as brambles, dog roses, wild cherries and crab apples.



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# The wonders of WOOD



HOME & DIY



**W**ould you like to add more wooden finishes to your home? Here's how to mix different wood shades that will make your interior the envy of all your family and friends.

### USE COMPLEMENTING UNDERTONES

While it is completely fine to match different shades of wood in one space, if you want to stop a room from looking chaotic and badly thrown together, it can be a good idea to use complementing undertones. For example, you can use a lighter and darker shade of wood as long as they both have the same undertones, i.e. warm or cold.

### ADD A BUFFER

If you are worried about mixing different shades of wood, then you may want to add a buffer item between each element. For example, if you have wooden flooring in one shade and a wooden table in another, try adding a rug in between the two as a visual barrier. Also, any white item or decorative feature will instantly help to break up multiple wood tones.

### GO WITH THE GRAIN

If the different woods you would like to use all have a prominent grain, then try keeping the patterns similar so that the mood of the room is retained. For those who favour a larger or open grain, do not mix more than one of these together as it can feel like they are competing for attention.

### DON'T GO TOO WILD

When it comes to mixing different shades of wood in your home, less is most definitely more. Try to focus your efforts on adding just a few different shades of wood to start and then repeat throughout the room. As a general rule, opt for two or three shades of wood per room at the most.



Photo credit: studio-mcgee.com





Pantone Colour of the Year 2024:

# PEACH FUZZ

Every year, the design world waits with bated breath for Pantone to declare its colour of the year. For 2024, the 25th anniversary of this renowned announcement, the colour is the delicate Peach Fuzz.

### What does Peach Fuzz look like?

Peach Fuzz is a soft peach tone that is nestled somewhere between pink and orange. Described as gentle, velvety and hardworking, this is a versatile shade that is guaranteed to dominate the catwalk and the world of interior design. As a tone that strikes the perfect balance between cool and warm, it can be used to either brighten a space or make it feel cosier. Pair with muted sage greens, soft blues and earthy tones for best results.

### Why was this colour chosen for 2024?

This shade was selected as a direct response to the nation's need for nurturing and compassion during times of turmoil, as well as our desire for a more peaceful future. Pantone colour specialist Leatrice Eisman said: "It's a warm and cosy shade, and it's very tactile. We feel that at a time like this, tactility is really important – to touch other people and gather them into our homes."

### How to incorporate Peach Fuzz into your home

**Paint the ceiling:** If you want to try this colour trend without committing to a complete room overhaul, why not paint your bedroom or living room ceiling in this soft shade? Keep the rest of the walls neutral to ensure balance.

**Choose new soft furnishings:** Arguably the simplest way to incorporate a new colour into a room in your home, look out for peach-coloured throws, scatter cushions and rugs.

**Invest in a new statement piece of furniture:** For those who want to go all out with this stunning shade, invest in a new piece of statement furniture such as a peach sofa, an armchair or a display cabinet.

**Paint your kitchen cabinets:** If you are on a budget and want to update your kitchen, then giving your cabinets a fresh coat of Peach Fuzz paint is definitely the way to go.



Photo credit: Stacy Zarin Goldberg via elledecor.com, dulux.co.uk, iohi.com, @STYLIA via abtinteriors.com.au

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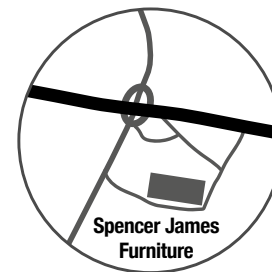
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# Exploring Langton's 18th-century splendour

Langtons House in Hornchurch offers the perfect combination of history and luxury, whether you're planning your next big event or an afternoon walk.

The wonderful thing about visiting manor houses is that they enable you to leave the stresses of the 21st century behind and escape to a simpler time. Langtons House is a perfect example of this, especially as it is nestled within six acres of stunning gardens and boasts its own ornamental lake.

A Grade II listed 18th-century structure, the property retains many of its original features, including Georgian windows, ornate fireplaces and decorative ceilings which preserve their original moulding. From the outside, it is impressive and imposing, while inside it still exudes luxury and decadence.

The residence was owned by the Massu family, who were Huguenot refugees originally from France. They had achieved prosperity as silk merchants in the City of London.

In 1929, the Massu

family generously donated the house to the Hornchurch Urban District Council. This gift came with the stipulation that the building be dedicated to council-related activities and that the six acres of land remain accessible to members of the general public.

Just shy of a century since the Massus passed on this magnificent property, Langtons House remains a favourite destination for both locals and those from further afield.

With four ceremony rooms – East Room, West Room, Langtons Hall and The Orangery – it is a fabulous destination for any big event.

More than that, though, it holds perfect echoes of a decorative past. With lottery grants allowing restoration to parts of the house such as The Orangery in recent years, the house you see today is just as magnificent as it would have been in days gone by – a building and estate locked in the traditions of the past, while looking ahead to an elegant future.

Photo credit: Shanne Mercer Photography



GLOW WORM - BAXI - VAILLANT - POTTERTON - WORCESTER - IDEAL - BIASA - FEROLLI - MAIN

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# 'The county has given me everything'

He is a pioneer of modern culture, launching 1,000 bands and singers, endowed with an encyclopaedic knowledge of music, and at the same time acting as a proud custodian of Essex. He is Steve Lamacq.

Many are surprised to find Steve Lamacq quite diminutive in height. Mostly because the DJ, who has pioneered new music across BBC radio over the past three decades, possesses true giant status in the music industry.

Outside the cast of *The Only Way is Essex*, the now 59 year old is perhaps the proudest and most vocal advocate of his home county (notwithstanding the fact he was born in Hampshire!). Rarely one of his Radio 6 Music shows goes by without mention of the influence Harlow had on him, or growing up in Halstead, or the emotion attached to his beloved Colchester United.

It all began back in the Harlow Square music venue in 1978. Lamacq credits the band The Lurkers for inspiring him to pursue a career in music; something he furthered when studying journalism at the new town's college, before getting a job at the *West Essex Gazette*.

Pirate radio, Greater London Radio, *NME* magazine and even *Top of the Pops* followed (although on reflection Lamacq was perhaps much too alternative for the mainstream commerciality of the Top 40).

The radio star's talent comes through perseverance. Even now, as someone indelibly front-of-stage as one of the most approachable, knowledgeable and influential forces in a rapidly evolving record industry, his passion is as great as ever.

"For me, the elixir of music is seeing a band live," he says. "It could be in front of 10 people or 10,000 – it is an experience that always excites me."

Essex certainly needs to feel proud of one of its greatest exports.

Steve says: "The county has given me everything and I'm never held back in my admiration for it."

Nor us for you, Steve.



Photo credit: BBC/Ray Burmiston



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# YOUR LOCAL EVENTS

## PRESCHOOL PHONICS WITH ROBOT REG

Rayleigh 5th Scouts, The Birches,  
Priory Chase, Rayleigh, SS6 9NF  
Mondays, starting from January 15,  
10.30am – 11.15am



Photo credit: Robot Reg

This 45-minute class of high-energy, engaging play is designed to introduce children to letter sounds and the skills needed to read and spell through games and other activities. It strengthens hands and fingers to develop fine motor skills and build dexterity to support writing. The class encourages learning through short, pacy and fun activities that keep children engaged.

Appropriate for children aged two to four. Classes cost £9 per session and can be purchased online from [www.bitly.ws/36Hba](http://www.bitly.ws/36Hba)

## THE SHERLOCK HOLMES COMEDY DINNER SHOW

The Billericay Theatre, 34 Radford Way,  
Billericay, CM12 0DX

Friday, January 19, 7.30pm – 10.30pm

The landlord of The Frog & Bucket has been brutally murdered, but the restaurant must remain open and you are invited for dinner.

None other than Sherlock Holmes has been called upon to solve the crime, his trusty sidekick Watson in tow. A second murder, you say?! Who is responsible? Collect the clues, question the characters, and solve the mystery (or just sit back and enjoy the show).

A unique, interactive murder mystery with a three-course dinner included.

Tickets cost £26.50 each from [www.tickettailor.com/events/thebillericaytheatre/1020938](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/thebillericaytheatre/1020938)

## ETS PONGAL VIZHA 2024

The Swayne Park School, Sir Walter Raleigh  
Drive, Rayleigh, SS6 9BZ  
Sunday, January 21, 12pm – 7pm

Essex Tamil Sangam presents its 7th annual Pongal Celebration. Pongal is not merely a festival; it's a reflection of gratitude for the bountiful harvest and a celebration of the spirit of unity.

The events agenda includes traditional games and lunch, cultural performances and entertainments, fun games, tea/coffee and snacks.

Tickets cost £20 for ages 12 and above or £10 for children aged five to 12. Purchase your tickets from [www.tickettailor.com/events/etsevents/1075619](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/etsevents/1075619)

## ACTING FOR STAGE, SCREEN AND DIGITAL MEDIA OPEN DAY

Performers College Essex, Southend Road,  
Corringham, Stanford-le-Hope, SS17 8JS  
Wednesday, January 24, 10am – 12pm

See what it is like to train at one of Performers College Essex's campuses. You will have the chance to watch classes, tour the campus, take part in a workshop, and chat with current students and staff.

This Open Day is reserved for those wishing to apply for the BA (Hons) Acting for Stage, Screen and Digital Media course commencing autumn 2024.

Book your free spot at [www.bitly.ws/36HbV](http://www.bitly.ws/36HbV)

## RAYLEIGH CLOTHES SWAP

Leonard Dance Academy, 39 Websters Way,  
Rayleigh, SS6 8JQ

Sunday, January 28, 11am – 1pm

This clothes swap is a fun and eco-friendly event where you can refresh your wardrobe without spending a penny. Bring your gently used clothes and accessories and swap them with other fashion enthusiasts.

Tickets cost £6.50 from [www.bitly.ws/36HbK](http://www.bitly.ws/36HbK)



Photo credit: Eventbrite

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Photo credit: BBC Studio/Lambert Mark Mainz

# Television's FAITHFUL FRIEND

Talented, attractive, charismatic and perfectly grounded – is Claudia Winkleman terrestrial television's elegantly-cloaked saviour?

Many of us may know someone who has ventured off for a murder-mystery weekend at a remote, windswept, crumbling castle. The concept is as old as, well, the castle itself, in some cases, but the BBC's decision to reinvent the challenge in the form of a reality show has not just done wonders for its tumbling ratings; it's also given the usually chatty Claudia Winkleman a whole new, almost silent persona.

The host of *The Traitors*, whose first-series success has led to the concept being brought back at the start of 2024, has revealed how the show's producers were insistent on her keeping quiet during tense moments, something that didn't come naturally to the perennially chatty host of *Strictly Come Dancing*, *The Piano* and *Best Home Cook*.

"As a presenter, I've always had to mould myself to new environments, situations and such, but I've always got through the discomfort by being outwardly vocal and chatty," the 51 year old admits.

"To be told I had to zip it was something quite new, and actually took a bit of getting used to, as I'm the sort of person who doesn't like nervous silences... yet the show is built around them!"

The first series of *The Traitors* worked itself into a spectacular crescendo almost a year ago, and the expectations are that its return will further revive the kind of entertainment across main channels that appeared to be at risk of running out of ideas.

Winkleman, to her credit, has been the glue that's prevented the terrestrial TV schedule from slipping into total oblivion. Her time on *Strictly* now totals a decade, and she has also hosted *The Great British Sewing Bee*, plus a host of one-off productions on both the Beeb and Channel 4. She also fronts the Saturday mid-morning show on Radio 2.

The star, who is the daughter of author and journalist Eve Pollard OBE gained her small-screen break when featuring on the likes of *Holiday* and *This Morning* in the early 1990s. She then progressed to the likes of *Fame Academy*, *Comic Relief*, *Eurovision* and a number of panel shows.

"I feel lucky to have had so many opportunities over the years, and I do feel we produce so much high-quality entertainment in this country. We are the envy of the world in that respect."

It helps, of course, to have presenters as charismatic and versatile as Winkleman, who with her journalist hat on has written for the likes of *The Sunday Times*, *The Independent*, *Metro*, *Cosmopolitan* and *Tatler*.

The mother-of-three, who has been married to producer Kris Thykier since 2000, has also been vocal when it comes to charitable and public health issues; not least in 2015 after her daughter Matilda was badly burned when a Halloween costume she was wearing caught fire. Winkleman's subsequent campaigning led to a change of the law.

"Career aims are great," she concludes, "but family has always been everything to me, and I would give up everything I have achieved, in a heartbeat, in order to protect them."

Perhaps the one 'traitorous' act we could forgive...

Claudia  
WINKLEMAN...



# Plants to PLEASE YOUR PETS

If you have a dog or cat, you need to be mindful of the plants you grow in your garden as some can cause them harm. Discover the prettiest pet-friendly plants for your outside space below.

**SNAPDRAGON:** Snapdragon is recognisable by its tubular flowers that come in an array of bright colours. A short-lived perennial, all elements of this plant are safe for dogs and cats to consume.

**BEE BALM:** The flowers of bee balm plants are often compared to fireworks, with their unique appearance making them a popular choice for many UK gardens. A magnet for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds, bee balm is also safe for pets.

**CRAPE MYRTLE:** Providing colour all year round, crape myrtle is non-toxic to both cats and dogs and requires little attention once it is established. There are many varieties to choose from, with options to suit gardens of all sizes.

**CORAL BELLS:** Coral bells come in a variety of colours and shapes and are known for their high tolerance levels. Non-toxic to pets, these can be planted anywhere in your garden.

**FUCHSIA:** One of the most popular flowers for hanging baskets, fuchsia is completely safe for cats and dogs and is also a firm favourite of hummingbirds.

**CAMELLIA:** Camellia is a showy flower that guarantees to brighten up your garden, and all parts of this plant are harmless to pets if ingested. Use in foundation plantings, hedging and screening for best results.

**SUNFLOWER:** Annual sunflowers make a cheerful addition to any garden and, fortunately, they are non-toxic to both cats and dogs. In fact, some dogs enjoy the nutty taste of their seeds and cats are often attracted to their leaves.

**PLANTS THAT CAN BE HARMFUL TO PETS:**  
Aloe vera | Carnations | Chrysanthemums | Dahlias  
Irises | Lily of the Valley | Peonies | Delphiniums  
Tulips | Tomato Leaves | Autumn Crocus.



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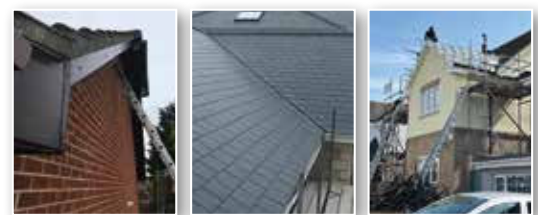
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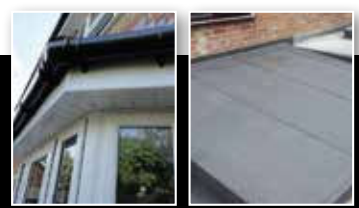
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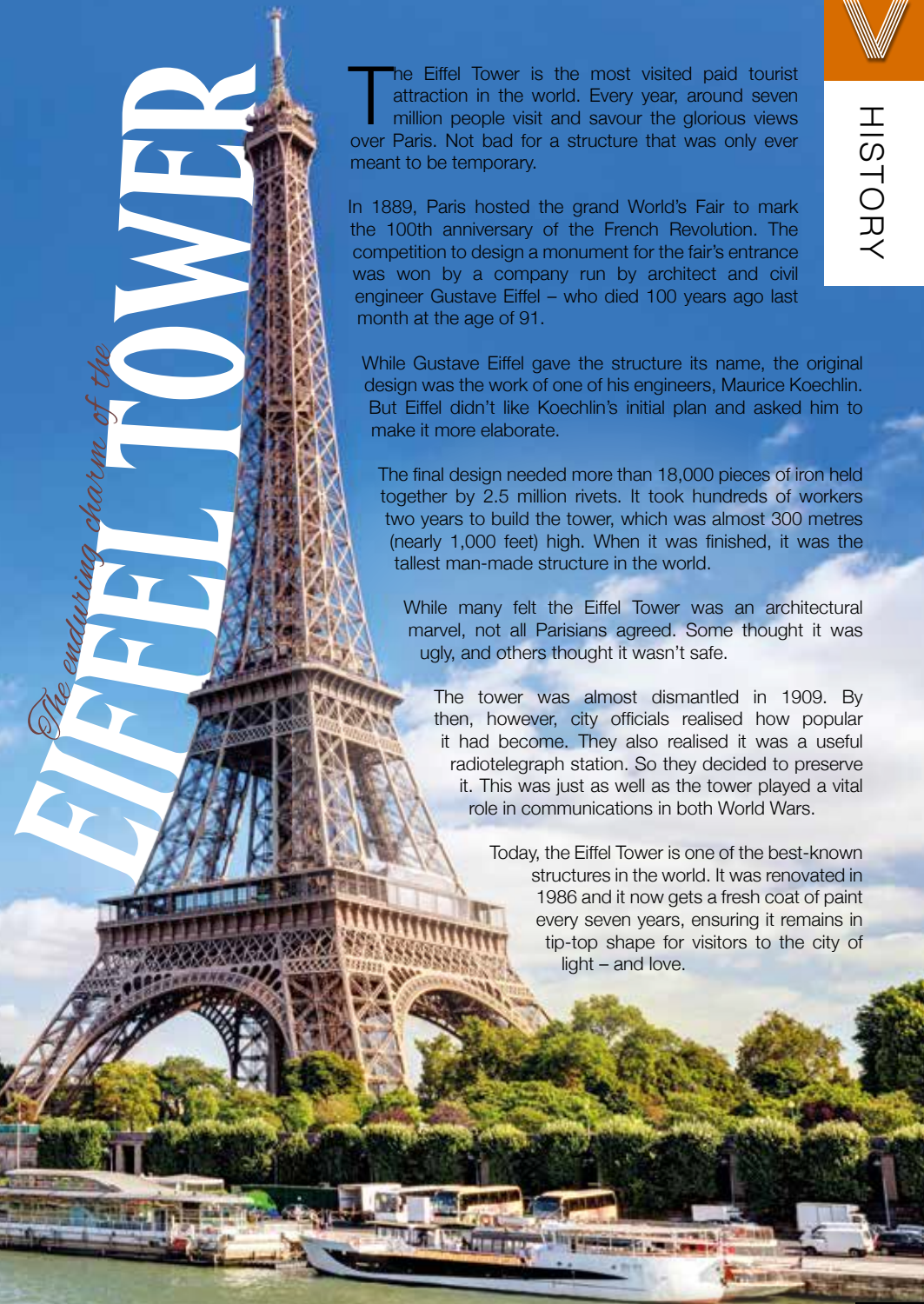
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The Eiffel Tower is the most visited paid tourist attraction in the world. Every year, around seven million people visit and savour the glorious views over Paris. Not bad for a structure that was only ever meant to be temporary.

In 1889, Paris hosted the grand World's Fair to mark the 100th anniversary of the French Revolution. The competition to design a monument for the fair's entrance was won by a company run by architect and civil engineer Gustave Eiffel - who died 100 years ago last month at the age of 91.

While Gustave Eiffel gave the structure its name, the original design was the work of one of his engineers, Maurice Koechlin. But Eiffel didn't like Koechlin's initial plan and asked him to make it more elaborate.

The final design needed more than 18,000 pieces of iron held together by 2.5 million rivets. It took hundreds of workers two years to build the tower, which was almost 300 metres (nearly 1,000 feet) high. When it was finished, it was the tallest man-made structure in the world.

While many felt the Eiffel Tower was an architectural marvel, not all Parisians agreed. Some thought it was ugly, and others thought it wasn't safe.

The tower was almost dismantled in 1909. By then, however, city officials realised how popular it had become. They also realised it was a useful radiotelegraph station. So they decided to preserve it. This was just as well as the tower played a vital role in communications in both World Wars.

Today, the Eiffel Tower is one of the best-known structures in the world. It was renovated in 1986 and it now gets a fresh coat of paint every seven years, ensuring it remains in tip-top shape for visitors to the city of light - and love.



HISTORY



## A WILL WRITER'S WORDS OF WISDOM

### WORRYING PROBLEMS

If a married couple dies together, and where there is no Will, the eldest is deemed to have died first, so only the family members of the surviving spouse will inherit

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

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

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 remarries 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

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

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

The estates of current or retired members of the Armed Forces, fire police and ambulance services, and most rescue organisations are entitled to exemption from Inheritance Tax if they die on active service, or if their later death was caused by an injury or disease that was received or aggravated while they were on active service

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 registered civil partner

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# DRY JANUARY

## mocktails

Take the dreariness out of dry January with these delectable, alcohol-free concoctions, guaranteed to please even the most discerning palates. These recipes each make one drink.

### COOL FRUIT MOCKTAIL

#### You will need:

A thick slice of cucumber (chopped) | 4-5 mint leaves (chopped) | 200ml water | About 7 raspberries (frozen or fresh) | 120ml sparkling lemonade (clear) | Ice cubes

#### How to make:

Bring the water to the boil in a small saucepan and add the cucumber and mint | Turn off the heat and leave for 2 minutes | Add the raspberries and squash them slightly | Strain the mixture | Pour 40ml of the mixture into a tall glass | Add the ice cubes and top up with lemonade

### NO-ALCOHOL NEGRONI

#### You will need:

¼ grapefruit and ½ orange (unpeeled) cut into small chunks | 100g caster sugar | 3 crushed cardamom pods | A pinch of coriander seeds | 150ml cold water | Ice cubes | 25ml white grape juice | Grapefruit and orange slices for garnish

#### How to make:

Put the grapefruit, orange, sugar, cardamom pods, coriander seeds and 125ml of the water into a saucepan | Bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes, then leave to cool | Strain the mixture and throw away the spices and fruit | Fill a tumbler with ice and the grapefruit and orange slices | Pour in 25ml of the syrup, the grape juice and the remaining water | Garnish with grapefruit and orange slices

### TANGY FIZZ

#### You will need:

1 pear, peeled, cored and sliced | 4 dried apricots, quartered | 50g golden caster sugar | 3 tsp honey | A sprig of rosemary | 100ml water | 2 tsp apple cider vinegar | 100ml cold sparkling water

#### How to make:

Put the pear, apricots, sugar, honey, rosemary and water into a saucepan | Simmer for 10 minutes, then cool completely | Strain the syrup into a jug, add the apple cider vinegar and chill the mixture in the fridge for 30 minutes | Pour 25ml of the syrup into a champagne glass and top up with the sparkling water.



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# Harbour Financial

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The start of a New Year usually goes hand in hand with making plans and looking at options for the year ahead. Potential thoughts of home improvements, renovations, moving or generally exploring your options to see what would be possible are all common thoughts at this time of the year which I can help you with!

**About me:** I'm Sammy, a local Independent Financial Adviser focusing on mortgage and protection advice within Harbour Financial. I have a wealth of knowledge and access to the whole of the market

which allows me to really search the market, compare lenders and find the most suitable options for my clients. I provide support from start to finish and take away a lot of the usual stress associated!

## Mortgages

Following a lot of negative media attention around mortgages last year we've started to see some real positive changes in the market! Getting professional advice and exploring your options in the current climate can provide cost savings compared with just staying with the same provider, this ensures you are really getting the right product for you and your circumstances. Whether we're talking re-mortgaging,

additional borrowing, looking at moving or buying your first ever home. I can help navigate all these for you!

## Protection Life Insurance / Critical & Illness Income

**Protection:** There are many variations available to protect you and your family from events outside your control and from life's unexpected curveballs. Whilst it can be a difficult thought, getting specialist advice and putting a policy in place tailored to your individual needs can not only provide financial security but also give peace of mind that you and your loved ones are taken care of.



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- It's important to review Life / Critical Illness & Income policies once these have been in place a long time to ensure these are still relevant and meet your needs.
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## OUT WITH THE OLD

January is a great time to engage in some post-holiday wardrobe organisation. If you received new clothes for Christmas or have stocked up on some sales bargains, now's the time to let go of those ill-fitting items and things you haven't worn for ages.

**1 EMPTY** your wardrobes, drawers and cupboards and pile all your clothes, shoes and accessories onto your bed. This will give you an idea of just how many clothes you have and help you think about what you actually need.

**2 TRY** everything on, even your underwear. If it doesn't fit well, isn't comfortable or you don't like it – it's time to let it go!

**3 SORT** all your clothes and accessories into three piles: 'yes', 'no' and 'maybe'.

**4 PUT** the 'yes' pile back in your wardrobe, drawers and cupboards. Treat yourself to some new coat hangers and group similar items together. Also, organise your drawers with dividers, making everything easier to find.

**5 CATEGORISE** the 'no' pile into three groups: sell, give away and recycle. Sell gently used items through local pre-loved clothing stores or online. Give away things to friends, family or a charity shop. And recycle items at clothing or shoe banks, which you can find at council recycling centres or in the car park of some big supermarkets.

**6 PLACE** 'maybe' items in a bag or box in a spare room or cupboard. Set a reminder for six months. After this period, if any items remain unworn, move them to a new 'no' pile for selling, donating or recycling. Things you wear can join your 'yes' collection.

A new year clothes declutter is therapeutic as well as rewarding. Best of all, you'll end up with a tidy and organised wardrobe filled with your favourite, well-fitting pieces that bring a sense of clarity to your daily routine.



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# Is a bad hip stopping you from doing everyday things?

**Nuffield Health Brentwood Hospital reveals the signs you might need a new one.**

## **What is a hip replacement?**

This is a procedure to remove your damaged hip joint and replace it with an artificial joint. It's used to treat hip pain, most commonly hip osteoarthritis, which is gradual wear and tear of the joint. During the procedure, the damaged joint is removed and replaced with an artificial ball and socket joint (a prosthesis). There are many different types of hip replacement and your surgeon will recommend the one that's best for you.

There are no set rules when it comes to hip replacement. While the surgery is commonly associated with older patients, in truth it's a life-changing procedure for anyone with a worn hip joint.

The following signs may indicate hip arthritis or be symptoms of other problems. The best way to accurately diagnose the state of your hip is to speak to a specialist and have an x-ray.

## **1. Hip or groin pain**

Pain around the hip or groin area can be one of the major indicators that there may be an underlying problem with your hip joint. Let's look at some of the different ways it can manifest.

### **Pain when walking**

If hip or groin pain is preventing you from walking normal distances for you or completing your usual daily activities, then speak to a specialist.

It's important to remember that this can be relative to you. For some, being able to comfortably stroll a short distance to the post box or local shop is enough. For others, being unable to complete a five-mile walk is unthinkable. It all depends on your lifestyle.

You may find yourself compensating with a limp, relying on a walking stick, or even needing painkillers just to cope with the pain of walking or other activities such as climbing the stairs or getting into a car.

### **Pain during exercise**

Soreness or pain during or after exercise which is stopping you from being as active as you normally would, be it jogging, swimming or other physical activities, can be a sign of hip arthritis.

The pain is usually localised between your hip and knee. If the pain is lower down towards the ankle the problem might be caused by back problems.

### **Pain at night**

If hip pain makes it hard to fall asleep or you find yourself waking up because of the pain caused by your movements in the night – talk to someone about it. There are a number of hip or joint-related issues that could be affecting your sleep.

## **2. Stiffness**

Difficulty putting your shoes or socks on is a common sign of stiffness in your hip, especially if one foot is more difficult than the other. You may also start to feel your hip joint clicking, popping or grinding in ways which impair your normal range of movement. If this is an ongoing problem, you should speak with a specialist.

## **3. The one leg test**

If you can't stand on your problem leg for longer than a minute – even with the support of a door frame or table-top for balance, then you might have a problem with your hip.

There are some other exercises you can try at home to see if you could benefit from hip pain treatment. For instance:

- Lying on your back or sitting, can you bring your knee to your chest? Assist with your hands if you need to.
- Lying on your back, can you move your leg out to the side without moving your trunk?
- Sitting on a chair, can you place your ankle on the opposite knee and let the knee drop down as far as possible?

For each test, compare both sides of your body. You may find the test easier on one side than the other, and many people notice this.

## **4. No relief from other treatments**

Most hip problems can be resolved without a full hip replacement. There is a range of treatments available, including physiotherapy and medication that may better address your symptoms.

If your hip pain is not severely limiting your daily life, or you have found ongoing relief from these less invasive treatments, then it indicates a hip replacement is likely not the right option for you yet.

At Nuffield Health Brentwood Hospital our experienced team of orthopaedic surgeons are experts in lower limb procedures and provide quick access to hip replacement surgery.

## **How to book a consultation at Nuffield Health Brentwood Hospital**

**If you are interested in hip replacement surgery or want expert advice from a professional, you will need to book a private consultation with one of our orthopaedic experts before proceeding with any treatment. To book a consultation, please contact our dedicated hospital enquiry team on:**

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### FEBRUARY

- 3<sup>rd</sup> - Saffron Waldon on Market Day
- 8<sup>th</sup> - Horniman Museum
- 11<sup>th</sup> - Birmingham International Tattoo
- 13<sup>th</sup> - Gainsborough & afternoon tea
- 14<sup>th</sup> - Anglesey Abbey Snowdrops
- 15<sup>th</sup> - Bluewater shopper
- 20<sup>th</sup> - Natural History Museum
- 20<sup>th</sup> - Science Museum
- 20<sup>th</sup> - Victoria & Albert Museum
- 22<sup>nd</sup> - Tower of London
- 24<sup>th</sup> - Chippenham Park Snowdrops
- 28<sup>th</sup> - Ruxley Manor Garden Centre

### MARCH

- 2<sup>nd</sup> - Norwich
- 5<sup>th</sup> - Polhill
- 6<sup>th</sup> - Ardingly
- 7<sup>th</sup> - Cambridge
- 7<sup>th</sup> - Ely
- 9<sup>th</sup> - Crufts
- 10<sup>th</sup> - Bicester
- 11<sup>th</sup> - Epping on market day
- 14<sup>th</sup> - Mystery Tour
- 17<sup>th</sup> - Festival of Railway Modelling
- 18<sup>th</sup> - Essex Countryside with lunch
- 19<sup>th</sup> - Milton Keynes
- 20<sup>th</sup> - Hever Castle
- 21<sup>st</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> - Stitch Festival
- 22<sup>nd</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> - Ideal Home Show
- 24<sup>th</sup> - Columbia Road Flower Market
- 26<sup>th</sup> - Bluewater
- 28<sup>th</sup> - Margate or Ramsgate
- 29<sup>th</sup> - Broadstairs
- 29<sup>th</sup> - Canterbury
- 30<sup>th</sup> - Brighton
- 30<sup>th</sup> - Leamington Spa
- 31<sup>st</sup> - Camden Market

## WINTER/SPRING BREAKS 2024

2 <sup>nd</sup> Feb Potters 5 Lakes - 4 days	£399
11 <sup>th</sup> Feb Cotswold Snowdrop Weekend 2 days	£169
12 <sup>th</sup> Feb Warners Corton - 5 days	£240
26 <sup>th</sup> Feb Sinah Warren - 5 days	£346
10 <sup>th</sup> Mar Llandudno & Snowdonia	£375
15 <sup>th</sup> Mar Emmerdale weekend - 3 days	£275
17 <sup>th</sup> Mar - Bournemouth - 5 days	£398
18 <sup>th</sup> Mar - Warners Lakeside - 5 days	£260
25 <sup>th</sup> Mar - Eastbourne - 5 days	£445

<b>EASTER</b> 29 <sup>th</sup> Mar - 1 <sup>st</sup> Apr Hampshire & Surrey Gardens	£390
Yorkshire Dales	£375

<b>ISLE OF MAN</b> 5 <sup>th</sup> Apr - 6 days	£683
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<b>GUERNSEY &amp; SARK</b> 18 <sup>th</sup> May - 6 days	£987
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<b>HERITAGE OF SCOTLAND</b> 19 <sup>th</sup> May - 7 days	£725
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# ENGLAND EXPECTS

With the group draw made, England are gearing up for potential success at Euro 2024, while Scotland also celebrate a return to the football elite.

Following the draw for the group stages of Germany 2024, England can now begin preparations for their European Championships campaign in earnest.

Their journey begins on June 16 in Gelsenkirchen, where Serbia are the opponents – the match representing a first meeting between the two countries.

Then, it's Denmark in Frankfurt – when the Danes will be looking to avenge their Euro 2020 semi-final defeat – before the group stage concludes in Cologne against Slovenia.

Three Lions manager, Gareth Southgate OBE, expressed mixed feelings about the draw, saying England will show absolute respect to their trio; yet also recognising the potential for tougher challenges that will surely follow in the knockout phase.

Their prospects post-group stage include possibly facing the third-placed team from Groups D, E or F in the last 16 – which could be Wales, should they negotiate a

route through a complicated playoff picture – then a potential quarter-final against Scotland.

The brief for England is pretty clear – win the thing. That may sound like a bold aim, but the Three Lions squad has never been laced with such talent, flair, resilience and mental strength – something tightened by impressive performances at the last three major tournaments.

The bookmakers make England pre-tournament favourites, followed by France, Germany (the hosts), Spain and Portugal. So the question is... is football finally coming home?

As for Scotland, they face a rigorous test of their credentials in Group A, beginning their campaign against host nation Germany on June 14.

Steve Clarke's men will also contend with an organised Switzerland outfit, and Hungary, who have reached the Euro finals for the third time in a row. The Scots have a history of starting big tournaments with a bang, reminiscent of their World Cup 1998 opener against Brazil.

For the Scots, their football regeneration means qualification is achievement enough, but don't rule out the Tartan Army upsetting the applecart along the way.

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Suddenly, the music industry became fun and frivolous, with the likes of Sweet, David Bowie, The Bay City Rollers, Slade Suzi Quatro, Wizzard and Mud following in Bolan's star-spangled wake.

The bands' music and style made the world a wildly more colourful place – teenagers swooned as their heroes and heroines glammed it up, caking on the make-up while teetering precariously on outrageously high platform boots.

In the coming weeks it's time to relive the exuberance of the era, as glam rock concert show spectacular Get it On! prepares to sparkle as it swings into town.

The production comes from the producers of

hit touring Seventies disco show Lost in Music – Entertainers. Show producer James Taylor says: "Get it On! is the biggest glam rock show of a generation."

"It's an outrageous celebration of a golden age, live on stage featuring the costumes, the make-up and the music."

He promises a 'ballroom blitz' as more than 25 sparkling, non-stop, glam rock hits are brought to the stage including: Starman, Blockbuster, Bye Bye Baby, Sugar Baby Love, Tiger Feet, School's Out and, of course, Get it On.

"So, bring your tiger feet and join us for a night like no other," he says. "We will transport you back to a time dreams were made of."

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A) The Sixties B) The Seventies C) The Eighties

Send your answer by email to: [rayleigh@visionmag.co.uk](mailto:rayleigh@visionmag.co.uk), with Get it On! Competition, Cliffs Pavillions, Southend-on-Sea in the subject line.

The winner will be drawn at random. Editor's decision is final and there is no cash alternative.

This is a tribute show and is in no way affiliated with any original artists/estates/management companies or similar shows. Promoter reserves the right to alter the programme.

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# Paint IT BLACK

Are you thinking of splashing out on a new set of wheels, but can't quite decide between a blue Beamer or a silver SUV? Well, studies suggest your choice of car colour says a lot more about your personality than you may think.

## GREY/SILVER

Grey and silver gives off a light air of wealth, taste and prestige, while the neutrality of the colours and their ability to camouflage dirt points to a busy, work-heavy lifestyle. As of 2023, grey is the most common car colour in the UK, with more than 25 per cent of British road users opting for this cool colour.

## GREEN

It's easy to assume that driving a green car hints at an environmentally friendly outlook, and whilst it is suggested that those in green will be less inclined to fill up their tank with toxic nasties, the real reason behind picking an emerald automobile is that it reflects a gentle and patient nature. Either that, or you've just purchased a vintage Jag in beautiful British Racing Green – the iconic motor racing colour commonly associated with the UK.

## BLUE

Owning a blue car doesn't mean you're a downbeat person – instead, it signifies that you like to promote an optimistic and stable image to the world. You might not be flamboyant enough to

go for a red or orange roadster, for example, but you're willing to find common ground with your more outlandish automotive associates.

## RED

This classic car colour is usually associated with boy racers and other speedy scoundrels – and perhaps rightly so. Driving a red car is said to show you have high energy and an outgoing personality. With that in mind, it's little wonder red has long been the colour of choice for vibrant Italian vehicles such as the Ferrari.

## BLACK

Whether it's an LBD or tuxedo reception, black has long been synonymous with sophistication and luxury. And when it comes to car colour, it tends to suggest in its driver a dignified personality that eschews over-exuberant displays of wealth, whilst still wanting to signal authority to fellow motorists. And just like the *Men in Black*, you don't mind a bit of mystery in your life, either.

## ORANGE

You don't see many orange cars, and that's exactly why a carrot-coloured four-wheeler is representative of a driver who does their best to stand out from the crowd. If you're artistic, eccentric, fun-loving or trendy, an orange car is sure to turn heads... which is maybe why it's more commonly seen adorning futuristic supercars such as Lotuses or Lamborghinis.



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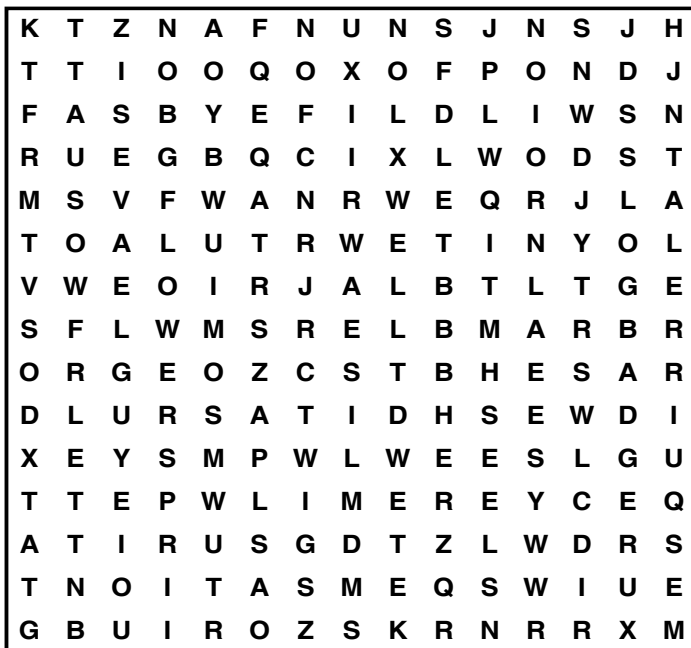


# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION listings

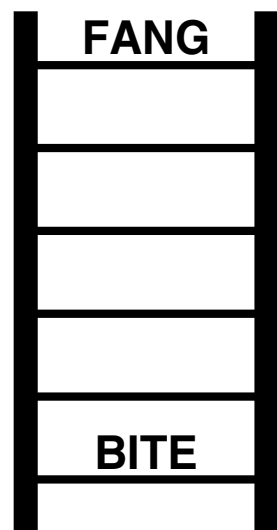
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## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Braille is a tactile code that enables blind and visually impaired people to read using raised dots and dashes set onto paper.
- ▶ Braille was created in 1824 by Louis Braille, a French educator who lost his sight at the age of three when he was playing in his father's workshop. The sharp tool he was holding slipped and struck him in the eye, leading to an infection that caused total blindness in both eyes.
- ▶ Louis was inspired by the system of night writing, a military code used by the French army in the 19th century to communicate at night without speaking.
- ▶ The Braille Challenge takes place in North America annually. Competitors are tested on skills such as spelling, speed and accuracy, and reading comprehension.

## WORD LADDER



THE AIM: Change the word at the top of the ladder one letter at a time to make the word at the bottom.

HOW TO: Change one letter on each step to make a new word. By the time you reach the end, you should have created the new word.

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

TIP: There is usually more than one way to solve this puzzle.

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- You require care assistance at home
- Reduce Inheritance Tax on your estate
- Enjoy more frequent holidays and leisure breaks or a cruise
- Leave an early inheritance to your children
- Enhance your savings or monthly income by deferring mortgage repayments
- Assist your children with their wedding, buying property or eliminating debt
- Save for your grandchildren's education
- Exchange your car for a newer model

**IF YOU ARE OVER 55, PLEASE CALL ME TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH CASH YOU COULD RELEASE FROM YOUR HOME AND THE LIKELY SUCCESS OF AN APPLICATION**

*Martin Engleman*

**MARTIN ENGLEMAN**

AIPW AFPC DipPFS Certs CII (MP & ER) (Mortgage Practice & Equity Release)  
 Certificates in Mortgage Practice & Equity Release - Chartered Insurance Institute  
 Diploma - Personal Finance Society  
 Approved Referral Partner - Age Partnership Equity Release \*\*  
 Qualified Member of the Institute of Professional Will Writers



**Office: 01268 761022 / Mobile 07901 948745**

**1 Nesbit Close, Wickford SS12 0PT**

*\* Think carefully before securing other debts against your home: by extending the terms of the debts, you will be increasing the overall cost; Equity Release may involve a lifetime mortgage or home reversion plan: to understand the features and risks, ask for a personalised illustration*

*\*\* Age Partnership Limited is a Company registered in England No. 05265969, and authorized and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. FCA registered number 425432*

**For more detailed information, go to the two Equity Release pages at**

**[www.businessadvisoressex.co.uk](http://www.businessadvisoressex.co.uk)**



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