



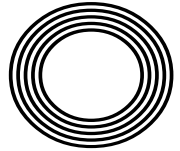
**REVEALED**  
Pantone Colours  
of the Year 2021

Most bizarre  
excuses  
**FOR PULLING  
A SICKIE**

*Remembering a legend*  
**DAME BARBARA  
WINDSOR DBE**

*Lewis*  
**HAMILTON**

Sports Personality of the Year racing into the record books



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# Editor's notes...

JANUARY 2021



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** SouthWoodFord. I don't know how many of you are like me, but every new year I like to jot down my targets for the year ahead and what I'd like to achieve. Looking at my 2021 targets I can see that, owing to the disruption from the 2020 global pandemic, most of them are identical to last year's. Having said that, I certainly wouldn't label 2020 a 'throwaway' year - rather, it was a year for us to slow down and be grateful for what we already have, rather than looking to build on it. I'm pleased to say that, despite this, we did branch out to more areas in Essex and Hertfordshire.

In hindsight, it was an important year, but one I'm glad to have left behind. I can't wait to see friends and family as normal, as well as hold face-to-face meetings for business. I'm looking forward to having that sense of connection back, which was definitely missed last year.

It was a huge source of pride for **VISION** to support businesses through their most difficult points in 2020 - equally, we appreciate the support, trust and belief that our clients showed in us.

I wish everyone a happy new year and, as always, thank you for reading.

*Brett Shohet*

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

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# The great Dame BARBARA WINDSOR DBE

CELEBRATING THE LIFE AND CAREER OF THE QUEEN OF TV

In a troublesome, traumatic year, many saw Dame Barbara Windsor's death in early December 2020 as another profound low.

An only child born in Shoreditch two years before the breakout of World War II, 'Babs' made her West End debut at the age of just 13, in the musical *Love from Judy*.

As the Swinging Sixties swung, so too did Barbara Windsor's buoyant, bubbly, effervescent personality carry forward an industry. From appearances in films *Sparrows Can't Sing* (for which she won a BAFTA), *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang* and *The Boy Friend*, to sitcom work with *The Rag Trade* and *Wild, Wild Women*, her acting talent was as admired as it was, at times, underplayed.

Indeed, when the slapstick comedy of the *Carry On* movies came around, while decorated in her roles, Babs became somewhat pigeonholed.

Nonetheless, she re-emerged in the 1970s to return to stage work with *Oh! What a Lovely War* and *Twelfth Night*, among others.

From high jinks to heavy drama, Babs was an entertainment icon in her own right. Never clichéd, never disrespected, she came to represent an era of British entertainment in which our output rivalled anyone else the world over.

And in accepting the opportunity to take ownership of the Queen Vic pub in Albert Square in 1994, Babs' career reinvention proved a masterstroke. A boisterous, no-nonsense, independent pub landlady, she kept a lid on Walford's most tempestuous characters, and remains the only person in *EastEnders'* 35-year history to have tempered the problematic Mitchell brothers, Grant and Phil – her sons.

Of course, Windsor's infectious persona,

effortless charm and cheeky sex appeal saw her decorated with no shortage of admirers. From relationships with Ronnie Kray and comedy sidekick Sid James, she enjoyed a lively 21-year marriage with nightclub owner Ronnie Knight. The pair shared a luxury home on Stanmore Hill. She later married chef Stephen Hollings and wed a third time in 2000, to Scott Mitchell, bridging an age gap of 27 years. She didn't have any children.

Following her passing, the tributes came from far and wide for an actress whose time in front of the camera was really only a platform to a breath-taking life in showbusiness.

The sadness of her death was calmed somewhat by the fact Babs had been in unsteady health for a number of years. In 2014 she retired from all acting duties when diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Undeterred by the darker clouds that she sensed were about to gather, and ably assisted by her husband, she leapt into a new role of raising both funds and awareness for the disease, and continued to campaign up until her death.

While still seen out frequently over the past few years, the toils of public engagements eventually proved too much for someone who had previously bathed in the decorative sunlight of press and publicity.

Slipping away quietly, as she did on December 10, was perhaps the most inauspicious of conclusions to a booming, bustling life full of big personality. And yet, while we all take away slightly different memories of Barbara Windsor, our collective recollections will surely always be of an actress who spearheaded a golden era of British entertainment, always accompanied by a warm smile and mischievous laugh.

Photo credit: Shutterstock





# THE WORLD AROUND US

## Part 3

In the third part of our environmental series, we look at the key driver in the health and well-being of the planet. In this issue, it's the air above our heads.

In all the trust we place in environmentalists, activists and those passionate about preserving our planet, perhaps when it comes to air we need to invest the greatest level of trust.

On the ground, the world in which we live seems largely pleasant, and as far as air quality goes, our immediate environment is certainly much cleaner today than at any time since the Industrial Revolution, and noticeably so.

Yet in 2020 we are driven by targets – achieving a net zero greenhouse gas equation and an 80 per cent cut in emissions by 2050 being two of the biggest headline grabbers.

The problem for the preservation of air quality is that industry rolls on. We are a long way from the smoggy days of 1950s London, but air pollution still contributes to almost 10 per cent of premature deaths, while costing around £40billion each year.

Of course, the enforced lockdown in the spring of 2020 was perhaps the greatest exemplar of

how great our footprint is. Within weeks, scientists reported a 40 per cent drop in air pollutants. It showed that protecting our personal health had a hugely beneficial effect on that of the environment.

And yet, when back at full capacity, even the healthcare systems in England will be responsible for an estimated 4 to 5 per cent of our carbon footprint, with 6.7 billion road miles each year coming from patients and their visitors travelling to NHS hospitals and centres.

Never in starker terms was it clear that the play-off between the health of the planet and the health of the people who inhabit it remains a tug of war we will continue to see.

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BEAUTY

# '90s HAIR revival



From Jennifer Aniston's boho beach waves to Victoria Beckham's bob to Winona Ryder's pixie cut, one of the biggest hair trends of 2021 will be the return of hairstyles from the '90s. Think new year, new do.

### THE LIVED-IN LOOK

One of the greatest things about the '90s was the effortlessly cool and laid-back style that spread across the nation, in terms of both fashion and haircuts. Spring 2021 will see hairstyles that feel less structured and more lived-in. Whether you go short or long, ask your hairdresser for a natural-looking, low-maintenance cut.

### THE BOB

Although the bob has been a strong and unwavering hair trend throughout 2020, next year will see the return of the classic '90s bob. For those with straight hair, opt for a blunt and unstructured bob that is cut to chin level and tucked behind the ear.

### THE BOXY CURL

If your hair is naturally curly, then 2021 is all about short and boxy shapes for added bounce. Avoid a straight cut and instead ask for layers and a light fringe. This look is all about texture and volume so you may want to invest in a good-quality volumising spray for added oomph.

### THE SUPER-SHORT PIXIE

If you are feeling particularly bold and daring in 2021, you may want to try the super-short pixie cut. Or, if you are ready to take the ultimate plunge, you could even choose a buzz-cut pixie loved by the likes of Kate Hudson and Cara Delevingne.

### THE FACE-FRAMING LAYERED LOOK

This look was fairly popular this year but is only set to get stronger in 2021 and beyond. In fact, you won't be able to go five minutes on Instagram without some face-framing plaits popping up on your feed.

Photo credit: Pinterest

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# CARING FOR Cashmere

Cashmere is a winter wardrobe staple for many, providing warmth without weight. That being said, it is not a cheap clothing option, so you need to make sure you show your cashmere a little TLC to prolong its life.

**Shave regularly:** You may have noticed that your cashmere items are prone to fuzz balls, especially under the arms or where you carry your bag. Known as piling, you can remove these using a razor blade or lint tape.

**Don't over wash:** Cashmere does not need to be washed every time you wear it. In fact, you should only wash your cashmere clothing a handful of times over the whole winter season. Always wash in cold water – handwashing is best – and use a mild detergent. Softener is not needed as cashmere naturally gets softer over time.

**Ignore dry clean only labels:** Unless your cashmere item has embellishments such as beading or metals that mean it needs to be dry cleaned, cashmere should not undergo this process as it can damage its fibres.

**Lay flat to dry:** Cashmere is at its most delicate when wet, so this is the cleaning stage that requires the most amount of care. Simply lay your cashmere item down on a dry towel and carefully roll it up to absorb as much moisture as possible. Never wring it. Then lay it in a shady spot to air dry.

**Store away from sunlight:** You should store your cashmere items inside out in a dust-free and well-aired area that is away from direct sunlight. Before storing, always ensure that your cashmere is clean and free from dust and dead skin, as these can attract moths. If you are storing your cashmere for the summer, make sure you clean, de-crease and remove any fuzz before putting it away.



# Are you READY TO GO SOBER?

Although January may feel like the worst possible time to try to give up your favourite tippie (isn't this month depressing enough?), you may be surprised at how great you feel after cutting out alcohol for just one month.

What to expect when you give up alcohol...

### WEEK ONE

Undeniably the most challenging week in your booze-free month, you may experience some unwanted side effects in the first seven days, such as headaches and intense sugar cravings, especially if you are a heavy drinker. That being said, you will also start to see the positive effects of giving up alcohol, including: Better decision-making | More energy | An improved sleeping pattern

### WEEK TWO

After two weeks without alcohol, you will continue to enjoy the health benefits listed above, as well as a few new ones, such as: Reduction in acid reflux as your stomach lining becomes normalised | Weight loss | Better mental health

### WEEK THREE

As you are now past the halfway

mark, the effects of not drinking will start to contribute to your long-term health, with benefits including: Improved vision | Better kidney health | A reduction in blood pressure, which can lessen your risk of future health problems, such as heart disease

### WEEK FOUR

The final week of your no-booze challenge and the effects on your health will be apparent for everyone to see and will include: Better-looking skin | Reduced dandruff and eczema | Up to 15 per cent less fat in your liver

### IS DRY JANUARY WORTH IT?

Although Dry January has become increasingly popular in recent years, is it really worth it in terms of your long-term health if you continue to drink for the other 11 months of the year?

According to Alcohol Change UK, yes it is, with this challenge forcing you to confront how much you drink and to take notice of the harm it can cause.





# MIDDLE OF THE LOAD

*Fight the flab after 40 with these steps to prevent midlife weight gain*

**Cut the calories:** Though you may feel as active as ever, your metabolism unfortunately is not as efficient as it once was. However, cutting between 250 and 300 calories per day is enough to keep your weight where you want it to be.

**Walk it off:** Burning fat only requires a slightly elevated heart rate, which means exercising for a longish period while being slightly out of breath is what you need to aim for. So ditch the gruelling runs and aim instead for a brisk walk or swim.

**Use your gut instinct:** Beat the bloat with healthy bacteria, best found in natural yogurts and fermented foods such as sauerkraut, kimchi and kefir.

**Exercise before your eggs:** Studies have shown that working out before breakfast can burn up to double the calories – ideal for those who prefer to do their sun salutations as it rises at dawn.

**Go nuts:** We all know that fruit and vegetables are an essential part of a healthy diet, but to maintain blood sugar and control weight you need to be getting plenty of protein too. From a handful of almonds to a bowlful of lentils, or even just a glass of milk, this is one healthy habit you'd be nuts not to try.

**Consider HRT:** In addition to easing the side effects of the menopause, there is evidence to suggest that hormone replacement therapy can help with weight distribution, which means less fat around the dreaded middle.

**Join the resistance:** You might balk at the suggestion of using weights in your workouts, yet resistance training is the best way to replace muscle lost through ageing. Pilates, yoga, squats and exercises using small dumbbells are all excellent and enjoyable ways to achieve that toned look.



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Are you addicted to

SUGAR?

Did you know that adults are advised to have no more than 30g of free sugars per day (the equivalent of seven cubes)? To put that into perspective, a single can of Coca-Cola has 35g of sugar, 5g more than your total allowance for the day. So, are you addicted to sugar? Let's find out.

**AM I ADDICTED TO SUGAR?**

If you are worried about your sugar consumption or you think you may be addicted to the white stuff, then you should look out for the following most common sugar addiction symptoms:

- Headaches
- Feeling tired or lethargic
- Intense sugar cravings
- Muscle pain
- Nausea
- Bloating

**HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO BREAK A SUGAR ADDICTION?**

You will be pleased to hear that you can break a sugar addiction in as little as 10 days. This is because the more sugar you eat, the more you crave it. However, once you stop, or cut back, you will find you want it less and less each day.

**WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GIVING UP SUGAR?**

There are many health benefits to giving up sugar, including:

- Increased energy levels
- Better ability to focus
- Enhanced mood
- Decreased inflammation
- Less stomach fat
- Better-looking skin
- Less risk of tooth decay
- Weight loss

**TOP TIPS TO HELP STOP CRAVINGS AND SATISFY YOUR SWEET TOOTH...**

Going cold turkey when trying to give up free sugars (sugars that are added to food, rather than naturally occurring) can be a challenge.

Fortunately, there are ways to make the process easier:

- Eat three meals and two healthy snacks a day
- Go for a run or a brisk walk
- Eat fruit in the morning on an empty stomach
- Focus on protein at every meal
- Try a fibre- and protein-rich chia seed pudding
- Chew sugar-free gum



FOOD & DRINK



# GO NUTS!

With Shrove Tuesday fast approaching, what better time to discover a new tasty topping for your pancakes?

Check out our own version of a well-known hazelnut cocoa spread which is half the calories, vegan and packed full of healthy fats and vitamins.

### Super Healthy Homemade Hazelnut Spread

#### WHAT YOU NEED:

240g raw hazelnuts | 1½ tbsp pure vanilla extract | ¼ cup cocoa powder | ¼ cup pure maple syrup or unrefined sugar | ¼ tsp salt | ½ cup vegan milk (or normal milk if you do not need a vegan recipe) | 2 tsp oil

#### HOW TO MAKE:

- > Set oven to 200°C/Gas Mark 6
- > Roast hazelnuts for 6–8 minutes
- > Leave to cool slightly and then rub off skins
- > Blend the nuts in a food processor until they are the consistency of butter
- > Add all the other ingredients and blend until smooth

Not just for pancakes, try using your homemade hazelnut spread in these yummy

recipes that the whole family will love.

### Hazelnut Hot Chocolate

All you need to create this dangerously addictive hot chocolate is cocoa powder, milk and some hazelnut spread. Simply mix all the ingredients together and pop in the microwave for 2 minutes.

### Caramel Cream Nutty Chocolate Lollies

The perfect little treat for tiny hands, simply dissolve 70g of hazelnut spread in a pan over boiling water and set aside half. Pour a thin layer into small, round silicone moulds and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Take out and place a hazelnut-sized piece of salted caramel cream in each mould and cover with remaining spread. Place a lolly stick in each and refrigerate for a further 5 hours.

### Nutty Iced Biscuits or Cake

If you are bored with your usual icing, why not use some hazelnut spread instead? Just warm some of the nutty mixture in the microwave for 10–20 seconds and then gently spread over biscuits or cakes. It makes a great cake filler too.



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Isn't it funny,  
how a bear  
likes honey?



On January 18, 1882, A. A. Milne, the creator of Winnie the Pooh, a character cherished by children and adults alike, was born. To celebrate this skilled storyteller, January 18 has become known as National Winnie the Pooh Day.

As well as being fun to read, these iconic stories offer some important life lessons that resonate just as well today as they did back then.

"What day is it?" said Pooh. "It's today," said Piglet. "My favourite day," responded Pooh.

As well as teaching the importance of seizing the day, this sweet correspondence between Pooh and Piglet helps to promote resilience and encourages children to put aside their fears and do things anyway.



"Hallo!" said Tigger. "I've found somebody just like me. I thought I was the only one of them."

When children are as young as two, they start to notice that people are different, so it is important that they learn to recognise and celebrate these differences, both in themselves and in others.

"A little consideration, a little thought for others, makes all the difference." (Eeyore)

Although known for being gloomy and depressed, Eeyore does sometimes give out little nuggets of wisdom, such as the advice above. Emotional literacy is crucial in your child's development and this life lesson teaches them the importance of being kind to others.



"Pooh!" whispered Piglet. "Yes, Piglet?" "Nothing," said Piglet. "I just wanted to be sure of you."

A life lesson that most adults today could benefit from, the act of being present in your children's lives, away from the distraction of work and technology, is sometimes all they need to feel loved and connected to you.

# NATIONAL PULL A SICKIE DAY ON



According to UK statistics, the first Monday of February is the day when employees are most likely to pull a sickie. Although excuses may be limited this time round, that doesn't mean we can't take a look at some of the more inventive reasons that people have come up with over the years. You can't make this stuff up!

### “My only pair of work trousers is in the wash”

Not the best excuse, as what would you do if your employer simply told you to come in your casual clothes?

### “It’s my dog’s birthday and I need to arrange a party for him”

Even though we are a nation of pet lovers, we can't see too many bosses accepting this far-fetched fabrication.

### “My grandmother poisoned me with her ham”

Yes, somebody really did use this as a reason why they hadn't turned up for work. Although, to be honest, this might just be crazy enough to actually work.

### “I’m too drunk to drive”

Although this may actually be true, we are not sure that this reason would go down too well with HR.

### “I can’t come in today, the show I’ve been watching just released a new series”

Another truthful explanation, and to be fair, we've all been there. Damn you, Netflix!

### How you should call in sick to work

- > Contact your employer as soon as possible
- > Keep your reason brief
- > Be as helpful as possible
- > Make sure you speak to the right person
- > If you are struggling with your mental health, be honest and say so, but you are not required to go into details
- > Only text if your employer has previously okayed this method of calling in sick
- > Consider remote working if you feel able to



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**2. Be water-conscious:** Whether you are making a cup of tea or boiling food in a pan, only use the amount of water that you need.

**3. Slow cook your family meals:** Cooking in a slow

cooker over a whole day only uses the same amount of energy as a lightbulb.

**4. Don't use metal trays in the oven:** Glass and ceramic dishes retain heat better than metal ones, making them more energy efficient.

**5. Keep heating rings clean:** Any food that has become stuck to your heating rings will absorb heat, making them less efficient.

**6. Wash your clothes at 30°C:** 90 per cent of your washing expenditure is spent on heating the water, so by reducing the heat to 30°C when possible, you can save one-third on your washing costs.

**7. Unplug any unused appliances:** Unplug or switch the power off on any appliances that you aren't using. This includes charger cables.

**8. Turn down your thermostat:** By turning down your thermostat by just 1°C, you can save up to £80 per year.

**9. Use halogen lightbulbs outside:** Halogen bulbs use a quarter less electricity than incandescent bulbs without affecting their brightness, so are ideal for exterior lighting.

**10. Defrost food overnight:** Defrosting food typically halves the cooking time, meaning less energy used per meal.



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HOME & DIY



# Viva

## DRIED FLOWERS

If there is only one interior design trend that you embrace this year, make it the revival of dried flowers. Cost effective, eco-friendly and, most importantly, Pinterest-approved, anyone can dry flowers and arrange a beautiful bouquet to be proudly displayed in their home.

### HOW TO DRY FLOWERS

If you want to prolong the life of a bouquet of flowers that has been gifted to you, then drying it out is the perfect solution.

1. Strip off any excess foliage and cut stems to desired length
2. Find a dark and dry area, such as an unused cupboard, and hang your flowers upside down using unflavoured dental floss or string
3. Leave for 2-3 weeks until completely dry
4. Take down and spray with unscented hairspray

### WHAT ARE THE BEST FLOWERS FOR DRYING?

If you are new to the flower-drying business, you may want a few ideas to get you started. The below flowers are ideal for drying, although you can dry any varieties: Pansies • Amaranthus • Artemisia • Lavender • Hydrangea • Yarrow • Eucalyptus (although not strictly a flower, this will add lovely greenery to your bouquet)

### HOW TO DISPLAY DRIED FLOWERS

Once you have dried your flowers, it is time to carefully arrange them into a delightful display. Below are four different arrangements for you to try out:

- Hanging bunches – tie a few bunches together using twine and hang upside down from a branch or an interior wall
- Wreaths – create a dried flower wreath to hang on your front door
- Mini bouquets – dried posy bouquets look lovely placed in a small vase or as a gift
- Statement displays – if you are looking to create a big and bold display, tie together dried flowers, herbs, leaves and grass. Hang over your dining table for maximum effect.





Illuminating  
13-0647

Colour of the Year  
2021  
PANTONE

Ultimate  
Gray  
17-5104

# Grey DAY?

Revealing Pantone's Colours of the Year, Ultimate Gray and Illuminating

Across a year that offered so much but delivered so little, it's perhaps apt that Pantone has selected not one, but two Colours of the Year. Combined, they reflect the trials and tribulations of 12 months that have seen the very fabric of our lives ripped from under us; and yet we emerge energised, enthused and even perhaps enriched.

Pantone has chosen a combination of shades to represent these feelings. Yes, Ultimate Gray (17-5104), at first glance, appears stern, solemn and even echoes back to the styles and sensibilities of the 1980s. And yet, look closer, and it provides solidity and fortitude.

Now combine those emotions with Pantone's second Colour of the Year for 2021 – Illuminating (13-0647). At first a yellow that resonates with cheerful, sparky, spring-like abandon, it offers light, vivacity and thoughts of energy.

As a single shade, Illuminating works, but combined with Ultimate Gray the end effect is, in Pantone's own words, "A story of colour that encapsulates deeper feelings of thoughtfulness with the promise of something sunny and friendly."

It is indeed a combination that can reignite your interiors – consider a statement piece such as a grey sofa, with yellow scattered cushions. Or what about an existing white or wooden room patterned with a grey rug and yellow feature wall?

Grey and yellow, together or alone, will combine with almost any colours. There is a chic harmony that blends as much as it stands out – even in the bedroom, yellow curtains can offer a feeling of light on the drabest of days; while grey walls, white skirting boards and yellow pictures present a classy combination.

In summing up, expect the Pantone Colour(s) of the Year, Ultimate Gray and Illuminating, to drop into your consciousness, guiding you to happier and more optimistic times in the weeks and months ahead.

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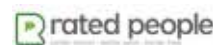
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# The ULTIMATE formula

Lewis Hamilton's ascent to being the greatest F1 driver of all time

It's fair to speculate that Lewis Hamilton polarises opinion, even in the midst of being unveiled as the greatest ever Formula One racer.

His victory at the Turkish Grand Prix in the middle of November ensured the Stevenage-born speedster equalled Michael Schumacher's record of seven Drivers' Championships, having already surpassed the German's race victory total in October, in another season of unparalleled dominance. By the close of the campaign in Abu Dhabi on December 13, 2020, Hamilton's points tally was 347, a colossal 123 ahead of closest rival Valtteri Bottas.

The champ said: "To all the kids out there, dream the impossible. Seven is just unimaginable, but when you work with such a great group of people and you really trust each other, there is just no end to what you can do together. I feel like I'm only just getting started; it's really weird."

He may just be correct in that statement. At 35, the Mercedes driver has time on his side – the great Luigi Fagioli was 53 when he scored his final race win at the 1951 French Grand Prix.

Certainly, it's becoming difficult to remember a time when Hamilton's grit, speed and desire wasn't present in the sport. Many believe he truly announced himself at the British Grand Prix in 2008, driving for McLaren. Although he'd already clocked up six victories, dating back to Canada a year previously, his mastery of brutally wet driving conditions to win by more than a minute after starting fourth on the grid set a precedent where he was regarded as the driver to beat.

The world title duly arrived later that year in spectacular fashion, as on the final corner of the final lap in the final race, in Brazil, he overtook Timo Glock to snatch victory from the gearbox of defeat.

After switching to Mercedes in 2014, following a fallow period, Hamilton's synchronicity with the technicians and mechanics accelerated success beyond all expectations, failing just once, in 2016, as Nico Rosberg pipped him to title glory by just five points. The German realised he would most likely never repeat that feat, and promptly retired from the sport, never to be seen again.

Wind forward, and even finding himself struck down with COVID-19 at the start of December was not to dampen the determination and drive of Hamilton, a man who now looks towards new heights, the first of which will be making up the handful of race wins required to get to that magic total of 100.

As far as being the sport's 'Marmite man', perhaps it's Hamilton's £40million annual salary; perhaps it's envy at the showbiz lifestyle he has garnered for himself from somewhat simple beginnings; perhaps it's a generic perception across the sport that racers are only as good as the cars they ride in.

In reality, Hamilton gives short shrift to the detractors. He will discuss his knighthood, announced as part of the New Year Honours; he'll reference all those times he's arrowed across the finish line in first position; he'll note the 84 occasions he's started on the front of the grid; and, of course those seven titles. And he'll point to the fact that he is, truly, the greatest ever.





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# LOCAL NEWS

*from your neighbourhood*



## Sibling duo make chutneys for charity

A duo from South Woodford were busy making chutneys for charity over lockdown and released another batch over the Christmas holidays.

Siblings Dina and Riad Hoque, aged 17 and 13, started making their own chutneys to raise money for charities such as Cancer Research UK.

Their mother Sarmine Hoque said that they began making chutneys after they noticed the number of apples in their garden that were going to waste.

She said: "During lockdown we had so many apples on our tree and they were falling to the ground and rotting.

"I have made chutneys forever and my daughter loves it. She asked if we can make some other chutneys and that's how it started."

Sarmine added that it has been going really well, and

the first batch of chutneys made were in high demand and loved by friends and family.

She said: "Dina and Riad love making the chutneys and they love tasting them as well. The first batch did quite well and made around £500.

"We will be making another batch which will be sold over Christmas time."

Sarmine added that although it is a team effort, they can't make too many batches all at once as Dina is currently in Year 13 and set to go to university.

She said: "I don't want it to affect her studies, and she will be at home for the summer holidays and Christmas so we can do it then. Twice a year is manageable.

For more information and to order some chutney, go to: [chutneysforcharity.com/about-us](http://chutneysforcharity.com/about-us)

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# Woodford and District National Trust



LOCAL NEWS

Let us all welcome this new year with the hope that we can get back to our normal lives and do the things we have been used to, including, indeed, visiting our meetings locally and enjoying our days out together, visiting the great National Trust properties and locations without the restrictions, closures and many other issues we endured in 2020.

may fancy could be ready now for a visit. Locally, we hope in January to run a Zoom meeting for everyone, with a talk, and we will be in touch with details as soon as possible.

Meetings will be dependent on our venues reopening, as well as our speakers, and we all hope we can resume our communal get-togethers as soon as it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, our committee sends warmest best wishes for a peaceful and healthy new year for everyone locally – and nationally too, of course.

Of course, there are many gardens, open areas and houses available to go to, albeit on a timed basis usually, so do check to see if somewhere you

## Maddeline is talk of the town

A teenager from Woodford County High School for Girls saw off competition from nearly 20,000 young people to win the largest youth speaking competition in the world.

Maddeline Balogun wowed a virtual audience in a live broadcast from Camberwell Studios on December 1, 2020 to win the Jack Petchey "Speak Out" Challenge.

Maddeline, whose speech title was 'Mind the Gap', spoke about the differences between the generations and how the younger generation struggle to get their views heard.

Speaking directly to her grand final audience of well over 600 people, Maddeline said: "I've noticed a gap, and it's made of generational differences paved with judgement and filled with 100 different shades of ignorance."

Addressing her audience, she continued: "Do you know how hard it is to convince your 50-year-old uncle that maybe, just maybe, he should start to recycle?"

She closed her speech with a compelling appeal: "It's not just outdated social views or ignorance... it's fear."

Her final line was met with approval by the judges: "Don't just mind the gap; be the person who closes it."

This year's grand final judging panel comprised a mix of award-winning journalists, high-profile business people and celebrities, all known for using their voice to make a change, including Andrew Rawnsley, chief political commentator, *The Observer*; Ed Balls, broadcaster, writer and economist; and Christine



Ohuruogu, Olympic medalist. Maddeline will receive £2,000 for herself and £3,000 for her school.

When asked why it was important to speak out on her chosen subject, she said: "As a young person, what I say is rarely taken seriously, so I try to get my message out as much as I can. The more we share our experiences, the harder it will be for others to ignore."

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## Pupils support children's hospice

LOCAL NEWS



Young entrepreneurs at a school in Woodford Green have raised nearly £2,000 for a children's hospice.

At the start of the autumn term, Year 6 students at Avon House Preparatory School were challenged to come up with a community enterprise idea to enable them to turn £10 into £150 to donate to charity.

After analysing existing business ideas and choosing projects that were realistic and achievable in the current climate, pupils wrote business plans and came up with project ideas that could be started with £10. They included personalised bookmarks, second-hand clothing sales, photo editing and storytelling.

The total proceeds from across the year group was £1,784, and this will be forwarded to Haven House.

Maria O'Donnell, marketing communications lead at Avon House, said: "We are very proud of our entrepreneurial Year 6s and we hope they found the project a useful exercise in developing their future business skills."

## Charity director used funds to pay mortgage

The founder of an African aid group from South Woodford who used its funds to provide significant financial benefits to himself and his family has been disqualified by the Charity Commission.

Samson Ochieng set up the Kenya Community Support Network (KCSN) to relieve poverty among Kenyans in the UK and Kenya.

After Comic Relief suspended grants to the KCSN in 2016 amid concerns the money was being used for personal financial gain, the Charity Commission

became involved.

The results of a two-year inquiry, opened in 2018, were published recently. The inquiry revealed that Mr Ochieng had fraudulently used £356,699 of the charity's funds.

A report read: "Bank statement analysis revealed payments to Mr Ochieng and numerous other payments that were inconsistent with what the Commission would expect to see in a charity's bank account, for example numerous withdrawals from cash machines and significant expenditure in restaurants."

The inquiry also found that Mr Ochieng had made two payments, totalling more than £8,000, to his and his wife's mortgage account. In addition, it found that £39,500 was paid direct to the founder and his family without adequate record-keeping to justify the payments.

Tim Hopkins, Assistant Director of Investigations and Inquiries at the Charity Commission, said: "Our inquiry has rightly exposed the failures of this charity's trustees and Mr Ochieng for his misuse of the charity, and he has now been disqualified from serving as a trustee for his conduct."

## Diners delight as restaurant wins award

An Indian restaurant in South Woodford is one of the best in London... and that's official.

Grand Trunk Road takes its name from ancient India's first route for traders, leading from Kabul to Kolkata in a long stretch of commerce and compelling recipes that survive to this day.

The restaurant, at 219 High Road, was named Fine Dining Restaurant of the Year at the Asian Curry Awards 2020.

After the ceremony, the owners at Grand Trunk Road took to Twitter to express their delight.

They wrote: "WE WON!!! We are so #thrilled to announce that we have been awarded the #FineDining #Restaurant of The Year for #London at the #AsianCurryAwards 2020 via their online ceremony! We can't thank everyone who voted enough and can't wait to see you all again soon."



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Join Haven House and take part in the London Landmarks Half Marathon (LLHM) on Sunday, May 23, 2021. This year the LLHM has a new theme and it will celebrate, commemorate and reflect upon the landmark moments of 2020. Along the iconic route, you will be immersed into The Grand, The Quirky and The Hidden landmark moments of lockdown life. Don't miss the chance to run through the Rave Tunnel, listen to the Bow Bells at St Mary-le-Bow Church and meet some special guests greeting you at the finish line.

Sophie Bragg, events fundraising manager at Haven House, said: "The London Landmarks Half Marathon is an event not to be missed, with unforgettable surroundings, brilliant performances and amazing cheer stations to keep you going on the 13.1-mile route. Owing to COVID-19 this event was cancelled in 2020 and we are so pleased to be a part of the event again. By joining the Haven House team, runners will get the opportunity to do something amazing this year and raise vital sponsorship for a really worthy cause that supports children and families in the local community."

Make 2021 your year and sign up to be a Haven House Hero. Visit [www.havenhouse.org.uk/london-landmarks-2021](http://www.havenhouse.org.uk/london-landmarks-2021)

## Wheelie great news for residents



People in South Woodford and across Redbridge can put messy, ripped bin bags behind them as they will be getting a new free wheelie bin in the spring.

The roll-out follows a successful pilot earlier this year which saw a reduction in household rubbish, and an increase in recycling.

Pilot feedback also revealed that the majority of households taking part found wheelie bins easier to use than black sacks.

Each household will receive a 180-litre black wheelie bin which holds around three black sacks of rubbish.

Redbridge Council leader, councillor Jas Athwal, said: "We know wheelie bins have had a positive impact on reducing household waste and increasing recycling following a successful trial, which is why we're really excited to be able to roll out this scheme borough-wide in the spring.

"Residents can look forward to receiving bins that are able to store rubbish securely, helping prevent animals from ripping open rubbish bags and making a mess of front gardens and streets, which is unpleasant for everyone and costly to clean up."

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JANUARY BIRTH FLOWER  
OF THE MONTH:

# Carnation

If you were born in January, then your birth flower is the delicately scented and long-lasting carnation. Commonly gifted on Mother's Day, carnations are one of the easiest flower varieties to care for.

## WHAT DOES A CARNATION SYMBOLISE?

Carnations come in many shades, and each colour has a different meaning:

- > **LIGHT RED** carnations symbolise admiration
- > **DARK RED** carnations represent deep love and affection
- > **WHITE** carnations are used to convey purity and luck
- > **PINK** carnations are used to show gratitude as well as to remember the deceased
- > **YELLOW** carnations convey disappointment and rejection
- > **PURPLE** carnations stand for unpredictability

## WHAT DOES THIS BIRTH FLOWER SAY ABOUT YOUR PERSONALITY?

If your birth flower is the carnation, you are said to be fiercely loyal and have unrivalled love for your family and friends. You are also strongly motivated and will work hard to gain a position of power in your career.

## HOW CAN I GROW CARNATIONS?

Carnations are relatively easy to grow, although they do need between four and six hours of direct sunlight a day. For best results, plant in drained soil that is slightly alkaline and fertilise regularly. Tall varieties may need support to hold up their stems as they grow. You can grow carnations in flower beds or in containers such as pots.

## DO CARNATIONS COME BACK YEAR AFTER YEAR?

Carnations come in annual, biennial and perennial types, so depending on the amount of space you have, you are guaranteed to be able to find a variety to fit your garden.

Perennial carnation seeds should be planted in late autumn to early spring and annual carnation seeds can be sown directly in the ground from April to May or in shelter from as early as March.





## Horticulture Heroes:

There's nothing quite like learning building knowledge from the ground up, and for a young Ellie Harrison, the wildlife, ecology and wide-open spaces of Zimbabwe provided a fertile and expansive canvas on which to construct her career.

From kids' TV to wildlife programming and on to the BBC, stopping off along the way at the Chelsea Flower Show, the now-43-year-old's focus has always been in the embracing of the natural world, even in home surroundings.

"I'm not sure where the phrase 'wildlife gardening' came from, but it requires little explanation," says the presenter and broadcaster. "As much as I admire the ingenuity and craft so many of us invest in our green spaces at home, I sometimes feel it is a look that can be a bit too contrived and planned.

"Wildlife gardening is really about embracing living landscapes. It doesn't matter if you're talking about

a 100ft lawn or something as simple as a flower bed, the point is that our spaces have all the life and variety that nature and the countryside provide."

At the heart of it is having the right platforms for birds, bees and insects. That will stimulate the impact of genuine wildlife in an area that might be bereft of anything noticeable.

"It's a case of making natural and organic decisions to decorate your space. Instead of using a dull wooden fence, invest in a living boundary that can feature bamboo, twine, flowers, scent and berries."

Similarly, a pond can be used to harvest natural life such as newts, tadpoles, frogs, toads and insects, rather than fish imported in from the local pet shop.

"The exciting thing about wildlife gardening is the creation of a world that grows and evolves in front of you, and all by itself. The phrase 'how nature intended' never seemed so pertinent."

Photo credit: bbc.co.uk

# ELLIE HARRISON

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# The PROPERTY Bug?

HOW COVID-19 HAS TRANSFORMED NOT JUST OUR LIVES, BUT THE PROPERTY MARKET TOO

While so much of our COVID-19 focus in 2020 was on health, employment and income, the pandemic's impact on the property market has been extreme, with further fluctuations due over the next few months as the industry reflects the variable conditions we find ourselves living under.

Certainly in the initial phase of lockdown, the immediate effect on our bricks and mortar was a rush of

home improvements akin to watching a series of *DIY SOS* back to back.

Sure enough, the Land Registry – generally considered the best guide to house prices in the UK – published September figures that indicated a 1.7 per cent month-on-month rise and a 4.7 per cent increase year on year.

For many, then, it's been reassuring that, through a time of great social insecurity, homeowners can at least take comfort from the increasing value of where they reside, with the stamp duty break offering a further incentive for prospective buyers to go in with higher bids.

And at the same time, renters have enjoyed increased protection as far as tenancy conditions go, although the market finds itself diverging between an increase in rentals in affluent areas and fewer new instructions in the bottom portion of the market. Research also shows that city centre lets are down as much as 15

per cent as some urban business areas become ghost towns.

It all leaves us speculating whether or not the effects of COVID-19 on the sales and lettings market are here to stay. Certainly, experts believe the recession the economy is suffering can only have one effect on the housing market, and that's for it to follow suit into decline. And yet, effects should be lessened given that a lack of overseas travel means the pound continues to be invested close to home.



## A MOVING STORY

Climbing the property ladder is something an estate agent will often promote and William Rose has heeded its own advice and recently moved into a swanky new office on the High Road, Woodford Green.

Previously located a little off the main drag on Woodford Green's Mill lane, William Rose estate agents have just moved to a much more prominently positioned premises on the High Road. And that's not all – they've also given their new abode a fabulous makeover, upping the ante on its precious signature navy shopfront to one that's electric blue. Inside it's all exposed brickwork and reclaimed wood, while exposed girders and vents all add to the contemporary, industrial vibe. The folks at William Rose wanted to create an office environment that was as unique as the area they service, and as you can see here, they've certainly achieved that.



Now happily settled in their new space, co-founders Adrian Sinclair and Jay Williams are getting down to serious business.

"Living and working in Woodford has been a joy for many years, but this has become even more obvious in lockdown with access to an abundance of outside spaces," says Adrian. It seems London is moving out

with areas like Woodford and the surrounding environs becoming even more popular for buyers and rents.

The level of applicants is extremely high with most of our properties going under offer in week one," he adds.

Jay, meanwhile concurs, offering "With the market in full swing again properties are selling at such a rate. In all my time in the local market I really can't remember a time like this but here we are. Along with London moving out I'm finding local sellers are also on the move to find more space.

Some of the clients we are currently dealing with I've helped move a few times now, which is always lovely as you see the families grow along with the properties.

So Jay and Adrian are encouraging others to follow their lead and "let's get you moving."

**Get in touch:**  
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# THE RISE OF VOICE SEARCH

Did you know that 60 per cent of smartphone users have tried voice search at least once in the last 12 months, and 55 per cent of teenagers use this technology on a daily basis?

## WHAT IS VOICE SEARCH?

Voice search is an innovative technology that allows internet users to perform a web search by verbally asking a question on their smartphone or smart device, rather than by typing it in to a search box.

## HOW CAN I GET MY BUSINESS FOUND ON VOICE SEARCH?

**1. BECOME THE FEATURED SNIPPET**  
Featured snippets are small sections of text that appear at the top of Google's search results and are designed to answer a searcher's query. If your business is the featured snippet, this is the response that will be read aloud by the voice assistant. Both blogging and detailed FAQ pages can help you get featured in the snippet.

**2. UPDATE YOUR GOOGLE MY BUSINESS LISTING**  
Most voice searches are local ones, so you need to make sure all your company contact information is up to date on both your website and your Google My Business listing.

**3. OPTIMISE YOUR WEBSITE WITH LONG-TAIL KEYWORDS**  
When using a voice assistant, people talk as if they're speaking to a real person. This means asking full questions and using longer phrases than they would if they were typing a search into Google. Therefore, your website needs to be optimised with longer phrases, also known as long-tail keywords.

**4. IMPROVE YOUR PAGE SPEED**  
A simple tip, the faster your webpage loading speed, the more likely you are to appear in voice search results. You can use Google PageSpeed Insights to check the speed of your site or you can do it manually. Google recommends a page loading time of less than two seconds.



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# SMART CAR

## TELEMATICS AND SMARTBOX INSURANCE ...WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS

Nobody likes 'average'. Average is plain, boring, middle of the road, dull. And in terms of motor insurance, if you're an extremely safe driver, 'average' means you're paying the same as a driver who is 'averagely safe'... or, worse still, unsafe. In short, you are subsidising someone else's tendency to, over the course of time, perhaps break the speed limit, undertake, be aggressive, and all the other things that lead to accidents which, in turn, lead to car insurance costs being as high as they are.

That's where telematics insurance comes in. Using the technology found in a smartbox (actually just a small device that plugs in below your steering wheel), this clever piece of tech will measure how well you drive.

In other words, the days of having to pay premiums based on the 'average driver' are no more – what you pay is directly related to how safely you take corners, to how much you respect road conditions

and to how conscious you are of other road users. It especially factors in how far you drive over a period of time, as sensible logic suggests that the more miles a motorist clocks up the more likely they are to be involved in an accident.

When you apply for telematics insurance you'll have to provide information regarding where your car is parked, when in the day you usually drive, the types of roads you use and approximate annual mileage. All being well, you'll be rewarded with an initial monthly cost that's much lower than standard insurance.

You'll encounter few problems if you stick to your promise of driving safely and stay within your mileage quota.

However, be warned: from hard braking to speeding to driving too many miles, telematics insurance may well cost you more in the long run if you fail to keep your motoring promises.



SPORT

# Remembering DIEGO



## *A hero of the game, a villain to himself*

The gap between hero and villain has perhaps never been better exemplified – in sporting terms, at least – than through the life of Diego Maradona.

When the Argentine departed us on November 25, football, sport and the world as a cultural sponge lost someone whose notoriety was as decorated as his talent.

In the space of four short minutes in the Estadio Azteca, in Mexico City, on June 22, 1986, Maradona showed the two sides of his character in the sort of perfect juxtaposition usually reserved for a Shakespeare play. The tragedy came first – that ‘hand of God’ moment that we all know, even if few of us, now, here in 2021, actually saw it happen live.

And then, the comedy, even if it was again England’s footballers being derided, as a dancing, pirouetting, sauntering, bulldozing run through the Three Lions’ defence rubbed salt in our wounds,

while offering up a perfect apology to that same deity for the forward’s earlier misdemeanour.

When that higher force claimed the 60-year-old in November, football fans the world over began to ponder again the best ever – Puskás, Pelé, Ronaldo, Messi. Of course, Maradona would never enter into such debate.

He may have led an average Argentina side to World Cup glory in 1986, and an even flatter version of themselves to the final four years later. He may have performed miracles in guiding unfancied, unfashionable Napoli to Serie A success in Italy. And in later life as drugs, gangs, sex workers and other lurid temptations possessed a man whose only passion, really and truly, was to kick a ball, he may have lost sight entirely of those dusty, poverty-stricken streets in Buenos Aires where he grew up.

And yet, through it all he stayed true to himself: ‘I am black and white... I’ll never be grey.’

Photo credit: Carlo Fumagalli/AP/Smutterstock

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# PUZZLES & TRIVIA

PUZZLES

Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

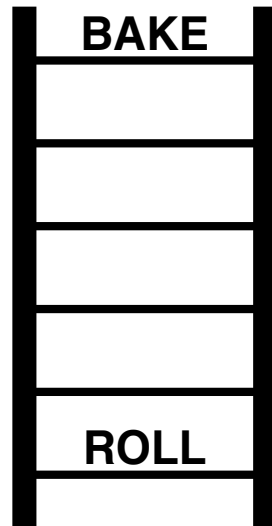
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## DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ Nepal's flag is the only flag in the world that doesn't have four sides
- ▶ Purple is the most uncommon colour to be used on flags
- ▶ The flag of Belize uses more colours than any other flag
- ▶ Hawaii's state flag contains the Union Jack. It is the only US state flag to include a foreign country's national flag
- ▶ There are 12 stars on the flag of Europe
- ▶ When the Queen goes to Parliament, the Royal Standard is flown from Victoria Tower
- ▶ Denmark has the oldest flag in the world, designed in 1219 and unchanged since
- ▶ South Sudan has the newest flag in the world
- ▶ The study of flags is called vexillology

## 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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