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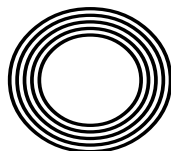
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DECEMBER 2022

Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** SouthWoodford. Like many people concerned about the cost of living at the moment, I've been reviewing my bills and expenses to see where I can make savings. It comes down to luxury versus necessity, but make sure you think twice before deciding what you can do without.

Some businesses may be thinking they should cut down on their advertising and marketing in the current climate. However, I'd argue that it's now more important than ever to do all you can to generate income for your business. I have always used the phrase, 'If nothing changes, nothing changes.' This can be used in life as well as in business.

Of course, if you need support or help getting visibility for your business, please get in touch with us and we'll see what we can do to help.

Brett Shohet

It seems no sooner are the Halloween decorations taken down than the Christmas decorations start appearing. As a child, the festive season seems to take forever to come around, while as an adult, it comes round all too quickly - and goes by just as fast. So it's important to enjoy every second while it lasts.

Please also try to spend your pound locally and support your local businesses this Christmas. I'm sure they will appreciate it. Wishing everyone a merry Christmas and happy New Year.

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

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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 All pages are recyclable



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WHIPPING UP A STORMZY

Stormzy's appeal is widespread – a musician, a fashion icon, a fulcrum for equality in what is a complicated social landscape, and the first grime artist to headline Glastonbury. With a new album out, the rap star – real name Michael Ebenezer Kwadjo Omari Owuo Jr – explains that his journey to greatness is no accident, but the result of sheer determination and hard work.

Stormzy will never be everyone's cup of tea. His music is genre-splitting but ultimately relies on a listener's ear for rap, grime and dubstep-infused combinations. Meanwhile, his politics often lean on diversity, equality and race, leading to an unapologetic prevalence of support for Black artists, musicians and students.

Yet whether you respect the 29-year-old Croydon native for his take on music and life or not, the fact he has battled back from depression, and is vocal in promoting good habits and good actions as methods for combating the mental and psychological ills of modern society, mean he deserves the stage he finds himself on.

Stormzy also possesses the humility to talk about the wider elements that influence his music, rather than simply pushing the marketing button for *This Is What I Mean*, his third studio album.

"Nothing would be possible without having a clear head and knowing what it is we have to do in this world to survive," he begins. "I realised a long time ago that exercise was the only mechanism that would truly keep me straight, and that's why so much of my focus is on building physical and mental strength.

"When you put on muscle, people are quick to label you as someone who wants to pose or show off, but it's nothing like that for me. Strength is just a by-product of a fitness regime that keeps my brain, my head, in the right place.

"If I didn't do it, some days I don't think I'd be able to cope."

Pushing his own vulnerability at potentially falling back into "the darkness" is an interesting slant, particularly in a music genre where confidence and bravado play such a big role in the promotion game. Yet while the rapper does accept imperfections in his armour, Stormzy is never less than 100 per cent driven to achieve.

"I find it strange and uncomfortable to aim for anything less than the greatest," he offers, with typical bravado. "That doesn't even make sense for me, that.

"If I was going to be an engineer or I was going to be a baker, or I was going to be a fireman, why would I not aim to eventually be the greatest at my job?

"I've never understood why I should just try to be the best rapper in London, or even the best rapper in the UK. I don't want to be the best rapper in the UK. I want to be the best artist in the UK."

Stormzy's new album will doubtless take him another step closer to his goal. It is a collection of 12 tracks revolving around race, love, fame, influence and contentment. "All our experiences get us to a certain place, and right now this is where I am," he says. "It feels right to be putting this record out – it feels good."



Photo credit: Tracey Welch/Shutterstock

Blind Ambition

CELEBRATING INFLUENTIAL BROADCASTER
AND BLOGGER LUCY EDWARDS

There's not a teenager out there who hasn't had to overcome setbacks – disappointing A Level results, the pain of unrequited love, and more.

For Lucy Edwards, the pain was rather longer lasting. When she was 17 years old, a life-changing operation designed to cure a rare genetic condition called incontinentia pigmenti turned out to be the most temporary and painful of reprieves. Lucy's sight returned to its fullest state, yet for a brief and tormenting four hours only.

Now aged 24, Lucy's sight has deteriorated to the point where she is holding on to the very last bits of light perception. However, she refuses to buckle under the pain of missed experiences or opportunities.

Instead, by "owning" the condition, she has styled for herself a career at the BBC – she was Radio 1's first-ever blind presenter, and is a notable fashion and style blogger/vlogger, with more than 650,000 YouTube and 150,000 Instagram followers. She regularly posts under the #blindnotbroken hashtag and has also published a book, *The Blind Beauty Guide*.

In everything she does, Lucy looks to give hope and encouragement to countless others looking to get their life ambitions back on track following disability setbacks.

"It is the trauma that drives me forward," she says. "I thought I should be open about my feelings because this brings about change. If I didn't share my life online, I don't think others would be as knowledgeable about blindness.

"It is important to show that anyone can do anything if they want to."

An important element of that is a new perception of beauty. For Lucy, her beauty routine is a holistic exercise that doesn't just rely on visuals. It's about taking time for herself, relaxing and unwinding with candles, music and aromas.

She adds: "As a blind person, these are things that mean so much to me."

Photo credit: lucyedwards.com, BBC, Twitter @lucyedwards

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Ravishing reds



There is nothing like a bold slick of red lipstick to signal the start of the festive party season, and the right shade has the ability to transform any look from okay to outstanding. Here's how to get the perfect red lip, plus how to choose the right shade for your skin tone.

STEP 1: Prep your lips – Always buff your lips before you apply lipstick as this will help to ensure that your lips are free from flakes and plumped up ready for application. Use a clean toothbrush or lip scrub, followed by lip balm.

STEP 2: Apply foundation – Foundation makes a great base for lipstick and can help your chosen shade stay put for longer. Use your normal foundation for best results.

STEP 3: Use a nude pencil – Rather than using a red lip pencil, a nude one is more forgiving of mistakes and can help you to achieve the perfect shape.

STEP 4: Fill in the colour – Use a lip brush to gradually build up colour on your lips rather than applying the lipstick directly. Add several coats for best results.

RED LIPSTICK SHADES FOR EACH SKIN TONE

Universal shades: True red shades that boast equal amounts of blue and orange look good on every skin tone.

Fair complexions: Opt for a pink-based undertone such as raspberry, which will complement the pink tones in your complexion.

Light complexions: Both neutral and warmish complexions suit orange-based reds as these will pick up the golden undertones of your skin.

Medium complexions: If you tan easily, then you should change your lip shade based on the season. In the summer, choose an orange-based red. During the winter, opt for a cherry red.

Olive complexions: With yellow-green undertones, you should look for a brick- or rust-coloured red that will warm your complexion.

Dark complexions: Dark and golden skin tones boast a yellow undertone so can pull off a bold red lipstick.

Alternatively, blue-based reds give a more natural look.





KIDS

CHARACTER

CHRISTMAS CREATIONS

Do you love creating handmade cards and gifts for your family and friends at Christmas? These handprint and footprint designs are super cute and offer the perfect way to personalise a wide range of presents this festive season.

If you are making a custom plate or mug, after following the below steps, apply a glaze with a brush or sponge to protect from water and wear and tear.

Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer

YOU WILL NEED:

Child-safe paint (red or brown) such as finger paints or poster paints | Red pom poms or buttons | Goggle eyes | PVA glue | A small bell | Ribbon | What you would like to print on – A4 card, a roll of paper to make wrapping paper, plate, etc

HOW TO MAKE:

- > If making a card, fold the A4 card in half.
- > Dip your child's hands in the paint and place on the front of the white card – these are the reindeer's antlers.
- > Dip one of your child's feet in the paint and place on the card below the handprints – this is the reindeer's face.
- > Glue the eyes to the top of the footprint.
- > Glue a button or a red pom pom to the centre of the footprint for the nose.
- > Glue the bell and ribbon to the heel area of the foot.

Father Christmas

YOU WILL NEED:

Red and white poster paint | Cotton wool | PVA glue | Goggle eyes | Black marker pen | What you would like to print on – card, wrapping paper, plate, mug, etc

HOW TO MAKE:

- > If making a card, fold the A4 card in half.
- > Paint your child's fingers in white paint.
- > Paint the lower half of their palm and thumb red.
- > Paint the top of their palm peach (mix some red and white paint together to make this colour).
- > Press down on the coloured card.
- > Once dry, draw on Santa's face and glue on the eyes.
- > Stick cotton wool at the end of the thumbprint and along the top of the red to form Santa's hat.
- > If painting an item of crockery, omit the cotton wool; use enamel paint instead and apply a clear gloss glaze to finish.

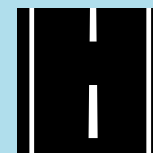


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- ① Tell me about what you built, made, created.
- ② Can you describe what happened?
- ③ What do you like best about it?
- ④ Tell me about what you saw.
- ⑤ How did you feel when you finished it?
- ⑥ What did you learn?
- ⑦ How might you do it differently?
- ⑧ Tell me about how you worked together.
- ⑨ What did you see happening?
- ⑩ How do you know that is the right answer?
- ⑪ What do you think will happen next?
- ⑫ How did you work it out?
- ⑬ Can you think of a new way to do it?
- ⑭ What would you do different next time?
- ⑮ Why did you choose ____ over ____?





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Addiction can include alcohol, drugs, sex, porn, exercise, shopping, eating or anything else that you feel you cannot do without but wish to change.

Relationships are any relationship of significance, and may be couples, siblings, parent/child, open, polyamorous and more.

None of these lists are limited and nothing is excluded. Please do not feel that you need to continue trying to manage alone. Sometimes just sharing your thoughts and feelings are a start to feeling supported, understood and able to visualise changes...



ARE YOUR SLIPPERS ruining YOUR HEALTH?



HEALTH & FITNESS

Soft, warm and oh so comfy, slippers are a staple for many. However, could they be doing more harm than good to your feet? Let's find out.

INSUFFICIENT HEEL SUPPORT: Your choice of footwear should provide both support and protection, especially if you are wearing them for long periods of time. However, with every step you take in slip-on footwear, your toes are forced to grasp the slipper to lift it off the ground and carry it, which has a negative effect on the muscles and joints of the foot.

INSTABILITY ALL UP YOUR BODY: Slippers challenge all the joints in your body owing to their lack of ankle support. In fact, an unstable ankle can drag both your knees and hips in, downwards or outwards, depending on your body type. This can cause a whole host of problems, including pain and poor posture.

HIGHER RISK OF FALLS: For the elderly, who are already at a greater risk of slipping and falling, slippers can be extremely dangerous. Slippers provide very little grip compared to other types of

footwear, which means that you are more likely to lose your balance, especially when walking on tiled, wooden or vinyl floors.

NON-BREATHABLE: Although slippers are meant to keep your feet cosy, they can easily make them too hot if they are made of poor-quality, synthetic fabric. This can create a breeding ground for fungi and bacteria and increase your risk of athlete's foot.

SO WHAT SHOULD YOU WEAR ON YOUR FEET IN THE HOUSE?

Opt for supportive, lace-up shoes that stay on the foot as you walk as these will cushion and protect your feet.

Some of the most supportive footwear brands include:

- > Birkenstock Milano
- > FitFlop
- > TOMS
- > Kalahari

It is also a good idea to walk around barefoot sometimes as this can help to strengthen and stretch the muscles, tendons and ligaments in your feet. This helps to improve balance and to prevent injury, knee strain and back problems.

Christmas

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HOW TO COOK WITH CHESTNUTS

When it comes to festive food, chestnuts go hand-in-hand with Christmas. However, did you know that there are many different ways you can cook and enjoy these mouthfuls of nutty deliciousness?

ABOUT CHESTNUTS

Chestnuts are the large edible fruit of the chestnut tree and are popular in both Europe and China. When you cook chestnuts, they produce a delicate and slightly sweet flavour, with a soft texture that has a similar consistency to baked potatoes. You cannot eat raw chestnuts so they must be cooked before serving.

THREE WAYS TO COOK CHESTNUTS

Boil them: To boil chestnuts, you first need to score them, before placing in a saucepan of cold water. Bring the water to the boil and allow to simmer for three minutes. Remove from the heat and then carefully scoop out a few at a time, before peeling off the shell and skin with a knife.

Roast them in the oven: To roast chestnuts, you first need to pierce each nut to prevent them from exploding owing to internal pressure. Then place on a baking sheet in an oven that has been preheated to 200°C/180°C fan/gas mark 6. Roast for 15-20 minutes, turning occasionally. Wait until they are just cool enough to peel, and serve warm.

Roast them on the fire: Take an aluminium pie plate or tinfoil pudding dish. Make cuts in the chestnuts and place the plate on a grill over white-hot coals. Shake the plate or dish periodically using heatproof gloves and roast until tender.

HOW TO ENJOY CHESTNUTS

- Mashed with sweet potatoes, carrots or cabbage
- Mixed with sausage meat, bacon and cranberries to make stuffing
- Blended with chickpeas to make a festive hummus
- Made into a purée and used to make chocolate chestnut cupcakes.



Time for TIRAMISU

CELEBRATING THE BOOZY ITALIAN DESSERT THAT ALWAYS OFFERS A LIFT

We're used to hearing about the history and provenance of our culinary loves – tales of family traditions and secret recipes that have been handed down for centuries.

To say that tiramisu doesn't fit into that category perhaps sounds like an attempt to besmirch it slightly, but the opposite is actually true. Instead, this is a dessert whose parentage is surprisingly recent.

The dish was invented by Italian restaurateur Ado Campeol in 1972 – thus the tiramisu has just completed half a century of service in cafés, restaurants and kitchens. In that time, it has been popularised the world over.

Now is an apt moment to celebrate the dessert, as Campeol passed away at the age of 93 this October.

The pudding has an impressive legacy, especially

as a combination of eggs whipped with mascarpone cheese, coffee-soaked biscuits and bitter cocoa powder perhaps doesn't sound like the most obvious taste combination.

The name 'tiramisu' translates to mean 'lift me up' in Italian due to the kick offered by the coffee, while rum or marsala is typically added to the mix to offer a premium, eclectic edge.

QUICK TIRAMISU RECIPE

INGREDIENTS:

3 tsp instant coffee granules | 3 tbsp coffee liqueur
| 250g tub mascarpone | 85g condensed milk |
1 tsp vanilla extract | 4-6 sponge fingers |
1 tbsp cocoa powder

STEP ONE: Mix the coffee granules with 2 tbsp boiling water in a large jug and stir to combine. Add the coffee liqueur and 75ml cold water. Pour into a shallow dish and set aside.

STEP TWO: Make the cream layer by beating the mascarpone, condensed milk and vanilla extract with an electric whisk until thick and smooth.

STEP THREE: Break the sponge fingers into three pieces and soak in the coffee mixture for a few seconds. Put a few of the sponge pieces in the bottom of two wine or sundae glasses and top with the cream mixture. Sift over the cocoa and chill for at least one hour before serving.



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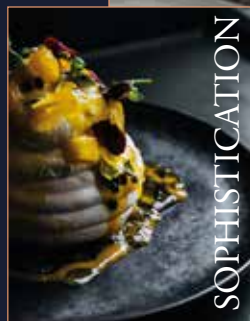
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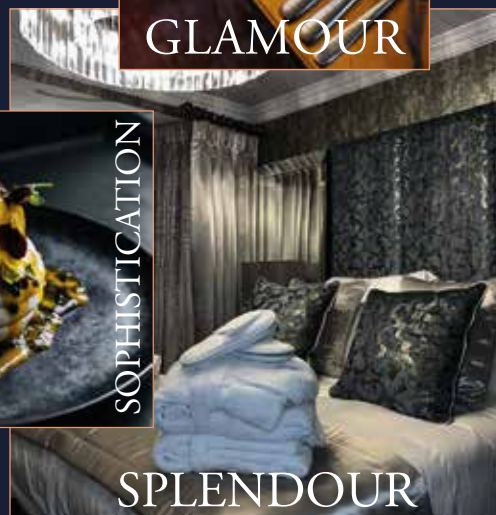
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KFC KRAZY!

Did you know that while you're tucking into your roast turkey and all the trimmings on Christmas Day, over in Japan, they're chowing down on crispy chicken with a selection of sides?

HOW DO THE PEOPLE OF JAPAN CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS?

In Japan, Christmas is still a secular holiday as less than one per cent of the population identify as Christian. Instead, they use this holiday as a time for families and friends to have parties, make plans for dinner and enjoy general celebrations.

WHAT IS THE JAPANESE KFC CHRISTMAS CRAZE?

An estimated 3.6 million Japanese families treat themselves to KFC every festive season, with what has to be one of the world's most unique Christmas food traditions.

In fact, demand is so high that locals often have to queue for hours to get their hands on a bucket or two of this popular cuisine.

HOW DID THIS TRADITION START?

This peculiar demand for KFC at Christmas came about because of a campaign that was inspired by Takeshi Okawara, the manager of the first-ever KFC in Japan. Shortly after it opened in 1970, he woke up at midnight with the idea to sell a 'party barrel' of fried chicken on Christmas Day. In 1974, the marketing campaign went national, calling it Kurisumasu ni wa Kentakkii, or Kentucky for Christmas. The rest, as they say, is history.

WHAT DOES THE KFC CHRISTMAS MEAL CONSIST OF?

As well as buckets of fried chicken, families in Japan tuck into lots of sides, cakes and even wine. Some of this year's offerings include:

- > A box of chicken for 3,780 yen (around £22)
- > A party box with eight pieces of chicken, a lasagne and a chocolate cake for 4,000 yen (around £25)
- > A premium roasted chicken and sides for 5,800 yen (around £35)

On average, these packages account for a whopping one-third of the chain's yearly sales in Japan.

HOW TO *untangle* CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Decorating your home for Christmas should be a joyous occasion but, if your Christmas lights are a tangled mess, this task can quickly turn into a full-on stressfest.

STEP 1: Get in a positive frame of mind

If you are already feeling frazzled and frustrated, then things are only going to get worse when you start trying to untangle your lights. Therefore, you need to make sure you are feeling relaxed and in the right frame of mind. Pop on some festive songs, pour yourself your favourite festive drink and take a few deep breaths before you begin.

STEP 2: Make sure you have enough space

You need to make sure you have sufficient space to lay your lights out on a flat surface, such as on the floor or across a large table.

STEP 3: Start with the plug

Always start with the plug when untangling your Christmas lights. Once located, gently work the plug through the knots. Be careful not to pull too hard as this may damage the lights.

STEP 4: Use a pencil or pen

If you come across any knots that are preventing you from unravelling your lights, gently use a pencil or pen to tease them out.

STEP 5: Keep your lights in a straight line

As you untangle your lights, make sure you keep them in a straight line to prevent further knots. It can be beneficial to enlist a helper to do this with you and to help you hang your lights on the tree.

HOW TO STORE YOUR LIGHTS TO PREVENT TANGLING:

- > Wrap your lights around a piece of cardboard and then wrap tissue paper around them to prevent damage.
- > Alternatively, wrap them around a wire coat hanger and store somewhere safe.



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Christmas CACTUS

A popular winter flowering houseplant that will make a great addition to your home this festive season and beyond, the Christmas cactus is easy to care for and maintain.

Why choose a Christmas cactus?

You may have already seen Christmas cacti in your local garden centre as they seem to be everywhere at this time of year, and with very good reason. A blooming succulent which is very easy to grow, Christmas cacti boast stunning flowers, and when tended to properly, can live for up to 100 years. They also release oxygen at night instead of throughout the day, which means they can help to improve your quality of sleep.

How to plant a Christmas cactus

Christmas cacti are easily propagated by cutting

a short Y-shaped segment from the stem tips of healthy plant foliage. Plant the segment a quarter of its own length deep in slightly sandy soil and then evenly moisten it. Place the cutting in a well-lit area but not in direct sunlight.

How to pot a Christmas cactus

When choosing a pot for your Christmas cactus, you need one that features a drainage hole at the bottom. This will help to prevent the soil from becoming too wet. Christmas cacti thrive in almost any type of potting mix that is formulated for succulents.

How to care for your Christmas cactus

Unlike other cacti, Christmas cacti are not native to hot and arid environments, which means they require completely different care. This houseplant should be kept in bright but indirect light, with an ideal daytime temperature of around 21 degrees and an evening temperature of 15-18 degrees. Water your Christmas cactus around once every 2-3 weeks, but only when the top one-third of the soil feels dry to the touch.



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BEFORE



AFTER



Everything's going TO BE OKAY

ONE OF BRITAIN'S BEST-LOVED COMEDIANS RETURNS

For a few years, it seemed you couldn't turn on the television or open a newspaper without seeing a mention of Peter Kay.

The larger-than-life Bolton-born comedian always seems to have had the Midas touch since bursting onto the scene when winning Channel 4's *So You Think You're Funny?* contest in 1997.

A year later, he was nominated for a Perrier Award for his stand-up show at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and by the time the Millennium came round, he was a regular on our TV screens, extolling a brand of observational yet irreverent comedy across multiple successful sitcom series. Included in these is the iconic *Phoenix Nights* – which, despite its legacy, only totalled 12 episodes – *Max and Paddy's Road to Nowhere*, *Peter Kay's Car Share* and *Peter Kay's Comedy Shuffle*. Switching almost seamlessly between filmed commitments and hilarious stand-up, it seemed Kay could do no wrong.

Kay's self-removal from the public eye was the subject of much speculation after he wrapped up his last TV projects back in 2017. It happened when his 90-date *Have Gags, Will Travel* tour planned for 2018/19 was cancelled.

He broke cover on events shortly afterwards, referencing The Lily Foundation, which works to raise awareness of mitochondrial disease in the UK.

He wrote: "The Lily Foundation is an inspiring charity that helps to improve the lives of children with mitochondrial disease."

Mitochondrial disease is a term that covers a range of often devastating conditions involving the failure of mitochondria, which live inside cells and which play a key role in providing energy. If they do not work properly, this can lead to serious problems for the body.

"I've had first-hand experience of the foundation's work and I'm proud to raise both awareness and much-needed funds to help with the inspiring work it provides to children and their families," said Kay.

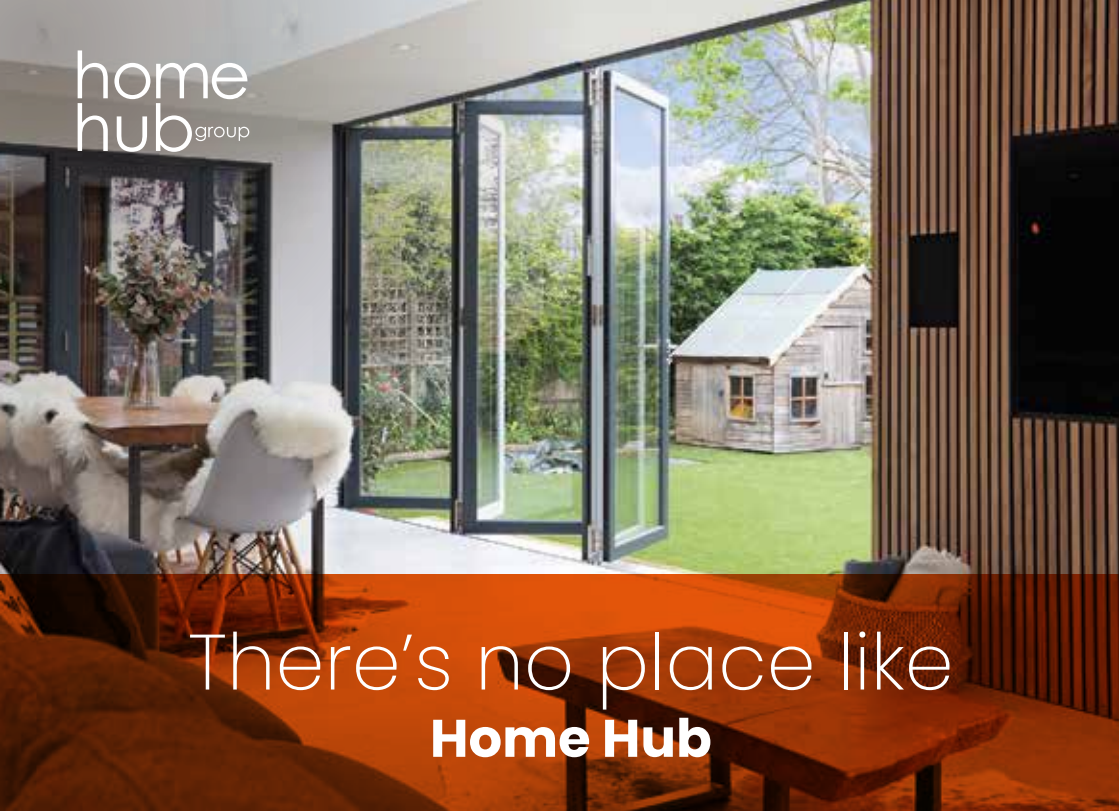
With his family's health issues now, seemingly, in a place where he can refocus on work, the funnyman, now 49, is getting back to what he does best with his first UK tour in 12 years. Aptly titled *Peter Kay Live: Better Late Than Never*, he will visit Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, Belfast, Newcastle, Dublin, Glasgow, Cardiff and Nottingham between December 2022 and August 2023.

However, such was the demand for tickets that the Ticketmaster site crashed under the weight of demand. Subsequently, additional dates have been added for 2024 and 2025.

Kay insisted that the ticket prices reflect the £35 cost from his last UK tour, way back in 2010. "The cost-of-living crisis has hit most and will hit everyone at some point," he said. "It's something I would do for free if I could. But even if I can't do that, this isn't a money-making exercise – it's an honour to be in demand still after all this time and I'm excited about having a laugh with people in a live setting all over again.

"I also may be a bit rusty... hence the freezing of the ticket price," he joked.

In addition, Kay, the recipient of four BAFTAs and a National Television Award, has been announced as the first artist in the world to perform a monthly residency at the O2. At a time when what we're allowed to laugh at seems under more scrutiny than ever before, it seems we could all benefit from knowing the way to Amarillo... or the North Greenwich arena, at least.



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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood



LOCAL NEWS

Photo credit: Met Police Handout, Google Earth



Men arrested after theft of cars worth £3million

Four members of an organised crime gang, including a man from Woodford, have been jailed for their roles in a spate of high-end vehicle thefts worth nearly £2.8million.

One member of the group, Dwaine Dixon (pictured left) of Blenheim Court, Woodford, appeared at Isleworth Crown Court on Friday, November 4, alongside three others.

Dixon was jailed for a total of five years and 11 months for conspiracy to steal and burglary, while three other members of the group were jailed earlier this year.

The thefts, many of which took place at Heathrow

Airport car park, were committed using a program that created a digital key for cars with keyless technology, enabling the thieves to gain entry and drive off in seconds.

Chief Superintendent Ian Howells, Operational Command Unit Commander for Aviation Policing, said: "This is an excellent example of an extremely thorough and diligent investigation which has resulted in a dangerous criminal network being closed down.

"As well as the distress caused to victims, the manner in which they carried out their offending presented a real danger to the public and I am pleased that they have now been brought to justice."



Children's hospice launches appeal

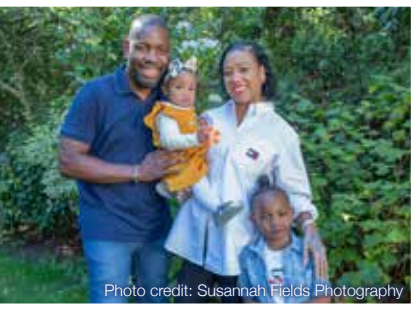


Photo credit: Susannah Fields Photography

Woodford-based Haven House Children's Hospice is appealing to the public to donate to its new campaign to help bring joy to children this festive season.

The campaign, called A Gingerbread Christmas, tells the story of six-year-old Deshawn (pictured above right), who has hypoplastic left heart syndrome, a condition where the left ventricle of the heart does not develop properly, preventing the heart from pumping blood around the body effectively.

Deshawn receives support from Haven House at home, and the charity's appeal has been inspired by his love for baking with his hospice health care support worker, Natalie.

His mum Crystal (pictured above second from right) said: "Natalie comes to our house every week to play with Deshawn and to give us some respite time so we can look after our daughter Aria or run some errands."

"As soon as Natalie walks through the door, the house is full of giggles and games. Natalie's fun and friendship has brightened our lives."

Siân Wicks, chief executive at Haven House, said: "Every day, a family like Deshawn's needs our help, and we're here to support them. But we can only do that with the help of our local community."

You can donate to A Gingerbread Christmas at www.havenhouse.org.uk/gingerbread-christmas

Cannabis farm discovered as firefighters tackle blaze

A suspected cannabis farm was discovered when firefighters attended a house fire in South Woodford.

Six fire engines and around 40 firefighters attended the property on Walpole Road on Saturday, October 29, at 5.28am, and brought the fire under control by 7.17am. Eight people left adjacent properties before the brigade arrived.

The fire destroyed the loft of the property. Fortunately,

no one was injured.

A London Fire Brigade spokesperson said: "Cannabis factory fires can be particularly dangerous because of the way criminals use unsafe wiring to illegally obtain electricity in order to grow the plants."

"They're often on top floors or in lofts, which means when a fire takes hold, it spreads."

"Firefighters can also be exposed to risks when dealing with the fires because of bad wiring and traps at some of the properties."

"It's important that people know the key signs and inform the police so that they can act swiftly to prevent these dangerous fires from happening."

The signs of a cannabis factory include a strong and sickly sweet smell, constantly covered windows, strong and constant lighting, and lots of cables.

Enquiries are ongoing.

Fundraising campaign launched to create garden

A local gardening group has launched a crowdfunding campaign to turn a section of Ray Park into a community garden.

The Woodford Greeners are looking to raise £6,200 to restore the small, octagonal 18th-century walled garden within Ray Park.

Funds raised by the crowdfunding campaign will go towards installing proper irrigation and building a timber pergola-style gazebo to provide a sheltered area where workshops can be held.

On the fundraising page, the Woodford Greeners said: "Our project will help to bring to life an unused area of the park and make it more accessible."

"It also presents a wonderful volunteering opportunity for local residents in Woodford Green to come together to learn about gardening, forge friendships and be physically active outdoors."

"All the perennial flowers when fully grown will be transferred to public planters in the community, including in the high street and around local schools."

"The new gazebo will provide an invaluable space for workshops, enabling local people to learn new skills."

For more information or to donate, please visit www.spacehive.com/ray-park-community-garden



Photo credit: Woodford Greeners

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The numbers at our October meetings, particularly at Copped Hall, were very good, and the hall certainly is a place worth visiting if you have not yet. I went and was fascinated at what, in time, will be a truly great local community benefit.

One of our recent talks was titled Coast of East Anglia by David Simmonds, and took place on Wednesday, November 16, at All Saints Church

Hall, Woodford Green.

Our last meeting for this year is titled The Amazing History of Lighthouses by Mark Lewis, and takes place at 10.30am on Tuesday, December 13, at Memorial Hall, St Mary's Church, High Road, South Woodford.

If it's not too early, best wishes for the holiday season and hope for a peaceful New Year.



Photo credit: Google Maps

Pub chain apologises

Pub chain Greene King recently paid compensation to a group of people who were refused service at the Rose & Crown in Woodford Green earlier this year.

The incident occurred on April 23, when 12 Irish Travellers planned to watch a boxing match at the pub. The first six pub-goers to arrive were allegedly asked to leave, while the other six were told not to show up.

According to solicitors Howe + Co, they were told they had to leave as Greene King had a policy not to serve Irish Travellers, though this has been denied by the board of directors.

In a statement on their website on November 15, Greene King said: "Greene King sincerely apologises to the 12 individuals who were discriminated against.

"This behaviour is in contrary to all that we at Greene

King believe in. We have a commitment to 'calling time on racism' and we are working hard to make sure that we all live up to these values.

"We have ensured that the team in the Rose & Crown has had full training in this area, in addition to our company-wide efforts, to promote inclusion and diversity and eliminate racism in our company.

"We have apologised unreservedly to the 12 individuals involved, paid them compensation as well as their legal costs, and have made a charitable donation to The Traveller Movement at their request."

Yvonne MacNamara, CEO of The Traveller Movement, said: "The Traveller Movement is pleased that Greene King has settled this instance of discrimination, and apologised to the affected individuals. We hope that they now have the closure they deserve."



LOCAL NEWS



NEWS FROM

THE 100 CLUB

LOCAL BUSINESSES SUPPORTING HAVEN HOUSE




People purchasing real Christmas trees this year can dispose of them after the festivities and support a great cause at the same time.

Haven House's popular annual Christmas recycling initiative is now open for people to register their tree for collection in the New Year for recycling in exchange for a donation to the children's hospice.

Hospice volunteers will be collecting trees from the following postcodes: E4, E11 1, E11 2, E12 5, E17, E18, IG7, IG8, IG9, IG10, on January 7 and 8, 2023.

Jenny Pearce, head of community fundraising and engagement, said: "Haven House can help you enjoy a hassle-free end to the Christmas period with our environmentally friendly service, which also raises funds for our vital care. We hope the community can get behind our recycling initiative, now in its third year,

so we can reach our target of raising £12,500 for our specialist care services. A huge thank you to Bricks Estate Agents for sponsoring us this year. We really appreciate their support and generosity."

Haven House provides round-the-clock care at the hospice and through outreach services in the home and local community. Services include day care, overnight stays, end-of-life care and bereavement support, as well as life-enriching activities such as sensory play, music therapy and physiotherapy.

To register your tree, go to www.havenhouse.org.uk/Christmas-tree-recycling

The hospice would also welcome people to volunteer their time and drivers with vans to help collect trees on the days. Please contact Haven House on 07715 990097 or email events@havenhouse.org.uk

Club out of competition

Woodford Town FC suffered a heartbreaking penalty shootout defeat in the Isuzu FA Vase second round on November 12.

Fakenham Town won the match at Ashton Gate Stadium 4-3 on penalties.

Despite having three penalty shootout victories under their belt this season already, including a 4-2 win over Sawbridgeworth Town in the FA Vase first round, misses from Dimi Christou and André Anderson saw The Woods knocked out of the competition, ending their cup journey.

Woodford Town took the early lead in the 10th minute, with a header from Alejandro Machado from the penalty area.

Fakenham went on to score either side of half-time, with Jack Robinson scoring both of the visitors' goals.

Although Woodford Town were able to equalise late, courtesy of Machado's half-volley and second goal of the game, they were unable to find a late winner and the game went to penalties.

In the Essex Senior League, Woodford Town continued their fine form with a 4-0 win over second-from-bottom in the league Clapton FC on Friday, November 4.

Woodford Town also played Barking FC on November 18, losing 1-3 with the Barking goalkeeper receiving a late red card and Joshua Phillips scoring a 94th-minute consolation goal.



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COMPANIONS at Christmas

Christmas is a time to relax and spend time with your loved ones. And your four-legged family members also love the chance to enjoy more time together, as well as greeting visitors, taking in different sights and smells, and giving you puppy-dog eyes for extra treats.

Your dog can bring joy this Christmas, and hanging out together can also help you escape from the seasonal stress.

Dog behaviourist Zoe Willingham, who has 23 pups, shares seven magical moments you can enjoy this Christmas.

1. Count down to Santa Paws' arrival with their own doggy advent calendar and make them happy every morning.

2. Give them a special toy to play with when you dress the Christmas tree so they're not jumping up at the baubles.

3. Top up your training to make sure they have the essential skills to wow your guests and anyone you visit with their impeccable manners.

4. Get social and enjoy a festive feast at your favourite dog-friendly pub or restaurant.

5. Wrap up warm and get outdoors together. It might be chilly, but being in the fresh air, taking in the scents, and spending time with you means your dog will be happy and content.

6. After your wintry walk, what's cuter than seeing your dog curled up snoozing while you watch your favourite Christmas film?

7. Your pup is sure to be top of Santa's Nice List, so make sure they have a doggy stocking packed with fun toys and healthy treats to open on Christmas morning.

Want to chat about fun activities you can enjoy with your dog or ask a question about training? For more tips and advice, please visit www.bestbehaviourdogtraining.co.uk



WHY IT'S VITAL TO KEEP YOUR GUTTERS CLEAR AND RUNNING SMOOTHLY

The sight of water either pooling in a gutter or, worse still, spilling out over the side of it, can signal real issues for your home. The autumn and winter months bring together the ultimate

combination of factors that mean it pays to check your gutters now before any problems have the chance to get worse.

Your utter gutter nightmare is started by an accumulation of plant debris, sticks, twigs, leaves and bracken. This can be blown onto your roof, dropped by flying birds or, as far as moss goes, may have grown there.

This accumulation of dead matter can form an impenetrable path for rainwater, leading to leaks, damp and mould. A constant drip of liquid over a surface will soon compromise brick material and coatings, with the water penetrating through gaps in the mortar. It will eventually hit your internal plaster layer, often getting trapped behind paint and wallpaper, whereby it will spread across the wall.

The first you may know about this is a discolouration of wallpaper, or a slightly wet stain that's cold to the touch. At this point, that handful of stuck leaves may have compromised an entire wall, which will require drying out and possible replastering.

Externally, blocked gutters can also rot wooden fascia boards around your roof. These are in place to deflect water and wind from the property, and when they deteriorate, their effectiveness drops.

Finally, blocked gutters can also lead to foundation damage; and if you have a cellar or basement – or any other room below surface level – this will be particularly susceptible to flooding.

While you may imagine scaling a ladder in order to hook out a handful of decomposing matter is easy, it often pays to enlist professional help to ensure the job is done properly.

Gutter maintenance specialists will know what to do if they encounter animals or nests, and they may also be able to attend to other quick bits of maintenance, such as replacing loose or broken tiles.




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Create your own SENSORY GARDEN

A sensory garden is designed to stimulate the five basic senses of sight, smell, sound, touch and taste, and has the ability to enhance your sense of wellbeing, reduce stress and calm the mind. Find out the best sensory garden plants and features below.

CURRY PLANT: An evergreen shrub that boasts silvery grey foliage and pale yellow flowers, the curry plant provides a beautiful aroma and is known for attracting bees and other pollinators. Plant in a sunny, sheltered spot in well-drained soil and trim regularly to help it keep its shape.


ORNAMENTAL GRASSES: Ornamental grasses such as pampas grass and architectural seed heads add structure and movement to a sensory garden. Pick creeping, hanging and straight standing grasses for maximum effect.

LAMB'S EAR: Featuring velvety foliage that looks just like a pair of lamb's ears, this evergreen perennial produces stunning purple-pink flowers in the summer months that promise to add colour and depth to your garden. Plant them in open borders with other perennials or grow in containers.

WILD STRAWBERRIES: Wild strawberry, known as *fragaria vesca*, produces small and super-sweet fruit that is perfect for stimulating your senses of smell and taste. This plant loves partial sun and fairly damp conditions.

LAVENDER: Easy to grow and care for, lavender can add both scent and colour to your garden, as well as attracting pollinators. Weave in among other summer-blooming flowers or plant near your home to enjoy its strong aroma whenever you pop your head outside the door.

A WATER FEATURE: A water feature such as a pond, fountain or bird bath makes a great addition to a sensory garden. Providing beautiful reflections, calming sounds and contrasting texture, it will also attract wildlife and a wide variety of colourful birds.



GARDENING



A new way OF LIVING



THE TREND FOR COMMUNAL LIVING IS HERE, AND IT'S CALLED COLIVING

Our cities are not only more crowded than ever before, but more expensive too; yet the desire for young people to thrive in the heart of these fantastic urban spaces is real.

The solution to those priced out of traditional accommodation is something called Coliving.

It is an innovative social construct that uses a new blueprint for accommodation design, whereby tenants in a space have individual rooms, but shared social and kitchen areas.

The concept is much the same as you would have in a student house, though the target market is very much young professionals, and the architectural and interior finish reflects a demographic who are in employment and looking to build careers and interactions with like-minded people.

While in terms of location, Coliving can provide a huge advantage with reductions in commuting time

and cost, an additional environmental impact comes by way of shared amenities, all-inclusive bills and communal events and facilities.

While for some young people the idea of being thrown into a space with a number of strangers may be daunting, Coliving spaces are typically extremely careful to maintain high safety standards for residents, with letting agents carefully screening both residents and staff, and most include a 24/7 concierge service to help manage the building.

Coliving also provides flexibility for residents who don't want to be caught in long-term renting situations; nor might they have the ability to put a large deposit down. Instead, a rental term might be for just a few days up to a few months, and longer if desired.

What people therefore get is a ready-made community of like-minded people, excellent facilities, and all the social and practical benefits of living in a central, busy part of town.



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Queen for 70 years

BUT COULD IT HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT?

Would Elizabeth have become queen if her uncle, King Edward VIII, hadn't renounced the throne to marry the woman he loved? And would she have reigned for so long?

In December 1936, King Edward VIII abdicated the throne to marry divorcee Wallis Simpson. This was because he didn't want to live without the woman he loved by his side and, at the time, the Church of England didn't allow divorced people like Mrs Simpson to remarry in church if their ex-spouse was still alive. And as Edward was the nominal head of the church, it was felt he had no choice but to step aside.

So the crown passed to Edward's younger brother, who became King George VI. When George died in 1952, aged just 56, his elder daughter, the 25-year-old Princess Elizabeth, became queen. As Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, she became the UK's longest-ever reigning monarch – leading the country for 70 years until her death earlier this year.

But what would have happened if things had gone differently?

What if Edward had married Mrs Simpson but refused to give up the throne? Because the couple didn't have children together, Edward's younger brother George would still have been his heir. Edward survived his younger brother by 20 years – so the crown would have still gone to Elizabeth. But this would have happened in 1972, not 1952. So she would have ruled for 50 years rather than the record-breaking 70.

It's also possible that Edward would have had at least one child if he'd married someone other than Mrs Simpson. The line of succession would then have passed through this child – and Elizabeth may have never become queen.

Another line of thought is that Edward's attitude to the monarchy and politics was troublesome, and the monarchy wouldn't have survived his rule. But that's another story.

Photo credit: Design Pics Inc/Shutterstock



Take me to the MOUNTAINS



Pikes Peak



Kilimanjaro



Mauna Kea



Mount Everest

If mountain climbing is on your bucket list, there's no better day to start planning your trip than International Mountain Day, which takes place on December 11.

Mountains are home to 15 per cent of the world's population and about half of the world's 'biodiversity hotspots' – areas with the richest concentration of threatened plant and animal life. But go carefully and you can experience all the thrills of the mountain, while also helping local communities and protecting fragile ecosystems.

Here are three mountains suitable for a range of abilities – though remember, you'll still need a high level of fitness and endurance to tackle any mountain.

MOUNT FUJI, JAPAN – 3.776M

The hike along the most popular route to the peak of Mount Fuji takes around eight hours. Most climbers start at night to reach the summit at sunrise. The official hiking months are July and August.

PIKES PEAK, COLORADO, UNITED STATES – 4.302M

This 21km hike in the Rockies lasts the whole day and takes you to the highest point on the US mainland. As well as stunning views at the summit, there's also a state-of-the-art visitor centre.

MOUNT KILIMANJARO, TANZANIA – 5.895M

Most trails up Africa's highest mountain take five or six days, allowing climbers to acclimatise to the thin air as they go. If you're brave enough, you can even spend a night camping in the mountain's crater.

MOUNTAIN FACTS:

- > There are 1,187,049 mountains in the world.
- > The tallest sea mountain in the world is Mauna Kea in Hawaii at 10,205m, but more than half of it is underwater. Everest is the world's highest mountain, at 8,848.86m above sea level.
- > Bhutan is easily the most mountainous country in the world – nearly 99 per cent of it is made up of mountains.
- > Annapurna I in Nepal is widely regarded as the most difficult and dangerous mountain to climb.
- > Around 300,000 people a year climb Mount Fuji, making it the world's most frequently climbed mountain.

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BIDDING FAREWELL TO THE *Fiesta*



WITH NEWS THAT THE FORD FIESTA IS TO TAKE A PERMANENT SIESTA, WE CELEBRATE THE LEGACY OF THIS BRITISH MOTORING MAINSTAY

If there is one car that portrays the modern era of motoring, it is undoubtedly the Ford Fiesta.

It was 1976 when the first Fiestas rolled off the Ford production plant in Dagenham, arrowing their way to the driveways of motorists looking for an affordable, fuel-efficient and fun way to conquer the roads.

The Fiesta has always been instantly recognisable among an ever-increasing and sometimes perplexing range of Ford models. Indeed, even though its lifespan traverses four decades and eight generations, the car that has shifted more than 22 million units – one fifth of those in the UK – has always stood out as the ultimate fun run-around.

The car has come in saloon, hatchback and even convertible versions – always nippy, always chic, and with a speediness that belies what has always been a modest price tag.

Indeed, the Fiesta epitomised a new generation of car buyers through the 1980s, who were keen to ditch the clumsy, clunky motors of the era, looking instead for a rather more streamlined and sporty approach.

Yet while the model arrived as a mark of practicality and fashion, it has found its exit governed by the same elements, ultimately being undone by the green car revolution. Hence Ford is also ditching the Galaxy and the S-Max, with the last of these being produced next April. Instead, the manufacturer – which has slipped to fifth globally in recent years, behind Toyota, Volkswagen, Hyundai and General Motors – is channelling all its energy into three new electric passenger vehicles and a further four new commercial models.

The Fiesta's day may be done, but the car's presence will be celebrated on our roads for many years to come.

Photo credit: emithankamuk/Shutterstock.com, redbubble.com



SPORT

BOWLED OVER

CHAMPIONS

ENGLAND CLINCH T20 WORLD CUP SUCCESS

England's hard-hitting, bombastic-bowling T20 side are the best in the world – their clinching of the World Cup in Australia in the middle of November capped a memorable few weeks Down Under, in which captain Jos Buttler MBE's side battled back from adversity to lift their first world crown since back in 2010.

Chasing a modest Pakistan total of 137 in the Melbourne final, an early batting wobble was calmed by the inspirational Ben Stokes OBE, as England knocked off the required runs with an over to spare.

It was another monstrous moment for Stokes, who has made a habit of being England's go-to man for the big occasion. Indeed, when entering the crease with the side 45/3, there were fears his side might wilt at the final hurdle, having got themselves into the final despite a group defeat to Ireland and a rain washout draw versus Australia.

Perhaps we shouldn't have worried. After all, it's getting be something of a regular thing, both for Stokes and in the way the England team have showed real prowess in their white-ball cricket over the past few years.

Stokes was instrumental as the Three Lions clinched the ODI World Cup in 2019, and although he has stepped down from 50-over duties now, he will look to overturn the odds and inspire the Test side to victory over Australia in next year's Ashes.

In the final, he smashed 52 off 49 balls to steer his side home, with Buttler's 26 and Harry Brook's 20 other notable contributions.

No one can question the fact that England were deserving champions. On the way to lifting the trophy, they defeated T20 heavyweights New Zealand, Sri Lanka and India, and in the final, repelled the threat of arguably the most feared bowling attack in the game, as Pakistan failed to find the breakthroughs they needed.



BRITAIN'S GREATEST SPORTING MOMENTS...

A score to REMEMBER

Each month, we look at one of the most significant events in British sporting history. This month, we go back 21 years to England's famous 5-1 victory over the Germans at the Olympic Stadium in Munich.

"This is getting better and better and better," enthused John Motson OBE as Michael Owen sauntered through to propel England into a 4-1 lead against old foes Germany. And there was still more to come as Emile Heskey made it five, capping a special night for Liverpool, as all the goals were scored by Reds; for Sven-Göran Eriksson, who truly arrived as Three Lions' manager on that incredible Saturday evening; and for England fans everywhere, who finally felt justified in putting expectation over hope.

Of course, the expectations we had over the so-called Golden Generation were, in fact, misplaced. England crashed out to a freak Ronaldo goal in the World Cup finals the following year, then suffered countless other false dawns throughout the Noughties, more often than not involving penalty

shoot-outs... for a change.

However, on that special night in Munich, all was good with the world. Very good. England had trailed to Carsten Jancker's fifth-minute goal, but Owen's hat-trick and Steven Gerrard MBE's piledriver on the stroke of half-time confirmed a special night for British sport.

Not only had England exorcised the spectre of Euros heartbreak five years previously, but they'd also exacted revenge on the Germans for the 1-0 defeat they suffered at the old Wembley Stadium in 2000 – a match that was to be Kevin Keegan's final game in charge.

That his replacement, the enigmatic Swede Eriksson, had turned the tide to such an extent in the 11 months in between, was a big part of arguably the most complete England performance of a generation (and right up there with the 4-1 hammering of the Netherlands at Wembley at the 1996 Euros).

The project may not have finished the way it should have, but we could revel in the glory for one night.

Deutschland
England
1 : 5
Olympiastadion:
München



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DOWN: 1. DOMESTIC, 2. VINYL, 4. ERRECTS, 5. LABYRINTHINE, 6. RIPOSTE, 7. DODO, 8. SCRIPTWRITER, 12. INVERSES, 14. POPULAR, 16. CASINO, 18. BARGE, 19. SPED



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PUZZLES

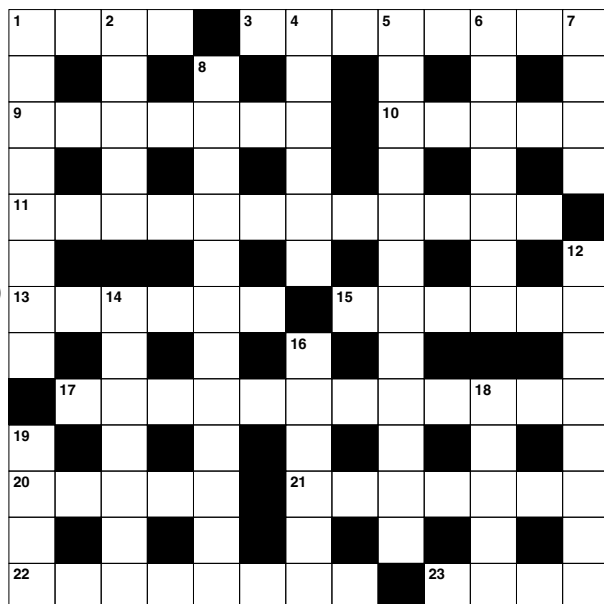
Answers: see end of The VISION Listings

ACROSS

1. Prima donna (4)
3. Stated emphatically (8)
9. Shackle (7)
10. Animal that walks on two legs (5)
11. Narcissism (4-8)
13. Contributes information (6)
15. Not noticed (6)
17. Easy to converse with (12)
20. Person who flies an aircraft (5)
21. Pays no attention to (7)
22. Where photographs are developed (8)
23. Stitches (4)

DOWN

1. Relating to the home (8)
2. Type of plastic (5)
4. Constructs a building (6)
5. Intricate and confusing (12)
6. Retaliatory action (7)
7. Extinct bird (4)
8. Author of screenplays (12)
12. Opposites (8)
14. Liked by many people (7)
16. Gambling house (6)
18. Flat-bottomed boat (5)
19. Moved quickly (4)



DID YOU KNOW?

- Christmas takes place on December 25 – the day the Roman Catholic Church chose to mark Jesus' birthday. No one actually knows the exact date Jesus was born.
- Not everyone celebrates Christmas on the same day. For example, Greek Orthodox Christians often celebrate on January 7.
- Many Christmas traditions come from the Victorian era, including crackers, roast turkey and gift-giving.
- Christmas trees were first seen in Germany in the 16th century, when fir trees were decorated with fruit and nuts.
- *Jingle Bells* was originally a Thanksgiving song written in 1850.
- It only took six weeks for Charles Dickens to write *A Christmas Carol*.

SUDOKU

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

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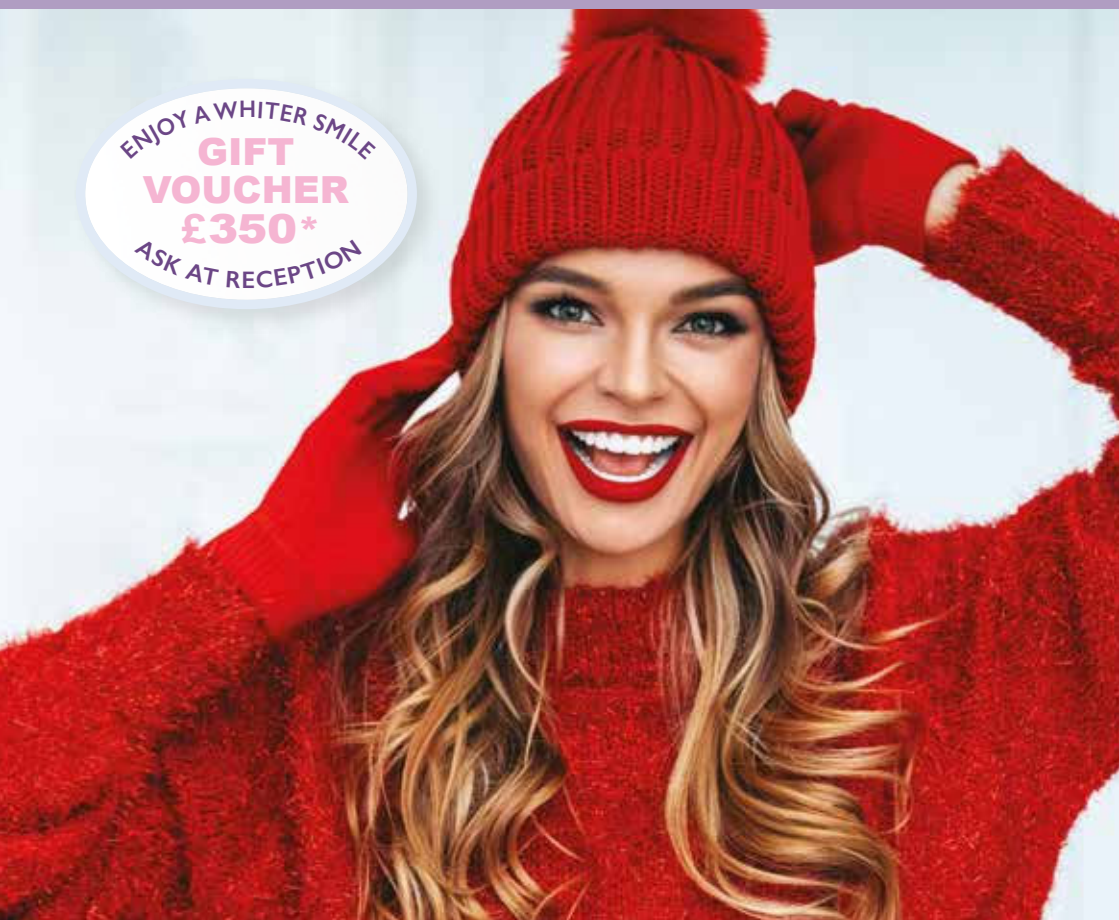
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