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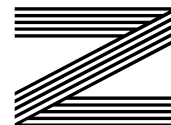
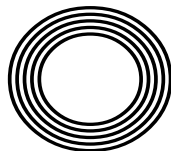
**FIVE
TV SETS
YOU CAN
VISIT**

Beauty treatments
using seasonal veggies

SOUP SEASON
How to build your own recipe

BEN STOKES OBE

Legendary cricketer sets his sights on World Cup victory



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Photo credit: Simon Dael/Shutterstock



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Editor's notes...



Brett Shohet, Editor

Hello and welcome to this month's edition of **VISION** SouthWoodford. The seasons are shifting as we move from summer into autumn. There's no surer sign of this change than when Halloween decorations begin appearing in the shops - though I did notice some as early as July this year. I've even spotted a few festive decorations lurking on the shelves...

This means it's time to dig out our old jumpers and coats - you might find a crumpled £5 note in a pocket if you're lucky - and begin preparing ourselves for the colder months ahead. But even with the darker evenings and chillier weather, there's still a lot to look forward to. Make sure you check out our what's on page to find out some of the top events in your local area.

It's been reassuring to see that our high streets are getting busier once again. I've recently been out and about supporting local networking groups and helping local businesses make valuable new connections. It just goes to show that here at **VISION**, we will always do everything we can to support our advertisers and help them to succeed.

Taking place locally this month is a business exhibition featuring a variety of businesses and welcoming hundreds of visitors. We'll be looking to expand to other areas in the future, so watch this space.

Brett Shohet

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

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woodford@visionmag.co.uk | 0208 088 0386
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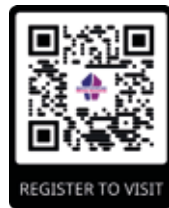
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Sooty™

Turns Seventy-Five

In an era where a fad is lucky to last a full five minutes, the enduring magic of hand puppet Sooty must be something of a mystery to young audiences. And yet, when faced with his snuggly yellow fur, button eyes and sweet, shy demeanour, they inevitably melt with adoration as generation upon generation of children before them have done.

Discovered by Harry Corbett OBE in a joke shop on Blackpool North Pier on July 19, 1948, 'Teddy' – as he was then known – was purchased for seven shillings and six pence.

Having long harboured ambitions for the stage, Bradford native Corbett first appeared with the silent bear in a 1952 BBC TV show, *Talent Night*. The act was an instant success and Sooty soon became the star of his very own show featuring magic tricks, slapstick comedy and songs – a nod to Corbett's former ambitions as a concert pianist which were thwarted by his being deaf in one ear. Soon afterwards, he was joined by his pals: there was Sweep, a grey male dog who communicated with a squeak, and Soo, a female panda with a human voice.

After suffering a heart attack in 1975, Corbett's son Peter (stage name Matthew) took over as Sooty's friend and keeper. In the ensuing years, and with the character now a mainstay on *Rainbow*, Corbett Senior would make occasional guest appearances on spin-off *Sooty Show* (by this point now airing on ITV) until his death in 1989.

Under Matthew Corbett, Sooty and co. would enjoy enormous success. He changed the format of the show to one of a sitcom but kept the integral elements. Namely, Sooty's wand, the catchphrase 'izzy, wizzy, let's get busy', and the silent bear's enduring love of water pistols and mayhem in general.

In 1998, Corbett was succeeded by Richard Cadell. Only a few weeks into his new role, he found himself at 10 Downing Street for a special awards ceremony honouring brave children, hosted by then Prime Minister Sir Tony Blair and his wife Cherie – who Sooty dutifully squirted with his water pistol.

Sooty and Sweep were also guests at the birthday party of His Majesty Prince Charles, as he was then, in 2018 (Sooty actually being a few months older than our now King). The pair have courted numerous other politicians, musicians and celebrities and even – on the hand of Harry Corbett – shared a giggle with Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

So how is it, then, that a premise so simple remains so beloved in an age of CGI and swanky animation?

"I think the great thing with Sooty – and this is a famous Harry Corbett quote – is that he's never really been in fashion, so he's never really been out," laughs Cadell.

"It's not like one of these children's things that spike and then disappear," explains the 54 year old, who will embark on *75th Birthday Spectacular* – a special UK national tour that kicks off on October 21 at Bradford's Alhambra Theatre and runs through until April 2024.

He adds: "Sometimes the things we cherish most as children, and adults, are based in simple entertainment, and I am delighted that fact has held true despite so much else around us changing."



Photo credit: Moviestore/Shutterstock

REFILMED the scenes

Are you a complete TV addict? What would you say if we told you that there are iconic sets all across the UK that you can visit? From *Coronation Street* to *Only Fools and Horses* to *Downtown Abbey*, here are some locations from popular shows that are open for visitors today.

Coronation Street – ITV Studios, Manchester

This walking tour of *Coronation Street*, the UK's longest-running soap, is a must for any Corrie fan. Complete with an expert guide, you can take a closer look at all the iconic shops and businesses on the street, including The Rovers Return, Roy's Rolls café and Webster's Auto Centre.

Only Fools and Horses – Bristol Temple Meads Train Station

One of Britain's most-loved comedies, who wouldn't want to take a closer look behind the scenes at this legendary sitcom? The *Only Fools and Horses* three-and-a-half-hour coach tour takes you to filming spots of more than 10 episodes and includes a look at Nelson Mandela House, Sid's Café and the road where the iconic Batman and Robin scene took place.

Peaky Blinders – Central Liverpool

A gritty masterpiece, *Peaky Blinders* was filmed in Liverpool even though it is set in Birmingham, owing to this city's well-preserved Victorian industrial architecture. Hop on either the half-day or full-day guided coach tour and see the homes of Polly and Field Marshal Russell, Garrison Lane and so much more.

Downtown Abbey – Bampton, Oxfordshire

Become Lord or Lady of Grantham for the day, with the *Downtown Abbey* and Village group tour. Visit the charming village of Bampton, which fans will know as Downtown Village. Then head to Highclere Castle, where you will be able to explore the estate and the rooms within and enjoy a spot of lunch.

Bridgerton – The Abbey Hotel, Bath

Channel your inner Daphne or Duke of Hastings with a guided *Bridgerton* tour. Explore many of this popular show's filming locations during this two-hour tour, including Lady Danbury's mansion, Gunter's Tea Shop and the modiste dress shop.



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A TECHNOLOGICAL MARVEL

Back in the early 19th century, there were no synthetic fibres available, and keeping clothing waterproof was a constant challenge. But Glasgow-born Charles Macintosh's innovation changed all that. He created a revolutionary material that was made by rubberising cotton cloth, making it waterproof. Macintosh patented his method, and the first 'Mac' hit the market in October 1823. His Mackintosh coat became an instant sensation, and the brand became synonymous with stylish and functional outerwear loved by workers and aristocrats alike.

STRANGE SMELLS AND MELTING COATS

Early Mackintosh coats faced a few issues – they smelled strange, the fabric was stiff, and they sometimes even melted in hot weather. Thankfully, these problems were largely solved in 1844 with the patenting of another groundbreaking innovation: the vulcanising of rubber. This chemical process made the fabric stronger and less sensitive to temperature changes.

BACK FROM THE BRINK

In the 1980s and 1990s, Mackintosh faced challenges from lightweight synthetic waterproof fabrics like Gore-Tex. However, a management buyout in the mid-1990s breathed new life into the brand. It also reclaimed its status as an upmarket brand, collaborating with prestigious fashion houses like Louis Vuitton.

THE MAKING OF A MACKINTOSH

To this day, the coats are still handmade in Cumbernauld, near Glasgow, using a fabric that's very similar to Macintosh's original. Skilled craftsmen and women cut, sew and seal the material by hand, using special rubber-based glue. Each seam is also taped to ensure the coats are 100 per cent waterproof.

Now owned by Japanese firm Yagi Tsusho, the Mackintosh has weathered the storms of fashion and remains a symbol of British style and innovation. If you want one, you'll need to start saving now; a classic trench coat will set you back almost £1,000.



FASHION



VEGGIE vision

Most people know that fruits and vegetables are good for your complexion when eaten regularly, but not everyone knows that they can also be applied to the skin and hair to achieve amazing results. Here are four of our favourite veggie-based beauty treatments.

PUMPKIN FOOT MASK – Best for dry, cracked heels

You will need: ½ cup of pumpkin purée | 1 whole egg | 1 tsp honey
How to apply: Combine all of the above ingredients in a bowl | Massage into the feet and ankles | Cover with cling film or put on a pair of old socks | Leave for 15 minutes and then rinse with warm water

BUTTERNUT SQUASH HAIR MASK – Best for dull or dry hair

You will need: ½ large butternut squash | 3 tbsp honey | ¼ cup of plain yogurt
How to make: Peel and cook the squash until soft enough to remove the inner contents | Mash the squash | Combine with the honey and yogurt | Apply the mixture to damp hair and put on a plastic shower cap | Leave on for 20 minutes and then rinse with warm water

BEETROOT FACE MASK – Best for ageing skin

You will need: 2 tsp beetroot juice | 1 tsp yogurt | 1 tsp lime juice | 2 tsp gram flour
How to make: Mix the beetroot juice with the flour and then add the yogurt and lime juice | Mix until you have a smooth paste | Spread the mixture evenly over the face and leave for 15 minutes | Rinse off with warm water | Pat your face dry

POTATO CLEANSER – Best for acne-prone skin

You will need: 1 potato | 1 cucumber | 1 tsp baking soda | 1 tsp water
How to apply: Peel and chop the potato and the cucumber | Blend in a food processor or blender for 20 seconds | Add the water and baking soda | Apply to the face daily to cleanse and remove make-up, dirt and impurities.



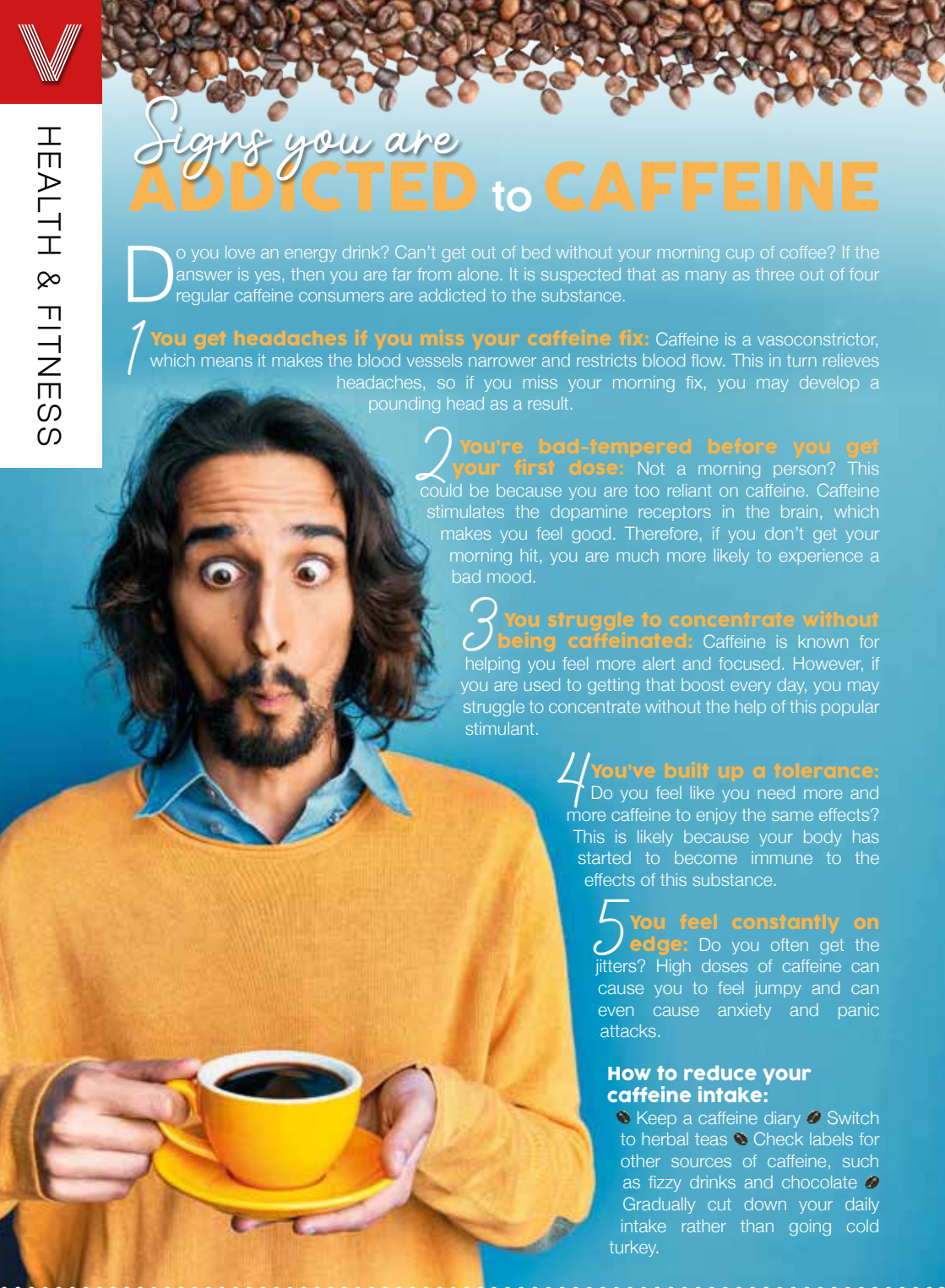
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Signs you are **ADDICTED** to **CAFFEINE**

Do you love an energy drink? Can't get out of bed without your morning cup of coffee? If the answer is yes, then you are far from alone. It is suspected that as many as three out of four regular caffeine consumers are addicted to the substance.

1 You get headaches if you miss your caffeine fix: Caffeine is a vasoconstrictor, which means it makes the blood vessels narrower and restricts blood flow. This in turn relieves headaches, so if you miss your morning fix, you may develop a pounding head as a result.

2 You're bad-tempered before you get your first dose: Not a morning person? This could be because you are too reliant on caffeine. Caffeine stimulates the dopamine receptors in the brain, which makes you feel good. Therefore, if you don't get your morning hit, you are much more likely to experience a bad mood.

3 You struggle to concentrate without being caffeinated: Caffeine is known for helping you feel more alert and focused. However, if you are used to getting that boost every day, you may struggle to concentrate without the help of this popular stimulant.

4 You've built up a tolerance: Do you feel like you need more and more caffeine to enjoy the same effects? This is likely because your body has started to become immune to the effects of this substance.

5 You feel constantly on edge: Do you often get the jitters? High doses of caffeine can cause you to feel jumpy and can even cause anxiety and panic attacks.

How to reduce your caffeine intake:

- ☛ Keep a caffeine diary ☛ Switch to herbal teas ☛ Check labels for other sources of caffeine, such as fizzy drinks and chocolate ☛ Gradually cut down your daily intake rather than going cold turkey.



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AUTUMN COCKTAILS

Just because summer now seems like a distant memory, doesn't mean that you can't still enjoy a delicious cocktail or two after work or when the kids are tucked up in bed.

Why not have a go at making one of these recipes below, and warm your cockles on a chilly night?

PUMPKIN WHITE RUSSIAN

You will need: 25ml pumpkin spice Kahlua | 50ml vodka | 25ml double cream

How to make: Pour the ingredients into a glass over ice | Stir lightly and serve.

CARAMEL APPLE MULE

You will need: 50ml vodka | 15ml caramel | 30ml apple cider vinegar | Ginger beer to top | 1 apple | 1 cinnamon stick

How to make: Shake the vodka, caramel and apple cider vinegar with ice | Strain into a mule mug over ice | Top with ginger beer | Garnish with an apple fan and cinnamon stick.

SLOE GIN FIZZ

You will need: 50ml sloe gin | 25ml lemon juice | 2 tsp sugar syrup | Sparkling water | Lemon slice | Fresh or frozen blackberry

How to make: Pour the sloe gin, lemon juice and sugar syrup into a cocktail shaker and top with ice | Shake well | Strain into a tall glass with more ice | Top with sparkling water and stir gently | Garnish with a lemon slice and a blackberry.

CAMPFIRE SLING

You will need: 50ml rye whisky | 7ml maple syrup | 3 dashes of chocolate bitters | Orange peel twist

How to make: Add all the ingredients to an old-fashioned glass with one piece of ice | Stir thoroughly | Scorch a piece of orange peel over the glass to release the oils.

MULLED APPLE JUICE

You will need: 1 litre apple juice | 1 cinnamon stick | 3 cloves | Orange slices | Sugar or honey to taste

How to make: Simmer the apple juice with the orange peel, cinnamon and cloves for 5-10 minutes | Sweeten with sugar or honey | Serve with some orange slices and a cinnamon stick.

Photo credit: bbcgoodfood.com, tastingpanelmag.com



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HOW TO BUILD YOUR *own soup*

Soup is cheap, filling and the perfect antidote to the cold weather. Sadly, supermarket offerings can be both costly and underwhelming. So we thought we'd share with you our foolproof method for prepping the perfect soup every time.

1. **CHOOSE A FAT:** Butter | Olive oil | Palm oil | Sunflower oil
2. **SELECT A BASE LIQUID (1 OR 2):** Beef/chicken stock | Vegetable stock | Cream | Tomato purée
3. **PICK A PROTEIN:** Chicken | Fish | Tofu | Lentils | Beans
4. **DECIDE ON A GRAIN:** Rice | Noodles | Pasta | Barley
5. **CHOOSE YOUR VEGGIES (UP TO 3):** Carrots | Onion | Peppers | Sweet potatoes | Parsnips | Spinach | Broccoli | Mushrooms
6. **ADD SOME FLAVOUR:** Garlic salt | Cayenne pepper | Cumin | Basil | Thyme | Chilli powder

How to make your soup

STEP 1: Heat your fat and sauté your aromatic veggies, such as onion and garlic, for 3-5 minutes.

STEP 2: Add your chosen protein and cook until browned or softened.

STEP 3: Add any other vegetables and allow them to soften for 5-10 minutes.

STEP 4: Pour in your base (unless using a cream base; if so save this until step 6), your grain and your selected spices and mix well.

STEP 5: Bring to the boil, reduce the heat and allow to simmer for around an hour.


STEP 6: Add cream if you are making a cream-based soup.

STEP 7: Allow to cool, and blend if you want a fully puréed soup.

STEP 8: Garnish with croutons, cheese or a herb-infused oil.

Freezing your soup

You can freeze your soup, ideally on the same day you make it, in an airtight container or freezer bag for 2-3 months. Most soups freeze well, with the exception of cream- or milk-based soups, which tend to separate. Add any fresh herbs or starchy elements such as rice or pasta once thawed and reheated, not before freezing, for optimum results.





Is your hallway looking more shabby than stylish? Has it become a place to dump everything and anything that doesn't have a proper home?

Discover five simple ways to transform the entrance to your home, with inspiring ideas to suit all hallways.

1. ADD POPS OF COLOUR

If you have a small hallway, you may be tempted to stick to white paint to make the space appear bigger.

However, by adding pops of bright colours such as yellow or green, you can create visual interest and fashion a vibrant space. If you don't want to go all out with colour on the walls, why not add a few bold accessories instead, such as brightly coloured coat hooks, colourful floor tiles or a piece of bold artwork?

2. MAKE THE MOST OF MIRRORS

Dark hallways can make the entrance to your home feel gloomy and unwelcoming. Counteract this by creating the illusion of light with a few well-placed mirrors. Don't be afraid to experiment with different sizes and shapes, as this can help to make more of a style statement.

3. INVEST IN FUNCTIONAL FURNITURE

Most hallways are narrow, which means they offer little in the way of space. Therefore, if you want to add a piece of furniture, then you need to make sure it is both stylish and practical. For example, a seating area that doubles up as a storage unit. It can also be a good idea to make use of any available vertical space, for example by hanging a wall cupboard above your coat hooks.

4. EMBRACE CONSCIOUS STYLING

As a transitional space in your home, it is important that your hallway is clutter free, well lit, and, most importantly, that it is styled in keeping with the rest of your interiors. Take a walk around your home and see what design elements you can incorporate into your hallway.

5. LAYER LIGHTING

You can transform a dark hallway with the right lighting, with layered lights offering a stylish and practical way to illuminate this key space. Try combining multiple pendant lights with directional wall lights for maximum impact.



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If you love the current rustic vibe but not the hefty price tags, check out these easy twig projects.

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- > A 25cm round frameless mirror
- > A 35cm circle of corrugated cardboard
- > A hot glue gun

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Glue the mirror in place in the centre of the cardboard circle.
- > Glue the twigs on the cardboard so that one end is right against the mirror edge and the other is sticking straight out, overlapping the cardboard. Layer on enough twigs so that the cardboard is completely covered.

For safety reasons, we recommend you prop your mirror on a shelf rather than hang it up.

TWIGGY PHOTO FRAME
YOU'LL NEED: For a 10cm x 15cm (6in x 4in) photo frame:

- > 2x 15cm twigs
- > 2x 20cm twigs
- > Twine
- > PVA glue
- > A piece of baking paper slightly larger than the photo
- > Scissors

HOW TO MAKE:

- > To form the first corner, lay a longer twig on top of a shorter twig, allowing 2.5cm of each twig to stick out where they overlap.
- > Wrap the two together so the twine forms a cross shape on top. Tie to secure.
- > Complete this step on all corners in the same way to create a rectangle.
- > Glue the photo onto the baking paper. Then glue the edges of the baking paper to the back of the frame, with the picture facing out.

JEWELLERY TREE
YOU'LL NEED:

- > A strong hardwood branch – approx. 25-30cm tall
- > A log slice about 5cm thick and 13-15cm in diameter
- > Epoxy glue (e.g. Araldite)
- > A drill and drill bits suitable for wood

HOW TO MAKE:

- > Drill a hole in the log slice, the same width as the main stem of the branch.
- > Fasten the branch in the hole with the glue and leave it to dry.
- > Hang up your jewellery!

Happy twigging!

Photo credit: saltygirlandherdog.com, doodlecraftblog.com



Let's get ready to TUMBLE!

Did you know that there are many more uses for tumble dryer sheets than just to reduce static and make your clothes smell nice? Discover five surprising uses for the humble dryer sheet below.

TO REMOVE FOOD RESIDUE FROM POTS AND PANS

If you have forgone the washing up in favour of more enjoyable activities, then you are likely to be left with food residue that simply won't budge. To remove this with minimal effort, simply place a dryer sheet in the middle of the pot or pan, add warm water and some washing-up liquid and allow it to soak. After an hour, remove the sheet, drain the water and wipe away the stains with a sponge.

TO PICK UP PET HAIR FROM CLOTHES AND UPHOLSTERY

Does your pet leave dander all over your clothes and upholstery? When it comes to removing stubborn pet hair, nothing beats a tumble dryer sheet. More effective than a lint roller, all you need to do is rub a fresh sheet against the item and watch the dander disappear.

TO CLEAN YOUR TV AND COMPUTER SCREENS

Out of screen-cleaning wipes? Don't panic, as you can use a tumble dryer sheet with equally impressive results. Designed to reduce static cling, a dryer sheet can effectively remove dust and prevent it from resettling.

TO REMOVE RESIDUE FROM YOUR IRON

Over time, residue will start to build up on your iron, which will make it less effective at removing creases. To clean this appliance, turn it on to a low heat setting and carefully rub a tumble dryer sheet over the surface, making sure not to touch the iron plate with your bare fingers. The heat will soften the residue and make it easy to remove.

TO SHARPEN SCISSORS

About to start a new craft project or wrap a present and realise your trusty scissors are blunt? Carefully run a tumble dryer sheet against the dull blade and enjoy restored sharpness in an instant. Be sure not to touch your finger directly to the blade!



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GREAT BRITISH INTERIOR DESIGNER: LAURA HAMMETT



HOME & DIY

Laura Hammett is an award-winning design house, run by Laura and her husband Aaron since 2008. With more than 25 years of experience between them, they are known for creating contemporary interiors with classic touches, resulting in stunning elegance.

Laura Hammett's work spans the globe and even includes a private jet. You can also enjoy the Laura Hammett look with a creative approach.

A CLASSIC STYLE FOR THE MODERN ERA

When you examine Laura Hammett's style, you're instantly transported to modern London. The designs are full of light and detail, creating beautiful looks that would be right at home in any design coffee table book.

Colour palettes include lighter shades of grey and taupe, paired with darker details to add contrast. Light upholstery, rich walnut and subtle marble are some of the styles that have been used in the Laura Hammett portfolio, adding character and elegance to all kinds of homes.

CREATING THE LOOK

With these simple tips, you can transform your home with a modern luxe look the Laura Hammett way.

- > Enhance the natural light in your home by keeping walls light. Think greige, off-white and white to draw the light in.
- > Adding details such as cushions and throws in rich fabrics can make your interior look more upmarket, without designer price tags.
- > Statement light fittings and abstract wall art in your colour scheme can complete your space, helping you create some interest without filling the room with clutter.
- > Search antique shops and second-hand stores to find high-quality furniture items you can restore to their former glory.

Laura Hammett's style is on trend and attainable, a look that can you can adapt to your own home to create subtle modern elegance.

Photo credit: laurahammett.com, @laurahammettinteriors via Instagram



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V29



BIG BEN

BEN STOKES OBE'S INCLUSION IN THE WORLD CUP SQUAD IS GREAT NEWS FOR ENGLAND CRICKET... LESS SO FOR OUR OPPONENTS!

When Durham and England all-rounder Ben Stokes OBE decided that the gruelling cricketing schedule was too much for him and his body to take, a collective sigh of relief from those who cherish the clack of leather on willow must have been heard all around the world in the sport.

It was July 2022. Stokes had spent the previous three months leading his country in Test cricket after succeeding Joe Root MBE as captain, and things in that regard had started perfectly, with four wins in a row.

However, after commenting that he felt playing all three of cricket's formats – Test, ODI and T20 – was “unsustainable”, Stokes’ last 50-over tussle came against South Africa at his home ground, Durham’s Riverside.

Yet a year is a long time in sport, and even longer in the seesaw nature of the Christchurch-born all-rounder’s career. So roll on 12 months, and despite a huge summer Ashes series ahead, Stokes began speaking to his limited overs captain Jos Buttler MBE and coach Matthew Mott about a quickfire return to the ODI circuit.

Stokes says: “The closer this World Cup got, the more I was becoming interested in having those discussions. And when you consider that we are the defending champions, it almost feels right to want to ensure you defend that crown.

“At the same time, I had to remind myself of the original reason for choosing to retire from this format of the game.”

Return he has, with a pledge from the 32-year-old to listen to his body, perhaps better than he has in the past when the almost constant demands of the game have had an impact on not just physical abilities, but the star’s mental wellbeing too.

“Let’s see how this World Cup goes,” he adds, “and I’ll decide then if it’s my last hurrah.”

Had Stokes not chosen to return to the fold, we would have been denied his record-breaking knock against New Zealand in the third ODI at The Kia Oval in September. Coming into bat alongside Dawid Malan with England compromised on 13/2, Stokes was about to rev it up against the Kiwis.

His 15 fours and nine sixes contributed to an almost unimaginable personal total of 182, beating Jason Roy’s 180 against Australia in Melbourne in 2018. His efforts saw England reach a mammoth 368 off 48.1 overs. New Zealand could only muster 187 all out and Stokes took a further leap into the echelons of iconic status.

“I need more time to get used to its rhythm, but I think I managed well this time,” he said, referencing that spectacular knock. “The announcer mentioned my record just before I was done. I didn’t even know about it until then. Jason congratulated me, and I apologised to him,” he laughs.

Does Stokes feel that England can become world champions again, and in the process become only the third side to defend the title since its inception in 1975?

“Everyone recognises our team’s strength, and it’s not boastful to admit we have a talented line-up. We’re optimistic about our chances, but in World Cup matches, it’s all about handling pressure.”

Photo credit: Kieran Mollenius/Shutterstock

FROM YOUR AREA

Teddies launched from church tower



Holy Trinity Church in South Woodford hosted its 'parateddy' event last month.

Last year, the event was held to celebrate Her Late Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee and it was such a success that organisers decided to bring it back for the second year running.

Children were invited to bring along teddies, which were hoisted up to the top of the church tower, equipped with mini parachutes. They were then launched off the tower. The teddy that managed to stay airborne for longest was Puppy, owned by proud Emma, who glided for 12 seconds.

Around 150 people attended the event, where there was also a barbecue, bouncy castle, and prayer tent.

Reverend Abi Todd said: "One of our aims is to demonstrate the place of the church within the community as a centre for connections."

Residents visit Islamic centre for special event

South Woodford Islamic Centre held a successful Visit My Mosque event on Sunday, September 24.

Visit My Mosque is an initiative organised throughout the UK by the Muslim Council of Britain and provides the opportunity for communities to observe the workings of their local mosque.

Visitors to South Woodford Islamic Centre on Primrose Road also had the opportunity to see the

centre's recent refurbishments.

Saleem Malik, trustee of the centre, said it was a "very successful event", with 100 local visitors.

He said: "One elderly lady who has lived in South Woodford all her life said she was so happy she had come and was smiling as she left. It was great to see."

Family of murder victim sets up foundation

A foundation has been set up in honour of a former Woodford Green pupil who was stabbed to death earlier this year.

James O'Malley-Kumar has created the Grace O'Malley-Kumar Foundation to further the causes his sister believed in and to keep her memory alive.

Grace (pictured below) was killed while on a night out in Nottingham on June 13, along with two others. Valdo Calocane has been charged with their murder and is due to appear in court at the end of this month.

Grace attended Woodford Green Preparatory School and Bancroft's School in Woodford Green.

James, who grew up in Woodford with his sister, has said that the motivation behind the foundation is the desire to "make something good" following the tragedy of his sister's death.

He said: "We will use the platform to better the causes that Grace supported and which meant a lot to her. The things that meant a lot to her mean a lot to my parents and me. It still feels very raw."

To donate, please visit www.gofundme.com/f/loving-memory-of-grace-omalleykumar



Photo credit: Bancroft's School

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NEWS FROM

THE 100 CLUB

LOCAL BUSINESSES SUPPORTING HAVEN HOUSE



More than 150 members of BluePrint Fitness in South Woodford, alongside friends and family, pushed themselves to the limit with a gruelling 24-hour sponsored workout to raise funds for our hospice.

The epic challenge saw 24 teams push a 65-kilogram prowler sled in relay along a 15-metre track for 24 hours, achieving a total distance of 182,574km.

The inspiration behind the challenge was to raise money for Haven House, the gym's local children's hospice, which supports two-year-old Carter Dunn (pictured bottom right) and his family. Carter's dad Jack, grandad Charlie, auntie Katie and godmother Lyndsey were among the participants.

Carter has epilepsy, sleep apnoea and respiratory issues and also has difficulty feeding. He is supported by Haven House's nurses, physiotherapists, and music and yoga therapists.

Carter's mum Scarlett Lowry said: "Carter just loves Haven House. We have some amazing teams on hand that support us. I don't know where we would

be without the hospice."

Lyndsey said: "It was an honour to take part in such a great event for a charity that does so much to support seriously ill children and their families. Thank you to some very big (and fit) hearts at BluePrint Fitness – you all did a superb job."

Pizza, beer, bottomless brunch and tunes from three different DJs, plus lots of laughter and cheers spurred participants on. Local businesses also donated prizes for the raffle.

Sarah Harris, Haven House's community and events manager, said: "I have never seen a challenge of this scale, and it was simply incredible to watch the members of BluePrint Fitness come together for our families.

"We are so grateful to all the members of BluePrint Fitness for their support."

The fundraiser has so far raised more than £12,500. To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/page/vikki-brock-1692013879415

From rural surroundings to entertainment icon

You wouldn't expect to find a buoyant behemoth of modern primetime entertainment lingering in the leafy, rural, countryside surrounds of Stanford, yet Rylan Clark-Neal's life in Essex is indeed the epitome of serenity, and a world away from the flashbulbs and entertainment excesses that pattern his day job.

Born Ross Clark and raised in Stepney, East London, the presenter we now know as Rylan got his big break when he auditioned for the ninth series of *The X Factor* in 2012. Though his singing skills may not have been the strongest among the contestants, his magnetic personality quickly captured the hearts of both the audience and assembled judges. Finishing in fifth place, his time on *The X Factor* provided a solid foundation for his future career in television.

Celebrity Big Brother followed, with audiences won over by the star's vibrant personality and natural charm. Presenting duties proved an obvious route for someone who, while never turning his back on his reality TV roots, was keen to explore other areas. These have included *Big Brother* spin-offs, plus daytime TV (*This Morning*), game shows (*Supermarket Sweep*), panel shows (*Celebrity Juice* and *Would I Lie to You?*) and *Eurovision*.

Rylan is openly gay, and while he uses his influence to good effect in terms of fundraising and providing exposure to minority groups – such as the LGBTQ+ community – the 34-year-old remains grounded and sincere.

The current voice of car retailer Cinch, the presenter is set to embark on a busy schedule of work in the coming months, including a rumoured *Big Brother* return.

Clark-Neal recently swapped Stanford for Brentwood, where his mother Linda lives, and remains loyal to his Essex image. As he says: "There is no better place on Earth – the people, the places, the vibe. It's always Essex."



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SOUTH WOODFORD COMMUNITY MARKET

George Lane, South Woodford, E18 1JJ
 Every third Sunday of the month, 11am – 4pm



Photo credit: South Woodford Market/Instagram

This monthly market offers street food, fresh fish, artisan bread, olives, churros, juices and cocktails, alongside cards, photos and handmade craft stalls.

To find out more visit www.swwg.co.uk/pec-events/south-woodford-community-market/1697367600

ROALD DAHL AND THE IMAGINATION SEEKERS

Redbridge Drama Centre, Churchfields,
 South Woodford, E18 2RB
 Monday, October 23, 11am and 1pm

Especially made for ages five and up, this show develops both creative and literacy skills through performance, games and creative play, while exploring Roald Dahl's extraordinary stories, including *The BFG* and *The Twits*.

Tickets cost £11.50. To find out more and to book, please visit www.visionrcl.org.uk/event/roald-dahl

LET'S CELEBRATE BLACK AUTHORS: UNDER FIVES STORYTIME

South Woodford Library, 116 High Road,
 South Woodford, E18 2QS
 Friday, October 27, 10am

Come along and celebrate the incredible contributions of Black authors who have woven tales that touch our hearts, inspire our minds and ignite our imaginations.

The event is free; visit www.visionrcl.org.uk/event/lets-celebrate-black-authors-under-5s-storytime

PUMPKIN PLOD

Haven House Children's Hospice,
 High Road, Woodford Green, IG8 9LB
 Saturday, October 28, 12.30pm – 4pm

The Haven House Pumpkin Plod includes a 3km adventure trail through Epping Forest. Back at the hospice, there will be Halloween-themed activities, a live DJ, hot food, face painting and more. There's plenty to keep little ones entertained while helping to support a great cause.

Tickets cost £3 for adults and children over 12, and £8 for children aged two to 12. Children under two go free. To book, visit www.havenhouse.org.uk

NATIONAL TRUST WINTER MEETING

All Saints Church, Inmans Row,
 Woodford Green IG8 0NH

Wednesday, November 15, 2.30pm

National Trust Woodford and District Centre is pleased to welcome everyone to its winter meeting, where Dr Ben Cowell will give a talk on the Historic Houses Association.

Entry is free for members of Woodford and District Centre and volunteers, or £3 for visitors.

MY LIFE WITH WINSTON

Redbridge Drama Centre, Churchfields,
 South Woodford, E18 2RB
 Friday, November 17, 7.30pm – 9.30pm

They say that behind every great man, there is a great woman. Was this true in Churchill's case? What of Clementine, his wife for 56 years? Liz Grand's superb portrayal of Clementine Churchill answers many of the questions about Clementine and her marriage.

Tickets cost £16.50. To book, visit www.visionrcl.org.uk/event/my-life-with-winston



Photo credit: Redbridge Arts Centre



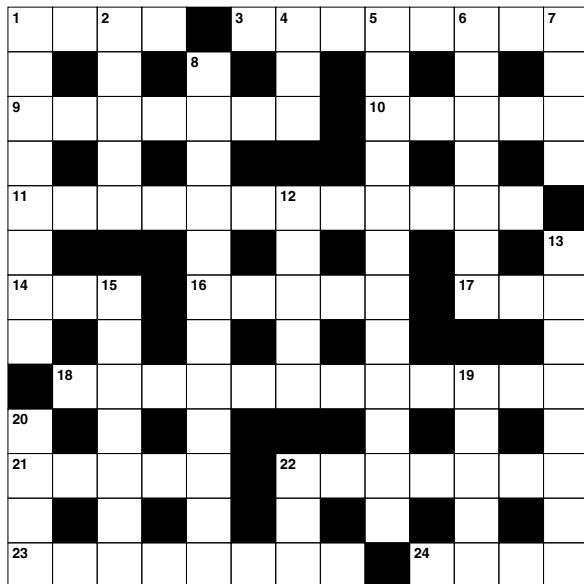
PUZZLES & TRIVIA

ACROSS

1. Light blast of wind (4)
3. Fast runner (8)
9. Not tense (7)
10. Written agreements (5)
11. Opposite of amateur (12)
14. Decay (3)
16. Lacking meaning (5)
17. Wonder (3)
18. Incessantly (12)
21. Concerning (5)
22. Mound made by insects (7)
23. Shows (8)
24. Snake-like fish (pl.) (4)

DOWN

1. Sweat (8)
2. Leaf of parchment (5)
4. Collection of many sheets of paper (3)
5. Enhancements (12)
6. Musical composition (7)
7. Repose (4)
8. Based on untested ideas (12)
12. Set out (5)

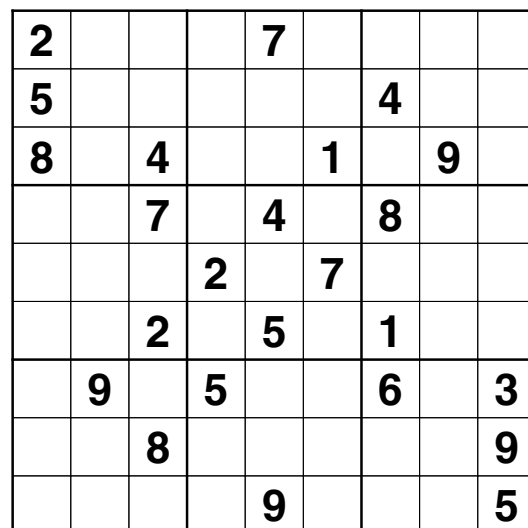


13. Uses again (8)
15. Slight earthquakes (7)
19. Part of a church tower (5)
20. Edible fat (4)
22. Nay (anag) (3)

DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ A hummingbird beats its wings up to 70 times per second.
- ▶ Hummingbirds are the only birds that can fly backwards.
- ▶ There are reportedly more than 350 known species of hummingbird, from the giant hummingbird weighing around 20g, to the bee hummingbird which measures less than three inches.
- ▶ Hummingbirds use their long, thin tongues like straws to drink nectar from flowers.
- ▶ Rufous hummingbirds migrate 4,000 miles from Mexico to Alaska every spring.
- ▶ Female hummingbirds use spider silk to weave together twigs and leaves for their nests.
- ▶ Hummingbirds have no sense of smell.

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How to grow SNOWDROPS

Snowdrops are one of the first signs of spring and can make a wonderful addition to any garden. Instantly recognisable by their small, white, bell-shaped flowers, snowdrops are easy to grow and will come back year after year.

WHERE TO PLANT SNOWDROPS

Snowdrops thrive in moist but well-drained soil and in partial shade. If you plant snowdrops in soil that is too dry, you risk the bulbs drying out and failing to flower. Choose to grow snowdrops beneath deciduous shrubs or along the front of borders where herbaceous plants can provide ground cover when these flowers are dormant. They also do well planted in grass, in spring border displays and in rock gardens.

HOW TO PLANT SNOWDROPS

Dry snowdrop bulbs can be planted in autumn, but these are often hard to establish. Instead, opt to plant snowdrops in the green in January or February. Simply lift snowdrop plants just after flowering and before the foliage has turned yellow, and replant somewhere else. You can buy snowdrops in the green from your local garden centre or online.

HOW TO CARE FOR SNOWDROPS

Once snowdrops are established, they require no maintenance. Allow the foliage to die back naturally as this will help to ensure that the nutrients from the leaves are returned to the bulbs. Once every two years, divide any established clumps to avoid overcrowding.

HOW TO PROPAGATE SNOWDROPS

To propagate snowdrops, lift and divide established clumps after flowering in either March or April. Using a fork, carefully lift the bulb with the roots intact and the foliage still in place. Replant in the garden immediately and water well. The foliage may appear a little sorry, but it should look healthy by next winter.

TOP SNOWDROP VARIETIES:

Galanthus nivalis | Galanthus elwesii | Galanthus woronowii | Galanthus Armine | Galanthus Cordelia.

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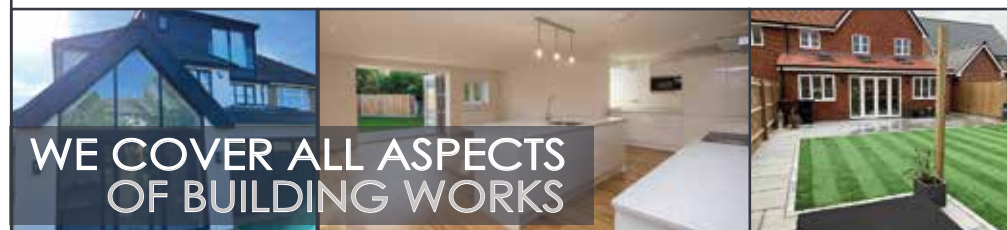
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WILD WEAR

THE ESSENTIAL WARDROBE FOR THE DEVOTED GARDENER

While gardening is a careful curation of your outdoor space, it's important not to forget the importance of maintaining your own green-fingered style.

TROUSERS

A pair of dedicated garden workwear trousers or dungarees will suit you much better than a simple pair of old jeans.

If you've gardened before, you'll know the perils of pinching waistbands, seams riding up, back-of-the-knee fatigue and general ripping or snagging; so investing in a pair of trousers that is waterproof, strong, flexible and with ample pockets on the front and sides, plus has all-essential knee pads, is a great idea.

HEADWEAR

Hats are a must when the sun comes out, and will also keep you warm when temperatures drop. Most gardeners will showcase a variety of headwear – from a nice woolly beanie hat in winter to a brimmed hat for summertime. Mix it up and keep your head in a good place.

FOOTWEAR

Footwear should be comfortable, as long hours on location can bring about foot pain and sores. From classic Crocs to garden sandals, sturdy boots to full-length wellies, your footwear will most likely match weather conditions.

Don't forget to invest in a few good pairs of socks too – in the winter, they will excel at keeping the cold out, while breathable varieties for the summer will minimise the threat of fungal infections.

GLOVES

While most gardeners are more than happy to get their hands dirty, gloves are essential for protecting your skin from sharp matter, such as rocks, stones and thorns. Switch between thicker and lighter varieties for seasonal versatility.

JACKET

Finally, as the weather changes, keep the cold out if you're committing long hours to the soil with a jacket that's breathable, a hood for sudden inclement weather, and plenty of pockets for essentials.



GARDENING



Keeping your dog SAFE IN AUTUMN

Autumn is one of the best times of year for long walks with your dog, when the leaves are falling from the trees and the weather has cooled. That being said, there are lots of lurking dangers that you need to be aware of.

ACORNS: Acorns contain a toxic ingredient called tannic acid which can cause damage to your dog's liver and kidneys. When ingested, they can also lead to vomiting, diarrhoea, lethargy and abdominal pain.

CONKERS: Conker seeds boast a spiky green shell that can injure your dog's mouth if picked up and carried around. The shiny brown conker inside can be a choking hazard and, if ingested, can cause vomiting, diarrhoea and sometimes an intestinal blockage.

FALLEN FRUIT: If you take your dog on long country walks, they are highly likely to encounter fallen fruit such as apples and plums. When these fruits fall on the ground, they start to ferment and produce a natural alcoholic substance. If eaten in large quantities, this can cause vomiting and diarrhoea.

HARVEST MITES: Harvest mites are tiny red mites that tend to appear at the end of summer and into autumn. They are often found on a dog's coat, in between their toes and in their ear folds. These mites can cause extreme itching and trauma to the skin.

WILD MUSHROOMS: Wild mushrooms come in all sorts of shapes, colours and sizes, which makes it very hard to distinguish between the edible ones and those that are poisonous. If your dog eats an unknown fungus, it may cause a mild stomach upset, or it could be deadly.

SPRING BULBS: Many people plant spring bulbs in autumn, such as daffodil, tulip and spring crocus bulbs. These are all toxic to dogs and can make them very unwell if ingested.



Incy wincy spider

Halloween provides the perfect opportunity for you to get crafty with your kids, and this spooky spiderweb doesn't disappoint. Suitable for little ones and older children alike, discover how to make your very own salt and glue spiderweb craft below.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Black paper or card | A pencil | A ruler | PVC or Elmer's glue | Table salt | Watercolour paints | A soft brush

HOW TO MAKE:

1 Draw your spiderweb design:

Your child can do this by hand themselves, depending on their age and ability, using a pencil or ruler, or you can help them with this step. Alternatively, you could print out a spiderweb template to use.

2 Trace the shape with glue: The next step is to trace glue along each line of your spiderweb. Again, young children may need help with this if they want to achieve a good spiderweb shape. To make the glue lines as smooth as possible, do not allow the tip of the glue bottle to touch the paper but instead, hover slightly above it.

3 Cover the spiderweb with salt: Fill a ramekin or small bowl with table salt and then use two fingers to pinch the salt and sprinkle it over the glue. Make sure that you cover each line and curve with enough salt. Leave the glue to fully dry, ideally overnight, before moving on to the next step.

4 Paint your spiderweb: Now comes the really exciting part: adding colour to your spiderweb. Watercolour paints are perfect for this as they spread well on dried glue and salt. Using a soft brush, plenty of water and your chosen watercolours, add a drop or two of colour to a salt line. Use a light touch and do not scrub as this may dissolve your spiderweb.

MAKE A HANGING SPIDERWEB

Take your craft to the next level by applying the glue and the paint, minus the salt, to a thin plastic sheet, gently peel it off and then fix it to your preferred surface using sticky glue dots or hang around the room with string. Make sure you allow the glue to fully dry before peeling.

Photo credit: meandmias.com, thepurplepumpkinblog.co.uk





THE ZOO IN THE FOREST

Get To Know Animals is an animal rescue centre which is home to over 350 animals across 70 species, providing animal therapy and handling experiences.

Founded in 2016 by Donna Rose who was driven by a deep-rooted passion from her own personal experiences of animal interaction and the amazing impact it can have on both physical & mental wellbeing.

GTKA opened November 2019 in Chingford, and though it was small (a converted betting shop) it made a massive impact and welcomed over 4000 customers through the doors in the first few months!!!

Sadly, the national lockdown in March of 2020 meant that GTKA had to close and couldn't reopen its doors again until April 2021. When it could, the remaining restrictions meant that operating anywhere close to its previous potential was impossible.

Lockdown wasn't all bad news as it led Donna to reconnect with Rob - who would go on to become the love of her life - (an old friend from senior school) and together they made



the decision to relocate to the current site in Epping.

Construction of the brand-new Animal Experience Centre began in earnest in December 2021. Fast forward 15 months, add in a bucket of blood, sweat, tears, mixed with a chain of events that would make the script writers of EastEnders blush, & GTKA finally opened its doors to the eagerly awaiting public.

Since opening, visitors have been able to meet animals ranging from an Armadillo to an Alligator, monkeys to mice, snakes, spiders, skunks, lizards and much, much more!



If you've yet to experience the jungle in Epping Forest, then visit www.gtka.co.uk for more details and ticket options.



The GLOBAL ZOO

Animals unique to one place and how to see them

The ability of animals to explore the world is only bettered by the wanderlust of humans, yet there is still a clutch of species who have never ventured from their home continents and, in some cases, countries. While the Galápagos Islands typically take credit for the planet's most unique array of life, here are some others worth celebrating.

GELADA, ETHIOPIA

A monkey that looks like it's wearing a tuxedo, the gelada is native to the highlands of Ethiopia and has rarely strayed. While other monkey species are known for swinging from trees with reckless abandon, these are happiest on the desert floor, eating grass, seeds, roots and insects.

INACCESSIBLE ISLAND RAIL, INACCESSIBLE ISLAND

Yes, there is a place called Inaccessible Island – it's in the South Atlantic – and it requires little description. To describe the world's smallest flightless bird (which also takes the 'Inaccessible' name) is undoubtedly to make a straightforward link

to how this little creature has never made it to the mainland.

THORNY DEVIL, AUSTRALIA

This lizard looks like something out of a Marvel comic, albeit it's never been exported any further than the Aussie outback. It can drink water through its skin, which is just as well, as there is precious little of the stuff about in the summer heat of the Southern Hemisphere.

TEXAS BLIND SALAMANDER, USA

Without eyes or skin colour, this peculiar amphibian detects prey by virtue of vibrations around it. It has never made it out of US waters and you're highly unlikely to ever see one in the flesh, since it lives deep underwater in cave networks.

MANX CAT, ISLE OF MAN

Lastly, there's the famous Manx cat. Although these have been brought across to the mainland, they stand apart from other cat species owing to a rare genetic mutation that means they are born with no tails.



Get BALANCED!

Did you know that National Work/Life Balance Week takes place this month, with the aim of generating awareness of the importance of a healthy balance between your professional and personal life?

If you struggle to switch off after leaving work or you find the lines between your work and home life have blurred, then we are here to help you.

Why is a good work/life balance important?

A good work/life balance involves finding a harmonious relationship between your home life and your working life. This is vital to your overall wellbeing as people need to engage in a wide range of activities, as well as rest, in order to thrive. If you work too hard or work very long hours, you are more likely to experience high levels of stress and suffer from insomnia, depression and/or anxiety.

What is an unhealthy work/life balance?

The most common signs of an unhealthy work/life balance are:

- > Regularly working long hours, including evenings, weekends and holidays
- > Neglecting your personal/family life owing to excessive work demands
- > Experiencing burnout, which causes physical, emotional and mental exhaustion
- > A lack of time for self-care, including sleep and leisure activities
- > Strained relationships owing to work commitments

How to achieve the right balance between work and home life

- 1. SET BOUNDARIES:** Make sure that you establish clear boundaries between your work and personal life by defining specific working hours and sticking to them.
- 2. FOCUS ON TIME MANAGEMENT:** Sometimes people are guilty of working hard rather than smart, which can mean they have to spend longer at the office and less time at home. Instead, prioritise the most important tasks both at home and at work.
- 3. BE FLEXIBLE:** At times, you will need to have to adjust your work schedule to accommodate unforeseen personal circumstances or emergencies, so don't feel guilty about doing this.



WORK CAREER FAMILY LIFE

LUXE

RARE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE

Offers are being invited at £2.5m freehold for this fabulous opportunity to purchase an existing home with additional planning granted, plus a large live work studio at the rear of the garden and further planning to build another family home as a separate dwelling.

This is a well-presented four-bedroom detached house in Epping, Essex. This home is approximate 1453 sq ft in size, with glazed windows, and has been extended since it was built between 1900 and 1929. The property is conveniently situated for Epping London Underground station, and has outstanding access to education as it is in the catchment area for Epping Primary School (Ofsted rating good) and a couple of miles away from Davenant Foundation School (among the top eight per cent of secondary schools nationally). Further enhancement of the Epping area shows plans to include a 25 m swimming pool, gym and sports hall, cinema and large retail park all within walking distance.

The main house on the land has been refurbished to a modern standard for family living. The downstairs has a large through lounge with conservatory. Separate fitted kitchen overlooking the garden which has access down a spiral staircase to a large basement area which has permission for a two-storey rear extension as well as a man cave/cinema room in the basement.

Upstairs, there are three double bedrooms and a single bedroom plus a family four-piece suite bathroom.

The current dwelling has a large garden at the rear, furthermore, there is planning permission to change the existing garden room to a large one-bedroom annexe of approximately 1400sq ft. (You could have this as a large office/gym/sauna). Plans are already drawn up.

The final stage of the planning would be for the outbuilding/garage to the left of the main dwelling as



you look at the house to have this knocked down and a detached three bedroom and study private house built in its place. This house would have its own private parking and gates to the front and side. The size of this family home would be very impressive, but still tucked away on this quiet road. We have current plans for this dwelling which show downstairs to have an open plan kitchen/diner with a separate living room and cloakroom. Upstairs has three double beds with the master has an en-suite bathroom and walk in wardrobe, study room and family bathroom.

The whole plot will need to be sold as a full redevelopment opportunity for anyone looking to live in the main

home and have the rear annexe as an office/gym or for an older family member to live within the grounds of the house and then to build the property to the side for a passive income if rented or to generate a future financial gain.

Existing house

90.21 m² ground floor
70.31 m² first floor
9 m² lower ground floor
Total internal GIA 169.52 m²
Outbuilding (Existing House Plot)
Total internal GIA 134.08 m²

New dwelling house

70 m² ground floor
66 m² first floor
Total internal GIA 136 m²

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The Regency, South Woodford, London – £475,000 Leasehold

Luxe are pleased to market this stunning two double bedroom property, with allocated parking, situated on the ground floor of this luxury development. The property consists of an excellent open plan kitchen/living room, modern family bathroom and two well-proportioned double bedrooms with fitted wardrobes in both bedrooms.



Forest Drive, Theydon Bois – To Let £1450pcm

Wonderful two bedroom flat (double and single) flat situated within a well maintained quite development in Theydon Bois. Newly decorated with neutral tones with a flash of the modern grey twist. Fitted kitchen with fully integrated high end appliances. The flat is available on an unfurnished basis and has access to permit parking off street within the development.

Further details can be found on the Epping Forest District Council website
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk



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BAD SPORTSMANSHIP:

ERIC CANTONA

With true skill, finesse and regular glimpses of genius, when Eric Cantona was good, he was very good. Yet the Frenchman was tainted with a self-destructive element that permeated his game.

Cantona was ever the mercurial talent, and was an iconic figure for Manchester United during the club's early glory years under Sir Alex Ferguson CBE.

From the outset of his career, Cantona's undoubted flair was plainly evident, yet so too was his lack of composure.

During a match in 1988 between his club, Auxerre, and Nantes, the Marseille-born forward kung fu kicked Michel Der Zakarian, landing him a three-month ban which was later reduced after the club threatened to withdraw him from French national team selection.

As it would turn out, this would not be an isolated incident. A string of other disciplinary issues in France prompted a move to England, with Leeds



Photo credit: Colorsport/Shutterstock

United the beneficiaries as they clinched the final First Division title before the inception of the Premier League in 1992. A tempestuous time at Elland Road then saw him move to hated rivals Manchester United for a cut price £1.25million.

Talent and turbulence would continue at Old Trafford, but never more so than one night in January 1995 in South East London. After being sent off for his kick at opposition defender Richard Shaw, Cantona was confronted by Palace supporter Matthew Simmons, who had run down 11 rows of the stand to confront and racially abuse the Frenchman. Cantona responded by launching into the crowd with another of his trademark kung fu kicks and followed this with a series of punches.

The sultry, softly spoken Frenchman's reaction to his subsequent eight-month ban went down as one of football's famous quotes. "When the seagulls follow the trawler," he said, taking a sip of water, "it's because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea."

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GOOD CARS

for **ULEZ 2023 EXPANSION**






Photo credit: mercedes-benz.co.uk, ford.co.uk, mazda.co.uk, volkswagen.co.uk

Regardless of your thoughts on the controversial expansion of London's Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ), there is a wide selection of cars out there ready to help you bypass this expensive charge.

The extension of ULEZ to encompass the whole of Greater London became operational at the end of August, and not without considerable objection.

Now, petrol vehicles must meet Euro 4 standards, with even tighter Euro 6 requirements for their diesel cousins.

Entering the ULEZ with a non-conforming vehicle invites a daily charge of £12.50, so Mayor of London Sadiq Khan's £2,000 grant for Greater London residents looking to change to a ULEZ-compliant motor is appealing, as are some of the cars that fit the criteria.

For instance, for those desiring a premium touch, the Mercedes-Benz A-Class hatchback is a worthy contender, boasting advanced technology and a luxurious interior. Models from 2013 hover around the £10,000 mark.

The widely admired Ford Focus has numerous ULEZ-compliant variants. One with fewer than 50,000 miles could be yours for less than £6,000.

Or what about the iconic Mazda MX-5? The Japanese brand is revered for superb driving experience and affordability. However, look out for some older versions, as these may not meet ULEZ requirements.

Lastly, the VW Polo, particularly the 1.2 TDI BlueMotion edition of the Mk5, is famously fuel-efficient, boasting up to 91.1mpg on motorways and 67.3mpg in urban settings. With no emission zone charges and some high-mileage models available at under £4,000, it's a sound option.

While virtually all petrol cars sold after 2005 are ULEZ compliant – along with petrol vans after 2006 and motorbikes registered after July 2007 – it ultimately pays to check your vehicle, as well as the status of a potential new one, online at tfl.gov.uk/modes/driving/check-your-vehicle

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