

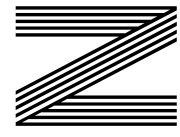
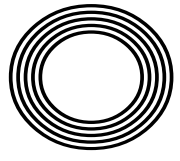
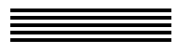


**TOP 7
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TRENDS
FOR 2023**

*Relax and unwind
with adult colouring*

SAVE MONEY
try no-spend January

*Celebrate the creation
OF WINNIE-THE-POOH*



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Photo credit: BBC

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Last orders as Queen Vic landlord leaves Eastenders



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Editor's notes...

JANUARY 2023



Nik Allen, Editor

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

If December wasn't busy enough, we had a tremendous World Cup to distract us from the usual Christmas build-up. The lead-up to the event was of course filled with controversy surrounding the hosts, but away from that, they sure did put on a great show for us all back at home. I'm glad we were able to focus on the impressive athletics on display.

I thought England gave a great account for themselves in the tournament, including Gareth Southgate, whom I'm pleased has decided to carry on until after Euro 2024. You can feel this team improving on past

failures and being stronger together, which certainly bodes well for the future. It does feel like real success is closer with Gareth than under previous managers.

The final was one of the greatest we've seen in recent years, with Lionel Messi and Kylian Mbappé showing why they are both considered to be amongst the world's elite. Congratulations to Argentina on a hard-fought and well-earned third World Cup.

I hope you had a wonderful Christmas and spent some quality time with friends and family. Finally, I wish you every success for this new year.

Nik Allen

Delivered in Frinton-on-Sea, Manningtree, Mistley, Brantham, Walton-on-the-Naze and Clacton-on-Sea every month.

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Daniel & Millie, Via Google

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SPARE?

AMID THE RELEASE OF HARRY AND MEGHAN'S TRIO OF PROJECTS, WE LOOK AT HOW THE 'SPARE' AND HIS WIFE HAVE BEGUN TO TELL THEIR TRUTH

Since their unexpected flight from both British shores and the working Royal Family in January 2020, Prince Harry and his wife Meghan have caused quite the stir, constructing a new narrative that neither they nor the Royal Family can be certain of recovering from.

First came a biography of the pair, *Finding Freedom*, written by close confidante Omid Scobie, which hinted at unease within the royal ranks. Then, in March 2021, their shock interview with TV talk show maven Oprah Winfrey aired to global comment on both sides of the Atlantic.

Since then, things have been reasonably quiet and calm as the Sussexes have settled into their Los Angeles lifestyle and adjusted to family life with their two children, Archie, aged three, and 18-month-old Lilibet. However, as several multimillion-dollar deals reach their point of fruition, our red-headed prince and his raven-maned wife are once again back in the spotlight.

Last month, their six-part Netflix documentary *Harry & Meghan* was released, which saw the Duke and Duchess of Sussex attempt to tell their side of the story. Capturing the couple from their earliest days together right up to the period after Prince Philip's death, the series has certainly split opinion. While some find it to be insightful and informative, others believe it to be shocking and villainous. Or in some cases, opinions have flipped completely, and those who might not have supported them before have now gone to the other side and have begun to empathise with the pair.

'I'VE HAD TO MAKE PEACE WITH THE FACT THAT WE'RE PROBABLY NEVER GOING TO GET GENUINE ACCOUNTABILITY OR A GENUINE APOLOGY'

To add to any nerves the Royal Family may have already been experiencing, Harry's book, *Spare*, was released this month. The title alone conveys the Duke's deep disconnection from his own family, one that doesn't appear as if it will be healed anytime soon.

All things come in threes, and Netflix has announced it is also behind the couple's other new project, entitled *Live to Lead*. It showcases inspirational figures – from climate change activist Greta Thunberg to New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, to South Africa rugby star Siya Kolisi, the first-ever black captain of the side. Harry was inspired by the efforts of Nelson Mandela, and true to the former president's lifelong aspirations, the series of interviews is positioned to offer hope, vision, perspective and understanding... arguably at a time when the world needs it most.

Hopefully Harry himself will find in 2023 ways to reconcile what has been a turbulent and heart-wrenching year for the royals. He and Meghan's latest moves won't have done much to repair relations, but his transparency and clarity over how he feels hard done by may indeed act as a line in the sand, from where a new vista may emerge for the outliers, even if he questions the possibility of that.

"I've had to make peace with the fact that we're probably never going to get genuine accountability or a genuine apology [from my family]," says Harry in the documentary. "My wife and I, we're moving on. We're focused on what's coming next."

Such sentiments have been uttered by many of us regarding our own families, and unequivocally this shows us that when it comes to matters of the heart, the Windsor family, for all their wealth, prestige and glory, really are just like the rest of us. But is this family's broken relationship past the point of repair?

Photo credit: Tim Rooker/ Shutterstock



Winnie-the-Pooh

A bear of very little brain

Winnie-the-Pooh might not seem smart, and he certainly gets himself into some scrapes. But there's no doubt he's also friendly, kind and thoughtful – and comes up with some great ideas to get his friends out of trouble.

And did you know he has his own special day on January 18? All things Pooh Bear are celebrated then because it's when Pooh's creator A.A. Milne was born, back in 1882. To join in the fun, why not organise a teddy bears' picnic, watch a Pooh movie, or just eat a load of honey?

Pooh was named after the teddy owned by author A.A. Milne's son, Christopher Robin – who also stars in the Pooh books. But the original drawings were based on Growler, the teddy owned by the son of the book's illustrator, E.H. Shepard.

Milne's tubby creation made his first appearance in print in a 1924 edition of *Punch* magazine. And two years after that, the first collection of Pooh stories appeared in an eponymously titled book, *Winnie-the-Pooh*.

Piglet, Eeyore, Kanga, Roo and Tigger – as well as Pooh – were all based on toys owned by young Christopher Milne. But Owl and Rabbit were the author's own inventions.

The Hundred Acre Wood, where Pooh and his friends lived, is Milne's version of Ashdown Forest in East Sussex, where the family bought a house in 1925.

Perhaps Pooh's most outstanding achievement was inventing the game of Pooh sticks. Standing on a bridge over running water, each player drops a stick on the upstream side, and the winner is the one whose stick appears first on the downstream side.

Or perhaps his greatest achievement was being one of the highest-earning literary characters ever. The rights to Pooh were sold to Disney in 2001 for a staggering \$350million.

Not a bad achievement for a bear of supposedly very little brain.

Photo credit: winniepoohshow.co.uk; Disney; E. H. Shepard; Wikipedia

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THE SMALL DÉCOR CHANGES YOU CAN MAKE TO YOUR HOME FOR 2023

Outdoor indoor: With all the stresses of modern life, the natural hues of the great outdoors are a perfect way to de-stress. So bring the outside in with wood, lush plant life and a colour scheme rooted in nature.

Aqua calm: Similarly, anything reminiscent of the sea works to ground those of us who are in thrall to modern life. Turquoise, tranquil blue and anything suggestive of the azure depths will soothe and calm the busy mind.

Homely habitat: Another trend expected to be prevalent in 2023 is being sympathetic to your local community. So rugs shorn from local sheep, furniture crafted from upcycled wood and art, and sculptures from resident artists.

Gorgeous gold: Neither garish nor flashy, this trend is warm, earthy and classy. Think gilded mirrors, glowing lanterns and burnished candlestick holders. Anything that exudes warmth will work.

Largesse lampshades: Does anything tie a room together quite like a lampshade? Looming over us in all their glory, larger lampshades are having a moment. Beautiful brass or the purest paper, some are even crafted from nothing but feathers, and yet the impression they leave endures.

Craving curves: Sensuous, soft and languid, straight lines are eschewed in 2023 and replaced by curves. Sofas, tables, chairs and mirrors – everything needs to have that gentle touch and slightly out-of-focus edge.

Lavender love: According to predictions, the Colour of the Year in 2023 is going to be Digital Lavender. This is a light shade of violet which expresses two sets of emotions: cheerfulness and calmness. By applying this colour to the home, you can create a relaxing yet mood-lifting ambience.








Snuggly as a BUG

In light of the huge rise in energy bills, households up and down the country are being more frugal with their central heating and looking for more creative ways to stay warm.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF HEATED BLANKETS?

Unlike electric blankets, which operate much like mattress toppers and come with elasticated straps or as a fitted sheet, heated blankets are designed for you to curl up under. Much more versatile and visually appealing, heated blankets can be used on the sofa, on the bed or even at your desk.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HEATED BLANKETS?

There are many reasons why you may want to invest in a heated blanket, such as the fact that they are comfy, can be carried from room to room, and come in a variety of colours and designs. However, it is the cost-cutting aspect that is the most attractive element.

HOW MUCH MONEY CAN YOU SAVE?

Both heated blankets and electric blankets are highly cost-effective and cost only pennies to run. In fact, if you choose to invest in a heated blanket, it can cost you as little as 1p for around seven hours on the minimum heat setting. To put this into perspective, it costs on average of £2.76 per hour to run your central heating based on a 24kW boiler. Plus, you can control how much electric you use by adjusting the various heat and timer settings and the automatic shut-off function.

BEST HEATED BLANKETS ON THE MARKET

- > Best for wearing around the house: Lakeland Electric Heated Poncho
- > Best for energy efficiency: Dreamland Velvety Electric Throw
- > Best budget buy: Silentnight Luxury Heated Throw
- > Best for ease of use and convenience: Homefront Electric Heated Throw



A BRITISH Suck-cess STORY



THE STORY BEHIND BRITAIN'S ICONIC VACUUM CLEANER

He's not the most aesthetically pleasing member of the household cleaning family, nor the most powerful, and as far as cutting-edge technology goes, he pre-dates even the era of the mobile phone and internet connectivity.

Yet despite all of that, our love affair with Henry lives on, more than 40 years since the compact and affordable vacuum cleaner was launched by Numatic International.

Its founder, Chris Duncan, first started toying with his vacuum cleaner concept back in 1969, when he dressed up one of his standard vacuum cleaners with a Union Jack, hat and smiley face during a particularly long night at a trade show.

The response from visitors was a revelation for the inventor, who discovered that taking an inanimate object and giving it a personality enchanted people who were looking for something different from the standard cleaning devices.

Of course, the cleaner plays its part where performance is concerned too, using large-capacity microfibre dust bags encased in a shell that is built for longevity and durability.

Since the machine was officially launched in 1981, sales continue to accelerate and now frequently exceed the one million mark each year. While Numatic has never advertised the machine, nor does it employ the services of a PR agency, an estimated 20 million have been sold in the UK to date.

Henry isn't the only named machine in the range. Previous versions have been called James, Charles, Nuvac, George, David, William, Edward, Basil, Wendy, Harry and Jack, while limited-edition models have been launched for B&Q, Screwfix and John Lewis.

It has also led to spin-off designs, notably the Henry and Hetty Spray Mops.

In 2023, it is the only mass-produced consumer vacuum cleaner still made in Britain, and has made its founder a millionaire many times over.



Photo credit: instanthome.co.uk, jdwilliams.co.uk



THREE DIFFERENT WAYS TO USE anti-freeze

Most car owners have a can or two of anti-freeze in their boot, especially during the winter months, but did you know that there is more than one use for this must-have motoring product?

WHAT IS ANTI-FREEZE?

Anti-freeze is an additive that is used to decrease the freezing point and increase the boiling point of any water-based liquid. It is made by combining any of the following with water: methanol, glycerol, ethylene glycol or propylene glycol.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN USES FOR ANTI-FREEZE? AS A CAR ENGINE COOLANT

The most common use for anti-freeze is to prevent an engine's cooling system from freezing or overheating. It stops the water in your car's engine from freezing during cold weather conditions and from becoming overheated when temperatures are high.

TO PROTECT HVAC SYSTEMS

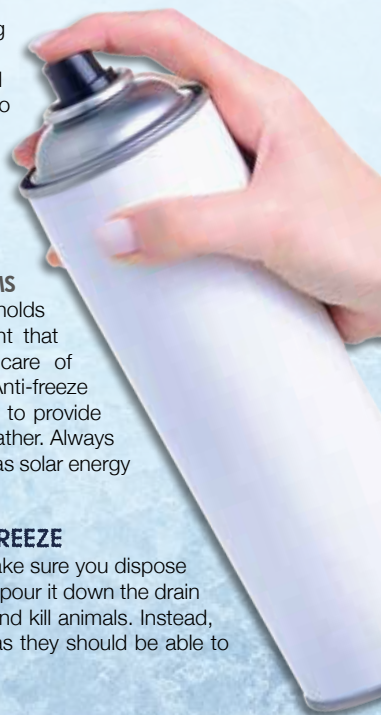
Heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) systems are an integral part of most residential homes and commercial properties. Anti-freeze can be used to help prevent the pipes within these systems from freezing, bursting and causing damage. It can also help to reduce the risk of scale build-up and corrosion.

TO MAINTAIN SOLAR ENERGY SYSTEMS

As more and more UK households embrace solar energy, it is important that you know how to properly take care of these types of energy systems. Anti-freeze can be used as a heat transfer fluid to provide protection from freezing in colder weather. Always hire a professional to do this for you as solar energy systems are pressurised.

HOW TO DISPOSE OF ANTI-FREEZE

Due to its toxic nature, you must make sure you dispose of anti-freeze in the right way. Never pour it down the drain as it can damage the environment and kill animals. Instead, contact your local recycling centre as they should be able to properly dispose of it for you.




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LOCAL NEWS

from your neighbourhood

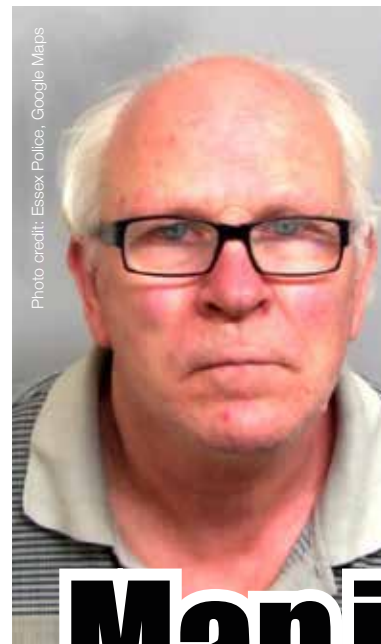


Photo credit: Essex Police, Google Maps



Man jailed for 32 years following sexual abuse

A Clacton man convicted of sexually abusing three children between 2011 and 2014 has been jailed for 32 years for 18 separate offences.

Graham Carson, 68 (pictured left) of The Drive, Clacton, denied the offences, including multiple counts of rape, but was convicted on September 30 following a trial at Chelmsford Crown Court.

He was sentenced at the same court on Thursday, December 8, to 26 years in prison with a six-year extension as he was deemed by the judge to be a "dangerous offender".

The offences came to light in August 2020 after they were reported to Essex Police. Carson had said to one of his victims "wish you were 16", while telling another it would be "their secret". The victims have

been supported by specialist officers.

Investigating officer Detective Constable Reuben Brame said: "The three victims in this case have been through an unimaginable ordeal at the hands of Graham Carson and have demonstrated incredible strength in reporting what happened to them.

"The impact of Carson's abuse cannot be overstated and those affected live with the memory of what's happened to them every day.

"I am pleased our work has been able to put him behind bars and, while no sentence will ever undo his crimes, I hope it will help his victims move forward."

Synergy Essex provides specialist support for victims and survivors of rape and sexual abuse. For more information, visit synergysessex.org.uk

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Police dogs meet primary school pupils

LOCAL NEWS



Photo credit: Essex Police

Lawford C of E Primary School in Manningtree recently hosted Tendring's community policing team and two police dogs.

Officers spoke to the students about the duties of the police, who not only "catch baddies", but also help people and keep them safe.

The morning finished with the children getting to meet and pet the police dogs, Dexter and Oreo, who showed off their fantastic sense of smell by finding cash that had been hidden around the classroom.

Following the visit, PC Ashcroft said: "We really enjoyed visiting the children at Lawford Primary. They were so well behaved and asked some great questions. Oreo and Dexter had a lot of fun too."

Sergeant Bailey added: "Visits like this are so important in building positive relationships with younger members of our community. It's crucial that they know we are here to keep them safe and help them when they need us."

Miss Woods, Lawford Primary School foundation stage teacher, said: "The dog unit was incredible with the children. It was an interactive visit, and the children haven't stopped talking about Dexter and Oreo. They were fascinated by watching them at work."

Government's £1million investment plan approved

The government has signed off on spending plans for more than £1million in Tendring as part of its levelling-up agenda.

Tendring District Council (TDC) has received £1.18million from the government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, spread across the rest of the current financial year and the next two years.

The current allocation must be committed by the end of March; as such, the initial focus will be on council-led projects.

This includes the Starlings redevelopment project in Dovercourt, funding to support the Jaywick Sands

commercial workspace scheme, and small grants to increase participation in sport and leisure.

In addition, funds will be provided to the University of Essex to carry out a feasibility study for a green skills and innovation centre in the district linked to Freeport East.

Councillor Neil Stock OBE, Leader of TDC, said that the funding agreement had now been signed and returned.

He said: "This funding will undoubtedly have a positive impact on Tendring. The allocation will not only directly support some exciting projects which will support economic growth and wellbeing in our district, but also I hope unlock other funding streams and leverage even more investment in Tendring."

Football team thanks sponsors for new kit

Brantham football team has thanked its sponsors for donating fresh new tracksuits for the whole Reserves team.

The Brantham Athletic Reserves team received the new kit from heritage developer City & Country in December.

The donation is part of the company's ongoing efforts to support the local community.

Jennifer Rhodes-Finch, head of marketing for City & Country, said: "Brantham Athletic FC has long played a part in Manningtree's community, and we are proud to support a club with such strong local ties. City & Country is committed to supporting organisations in the local area and we'll be cheering the Brantham Athletic Reserves on for the rest of their season."

Craig Clarke, manager of Brantham Athletic Reserves, said: "We'd like to thank City & Country for its sponsorship of our Reserves, and for choosing the man of the match at our game against Harwich and Parkeston Reserves FC. With more than 20 teams at Brantham Athletic FC, the support from local businesses such as City & Country is invaluable for the running of our club."



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GILES WATLING
MP for Clacton



LOCAL NEWS

This is an opportune moment for reflection on the previous year and to set goals for the new one. Life in Parliament was exceptionally busy and, since being first elected in 2017, I don't think I can say it has ever been anything but turbulent. Yet I feel confident this current government will be the calm after the storms of 2022.

I have received positive feedback from constituents regarding the Energy Bills Support Scheme. This has been a lifeline to households to help them heat their homes, and I know this has saved lives.

It is such a shame that, after a damaging global pandemic, we are then faced with a terrible and unnecessary war started by an expansionist despot. The government is stepping up to the plate to help where it can, both here and overseas.

But to more local matters... While I have not been in Parliament owing to the Christmas break, it doesn't mean the work has stopped. I held a surgery just before Christmas and I was out in Point Clear speaking to residents about the things that matter to them.

Separately, I am leading on a joint letter to the Prime Minister from Conservative Parliamentarians to find a reasonable solution to the rail strikes. It seems clear some political opponents are using the current climate to score cheap points. We are all suffering the costs recently incurred, and we all want to see improvements



in healthcare and standards of living. It is the taxpayers who bear the brunt of public spending, and we need to encourage growth, so the balance has to be struck to satisfy the needs of growth and services.

As we look to the new year, I am reinvigorated to champion Clacton's causes: faster and more reliable trains to London; devolved powers to the local authority over our coastline; more dentists to reduce the backlog; and ensuring we are not left behind in the levelling-up agenda.

Trees planted for anniversary



Students from Great Clacton Junior School joined members of Tendring District Council's (TDC) open spaces team to plant 150 trees as a legacy for Clacton's 150th anniversary.

The new woodland has a mix of native trees positioned on the open space next to Burrs Road, with the variety chosen to provide blossom in spring and coverage all year round.

The Clacton 150 celebrations, supported by a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £250,000, featured several events in the local area.

Lee Caffull, Great Clacton Junior School Year 4 teacher (pictured right), said: "The children took the job of planting extremely seriously and their work will have a lasting impact on their local community."

Councillor Michael Talbot, TDC cabinet member for environment (pictured third from left), said: "It was great to see the students getting involved in planting these trees, as the younger generation will hopefully benefit from them for years to come."



SIR BERNARD JENKIN MP



Member of Parliament for Harwich and North Essex



At the time of writing, we are ending a year of extraordinary international turbulence. It is chilling to keep remembering the fact there is state-on-state warfare in our own continent of Europe and we have seen scenes of devastation of modern cities and queues of refugees waiting for trains – images we thought would remain in history.

Putin's war is not just on Ukraine, but on the whole international order of law and security which has underpinned our own national safety and prosperity since the Second World War. The energy crisis and the inflation that grips European economies is not merely a consequence of Putin's war; it is Putin's war using energy, economics, cyber attacks, direct sabotage of critical national infrastructure, the destabilisation of democratic states, and the flows of refugees, all as

weapons to undermine our security and prosperity.

At the same time, the cost-of-living crisis and inflation is driving down living standards so that even in an affluent country like our own, millions more people are finding it harder to make ends meet. It's important to remember not only those least fortunate, but also those who give up their own time and resources to care for them, and we give thanks for their generosity of spirit.

As we begin 2023, so many challenges together seem daunting, but for more than 1,000 years, our nation has always recovered from adversity, learned from mistakes and emerged stronger, as a beacon of freedom, democracy and security which many other nations around the world so admire. Let us, then, approach the new year resolute and confident that whatever events afflict us, our nation will find its inner strength and meet whatever challenges we face.

Residents find migrant boats

Residents of Walton and Frinton came upon two small boats that had been used by migrants to cross the English Channel illegally, while walking along the Essex beaches.

Stuart Keen, a resident of Walton-on-the-Naze, said that while walking his dog, he spotted the boat in the distance.

He said: "After realising nobody was inside, my first reaction was to take pictures. I wondered what had happened to the occupants, then immediately phoned the police."

The boat had already been marked by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), which marks boats to identify that they are aware of them, but their priority is to get the occupants to safety.

The same day, a Frinton resident posted on Facebook about finding a different boat that had washed up on the beach, also marked by the MoD, while walking their dog.

The boats are just two of the 23 boats detected between December 9 and December 14, with those boats holding more than 1,000 migrants.

Four individuals were confirmed to have died after a boat capsized on December 14.

Responding to the incident, a government spokesperson said: "This is a truly tragic incident. Our thoughts are with the friends and families of all those who have lost their lives today."

More than 45,700 migrants crossed the English Channel by small boats in 2022, a 60 per cent increase from 2021.



Photo credit: Stuart Keen

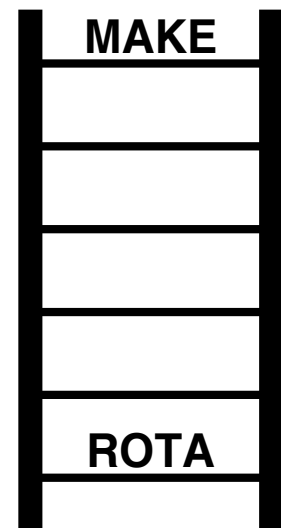
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DID YOU KNOW?

- ▶ More than one million animal species have been identified on earth.
- ▶ There is only one species of Koala in the world.
- ▶ In the wild, red pandas are mainly active during the twilight period and until the early hours of the morning. They can then be found resting.
- ▶ Like domestic cats, giant panda bears have vertical slits for pupils.
- ▶ It's thought there are more tigers in captivity than are left in the wild.
- ▶ Lions can eat up to 40kg of meat in a single meal. That's around a quarter of their body weight.
- ▶ You can tell the species of an elephant by the shape of their ears.

WORD LADDER



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

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

DO NOT rearrange the order of the letters.

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

DYER STRAITS

DANNY DYER'S EXIT FROM *EASTENDERS* MARKS ALMOST A DECADE OF THRILLING DRAMA IN THE SQUARE

That Danny Dyer evolved so admirably from regal cockney to Queen Vic landlord Mick Carter is one of the more celebrated evolutions of British celebrity culture.

The East London-born West Ham United superfan has waved goodbye after almost a decade on Albert Square – a solid commitment to E20 and the drinks industry that has seen the once-derided actor and presenter rise to the cream of the soap opera fraternity.

Dyer emerged as a spiky, punchy, salt-of-the-Earth type who passed up an interest in usual working-class opportunities to embark on acting classes. Bullied at school for his passion for drama, Dyer soon had the last laugh, appearing in *Prime Suspect 3* at the age of 16.

Terrestrial gigs in *Cadfael*, *A Touch of Frost*, *Loved Up*, *Highlander*, *Soldier Soldier* and *Skins* followed, before his big film break came in *Human Traffic*, an iconic coming-of-age clubbing movie that also saw the emergence of John Simm.

Soon after, he was asked to front Bravo documentary series *The Real Football Factories* (a real-life take on *The Football Factory* movie he had previously starred in), which proved to be a big hit in an era where terrace casuals were still prevalent in the Premier League and beyond (as the subsequent *The Real Football Factories International* proved).

This was followed by *Danny Dyer's Deadliest Men*, in which he interviewed Britain's most notorious gangsters.

He turned down the chance to join the cast in Walford in 2009, citing fears of being too exposed in the public eye, but having experimented with a number of low-budget film projects, was lured to *EastEnders* in 2013 as Queen Vic landlord Mick Carter.

Enjoying a bevy of controversial storylines, he has clinched three awards in the role, including Best Serial Drama Performance at the National Television Awards. Along the way, he has made the change from the rough and ready hard man of the Square to someone capable of carrying through a wealth of poignant and emotive storylines. Having spent years developing his skills, he now looks to take that forward with other projects.

"*EastEnders* has been amazing for me," says Dyer. "I'm grateful for the beautiful years I've had there. I'm going to miss the people massively."

Talking about what comes next, the 45 year old says: "I know the landscape has changed slightly, but I want to go out there and have another go, and the only way I can do that is if I decide to walk away from the job."

Dyer will next be seen in a four-part Channel 5 drama called *Heat*, for which filming is to begin shortly in Australia.

Ahead of his Albert Square exit, executives were tight-lipped on how the storyline would develop, but there was all the drama expected of an *EastEnders* Christmas special – including a car chase, a cliff-top brawl, and ultimately tragedy as Mick met his watery end.

Perhaps the true tragedy is that one of the true mainstays of the British landscape is gone... for now, but maybe not forever.

Photo credit: BBC/Jack Barnes/Kieron McCarron

KISS A Ginger

CELEBRATE KISS A GINGER DAY THIS MONTH

On January 12, it's Kiss A Ginger Day – the perfect time to show redheads some love. But you might need to take a good look around – because red hair is rare. Only two in every 100 people are natural redheads, making it the rarest hair colour in the world. And the rarest people of all are redheads with blue eyes.

The genes responsible for red hair are recessive. This means that to have a red-haired baby, both parents must carry a red-haired gene. If both parents carry the gene but don't have red hair themselves, they'll have around a one in four chance of having a red-haired baby. If one of the parents is a redhead and the other is a carrier of the gene but doesn't have red hair, the chances go up to around one in two. And if both parents have ginger locks, chances are that all their children will have red hair too.

Hundreds of years ago, redheads were thought

to be witches and were shunned by society. These days, things have thankfully improved – although some people still think natural gingers are brash and hot-headed. That's not true, of course. But recent studies have shown that redheads require more anaesthetic than people with other hair colours. Their response to painkillers is also different – for the medication to work, they need more of some types of painkillers and less of others.

So how are you going to celebrate on January 12? If you've got a natural ginger among your family and friends, show them how much you appreciate their extraordinary tresses. And if you're not that lucky, listen to some music by redheads – Ed Sheeran or Florence and the Machine, anyone? Or how about a film starring Julianne Moore or Jessica Chastain? The choice is yours.



BRITISH BUSINESS survivors



HISTORY

FIVE AGE-OLD BRITISH COMPANIES STILL WITH US TODAY

Staggeringly, between 350,000 and 400,000 British businesses close their doors for good every year. But some companies have been up and running for centuries.

The oldest surviving British company is The Royal Mint. It opened in 1279 and, for several hundred years, was based at the Tower of London. In the early 1800s, it moved over the road. But by 1975, it had completed its move to its current home in Llantrisant, Wales. The Mint makes more than 3.3 billion coins and blanks yearly – for the UK and more than 30 other countries.

With the dwindling use of cash, the Mint has expanded into other areas, including precious metals investment, historic coins and luxury collectibles. And it's doing pretty well.

Cambridge University Press, the world's first publishing company, was founded in 1534 and publishes academic and educational texts.

Moving down the years, Royal Mail, as it's now known, was founded in 1586. For almost 500 years, it was owned by the state. But by 2015, it was fully privatised. At one stage in the early 20th century, the company had 22,000 pigeons. And someone's gone to the trouble of counting how many elastic bands it currently uses to bundle mail – apparently 342 million a year.

Barclays Bank was founded in London in 1690. The institution's long history is contained in an archive of photos, letters and curiosities housed in the Barclays Group Archives in Manchester.

In 1706, Thomas Twining bought a coffee shop in London's Strand and began to sell tea. Back then, tea was very costly. But Twining spotted a trend. And when he started selling loose tea leaves, as well as cups of the beverage itself, business boomed. By 1717, he'd bought additional space next door – and the shop's still open for business today.

Photo credit: Shantal Maksunov/Shutterstock.com, Crispictures/Shutterstock.com

National Eye Care Month



January is National Eye Care Month, so what better time to learn how to take care of your pet's eyesight? Sight is an essential sense that enables your pet to navigate their environment, communicate with other animals and even express emotion, so find out how to look after your pet's vision below.

WHAT CAUSES EYE PROBLEMS IN PETS?

Sadly, eye problems are relatively common in pets and can be caused by many different things such as exposure to chlorinated water or saltwater, fungal infections from a change in climate or humidity, genetics, and ageing. Some breeds are also more susceptible to certain eye conditions than others.

HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR PET'S EYE HEALTH

1. Regular maintenance

One of the easiest and most effective ways to keep your pet's eyes in good condition is by preventing any issues before they occur. You can do this by periodically cleaning their eyes with a soft, damp cloth or a specially formulated rinse and regularly trimming the hair around their eyes. Also check for any debris or contaminants in and around the eyes.

2. Purchase eye vitamins

You can help to support your pet's eye health by giving them eye vitamins. A more long-term approach to eye health, these are packed with antioxidants that work hard to fight harmful free radicals. Research shows that these can help to prevent the onset of age-related and hereditary macular degeneration.

3. Use gentle grooming products

While it is important that you keep your pet clean and well groomed, some grooming products can irritate their eyes. Use chemical-free shampoos and soaps and avoid air fresheners in the home if your pet has sensitive eyes.

4. Be vigilant

Many eye problems cause watery or mucus discharge, so make sure that you look out for this as well as any swelling or redness. Sensitivity to light, rubbing at the eye and holding the eye closed are also signs of a potential infection or issue.

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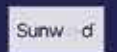
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WINTER Wonderland

HOW TO GET THE BEST OUT OF YOUR GARDEN IN THE COLD WINTER MONTHS

Some of us may regard winter as the season when our desire to venture out into the garden wanes completely. Yet whether we're negotiating a path across a frosty lawn, or simply viewing nature from the warmth and comfort of the indoors, making your garden into a winter wonderland is a rewarding task.

So while you may not have the summer sorcery of flower sprays, sun loungers and an abundance of fruit and produce, these tips will help keep your outside space special even in the depths of winter.

beautiful – consider the pinky purple of dogwood, evergreen rhododendrons and the shining white trunks of a birch tree.

TAKE FORWARD TRADITION
Planting a number of hardy winter varieties will give your garden presence as well as helping to carry forward the legacy of a traditional English garden. Use hellebores and snowdrops to create a classic, elegant effect.

STRUCTURAL STATEMENTS
A winter garden is one that's lighter on detail, so create new space and interest with some cool man-made structures. From trellises to metalwork, benches to rockeries, winter provides a great opportunity for man-made materials to enter the fray.

TREMENDOUS TREES
Stripped of their summer decoration, let skeletal trees stand out against a snowy backdrop. Mixed up with evergreens, you can create a brilliant contrast.

CALL FOR COLOUR
The assumption that the colour drains out of our gardens in winter is, ultimately, wrong. There are many stem-like winter plants that are radiant and

FANTASTIC FEASTS
Finally, don't assume your winter garden can't put produce on the table. Carrots and fava beans will still thrive throughout the winter, and you can extend the growing period of a number of other varieties of fruit and veg if you keep your greenhouse operational throughout the cold months.



PRUNED TO perfection

If you want to enjoy a good fruit cycle, you need to prune your apple and pear trees over the winter. For those who are new to fruit pruning, this step-by-step guide tells you all you need to know.

GET THE RIGHT TOOLS

You need to have clean, sharp tools that are designed for pruning, such as secateurs, loppers or a pruning saw if you have a larger pear or apple tree. Make sure you sharpen them before use.

CUT BACK SUCKERS AND LOWER BRANCHES

Use secateurs to cut back any suckers. These are unwanted shoots that grow near the base of the trunk. Also, cut back lower branches as these do not get sufficient light to bear good fruit.

REMOVE DEAD OR DISEASED WOOD

Remove all branches with discoloured or flaking bark towards the base of the branch by making a cut above an outward-facing bud (one that is on the opposite side of the stem to the main trunk). If there are no buds, remove the entire branch.

CREATE A VASE SHAPE FRAMEWORK

Ideally, you want four or five main branches that help

to create an open vase shape. If you have more than five, remove some at the base by cutting 6mm from the branch collar – this refers to the bulbous area that is attached to the trunk. Avoid removing more than 25 per cent of the branches in one go as this can affect the tree's health and fruit production.

REMOVE CROSSING OR RUBBING BRANCHES

Remove any branches that are growing into the centre of the tree as this will allow for better air circulation. If two branches are crossing, keep the one that best retains the vase shape of the tree and remove the other one.

SHORTEN THE PREVIOUS YEAR'S GROWTH ON EACH BRANCH BY ONE-THIRD

Cut just above an outward-facing bud on each main branch so that new branches grow outwards. This will help the tree to develop into a healthy shape and prevent congestion.



MEN'S HAIR TRENDS

FOR WINTER 2023

TOP TIPS FROM AWARD-WINNING MEN'S HAIRDRESSER AND OWNER OF TONI&GUY BILLERICAY, JIM SHAW

There will be one stand-out hair colour trend for men this winter – bleached hair. Men will look to lighten their hair and have it toned for a clean, platinum hue or an icy white/grey tone that's fitting for the season.

We will also see cooler-toned brights becoming popular, such as dark greens, blues and purples for men who want to add a pop of colour to their look.

Disconnected cuts have been in and out of fashion over recent years, and this season they're back on trend. This means we'll see men requesting their hair to be super short on the sides with longer length on top.

The military-inspired regulation cut will also be popular. This is a very sharp and fresh style whereby the hair is trimmed down on the top but kept longer than the sides, which are tapered and gradually cut shorter before reaching the nape of the neck, where the hair can be shaved off completely to help reflect a true regulation cut.

For those looking for a haircut that's longer in length, mullets will be the textured haircut of the season. Hair should usually be cut shorter and choppy towards the front and sides and left longer at the back. However, for 2023, we will see a more modern take on this trend, with men looking for the gradation of different lengths to be a lot softer.

In terms of styling for winter 2023, this all depends on the cut you have. If you have a shorter haircut, sleek styles will be very on trend. Incorporate a pomade with a shine finish, gel or wax into your styling routine to give your hair a neater, more polished appearance.

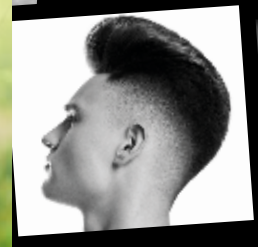


Photo credit: Tony Le Britton



Yes please TO CHEESE

JANUARY 20, IS NATIONAL CHEESE LOVER'S DAY – HERE'S HOW TO CELEBRATE

Feeling a little cheesed off? Well don't despair, for Friday, January 20, is National Cheese Lover's Day, giving you carte blanche to celebrate and indulge in all your favourite dairy delights.

Not surprisingly, Britain is a nation of cheese lovers. Whether it's a humble cheddar sarnie, a saucy slice of Welsh rarebit or a fancy fondue dip, the average Brit eats 30g of cheese a day and there are more than 700 cheeses produced in the UK.

Around half of sales are cheddar – named after the famed Cheddar Gorge caves in Somerset where the cheese was once stored to ripen – but we're still partial to more exotic fromages such as mozzarella, parmesan and feta.

HOW TO CELEBRATE

With such a thriving cheese industry in this country, it couldn't be easier to indulge in this Wookey Hole-iest of days. Most major supermarkets now boast English-made gems such as Wensleydale Blue and Red Leicester, but it's also worth seeking out some lesser-known treats from your nearest speciality cheesemonger. Or, if you're really enthusiastic, you can head to your local dairy farm where they will likely have a shop selling their creations.

Not only is cheese incredibly tasty and diverse, it's also highly nutritious. A great source of protein, it contains vitamin B12 (which is vital for red blood formation), and a matchbox-sized slice provides one-third of an adult's daily calcium requirement.

So don't be sheepish – make like a mouse and treat yourself to a little of what you fancy. Whether red, yellow or blue, in moderation, cheese is very good for you.

BRITAIN'S TOP 10 CHEESES*:

1. Cheddar
2. Red Leicester
3. Brie
4. Mozzarella
5. Parmesan
6. Stilton
7. Cream cheese
8. Wensleydale
9. Camembert
10. Feta

*According to a study by Branston Pickle in 2017.



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Colour me calm

Are you looking for a new hobby? Sales of adult colouring books have surged since the pandemic as people look for ways to relax, de-stress and enjoy some much needed me-time. Not convinced that colouring should be your new pastime? Discover five benefits of picking up pens and pencils below.

Colouring relaxes your brain

Does your brain often feel frazzled by the end of the day? As colouring is a focused activity, it can help to relax your mind and keep worries at bay. It has also been shown to improve brain function as it activates the creative part of your mind.

Colouring improves your motor skills

Adult colouring books often feature complex designs which require you to hone your hand-eye coordination and motor skills. This can be particularly beneficial if you spend a lot of time looking at screens.

Colouring aids sleep

As many as one in three people suffer with insomnia, which is characterised as not being able to get to sleep or not staying asleep for a sufficient amount of time. Colouring before bed, rather than being exposed to blue light from your phone or tablet, can help to release melatonin and enable you to easily drift off to sleep.

Colouring reduces anxiety

Studies have shown that colouring can help to reduce anxiety in adults. Simply by colouring for 20 minutes a day, you can lower your heart rate and decrease feelings of stress or anxiety. Colouring can also help to improve your mood.

Colouring can be therapeutic

Similar to art therapy, colouring can be therapeutic as it helps to put your mind into a meditative state. This enables you to focus purely on the present and remove any negative thoughts from your mind.





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Chinese New Year LANTERNS

This year, Chinese New Year falls on January 22, marking the beginning of the Year of the Rabbit. Chinese communities throughout the world celebrate the New Year with family meals and outdoor events featuring firecrackers, fireworks and dragon puppets. And at the end of the festivities, there's a lantern festival to welcome the full moon.

To mark the occasion, why not create some beautiful paper lanterns? Plain ones can look gorgeous, but choose rabbit-printed paper or add some decorations for a bit of extra festive fun. You could even adorn your lanterns with homemade bunny features, such as ears, eyes and noses.

6. Run your gluestick along one short side of the lantern. Form the paper into a tube shape, then glue the two short sides together.
7. If you like, decorate your lantern or add a ribbon or paper handle.

The lanterns look great strung along a piece of ribbon or string!

YOU WILL NEED:

- > Some sheets of paper (A4 paper makes a lantern about 20cm tall, and A5 paper makes a lantern about 14cm tall). You can use different coloured or patterned paper
- > A ruler, pencil and eraser
- > A glue stick
- > Scissors
- > Extra decorations such as stick-on shapes, sequins, braid or ribbon (optional)

HOW TO MAKE:

1. Fold your paper in half lengthways so you have a long, slim rectangle.
2. Draw a line parallel with the long edge, where the two sides of the paper meet. This line should be about 2.5cm away from the edge.
3. Starting about 2.5cm in from one of the short edges, draw a series of parallel lines across the rectangle, from the folded edge up to the long line you've just drawn. These lines should be about 2.5cm apart.
4. Cut along each of the short lines.
5. Erase any noticeable pencil marks, then unfold the paper.



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GARDEN GETAWAYS

If you love gardening, then you are going to love our suggested destinations that are just perfect for green-fingered travellers.

Whether you want to explore gardens in the UK or go further afield, here's something for every gardening enthusiast.

Italy: Whether you choose to explore its formal gardens or simply enjoy the abundance of breathtaking blooms around the country, Italy is a great destination for garden enthusiasts. The gardens that overlook the Italian lakes are a must-see, with the botanical gardens of Villa Taranto overflowing with azaleas and rhododendrons.

Japan: This East Asian country is renowned for its pink cherry blossom and Zen gardens which have to be seen first-hand to be believed. Head to the Hama-rikyu Gardens in Tokyo in March, and don't forget to also schedule a trip to Japan's most popular Zen garden at the Ryōan-ji Temple.

Somerset: If you are looking for a gardening getaway that is closer to home, Somerset is the perfect choice. Visit country houses such as Hestercombe House, Kilver Court and Lytes Cary Manor and marvel at their impeccable grounds and stunning natural surroundings.

Madeira: Boasting a sub-tropical climate, Madeira is a haven for a whole host of rare species that guarantee to impress. From North American sequoia trees to pretty ponds filled with koi carp, there are many colourful sights for you to enjoy. Don't miss the Flower Festival in April 2023, where you can see some of Madeira's finest gardens and landscapes.

Isles of Scilly: The Isles are famous for their unspoilt natural beauty, with an abundance of beaches, rugged landscapes and wildlife. Head to Tresco Abbey Garden, where you can marvel at 20,000 plants from more than 80 different countries.

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**ENGLAND'S
FINEST?**

**BEN STOKES OBE HAS TRANSFORMED
HIMSELF AND THE GAME OF CRICKET**

It's only five years since Ben Stokes OBE found himself facing not just exclusion from the sport he loved, but also potentially a prison sentence, having been charged with affray outside a Bristol nightclub.

The incident – in which the brilliant all-rounder was defending a homosexual couple – cost Stokes his place in the 2017/18 Ashes team, and sent the Durham cricketer on a journey of self-discovery that, ultimately, has led him to the heights he finds himself at now.

Stokes roared back from the Bristol incident, inspiring England's 2019 World Cup win, batting sensationally at Headingley in that year's Ashes to win the third Test when all seemed lost, and being named Player of the Series in South Africa that winter.

Last year, Stokes was instrumental in bringing England T20 World Cup glory, yet it is his ascent as Test captain that is truly captivating a nation at the moment.

England clinched an away Test series in Pakistan – a country in which they had only ever won two matches in their entire history – yet it is the manner of the cricket being played that truly reflects a new dawn for the sport.

'Bazball', as it is referred to, is a driven, dynamic and outlandishly positive method of playing the game, the like of which five-day Test cricket has never seen. This cricket revolution epitomises not just Stokes' captaincy, but also his approach to life itself.

As inspirational English sportspeople go, there are few who can rival Stokes' efforts.

Further proof of this was offered when Stokes was named as runner-up in the 2022 BBC Sports Personality of the Year Award. Though he didn't win, his nomination is evidence enough of his incredible success.



SPORT

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