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Robert Halfon MP
Working hard for Harlow and the Villages

✓ Championing Apprenticeships and Education ✓ Building an Even Better Harlow
✓ Ensuring Brexit Means Brexit ✓ Cherishing Our Villages ✓ Protecting Our NHS
Inside this week

24K Bruno pays tribute to Bruno Mars

EYES ON THE SKIES

BISHOP’S STORTFORD FIREWORKS: Bishop’s Stortford RFC, Silver Leys, Hadham Road, Saturday, November 3, 7pm

One of the largest firework displays in the Bishop’s Stortford area, there will be live music, a fairground, a barbecue, a fully stocked bar and hot beverages.

Gate opens at 5pm. Skies alight at 7pm. Tickets prices when purchased in advance: £5 adults, £15 family (two adults and two children). £3 extra child (2-17 years).

Children under two are free. Tickets can also be purchased from the rugby club or local (Bishop’s Stortford, Stansted and Sawbridgeworth offices of Intercity).

Tickets can be paid for on the night (cash only) but prices are slightly increased to:

* family £16, adult £8, extra child £5.

For tickets go to www.bsrfctickets.co.uk.

For more details visit: www.bsrfc.co.uk

For tickets go to www.bsrfctickets.co.uk.

For more details visit: www.bsrfc.co.uk

KNOCKOUT BRUNO SHOW

24K Bruno: Harlow Playhouse, Playhouse Square, Friday, November 2, 7.30pm

24K Bruno is powerful, energetic and the tribute concert to the number one selling artist Bruno Mars.

With live vocals from the talented Andres Cruz, explosive sound, lights, screens, 12 professional dancers (from local talented favourites Hip Hop Pop), and an incredible live band who have performed with the likes of The Saturdays, Kim Wilde, Lil Chris and more.

Tickets prices when purchased in advance:

* £5 adults, £15 family (two adults and two children).

This show will have you on your feet dancing and singing along with all your favourite Bruno hits, while being immersed in the amazing sound, vocals and slick dance moves. Tickets from £19. For more details visit: www.horlovecity.co.uk

Bonfire and fireworks night:

Essex Showground, Harlow Town Park, Park Lane, Sunday, November 4, 6pm

Harlow Council’s annual free-admission bonfire and fireworks night with support from Great Parndon Community Association.

There will be music, dance, comedy and more before the display begins at the Playhouse Stage from 6pm.

Bonfire lit at 6.45pm and Fireworks display starts 7pm. There will also be a food and refreshments village.

For full details on the event and road closures, visit www.harlow.gov.uk/bonfire-night

REMEMBERING A LEGEND

VOICE OF THE HEART - KAREN CARPENTER: 1-3 South Road, Bishop’s Stortford CM23 3JG, Friday, November 2, 7.30pm

A terrific show from the producers of the hit musical Forever In Blue Jeans.

It is now just over 30 years since the legendary Karen Carpenter passed away, leaving behind an amazing catalogue of hit songs and golden memories and is still played daily on radio stations throughout the UK.

This stunning show celebrates the music of The Carpenters, and the evening is looking for something a bit different this Christmas then you’ll be spoilt for choice with over 30 stalls to browse. A list of stallholders attending The Fair can be found at www.wearehandmade.co.uk. Cathy Russell from the Guild of Essex Craftsmen will be demonstrating the art of quilling throughout the day.

Plum Fairy will be running the tea room serving tea and cake. For more details visit: www.facebook.com/events/158651488259875/?active_tab=about

CRAGTY IN CHRISTMAS

WE ARE HANDMADE CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR: Foakes Hall, Stortford Road, Great Dunmow, Saturday, November 3, 10am - 4pm

This event will showcase a wide range of quality handmade items, with many stallholders taking commissions.

This is a great place to find unique, well-designed handmade presents - if you are looking for something a bit different this Christmas then you’ll be spoilt for choice with over 30 stalls to browse. A list of stallholders attending The Fair can be found at www.wearehandmade.co.uk. Cathy Russell from the Guild of Essex Craftsmen will be demonstrating the art of quilling throughout the day.

Plum Fairy will be running the tearoom serving tea and cake. For more details visit: www.facebook.com/events/158651488259875/?active_tab=about
Happy days are here as Smiler celebrates her 102nd birthday

By CHARLOTTE PAGE

A GREAT-GRAN with a love for animals, nicknamed “Smiler”, has celebrated her 102nd birthday in style.

Ivy Edmonston celebrated her birthday at Ashlyn’s Care Home last Sunday with her family by her side.

The mother-of-four worked as a French polisher which saw her move from Walthamstow to Harlow when the town was first built.

Ivy worked all her life until a breast cancer diagnosis meant that she had to give up.

Daughter Pauline Varcoe, 80, said: “She’s always been hard working. She went to work and she brought us all up. Ivy has seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren, adores animals and enjoys visits to Ashlyn’s from Pets of Therapy Dogs.

“If she was to see an animal on the road, she would take it home and get it better,” continued Pauline. “She found a sparrow and it had got run over by a car. She got it better and when it was better it flew off.

“My brother Tony, he had a poodle and it had been badly treated. “My mum saw it and fell in love and he said to her ‘Mum I can’t let you have this dog because she’s in a bad way.’ She had no fur - nothing, and she said ‘no, I’ll get it better.’ Bonnie the poodle recovered, grew fur, and never left Ivy’s side. From that point, she always had a dog, as well as cockatiels.

Ivy is a firm favorite at Ashlyn’s, situated in Vicarage Wood, where she has lived for the past four years.

“All the carers here absolutely adore her,” added Pauline. “Whenever they do anything for her, she always gives them a kiss. “They call her Smiler because she always puts on a smile.”

Pauline said Ivy has been more than any daughter could wish for.

“She’s been more than a mum, she’s been a friend,” she said. “When I lost my husband in 1953, she was there for me and then I had to have an operation on my head because I had cancer - and she came down every day, cooked my dinner and stayed with me and then went home.”

Ivy’s family say her secret to a long and happy life is to always speak the truth. Ivy also loves music, holidays and enjoys spending time in the garden.

“Singer and accordion player Alex Southgate joined her for her celebrations, as did chairwoman of Harlow Council Maggie Hulcoop, before they had tea and cake.”

FAMILY JOIN IVY FOR CUPPA AND CAKE
Does the north-east part of town deserve its poor reputation?

By ALASDAIR HOOPER
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@alasdairehooper1992

THE north-east of Harlow town centre has developed something of a reputation - and not necessarily for all the right reasons.

Ask the residents about the area surrounding the underpass that runs below Velizy Avenue - linking Post Office Road with the Hides - and they are unlikely to speak favourably about it.

That area of town has seen plenty of violent crime.

In recent times, on March 28, 2018, Jordan Ogoazi, 20, was jailed at Chelmsford Crown Court for the leading role he played in a brawl outside a nearby Harlow bar that left one man with "part of his arm hanging off".

In July 2018 emergency services were called to nearby Terminus Street, close to Harlow bus station, after a man was left needing treatment for a chest injury.

A man was charged with possessing a knife in a public place following that incident.

With the reputation the area around this underpass has garnered, as well as the unwanted headlines, the Star went to ask residents about whether it is justified or not.

Builder Tim Hobbs, 41, has lived in Harlow all of his life and lives around a mile away from what he refers to as the 'dodgy end'.

"They've had a few people injured and there's been people beaten up and killed down there," he said.

"I'm sure somebody died up the top of those flats as well.

"They've had problems over the other side on the bit coming out of the Post Office.

"That's the dodgy end of town that bit."

Another resident, 67-year-old Kevin Higgins, said: "This has got a reputation only because it's near the town centre - not the area I would have said.

"Many a time I have walked through the underpass there on a Saturday morning and it has been cordoned off because of a stabbing or something.

"But that's the town centre so in this actual area there's no problem for most of the day.

"It has improved in the last few weeks - there's been no stabbings.

"But I believe that the police presence is a lot greater on a Friday and Saturday night up there."

"There's about two clubs but I believe one stays open until about 4am or 5am."

"If people can enjoy themselves and just go home then fair enough but it's just the one per cent."

"He added: "But it's not just here, it's all over."

With the area garnering such a reputation it is only natural that people who want to live their lives normally feel considerably exasperated over the actions of the minority.

"It does annoy us because it gives us all a bad name and it gives the area a bad name," Mr Higgins continued.

"I've lived around here for many, many years and it's only in the last ten years with the advent of the clubs you've had the trouble."

"The police are getting on top of it, give them credit, but it's the knife crime. It's worse in London but it's all over.

"Whether it is drug-related I don't know. I'm not an expert."

Mr Hobbs also added: "I don't know if it annoys any of this lot down here but no one wants it."

"There's always something going on but we haven't had anything up this way for maybe about a year."

The nearby pubs and clubs are often cited by residents as a focal point for the trouble. While plenty of people go out with the intentions to have a good night out, and nothing else, inevitably there will be some who see their nights spiral out of control in an ugly way.

Whether it is alcohol taking over, or having violent intentions from the get-go, bringing the nightlife under control is important for the residents in reducing the amount of crime in the 'dodgy' part of town.

That inevitably leads to one of the main questions that almost everyone asks - what about the police presence in the area?

While Mr Higgins believes there has been a change in recent weeks and the police are starting to tackle the root problem others still question the presence of officers.

"There's a lack of police presence probably," says one woman who wished to remain unnamed.

"I think they've been cut back to the bone by the government and, although I work full-time, I don't really see that presence."

That was a sentiment shared by Mr Hobbs who said: "I haven't seen a policeman in the town for years."

"Over there on a Friday or Saturday night having them as a visual deterrent wouldn't be too bad with your clubs pouring out and the rest of it."

The underpass runs below these blocks of flats.
“People come down from outside of Harlow as well, you get some Londoners coming down here.

“I don’t know why you’d want to come out clubbing or drinking in Harlow, I’ll be honest with you.”

What comes across most from the residents is a sense that Harlow as a whole has almost been left behind by the times.

Instead the reputation that the area around this underpass has garnered - as well as other areas of town - is where the focus lies.

That’s not something for people to shout about.

“I’ll be honest with you, this would be a town I would have moved out of years ago if I could,” said Mr Hobbs.

“This town was designed in a special way and it was a good design for the 60s.

“We are now here 50 years later and it really just does not work.

“You can see over there - look - it’s just a mess. It’s from an aesthetic point of view and things to do.

“All the shops have shut down in the town, there’s nothing over there.

“It’s never been a great town since I’ve been a kid.

“The town centre should be renovated, or properly renovated, not just tinkered with.

“They’ve tinkered with the market area more than once and it has been a waste.

“I remember when that market was bustling and now there’s about three or four stalls going down that walkway.

“It’s a waste of money.”

For Mr Higgins it is a case of thinking that the time to completely change the town has probably now passed.

“I don’t think they could change the town now to be honest,” he said.

“When I first came down here - I came down as a baby - my father was building the town.

“There was no town centre then when we moved into Harlow.

“The town centre needs a 100 per cent revamp.

“They’ve spent thousands on table tennis tables made of concrete, and stuff like that, which to me is a complete waste of money.

“I’m not a killjoy but something better could have been done with the money.

“Let’s get a proper market back in town - there’s only three or four stalls and they’re dying a death.

“I go to Epping now and again and on a Monday at the Epping market, you must have over 60 stalls there.

“It’s a proper market and they’re dragging people in and the shops are happy.

“The only area that I would say is catching the trade is the Water Gardens.”

What also comes across from people is that not everything around Harlow is as gloomy as it seems.

“For residents, there is a lot of good that goes unnoticed because of the reputation.

“I think it gets a reputation of being a bad place and to me I don’t think it is,” said an anonymous woman. “I think a lot of people think it’s not the youth of Harlow, it’s what is coming in from different areas.

“As I say, it gets a reputation for the bad whereas to me there’s some very, very good sides as well.”
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News

Boy injured after bike hits pothole

MUM IS CRITICAL OF STATE OF UNDERPASS

By SOPHIE FINNEGAN
Sophie.finnegan@reachplc.com
@sophiefinnegann

AN angry mum from Harlow has criticised the council after her three-year-old son fell into a pothole and suffered two black eyes.

Kirsty Nicol, 27, from Little Grove Field, spent three hours in A&E with her three-year-old son Charlie after he fell face-first into the pavement on Monday, October 22.

Charlie was riding his bike through the underpass on Playhouse Square opposite the Harvey Centre’s multi-storey car park with his mum when his wheel became lodged in a pothole and fell face-first into the pavement.

Kirsty said: “There’s a lot of potholes in that area. My son was on his pushbike when his wheel got stuck in one of them and he went face-first into the pavement and he got a big bruise and he now has two black eyes.

“We were in A&E for three hours. It was awful. The doctor said because his bumps were soft, they wanted to keep us in overnight before they let him go.

“We kept an eye on him but now he’s got two black eyes. I had to keep him home to make sure he was all right.”

Angered by the incident and the fact that the potholes weren’t marked, Kirsty went down to the council offices the following day to report the incident.

“I went up to Harlow Council on Tuesday and they filled in an incident form and said they were aware of it and that they are still to be repaired,” she explained. “They said it was the weather conditions, but they should either mark them or repair them.”

She added: “Those potholes have been there since summer and nothing has been done.

“My nan is disabled and has a wheelchair and she can’t even use the underpass and has to go the other way to cross the road. It’s just not safe.”

Harlow Council confirmed that maintenance for the underpass comes under Essex Highways.

A spokesman for Essex Highways said: “Our inspector has logged the defect and we are planning repairs in due course.

“We do hope the child isn’t badly hurt and makes a full and quick recovery.”

Harlow mum Kirsty Nicol has criticised the council after her three-year-old son, Charlie, fell into a pothole and suffered two black eyes

CHRIS COOK

St Mark’s West Essex Catholic School
Sixth Form Opportunities Evening

Thursday 8 November 2018 7.00 pm - 9.00 pm
(The Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form will address parents and students at 7.15 pm)

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Driver who broke PC's leg is jailed

A DRIVER who broke a police officer’s leg after crashing into her with his car has been jailed.

Jack Mitchell, of Kingsmoor Road, Harlow, drove his car at two officers after they approached him as part of their enquiries into another incident on April 24.

Police had initially been responding to reports of concern for the welfare of an 18-year-old woman, with the support of the national Air Police Service. While dealing with the incident, PC Hayley Robinson approached the 19-year-old who was in a black Audi A5 in Sunderland Road in Sandy, Bedfordshire.

Mitchell then drove at the officers, who tried to take cover in their police car before they were hit.

PC Robinson’s leg was broken in the collision, while the other officer was unhurt.

Mitchell initially evaded the officers and left the county, however he was eventually arrested in Essex in August.

Mitchell is clearly a dangerous individual who went to extreme efforts to evade officers and I’m glad he has finally been caught and will serve time in prison.”

Detective Constable Jo Barkat, who led the investigation, said: “Hayley has been incredibly brave throughout this experience, the impact of which clearly goes beyond the physical trauma she suffered at the time.

“Officers were responding to an incident which had nothing to do with Mitchell, and his subsequent actions were not only dangerous, but needless.

“He went to great lengths to avoid being detained, so I’m glad we were able to trace Mitchell and bring him to justice.

“No one should be put in harm’s way simply for doing their job, and this is a stark warning for anyone who tries to hurt a member of the emergency services; it’s not acceptable, won’t be tolerated, and you will appear will appear before the courts.”

Mitchell was sentenced at Luton Crown Court on Friday, October 25, after previously pleading guilty to dangerous driving with intent to cause injury.

Judge Richard Foster jailed Mitchell for two years and three months for this offence, and a further three months for a separate dangerous driving offence in Essex.

Due to Mitchell’s age, and personal mitigation, the sentence was reduced to two years.

Mitchell also received a two-year driving ban, to come into effect once his sentence is served.

He must also take an extended driving test.

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email: dementia.prevention@imperial.ac.uk

web: www.chariotregister.org

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Wednesday 14th November
6.00pm - 9.00pm
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Due to the popularity of the school, parking on the school grounds may be limited. Those attending the later presentations are encouraged to arrive earlier and visit departments beforehand.

New prospectus for 2019 entry and on-line application system available at www.tbshs.org from 14th November.
Rod Stewart set to sell mansion

By TOMMY WATHEN

PICTURES online have shown the incredible former home of Rod Stewart in Essex that is close to being sold for almost £5 million.

Copped Hall, which is located in Epping, is currently under offer with Savills estate agents after being put on the market with a guide price of just under £4.73 million.

The property features a stunning boating lake, swimming pool, formal gardens, a tennis court, garages and even a full sized football pitch.

On top of that, the six-double bedroom and five-bathroom property is located on 16.91 acres of land on the fringes of Epping Forest – offering scenic landscapes and plenty of space.

In August, the Mirror Online reported how the 73-year-old rock singer-songwriter and his wife Penny Lancaster had been trying to sell the picture-perfect property for two years.

Originally, the property was listed on the market for £7.5 million, although it is not under offer for less than £5 million.

As reported by the Mirror Online, Rod Stewart’s 47-year-old wife told a property magazine: “Rod and I have found ourselves affected by the recent property stalemate thanks to Brexit. “We can’t sell our old place in Essex, The Wood House, despite its unique architecture and strong historical links.”

Images from Savills estate agent now show inside the mansion Rod and Penny used to live in when they lived at The Wood House before moving out.

So what is a potential buyer actually getting for their £4.73 million?

As you approach The Wood House, electric gates open up to a driveway that leads you directly through the stunning grounds surrounding the house.

Once inside, you’ll find six double bedrooms on the first floor that all have their own individual en-suite facilities and a superb dual aspect second bedroom with a very attractive outlook over the grounds.

A fireplace, raised ceiling and panelled walls help to create a stately feel.

The dressing rooms have Clive Christian fitted wardrobes, a dressing table and a central island with storage underneath and topped with heavy marble.

Back outside and you will also find a detached Tudor-style cottage.
Top brands coming to new store

By CHARLOTTE PAGE
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@journopage

A NEW clothing store will open in Harlow town centre in time for Christmas.

Premium-branded retailer Tessuti has chosen The Water Gardens as the location to open its latest store.

The currently vacant unit used to house both Dorothy Perkins and Evans.

Tessuti has more than 20 stores across the UK and will stock a wide selection of high-end menswear and womenswear brands including Parajumpers, Barbour, Polo Ralph Lauren, Emporio Armani, Hugo Boss and Tommy Hilfiger.

The clothing store will open in mid-December.

A spokesperson from Tessuti’s head office said: “Tessuti are proud to be opening at the Water Gardens and we look forward to sharing our favourite brands with Harlow shoppers in time for Christmas.”

Centre manager of The Water Gardens, Simon Plumb, said: “We’re delighted that Tessuti has chosen to open in the Water Gardens, which has become a real destination for shoppers.

“It will be a fantastic addition to the scheme, offering premium brands that are not currently available in Harlow, and we are confident it will be very popular amongst customers.”

Tessuti is the latest store to open in The Water Gardens following the opening of Virgin Holidays in Next and children’s toy specialists Totally Toy in Matalan this summer.

For more information visit: www.tessuti.co.uk

The premium branded retailer will be open mid-December
CHANGE is in the air at Herts & Essex! Sixth Formers at the school now have a brand new home. The much awaited Sixth Form Centre opened its doors on 15 October revealing a fantastic new state-of-the-art building. The transformation of the old school gym into the Sixth Form Centre has been watched over the last few months by the whole school and it is difficult now to believe it was anything other than a purpose-built Sixth Form building!

Students in Years 12 and 13 are enjoying their own dedicated space on the Warwick Road site, something that has been much needed especially as the popularity of the Herts & Essex Sixth Form has seen a significant increase in numbers in recent years. In addition to the communal area, the accommodation includes a quiet study zone, a café area, library facilities and ‘superloos’. It has been a long-awaited project and one that has generated much excitement. With the former Sixth Form spaces having been converted into a fantastic new Drama studio as well as several classrooms, the creation of the Sixth Form Centre is the beginning of something that will be beneficial to the school as a whole.

Described as ‘brilliant and modern’, ‘fantastic’ and ‘a great space’, students are extremely pleased with the new centre. The staff are equally thrilled.

Mrs Caroline Lewis, Director of Sixth Form, commented, “Our new home is fantastic! This dedicated area offers a university-style space for students helping them to make an effective transition to independent learning.”

She added, “in addition to the high number of computers now available for study, we are looking forward to the flexibility within our new centre to host events, such as those preparing for university and apprenticeship interviews.”

The Sixth Form Centre will be on display for the first time to the public at the forthcoming Sixth Form Open Evening which takes place on Wednesday 7 November. Doors open at 6.00 pm with the evening finishing at 8.30 pm.

Prospective Sixth Form students and their parents are warmly invited to Herts & Essex to meet staff and existing Sixth Formers. For further information please see the school website at www.hertsandessex.herts.sch.uk or call the school on 01279 654127.

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86 drivers fined after M11 is closed by collision

By HANNAH KANE
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@hannahkane

ESSEX Police has announced action will be taken against 86 drivers following a crash on the M11 which saw an air ambulance land.

A six-vehicle collision on the busy road near Harlow shut the carriageway at around 1.10pm on Saturday (October 27).

The road was shut for around 25 minutes but no one was seriously injured. However, a large number of motorists stuck in the queues took matters into their own hands and police have said they will be fined as a result.

Officers received dozens of video clips from dash cam and mobile phones through the Safer Essex Road Partnerships’ Extra Eyes campaign. These clips showed motorists turning around and driving the wrong way up the hard shoulder and slip road.

Police have said there is no excuse for this behaviour and will issue each driver with a £100 fine and three points on their driving licence.

Adam Pipe, Essex Police’s head of roads policing, said: “Turning around on a road and driving in the other direction is clearly dangerous, there are no excuses.”

For more visit: saferessexroads.org/extraeyes/extra-eyes-what-next/
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A video of urban explorers inside an abandoned tower block just weeks before it was demolished gives an eerie idea of how residents lived.

The shell of the former hostel building was mostly intact, with the exception of certain walls or windows which had collapsed completely.

The footage details the state of what was left in the Harlow YWCA tower and how it looked before it became a flat piece of land.

The building, also known as the Angel Tower, housed hundreds of residents, families and those who were vulnerable, and was prominent in the area next to The Square. It was demolished as plans were submitted to build newer homes in the area, but these are yet to be built.

Ryan and his friend dared to go into the building when the site employees were gone, and climbed almost to the top.

He said at one point the pair diced with danger when they opened the fire exit door and there was a straight drop to the ground.

The 23-year-old said: “The tower no longer exists, it was demolished a few months ago and we explored it a month before it went down.

“I actually spoke to a builder before we went in and he said we’d have to get permission from the site manager and wear a high viz and hard hat.

“But we went in on a Sunday when the building crew were not in there.”

Ryan, who was 22 at the time, added: “I had actually been in the building a few years ago with another explorer but I documented everything on Snapchat.

“I didn’t get to keep my footage and I told myself I’d have to go back before it was demolished.

“I went into the site with my friend Fraser as he likes buildings and things like this.”

When they arrived there in June this year there were parts of the tower crumbling and evidence of other people exploring and vandalising.

He claimed: “Some of the building had already been demolished and there was a lot of open walls and flooring. It was amazing to see one of the boilers was still running – it was still intact.

“I like to explore derelict buildings because in years to come and they are gone or they have been built over, people won’t remember them or have the chance to see those buildings.

“That way people can say look at this video it shows the inside before it was knocked down.”

The footage shows walls crumbling and holes to the ground where a large pile of rubble sits outside.

There are also lots of pigeons inside the building, which Ryan said disturbed dust and the pair were concerned over reports of asbestos.

In the film, which is available on YouTube, the lift doors remained open which scared the young explorers.

At one point they visit a room where the entire outside facing wall has fallen down, leading to a huge drop below.

Watch the full video on EssexLive to see what was inside the Harlow YWCA tower.
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**Halloween hits Harvey Centre**

By CHARLOTTE PAGE
Charlotte.page@reachplc.com
@journopage

A SPOOKY 3D house, a cursed pirate ship and a treasure hunt are all part of the spooky transformation a Harlow shopping centre has had.

The Harvey Centre has been celebrating Halloween over the past couple of weeks.

Centre manager of The Harvey Centre, Bryan Young, said: “Halloween is now a huge event in the UK and a celebration our shoppers really love.

“Every year we want to push the boundaries and offer something unique, fun and memorable and this year’s pirate extravaganza ticked all those boxes.”

Attractions such as Hoop the Witches Hat and Catch the Ghost will be in place until November 4 outside Burger Priest on the top floor.

There was plenty of fun for young people
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*LINE-FOR-LINE QUOTES FROM CARPET FITTERS AND SUPPLIERS OPERATING IN THE SAME NEWSPAPER DISTRIBUTION AREA AS THIS ADVERT. *AVERAGE LOUNGE 18 SQ M / 17.5 SQ YDS
Healthy outlook for new centre – even before it was opened

EVEN before its official opening, the benefits of the new Lister House Health Centre were clearly already evident. The section of pavement in Perry Road opposite the old site has been returned by the motorist to its rightful user, the pedestrian; although it cannot be too long before it is claimed by that other menace to those on foot, the cyclist. The relocation of the Metwest Pharmacy means many of its customers will no longer have to endure the ‘open sore’ that is Staple Tye. With Poundland and Lidl book-ending the fast-food outlets, add the speeding drivers, careless and inconsiderate parking, the so-called, ‘Shopping Centre’ is undoubtedly somewhere to avoid, and this after a total rethink and ground-up revamp not that long ago.

Oh dear, what have we done to our town? As for the reported £7.5m cost for the new Lister House? Money well spent in my opinion.

L Richards
Harlow

Next year’s Great North Run

WE’D like to invite the readers to get their running shoes on and stride out in next year’s Great North Run to help beat meningitis.

By running for Meningitis Now or any other charity, we can help to improve road safety.

Swap the school run for a school walk

FOURTEEN per cent of children killed on roads in 2017 were between 7 and 9am and 23 per cent were between 3 and 5pm – school run hours. These are heartbreaking figures. People walking do not cause congestion, road danger or toxic air levels, and yet they’re the ones paying the price on our roads.

The current justice system is simply not an effective deterrent to dangerous behaviour. We are calling for an urgent review of how the justice system deals with mistakes, deliberateness, recklessness and deliberately dangerous behaviour by all road-users.

We also need to see more measures to protect pedestrians.

Cars on the school run are a huge part of traffic in the morning peak. By creating safer school walking routes and investing in proven behaviour change initiatives, we can help reduce the number of cars on our roads.

October is International Walk to School Month. We want as many families as possible to swap the school run for a school walk – helping to reduce congestion and improve road safety.

Kathryn Shaw
Via email

As for the reported £7.5m cost for the new centre? Money well spent in my opinion.

L Richards

Where there’s a will there’s a way to help

As chief executive at the British Heart Foundation (BHF) I see first-hand the incredible impact gifts left in wills make to the charity. Research funded by the BHF has helped halve death rates from heart and circulatory diseases over the past 50 years and so much of our work has only been possible thanks to the amazing individuals who have remembered the BHF in their will. A recent survey to support Will Power the BHF’s campaign to encourage people to consider leaving a legacy in their will, showed that the British public would like to be remembered for their generosity, kindness and humour over their wealth or professional work achievements. Seven in ten of those asked said they wished they could do more to help others and a quarter said they wanted their will to improve the lives of others.

I must take the opportunity to thank all of the generous supporters - past, present and future - for their contributions.

Simon Gillespie
British Heart Foundation

We reserve the right to edit material.
Please enclose your full address and daytime telephone number, where you took the photo and, if possible, a picture of yourself. We reserve the right to reuse pictures at our discretion.

Your Views
Letters

Sadly, meningitis and septicaemia continue to affect thousands of people in the UK each year and kill more under-fives than any other infectious disease. Help us fight back by funding research, raising awareness and supporting survivors. This year we had 50 runners taking part in the run, raising over £21,000 (thank you everybody). Next year we’d like to do even better. We have guaranteed places for the event, on Sunday, September 8 2019, for a registration fee of £25 and a minimum pledge of £300.

Your runs will help to reduce the number of deaths caused by meningitis in the UK and move us ever nearer to our vision of a future where no one dies from the disease and everyone affected gets the support they need.

Visit www.MeningitisNow.org or visit meningitisnow.org to register and find out more.

Michaela Ifill
Via email

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Your Views
Letters
Harlow town basking in the late afternoon autumn sun sent in by Stuart Searle from Harlow

Here’s what you’ve been talking about on Facebook this week:

**WEBCHAT**

**LLOYDS TSB IN HARLOW**

Bush Fair has closed after customers decline

A lot of older people don’t bank online. The banks make millions and taxpayers helped bale them out after they caused the banking crash. You’d think they would give something back to the community, and provide a service for older people.

Steve Edwards
I worked there many years and know all the staff affected. Sad day for them and the people who used it.

Shirley Mclean
Just like old Harlow. There were 4 banks there when I was a kid, Lloyds, Midland, Natwest and Barclays. Now only Barclays is left, I wonder how long until that closes too.

Scott Brannon
Very sad, the only reason I stayed with Lloyds. The council and MP should have stopped this decline of our shopping centres.

Karen Taylor
Just wasted money doing it up then closes. Was the only place you could guarantee to get money from cash point.

Janet Piper
Have been using this branch for 50 years, sadly no more. Will miss it and want to say a big thank you to all the staff who worked there. A sorry day.

Gwen West
They encouraged their customers to bank online.

Chloe Stevens
So what happening to Lloyds bank customers as I’m one and have been for 7yrs I don’t want to change banks x

Katie Whitmore
Went there this morning gutted it’s gone it was so Convenient than the town for me.

Angela Eaton
Number of homes planned on site of The Square in Harlow almost double 128 homes, 93 car park spaces. Can’t see any problems there. If you live in Hare Street Area that’s where the overspill will park. Also extra cars at rush hour at town centre just what we don’t need. Anyway crack on Harlow Council am sure these plans will go through!

Nick Teale
Are they going to build another doctors surgery and school to accommodate for the extra people. Schools are full and so are doctors.

Louise Ellen Ball

**Get in touch**

- **Email:** community@hertsessexnews.co.uk
- **Twitter:** @Harlowstar
- **Facebook:** /HarlowStar
How do we decide who can come into the UK?

How do we create a fair asylum and immigration system that benefits Britain?

**THE BIG QUESTION**

**LABOUR:** Jodi Dunne

Creating a fair asylum and immigration system depends on, respectively, recognising our international responsibility and heeding the needs of our businesses and industries.

Asylum seekers in the main come from countries that have been destabilised by conflict and I feel it is the responsibility of the UK, as one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, to do as much as we possibly can to use diplomacy in order to identify and deal with areas of potential conflict before they turn into regional wars.

The UK is a world leader in diplomacy and more could and should be done to bring our influence to bear on tragic situations in which innocent men, women and children are caught up in cross fire.

When conflict does arise and innocent civilians are forced to flee to neighbouring countries we should work in a more effective way with the host countries to ensure the wellbeing of affected people.

With immigration, the needs of our businesses have to be addressed so as to keep our economy competitive and our public services fully staffed, while also giving the requisite training and educational opportunities to our younger people to help them into these and more skilled jobs.

The current Conservative government has effectively discouraged further education for working class students by trebling tuition fees to a colossal £9000 a year, education spending per pupil in England has fallen by 8% in real terms since 2009 and their so-called apprenticeship scheme is restarted every couple of years with ever diminishing returns.

The Labour Party will ensure that students reach their full potential with a National Education Service which will among other initiatives restore grants enabling those less well off to reach their full potential.

As we train our younger people to a more effective degree, it's important to remember that as a country, we have always had a blend of native and overseas workers and it is that combination that has propelled our economy forward and helped us to evolve and prosper as a nation. Keeping that balance in mind is key to our future prosperity.

**UKIP:** Peter Day

The first thing to do is get out of the EU. We need to get out so that this question can be looked at in a fair and sustainable manner. We know that whilst inside the EU we have no controls over numbers or fairness of the current system and for an island nation, this is not sustainable.

Once outside of the EU, we can and should look at immigration and asylum in a new way.

Firstly with asylum we need to make sure that the reason is valid and create a system to check that asylum seekers are helped but that economic migrants are stopped from entering the country.

This needs a complete overhaul of our current controls which are open like a barn door.

In terms of immigration, UKIP have been the only party to promote and support a points based system that would allow us to bring in people from anywhere in the World based on their ability and willingness to do jobs at all levels that are also able to bring value and enrichment to our society.

A points based system would not discriminate against people from any country (as is happening now) and it would allow us to find the very best people to work and live happily here in the UK. That includes the lower paid workers if and as needed.

UKIP have had this policy for many years while the three main parties don’t listen to the argument and benefits. That said, they all prefer to stay inside the EU (as we are currently seeing) and if that ever happens it means the question is irrelevant because we will never be able to change things.

**WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU WANT ANSWERED?**

Every week we put your questions to representatives of each of your main local parties. So get involved! Email your questions to get the issues that matter to you on the agenda.
ARRIVING at school to find Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker’s house has been recreated is enough to inspire anyone to want to read.

That’s what pupils at Little Pardon Primary Academy in Harlow were met with when they arrived at school on Roald Dahl Day.

Dressed as their favourite book characters, pupils enjoyed a day celebrating the famous author’s birthday.

The themed day — including a special lunch menu — was the latest to hook children into their writing and reading.

Kirstie Clark, co-head of the Hodings Road school, said: “Our Little Spinney was transformed to look like Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker’s house and included the giant peach famous in the Roald Dahl tale.

“We used the national day as a stimulus to help pupils with their writing and other topic work over two weeks. We celebrate the work of Roald Dahl every year and the children absolutely love all of his stories.

“It’s a hook which really engages the pupils, particularly the boys.

“The theme is used to link with as many subjects as possible.

“The children absolutely love it; there’s a real buzz around the school as it’s something different for them.”

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“The children absolutely love it; there’s a real buzz around the school as it’s something different for them.”

Pupils to get writing after cinema outing

COOKS Spinney Primary Academy in Harlow is taking all of its pupils to Cineworld as part of the Into Film Festival.

This month, Years 2, 3 and 4 will watch Big Bad Fox and Other Tales, Year 5 will watch Captain Underpants and Year 6 will see Mary and Witches Flower.

Head teacher Neil Stirrat said: “Opportunities like this bring learning to life for our pupils.

“We know the cinema can be an expensive trip for families.

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Your Education News

email your news to community@hertsessexnews.co.uk
YOUR NEWS

We compile Your Community News pages two weeks in advance of publication. If you want to include a future event please make sure you tell us in plenty of time so our readers can come along.

Hunsdon

■ CHRISTMAS FAIREE: Hosted by St Clare Hospice on Sunday, November 25 from 12.30-4pm at Great Parndon Community Centre, Abercrombie Way, Harlow, CM18 6YJ.
■ WALKING FOOTBALL: 50-plus fitness group. A great way to keep fit newcomers welcome to come along and give it a try £3 per session 3G pitch. Hosted by Parndon Sports Club. Session times Mondays 4-5pm; Thursdays 10am - 12pm; Sundays 2.30pm. Please call Dave on 07980 578201 for more details.
■ PILATES CLASSES: Mondays 2-3pm at Hunsdon Village Hall. Friendly and welcoming classes. Pilates helps you achieve a balance of mind and body, plus focusing on stretching and strengthening the whole body to improve balance, muscle strength, flexibility and posture.

Sawbridgeworth

■ MORRIS MEET: Fiddler’s Brook Morris meet every Tuesday at 8pm at Aliens Green Village Hall near Sawbridgeworth. Newcomers are welcome to go along and give it a try for fun, exercise and friendship and to keep a tradition going.
■ SAWBRIDGEWORTH MARKET: Craft and messy play classes are held on Tuesdays from 1.30 to 2.30pm at Allens Green Village Hall near Sawbridgeworth. Musicians also welcome. Call 01279 723707 or email neilandgillmouro@aol.com or see our Facebook page.

Harlow

■ FUNDRAISING QUIZ: Amnesty International Harlow group is hosting a pub quiz on Friday, November 2, to help fundraise for their local campaigning.
■ FUNDRAISING QUIZ: Amnesty International Harlow group is hosting a quiz at the Snooker and Social Club, the quiz will be the quizmaster for the event.
■ CHRIStmAS FAyRe: The Big Band at Christmas is the matinee show that’s swinging into Harlow on Sunday (November 4). Hosted by the Harlow playhouse Theatre, the show features Five Star Swing as seen at London’s Leicester Square Theatre and BBC Children in Need. The show promises all your favourite Christmas songs given the dynamic big band treatment - Glenn Miller, Frank Sinatra, Count Basie, Nat King Cole - jazzing up those Jingle Bells. “Superb – they swing like crazy.” says the BBC’s Sheila Tracy. Local drummer Steve Rushden, who tours with the band, said: “I’m excited to be bringing the big-band version of all these classic Christmas songs back to my home town”. Also featured is Simone from the Ivy Benson Orchestra, and Chris Smith (Unr), composer and arranger for the BBC Radio Big Band, the Herb Miller Big Band Glen’s brother), plus Tony Bennett’s trombonist. Tickets are selling fast and are available from Box Office 01279 431945, www.harlowplayhouse.co.uk
■ CReAtIve LIttLe ONeS: Art, craft and messy play classes are held for under fives. The sessions are held
 ■

Lord Butler Leisure Centre, Peaslands Road, Saffron Walden, CB10 1EN. Entry is just £1 per person, with children attending for free

Sandon

■ GREEN FINGeRS: Sandon Gardeners’ Club meets every second Monday of the month at Sandon Village Hall at 7.30pm. If you have an interest in gardening, go along and join. New members are always welcome.
■ Contact chairman John Handley at: johnhandley5@btinternet.com for more.

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MP seeks assurances over supermarkets merger move

MP Robert Halfon recently met with the chief executive of Sainsbury’s to seek assurances for Harlow workers amidst the Sainsbury’s-Asda merger. This was following conversations the Harlow MP has had with Asda on the same issue.

Robert Halfon said: “Mike Coupe, CEO of Sainsbury’s, came to visit me this week and we had a very constructive meeting.

“Mike reassured me that no stores would close as a result of the proposed Sainsbury’s and Asda merger and that he is committed to continuing to invest in his employees and in local communities.

“I also raised concerns about how the merger could impact petrol prices. However, I was assured that both supermarkets would continue to price competitively and if anything, their prices may go down with increased buying power.

“I have had the same conversations with Roger Burnley, chief executive of Asda, who also said that fuel costs will continue to be a priority to ensure hard-pressed motorists get the best possible deal.

“We will stay in touch as the merger process continues and I will work hard to ensure we get the best deal for Harlow and the villages.”

Teen dance: DDMIX (Diverse Dance Mix) dance fitness classes are held every Wednesday at Standon Village Hall for teenagers between 5.45 and 6.30pm, term time.

No dance experience is required, just lots of enthusiasm and a pair of trainers.

It costs £5, which can be paid on the door each week.

Call Julie on 07971 699615 or visit: dancejamacademy.co.uk for more information.

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Pilates helps you achieve a balance of mind and body plus focusing on stretching and strengthening the whole body to improve balance, muscle strength, flexibility and posture.

For more information or to book your first complimentary class (limited places) contact Anne at activehealthpilatesandmore on 07717 333234 or email: activehealthpam@gmail.com or visit www.activehealthpilatesandmore.com

Widford

Musicians and Movers: Put a jingle in your step and become a morris dancer.

Have a bash at Cotswold dance traditions with Standon Morris at practice sessions on Thursday evenings.

The mixed side welcomes anyone from ten years old upwards.

No experience necessary, and it is free. The group gathers from about 8pm onwards in The Star before heading down to Standon Village Hall at 8.30pm.

Musicians are also needed to play. To find out more, call Catherine on 07808 969379 or send an email to: standon.morris@gmail.com

Film stars Migo and Meechee are the centre of attention

The characters appeared in The Harvey Centre's upstairs dining and leisure area.

THE Harvey Centre in Harlow was thrilled to welcome Migo and Meechee from the latest animated comedy by Warner Animation Group, ‘Smallfoot’, to the centre on Saturday, October 13 and Sunday, October 14.

The characters appeared in The Harvey Centre’s upstairs dining and leisure area. Here, the stars of the movie met customers and posed for photos outside the centre’s Cineworld Cinema – bringing to life the experience families will have when they see the film.

The film itself is a fun tale that turns the myth of the Bigfoot / Yetti on its head, making humans the myth to the Yetti. The film tells the story of one young yeti going in search of the elusive ‘Smallfoot’, with characters voiced by stars including Channing Tatum, James Corden and Danny DeVito. Smallfoot was released in time to keep the kids entertained during the half-term break.

Bryan Young, manager at The Harvey Centre said: “We loved having Migo and Meechee at The Harvey Centre and hope our customers enjoyed the chance to meet them and pose for photos. We’re always looking for exciting ways to entertain our customers and hope this event put a smile on the faces of the younger members of the community in particular.”
A new art installation introduces colour and light to hospital foyer

AN artwork which was inspired by a view from a ward and which celebrates the wonderful care provided at Princess Alexandra Hospital Trust (PAHT) in Harlow, will form a lasting image to welcome patients, visitors and staff.

The entrance to the hospital is now illuminated by Tree Circles, an impressive glass installation by Parndon Mill artist Ewa Wawrzyniak.

Tree Circles was officially opened in the presence of Ms Wawrzyniak, Inger, Eric, Ingrid and Joyce Collins, from the sponsoring family, outgoing PAHT chief nurse and deputy CEO, Nancy Fontaine, and Jacqueline Jackson, a member of the quality improvement team at the hospital.

Tree Circles spans three discs of glass and is backlit in a frame especially designed by Ms Wawrzyniak’s fellow Parndon Mill craftsman Barry Volckman.

Ms Wawrzyniak said: “In the making of the Tree Circles, I wanted to represent a renewal, hope, promise.”

“The prominent position in the hospital entrance dictated to me the importance of communicating to people coming to the hospital that there is always a potential for the new in our lives.”

“Using glass as a medium, I could play with light and shadows drawing with enamels and using glass powders as a background colour.”

“I wanted to capture trees in spring as a symbol of a fresh start, positive energy.” Inger Collins said: “Ewa’s Tree Circles is a thank you to the NHS and PAHT in particular for the important role it has played in the community in Harlow over so many years.”

“PAHT deals not only with the medical condition of people.”

“Stained glass has added greatly to the atmosphere of churches over the centuries.”

“It welcomes people with courtesy and friendliness, and shows great consideration for human dignity.”

Speaking about the installation, Eric added that the aim of Tree Circles is to introduce colour and light into the hospital entrance. “The inspiration is a mixture of medieval and modern.”

“Stained glass has added greatly to the atmosphere of churches over the centuries.”

“And in modern times we have all got used to the allure of backlit smartphone screens. Tree Circles shares the luminous qualities of both.”

“We hope that it will help create a calm and colourful environment for people walking into the hospital.”

Ewa has worked for more than ten years at Parndon Mill, in Harlow, and teaches at the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield.

Chief executive Lance McCarthy said: “We are delighted to have this wonderful artwork project that will enhance the entrance to our hospital for current and future patients and visitors.”

“The symbolic image of renewal and hope is a great adornment for our new entrance and forms a wonderful welcome to all who come to Princess Alexandra Hospital.”

“We are very grateful to the sponsors of this project and to Ewa who created inspirational Tree Circles.”

Could you give Merlin a magic new home?

MERLIN is a lovely friendly boy, approximately three years old, who would love a home where he can be the only cat and the centre of attention.

He was found wandering the streets of Harlow but has now had a full health check, been vaccinated and microchipped and is looking for his forever home.

If you feel you could provide the loving home that this adorable cat needs, get in touch with Catnip Cat Rescue on 07949 345447 or take a look at the website at www.catnipcatrescue.co.uk where you can view and read all about the beautiful cats ready for rehoming.

Harlow-based Catnip Cat Rescue was formed in April 2018 by a group of five volunteers who are passionate and committed cat lovers, with many years of knowledge and experience between them in all aspects of cat rescue and welfare.

Merlin is looking for his forever home
Kathy BASTOW
Passed away peacefully on 26th October 2018 aged 97 years. A much loved Mum to Tammy & Sister to Joanne, Suzanne and Husband David. Grandmother to Emma and Hannah, Great Grandmother to Jacob, Noah and Sebastian. She will be deeply missed by all her family and friends.
Funeral service will be held at Parndon Wood Crematorium on Tuesday 13th November at 3.15pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired may be sent c/o Daniel Robinson & Sons, 79/81 South Street, Bishop's Stortford, Herts CM23 3AL. Tel 01279 655477.
Alternatively, please visit Kathy’s In Memory Page on www.drobinson.co.uk

Thomas Arthur DAVIS
Of Sawbridgeworth, passed away peacefully in Princess Alexandra Hospital on the 22nd October 2018 aged 75. He will be deeply missed by his wife June, son Lee, daughters Karie and Wendy, family, friends and all who knew him. Tom’s funeral service will be held at Parndon Wood Crematorium on Friday 9th November at 3.15pm. Flowers may be sent to Daniel Robinson & Sons, 3 Bullfields, Sawbridgeworth, CM21 9DB. Telephone 01279-722476.

Gary John HARVEY
(GAL)
Gary sadly passed away in Basildon Hospital on 17th October with his family by his side, he will be greatly missed by all his family and friends. A celebration of his life will be held at Parndon Wood Crematorium at 10-45am on November 7th. Family flowers only donations for the British Heart Foundation. All enquiries and donations to Masterson Funeral Home Ltd 01279 636298.

Sheila GUERRATI
Passed away peacefully on the 4th October 2018 aged 77 years. A beloved Mother to Gina and Dianne, devoted Grandma to Jade, Hannah, Luke and Emma and Great Grandma to Levi. The funeral service will take place at Parndon Wood Crematorium on Friday 16th November at 1.00pm. Flowers if desired may be sent c/o Daniel Robinson & Sons, Wych Elm, Harlow, CM20 1QP Telephone 01279 426990.

John James HARDING
Passed away on 26th October 2018 aged 81 years. Loving father to Jane and the late Paul. Grandfather to Abigail, Jonathan and Holly. Great Grandfather to Charlie, Harvey and Jake. The funeral service will take place at Parndon Wood Crematorium on Thursday 15th November at 1pm. Family flowers only. Donations if desired, payable to the British Lung Foundation may be sent c/o Daniel Robinson, Wych Elm, Harlow, CM20 1QP or via www.drobinson.co.uk. Telephone 01279 426990.

Margaret Ann CLAYTON
(née Maughan)
Passed away peacefully on 18th October 2018 aged 95 years. Funeral service to be held at St Cecilia’s Church, Little Hadham on Tuesday 13th November at 1.30pm. No black clothing is preferred. No flowers please, but donations if desired for The Children’s Society may be made online using the “In Memory” pages at www.drobinson.co.uk or cheques made payable to the charity can be sent c/o Daniel Robinson & Sons, 79/81 South Street, Bishop’s Stortford, Herts, CM23 3AL. Tel 01279 655477.
Deaths

KENNETH JOHN NELMES
Sadly passed away on 2nd October 2018, aged 56 years. Beloved brother of Debbie and Brian. He will be greatly missed by all his family and friends. Funeral service will be held at Parndon Wood Crematorium on Friday 9th November at 11.30am. Family flowers only. Donations if desired made payable to British Heart Foundation or Diabetes UK may be sent c/o Daniel Robinson & Sons, Wych Elm, Harlow, CM20 1QP. Tel: 01279 426990. Alternatively, please visit the ‘In Memory page’ at www.drobinson.co.uk.

Maureen TUCKER
Sadly passed away on 4th October 2018, aged 82. Dearly loved Wife of Ray, loving Mum to Peter, Jean & Robert, much loved Nan and Great Nan. She will be missed by all her family and friends. Funeral service will be held at Parndon Wood Crematorium on Wednesday 7th November at 1.45pm. Family flowers only. Donations if you wish to The Royal British Legion or Diabetes UK may be sent c/o Daniel Robinson & Sons, Wych Elm, Harlow, CM20 1QP. Tel: 01279 426990. Alternatively, please visit the ‘In Memory page’ at www.drobinson.co.uk.

In Memoriam

VIOLET MABEL BURNETT
5th November 2011. Also remembering Alan Peter Burnett, passed away on 23rd August 2018. Both sadly missed but always remembered. Love Rene and Grandchildren xx

SHUMONTO CHAUDHURI (CHAD)
04 11 2017
Always and forever. Your Abs, your Wife xx

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Wych Elm, Harlow 01279 426990 www.drobinson.co.uk

CONGRATULATIONS

ANGELINI
Francesco & Katherine
Congratulations on your engagement.
Love Mum, Dad and Family xxx

F.J. PINNOCK & SON
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website: www.fjpinnockandson.co.uk

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Share your happy moments too, celebrate their birthday, anniversary, engagement or any special occasion here in your local newspaper.

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**PETERLOO (12A)**

In an early scene of Mike Leigh’s historical drama, an exhausted mother presides over her brood in Manchester with stoic resolve as the bitter cup of oppression overflows in the corridors of Westminster.

“Times is too hard to lose hope. Hope is all we’ve got,” professes the matriarch as neighbours prepare to take to the streets for a pro-democracy rally in defiance of the ruling Tory government.

Her simple, heartfelt words reverberate throughout Peterloo, an impassioned call to arms across the class divide which builds with sickening inevitability to the 1819 massacre of protesters at St Peter’s Field in Manchester, which Leigh recreates with all of the sound and fury he can muster.

It’s a bravura sequence, captured in all of its horrifying grandeur by cinematographer Dick Pope, who was deservedly Oscar-nominated for his work on Mr Turner, Leigh’s previous foray into 19th-century machinations.

That film was blessed with a sensational lead performance from Timothy Spall as controversial painter JMW Turner. Peterloo has no obvious emotional fulcrum, dividing attention between a vast ensemble cast, some of whom are only afforded one or two lines of dialogue.

The film is book-ended by brutality, opening on the disorienting image of a young soldier called Joseph (David Morrisey) sounding his trumpet at the battle of Waterloo as brave young men are cut down in their prime around him.

He is one of the lucky few to stagger from the blood-soaked battlefield and David limps home to Manchester to the comforting embrace of his mother, Nellie (Maxine Peake).

The lad is deeply scarred by his experiences, exhibiting all the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder as loved ones cluck and fuss around him.

David’s father Joshua (Pearce Quigley) joins the throng of disgruntled voices, who are enraged that Parliament under the control of Prime Minister Lord Liverpool (Robert Wilfort) and home secretary Lord Sidmouth (Karl Johnson) has refused to extend voting rights to workers.

Thousands plan to march on August 16 1819 to St Peter’s Field to listen to famed orator Henry Hunt (Rory Kinnear) plead their case.

“We cannot allow this Wiltshire peacock to incite the spurious masses,” sneer the men in power, who position sword-wielding cavalry close to the protest site in case fiery rhetoric inspires a riot.

Peterloo is disappointingly light on textured human drama to complement the political turbulence.

The spectacularly orchestrated conclusion should be emotionally shattering but I was curiously unmoved, unable to find many faces in the crowd that I cared about as cavalry charged.

Leigh’s picture doesn’t quantify the loss of life in expositional dialogue or with a title card at the end of the film, which seems a curious artistic decision for an epic, sprawling memorial to survivors and the fallen.

Damon Smith

**HISTORICAL EPIC THAT LACKS HUMAN TOUCH**

Based on a novel by Nick Hornby, Juliet, Naked is a sweet, reserved romantic comedy set in a sleepy English coastal town, which reveals in the power of music to anchor our emotions to a specific person or time.

It could be a gut-wrenching ballad which perfectly encapsulates the anguish of a relationship break-up, a cheesy dancefloor anthem that conjures embarrassed memories of a boozey wedding or summer holiday, or the favourite track of a dearly departed loved one that will be forever “their song”.

Music belongs to the listener, resonating in hearts and minds on a deeper level than the performer ever intended.

As one character in Jesse Peretz’s film tells his self-deprecating musical idol, who openly rubs and minds on a deeper level than the performer ever intended.

Incroyable. It’s a preposterous set-up for a love triangle that never quite flies on the wings of its opening promise.

It’s a preposterous set-up for a love triangle that reaches a crescendo of implausibility when Hawke performs an impromptu rendition of The Kinks’ Waterloo Sunset.

Annie Platt (Byrne) becomes curator of Sandcliff Seaside Museum following her father’s passing. Her lecturing boyfriend Duncan (Chris O’Dowd) runs a website called Can You Hear Me?, which is devoted to American singer-songwriter Tucker Crowe (Hawke), who walked out of a gig 30 years ago at The Pit Club in Minneapolis and hasn’t been seen since.

Obsession teeters into hysteria when Duncan receives a CD of an early version of Crowe’s landmark album Juliet.

“It’s boring versions of songs you’ve heard millions of times before,” grumbles Annie.

Fractures in the relationship deepen after Duncan acts on his primal attraction to fellow lecturer Gina (Denise Gough).

In the midst of this emotional upheaval, Annie initiates an animated email conversation with the real Tucker Crowe, who is living in the garage of an old flame (Eleanor Matsuura) so he can take care of their son Jackson (Azhhy Robertson).

Dame Tamsin Greig seth results from a briefly testy relationship that plays out with exquisite deftness.

The lad is deeply scarred by his experiences, exhibiting all the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder as loved ones cluck and fuss around him.

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**JULIET, NAKED (15)**

*Also out this week*

Rose Byrne and Chris O’Dowd in Juliet, Naked

Alex Bailey

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Damon Smith
Katie Melua was a breath of fresh air when she arrived on the music scene in the early noughties. She talks to Lucy Mapstone about her 15-year career and putting together her new ultimate collection album.

Katie Melua may be releasing a greatest hits album, but she is also looking to the future.

Katie Melua is inextricably modest for someone who has experienced so much success. Fifteen years on from the release of her chart-topping debut Call Off The Search, the Georgian-British singer - who has sold 11 million albums - reckons she just got lucky.

"I think it’s a mixture of extraordinary luck and just luck in meeting the people that I met," she says, reflecting on her career.

“My producer and collaborator at the time always insisted on getting the most amazing musicians and on pretty much everyone playing live.

“And I realise now that that’s really rare, because that kind of music didn’t always have the guarantee of being super successful. It was always pop and R&B and dance music. That’s why I feel really lucky."

Katie, 34, who has just released a compilation of her greatest hits along with two new tracks to mark her past decade and a half, certainly broke the mould when she arrived on the scene in 2003.

Her charming jazz- and folk-influenced voice was a breath of fresh air for the music scene.

Debut album Call Off The Search, released when Katie was just 19, was a number one in the UK, spawning hit singles such as ‘The Closest Thing To Crazy.’

Her follow up, Piece By Piece in 2005, also hit the top spot and two years after that, third effort Pictures made it to number two.

At one point, Katie was named one of the richest stars in Britain under the age of 30. She was the best-selling UK female artist for a couple of years and her albums went platinum across the world.

But the heady heights of fame and the stress of keeping up with it all took its toll and, in 2010, Katie spent six weeks in hospital after suffering a nervous breakdown.

Two years ago, Katie said it was the “best thing” that had ever happened to her.

Now, she describes it as her “crunch time,” but adds: “What has arisen out of all of that is a great collection of work that I’m super proud of.

“All the crazy schedules, the crazy promo, the creative politics – which is always there – and those things you struggle with, actually in amongst that I look back and go, ‘These are great songs, great recordings I’m really proud of, and I can’t wait for what’s to come next!’"

Perhaps Katie’s no-nonsense outlook on life, from her triumphs to her low moments, is down to her upbringing.

She was born in Georgia, where she lived for most of the first decade of her life, around the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Speaking of her childhood in the country, she remembers that times were difficult, due to lack of electricity and the political upheaval.

But she also fondly reminisces about the fun times: of climbing to pick blackberries, of swimming in the Black Sea and of living with a large crowd of family members.

“We lived with my dad’s family; my grandparents, two uncles on dad’s side, mum and dad, plus we had two friends of relatives staying because Georgia is very communal,” she recalls.

“This was in about 1991/1992, because of the Soviet Union breakdown. The infrastructure of the country had really suffered, but because of always being outside, always with nature even in the city, I loved it.

She is also glad to have then spent some of her formative years in the UK - first in Belfast, to which she moved at the age of eight with her family, and then in London.

“I’m grateful I got to realistically live in Georgia, see the life and experience it as a kid there, and also be raised in the UK,” she says.

“In Georgia during that period, you wouldn’t have had the opportunity to do what I’ve been able to do in the music industry.

“I’m really grateful to have had those two world views. When you looked ahead, about what you might do for a living in Georgia... I loved singing, I started to sing from a very young age. But didn’t seem to be much hope back then.”

Her birthplace is incredibly important to her, as Katie is to her compatriots.

“I find it remarkable to have done so well out here, but in Georgia it’s kind of magnified.

Georgians really look up to artists from the west. Everyone in Georgia grew up on the Beatles, Led Zeppelin, Queen, Black Sabbath. It means a lot to them that one of theirs has kind of done alright in the music industry.”

KatieMelua

She’s definitely done alright, as her back catalogue proves.

Collating her body of work for her Ultimate Collection was, she says, ‘like looking at a photo album.

“You know, when you’re a teenager and you think, ‘I’ve got really big thighs’, but then you look back and go, ‘Actually, I shouldn’t have worried about it.’

“When you put together a collection like this and you’re looking back on something you did five/10 years ago, there were quite a few moments where I went, ‘Actually, this is really good, and it seems to have lasted; and it surprised me.’

For some artists, a greatest hits offering might signal the end of a career but not for Katie, something her fans will be delighted to hear.

“I’m doing a lot of writing at the moment, we’ll see what ends up coming out.”

“There is so much work to be done, as far as I’m concerned, on just making records. I’ve got a lot of stuff to keep working on.

“I think I’ve only just begun, to be honest.”

Katie Melua tours the UK from November 28 and her album, Katie Melua - Ultimate Collection, left, is out now.

THOM YORKE

Brooding, disconnected, an ever-present sense of dread and paranoia... it’s easy to see why Luca Guadagnino, the Italian director behind the new remake of 1977 horror classic Suspiria, wanted Thom Yorke to write the soundtrack. The 23-track album - the Radiohead singer's first full film score - features some insanely beautiful songs. Open Again is a smothering slow-roller enveloped by swirling delay loops, while Unmade - a fragile faloet piano ballad that shatters into tiny fragments - could easily have made it on to a Radiohead record.

ANDEA BOCELLI

Si

This new album reminds the listener that the Italian singer's voice is as beautiful and as powerful as ever.

What makes this record exciting is Bocelli's work with a range of artists. Fall On Me, a duet with his son Matteo, is a moving piece, similarly, Bocelli's collaboration with Ed Sheeran seamlessly blends the voices and styles. Other pairings are less successful. Dua Lipa is drowned out by Bocelli and, while Raphael Gualazzi’s piano-accompanied ballad that shatters into tiny fragments - could easily have made it on to a Radiohead record.

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Meditation is my secret for staying sane in a busy life

From morning rituals and early nights, to chilling with her dogs, cook and author Jasmine Hemsley tells GABRIELLE FAGAN about her approach to wellness.

Tell us about your fiancé, photographer and fashion director Nick Hopper – are you planning your wedding? WE’VE been together 15 years, got engaged in India, and he’s really the third member of Hemsley + Hemsley. We’ve pretty much lived more or less in each other’s pockets since we met, as we often work from home. At the weekends, we don’t talk work and give each other space.

I think the secret of a happy relationship is listening and trying to see life from the other person’s perspective, and being compassionate. I’d love someone to organise our wedding, and then Nick and I could just turn up, because we never seem to get round to it ourselves.

What’s been your toughest time? WHEN my father, Jack, died aged 72 in 2014. He always encouraged me and my sister by telling us we could do anything we put our minds to. It was actually amazing to be with him when he passed. It brought home to me that in the West, we need to improve our understanding and relationship around death. Losing him’s made me even more determined to live every day and appreciate it – but not in the Western way of feeling you have to achieve something huge and you’re only worth what you can show off.

What can’t you resist? CAR-BOOT sales, which are the best day out you can get. Mostly everything I have, from my furniture to my clothes, comes from them. Discovering and re-purposing things and finding bargains is eco-friendly and fun.

Jasmine Hemsley has joined the fight against childhood obesity in support of Beko’s Eat Like A Pro initiative. Together, they hope to empower future generations to live healthier. For more information, visit beko.com

One half of holistic food and cooking empire Hemsley + Hemsley, Jasmine Hemsley found success alongside her sister, Melissa. Their partnership’s been a winning formula – their first book, The Art Of Eating Well, pushed Jamie Oliver and Mary Berry off the top of the Amazon charts in 2014, and follow-up, Good + Simple, was also a hit. They’ve since opened a cafe in Selfridges, stared in their own Channel 4 TV show – Eating Well With Hemsley + Hemsley, and gathered some 300,000 Instagram followers.

Right now though, Jasmine, 35, is temporarily flying solo, and her own separate ways now? Her approach to health and happiness has anti-bacterial, anti-carcinogenic, analgesic and anti-inflammatory properties.

Eating capers significantly boosts your intake of sodium, however, so people sensitive to salt should avoid consuming a lot of them.

1 THEY contain fibre, a type of carbohydrate which helps to fill your stomach, soften stools and prevent constipation.

2 CAPERS contain vitamin K, an essential vitamin. This promotes bone growth to help keep them healthy and strong.

3 THE plant contains small amounts of iron, an essential mineral. Iron aids in oxygen transport around the body. Capers can carry enough of it to nourish tissues throughout your body.

4 ALCOHOL causes about three million deaths a year – or about one in 20 of all deaths worldwide, according to a report by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Men accounted for about three-quarters of the alcohol-related deaths, with the largest single cause – at 28% – being injuries. Digestive disorders (21%) came second and alcohol-related cardiovascular disease third (19%).

“Alcohol consumption levels continue to be very high,” noted WHO’s Vladimir Poznyak. But it’s not all bad. Four years ago the WHO reported more alcohol-related deaths, and in several areas, including Europe, the proportion of drinkers has fallen.
FAMILY MATTERS

SIMPLY TELLING KIDS TO GO OUTSIDE WON'T WORK, YOU HAVE TO PERSUADE THEM

James Cracknell has won two Olympic rowing gold medals, raced across the Atlantic and the Sahara, and even made it to the South Pole. And now he’s completed another huge challenge which many of us struggle with, too — teaching his two young daughters lost outdoor skills.

The Olympian took to adventuring after retiring from competitive rowing in 2006, and has recently been putting his own outdoor skills to good use in Channel 4’s Celebrity Island with Bear Grylls.

James believes it’s a shame that many children have no outdoor nous, such as knowing how to light a campfire and map read. So, the 46-year-old teamed up with Vauxhall Motors to teach his two daughters, Kiki, nine, and Trixie, seven, to put down their tablets and get out with him, so he could help them master some of the skills.

“We lead such busy lives,” James says, “for us as a family it’s really important to get outside for some quality time together. It’s been great to explore more of the outdoors with my girls — showing them a few skills, like reading a map or identifying a flower.

More than half of parents questioned by Vauxhall said their children have no outdoor skills, yet 83% think it’s important. However, almost half admitted they wouldn’t feel confident teaching children basics, like reading a map or identifying a flower.

James, who’s married to the TV presenter Beverley Turner, showed his own outdoor skills to good use in 2006, and has recently been putting his two daughters to the test.

PRIMARK’s latest accessory range is “practically perfect in every way” because the collection of cases, bags and coin purses ties in with the upcoming cinema release of Mary Poppins Returns. It includes a vanity case with a pastel, floral design and a pink silhouette of the famous nanny on it, and two coin purses — one in the shape of a blue hat — and the other with the same floral design as the vanity case. The budget retailer will also be selling another coin purse in a similar shape to the one featured in the original 1964 film.

Prices will start at around £4 and go up to £10. The range lands in stores on Sunday, November 4.

Map reading
2. Reading a compass
3. Identifying flowers
4. Lighting a campfire
5. Birdwatching
6. Foraging
7. Putting up a tent
8. TYing a knot
9. Fishing
10. Toasting marshmallows

James Cracknell and daughters, Kiki and Trixie

“THEY probably won’t catch it but there’s a nasty bug going around,” Kathy the nursery assistant whispered in a conspiratorial voice.

“Or they’ll be fine, they’ve only just got over one, I’d be surprised if they were ill again,” I replied in a wildly optimistic fashion. The nursery was certainly a few babies down, which implied that the threat had been isolated.

Indeed the next day, it looked like Thomas and Emma were some sort of genetic superbabies. This theory was tested when I collected them and Kathy said they’d had a few ‘loose nappies’. Initially, there was confusion over the terminology. I thought ‘loose nappy’ might be a specific complaint about the construction of the product.

In fact, a loose nappy is not a technical matter but a physical one. We chose not to panic yet though because the twins were still smiling and ate dinner without any kerfuffle down below.

Until Thomas’ cod and spinach in cream sauce made a surprise reappearance. Again, I wasn’t worried. I pointed out to Victoria lots of people might be sick after eating cod and spinach in cream sauce.

And he was coughing a bit so that provided an adequate explanation. It was definitely something stuck in his throat. Despite this positivity, I could sense there was tension as we both pondered the possibility of missing work to look after a couple of vomiting babies.

Even on a bad day, working is far better than caring for babies with a vomiting bug. The morning would provide the answer and it replied with
his daughters how to light a fire after collecting firewood, how to use a compass and read a map. Their older brother, Croyle, 15, didn’t join them, but his dad says: “My lad’s really not afraid of anything: that wriggles, jumps or crawls, and takes a lot less persuading to get into the outdoors, contrary to my wife! In all honesty, all the kids are happy to be outdoors – though it’s a bit trickier if it’s raining, they’d much rather be out in the sun.”

Some kids, of course, will take more than a little persuading to get off their phone or tablet to get outdoors to learn new skills, and James stresses: “Simply telling kids to go outdoors won’t work, and you can’t tell them to come off playing Fortnite to go outside. You might need to persuade them to go on a trip by bringing some gadgets with them, but once you’re there, they’ll realise how much fun it really is. After that, it’s no problem getting them outdoors.”

Like many children of his generation, James himself learned outdoor skills at Cubs and Scouts, and on family camping trips. “As a child, I enjoyed most everyday outdoor activities. My family would always drive to France to camp, we never stayed in hotels and I hadn’t been on a plane until I was 18 for the World Championships. We also owned a canoe, so I’ve actually enjoyed rowing since childhood.”

“To this day, I never travel without a map. With a satnav, you could be driving to anywhere and have no idea where you are.”

But James thinks parents should “definitely” learn outdoor skills themselves, noting: “Almost half of parents don’t feel confident in teaching their kids outdoor skills. The majority have to actually resort to the internet to do so, even though they feel these skills are important.”

He says this is why he wants to encourage more people to get outdoors, and points out it’s nice for children to learn skills and do activities that will still serve them well as grown-ups.

Finally, the dad and action man says that after his time on the survival reality TV show Celebrity Island, hosted by Bear Grylls, he wants to try living more simply – and avoid plastic when he can.

“I’m in no rush to eat coconuts, that’s for sure,” he laughs.

“One thing you notice on the island is the amount of plastic in the oceans, which is actually horrendous, so I’ll really avoid using single-use plastic. “There’s a lot of simple things I want to go back to doing. This campaign is all about going back to basics, and my time on the island made me realise the joys of simplicity.”

“The beauty of camping is that you don’t really need to have much with you to enjoy it, so I’m really looking forward to enjoying more of that with the family.”

Keeping secrets from nurseries

nappies so loose, they were almost non-existent. To add to our woes, nursery was on lockdown, they’d adopted a zero-tolerance stance in a bid to halt the spread. If there was one, just one, loose nasty then we would be summoned to collect the twins and take them home. I explained that they seemed fine, had incredibly firm nappies and made a run for it. It was only a matter of hours, maybe minutes before one of them blew. We were living on borrowed time and we both had stuff to do.

“Time ticked very slowly but we made it to 10am, then 11 and then I felt a rush of optimism. Midday rolled around so maybe they’d managed to keep a lid on it. And then at precisely 1.42pm the nursery phoned.

The game was up; Emna had been sick on the climbing frame and Kathy was struggling to keep up with the volume of their movements.

It was time to cancel all plans, stock up on wet wipes and brace ourselves for the apoo-calyse.
Why your fitness routine doesn’t have to be worthy of Instagram

Celebrities on social media can give us unrealistic health goals, writes Ruth Lynch

Many of us will have a love/hate relationship with social media. We enjoy scrolling through our favourite celebrity’s Instagram to see what they are wearing, eating and how they spend their days.

But this can quickly turn into a guilt-fest as we see how much weight they have lost post-baby, or images of them flashing their toned abs with the caption ‘ate too much today’.

Of course, this is not helpful, and it’s easy for them when they have an endless supply of surgery, private chefs and personal trainers.

So while social media can be a wonderful thing, it is important to take it with a big pinch of salt, and make sure you take control of your own fitness in a way that suits you.

Don’t just ‘do it for the ‘gram’

Instagram feeds are filled with selfies taken on a running machine or arty pictures of people doing the latest weird and wacky fitness craze.

But let’s face it, they are uploading their pictures to show off and get ‘likes’, not because they genuinely want to endorse it as a great way to get fit.

A walk to the park with the kids, cycling to the shops and doing a walk to the park with the kids is probably a much healthier way to compare fitness than with celebrities.

Being influenced by your peers

Social media has created a whole new kind of celebrity – influencers. These are the ‘normal’ people who share their lifestyle on Instagram, providing tips and advice to help you follow in their footsteps.

Following a yoga instructor, personal trainer or adventurer is a much healthier way to compare fitness than with celebrities.

Again, nothing beats a face-to-face consultation with a fitness coach, but they can be a perfect motivator or source of advice for new ideas.

There are some great social influencers who concentrate on body positivity and fitness, so make sure you choose people who inspire and challenge you rather than make you feel intimidated.

Make friends

It’s not necessary to validate every workout by posting a picture on social media.

Beating your personal best or getting a pat on the back from another gym goer is much more rewarding.

Going to a fitness class or the gym and exercising as a group is also much more positive for your mental health and wellbeing than getting a few ‘likes’ for a picture you posted.

Use it for the better...

Social media can give you a fantastic insight into what classes, sports clubs and group activities are out there for you to join.

Facebook groups set up by your community clubs will always have plenty of photos and stories, so you can check if it’s the right thing for you.

It can also give you an idea of the difficulty level. Seeing people at a similar fitness level or with a body shape like you can give you the confidence boost you need to take that first step into a new class.

Track your progress

We ALL have an annoying gym-bunny friend who painstakingly logs every workout on every media platform. But shouting about your success – whether it’s running your first marathon or jogging your first mile without stopping – can do wonders to help keep up your motivation.

Monitoring your fitness activity through social media can also be a great way to encourage your friends and family to join you.

Most modern fitness trackers will link into your social media so you can record your achievements and organise competitions between friends.

Watch out of bad information

Social media is a fantastic resource, but there is a lot of bad information out there. Do your best to make sure fitness advisers and food bloggers you follow have the right experience and qualifications to be giving you advice.

Most will include their credentials in their bios and be affiliated with a sports programme or gym.

While social media can provide us with great advice, encouragement and motivation, it can also give us unrealistic expectations.

Using it to your benefit can be a fantastic resource, but don’t get sucked in if something seems too good to be true.

■ Ruth Lynch is head of health, fitness and communities at Life Leisure (lifeleisure.net).

ASK THE EXPERT

Can chemicals in plastic raise the risk of premature birth?

Q I’m pregnant, and I’ve read that chemicals in plastic can increase the risk of premature birth. What are these chemicals, and should I avoid them until at least after my baby’s born?

Jennifer Yland, an epidemiology researcher at Harvard University’s T.H. Chan School of Public Health in the USA, who led a recent study into whether chemicals in plastic interfere with pregnancy, says: “Research suggests some environmental chemicals commonly found in plastics and personal care products, such as phthalates and phenols, are associated with a higher risk of preterm birth.

“These chemicals, sometimes referred to as endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs), may be harmful because they interfere with our endocrine system.

“In the pre-conception period, they may disrupt egg development by promoting inflammatory processes.

“However, there are a range of possible mechanisms by which these chemicals may influence reproduction and development.

“Exposure to these chemicals is widespread as they have diverse consumer and industrial applications. Some phthalates are used to soften plastics or can be used as solvents and can be found in cosmetics, toys, food packaging, and medical devices. Phenols like BPA are used to make resins and plastics and are found in food can liners, hard plastic containers, and thermal paper sales receipts.

“It’s important to note that ‘BPA-free’ plastic products often substitute BPA for other bisphenols, like BPS. The potential effects of these chemicals aren’t yet fully understood, but they may behave like BPA.”

“I would be unrealistic to try to avoid all phthalates and phenols, however, there are some steps that can be taken to reduce exposure.

“Pregnant women may wish to swap plastic food containers for glass or stainless steel, avoid polycarbonate plastics, try to avoid heating plastic containers, reduce use of canned foods in favour of fresh or jarred, or try phthalate-free cosmetics and unscented personal care and household products.

“These steps can be adopted by everyone, not just pregnant women, as the effects of these chemicals aren’t limited to pregnancy.”

Posting a picture on social media after every single workout isn’t necessary

Ruth Lynch

Life Leisure (lifeleisure.net)
Have you developed middle-age manxiety?

**Left:** Feeling unsatisfied in your relationship can lead to affairs. **Right:** Talking to friends can help you relieve your stresses and anxiety.

**YOUR MIDDLE YEARS CAN BE A HIGH PRESSURE AND CONFUSING TIME, SAYS CLAIRE HIGNEY, BUT DON'T BOTTLE UP YOUR FEELINGS (OR GET A TATTOO THAT YOU'LL REGRET)**

If you're unhappy with your body or bored with your routine, take positive steps like joining a gym or setting new and achievable goals to focus on.

Do you feel overwhelmed by stress, but keep it bottled up? Planning your goals and reaching out to friends for support are key, says Dr Euba: "Stress often comes down to economic pressure and dealing with the system - providing for your family's future and dealing with authorities over schools and care provided for elderly parents. You need to be able to delegate if you can, to compromise where necessary, to negotiate and to plan.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, it's crucial to make use of your social network and don't regard stress as a sign of weakness, but as a sign you have to plan things and get support from the other people in your life,"

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Dr Rafael Euba, consultant psychiatrist at The London Psychiatry Centre.

**If you're feeling overwhelmed, it's crucial to make use of your social network and don't regard stress as a sign of weakness, but as a sign you have to plan things and get support from the other people in your life.**

Do you feel your sex life and relationship are dull? Do you want to cheat? If you've been in a relationship a long time, along with a sense of stability can come a sense that life is, well, just a bit boring.

Dr Euba says: "Men's sexual potency does start to decline in middle age, and although it's more subtle than it is for women, it can affect self-image for some men. If that's combined with a lack of sexual interest from their current partner, many guys take that as a personal failure. These things can make couples more vulnerable to affairs.

"It helps to know these issues are normal and seeking help in therapy doesn't mean you're less of a man."

Men often consider admitting they are suffering from stress as a sign of weakness, but as a sign you have to plan things and get support from the other people in your life. "Don't compare yourself to others. These days, largely thanks to social media, if your life isn't amazing it's tempting to believe you're failing. But it's normal to have difficult days. Set yourself smaller, achievable goals and celebrate those wins and, if possible, try to carve out areas of your work that you're in control of. It's also important to understand there's much more to being a man than how big your salary is and how far you go in the hierarchy."

Are you anxious about your physical health? Our bodies begin to decline in middle age and it can be a painful glimpse of what's to come. Dr Euba says: "The knowledge there's less ahead combined with the onset of physical ailments can cause anxiety. Getting fitter is good for the mind and there's growing medical evidence that exercise can help people beat depression. The key is, don't overdo it.

"Pay more attention to lifestyle - don't smoke and don't drink too much - and just be aware of your body. Taking responsibility for your health will help you feel in control."

Do you feel trapped or dissatisfied at work? This is a tough one to sort out, admits Dr Euba. "Most of us can't just walk out of a job if we have dependents. But it can help to remind ourselves of the norm - that it's a minority of privileged people who genuinely love their job and earn good money from it. They are the exception to the rule - not you.

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We’re not adventurors enough in the kitchen

FOR most of us, the kitchen is where it all happens. From quickly grabbed slices of toast and last-minute snatches of homework, to the lazy chaos of prepping and dishing up Sunday lunch, and drunken late-night arguments over who ate the last of the crisps and dip.

“It is the kitchen, for most people, where interaction and life takes place,” explains food writer Gill Meller, best known for his work with Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall at River Cottage.

“Our kitchen, when we were growing up, was fairly lively. My parents were quite sociable, everything just happened there — you would come, people would stay, food would be cooked.”

From his childhood in his parents’ kitchen, he went on to spend his adulthood in commercial kitchens: “So as a space and a place, it’s always had a real significance and poignance — more so than the other rooms in one’s house.”

As such, he has peppered his latest cookbook, Time, with photographs of kitchens that belong to people he loves — “to make some noise” about these fundamental rooms that underpin what we eat, how we eat it, and who we eat with.

Gill, 37, says his kitchen now isn’t packed with gadgets and instead he relies on a couple of good sharp knives and “sentimental things”, like his pestle and mortar, his wooden spoons, and an old silver fork.

The colocation between memory and cooking is a thread he tugs throughout Time, be it making a fire, cooking something nice and tasting it, “to make a fire, cook something nice and taste alone.”

He believes food memories are particularly significant, “because eating and tasting is such an important part of our lives and the senses trigger memories like nothing else”. Even something as simple as fish fingers can take you back, he notes with a laugh.

Gill’s mother died last year, and her food and influence can be felt throughout Time, be it in the seasonal nature of his recipes, recollections of her “old turquoise, crank handled, runner-bean slicer”, or in sharing her recipe for spaghetti with tomato and fried chicken, a dish everyone in his family makes.

The book is split into three parts — Morning, Day, Night — but essentially mirrors, breakfast, lunch and dinner, and includes recipes from across the seasons in each section.

And the food itself, says Gill, is straightforward and achievable too. Time, he admits, is a touch more accessible than his debut cookbook from 2016, Gather — for instance, there’s no squirrel meat in this one, but he’s all for encouraging people to consider different ingredients.

“Time: A Year And A Day In The Kitchen” by Gill Meller, photography by Andrew Montgomery, is published by Quadrille, £25.

LAST night I had on more layers than a cake in a British Bake Off. Hearty, comforting, and perfect for the weather.

In a thick wool jumper, jeans, slippers, jim jams, two jumpers, and a blanket didn’t quite take the edge off the cold. I was making honeycomb, and a glass of red wine would stay, food would be cooked.

Honey and roasted figs with yoghurt

INGREDIENTS:
- 400ml thick Greek yoghurt
- 100g butter, cubed and chilled
- 100g plain flour
- 400ml thick Greek yoghurt
- 100g butter
- 100g plain flour
- Few thyme sprigs (optional)
- Honeycomb
- 400ml thick Greek yoghurt

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PRODUCERS: Cramele Recas and is Syrah pondering what to write about this notes about a glass of red wine?

A blend of cabernet Sauvignon and merlot

This wine is another compete of warm dark fruits, with confident shousters from plums and damsons. The wine has been aged in a mix of French and American oak, which together bring overtones of vanilla and chocolate; but there is still a lightness of touch with the wave of a woodland breeze.

For my final choice I’m going to take you to Spain.

I tasted Smooth Red (£4.99, 13% abv) at Spar’s seasonal tasting the other week, where many months of work by the Spar team to revamp its wine offering was seen to be finally bearing fruit. (Is that a pun? I’m not sure.)

The red is part of its Taste Range, launched last year together with its Alphabet range (you see a simple “G” on a wine label, and the wine is garnacha etc.). Those ranges are now supported by an Exclusives line and the new Regions Selection line. The latter has a set of labels designed to pull together the many wines from across the world — France, Chile, South Africa, Italy, Spain, Argentina — under a consistent umbrella.

Philipa Carr MW, Spar’s wine consultant, told me they’ve had to think carefully about what the modern consumer wants, especially in stores where a wine buying decision is made in seconds. The range is now complete, with “the consumer respected in the lifestyle choices they want to make.”

I’ll share more of the new wines as we inch towards Christmas, but for now, the very adequate and friendly autumn warmer Smooth Red is 100% merlot and produced in Spain, Raspberry jam. Strawberry jam. Jam, jam, jam. This wine is dotted with spice but if it’s fruity and warming wine you want at a reasonable price, then there very.

Jane is a member of the Circle of Wine Writers. Find her on social media and online as One Foot in the Grapes.

RAISE A GLASS

maker Hartley Smithers. It’s a deep red, veering on the colour purple yet is not quite full-bodied as I can slightly feel my fingers through the glass. It oozes aromas of vanilla and liquorice, blackcurrants and black cherry. To that, a good sprinkling of spice flashes in and out of dark fruit flavours and a veil of vanilla. There’s a decent acidity which freshens, the tannins are integrated and the lasting effect is one of spice.

Hold my hand as we zip off to McLaren Vale in Australia for Wirra Wirra Church Block 2016 (RRP £13.49, Waitrose, Docado, 14.5% abv) which is a blend of cabernet Sauvignon, merlot and shiraz. This wine is another compete of warm dark fruits, with confident shousters from plums and damsons. The wine has been aged in a mix of French and American oak, which together bring overtones of vanilla and chocolate; but there is still a lightness of touch with the wave of a woodland breeze.

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1 celeriac (about 800g), peeled and cut into bite-sized chunks
2 red onions, halved and each half cut into 3 or 4 wedges
2 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
2 rosemary sprigs, torn
1 small bunch of thyme, torn
2 bay leaves
2 tbsp olive oil
15g pumpkin seeds
15g sunflower seeds
300g skirt steak
1 piece of cured pork belly (streaky bacon; about 350g), cut into 4-5cm cubes
500g fresh pork belly, cut into 4-5cm cubes
1 large or 2 small leeks, halved and sliced
2 or 3 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
4-6 bay leaves
2-3 rosemary sprigs
2 thyme sprigs
2 tbsp plain flour
150ml double cream
250g wild or cultivated mushrooms
4-5cm cubes
4-5cm cubes
knob of butter
200ml double cream
2-3 thyme sprigs
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsp red wine vinegar
2 tsp sugar
2 tsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp olive oil
1 large handful of salad leaves
300g skirt steak
15g sunflower seeds
15g pumpkin seeds
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2 bay leaves
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2 tbsp plain flour
150ml double cream
250g wild or cultivated mushrooms
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2 bay leaves
2-3 rosemary sprigs
2-3 thyme sprigs
2 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
3 or 4 wedges
2 red onions, halved and each half cut into bite-sized chunks
1 celeriac (about 800g), peeled and cut into 4-5cm cubes

METHOD:
2. First, make the dressing. Put all the ingredients in a small bowl or jug, season with plenty of salt and pepper and whisk vigorously to combine.
3. Season the steak all over with salt and pepper. Heat a medium-large frying pan over a high heat. Add the remaining olive oil and, when hot, add the steak. Cook for about one to two minutes on each side for rare; or two to three minutes on each side for medium. Lift the steak from the pan and keep warm.
4. In the same pan, along with the sliced garlic, all the herbs and a little seasoning. Sweat the leeks gently for about 10 minutes, then return the browned pork pieces to the pan, sprinkle over the plain flour and stir well. Cook for a further three to four minutes, then pour in the cider and stock and bring to a simmer. Stir well, then place a tight-fitting lid on the pan and place in the oven for two hours, until the pork is fork tender.
5. Meanwhile, set a large frying pan over a high heat and add the butter. When it’s bubbling, add the mushrooms, season them lightly and sauté, turning them regularly, for six to eight minutes, until cooked through. Set aside.
6. When the celeriac is ready, remove it from the oven and add the fried mushrooms and double cream. Stir well, then return the pan to the oven for 15 minutes without its lid.
7. Stir in the chopped parsley and check the seasoning before bringing to the table with a sharply dressed green salad and some good bread.

INGREDIENTS: (Serves 4)
2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
2 tbsp Dijon mustard
2 tbsp sugar
2 tbsp red wine vinegar
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
200ml double cream
450ml pork, chicken or vegetable stock
450ml cider
2 tbsp plain flour
2-3 thyme sprigs
2-3 rosemary sprigs
4-6 bay leaves
2 or 3 garlic cloves, peeled and sliced
1 large or 2 small leeks, halved and each half cut into 3 or 4 wedges
1 celeriac (about 800g), peeled and cut into 4-5cm cubes
1 piece of cured pork belly (streaky bacon; about 350g), cut into 4-5cm cubes
500g fresh pork belly, cut into 4-5cm cubes
1 large or 2 small leeks, halved and sliced
2 or 3 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
4-6 bay leaves
2-3 rosemary sprigs
2 thyme sprigs
2 tbsp plain flour
450ml cider
450ml pork, chicken or vegetable stock
Knob of butter

METHOD:
2. First, make the dressing. Put all the ingredients in a small bowl or jug, season with plenty of salt and pepper and whisk vigorously to combine. Set aside while you make the salad.
3. Scatter the celeriac over a large baking tray, then the onions, then the garlic, rosemary, thyme and bay. Trickle one tablespoon of the olive oil over and season well with salt and pepper.
4. Place the celeriac in the hot oven and roast, turning the celeriac occasionally, for 35 minutes.
5. Season the celeriac all over with plenty of salt and pepper. Heat a medium-large frying pan over a high heat. Add the remaining olive oil and, when hot, add the steak. Cook for about one to two minutes on each side for rare; or two to three minutes on each side for medium. Lift the steak from the pan and keep warm.
6. Take a large, warmed serving platter and scatter over the roasted vegetables and seeds. Slice the skirt steak thickly across its grain and place this on and around the celeriac. Top with the salad leaves, then trickle over the dressing and bring to the table.
7. Stir in the chopped parsley and check the seasoning before bringing to the table with a sharply dressed green salad and some good bread.
On the unspoiled north-west coast of Mallorca, GEORGIA HUMPHREYS enjoys a sumptuous stay at one of Richard Branson's retreats

FROM Necker Island to South Africa and Verbier, Sir Richard Branson has homes all over the world. And yet, there's one place he holds particularly close to his heart – Son Bunyola, a luxury retreat on the north-west coast of Mallorca, which is open to the public as a Virgin Limited Edition property.

But how often does the busy business magnate actually get to visit the sprawling 680-acre estate with three villas nestled amongst seemingly endless rows of trees?

General manager Lee Bowes reveals her boss rocked up to stay twice this year, and on his most recent visit, he even challenged some guests to a game of tennis.

Eager to sample the place for myself, I head over for a long weekend.

The founder of Virgin group first visited Mallorca as a child, and he later took his own children to the Spanish island for summer holidays. In fact, the Bransons are such fans of this region, his son, Sam, even named daughter Eva-Deia after the town Deia, which is a 45-minute drive from Son Bunyola.

Surrounded by the Tramuntana mountain range, jutting out from the lime green coastline to the azure sea, Son Bunyola is close to plenty of hiking and cycling trails and is perfect for an adrenaline junkie like Branson. It’s also peacefully unspoiled.

On the helter skelter of a drive down from the main road, you'll gasp at the central 18th-century finca building, typical of the grand farmhouses that can be found all over Mallorca and Spain. Rows upon rows of crumbling terraces lead down from it, making patterns on a landscape dotted with vines and towering olive trees.

Amazingly, some members of the team who work at Son Bunyola today actually lived in the finca as children in the 1970s. Back then, the estate was used as farmland and harvested alfalfa, almonds and vegetables.

As for the future? Plans are in the pipeline to transform the finca into a hotel – but I've never stayed somewhere so tranquil.

There are three individual villas to choose from – Sa Terrera Rotja, Son Balagueret and Sa Punta de S’Aguila – and each feels very different.

With handcrafted terracotta flooring and local Binissalem stone used throughout, the vibe is undoubtedly traditional – and yet, there’s a clever contemporary contrast thanks to pops of bright artwork.

I stay in Sa Punta de S’Aguila, which translates as ‘Eagle’s Point’ – a five-bedroom villa located along a track above the coastline.

My room feels light and airy, thanks to the exposed beam ceiling, large windows and traditional dark green shutters opening out onto a terrace.

Branson loves hiking around the estate, and a walk not to miss is the one down to Son Bunyola pebble beach, which takes 40 minutes from Son Balagueret. Ask the team for a pair of aqua shoes, so you can clamber over the rocks pain-free, and float in the ocean with an uninterrupted view down the wild terracotta-red coast.

My favourite activity is a hike along the path to Banyalbufar. Our guide, Eduard, who founded MallorcaAlpina with his brother David, teaches me about the flora.

I spot wild strawberry trees and mushrooms – along with houses belonging to famous faces, such as Michael Douglas.

Following a quick swim and fiery sunset at Banyalbufar, I head for dinner. (Once a week, staff at the villas have a day off, encouraging everyone to go out and explore.)

Run by a local lady called Magdalena, Can Paco is a favourite haunt for Son Bunyola guests. After devouring their crispy garlic squid, I can see why. But if you really want to holiday like Sir Richard Branson, he always goes for their signature paella.

It’s true, the entrepreneur is a man with good taste. And his special retreat Son Bunyola is quickly becoming one of my favourite places too.
Amazing value 2019-2020 cruises

Welcome to the latest selection of tremendous value cruises aboard Columbus, Magellan & Marco Polo, a trio of beautiful ships operated by hugely respected British cruise line Cruise & Maritime Voyages, with sailings right through to early 2020. A wide choice of UK ports on which to join no-flying cruises, and a selection of right-inclusive voyages in some of the world’s most exotic corners and the tremendous value Buy-One-Get-One-Free Fares* mean there’s never been a better time to join us!

Glittering Columbus
Proud flagship of the CMV fleet and sailing from her home port of London Tilbury, beautifully appointed Columbus offers a range of hugely enjoyable, great-value voyages, adding a touch of contemporary style to the traditional welcome and friendly warmth that has long been the hallmark of the line.

Sleek, majestic Magellan
Since her arrival in the UK in 2015, sleek, majestic Magellan has built a fine reputation, and has been a welcome addition to the CMV Fleet of traditional, no-flexing cruise liners. Sailing from a choice of regional ports Magellan brings a touch of contemporary chic to the traditional welcome of the CMV cruise experience.

Elegant Marco Polo
In an age of vast, impersonal, floating hotels, 22,000-tonne Marco Polo, her profile marking her out as the epitome of sea-going elegance even before you’ve stepped aboard, is a beautiful ocean liner in the classic tradition. Offering high levels of comfort, sumptuous dining in stylish surroundings, and a warm welcome.

Sailing from Tilbury, Bristol & Liverpool, please see our website for the full range of departure points.

Call 0330 160 8068 quoting RGF or visit newmarketholidays.co.uk/rgf

Prices above are per person for the lowest available cabin type. A selection of cabin types is available at varying prices. All prices are extremely limited & may be withdrawn without notice. Cabins are subject to availability, please call us or see our website for latest availability and pricing. Newmarket Holidays Ltd ABTA V7992. Single supplements apply. Standard phone charges apply. Fares exclude gratuities. On-board prices in sterling. Payment of on-board accounts by card only. Prices correct at time of going to print. Please check online for latest prices and availability. Book by 3 Dec 2019. Offer subject to availability & may be withdrawn at any time. 1st person pays the price shown, 2nd person travels free.
**Pathfinder**

Beginning with the top highlighted letter, follow a continuous path of words associated with the given subject. The trail goes through each letter once, twisting up, down and sideways, but never diagonally.

**Easy**

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

**Hard**

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

**Sudoku**

There is one simple rule in Sudoku. Each row and each column must contain the numbers 1 to 9, and so must each 3 x 3 box.

**Easy**

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

**Hard**

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

**Two Speed Crossword**

This two-speed crossword has two sets of clues, but just one grid. If you can’t solve the Cryptic clue, try the Quick.

**Cryptic**

**Across**

7. A motive to set forth logically (6)
8. Very small (6)
10. No longer hold a clique without change (3,4)
11 & 18AC. A charming staff set up in North America (5,4)
12 & 14DN. But they’re not speechless hotel servants! (4,7)
13. Slight prevaccination about material texture (5)
17. Dear Thomas, make the circuit safe inside (5)
18. See 11 Across.
22. Plan to engross one aviation expert (5)
23. Passes on information when representative has a meal (7)
24. Distinctive dress for this kind of stable (6)
25 & 4DN. Not necessarily a sentimental film (6,7)

**Down**

1. Before the team take control at the meeting? (9)
2. I’m surrounded by dough - it’s a hobby! (7)
3. To collect treasure is difficult if you having nothing inside (9)
4. See 25 Across.
5. A collection of pieces sounding melodious (9)
6. Appears to be a diocese manuscript (5)
9. Records showing people’s voice ranges (9)
14. See 12 Across.
15. Live with the commanding officer – just routine (7)
16. Communication causes a mix-up a long time after (7)
19. This provides enchantment for a certain length of time (6)
20. The girl will produce a fruit tree (6)
21. Rings up for a film (5)

**Quick**

**Across**

7. Motive (8)
8. Unit of time (8)
10. Release (3,4)
11. Symbolic object (5)
12. Mute (4)
13. Thread (6)
17. The world (5)
18. Mast (4)
22. Aviator (5)
23. Reiterates (7)
24. Uniform (6)
25. In motion (6)

**Down**

1. Hold authority (7)
2. Hobby (7)
3. Store (5)
4. Image (7)
5. Furniture set (5)
9. Records (9)
14. Restaurant staff (7)
15. Live together (7)
16. Communication (7)
19. Magic formula (5)
20. Green or black fruit (5)
21. Reel (5)

**Split Decision**

Cross out one of the two letters in each divided square to reveal a completed crossword grid.

**Split Codeword**

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in 1, the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter. For example, if 8 turns out to be a vowel, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.

**Wordsquare**

Give yourself ten minutes to find as many words as possible using the letters in the grid. Each word must use the central letter and at least 3 others, and letters may be used only once. You cannot use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns, but verb forms ending in “s” are permitted. There is one 9-letter word to be found.

**Wordsquare**

SIG

S

E

I

G

B

E

G

E

Wordsquare INSATIATE

**Wordsearch**

**Across**


**Down**

10. What name was given to the Greek Ares? 1066? Which market town was the birthplace of William Shakespeare? Who was the Roman god of war, identified with the Greek Ares? Which tuned percussion instrument takes its name from the German for ‘belles’ and ‘play’? What sort of antibiotic was first isolated by Sir Alexander Fleming? Which composer wrote the ballets The Firebird and The Rite of Spring? What name was given to the policy of increased openness in the Soviet Union introduced by Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1980s?

**LAST WEEK’S SOLUTIONS**

**Pathfinder**


**Two-Speed Crossword**

Across: 1 Capon; 4 Cast-off; 8 Tear gas; 9 Umber; 10 Land; 11 Boat race; 13 Scot; 14 Wend; 16 Superior; 17 Free; 20 Loose; 21 Dead Sea; 22 Rattled; 23 Lisle.
Down: 1 Cattle rustler; 2 Plain; 3 Nags; 4 Custom; 5 Scuttles; 6 On board; 22 Rattled; 23 Lisle.

Quiz

Q1 - Rita Ora

1. What is the title of the latest single from Rita Ora? Who is the lead singer of The Rolling Stones? Which battle took place on October 14 1066? Which Warwickshire market town was the birthplace of William Shakespeare? Who was the Roman god of war, identified with the Greek Ares? What name is given to the ninth month of the Muslim year?

**Split Codeword**

FCJOTNWKSZWCYCLE

**VBPGDIXQRUMH**

**Graphic**

**Pathfinder**

**Easy**

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

**Hard**

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

**Sudoku**

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**Easy**

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

**Hard**

```
5 9 1 4
1 5 4 6
5 3 8 7 4 2 9 3 8 7 9 3 2 1
```
Substantial family home is ideal for commuters SEE PAGES 40&41
Substantial family home that’s ideal for commuters

This spacious five-bedroom house has just cropped up on the market for you to buy. Located in the heart of Sawbridgeworth on Redricks Lane, this property is perfect for large families. And with three train stations within a two-mile radius, it is also ideal for commuters.

Step inside, and you’ll find a large entrance hallway with a spiral staircase in the middle. The lounge has bay windows and a gas fireplace.

Also on the ground floor is a kitchen at the rear of the property and a huge master bedroom, with adjoining en-suite bathroom.

Upstairs there are four other sizeable bedrooms.

But perhaps the best feature of the house is the back garden. The north-west facing garden has a decked area leading from the dining room which can fit garden furniture - perfect to enjoy al fresco dining in the warmer months.

There is also a large, double garage and an allotment area, with the rest of the garden mostly laid to lawn.

There are ten schools within two-miles. It is currently valued at £700,000. For more information or to book a viewing, call 01279 949163 or visit Centurion Property's website at www.centurionproperty.co.uk
This five-bedroom house has a well-kept back garden with decking area and is on the market for £700,00
Fall in love with your interiors

Want to channel an autumn glow at home? Wellbeing and styling guru Liz Earle shares her top tips with **SAM WYLIE-HARRIS**

The leaves are crisp and golden, and dappled sunshine is filtering through the windows, so it’s the perfect time to embrace nature and bring a touch of autumnal charm indoors.

If you’re looking for inspiration as to how to channel the colours and warm glow of the season - think rich reds, deep orange and soft yellows and pinks - who better to turn to than wellbeing and styling guru Liz Earle?

A natural pro when it comes to harvesting the ideal setting for a rustic feast, autumn is one of her favourite times of the year.

She’s a fan of outdoor entertaining during this cool, crisp season too.

“The end of summer doesn’t have to mean the end of al-fresco eating” says Liz. “Autumn can be the ideal time to enjoy nature at her finest, eating with friends in the golden light of the evening.”

“I like to capture the magic of autumn by spreading my table with the natural splendour of foraged finds - and this works brilliantly inside or out.”

Whether you’re looking for inspiration for outdoors or inside, take a leaf out of Liz’s library of styling tips.

Here’s how to let autumn’s shades and foliage inspire your decor and dining settings...

**Harvest Basket, £30, gardentrading.co.uk**
A woven basket adds an extra rustic touch. Fill with warm blankets, or fruit, twigs and berries

**Apple tealight holders**

**Autumn bouquet, currently reduced to £59.50 from £85, Laura Ashley**

**Pumpkin serving dish, currently reduced to £31.50 from £45, Laura Ashley**

**Grand minimal dome micro light bundle, £38.99, Lights4fun (table setting deco’s, stylist’s own)**
Alternatively, try these fun lights without the fuss of having to hunt down a box of matches. Lighting up a glass bell jar (a lovely decorative addition on its own), a string of 50 warm white micro fairy lights channel a soft, diffused glow, which works especially well with copper effect dining accessories.

**Light up the Darkness**
As night-time falls, whether you’re eating inside or out, tin-can lanterns can make the perfect backdrop to any feast. With pretty ornamental details, they are especially atmospheric in a darkened room and I love the way the light dances around as the candles flicker, like a campfire.”

**For more of Liz Earle’s tips, visit LizEarleWellbeing.com**
Laura Ashley's autumnal dining ranges include a pumpkin serving dish, currently reduced to £31.50 from £45; Fox tableware, from £7 each, and cockerel reversible fabric pot rest, reduced to £7 from £10 (lauraashley.com)

Refreshing a country kitchen is easier than you think. With a little imagination and a few key materials, such as rust coloured runners, nursery rhyme farm animals and homespun decos, creating a warm and inviting space your friends will love sitting down to doesn't have to be complicated.

**WHERE TO GET A FOREVER AUTUMN HOME**

**Fern foil natural cushion, £12, Finchley multi-drawer chest, £479, gold leaf mirror, £28, Dunelm (dunelm.com)**

Could there be a more cosy autumnal scene? Wood panelling, mirror frames entwined with gold ferns, gold leaf tea lights, dropped branches used as props alongside rustic furniture, and an uber-comfy armchair... An intimate setting just begging to be snuggled into.

**Alexander and James New Romance Betsy fabric armchair, currently reduced to £595 from £795, Furniture Village (furniturevillage.co.uk)**

This glorious mustard yellow armchair, with smart brass detailing and scalloped panels, looks ready to sink into and makes a great investment with the potential for year-round styling... A soft throw draped over it in the winter, or a beaded blanket to pick up colours from the spice route in summer.

**Sunshine Shetland throw – Harley stripe, £67, Amara (amara.com)**

You can never have too many blankets, and this delightful Shetland throw can be used in so many ways. Drape it over the corner of a sofa or weave it between your favourite cushions and get cosy.

**Autumn watercolour leaves cushion, £23.99, Mode Prints (modeprints.com)**

Placing scatter cushions here and there means you can draw attention to cosy corners that might be ignored. And the charm of this cushion is that its white background means it can be grouped with white linen and peach cushions come the spring.

* Prices correct at time of going to print. Offers available while stocks last

**Anthropologie Alcea quilted bedspread, kingsize, £168 (mirror from a selection) John Lewis (johnlewis.com)**

Brilliant bedding with a vibrant collage that captures all the autumnal hues, without being over the top when it comes to foliage. This quilted bedspread can also double up as a wall hanging and be pinned to a wooden pole above the bed, or dressed with cottons and linens to reflect sunnier climes.

* Prices correct at time of going to print. Offers available while stocks last
As a survey reveals many buyers wish they’d known more about their property, TV’s Phil Spencer shares his expert tips. By ABI JACKSON

Buying a property can be a very lengthy process with lots of back and forth – but many buyers still end up wishing they’d found out just a few more crucial details before the deal was finalised.

California Shutters (californiashutters.co.uk) recently asked 1,000 UK homeowners what they most wished they’d known about before purchasing their property. Competition for parking spaces came out tops (20%), followed by noisy neighbours (19%), high renovation costs (13%) and traffic noise (11%).

Oliver Robertson at California Shutters comments: “While our survey shows most movers have a good awareness of problems like damp and pests prior to moving in to a new home, they can still be caught off guard by other things such as having to fight for parking spaces or deal with noise from next door or traffic from the road.”

TV property guru Phil Spencer, who recently launched the advice site for buyers MoveIQ, agrees that as well as the ‘big’ questions, the ‘small’ things should not be overlooked.

“Buying a home is always a mixture of heart and head. Your first impression as you walk through the door is crucial to your decision, but so too are many other less obvious factors,” says Spencer.

“It’s essential that you do your homework, or you risk being blinded by emotion during the purchase. Even worse, you could end up with expensive problems down the line. Asking the right questions before, during or after that first viewing can make the difference between identifying the perfect home and having an unwanted surprise after you’ve committed to buying.”

Here, Spencer, who certainly knows a thing or two about house-hunting, shares his top five things to ask...

1. **HOW LONG HAS THE PROPERTY BEEN ON THE MARKET?**
   “This should be one of your first questions,” says Phil. “The average time it takes to sell a home in the UK is two to three months, according to the Government. So, if the property has been on the market for considerably longer, it may have an issue that is stopping it selling, beyond just being priced too highly. But you’ll need to get your detective hat on to find out what it is.”

   “One red flag to look out for would be if the current owners have lived there for an unusually short period of time. There is usually a reason behind a seller trying to get shot of a property after a short period. Push the agent or sellers for clues: Is there a nuisance neighbour, what are crime levels like in the area, how busy are the roads and how much does the property cost to run (utility bills, council tax etc.)?”

2. **IS THE PROPERTY IN A CONSERVATION AREA?**
   “If you are drawn to the history and charm of older homes, bear in mind that your scope for making changes to such a property could be severely limited. Specific rules about what you can and cannot do to the property will vary from local authority to local authority. Some may prohibit you from making changes to metal railings, windows, trees and even the colour of the front door. So, if your heart is set on a house with history but you’ve got an eye on modernisation, make sure to ask about anything that might block your plans.”

3. **IS THE PROPERTY A FREEHOLD OR A LEASEHOLD?**
   “There are pros and cons to both freehold and leasehold properties. As a leaseholder, you will have to pay annual fees to the owner of the freehold, from ground rent to maintenance charges. These can fluctuate over time, so make sure that when you’re budgeting you factor in the possibility that ground rent will increase or maintenance charges could spike if the building needs major repairs.”

   “By contrast, if you buy a freehold property there’s no ground rent to worry about, but you will be responsible for everything, including the roof and the maintenance of the structure. A detailed survey will flag up any issues that need urgent or expensive repair.”

4. **ARE THERE ANY PENDING PLANNING APPLICATIONS THAT MIGHT IMPACT ME?**
   “This is a quick bit of research you could carry out before viewing your prospective home. Nearly all local authorities have a planning portal on their website that allows you to view any previous or pending planning applications. If, for example, you were considering buying a home close to agricultural land, it might be a good idea to check whether the friendly farmer next door has just submitted a planning application for a new pig rearing facility!”

5. **HAS THE SELLER MADE ANY CHANGES TO THE PROPERTY?**
   “If changes have been made recently – especially structural ones – you need to know so you can ask the seller for any relevant documents, receipts or guarantee certificates.”

   “Equally if the seller has spent money doing the place up, they will have raised the asking price accordingly – so you need to make a judgement on whether the premium is justified. Always ask a seller, which can prove revealing is, ‘If you were staying, what other improvements would you make?’”

**Question time**

**Property guru**

Phil Spencer
For a full list of all properties available log on to our website: www.geoffreymatthew.co.uk
The transition from late summer into autumn had been very gentle – until recently at least – thanks to the unusually warm weather this year. After six months of balmy weather, we could have been lulled into a false sense of security and imagine that winter would never come. But now it’s time to anticipate frosts, storms and heavy rain.

So it’s with some excitement we can tackle the jobs which we may all need to do to get our gardens winter-ready.

Some projects are obvious. There’s a lot of debris around – it is windy. Leaves and old brittle branches are coming down from trees. Clearing them into a composting area is satisfying. What the garden sheds will come to be new feed for its plants in time.

Conditions across the country can vary from extreme lows in the North to almost frost-free coastal zones in the South, so this will inform you whether you need to lift, mulch or wrap tender plants.

If you’ve already had your first frost, that means it’s time to lift your dahlias, gladioli and other tender corms and bulbs such as begonias. Lift, clean off the soil, leave to dry out and then store in a cold, frost-free place such as a garage. In milder areas it’s possible to get away with leaving them in situ, cutting them down and piling some insulating mulch on top.

Bananas and tree ferns can be wrapped in horticultural fleece. Avoid doing this on a windy day as it can turn into a very frustrating job with the fleece blowing away! There are also fleece jackets which can be slipped over the shrub.

The lawn has had a tough time this year but it can take it. Almost five months of drought has weakened some of the grass plants.

Give it a vigorous rake – this is called scarifying and removes any thatch that has built up, as well as fallen leaves. Yes, there will be plenty more leaves to fall but it’s best to remove them as this happens otherwise the lack of light will turn the grass yellow and weaken it for the winter.

You can improve drainage for winter by hollow tining the turf – this is the removal of plugs of soil at intervals around the lawn and then sweeping in some silver sands into the holes.

A lot of the glorious herbaceous growth which produced much of the flowers is done so anything that isn’t attractive can be cut back. However, you don’t have to be super tidy – it’s more beneficial for wildlife if you can leave some areas of wildness. Even a small pile of dead leaves will make a home for beneficial insects such as beetles which will feed on aphids and small caterpillars.

Try to get your weeding done before temperatures fall

**Get to work before temperatures fall**

- Continue planting bulbs and, in particular, tulips can now go into the ground.
- Sow batches of hardy broad beans and peas outdoors to yield early crops next year.
- Remove suckers from the base of plants.
- Pick off rotting fruit from trees and dispose to get rid of fungal spores that overwinter.
- Bonfire Night is a great time to get rid of material that is unsuitable for composting, so collect diseased leaves from fruit trees and roses and chuck on the fire.
- Rake up fallen leaves and compost in bin bags pierced with a few holes – this makes excellent compost for your ericaceous plants.
- Treat your lawn with autumn fertiliser to help it get through winter in good health.
- Prune shrub roses now to avoid damage to the roots caused by high winds rocking the plant back and forth.

**JOBS FOR THE WEEK**

- Diseased leaves and roses can go on the bonfire
- Weed: Spurge

**Winter is coming**

It’s time to get your garden ready ... before the weather gets too cold
In and out: Tulip bulbs can go into the ground now, but if you have tender bulbs such as begonias, take them out.

**PLANT OF THE WEEK**

Rudbeckia fulgida var deamii

This is an easy-to-grow perennial that brings lots of sunshine to your garden with tonnes of black-eyed yellow daisies. The coneflower, also sometimes known as black-eyed Susan, likes to grow in sunshine or partial shade and prefers well-drained, moist, quite fertile soil but really it’s not fussy and very low maintenance. It will provide pollen for butterflies too.

Propagation is easy – you can either divide it in spring or grow it from seed.

**ASK DIARMUID**

Q I have a tree which I think is a yew. I’ve attempted numerous ways to get rid of it but have failed. I’ve tried a nail in the root, weed killers and diesel, but nothing has worked.

Have you any ideas or solutions? I have enclosed a picture for you to look at.

Louis Morris, via email

A Your tree is a conifer but I think it might be a Thuja. Trees are never the easiest to remove but I think your best bet is to cut it down. Remember to wear safety equipment if using any electrical saws. You will be left with a stump, and depending on the size of the tree, you can dig this out or use a stump grounder, which will reduce it to sawdust.

It is also possible to drill some holes in the stump, and pour in chemical stump remover, which will help to rot it down.

**YOU MULCH THE BEDS.** This year I’m plagued with petty spurge, a common euphorbia which I’m determined to see off before they set seed again.

Use last year’s compost as a mulch – think of it as a cosy winter blanket for your outdoor beds, and while your sleeves are rolled up, clean out your pots.

Spread spent compost in the borders. Scrub the pots and either go again with some winter bedding or store them in the garden shed for next year.

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£775,000

- Four Bedroom Detached Property
- Two Reception Rooms
- 100ft Ecologically Maintained Garden with Fruit Trees
- Walking Distance of Harlow Town Station
- Overlooking Harlow Town Park
- EPC Rating: D

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**Waterhouse Moor**

Offers In The Region Of £250,000

- Two Bedroom Terraced House
- Chain Free
- Utility / Storage Room
- Lounge / Diner
- EPC Rating: Awaiting

---

**Mill Court**

£185,000

- Two Bedroom Flat
- Chain Free
- Walking Distance of Harlow Town Station
- En-suite to Bedroom One
- Open Plan Lounge / Diner
- EPC Rating: C

---

**Heron Wood**

Offers In The Region Of £210,000

- Two Double Bedroom Flat
- Within Easy Reach of Harlow Town Station
- Communal Gardens
- Ideal First Time or Investment Purchase

---

**Tany’s Dell**

£210,000

- A Two DOUBLE Bedrooms Flat
- Located On The Top Floor
- Large Lounge/Diner
- Recently Refurbished to Rear Aspect
- Recently Re-Wired & New Gas Central Heating Throughout
- EPC Rating: D

---

**Weddley**

£210,000

- A Two Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
- One DOUBLE Bedroom
- Lounge/Diner
- Driveway
- Share of Freehold
- EPC Rating: Awaiting

---

**Pensomead**

By Auction

£250,000

- Three Bedroom Terraced House
- Chain Free
- Potential To add a Driveway (STPP)
- Ideal First Time or Investment Purchase
- EPC Rating: D

---

**Fold Court**

£285,000

- A Two Bedroom End Of Terrace House
- Two DOUBLE Bedrooms
- Private Driveway
- First Floor Family Bathroom
- Larger Than Average Lounge/Diner
- EPC Rating: Awaiting

---

**Woodcraft**

£350,000

- Three Bedroom End Of Terrace
- Open Plan Lounge / Diner
- Two Reception Rooms
- Recently Re-fitted Kitchen & Bathroom
- EPC Rating: D
**Paddock Mead, Harlow**
- £400,000
- Three/Four Bedrooms
- Garage & Driveway
- Quiet Cul-de-Sac
- Well Presented

**Headland Street, Newhall**
- £370,000
- Three Bedrooms
- Two Allocated Parking Spaces
- Open Plan Living
- NHBC Warranty
- Terraced Home
- High Spec Finish
- Desirable Location
- EPC Rating: B

**Bowhill Way, Fifth Avenue**
- £365,000
- Three Bedrooms
- Kitchen/Diner
- Modern Home
- Cul-De-Sac Location
- End Of Terrace
- Immaculate Condition
- Allocated Parking
- EPC Rating: B

---

**Sakins Croft, Harlow**
- £340,000
- Three Bedrooms
- Modern Kitchen
- Two Receptions
- Garage & Driveway

**Fuller Mead, Harlow**
- £339,995
- Three Bedrooms
- Two Receptions
- Semi Detached
- Modern Bathroom Suite
- Popular Location
- EPC Rating: TBC

**Pytt Field, Harlow**
- £315,000
- Three Bedrooms
- Modern Fitted Kitchen
- Two Parking Spaces
- CHAIN FREE
- End Of Terrace
- Quiet Cul-de-Sac
- Westerly Garden
- EPC Rating: TBC

---

**Monksbury, Harlow**
- £350,000
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge/Diner
- Garage & Driveway
- Popular Location
- Conservatory
- CHAIN FREE
- EPC Rating: B

**Manor Road, Old Harlow**
- £349,995
- Three Bedrooms
- Lounge/Diner
- Long Gardens
- Semi Detached
- Conservatory
- EPC Rating: B

**Mulberry Green, Old Harlow**
- £364,995
- Two Bedrooms
- Modern Kitchen
- Open Plan Living
- Parking Area
- End Of Terrace
- Pretty Cottage
- Private Location
- EPC Rating: B

---

**Albert Gardens, Church Langley**
- £332,500
- Three Bedrooms
- Kitchen/Diner
- Cloakroom/WC
- Double Driveway
- Semi Detached
- Conservatory
- Popular Location
- EPC Rating: D

**158,**
- £325,000
- An immaculate detached home in one of the most popular locations in Church Langley. The property has a large entrance hall, modern fitted kitchen/diner, family bathroom and a garage from the side. The ground floor has a family bathroom and three good size bedrooms with built in wardrobes and the rear garden is around 200 square with patio and lawned areas. Garage is located to the front along with a driveway.

**Lodge Hall, Harlow**
- £299,995
- Three Bedrooms
- Garage & Driveway
- Kitchen/Diner
- Chain Free
- Semi Detached
- Ground Floor WC
- Popular Location
- EPC Rating: D

---

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Features</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felmongs, Harlow</td>
<td>£299,995</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Terraced Home, Desirable Location, Westerly Garden, EPC Rating: TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wooding Grove, Harlow</td>
<td>£289,995</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Semi Detached, 40FT Garden, Close To Town, EPC Rating: TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fesants Croft, Harlow</td>
<td>£294,995</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Terraced Properly, Overlooking Fields, Modern Kitchen, EPC Rating: D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry Spring, Harlow</td>
<td>£279,995</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Middle Terrace, Conservatory, EPC Rating: TBC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aysley Gardens, Church Langley</td>
<td>£289,995</td>
<td>Two Double Bedrooms, Kitchen/Bath Room, Parking For Two, EPC Rating: TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tickenham Drive, Church Langley</td>
<td>£274,995</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Middle Terrace, EPC Rating: C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BARN MEAD, HARLOW</td>
<td>£280,000</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Lounge/Diner, Quiet Cul-De-Sac, EPC Rating: D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUSHEY CROFT, HARLOW</td>
<td>£279,995</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Lounge/Diner, Well Presented, EPC Rating: D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WESTFIELD, HARLOW</td>
<td>£275,000</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, DriveWAY, Lounge/Diner, Middle Terrace House, EPC Rating: TBC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOODWARDS, HARLOW</td>
<td>£275,000</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Open Plan Lounge/Diner, Well Presented, EPC Rating: C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE GARDINERS, CHURCH LANGLEY</td>
<td>£270,000</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, CHAIN FREE, Two Parking Spaces, EPC Rating: TBC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Westbury Rise, Church Langley**  
£560,000  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Two Receptions  
- Kitchen/Family Room  
- Conservatory  
- Detached House  
- Double Detached Garage  
- Immaculate Home  
- EPC Rating: D

**Chelsea Gardens, Church Langley**  
£549,995  
- Six Bedrooms  
- Two Receptions  
- En-Suite Shower  
- Garage & Drive  
- Utility & W.C  
- Ripptide Swim Spa  
- EPC Rating: TBC

**Park Avenue, Harlow**  
£525,000  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Two Receptions  
- Utility/WC  
- Popular Location  
- Semi Detached  
- Driveway  
- 100Y Garden  
- EPC Rating: F

**Ashworth Place, Harlow**  
£515,000  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Garage & Driveway  
- Two Receptions  
- Westery Garden  
- Detached Family Home  
- Desirable Location  
- EPC Rating: TBC

**Fornham Close, Sawbridgeworth**  
£475,000  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Garage & Driveway  
- Quiet Cul-De-Sac  
- CHAIN FREE  
- Detached Home  
- Two Receptions  
- Southerly Rear Garden  
- EPC Rating: TBC

**Brookline Field, Harlow**  
£450,000  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Two Receptions  
- 2/Floor Extension  
- Landscaped Garden  
- Semi Detached  
- Modern Kitchen  
- Garage & Driveway  
- EPC Rating: D

**TATTON STREET, NEWHALL**  
£465,000  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Kitchen/Diner  
- Immaculate Home  
- Double Garage  
- Detached House  
- Two Receptions  
- En Suite Shower  
- EPC Rating: C

**ROUND HOUSE WAY, NEWHALL**  
£464,995  
- Four Double Bedrooms  
- Driveway  
- Balcony  
- NHBC Warranty  
- Link Detached  
- Ensuite To Master  
- Desirable Location  
- EPC Rating: TBC

**WATER HOUSE MOOR, HARLOW**  
£450,000  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Lounge/Diner  
- Conservatory  
- Garage & Driveway  
- Detached House  
- Westernly Garden  
- CHAIN FREE  
- EPC Rating: E

**DENBY GRANGE, CHURCH LANGLEY**  
£429,995  
- Four Bedrooms  
- Two Receptions  
- Dressing Room  
- Garage & Drive  
- Link detached  
- Ensuite to Master  
- Cul-De-Sac Spot  
- EPC Rating: C

**BURY ROAD, OLD HARLOW**  
£420,000  
- Three Bedrooms  
- Two Receptions  
- Stunning Garden  
- CHAIN FREE  
- Semi Detached  
- Kitchen/Diner  
- Immaculate Home  
- EPC Rating: E

**DACRES GATE, ONGAR**  
£415,000  
- Two bedrooms  
- Kitchen/Diner  
- Ground Floor W.C  
- Cot Lodge Parking  
- End Of Terrace  
- Gated Development  
- Exclusive Location  
- EPC Rating: D

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<td>Abbotsweld, Harlow</td>
<td>£269,995</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Dining Area, Modern Kitchen, Extended Property</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crossbill Way, Newhall</td>
<td>£267,500</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, En-Suite Shower Room, Open Plan Living, Own Balcony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbotsweld, Harlow</td>
<td>£267,000</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Lounge/Diner, Front Extension, Driveway To Front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church Leys, Harlow</td>
<td>£259,995</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Lounge/Diner, Great First Time Buy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purford Green, Harlow</td>
<td>£240,000</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Lounge/Diner, Close To Shops, 40ft Rear Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milwards, Harlow</td>
<td>£230,000</td>
<td>Three Bedrooms, Kitchen/Diner, Clockroom/WC, Chain Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priory Court, Harlow</td>
<td>£229,995</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Lounge/Diner, Balcony, Garage En-Res, Private Apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sothern Lodge, Harlow</td>
<td>£219,995</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Residents Parking, Warden Assisted, Chain Free</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gultfords, Old Harlow</td>
<td>£210,000</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Open Plan, Well Presented, First Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalport Close, Church Langley</td>
<td>£210,000</td>
<td>Two Bedrooms, Allocated Parking, Lounge/Diner, First Floor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bercroft, Harlow</td>
<td>£200,000</td>
<td>One Bedroom, Lounge/Diner, Well Presented, Detached Bungalow, Barely Available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peterswood, Harlow</td>
<td>£185,000</td>
<td>One Bedroom, Lounge/Diner, Immaculate, First Floor</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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Howick & Brooker Partnership Gothic House Old Harlow CM17 0DN
Guide Price £230,000 - £240,000
Going Going Gone
Torkildsen Way
This two bedroom flat on the popular Fifth Avenue development has now been sold STC, if anyone is thinking of selling in this area please call 01279 443311. Ref 14713

Guide Price £220,000 - £240,000
Berecroft
A Home For The Family.
EPC D
Are you looking for space for all the family? With three good sized bedrooms, spacious lounge and a downstairs cloakroom, everyone can have their own space. Ref 14683

Guide Price £260,000 - £270,000
Modern, Stylish And Contemporary
EPC C
Braggowens Ley
This two bedroom ground floor apartment located within the award winning development of Newhall. The property offers spacious living accommodation along. Ref 14604

Guide Price £130,000 - £140,000
Linford End
A Great Place To Start
EPC E
Are you looking to get on the property ladder and own a property of your own? The look no further than this one bedroom top floor flat. The property does require some modernisation but would be a great place to start. Call now to view. Ref 14738

Guide Price £289,995
Ladyshot
EPC TBC
Located within easy reach to schools and amenities is this well presented three bedroom detached home benefiting from two reception rooms, utility room, fitted kitchen, three bedrooms with en-suite to the master, family bathroom, rear garden, garage and driveway. Internal viewing is highly advised. Ref 14635

Guide Price £400,000 - £425,000
Fantastic Find
EPC F
Walnut Tree Cottages, Mill Street
Positioned in the desirable location of Mill Street, Hastingwood is this end of terrace cottage. The property also benefits from a large front which offers potential to extend. Ref 14666

Guide Price £450,000 - £465,000
St Johns Avenue
A Home For All
EPC E
This older style three bedroom semi with garage to the side and detached two bedroom annexe in the garden, would be ideal for two or three generations to all live together but still have your own independence and space. Ref 13895

Guide Price £400,000 - £425,000
The Ridings
EPC C
Located within easy reach to Schools and Amenities is this well presented three bedroom detached home benefiting from two reception rooms, utility room, fitted kitchen, three bedrooms with en-suite to the master, family bathroom, rear garden, garage and driveway. Internal viewing is highly advised. Ref 14635

Guide Price £265,000 - £275,000
Nothing Not To Love
EPC E
Rye Croft
This well presented two bedroom end of terrace home is one to view, with the potential to get off road parking (STPP) this would make a great starter home. Ref 14529

Guide Price £350,000 - £375,000
Offered Chain Free
EPC B
Tanyard Place
This three bedroom and terrace family home located in Harlow has now been sold STC, if you are thinking of selling please call 01279 443311. Ref 13575

Guide Price £300,000 - £320,000
Thinking Of Selling?
EPC D
Ram Gorse
This three bedroom end of terrace family home located in Harlow has now been sold STC, if anyone is thinking of selling in this area please call 01279 443311. Ref 14713
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SAWBRIDGEWORTH (Lawrence Meadows)

2 bedroom top floor apartment with views over the River Stort. 3 mins walk to town station serving London Liverpool Street. Living/dining room, kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom, allocated parking. recent decoration and new carpet throughout. Sole agents.

£249,000

TAKLEY

2 double bedroom, double storey extended character cottage with a 70ft garden, parking to front. Large living room, good size kitchen/diner, utility, large rear garden, driveway and parking. Available now. £2950pcm

£284,000

SAWBRIDGEWORTH (Russet Court)

Large ground floor apartment in a stunning position of the village, 5 mins walk to the station and in the heart of the village. Extended by its current owner and scope for second storey extension (opl). Driveway and parking for 2 cars. Sole agents.

£329,950

HARLOW (Sandside)

Detached 3 bedroom family home overlooking the river Stort. 3 bed, 2 bath, dining room, kitchen, utility and garage. Parking for 5 cars. £645,000

£340,000

SAWBRIDGEWORTH (West Road)

Semi-detached 4 bedroom home within walking distance of village centre, train station and schools. 125ft rear garden. Scope to extend (opl). Vacant possession and no onward chain.

£395,000

OLD BRIELE (Bury Barns)

Imposing 2 bedroom ground floor apartment set in its own secluded gardens. Immaculate communal garden. 2nd floor apartment in a mews. Own entrance, garage and parking. Sole agents.

£425,000

SAWBRIDGEWORTH (Church Mews)

Recently refurbished, unfurnished, ground floor two bedroom apartment overlooking the river Stort. 2nd floor apartment in a mews. Own entrance, garage and parking. Alone parking to front. £550,000

£435,000

HARLOW (Deep Purple)

Detached 4 bedroom, kitchen/diner, 2 living rooms, conservatory, 3 bathrooms and separate wc. Brick built out buildings for storage, fine countryside views and ample parking. Available now. £570,000

£465,000

SAWBRIDGEWORTH (Parkway)

Beautifully presented 3 double bedroom family home with a large open plan living area with bi-folding doors onto garden, luxury kitchen and bathrooms, west facing rear garden, garage and parking. Sole agents.

£620,000

SAWBRIDGEWORTH (Ladywell Prospect)

Unfurnished 2 bedroom apartment. Situated on 2nd floor with wonderful views of the village. Close to town centre, 10 mins walk to station. £750pcm

£875 pcm

BISHOPS STORTFORD (Turley Lane)

Detached 4 bedroom family home. Living room, three bedrooms, bathroom, living room, utility, large rear garden. Double glazing throughout. £900pcm

£895,000

SAWBRIDGEWORTH (Lawrence Meadows)

Unfurnished 2 bedroom apartment. Situated on the 3rd floor with wonderful views of the village. Close to town centre, 10 mins walk to station. £950pcm

£975,000

HARLOW (Grey Goose Park)

Recently refurbished, unfurnished property enjoys period features including exposed brickwork, beams and sash windows. £495,000

£1050pcm

SAWBRIDGEWORTH (Ladywell Prospect)

Unfurnished 2 bedroom apartment. Situated on the 2nd floor with wonderful views of the village. Close to town centre, 10 mins walk to station. £1050pcm

£1150pcm

OLD HAYNOR (Market Street)

Recently refurbished, unfurnished, top floor two bedroom apartment in a sought after location, just a short walk to the town centre and train station. Extensive hall, two bedrooms, bathroom, good size living room/dining room and kitchen from the rear over the River Stort. £945pcm

£1095pcm

BISHOPS STORTFORD (Rainsmead)

Recently refurbished, unfurnished, top floor two bedroom apartment in a sought after location, just a short walk to the town centre and train station. Extensive hall, two bedrooms, bathroom, good size living room/dining room and kitchen from the rear over the River Stort. £1195pcm

£2950pcm

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**REDRICKS LANE, SAWBRIDGEWORTH** £700,000
- Five bed detached house
- Double garage
- Large driveway
- En-suite
- Gas heating
- UPVC double glazed windows
- Sought-after location
- Internal photos online

**NICHOLLS FIELD, HARLOW** £299,995
- Three bed end terrace
- Garage & parking
- Modern fitted kitchen
- South facing garden
- Gas heating
- UPVC double glazed windows
- Viewing recommended
- Internal photos online

**BROOKLANE FIELD, HARLOW** £545,000
- Extended five bed semi
- Three reception rooms
- Off street parking
- Cloakroom
- Gas heating
- UPVC double glazed windows
- Close to Harlow Common
- Internal photos online

**COWLINS, OLD HARLOW** £299,950
- Three bed end terrace
- Garage & parking
- Modern fitted kitchen
- South facing garden
- Gas heating
- UPVC double glazed windows
- Viewing recommended
- Internal photos online

**SILVEStERS, HARLOW** £355,000
- Three bed semi
- Outskirts of Harlow
- Open plan living areas
- Garage & driveway
- Gas heating
- UPVC double glazed windows
- No onward chain
- Internal photos online

**BARN MEAD, HARLOW** £169,950
- One bed ground floor
- Private garden
- Wet room
- Gas heating
- UPVC double glazed windows
- No onward chain
- Internal photos online

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Guardian are delighted to offer this newly refurbished three bedroom house in Perry Springs. This property also benefits from gas central heating, low maintenance garden and ample storage. EPC - C. Available mid December.

Guardian are delighted to offer this two bedroom house in Church Langley, Harlow. Layout comprises entrance hallway, lounge, kitchen overlooking rear garden, two bathrooms and bedroom with an en-suite. This 3rd floor property benefits from allocated parking, gas central heating, electric shower, neutral decor and new carpets throughout. EPC - C. Available mid November.

Guardian are delighted to offer this two bedroom flat with an en-suite. This 3rd floor property benefits from allocated parking, gas central heating, electric shower, neutral decor and new carpets throughout. EPC - C. Available mid November.

Guardian are delighted to offer this one bedroom first floor flat in Dads Wood. House is a short walk to town centre and hospital. Benefits from newly fitted kitchen, brand new carpets throughout and neutral decor. EPC - C. Available NOW.

Guardian are delighted to offer this one bedroom ground floor flat in Milwards. This property benefits from gas heating and generous living space throughout. EPC - D. Available NOW.

Guardian are delighted to offer this fully furnished two bedroom ground floor flat with a rear garden. This 1st floor property benefits from allocated parking, gas central heating, electric shower, neutral decor and new carpets throughout. EPC - C. Available mid December.

Guardian are pleased to offer this recently redecorated one bedroom flat in private block located just off Potter Street. Benefits from allocated parking, gas central heating, electric shower, neutral decor and new carpets throughout. EPC - C. Available NOW.

Guardian are pleased to offer for rent this affordable and large one bedroom first floor flat in the Luton Flats area of Harlow. The property is perfect for someone on a budget looking for quality accommodation in Harlow. Unfurnished with oven and hob only. EPC - D. Available late November.

 Guardian are delighted to offer this one bedroom flat in Church Langley. The property benefits from a modern fitted kitchen, including oven, hob, fridge freezer and washing dryer. EPC - C. Available early November.

Guardian are pleased to offer this affordable and large one bedroom first floor flat in the Luton Flats area of Harlow. This property is perfect for someone on a budget looking for quality accommodation in Harlow. Unfurnished with oven and hob only. EPC - D. Available late November.

Guardian are pleased to offer this affordable and large one bedroom first floor flat in the Luton Flats area of Harlow. This property is perfect for someone on a budget looking for quality accommodation in Harlow. Unfurnished with oven and hob only. EPC - D. Available late November.

Guardian are delighted to offer this three bedroom house in the Church Langley area of Harlow. Offered part furnished with oven, hob, fridge freezer and washing machine. The property is in good decorative condition and offers off street parking to front. EPC - D. Available mid December.

Guardian are delighted to offer this one bedroom ground floor flat in Milwards. This property benefits from newly fitted grey carpets and a high gloss kitchen. EPC - D. Available late November.
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varied test routes. The five-speed manual gearbox is fine with a nice movement up and down the gears making it an easy car to drive, whether out on the open road or trudging through heavy urban traffic.

Naturally some of that driving involved motoring up and down steep inclines and that means plenty of gear changing at times, particularly when fully loaded with five adults on board, but it’s not inconvenient.

Understandably much of the mechanical hardware has come from the Renault ‘pot’ so all components are well engineered and reliable and again various minor engineering changes now make this Duster more flexible in performance out on the road, helped also by new electric power steering. Inside one of the major improvements is that the car is much quieter thanks to more sound deadening and thicker glass used and for the driver the seat has a longer cushion which is so much better and more comfortable than in the previous models – and there’s an armrest too.

All new Dusters now have daytime running LED lights, electric front windows and more supportive passengers seats.

Paying a little bit extra for the Comfort and the buyer gains useful to use seven-inch colour touchscreen, sat nav, parking camera, alloy wheels and cruise control, leather steering wheel, Bluetooth plus heated and electrically adjustable door mirrors – overall an exceptionally good package for £13,000.

The dashboard again remains simple but effective to use with piano style buttons too and surrounding plastic trim is now of a much better quality and Dacia proves with this car that it can produce a comfortable interior with pleasant enough trim.

Admittedly here it is still perhaps not up to the slightly better standard of say the German or Japanese rivals but it better and clearly does the job and of course the Duster is much cheaper which is an important fact for the more budget-conscious buyers. Interior space is bigger too with some 1,623 litres overall of space and plenty of storage spaces for those family oddments while the Duster remains a practical family car in every sense of the word.

The addition soon of a diesel engine will further enhance the range as will a go-faster turbo petrol engine due early next year.

Value for money remains the heartbeat of the Duster which is now a far more accomplished and much better driving car than its predecessor.

IX years ago when Renault-owned Dacia first started bringing here their budget-made Duster cars from Romania they were described as being ‘cheap and cheerful’ but exceptionally good value for money and clearly aimed at the budget-conscious motorist.

Now there’s a new, fresher looking Duster here better built, better quality yet still a value-for-money car with affordable prices as the entry-level model comes in at under £10,000.

With four trim levels – Access, Essential, Comfort and Prestige – and still Renault based normally aspirated petrol engines (a diesel will be here soon followed by a turbo petrol) this new Duster sticks to its affordable label but now offers much more on board.

There’s new styling to the car’s body with every panel changed, a wider grille at the front while at the back there’s a been a redesign with the lights pushed out to the corner and overall a more sporty look about the car.

The Comfort trimmed model (tested here) is expected to be the best seller and powered by a 1.6-litre 115bhp petrol engine is responsive enough with a 0 to 62mph of around 11 seconds while its pretty economical too, average an impressive 44.1mpg over some 700 miles of varied test routes.

Inside one of the major improvements is that the car is much quieter thanks to more sound deadening and thicker glass used and for the driver the seat has a longer cushion which is so much better and more comfortable than in the previous models – and there’s an armrest too.

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EXCLUSIVE MOTABILITY OPEN DAY AT GATES OF HARLOW

Gates of Harlow is hosting an open day on Thursday 15th November 2018 dedicated to the Motability Scheme so you can learn first-hand more about the leading car scheme for disabled people.

The Motability Scheme is the worry-free way to get a brand-new car, scooter or powered wheelchair in exchange for either the Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance, the Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment, the War Pensioners’ Mobility Supplement or the Armed Forces Independence Payment.

The Gates of Harlow open day will offer free information and advice on leasing a car through the Motability Scheme to anyone who thinks they might be eligible.

Available exclusively at the event will be the chance to take advantage of special offers including a free adaptation health check and adaptation demonstrations with a specialist from Brig-Ayd Controls. Brig-Ayd’s adaptation expert will explain how a car can be modified to suit individual mobility requirements.

On hand will be experienced Motability Specialists from Gates of Harlow to offer advice on getting a new car; there has never been a better choice of Ford vehicles available on the Motability Scheme, many with little or no advance payment. Specialists will also be able to offer advice on who is eligible for the scheme, the benefits of joining and any other questions that you may have. If you have any questions on vehicle ownership on the Motability Scheme, there will also be aftersales personnel available to help.

Plus, visitors can enjoy light refreshments and receive a free valet on their current vehicle, subject to terms, conditions and availability.

Mel Shaw, Motability Specialist at Gates of Harlow commented: “The Gates of Harlow Motability open day promises to be a great occasion to learn more about leasing a car through the Motability Scheme and highlight how easy it is to get on the road. We’re really looking forward to welcoming people in Harlow and the surrounding areas to join in the fun and take advantage of the free information, advice and expertise on offer.”

The Gates of Harlow Motability open day takes place on Thursday 15th November between 10am and 3pm at the dealership on Edinburgh Way, Harlow. For more information about the event, call Gates of Harlow on 01279 421166 or visit the dealership.

For more information about the Motability Scheme and to find your local dealer, contact us today.
QUALITY USED CARS:

Every Kia in this list comes with the balance of our 7 Year Warranty – this means a 3-year-old Kia will have a warranty that’s longer than many of our competitor’s new cars!

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2. 14 (14) 15 (63) Hyundai i30 Active 1.6 Diesel 5dr, White, 36,000 Miles, Air Con, C/Locking, E/Windows, Under Kia Warranty Until 23/05/2022 ............................................................................................................................................ £6,795
3. 18 (18) Vauxhall Astra 1.6 Diesel 5dr, White, 53,000 Miles, Air Con, C/Locking, E/Windows, Under Kia Warranty Until 30/07/2023 ............................................................................................................................................ £6,795
4. 18 (18) Kia Sportage 1.6 PETROL ‘2’, Silver, 27,000 Miles, Air Con, Alloys, R/C/Locking, E/Windows, Under Kia Warranty Until 01/06/2022 ............................................................................................................................................ £6,995
5. 18 (18) Honda Jazz 1.3 EX Petrol 5dr, £12,899
6. 18 (18) Kia Rio 1.25 Petrol ‘2’ 5dr, £9,495
7. 18 (18) Kia Cee’d 1.6 Diesel ‘3’ 5dr, £10,395
8. 18 (18) Kia Niro HYBRID 1.6 Petrol Auto ‘3’, £14,999
9. 18 (18) Kia Optima 1.7 Diesel ‘3’ Estate Auto, £16,999
10. 18 (18) Kia Pro-Ceed 1.6 GT LINE Hatchback, £17,460
11. 18 (18) Kia Cee’d 1.4 CRDI (New Shape) 1.4 Blue Edition 5dr, £17,750
12. 18 (18) Kia Sportage 2.0 Diesel ‘GT-LINE’ 6-Speed Manual, £18,750
13. 18 (18) Kia Cee’d 5W 1.6 ‘2’ Estate, £18,995
14. 18 (18) Kia Soul 1.6 Petrol ‘Sport’ Auto 5dr, £18,995
15. 18 (18) Kia Rio 1.25 Petrol ‘2’ 5dr, £18,995
16. 18 (18) Kia Sportage (New Shape) 1.6 Petrol Special Edition ‘25’, £21,475
17. 18 (18) Kia Sportage (New Shape) 1.6 Petrol ‘GT-LINE’ 6-Speed Manual, £21,750
18. 18 (18) Vauxhall Corsa 1.4 90PS 5dr, £21,750
19. 18 (18) Vauxhall Corsa 1.4 90PS 5dr, £21,750

KIA APPROVED USED CARS:

All cars come with a full 7 year/100,000 mile warranty from when you take delivery and available with low rate 5.9% APR Representative PCP or HP Finance for up to 5 years*. Please call for a personalised quote.

17 (17) Citroen DS3 1.6 Petrol Hatchback, £12,690
18 (18) Mercedes-Benz A Class 1.0 Petrol Auto, £12,899
19 (19) Volvo V40 Cross Country 2.0 T5 Petrol 5dr, £13,695
20 (20) Toyota Proace 2.4 D-4D 150 DIN hp Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 34.4 (8.2), Extra Urban 44.8 (6.3), Combined 40.4 (7.0). CO2 Emissions 185g/km All mpg and CO2 emission figures quoted are NEDC equivalent. This means the mpg and CO2 figures are based on the new WLTP test procedure but calculated (using a standard European calculation method) to allow comparison with the current NEDC test procedure. More information can be found by visiting www.MATracts.com. For cars certified under WLTP revised CO2 and mpg figures are available from your local Toyota Centre on request.

Stop/Start 2.4 D-4D 150 DIN hp Manual. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 47.1 (6.0) – 50.5 (5.5), Extra Urban 54.3 (4.4) – 57.6 (4.2), Combined 54.3 (4.4) – 57.6 (4.2). CO2 Emissions 144g/km – 137g/km. CO2 emissions quoted are NEDC equivalent. This means the mpg and CO2 figures are based on the new WLTP test procedure but calculated (using a standard European calculation method) to allow comparison with the current NEDC test procedure. More information can be found by visiting www.MATracts.com. For cars certified under WLTP revised CO2 and mpg figures are available from your local Toyota Centre on request.

PROACE Range. Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 47.1 (6.0) – 50.5 (5.5), Extra Urban 54.3 (4.4) – 57.6 (4.2), Combined 54.3 (4.4) – 57.6 (4.2). CO2 Emissions 144g/km – 137g/km.

To our knowledge this list includes all the Kia vehicles in stock at Steven Eagell Toyota, Bishop’s Stortford CM23 5HW. This list is updated as vehicles are sold. Any vehicles shown that have been sold will be removed. If you can’t see a particular model or colour you require, please call us on 01279 710075 and we’ll do our best to find you what you want.
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In addition to a highly competitive salary we offer a contributory pension scheme and private health care. If you are interested in applying for any of the above roles please email your CV and current salary details to our HR Manager Bernadette Warren@inflite.co.uk or phone for an informal chat with James Hawkins, Shop Supervisor, David Page, Production Control Manager, Keith Meadowcroft, Chief Inspector or Richard Cross, Shop Floor Co-ordinator on 01279 446968.

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HTS (Property & Environment) Ltd has been set up by Harlow District Council to provide housing repairs & maintenance and environmental services.

Closing date - 9th November 2018
Interviews - 20th November 2018

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(Footpath 14 & Footpath 29, Harlow)
(Temporary Prohibition of Use) Order 2018

Notice is hereby given that the above Order Made under the Essex County Council, under s14 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, has been continued in force with the consent of the Secretary of State for the Department for Transport until 7th May 2019

Effect of the order: The order is to temporarily close that length of Footpath 14 & Footpath 29, Harlow as specified:

Footpath From Marsh Lane in Gilden Way and 29, Harlow to the east to the junction with Footpath 184 in the west for a distance of approximately 700 metres

Footpath From Gilden Way, Gilden Way and 14, Harlow north for Marsh Lane approximately 575 metres

The closure commenced on 7th May 2018 and is required for the safety of the public and workplace while development works are undertaken.

Dated: 1st November 2018

Essex County Council, Network Assurance,
A2 Annex, Sea House, Victoria Road South,
Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1QH
Telephone: 0345 603 7637
Website: www.essex.gov.uk/highways

Hamstel Road, Harlow
(Temporary Prohibition of Traffic) Order 2018

Notice is hereby given that the Essex County Council intends, not less than seven days from the date of this notice, to make the above Order under section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Effect of the order: To temporarily close that length of Hamstel Road, Harlow in the District of Harlow, from a point approximately 40m south east of its junction with Rectory Wood for a distance of approximately 100m in a southeasterly direction.

The closure is scheduled to commence on 18th November 2018 for 4 days, or where stated on a valid permit SP015EHV230802 - Essex County Council.

The scheduled date may vary for these works with appropriate signs showing and/or displayed on www.roadworks.org. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workplace while zebra crossing installations are undertaken by Essex County Council.

An alternative route is available via Hamstel Road, Hoddings Road, Fourth Avenue, Hoddings Road, and vice versa.

Or via Hamstel Road, Fourth Avenue, Hoddings Road, Hoddings Road, and vice versa.

The Order will come into effect on 8th November 2018 and may continue for 18 months or until the works have been completed, whichever is the earlier.

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Gwen, 47yrs blue eyed brunette, recently new to the market and looking for some male attention. 30-50yrs. Status unknown. Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 423587

SUSE, married, adventurously inclined lady, 38yrs, seeks discreet man any age for no strings fun. Lives in North West. Tel No: 0906 515 3028; 431239
LOUISE 49yrs, divorcee, looking to fun times with like-minded male who wishes to have good times in or out. Stalkers, unemployeds, etc. please send no replies. Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 423587

ROBERT, 67yrs, a lady 21-28, fit and slim, if you would like some discreet looking for please me know. Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 422861

Mack, 35, 5ft8, blue eyes, not bad divorced, GSOH, adventurous, easy-going, genuine, looking for a description-woman, 50-65, someone open-minded and genuine who likes a laugh and joke. Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 421555

HUGE black, British born male, five feet eleven, some pro body builder, extremely good looking with a vibrant and winning personality. Get in touch and I’ll send you a pic! Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 421021

TINA, pretty Asian lady. 32yrs. Lives at home & works in the business. Hoping to meet a kindly older man who is understanding of her situation. Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 421264

BOBBY: cute normal size humour knows countryside, seeks similar nutty guy. Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 423025

LOUISE: 49yrs, divorcee, looking to fun times with like-minded male who wishes to have good times in or out. Stalkers, unemployeds, etc. please send no replies. Tel No: 0906 515 4456 Box No: 423587
SPORT

'WMILER’ IVY CELEBRATES
TO2ND
BIRTHDAY

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2018

Hawks secure a first victory in five matches

Harlow Town clawed back a two goal deficit to beat Whitehawk 3-2 and progress to the FA Trophy second round qualifying, banking £3,250 in prize money.

The Hawks put their league woes behind them to net three second half goals on Saturday and secure a tie at Carshalton Athletic.

Manager Danny Chapman named all four of his new signings in the matchday squad, with Matt Foy and Tom Hitchcock leading the attack in the starting line-up and Bill Plumpton and Mayowa Adaje on the bench.

The hosts went ahead midway through the first half through Anezu Sisimayi, and it looked as though Harlow would struggle again as they failed to create significant chances.

Chapman changed things up in the second half, bringing striker Emile Acquah on for defender JJ Da Cruz and moving to a 3-4-3 formation, and it paid dividends immediately. The equaliser came in the 66th minute. Whitehawk goalkeeper Melvin Minter was unable to hold onto the ball and Hitchcock pounced on the rebound from close range.

The hosts reacted quickly and almost went ahead again a minute later, but the goal was ruled out for offside. Harlow went ahead in the 70th minute. Hitchcock’s shot deflected to Nathan Koranteng who scored. With six minutes of normal time to go, Harlow seemed to have wrapped up the game.

A neat ball over the top of the Whitehawk defence from Louis Yull was met by Acquah, who evaded a defender before finishing well to open up a two goal cushion. Whitehawk weren’t finished yet, though, and they reduced the deficit to one just two minutes later. A cross was played in to the back post, and Ed Sanders slid into turn it home. However, Harlow Town saw out the remainder of the game to secure their first win in five matches.

While Harlow Cricket Club may not have the best of seasons there were still plenty of outstanding performances to celebrate at its senior presentations.

Of the club’s four senior teams only the third XI managed to retain their position in the Shepherd Neame Essex League. However, the club took solace in the progress of many of the Colts into the higher teams, and the encouragement and support from more experienced players which brought out the best in them all. Awards were made to U18 Max Baulcomb and U21 Callum Sykes, both of whom had remarkable seasons.

Max joined the club’s colts when he was five years old and this year played games across the teams including making his first XI debut, while Callum cemented his place in the first XI, just being pipped at the post in the number of wickets (28) taken by Nicky Baxter (29).

Teenager Matthew Hart has been developing for the fifth XI, the club’s development team, who ply their trade in the Herts and Essex Cricket League.

The 15-year-old is an outstanding all rounder taking 15 wickets in the 11 matches he played and scoring 349 runs.

Rizwan Qayyam collected the fourth team award with 314 runs and five catches, while Amir Farouk, the third winner, ended the season with 53 wickets including five five-wicket hauls.

With 17 league wickets Waheed Azam picked up the second team award, and also showed his all rounder capabilities with a best score of 81 not out against Chingford.

In what will be his last season at the club before moving to Canada, Nicky Baxter received the first team award, finishing the season as top wicket taker (29) and second highest run scorer (407).

Clubman of the Year was shared by three people – social secretary Tracy Sykes, and Russ Davies and Christine Baxter for their work in supporting the fifth XI.

A final award was made to club chairman Simon Radbourne for his behind the scenes work.

Cricketers of the Year were awarded to Lewis Chapman, Max Baulcomb and Callum Sykes.

Awards were made to U15 Marcus Millard and U18 Max Baulcomb.

Awards were made to U18 Tim Chapman and U21 Callum Sykes.

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WONDER WOOL

FIND OUT WHY MORE AND MORE FARMERS ARE FALLING IN LOVE WITH CUDDLY ALPACAS

PAGES 10&11
Sitting pretty: James to cash in on gin craze

Many SMEs do not have sufficient insurance

UNDERINSURANCE within small-to-medium-sized enterprises (SME’s) has been identified as a major client concern.

One insurer, a leading UK brand has claimed that as many as 22% of SME’s were found to be underinsured where the claim amount exceeded £5000.

There was new legislation introduced in 2016 under the “Insurance Act 2015” meaning that insurers could no longer refuse claims if the customer has made a fair presentation of their risk to the best of their knowledge, however it still doesn’t resolve the issue of under-insurance, particularly in the event of a self-service policy.

Many insurers use a calculation called “average”, meaning that if you were found to have underinsured a risk, by say 20%, then they would underpay the claim by the same amount, regardless of the sum insured or claimed.

A number of insurers have now removed their average clauses, however the onus is still on the client to ensure that sums insured accurately reflect the risk. Some insurers have started recalculating your premium in the event of under insurance and charge you the difference prior to any settlement of claim.

All of this is very reactive and causes extra stress and strain at a point when you need it least, at the time of a claim.

Become pro-active, take time to review your insurance risk at least once a year, on or around renewal. Think about any changes to your business in the past twelve months or any planned changes in the next twelve months and engage your broker.

I understand that many small business owners are time precious, however I urge you all not to just roll over your existing terms year on year, engage your broker and avoid disappointment at a later date.

Call 01992 471001 for independent advice and visit www.ashbourneinsurance.co.uk

By CHARLOTTE PAGE
Charlotte.page@reachplc.com @journpage

GIN has significantly increased in popularity in recent years and is bringing a rise to the number of distilleries operating across the country.

Figures published by the Wine and Spirit Trade Association (WSTA) show that a total of 315 distilleries are currently operational in the UK - with 49 opening in the last year alone.

This data, provided by HMRC, also shows that there are now double the number of gin distilleries than there were five years ago.

Among these are One Time Gin, who recently moved their distillery from Bishop’s Stortford to Colliers End in Ware.

Founder James Grant said he was able to open his own distillery thanks to a change in the law. Right, the company designs its own bottles too.

“Before that, a law introduced in 1751 banned any distilleries existing smaller distilleries to exist. A change in law in 2007 that allowed a main still is 200 litres, thus reducing the barrier to entry for people looking to start a spirits business.

“In our distillery, the main still is 200 litres, therefore before the law change we wouldn’t have been able to start up as we did.

“Since the law change lots of smaller distilleries have emerged ultimately, making the category much more interesting, which has fuelled the growth of gin and the craft spirits movement in general.”

Before starting his gin company James worked at a gin distillery in East London where he learnt to make gin and the creative process of forming a recipe from scratch. “I generally learnt a lot about how to create really good quality spirits from a super experienced team,” he continued.

“Before that I had worked as a cocktail bartender in high-end bars all over the world and had a wealth of knowledge about how to mix drinks and how to get the most out of spirits, that really formed my ideas about what people actually want to drink.”

With Christmas fast approaching the popularity of gin shows no signs of stopping, with new products launching in time for the festive season.

James continued: “Christmas is coming and we’re really busy. We are just about to launch our brand new Hertfordshire Dry Gin which is the first product made end to end in the new distillery.

“We already have a range of six products which are sold all over the place so they have been keeping us busy through the transition from Bishop’s Stortford to our new site in Colliers End.

“The new Hertfordshire Dry Gin is very much a classic gin and includes as much as possible ingredients sourced from within our county.”

Branch leader of the Federation of Small Businesses in Hertfordshire, Pam Charman, said the rise in distilleries in and around the area supports Hertfordshire’s food and drink heritage - more so when local ingredients are used.

She said: “It is great to see that the entrepreneurial spirit is alive and well in Hertfordshire with start-up businesses taking advantage of the trend for quality gins.

“It is great to see that our consumers are enjoying prestige, niche products, which have been produced locally from the best quality ingredients, rather than something that is mass produced and bland.

“We hope that it will continue to grow with more people taking the brave and exciting step of starting their own small business, supporting the great food and drink heritage that we have here in Hertfordshire.”
Another year of growth on cards?

INITIAL indications suggest another year of growth is on the cards for the county’s 100 leading businesses ahead of the official release of the Essex Limited 2018 study findings by financial and business advisers Grant Thornton, in partnership with law firm Birketts LLP.

The annual Essex Limited report offers an in-depth financial analysis of the 100 largest companies which are owned and managed within the county to provide a recognised barometer of the overall health of the Essex economy.

The 2018 findings will be presented during a breakfast briefing on Tuesday, November 20, at Stock Brook Country Club in Stock, with all signs pointing to another strong set of results.

Trevor Ling of Grant Thornton’s Chelmsford office, said: “While Essex businesses have not been immune to the challenging political and economic environment, they have a proven resilience, driven by a strong entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic, agile approach to business.

“Deal activity across the county remains extremely buoyant with the high level of quality, owner managed business proving a strong draw for overseas and private equity investment alike.

“The county is also home to two international airports, one of the world’s largest container ports and excellent road and rail links, providing a superb backdrop for business.

“We anticipate this strength will translate to another robust performance for Essex Limited in 2018.”

Adam Jones, partner at Birketts’ Chelmsford office, added: “Last year’s report showed strong growth for the county’s largest businesses and we see no evidence to suggest this upward trend will not continue for 2018.

“In our experience Essex is flying right now no matter the size of the business, spurred on by the county’s diverse range of innovative, progressive mid-market companies who make a vital contribution to the thriving local economy we see today. It will be valuable to see how the county’s businesses have performed over the past 12 months and how well placed they are to move ahead as the UK officially exits the EU.”

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LAW firm Birketts has been shortlisted in three categories for this year’s Central & East Dealmakers Awards. The annual awards, hosted by Insider Media Limited, recognise the high quality professional advisory firms in the region involved in corporate M&A transactions. This year, Birketts has been independently shortlisted for ‘Deal of the Year (above £10m)’, ‘Deal of the Year (under £10m)’ and ‘Corporate Law Firm of the Year’ – all of the categories that are open to law firms.

Rafael Ruiz, Partner and Head of Birketts’ Corporate and Commercial Team in Chelmsford commented: “We are thrilled to be shortlisted once again for these prestigious awards. Having won ‘Corporate Law Firm of the Year’ in both 2014 and 2016, recognition from these awards is a great testament to all the hard work and dedication put in by our teams across the firm’s four offices, and recognises our position as the leading corporate law firm in the Central and Eastern regions of the UK.”

Rafael was the lead partner working on the acquisition of Servest by Paris-based international facilities management provider, Atalian. The acquisition, which included £457 million for Servest and £83 million for its investment in Getronics (an international ICT company), and created a 3 billion Euro turnover company, has placed Birketts in the running to win ‘Deal of the Year (above £10m)’. Rafael continued, “The size and complexity of this transaction, together with challenging timeframes and the number of jurisdictions involved, meant that it was a real team effort. Our work on this deal shows that we have the depth and breadth of resources, skill and experience, to handle the most complex of cross-border M&A transactions.”

Victory for quay restricted by fence in village green row

MISTLEY residents are celebrating after the Court of Appeal handed down its judgment in the Mistley Quay village green case. The decision ensures that an area of waterfront remains classified as a village green and so available for the recreational use of the inhabitants of the area.

The application for registration as a village green was first prompted by the action of the port owners, TW Logistics, in erecting Heras fencing along the edge of the quay in 2008. This led locals to bring a challenge to the attempt by the port owners to exclude them from enjoying and accessing the quay, a custom that had gone back centuries.

The quay has sweeping views over the estuary of the River Stour and is a focal point for village life. The Court of Appeal judgment represents a hard-won victory for campaigners.

Birketts’ Partner Nigel Farthing was instrumental in the application for registration of the quay as a village green in 2015, representing the Applicant Ian Tucker at an eight day public inquiry to determine the issue of registration. However, as soon as it was registered the port owners lodge a High Court challenge seeking the removal of the quay from the register of town and village greens.

The challenge culminated in a trial in the High Court in July 2016, this time with Birketts’ Partner and Solicitor Advocate Richard Eaton successfully defending the case for continued village green registration. The latest development saw the port challenge the High Court judgment in the Court of Appeal. The appeal was brought on several grounds; some highly technical. One of the primary arguments advanced for the port was that the consequence of registration would be to deny the port owners lawful ongoing use of the quayside.

The argument went that that laws protecting village greens would lead the port to commit criminal
Have a plan in place to protect your great idea

Dean McCormack, who has been promoted to Associate at Rickard Luckin, provides advice on how to future-proof your business

Whether you’ve got a big idea that you can’t wait to unleash on the world, or you’re a little further down the line and want to build on early success, the importance of having firm and sensible plans in place really can’t be overstated.

You may have heard the old adage, “failing to plan is planning to fail” - perhaps a few too many times! However, it’s a saying that really does hold true in business. Our Small Business Unit team speaks regularly with people who are clearly enthusiastic about what they do and are fantastic at doing it. Yet often, they have failed to think properly about the best way to future-proof their business, and maximise the profits they are making.

Plans, plans, plans

Would you build a house without plans to work from? Or would you drive to an unknown destination without a planned route? I would suggest that the answer to both of these questions is no, and the same principle should apply to your businesses.

New business owners should always have a plan in place from the outset, with targets for at least the first three years. Growing businesses, meanwhile, should ensure that they are regularly forecasting and tracking the effects of any strategies for expansion.

Often, the very thought of creating a business plan will strike fear into a business owner – visions of essay dossiers with pages and pages of financial information spring to mind! These visions can see the very idea of planning fall to the bottom of a business to-do list, in favour of more exciting tasks.

However, the biggest myth when it comes to business plans is that they have to be long, complicated and filled with jargon. In fact, the best business plans are often just a few pages long, as they only include the most important information.

So what should be included in a standard business plan?

The first step is to focus on income. It is important to set realistic and achievable sales targets for at least the next twelve months. These targets need to take any seasonal fluctuations into account, so that the sales profile can be accurate for the whole year. Often, subsequent sales targets can then be based on those detailed targets set for the first year, perhaps with percentage increases built in to reflect expected upturns in sales.

Once sales targets are in place, the next step is to build in the direct costs you will incur in delivering the expected sales. The nature and level of these costs will differ depending on your industry – for example, a service industry will have very few direct costs, whereas a business that buys and sells goods will have more sales costs.

Such costs may include the purchase of goods and materials, delivery and distribution costs, or direct labour costs for example. Once these are deducted from the forecasted sales, you will be left with the expected gross profit.

The final step in a basic financial business plan is to think about additional overhead costs. Again, these will vary from business to business, but may include rent, telephone and internet, professional fees, administrative salaries, training, or client and staff entertainment. These costs will be deducted from the gross profit to give an expected net, or ‘bottom line’, profit.

So there you have it – a simple, three-step process that will provide a basic and robust plan to help your business as it grows. Of course, the plan could later be expanded to include other useful reports, such as how cash flowing through the business may differ from expected profits made, or the calculation of break even points (the value of sale required to cover the costs a business is committed to). However, the process described above will be enough for most businesses.

What next?

Is there any point in preparing a robust business plan, and then filling it away, never to be seen again? I previously used the analogy of a long car journey, with good reason. No matter how well we’ve planned our journey, if we run into traffic, our first thought is to look for alternative routes that will see us arriving at our destination in good time.

By regularly comparing actual results to those included in the business plan, upcoming challenges can be viewed more clearly and much earlier, allowing for informed decision-making that will reduce the impact of those challenges (or stay ahead of the traffic, as it were)! A business plan may also provide invaluable information for business growth opportunities. Often, such opportunities will require external funding, and the plan can be used to reflect any expected impact. It can then be used to demonstrate to external funders, such as banks or venture capitalists, why financing your business would also be a great opportunity for them.

Having an idea of expected profits also allows for a plethora of other decisions to be made and actions to be taken. For example, it can help calculate a sustainable level of dividends in an owner-managed company, or help identify how much cash you should be putting aside as a provision against tax liabilities.

The best laid plans...

Even the best initial planning does not necessarily lead to success, and so it is important to revisit business plans periodically, to ensure that they are still realistic. The use of accounting software packages to maintain up-to-date information allows for regular planning reviews, meaning that you should always have a good idea of where your business is heading. This can significantly reduce the likelihood of any unwanted surprises.

Finally, a business plan should not be too onerous to prepare, and I am a firm believer that the time invested in preparing one will pay back several times over.
How bosses should treat harassment in the workplace

Abigail Hubert, a solicitor in Birketts’ employment team, says the Equality Act should offer some protection

THERE is no doubt that we have all heard about the #metoo movement that went viral in October 2017, with millions of women coming forward to share their stories of harassment in the workplace. However, the question still remains: how should employers deal with harassment in the workplace?

The Equality Act provides individuals with protection against harassment. Harassment covers creating a degrading, humiliating, intimidating, hostile or offensive environment linked to various characteristics including sex, race and disability. Employers have to take steps to afford this protection in the workplace, and strive to create an environment where employees understand that any form of harassment is unacceptable.

Ideally, businesses should aim to stop incidents of harassment before they occur. Key steps could include:

1. Creating a clear and comprehensive Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy which sets out what constitutes legal harassment and plainly states that harassment is not tolerated. It should be clear that harassment will be treated as a disciplinary offence with the consequences of such behaviour set out in the policy. It is important that this policy is communicated to all staff, fairly enforced and reviewed to ensure that it is kept up-to-date.

2. Employees should be provided with equal opportunities and diversity training which should include examples of harassment and unacceptable behaviour.

3. Reporting any behaviour that an employee believes to be harassment should be encouraged and there should be a simple process for doing so included in the handbook and discussed at the training.

4. Where there is any complaint of harassment a fair process should be followed which includes a prompt investigation.

5. Ensure that support is provided to the complainant and reassure them that allegations are being dealt with.

6. If you have any employment queries please do not hesitate to contact Abigail Hubert on 01245 211320 or via abigail-hubert@birketts.co.uk in the first instance.

Make sure you when it comes

ABIGAIL Hubert is a solicitor in the Employment Team at Birketts. Abigail advises both employers and employees and is currently working on a range of contentious and non-contentious employment issues.

1. What do you do to relax? Yoga.
2. What’s your favourite thing about Essex? St Ives in Cornwall.
3. Most listened to track on your iPod? Sia - Unstoppable.
4. Name one thing on your “bucket list”? Visit Angkor Wat.
5. Name your three fantasy dinner guests: Walt Disney, Katherine Johnson and David Attenborough.
6. Favourite meal? Pizza/Pasta... basically anything Italian.
9. City centre or country escape? City centre.
10. Early bird or night owl? Night owl.
11. Dancing or singing? Dancing.
13. If you hadn’t been a lawyer, you’d have been… Travel blogger (I wish!!)

Changes should increase transparency, says Hannah Dumenil, Payroll Team Leader at Rickard Luckin

APRIL 6, 2019 will herald changes to the way in which many companies produce their payslips, particularly if they employ workers whose pay regularly fluctuates depending on the amount of hours they work, such as retail staff.

An amendment to the Employment Rights Act 1996, which was originally brought to Parliament in February this year as an Itemised Pay Statement Order, means that employers will soon have to itemise payslips for employees who work varied hours.

Employers will be required to show the following information on individual payslips:

1. The number of hours the employee is being paid for, and either:
2. The combined number of hours worked for which payment is made,
3. Itemised figures that show different types of work and/or different rates of pay (such as overtime or night shift work).

Why are payslips changing?

These changes are aimed to increase transparency for both employers and employees.

As we have seen in the press over recent years, issues have been raised in various industries regarding the potential underpayment of staff, whether under the original contract of employment, or according to the National Minimum or Living Wage.

Staff will be able to match what they are being paid with time they have worked Hannah Dumenil

April 6, 2019 will herald changes to the way in which many companies produce their payslips, particularly if they employ workers whose pay regularly fluctuates depending on the amount of hours they work, such as retail staff.

A
Firms will have to go digital in all things VAT

Kevin Thomas, Rickard Luckin’s Tax Director, says get ready for a digital revolution in tax

The digital tax revolution is about to begin, with Making Tax Digital for VAT (MTD) coming into force on April 1, 2019. How confident are you that your business will be MTD-ready?

From next April, businesses with a turnover of more than £85,000 will be required to keep digital VAT records, and submit their VAT return information to HMRC using MTD-compatible software, instead of the portal used presently.

This will be a big upheaval for many businesses, particularly as some still rely on manual bookkeeping records, spreadsheets, or outdated software. However, action needs to be taken now, as time is of the essence. Start by considering how MTD is likely to change your current processes. Is your accounting software MTD-compatible? If not, how will you ensure that it is updated and ready in time?

The majority of VAT-registered businesses already file their quarterly returns online, and HMRC plan to build on this by integrating digital record-keeping with quarterly reporting. This should enable businesses to generate quarterly updates along with their VAT returns, all of which will be sent directly from their chosen software.

However, if your business still submits paper returns, then it is important that your company records are being held digitally, ready for online reporting from April 2019.

For any businesses that are voluntarily VAT-registered, i.e. they operate below the VAT threshold, digital reporting from April 2019 is not mandatory but they can choose to implement the process.

HMRC will be working closely with the software industry to ensure the successful implementation of Making Tax Digital. We would recommend that action is taken to ensure that all accounting records are held in one of the following formats, even if you are not VAT-registered or your business operates below the VAT threshold:

■ Accounting software, such as Sage or a bespoke programme
■ Online cloud accounting software, such as Xero or Sage One
■ Excel spreadsheets

Rickard Luckin has an expert cloud accounting team, who can review your current records and the options available to you if your business is not already fully digital. We can also provide training on most accounting software including Xero, Sage and QuickBooks, as well as assisting with the process of transferring existing data from your manual records. For further information or enquiries, please contact us.

Birketts business conference

Event: East Anglia Family Business Forum 2019
Venue: Newmarket Racecourse
Date: Wednesday, November 14
Time: 9am-3.30pm

Birketts are proud to be sponsoring The East Anglia Family Business Forum.
This conference seeks not only to bring the family business together but also provides a great opportunity to discuss some of the unique challenges facing family firms and to hear insights from other family business people and their advisers who have already dealt with some of these challenges.

Costs: £24.88 - £191.02
For more information and to book: Visit www.birketts.co.uk/events
TOP 100 law firm Birketts has helped secure a £9m investment for Ventrica from Mobeus Equity Partners. Founded in 2010 by Dino Forte, Southend-based Ventrica is an award-winning outsourced contact centre, which provides intelligent, multilingual and omni-channel outsourced customer service to a range of blue-chip clients.

Birketts has advised Ventrica and its owner, Dino Forte, on all legal matters. Adam Jones (Corporate Partner) led the team which included Alex Forwood (Corporate), Ozan Zorba (Corporate), Clare Barlow (Employment), Matthew Grindley (Property), Karl Pocock (Corporate Tax) and John Kahn (Corporate Tax).

Dino Forte, Ventrica CEO, said: “Throughout the process Birketts have demonstrated a clear understanding of our business and their market knowledge. They have been invaluable in helping to secure investment from the right PE house in order to realise our ambitions, with their PE experience giving me confidence in negotiating the terms. With Mobeus as a partner, we are well positioned to continue to support our significant growth whilst also allowing us to better focus on our existing clients.”

Adam Jones said: “Given our long and continuing history with Ventrica we were delighted to spot this opportunity for Dino.”

Glyn Mummery, specialist business advisor and insolvency expert at FRP Advisory LLP in Brentwood, outlines several ways firms in Essex can maintain a competitive edge during the festive season and avoid financial pressure.

**May your days be merry and bright with this advice**

Christmas is always a busy time and consumer spending levels naturally start to spike. In the last three months of 2017, household spend increased by 0.3% on the previous quarter. It’s a time of year when people are spending more, but amid all the festivities it’s still important for management teams to take stock and plan for the year ahead.

**Make most of festive season**

TAPPING into a calendar moment can help to drive sales. Christmas is the prime time to do this, and it’s not just those selling directly to consumers who can benefit. Those operating in other sectors can also use the period as a time to take stock and look to the year ahead.

It’s a time for managers to take stock and look to the year ahead. This involves being able to deliver on promised work whilst knowing you are going to get paid by the prospective or existing customer. Scoping out potential clients’ financial and operating due diligence is essential before onboarding, to ensure your own company doesn’t fall short by late or, worse, no payments.

Professional service and creative firms aren’t the only ones exposed to shortfall. In the 12-month period to August 2018 alone, 28 UK retailers, 2,085 sites and almost 40,000 employees were recorded as being affected by an administration process. More than ever, retailers need to be proactive in order to win customers over and highlight their USPs to stand out amidst floods of competition. And, if retailers have one opportunity to do this, it would be Christmas when consumers are gift buying, stocking up with gifts and dining out more frequently with friends and family.

Shop owners can make the most of this by keeping shelves stocked with best-sellers, increasing opening hours so individuals can shop around working hours, and consider using ecommerce as another selling channel. Bricks and mortar certainly isn’t dead, with roughly 85-90% of shopping taking place in-store, but having a virtual and physical presence gives the buyer the convenience they want, and encourages around the clock spending.

**Take stock and plan first**

BEFORE winding down and enjoying the festive season, it’s important for business owners to use the last few weeks of the year to reflect on the 12 months that have passed. Create a checklist of everything you need to tie up before the calendar year draws to a close and evaluate successes and failures.

For professional services firms, such as architects and law firms, the last few weeks of the year are often quieter, at least for those without a December year end. This is when management teams should be finalising 2019 plans and their business strategy for the year ahead.

Also remember to take account of the December fluctuations you may experience, such as bad weather or staff shortages. For some, like those in the retail, events or hospitality sectors, it’s often a jam-packed few weeks. This uplift in activity needs to be factored into financial planning, too – ensuring cash isn’t tied up and can be used to spend on higher levels of stock, staffing levels or events.

But December can also be a strain. Paying staff through quieter periods and navigating issues like delayed payments can mean money is tight.

If a business isn’t in a good place financially, the Christmas period can be the tipping point. It’s important managers seek advice early on and use tools, such as invoice financing, to help bridge payment gaps.
Get into the Christmas spirit and indulge staff

CHRISTMAS is a time for celebration and indulgence. So, use it as an opportunity to treat your customers and staff alike. Going the extra mile during the festive period can work wonders for goodwill and loyalty for the year ahead.

Use December as a time to drive employee engagement, whether that’s more flexible working hours or festive outings for example. The work-life balance can become more of a struggle for employees during the social season, so doing your bit to make their Christmas duties possible won’t go unnoticed. It’s also the time to reward loyalties. A little extra financial boost at this time of the year doesn’t go amiss by anyone, just make sure it’s factored into cashflow forecasts well in advance. For customers, consider hosting discounted or on-the-house strategic planning sessions for the year ahead. Identifying business priorities, and the services you can offer to help your customer attain these will give you extra ‘brownie points’. Or, better still, it can open doors to new business opportunities.

WE BEAT THE THREE PEAKS

AFTER months of training a team of 11 from FRP Advisory’s Brentwood office took part in a National Three Peaks Challenge last month, in aid of the Maddie Foundation. The challenge involved climbing three of the highest mountains across Scotland, England and Wales within a 24-hour period – and the team managed to complete it with six minutes to spare.

The trekkers raised a total of £11,925 for the charity, which supports medical research into Spastic Paraplegia type 15 – a degenerative neuro disease, for which there is currently no cure or treatment.

Birketts leads where others follow in awards

BIRKETTS has been recognised as Thought Leader in both Employment (UK) and Private Client (UK) at the first Lexology Awards, announced on October 3.

Additionally, Bernadette Baker (Legal Director, Dispute Resolution) and Liz Stevens (Professional Support Lawyer, Employment) have been recognised as Legal Influencers within their practice areas.

Relying on a bespoke automated process to analyse Lexology data, the Lexology Awards reward law firms which produce great legal content for their subscribers. At the end of each quarter, individual authors are recognised as Legal Influencers, and law firms or contributors as Thought Leaders.

Edward Costelloe, Managing Director of Lexology said: “Birketts has beaten off stiff competition to be recognised for their work. Being one of the first winners of the Lexology Awards is a great achievement. They have been carefully designed to recognise those authors and firms who consistently provide our subscribers with useful, insightful legal updates and we are delighted to recognise excellence in legal content today.”

Matthew Rowe, Head of PR and Communications at Birketts, concluded: “We have invested heavily in our content management programme in recent years. The team produce a substantial number of legal articles that are published on our website and posted via our social media accounts each month. Additionally, we offer a large selection of newsletters throughout the year that people can receive for free via www.birketts.co.uk/register.”

Get out there and network

WE all know that getting out and about networking is part and parcel of working life and is a crucial way of building relationships. Sometimes finding the time to do it is the tricky bit.

Making the most of the uplift in local or industry events over Christmas will ensure you’re visible. The London-Essex UK Finance Corridor is a hub of business activity – being at this comes rife competition. It is essential for the firms operating here to stand out from the crowd and ensure they have a strong presence in the circles they operate in. Attend or organise social activities like festive networking, ringing time to complete charity work or donate working hours to a good cause. It’s often the only time of year businesses get to do this, so make the most of it.

Typically, professional services firms often wind down as we near the festive period – in contrast to retail, leisure and hospitality. So, investing this time in taking stock for the year ahead, finalising 2019 plans and getting out and about will put a firm in good stead for the upcoming months.

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‘I fell in love with them, the way their eyes draw you in...’

By HANNAH BROWN

The UK has a long farming history, with the east of the country continuing to be a major part of this traditional industry. However in recent years there has been an increase in the alpaca farming industry that is not native to this county - alpaca farming.

Alpacas originate from the Altiplano (Spanish for high plain) in west-central South America. They are closely related to llamas and according to the British Alpaca Society, it is believed that alpacas were domesticated from the wild species, vicuna and guanaco, over 6,000 years ago. Alpacas were developed primarily as a fleece-producing animal, with their meat as a secondary product.

The Incas are known to have farmed alpacas, however alpaca fur didn’t make it to the UK’s marketplace until Sir Titus Salt introduced it around 1836.

Today there are many different alpaca breeders across the UK who introduced it around 1836.

Alpacas originated in South America, and are becoming a common sight here too.

It’s the way they walk up to you and look at you, their eyes draw you in,” Ms Laver explained.

“Originally I had five females, of which three were pregnant. We have gradually improved our herd over time and now have 80 alpacas,” Ms Laver explained that they shear the alpacas once a year. “They need shearing once a year. What you get for the fleece depends on its quality,” she said. “How fine the fibre is one of the things, but a big part depends on the colour. It’s a lot easier to dye a white fleece than a black one, so you will get more money for a white fleece.”

An alpaca fleece is made of a very dry fibre with minimum lanolin content, which means it does not need to be scoured and can be spun straight into yarn.

Alpaca fibre can be incredibly fine and is used to produce high quality luxury garments in both the woollen process for knitwear and weaving and in the worsted process for fine suits and materials.

Even though alpaca has increased in popularity, on a global scale alpaca fibre is still a niche market.

Emma Taylor, 53, owns the East Anglia Alpaca Mill, in Norfolk, and has been involved in alpaca farming in the East for 10 years.

“I have been looking after alpacas for almost 10 years. I decided to set up the mill after finding out that it was almost impossible to have their beautiful fleeces processed. So I decided to fill that gap in the market with the mill, using bespoke machinery designed specifically for alpaca fibre.”

She added: “We don’t dye the fibre here, we keep their natural colours.

“We are also an eco-friendly mill and we have opted for as many green aspects that we can, including rainwater harvesting, water recycling, green packaging and biodegradable products, are just some of the things we do.”

Ms Taylor, who is also a director of the British Alpaca Society, and a member of the eastern Alpaca Group, has seen how the alpaca industry in the East has grown. “The alpaca industry in the East is huge,” Ms Taylor explained.

“It’s bigger than anyone might imagine, because the farms are often tucked away, as many farms in general are. “Based on the number from when we last counted, I would say there are over 80 registered herds in the East and this doesn’t include all the people who have two or three alpacas as pets.”

Although the alpaca fleeces are the expected way to make money from the animal, there are other aspects of the alpaca industry that are not solely focused on their fleeces.

Spending time in the company of alpacas is also a thriving industry.

“They need shearing once a year. What you get for the fleece depends on its quality,” she said. “How fine the fibre is one of the things, but a big part depends on the colour. It’s a lot easier to dye a white fleece than a black one, so you will get more money for a white fleece.”

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Spending time in the company of alpacas is also a thriving industry.
Alpacas are highly sociable animals and are extremely intelligent, highly inquisitive and interact well with humans.

Because of this they can be trained to take part in walks, and are popular animals to visit on open farms.

Ms Laver explained that although they don’t currently allow visitors to the farm, she is hoping to open up the gates in the new year.

“We do allow people to visit farm when we are there, but in the new year we planning to set up alpaca experience days,” she said.

“At them people would get to learn everything alpaca and get hands on with them. “We haven’t been able to do it this year, because we moved the females to the other plot of land, so we wanted to get them settled.”

At the farm they also sell bags of alpaca manure that people can use to put on plants and vegetables. Unlike horse manure, alpaca manure can be put straight onto the plants.

Ms Laver’s plans for the future of the farm are to continue to improve the quality of their alpacas and to one day have a high quality male stud carrying their farm’s name.

“At stud services people will either come to us or we will take the stud to them and leave them with the female until they are pregnant,” she said. “I would really like to have a high quality stud with the Churchfield name.

“Studs take the name of the farm they were born at, so one of the big things I would like in the future is to have an award-winning stud with the Churchfield name.

“But I think that’s something every alpaca farm wants.”

With alpacas becoming more popular among the general public, the industry appears set to continue to grow, helped by the dedicated and hard working alpaca farmers who love this intriguing animal.
Small firms offer hope ten years after banking crisis

By ALASDAIR HOOPER

It has been a decade since the 2008 financial crisis had a huge impact on business, the economy and lives.

While the woes of big business and large corporations hogged much of the headlines, on a more personal level people found themselves struggling.

Many of those hardest hit ran their own businesses or were self-employed and all of a sudden they faced dark times.

But ten years on how are small businesses faring?

“They were always at the sharp end, small business,” explained Michael Mealing, the East of England policy lead of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB).

“You could describe them as bottom of the food chain but the majority of businesses actually are small businesses.

“It’s small and medium size enterprises that employ 60 per cent of the private sector workforce.

“Obviously the big businesses tend to get the headlines but most of them have long supply chains.

“So in many ways small businesses are reflecting where the economy is and where it is going.”

A decade on from the financial crisis, and baring in mind that the status of small business often reflects the health of the economy, Mr Mealing explained that the situation is actually promising.

“The small business landscape is bigger now,” he said.

“Half of the new jobs that have been created in the last ten years have been generated by self-employment and things like that.

“We have over five million entities termed businesses - there is an argument as to whether a sole trader or self-employed employees is actually a business, they are an individual in business.

“You define business as anyone in business as opposed to an entity that employs people.

“So the small business sector has grown and that has contributed significantly to the amazingly high levels of employment that we have continued to enjoy and are still enjoying in a post-recession era.”

He added: “Small businesses are fragile but in the UK we are close to having half a million new ones start every year. Sadly a good proportion of those do not last but frequently people go round again and again.

“In the UK it is easier to set up a new business than it is in mainland Europe and certainly there’s a choice of how to do it.

“The majority are sole traders but you can have your own little limited company, you can have a partnership or a limited liability partnership.

“So the UK certainly has a fairly positive landscape in terms of setting up a new business.

“The challenges aren’t legal - the challenges are loneliness, technical updating, access to finance and things like that.

“Personally I have been self-employed for a couple of decades now but I used to run a business support organisation that was funded to help people start their businesses. I was full of admiration for my clients in the sense that going it alone was a very brave thing to do. Being a start-up business is a lonely and challenging thing but it has many benefits if you do survive the first year.”

“It is no secret that small businesses are incredibly diverse given the wide range and number around in the country.

“But while some factors have helped them continue over the last decade the loss of confidence, particularly from banks, has left many people wanting to launch a start-up scrambling for finance. “Low interest rates to an extent were very helpful as you had an environment where money was cheap but you also had a problem with business finance,” said Mr Mealing.

“The big banks really don’t want to know about loans to small business because small loans are too expensive to service. I have always marvelled at the fact that it is easier to borrow half a million pounds than it is £50,000. The bank will want to put in place a structure to monitor performance and for a small loan it just isn’t worth it.

“Sources of finance have been difficult and a lot of my colleagues in the FSB would have used their own personal finance.” He added: “It’s not a bad time to launch a start-up because times of change always present opportunities. The big problems about Brexit - whatever side of the argument one takes - is in the short term there will be some disruption and additional difficulty with international trade.

“Three quarters of small businesses are not overly involved in international trade. But the home market may respond to changes that make it more difficult for foreign competitors to operate in the UK.

“There will be opportunity but for people who are involved internationally, or people here in the East of England, employing seasonal labour in something that will probably have additional bureaucratic procedures that add up to an administrative burden to find people to pick carrots in East Anglia or something similar.”

The sector has grown and added significantly to amazingly high levels of employment

Business expert Michael Mealing

The woes of big business and large corporations hogged much of the headlines around the time of the crisis, but smaller firms were affected too.

Leon Neal/Getty Images
HAVING the courage to take the plunge and start your own business can be a terrifying prospect, especially in today’s financial climate.

But when even major chains are struggling to stay afloat, how can smaller independent businesses keep their heads above water? This year has already seen the closure of several major chain stores including BHS, Prezzo, Toys R Us and House of Fraser.

And independent business owners in Chelmsford have now had their say on the matter, claiming extra council support and lower rates would all help them carry on trading for the foreseeable future.

For Jim Crozier, co-owner of Counter Culture Games on Baddow Road, one of the main issues is the high business rates which has become a problem for his first year of trading.

When Jim was out of work and struggling with depression, he sought inspiration from a board game shop and decided to take the plunge and start up his very first business.

He said: “I remember going to a games shop and just thinking I would love something like this in my hometown so I thought I would give it a go.

“I don’t have any experience with financial planning so we did have to get help from family, friends and people that have experience in this. It is growing but it is hard work.

“One of the main issues for us is the business rates - they are very expensive, which is to be expected when you’re so close to London. There is business relief but we have got quite a large site, which we got for quite a reasonable rent, but because it is a large site, we don’t qualify for business relief even though I’m not taking home a massive amount.

“I think the other thing that would really help us is more support from the council and collaborations with other independent businesses. On our road it’s quite good because people who come in to our shop will often go to the independent restaurants like Moto Pizza nearby as we can’t serve food.”

“From what I understand, I think the management wasn’t that great but a lot of people are shopping online now so that’s why we try to offer something different. It’s not a good indication thought that major chains are struggling.”

Intense Records is a drum and bass, Dubstep, CD and vinyl record shop located on Viaduct Road.

Its founder, Jon Smith, also criticised the rates in the city, claiming the rent for shops on the High Street is too expensive for him.

He said: “One of the biggest problems for me is the High Street rents. We are quite tucked away here and nobody knows we are here and even if they do, nobody wants to walk to our shop, they’d rather just go to the High Street.

“We did a pop-up shop and we had so many people come out and a lot were saying they didn’t know we were here - but I’ve been here 15 years.

“I can’t afford the High Street rent, it’s so expensive.

“We’re not even allowed to advertise on the High Street. I can’t afford to be in our city.

“The road we’re on is always full of taxis because it’s right next to the station so a lot of our customers cannot park.

“It does kind of worry me that even big chains can’t make it work but I guess it’s just down to not enough people using high streets. I have two younger members of staff here and I think they’d rather do their shopping online.

“Do think with these big chains that they’re not adapting to what is going on at the moment.”
Great chance to network is now just weeks away

Excitement is building among ambitious firms across the region as the eagerly awaited Ambition 2018 event is now just a matter of weeks away.

Offering a chance to learn from experts in the field, the event is a one-day sales and marketing conference that will be held on Wednesday, November 14 at the Spotlight in Hoddesdon.

The organisers said: “This one-day sales and marketing conference is a community event, sponsored and organised by local businesses for local businesses. It’s a fantastic opportunity to network with fellow professionals from Broxbourne and the surrounding areas."

“What’s more, there’s a packed agenda with inspiring talks from several high-quality speakers.”

SWCO Financial Planning, which is based in Ware, is one of the firms that are sponsoring the event.

Dave Brown, a senior paraplanner at the firm, said SWCO is committed to “providing totally independent and holistic financial advice” and “finding the right combination of investments, products and tax wrappers that balance cost, risk and flexibility to help our clients meet their financial and lifestyle goals”.

He added: “Our aim is to provide a comprehensive wealth management service on a very personal basis, overseeing clients’ savings and pension portfolios with a clear and tightly managed investment philosophy and process. We meet with our all our clients at least annually to review their circumstances to ensure they are still on target.”

Dave added: “Between us we have a wealth of experience with over 50 years advising clients, which allows us to offer a comprehensive range of services to our clients."

“A core focus of SWCO is based on delivering a high level of customer service and we work closely with DSCO Chartered Accountants to deliver an all-round financial and account planning service to all of our clients.”

To book tickets for the event, which will take place from 9.30am to 4.30pm, visit www.ambition.events. Tickets are available until Monday, November 12.

FINANCIAL EXPERTS AT SWCO ARE AMONG THE EVENT SPONSORS

How SWCO can help improve your finances

- Phase 1 - About You
  We meet together to discuss your personal circumstances and your current financial situation. We’ll explain how all of this information builds a profile which will help us to formulate your financial plan.
- Phase 2 - Your Goals & Ambitions
  Next we discuss your objectives, describe our services and explain the payment options. If you do decide to proceed, we will follow a six-stage process in providing Financial Planning and Asset Management advice to you as summarised below.
- Phase 3 - Analysis
  We’ll discuss with you our analysis of your current financial position, present our recommendations and actions required for you to potentially achieve your goals.
- Phase 4 - How to get there
  In this phase we present your Personal Financial Plan which maps out the journey to your destination. We discuss how your existing finances can be utilised towards the achievement of your financial goals.
- Phase 5 - Implementation
  Every course of action we have recommended and agreed with you is now put into motion.
- Phase 6 - Review the Plan & Progress Updates
  We agree with you periodic (at least annually) review dates to enable you to clearly see progress towards reaching your financial goals, and for us to make any course adjustments that may be required.
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834 – 2,320 sq ft office suites in town centre. Close to local amenities and ample parking.

31 Rayharn Road, Bishop’s Stortford

**To Let**

2,605 sq ft trade counter unit with office space. Popular estate close to M1 I/A120.

Kenyon House, Bishop’s Stortford

**To Let**

Ground and second floor office suites from 80 sq ft (second floor can be let as a whole).

143 High Street, Walton Cross

**To Let**

3,668 sq ft ground floor retail unit in High Street location. Suitable for a range of A1 to A5 uses STPP.

The Greens Building, Stansted

**To Let**

1,934 sq ft offices in High Street location. Character property.

5 Myson Way, Bishop’s Stortford

**To Let**

11,483 sq ft modern industrial unit. Good location for M11, A120 and Stansted Airport.

Unit ES Harlow Business Centre

**To Let**

240 sq ft open workspace in excellent location. Secure site with parking.

3 Parc Studios, Bishop’s Stortford

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1st Floor, 72 South Street, Bishop’s Stortford

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**To Let**

597 sq ft first floor office suites. Brand new, self-contained with parking.

Yard at High Pastures, Harfield Heath

**To Let**

2,145 sq ft secure gated yard with CCTV in good location.

View all properties at www.cokegearing.co.uk
Is your business ready for Brexit? Rina Sond, Partner and Head of Company and Commercial Law at Longmores Solicitors, asks business leaders to prepare to minimise the impact on their firms.

■ New or increased trade tariffs which may be payable on both imports and exports. These could apply to raw materials, components or finished products, as well as increased logistics costs.
■ Continued fluctuations in currency – this may have an impact on the cost of goods or services and therefore increase competition pressures.
■ Freedom of movement for workers – this could make it more difficult or even prevent EU workers from working in the UK, or vice versa. This could be tricky for those jobs where there is a skills shortage.
■ Changes in law and regulations – EU regulations won’t apply directly to the UK any more, so the UK may make legislative changes that depart from existing EU-derived law. Businesses should be reviewing their existing contracts, to ensure they provide sufficient flexibility to amend the terms, should any Brexit changes have a negative impact on certain business arrangements.
   In particular, businesses should ask themselves which party to a contract will bear any additional obligations and costs which may arise as a result of Brexit. How can firms limit their liability and how easily can they terminate a contract if Brexit changes will negatively affect it? Would a force majeure clause work if a firm wished to end a contract?
   Commercial lawyers across the UK are beginning to draft ‘Brexit clauses’ into contracts in order to limit any risks.
   ■ Should you require any help with any of these matters, contact Rina on 01992 300333 or rks@longmores-solicitors.co.uk

Firms need to prepare themselves for Brexit

The topic of Brexit is constantly in the news and whilst many may have lost track of the details, businesses do need to consider the impact that any final agreement with the EU will have on their business and its bottom line.

Possible issues could include:

- New or increased trade tariffs which may be payable on both imports and exports. These could apply to raw materials, components or finished products, as well as increased logistics costs.
- Continued fluctuations in currency – this may have an impact on the cost of goods or services and therefore increase competition pressures.
- Freedom of movement for workers – this could make it more difficult or even prevent EU workers from working in the UK, or vice versa. This could be tricky for those jobs where there is a skills shortage.
- Changes in law and regulations – EU regulations won’t apply directly to the UK any more, so the UK may make legislative changes that depart from existing EU-derived law. Businesses should be reviewing their existing contracts, to ensure they provide sufficient flexibility to amend the terms, should any Brexit changes have a negative impact on certain business arrangements.
   In particular, businesses should ask themselves which party to a contract will bear any additional obligations and costs which may arise as a result of Brexit. How can firms limit their liability and how easily can they terminate a contract if Brexit changes will negatively affect it? Would a force majeure clause work if a firm wished to end a contract?
   Commercial lawyers across the UK are beginning to draft ‘Brexit clauses’ into contracts in order to limit any risks.
   ■ Should you require any help with any of these matters, contact Rina on 01992 300333 or rks@longmores-solicitors.co.uk

Have you tried our business networking?

Our Go Meet networking breakfasts are held monthly at Threemal Park in Stansted, The Officers’ Mess in Duxford, and CB1 Business Centre in Cambridge. The meetings run from 8am until 10am, with mingling and networking for the first and last half hour, with structured introductions and a short presentation from the sponsor in between. This is a great opportunity to meet some of the tenants based within our centres.

There’s a lot of business being done in these meetings, but you will still find them relaxed and enjoyable. Come along and try for yourself, we hope to see you there! For more information and to book your ticket:

To Book Your Place Visit: mantlebusinesscentres.co.uk/go-meet
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