

# Living

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
& BERKSHIRE

MARCH 2022 • HOMES & INTERIORS • PEOPLE & PLACES • FASHION & BEAUTY • FOOD & DRINK • COMPLIMENTARY

## EVERYDAY ETHEREAL

Gilets, knitwear, and collars  
among wardrobe essentials

## INTERIOR INSPO

Top trends to create an  
earthy look this season

## *Inside* SPRING A-Z

The ultimate guide to  
fashion and well-being

## Friendly feed

Can leftover coffee  
help feed your plants?

## FANTASTIC FORTIES

Embrace the decade  
of confidence like the  
Duchess of Cambridge

## PUMPKIN PASTA

Get stuck into Natural  
Flava's recipe for Rasta  
pumpkin pasta

## HOME SCENTS

How to make the  
most of aromas to  
complete your home

*Plus*

STYLE &  
WELLNESS  
ARTS &  
CULTURE  
MOTORING  
AND MORE





## THE DATEJUST

The ultimate Rolex classic, the Datejust was the first self-winding waterproof chronometer wristwatch to display the date in a window, and continues to be the quintessential watch, reflecting the essence of timeless style.

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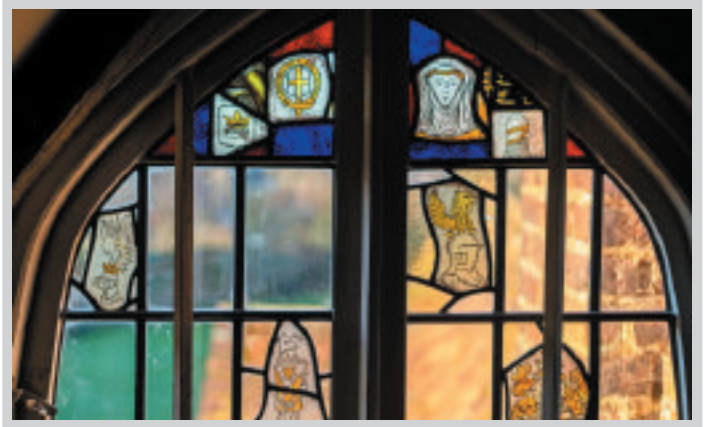


OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST 36

# LUXURY PROPERTY

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Showcasing the finest homes on the market from around the region



## Wendover | Buckinghamshire

Lime Tree House is a stunning Grade II Listed, Georgian fronted house, which is being sold with planning consent in place to completely renovate and modernise this important dwelling.

The 18th Century Georgian facade was added on to an earlier house, as was often the way when homeowners wanted to gentrify their properties. The striking symmetrical facade has Venetian windows and a heavy six panelled door, making this arguably the prettiest house in Wendover.

Guide £1,750,000 | [countryhousedepartment.com](https://countryhousedepartment.com)



## Thame | Oxfordshire

An attractive extended Victorian home set in beautiful and private gardens in Postcombe, a popular south Oxfordshire village benefitting from excellent links into London, Oxford and the midlands.

£1,000,000 | [knightfrank.com](https://knightfrank.com)

## EDITORS PICK



### Stichens Green | Berkshire

Idyllically located in a most desirable rural location, surrounded by open countryside in a most impressive setting with panoramic far-reaching views, this stunning residence, built in 2010, extends to approximately 6,027 sq ft in all. It is an 'Arts & Crafts' inspired design by award-winning architect Richard Cutler, providing a cathedral-like ambience in a context of combined traditional and modern high quality materials, resulting in a very special home, which yields an inspired and tasteful dwelling with great light and space

£3,500,000 | [warmingham.com](https://www.warmingham.com)



### Long Crendon | Buckinghamshire

An attractive wisteria clad 17th century Grade II listed cottage set in the middle of Long Crendon, a charming village close to Thame and Oxford.

£950,000 | [knightfrank.com](https://www.knightfrank.com)



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## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AND BERKSHIRE LIVING

## WELCOME

MARCH 2022

**I**t's International Women's Day on March 8, so we wanted this issue to pay homage to some of the amazing women we have across Buckinghamshire and Berkshire. When I was younger, I absolutely loved the police show Juliet Bravo. The show gave me my first female role model; Inspector Jean Darbley. It was during the early eighties and the show focused on Inspector Darbley's team feeling uneasy about having a female boss. I loved the show so much I called all my dolls Juliet! My mum let me stay up late.

My mum was and still is a strong role model for me too. There's really nothing that she can't do, and I am always in awe. And now as a mum myself, I am proud to say that I am raising a strong, independent and feisty daughter. She likes to remind me that she's half of me, and often tells me that I can't complain when she has all the answers or is sassy!

So, what do we have in this issue I hear you ask? We have some fantastic interior features from women from across the counties. Whether you are



'I had the fun job of checking out the latest gadgets, tips and tricks that can help get a good night's sleep'

looking for an interior designer or keen to find a new home fragrance, we have it covered. March is also home to World Sleep Day on Friday, March 18.

As a mum to two autistic children with ADHD, sleep has always been a struggle in our house. I had the fun job of checking out the latest gadgets, tips and tricks that can help get a good night's sleep. I discovered some amazing small businesses doing some brilliant things, which can help really help when trying to get some shut eye.

Don't forget that if you have a business and live or work in Buckinghamshire or Berkshire then do get in touch. At *Living* we always love to hear from you, so drop me an email or give us a follow on Instagram. So here is to all the inspirational women across Buckinghamshire and Berkshire – this issue is for you. That's you by the way – remember you are amazing.

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# INSPIRING INTERIORS

**Hester Grainger** chatted to Melanie Tomlinson, director at Melanie Tomlinson design. Melanie shares moving from Australia to England and being award-nominated

## Where did it all begin – talk us through your story

Starting my design career in 1997, I focused my studies on architectural drafting and technology before refining my academia with interior design at the International School of Colour and Design Sydney.

I spent my formative years working for names like Reel Grobman in Silicon Valley, California, Response Design Group, Paul Kelly & Paynter Dixon in Australia. Assisting internationally renowned designer Thomas Hamel for one year was a real highlight for me. Reflecting on this time, this was where I developed my desire to create warm, sophisticated spaces that my clients are delighted to come home to every day. It was also the launch pad for Design Bubble, a Sydney based

practice I dearly loved building for the next eight years.

## When did you launch your business?

Melanie Tomlinson Design was formed in 2017 following a move to the UK from Sydney, Australia with my young family. Having always loved the UK and been lucky enough to have spent time here previously, it had always appealed as an opportunity for a new adventure. That and the exposure you get here compared to any other country to the variety of design and architecture. You can see it all from beautiful heritage buildings to stunning modern design – often in the same town!

Wrapping up my previous design studio in Sydney, located close to where we were living in the city, and making a move seemed



the perfect time to launch independently as Melanie Tomlinson Design and I haven't looked back.

## Where does your passion for interiors come from?

From an early age, while at high school, I



**‘The family didn't want to part with the house as the location and aspect were perfect’**



always moved furniture around, restyling rooms and photographing them to capture the “before” and “after”.

While attending a ten-year school reunion a few years ago, my school friends said it was inevitable and “they knew I would become an interior designer”.

Still to this day, I can vividly remember the interior layouts, colours, and styles of friends and family homes. It is like I captured an image in my mind and can recall right down to wall colours and accessories.

#### **What’s been your favourite project to date?**

Turrumurra House was originally the owner’s family home; she grew up there with her sisters and had strong connections and memories. The family didn’t want to part with the house as the location and aspect were perfect; however, it needed to become “their” home, resulting in a complete renovation. They had a strong love for designers Thomas Hamel and Victoria Hagan. Both originally American designers, it was agreed that their influence would be carried throughout the ➔





home to give it a “new traditional” feel – one that suited their growing family and provided a relaxed yet formal setting.

There was no rush with this project; it would be a “forever home” and true labour of love, slowly developing each unique space. The family were involved every step of the way, even visiting sandstone quarries to choose stone for the fireplace’s mantle. The result is a home that feels like a home, with places found for all their loved objects and artworks collected over the years.

I was extremely excited when the “garden kitchen” was nominated for best kitchen in the Belle Coco Republic Interior Design Awards 2015, inspired by French Farmhouses; our clients were quite organic, growing their fruit and vegetables, it was the perfect “second kitchen” for cleaning and preparing the produce.

#### What are you working on at the moment?

We are lucky enough to be working on a full-scale renovation of a penthouse in an art deco building in Berkshire, having been appointed as sole interior architectural designers alongside exterior landscaping design of the stunning wrap-around terrace.

Alongside other residential projects, we are also undertaking a commercial project, which I enjoyed during my time in Australia. Creating immersive interiors in innovative spaces brings a unique perspective to design as you must consider customer experience alongside form and function.

### ‘We are lucky enough to be working on a full-scale renovation of a penthouse in an art deco building’



#### What are your top tips when designing rooms in your house?

It must start with spatial planning – how you use and live in the current space and what you are looking to achieve that is different. Seek out plenty of natural light, which rooms

benefit the most and at what times of the day. Form and function must be considered with furniture layout to maximise space. And finally, the integration of unique pieces you already own into a design scheme, so the personality is reflected in those who live there.

#### What inspires you?

Variation in architecture and design is so inspiring, and I believe it has afforded me the luxury of never really having a “signature” style, something that can happen in the design world. I adore much of the American design influence alongside the Australian coastal Hamptons vibe. I have also been lucky enough to travel in Europe and take much influence from European design.

#### What is the favourite room in your house and why?

As a business owner and mum of two very sporty and energetic boys it must be the laundry room! Functionality in a home should never be overlooked. The laundry room has to be the ultimate multi-purpose room in a home! I had real fun designing it as they can often be the smallest rooms that demand the most.

Being clever with space and storage meant I got to plan well and source great products for practical modern living solutions.

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# SCENT YOUR HOME

JOGB Living's founder Jo Glanville Blackburn shares her thoughts on how much aromas matter in our lives and how she learned to live well

**W**ellness expert, author, and founder of JOGB Living, Buckinghamshire-born Jo Glanville-Blackburn, reveals to Hester Grainger why the scents of nature in the home make a better way of living and how her diagnosis of multiple sclerosis sent her on a journey of self-healing. Inspired by over 25 years of experience as a holistic lifestyle author and wellness expert, Jo GB moved home in the midst of 2020, to a 17th century Grade II listed house with far reaching views and a modern, rustic charm.

With her husband and partner Jim, Rufus their much-loved, rescued lurcher, and the help of their three grown children Olivia, Will and Phoebe, they are bringing the home back

to life, creating a beloved home full of light, love and creativity. Living well to Jo means cocooning your senses with natural aromas, texture, and aesthetics, creating a soulful environment of wellness and comfort, for a happier home. Following her holistic home philosophy, Jo regularly practises meditation, Reiki, and sound therapy, to help improve daily health and wellbeing. Having been born in Chalfont St Giles, Jo is a huge fan of Cliveden and loves visiting Newbury when she can, to browse the antiques fairs.

## Why does scent matter?

Having written many books and articles about wellbeing throughout my career, I know that when we are increasingly stressed and stretched in our daily lives, where better to feel more relaxed, and chilled, or

joyful and reinvigorated, than at home. As a working mother, pretty much consumed with guilt whenever I wasn't there, I made a ritual of wearing natural scents in the home to comfort my children when they were younger.

From tiny, I would bathe them in lavender and chamomile oil; spritz the rooms with geranium, orange and frankincense; dab cut knees with lavender (the dog too); to me, nature's botanicals are like first aid therapy in a bottle. Your home is all about your senses: especially your sense of smell. Scientifically it's proven that the fastest way to transform your mood in an instant is with aroma.

As a result our home always smells warm, natural, and reassuring. More than ever, in these chaotic times, I truly believe we need to surround and immerse ourselves



**‘I won’t deny there was often the tip of ‘lighting a candle’, but I do find candlelight so incredibly relaxing and it is often used in meditation’**



in a cocoon of contentment, happiness, and peace, where we can reconnect with our emotions.

**What made you decide to create your own home aroma collection?**

My career has always inspired giving self-care and positive lifestyle tips and advice to make people live better, healthier, and stronger. I won’t deny there was often the tip of “lighting a candle”, but I do find candlelight so incredibly relaxing and it is often used in meditation.

Hence it was a bit of a shock to be diagnosed in 2012 with MS (multiple sclerosis). I realise now that in my own journey I’d neglected myself. My focus then turned to self-healing as I genuinely believe that the body is so clever that if I could calm my senses and lower my stress, I could improve my health long term.

In my quest, I spoke with countless experts and therapists, from my neurologist, to acupuncturists, naturopaths, nutritionists, aromatherapists, and a shaman. One of the most overwhelming pieces of advice I was given was to “stop burning paraffin candles in my home”. I burned masses of ➔



**‘So, I decided to create my own utterly pure, ethical, cleaner burning, botanical candles made here in the UK’**

them. Then, the more I researched paraffin wax (a petrochemical), I learned how cheap, potentially toxic, and easy it is to manufacture, often coming from abroad, bought in bulk, and filled with a basic, synthetic smell. So, I decided to create my own utterly pure, ethical, cleaner burning, botanical candles made here in the UK.

I created three exclusive aromatherapy oil blends JOGB MOJO, GOJO and SLOJO to use, with the help of the wonderful natural artisan perfumer, Richard Howard. That’s why their pure mood-enhancing aromas matter so much to me. Being obsessed by candlelight, the luxurious oils feature in a luxurious 10 per cent of each JOGB Candle and are also available as pure oil blends in JOGB Mood Drops. Using only pure therapeutic grade essential oil blends, zero synthetics, ethically and sustainably sourced soy and rapeseed botanical wax to enhance your mood, our aromas give a wonderful throw around a room.

Now more than ever, people are looking for comfort, contentment – for me that’s a scented home. The wonderful testimonies we have received from devoted customers make us feel very proud of our emerging brand. We love to connect directly and have recently started to share our Interior styling and art creations at Random Thatch too, linking our aromas and comfort accessories together. In the process our genuine passion for nature and pure botanical scents has evolved to help others feel good: that’s an amazing feeling.

**I absolutely love the MOJO candle, it smells divine. What makes your products different?**

I could never just do an average range: it just wouldn’t feel right. We had the opportunity to take the easy, cheaper route, but we know how good our products can make anyone feel because we know exactly what is in them (and what isn’t) and true scent matters. Designed to appeal to your senses and make you feel “happy at home”, JOGB aromas are unique and exclusive to us, and genuinely will enhance your mood.

From our pure Mood Drops that the same in our soy and rapeseed ethical candles, Sensual MOJO, Uplifting GOJO, Relaxing SLOJO, these pure essential oil blends are all lovingly enhanced with positive Reiki energy to help boost a true sense of wellbeing. Plus pure plant essential oils have the ability to trigger your brain and your senses by making you feel more comfortable and secure.



**How can we get the most from your candles?**

You can inhale the feelgood aromas in both our luxury candles (we recycle and repurpose glass so you can send back the container for a gift refund off your next purchase); or diffuse the oils in your home space.

Just add one or two drops on a ceramic or electronic diffuser, in a spray bottle containing rosewater, on the edge of a blanket, or rub between the palms of your hands or on a tissue and inhale. I recommend doing a mini daily ritual of deep breathing with a natural scent in your home, and for yourself, to help match the way you want to feel.



## What will your legacy be?

We all have different goals, challenges, and priorities in life. Whether you wish to inspire, to support or to care for someone, a Will can help you focus on what matters to you.

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# HOME FRONT

SHOPPING • NEWS • DESIGN • TRENDS

## LET THE SUN FLOOD IN

Creating a relaxing, cooling look, Songbirds in Spring blinds feature greens, blues and touches of brown to create an earthy look. As a light-filtering fabric, this roller is further enhanced by the sun, which creates a stunning feature in your window.

[247blinds.co.uk](http://247blinds.co.uk)



# 3

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2 Pixie butter dish, £19  
3 Pixie citrus juicer jug, £24.90  
[beaumonde.co.uk](http://beaumonde.co.uk)



## PERFECT *pink*

We are also so about pastels this season, which is why this wallpaper is a definite favourite.

£120 a roll from  
[limelace.co.uk](http://limelace.co.uk)

## SHOPPING • NEWS • DESIGN • TRENDS



## CHILL

Throw open the bi-fold doors, get under a blanket and read the day away in this stunning Tarma armchair (£1,695).

[oka.com](http://oka.com)



Spring floral cushion, £37.99, [perkinsandmorley.com](http://perkinsandmorley.com)

### 3 flowery cushions we adore



Sixties daisies cushion by Nichollette Yardley Moore, £160, [charltonisland.com](http://charltonisland.com)



Bohemian floral waterproof scatter cushion, £74, [bridgman.co.uk](http://bridgman.co.uk)



## BUZZING

Perfect for the Easter table, this gorgeous gold bee napkin ring from Sass and Belle is adorable.

[sassandbelle.co.uk](http://sassandbelle.co.uk)

## MORE FLOWERS

Yes! We are obsessed! This is the Spring Pudding fresh blossom bunch from Happy Blossoms.





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# COLOUR OF THE MONTH

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[coatpaints.com](https://coatpaints.com)



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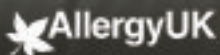
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**Quince** – Neptune's refreshing new paint colour. Inspired by the fruit itself, it is an uplifting citrus shade, which blends fresh green hues and a warming red undertone.

**Wardley dining chairs in a new Warm Black finish** - Contrasting with the light of spring, Neptune's Windsor-inspired Wardley chair now comes in a black finish with a hint of warmth to it.



**Quince botanical illustrations** - To complement their new SS22 shade, the new additions to Neptune's wall art collection feature the fruit itself.



**Aldwych wardrobe** – This wardrobe joins Neptune's existing family of Aldwych bedroom pieces - a clean-lined and understated collection.

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# DESIGNED FOR YOU

Hester Grainger meets up with Julie Clifford of Alexander James Interior Design to learn the ins and outs of hiring a designer to bring your dreams to life

**T**he Alexander James Group of companies is an award-winning design practice providing complete interior and architectural design services to property developers, private clients and hotel groups around the world. Hester Grainger chats to Julie Clifford, head of strategic partnerships at Alexander James Interior Design who are based in Twyford, Berkshire. Julie shares why you should hire an interior designer and her top tips when designing a glamorous room.

Why hire an interior designer? If it isn't something you've thought about before, hiring an interior designer is definitely worth considering. Especially if you've invested a lot of money into your property and want to showcase it in the best possible light. It's no secret that a lot of people don't know where to start, or perhaps they do but are unsure of how things piece together. Hiring a designer will help bring your vision to life, with it bringing less stress and a number of benefits.



### The Right Knowledge

It almost goes without saying that the mere fact that interior designers are trained professionally should already tick the right box. From the moment you provide a brief, the designer will start mentally mapping out ideas and themes to help you achieve the look you are going for. Interior design is their field of expertise, so you don't have to worry. They know the dos and don'ts, and this advice is invaluable, because the designer can help to make suggestions for things that you would most likely not have considered.

### The Right Budget

There is often a misconception that using an interior designer is very expensive. It's important to understand that a good interior designer will work within the budget provided, however small or large, to achieve the best result.

Using the designer will in turn help you save money, by avoiding costly mistakes that an amateur might make, and by having access



to such a vast variety of suppliers to find the most cost-effective options.

### The Right Colour Combinations

Quite often, if you are decorating your own home, the process of choosing colours can be both difficult and expensive. Home owners are often perplexed with what colours will work together, and buying the wrong paint can be an expensive mistake.

If you work with an interior designer, you'll be surprised how they can match a variety of colours and tones to achieve different moods, and they'll often pair colours together which you would never have expected to work.

### The Right Furniture

An important part of the home design process is spatial planning; positioning of furniture is key to utilising the space that you have. An empty space can feel daunting initially, and key pieces will frame the space, creating zones within the room. This is especially effective in the large open plan ➡





kitchen/living rooms, where the room is divided subtly. The designer can also assess the scale of the furniture to make sure that the proportion is right, as often the wrong size furniture can be lost.

### The Right Accessories

Aside from choosing the right furniture, the interior designer will also help by sourcing the right accessories to work perfectly with your scheme. Don't forget, they've been doing it for years and know what works with your style.

### The Right Suppliers

Interior designers have access to an extensive library of suppliers. With years of experience working and building relationships with these suppliers, the designer will know exactly which are reliable and provide the quality that you expect.

### The Right Style at the Right Time

Designers live and breathe interior design, and are always in touch with the newest trends, colours and styles. This means that they'll always incorporate the newest inspirations into your home.

There are so many advantages to hiring an interior designer to help you bring your home to life, and what you pay will be worth it when you see the end result.

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## 'There are so many advantages to hiring an interior designer to help you bring your home to life'

If you are looking to create a glamorous room yourself here are some top tips to help you achieve that:

### 1. It's all in the lighting

When it comes to creating a flawless make up look, lighting is key. Where possible, locate your dressing table in front of a natural light source and where this isn't possible, make sure to add some spot lighting. Aim for a selection of light sources to achieve the perfect illumination.

### 2. Sockets!

Don't forget to think about where your dressing table will be located. Ensure there are plenty of sockets to host your equipment. The last thing you need is to be blow drying your hair across the room.

### 3. Indulgence and relaxation

This room is designed to be your sanctuary, the perfect place to have undisturbed you-time. Indulge yourself with luxurious fabrics and plush cushions to provide the utmost in comfort, and a soft, light colour palette will help to keep the room elegant and feminine.

### 4. Keep it clutter-free

Storage is another must in glam rooms. Tuck away make-up and hair accessories into organised draws and trinkets to keep the surface area free. This will reduce the risk of that eye shadow dropping on the carpet or losing that one lipstick you know would be the perfect touch for your outfit.

### 5. Extra seating

Whether it's a bench for you to perch upon as you decide which shoes work best, or a chaise longue for your husband or friends to sit while you get ready, extra seating is a must. Not only is it practical but it looks fabulous too.

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4. Birds and Flowers wallpaper, £69.95, [limelace.co.uk](https://www.limelace.co.uk)
5. Birdsong wallpaper in Jade, £69, [fionahoward.com](https://www.fionahoward.com)
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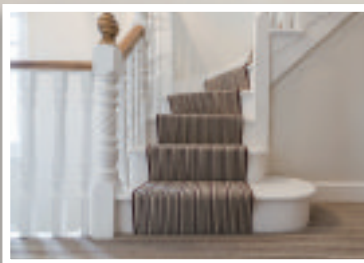


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OUR FAVOURITE ACCESSORIES AND IDEAS FOR YOUR GARDEN THIS MONTH



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From Oka UK, this decadent garden dining table – known as the Acanthus (£3,295) will last a lifetime thanks to its sturdiness and timeless style.

[oka.com](https://www.oka.com)

1



3

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2



3



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  3. Herboo Sunflower Teddy Bear  
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- [sproutl.com](https://www.sproutl.com)

## BREATHE *it in*

Once you've achieved that perfect secret garden this year you'll want somewhere to sit and enjoy it. May we warmly suggest this hanging egg chair (£485) from [beaumonde.co.uk](http://beaumonde.co.uk).



## *Classic garden style*

In a dark grey hue, this Venice-inspired planter from Cox and Cox is just right for those taller grasses, helping add height and decadence to your garden.

£125, [coxandcox.co.uk](http://coxandcox.co.uk)



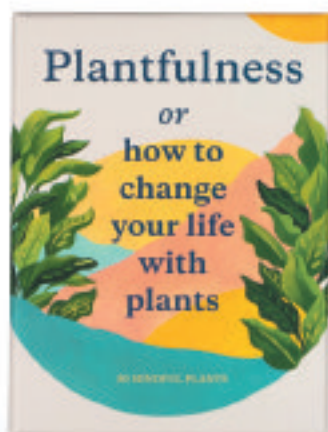
## DIG IN

How chic and lovely are these English leather and linen gardening gloves (£30) from Sir Gordon Bennett?



## DECKED OUT

With the vintage butterfly print, we hope you love this deckchair from Perkins & Morley (£149.99) as much as we do.



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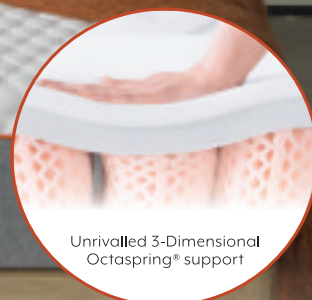
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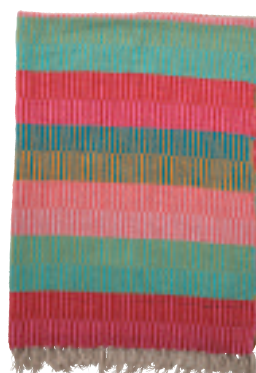


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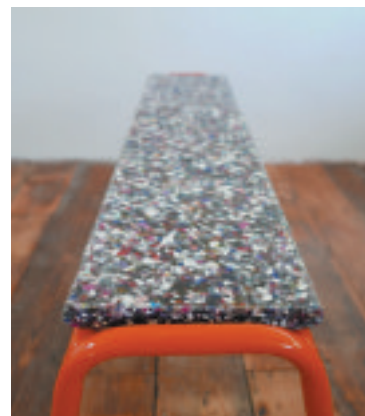
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LAND AND DEVELOPMENT

# *Feed your* FRIENDS



Could leftover coffee, tea and other drinks feed your plants? Experts sort fact from fiction on less traditional plant food. By **Hannah Stephenson**

**I**f you're prone to drinking half a cup of coffee and pouring the rest down the sink, the excess could give a boost to your houseplants in winter and beyond.

Experts at WeThrift (wethrift.com) say coffee can be a great fertiliser for your plants because it contains some of the essential nutrients they plants need, such as nitrogen, potassium, calcium and magnesium.

RHS chief horticultural adviser Guy Barter agrees: "Undrunk beverages can be beneficial. Lots of people empty the teapot contents once they are cool onto their houseplants."

So, which leftover liquids will really make a difference? Here, experts unravel the fact from the fiction...

## COFFEE

"We did some research and found tea and coffee are quite good for plants. They contain a modicum of nitrogen - but if you put milk in your drink it can get a bit smelly and rotten in the soil, although it's alright for outside," says Barter.

If you take sugar in your coffee, that may reduce the beneficial effects to your plants because it can lock up nitrogen, he warns. In that case, add ordinary fertiliser if plants go a bit yellow. Try to avoid using coffee which has had milk or cream added if you're going to deposit your dregs on houseplants.

Putting coffee grounds into your compost heap is an organic way to give plants a huge boost, according to experts at WeThrift, who add that coffee grounds can also be used for most houseplants.

But they warn against over-feeding plants with coffee, only giving them a boost about once a week. Acid-loving plants such as azaleas, hydrangeas and bromeliads prefer coffee to other plants like roses, which can end up with a burnt stem if they are overfed.

## TEA

"Tea is slightly acid, although if you have really alkaline water, that might reduce the acidity. People have historically used it on their indoor azaleas and gardenias and it's thought to be good for houseplants," says



Barter, although again try to avoid using milky tea. However, a Which? study in 2010 found it's unlikely that much of the nitrogen in tea is actually available to plants and that tea also contains aluminium, fluorine and manganese, which are harmless to people but high concentrations in very strong or stewed tea could stunt plant growth. It concluded that tea leaves are best put on the compost heap, rather than around your plants.

### BEER

While most people tend to use beer to attract slugs into beer traps in the garden, some have taken to pouring it on their plants. The idea is that the acid in beer will kill pests, and the sugar and yeast will add beneficial soil microbes, assisting growth.

However, there doesn't seem to be much substance to claims that it boosts the life of houseplants. "I don't think it contains much nitrogen or plant food, so I wouldn't have thought it's a good substitute for regular houseplant fertiliser," says Barter.

### CARBONATED DRINKS

Fizzy drinks tend to contain sugar, which prevents plants from absorbing nutrients, so don't go pouring lemonade or cola on your houseplants.

"In the old days when lemonade was very sugary, it was excellent for putting cut flowers in because it's acid, which stops the bacteria, and had sugar in it which would feed the stems. I'm not sure modern lemonade would do that," adds Barter. Research shows that carbonated mineral water may be

better, as it commonly contains many of the macronutrients that are essential for healthy plant growth.

According to a 2002 study conducted at Colorado University Boulder, carbonated water makes plants grow faster and makes green plants grow greener.

Carbonated water which has gone flat can also be used on houseplants, but make sure you don't pour it on your plants straight from the fridge, as this may send them into shock.

### WASHING UP LIQUID

"Using old washing up water to water your plants outside the back door shouldn't do any harm. There will be a certain amount of phosphorus in it, but it might be too grubby for indoor plants," Barter advises.

### AT THE END OF THE DAY...

"I can't think of anything that's a really good substitute for proper fertiliser," says Barter.

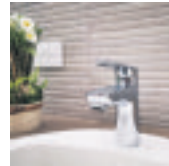
**'Undrunk beverages can be beneficial. Lots of people empty the teapot contents once they are cool onto their houseplants'**





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# Living LOVES

Spring is in the air, the days are getting longer and it won't be long until we are all basking in the sun again. For us, this lounge from Oka is our idea of heaven. Imagine long, lazy, hazy days with a book and a glass on something cool, lounging on this gorgeous double lounge (£1,995). Heavenly!

**oka.uk**



# TWINNING IS WINNING

**Hester Grainger** caught up with the team from Cyberjammies to find out about their ethos, their plans for 2022 and why their matching pyjama sets are perfect for twinning

## **Where did the Cyberjammies story begin? When did it launch?**

Cyberjammies launched in 2001. After many years of making nightwear for high street brands we decided we wanted to create our own. We launched online and at the time the internet was very new, hence where the name "Cyber" jammies came from. Our mission: to design and create the highest quality but affordable nightwear with fun and expressive designs. We knew nightwear didn't have to be boring and we were ready to liven things up!

## **What's the ethos behind it?**

As a family business, Cyberjammies is about creating nightwear that every member of the family can enjoy. Matching and co-ordinating styles that are designed not just for sleeping

**'She enjoys self care, would much rather stay in for the night than go out and treats herself and her family to cosy treats, like comfy PJs!'**

but for those cosy moments spent all together. We want our customers to share in the Cyberjammies experience. Underpinning this, the customer sits at the center of our business and guides our every decision. Each season, our collections are refined and tweaked based on what our customers are

telling us. We know our nightwear makes the perfect and most welcome gifts but we also understand the power of buying something beautiful for yourself.

We believe our nightwear contributes in a small way to self-care, with the joy that slipping on a brand-new PJs before bedtime can bring.

Our nightwear represents a little self-indulgence and offers attainable luxury. We strive to be sustainable and ethical from start to finish.

## **Who are your usual customers?**

The Cyberjammies customer is aged between 25 and 65 – She enjoys self care, would much rather stay in for the night than go out and treats herself and her family to cosy treats, like comfy PJs!



**‘In order to scale and grow at a fast pace it was essential that we introduced Brightpearl as our main business hub’**

**Tell us about becoming the UK’s fastest-growing online apparel brand**

In addition to winning the Stars bestselling collection for the fourth year in a row at the end of last year, we were really pleased to pick up the award for fastest selling brand from Brightpearl.

In order to scale and grow at a fast pace it was essential that we introduced Brightpearl as our main business hub, it has enabled us to scale and grow our business significantly over the last few years on our own website and with other big retailers, we wouldn’t have been able to achieve the growth we have without it. ➡

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\*Code expires 27th March 2022. Price may vary, see website for current prices. †Subject to age and status.

### Have the matching pyjama sets been popular?

Family matching started as a fun project for a Christmas collection back in 2017, then it really took off. Our customers absolutely loved matching not just at Christmas but all year round.

We love choosing designs we think the whole family will love, it's an exciting part of our creating our new collections.

### What are the best-selling pieces?

You can't beat a classic style pyjama set. Although our mix and match sets and loungewear pieces are a favourite amongst our customers, a floral pyjama set will always be a sure-fire winner with the true Cyberjammies fan.

### Where does the inspiration from the collections come from?

Inspiration can come from everywhere. We all make sure to get creative and come up with exciting new ideas for upcoming seasons. A lot of inspiration for design comes from the catwalk but we take inspiration from home décor, our own interests and trends we see every day.

### What do you do to unwind at the end of a busy day?

At Cyberjammies we are all about self-care and we are good at it! We all make sure to take time for ourselves at the end of a long day, whether that's cooking, exercising, taking the dog for a walk or reading a good book, whatever it is you can guarantee we will end the day by slipping into our Cyberjammies getting a restful night sleep ready for the next exciting day.



**‘A lot of inspiration for design comes from the catwalk but we take inspiration from home décor, our own interests and trends’**

### What are your plans for 2022?

In 2022 we plan on launching the final phase of our spring 2022 collection and our autumn 2022 collection in June. We have already started working on our collection for spring 2023 and plans for autumn 2023 will be under way too. Our mission this year is to become even more sustainable in all areas of the business, from BCI cotton in the summer to fully sustainable packaging, we want the Cyberjammies experience to be a sustainable one.

We will also launch a brand new website in the Spring, making shopping even easier for our customers. We are so excited to expand our team and continue growing this year, but most importantly want to continue making amazing nightwear that our customers love.

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**cyberjammies.co.uk**  
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# FORTY WINKS

With World Sleep Day on Friday, March 18, **Hester Grainger** thought she'd take a look at some tips, tricks and products to get a good night sleep

**A**ccording to The Sleep Charity the average sleep an adult requires or might expect to sleep is around eight hours a night. However there is no 'normal' length of time, it is whatever is natural for you. As a mum of two, I often find it difficult to get a good night's sleep. So I decided to test the latest products and see if any of them really can help me sleep better.

## Relax and unwind

Trudy Arnel is founder of The Ives, a range of oils to help you sleep better. Trudy explains: "I started making the sleep oil when my son was four years old and was really struggling with sleep and anxiety. I wanted a way to connect with him each day and to help

**'I started making the sleep oil when my son was four years old and was really struggling with sleep and anxiety'**

his sleep. I only wanted natural help and started to read about the science of sleep. I found that magnesium is contained in every cell of our bodies and is a key component in sleep, yet less than half of us get enough daily.

I combined this knowledge with my love of essential oils to create a formula that is massaged into the skin at bedtime. Giving us a few minutes each night to connect,

talk and create a safe space for feelings. It worked so well and stopped him from waking in the night that I just had to make a more concentrated version for me!"

Having tried the family blend myself, I loved it. I used the roller on my son as he struggles to sleep and it really did help. It has a large roller-ball which was easy to apply and I have to say that I love it.

## The perfect pillow

We all know that a perfect pillow should be at the heart of our bedtime routine, but does such a thing exist? James Leinhardt is a sleep and posture expert and the founder of the leading pillow and mattress company, Levitex.

Their core focus is helping those who struggle to get a good night's sleep – focusing specifically on recovery and the importance of



**‘It’s already helping me get a good night’s sleep, which is something I have struggled with using my old pillow’**



sleep posture, as well as those that suffer with chronic neck and back pain. I was really keen to try the pillow as having scoliosis I can find it tricky to get comfy at night. Having filled out a questionnaire I was sent the perfect pillow for me.

It’s already helping me get a good night’s sleep, which is something I have struggled with using my old pillow. Levitex identified the twelve most common sleeping positions, with “The Dreamer” (semi-foetal side lying) proven to be the optimal position for good night time posture. Bed time by The Sleep Charity found that swapping an uncomfortable bed for a new one, resulted in nearly an extra hour of sleep a night. So I caught up with Feather and Black who are passionate about creating simply beautiful products for the perfect bedroom.

Phillipa MacDermott, head of Buying & Merchandising at Feather and Black explains: “A bed is the hero piece within any bedroom, not just because of its size and central position, but its ability to determine the style and feel of the entire bedroom. So, when choosing a new bed frame there are a few things to consider. Are you looking for a statement piece? Do you need any ➔

hidden storage? An ottoman bed or one that houses in-built drawers is a great option to help keep the bedroom clutter free, for example. It's a good idea to consider how you might use the bed too, other than for sleeping in. Those who enjoy reading in bed might prefer an upholstered headboard to provide a little extra comfort. Size is also important. While the temptation is to go bigger to get the best night's sleep possible, go too big and it will leave little space for anything else and end up making the room feel small."

### Gadgets to help you unwind

Sleep.8 believe that good sleep is the foundation of happy, healthy living. Inspired by the techniques of traditional Shiatsu massage I was keen to try the S8 Power Neck massager. It stimulates different areas of the neck and shoulders, relieving muscle tension. It took me a few attempts to get the right pressure but it was great when I did. Next on my list was the S8 Power Eyes eye massager.

Gently massaging the area, the S8 Power Eyes massager improves blood circulation around your eyes and sinuses, promoting deep relaxation. I tried it while lying in bed and it was the perfect end to a busy day on screens. Who says you shouldn't use gadgets before bed?

### Give yourself a boost

This has to be one of my favourite products that I tried. It's a natural essential oil diffuser made from volcanic rocks. The "unwind" oil which contains Lavender and Bergamot plant extracts was perfect to help me relax before sleep. The porous lava soaks up the oil, and slowly releases the lovely aroma into your room. Boostology is the brainchild of Martin Gerhard, a former BBC journalist. Martin explains: "We design and make the products we sell, which means our products are exclusive to us."

"This essential oil diffuser is elegant, long lasting and reusable – no part of it gets thrown away – this makes it an eco-friendlier way to scent your room. It uses no electricity, and no flames which can pollute your living space. We also plant one tree for every order placed."



**'Those who enjoy reading in bed might prefer an upholstered headboard to provide a little extra comfort'**

### Clearing your mind

Lastly, I used The Sleep Journal which I found useful. The journal helps you build a consistent evening routine and sleep rituals so that you can have a good night's sleep. Putting pen to paper in the evening aids sleep.

There is a space for a nightly brain dump and writing down tomorrow's to-do list. It's full of sleep affirmations, a sleep tracker and a space for daily gratitude. The Sleep Journal is the brainchild of Anne Marie Boyhan, a mum turned functional diagnostic nutritionist and health coach, who wrote it to find a solution to her sleep struggles, as she couldn't find everything sleep-related in one place.

Boyhan says: "I believe that great days are built on the night before."

featherandblack.com  
theives.co.uk  
levitex.co.uk  
sleep8.uk  
thesleepcarecompany.com  
boostology.co.uk



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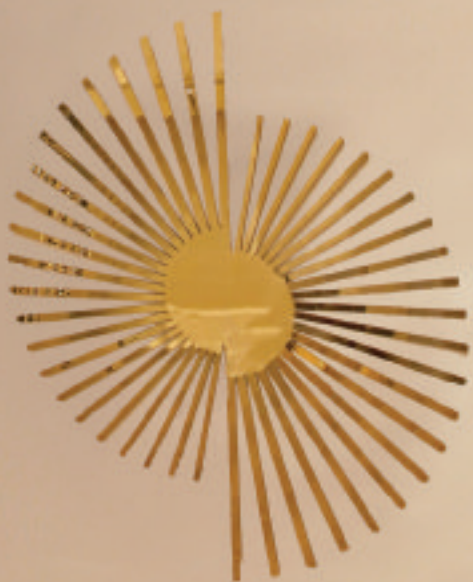
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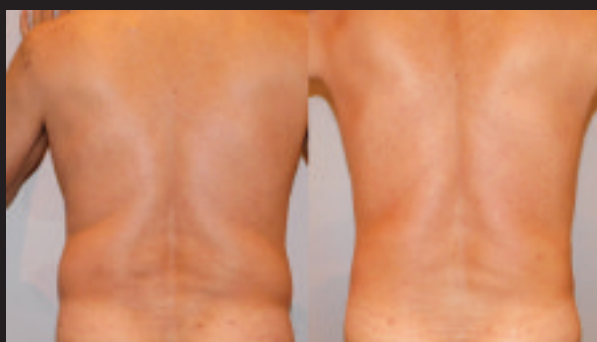
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# A-Z of SPRING

Looking for some fashion and wellbeing inspiration? We've got you covered

## A IS FOR ABOUT TIME

It's been a hard two years, so isn't it about time you booked yourself that luxury spa break. You do deserve it! Pictured here is Gleneagles Spa; a spa and wellness resort in Scotland – a short break here will do the trick, we guarantee! [gleneagles.com](https://www.gleneagles.com)



## b IS FOR BYOB

Taking a picnic in the park or enjoying a tipple on the river with a friend? Then meet the Keep Your Cool Bag (£85) from Heating and Plumbing London. Quirky and practical, it's bang on for those BYOB occasions.

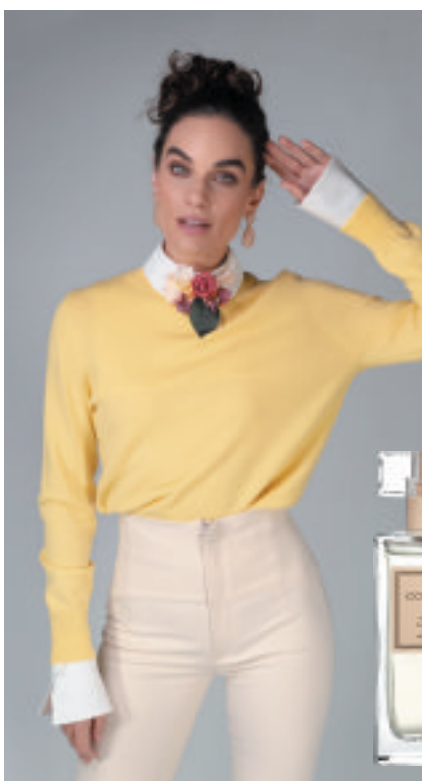


## d IS FOR DENIM

A good, timeless denim jacket will serve its life out with you. If you need to invest, this classic Levi's 90s Trucker Jacket is the one.

## C IS FOR COLLARS AND CUFFS

Statement collars and cuffs are tres chic this season. We love this detachable set (£219) from Prairie Finnai – just perfect if you want in on the trend but don't feel you can commit to new wardrobe choices.



## e IS FOR EXQUISITE SCENTS


Time to change up your signature scent? Might we recommend this? It's our favourite right now. Cochine Vanille & Tabac Noir Eau De Parfum, £110 for 50ml, available from Cochine.



**f**

**IS FOR FEELING SUPERSONIC**

Sorry, but we've yet to find a better appliance that's hot the shelves in the last ten years than the Dyson Supersonic hairdryer. If you've yet to invest, can we politely recommend you do?



**h**


**IS FOR HOLIDAY**

So excited are we for (hopefully) un-restricted holidays this year we're already shopping around for new costumes. This one-piece Capri costume (£160) from lapecheswim.com is the first purchase on the list.

**G**

**IS FOR GOLD**

We are in love with chunky jewellery this season – especially this piece from Selfridges.




**i**

**IS FOR IN FASHION**

We were fascinated by Couture Week when it took to the runway last month. Amazing outfits, gravity defying structure and a real peek into the high-end red carpet wardrobes of 2022.



**J**

**IS FOR JAPANESE INSPIRED**

The intricacy of Japanese prints and design has always been fascinating to us – just look at the pattern on this silk kimono from Myrtle and Mary. Adorable.



**k**


**IS FOR KIM KARDASHIAN**

She's going to take over the fashion world this year, trust us on this one...

**L**

**IS FOR LEOPARD**

Animal print is back (as if it ever really went away) and we are investing in this organic cotton drawstring hoody (£195) from Veo because we are so excited!

**m**

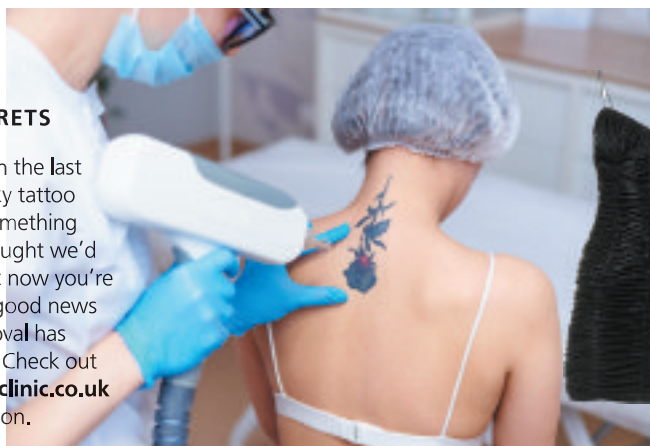
**IS FOR MOVIE STAR JEWELLERY**

Don't be afraid to channel your inner Elizabeth Taylor this year with statement jewellery pieces. This pearl bracelet from Lido Pearls is just perfect we think.

N

IS FOR **NO REGRETS**

We've all done it in the last few years; a sneaky tattoo here and there; something subtle that we thought we'd want forever... but now you're over it? Well, the good news is that tattoo removal has never been easier. Check out [manchesterlaserclinic.co.uk](http://manchesterlaserclinic.co.uk) for more information.



O

IS FOR **OBVIOUS CLASSIC**

Make sure you're ready for any occasion by keeping a timeless LBD in your wardrobe. From Selfridges, this Birger Christensen Aria dress is a good refresh starting point.



p

IS FOR **PLANET FRIENDLY PERIODS**

OK, we know these aren't exactly the sexiest underwear out there, but they will reduce your impact on the planet each month massively! Find them at Wearth London.



q

IS FOR **THE QUEEN**

As we roll through her Platinum Jubilee year, we're excited to enjoy flashbacks of her amazing wardrobe, like this shot from a few years back when she joined the Canadian Government for dinner.



R

IS FOR **REFRESH**

If it's time to refresh your skincare routine, give this 111 Skin Booster discovery set from Selfridges a whirl.



S

IS FOR **SNUGGLY**

These vintage-style cardigans are probably our favourite off-the-peg knitwear this season. [aurina.co.uk](http://aurina.co.uk)



t

IS FOR **THROWBACK**

Remember carrying around highly impractical fluffy/furry bags in the 90s? Well they're back. This one is a Bottega Veneta piece from Selfridges.



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**u**

IS FOR **UPCYCLE**

Made from reclaimed fabric and the leather of old horse tack, this tote from Reclaim Mallorca (£580) is the most stylish use of upcycling we've seen so far.

**V**

IS FOR **VICTORIA BECKHAM**

Her new Reebok collection is just fabulous. Sophisticated, chic and practical, it's the gym wardrobe update you need.



**w**

IS FOR **WILD SWIMMING**

The feeling when you emerge from a wild swim is just incredible – but it ain't half cold! Time to invest in one of these dry suits from Go Wyld we think!



**X**

IS FOR **XTRA TIMEPIECES**

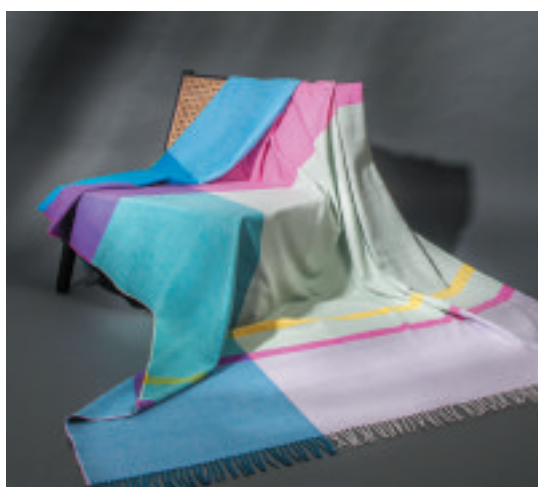
Sorry, but if we could we'd have a different Gucci timepiece for every day of the week.



**Y**

IS FOR **YES TO LAYERS**

Say yes to layers this spring. This cashmere poncho wrap (£595) from The Fine Cotton Company is adorable.



**Z**

IS FOR **ZEDS**

If you haven't discovered the restorative power of a good nap, then make this the year that you do. Of course, investing in the perfect shawl is essential. How about this cashmere shawl (£675) from Heating and Plumbing?



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# Everyday Ethereal

Dresses, gilets, knitwear and collars – there are so many ways to add some Ethereal luxury to your every day wardrobe this spring, as **Samantha Harman** finds out



**W**hen the press pictures came through of the spring-summer Ethereal London collection, my heart skipped a beat. Bold, bright florals in beautiful dresses and kimonos; sustainable knitwear and a gorgeous bridal line.

After months of winter (and years of a pandemic), founder Annie Holt really knows how to get us excited about dressing up again. And if you're off to an event or wedding this year, she's got you covered.

But Annie doesn't make pieces you wear once and never again. Her designs are built to last. Gorgeous cuts in sustainable materials and beautiful prints. With lounge and homeware on offer too, you really can get the Ethereal feeling every day. And the best part is that you know you're investing in a piece you'll love forever – not to the detriment of the planet, either.

*Living* has long been a fan of Ethereal. And that's because we share a similar ethos. Elevate the every day. We want to champion well-made, sustainable pieces from local brands you'll treasure forever. And since first appearing in *Living* way back in 2018, Annie's brand has gone from strength to strength, being spotted on celebrities and featured by major fashion publications.

It's all not only down to Annie's hard work, but also because of the ethos behind



**'Falling in love with a dress and how it makes you feel when you try it on is a special experience. However, it's an experience that is difficult to find on the high street within the realms of fast fashion'**

her brand. Having worked in fashion for 15 years, Annie wanted to 'create clothes that contributed to the world in a considered, positive and responsible way.'

Ethereal London came from her personal experiences of searching for wear-forever pieces and being let down by what was on offer. Lots of women, she discovered, had the same issues, with clothes being made only in one shape and blanket sizing unable to cater for every woman.

Two women could both be a size 12, for example, but the proportions of their bodies ➔



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## 'I want to create quality dresses you can fall in love with'

could be completely different. High street fashion can't make one product to fit them both – and the millions of other women who fall into the same size label but have different shapes – perfectly.

"Falling in love with a dress and how it makes you feel when you try it on is a special experience. However, it's an experience that is difficult to find on the high street within the realms of fast fashion," says Annie.

"Lots of women have spoken to me about similar experiences, where dresses only ever seem to come in one shape, length or silhouette, which of course don't suit everyone. I want to create quality dresses you can fall in love with."

Annie has a long-held passion for sustainability. She says that statistics show women are currently wearing only 20 per cent of their wardrobes 80 per cent of the time. She says she hopes lockdown has given us a chance to reconsider our love of fast fashion.

**F**or this collection, she has introduced floral jackets that will work throughout the seasons. Statement pieces designed to wear for everyday luxury to make dressing up that bit more special. Made in the most beautiful lightweight quilting, the jacket has an elegant tie waist detail along with reversible styling.

Annie says: "It will create a statement for an event or will be a season-less staple adding that feminine touch to your wardrobe. It can be worn over a dress or dressed down over jeans and a simple top. This style is made with a silk and recycled polyester lining, which is sourced responsibly using organic farming methods and with no pesticides or chemicals used in the process."

Then there is the new addition of seam-free sustainable knitwear. Annie adds: "Knitted in three dimensions without seams, this style offers benefits never before found in other garment types. It provides you with second skin comfort, and the minimum amount of necessary material – making it the ultimate in eco knitwear."

And of course, there is the signature piece from Ethereal London – the dress. Whether you like mini, midi or maxi there is something for you.

**ethereallondon.com**

**Visit the virtual store to try on the collection at [ethereallondon.com/virtual-store](https://ethereallondon.com/virtual-store)**

**I: @EtherealLondon**



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Our care is provided at no cost to our patients and families but we rely on generous donations from people like you in our local community to carry on caring for all the local people who need us.

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Amy, busy working mum of two shares her recent experience – “During Covid it struck me that if anything was to happen to me, my financial wishes would not be in place because I didn't have a Will.”

“When I heard about Rennie Grove's free online Will service I had no excuses. It was a really quick but thorough process. In total it took 20 minutes and I did it in my lunch hour. I was able to honour a pledge to each of the three charities close to my heart too.”

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# FANTASTIC 40S

It's a decade that brings confidence, so put your worries aside and enjoy your 40s to their fullest and embrace the experience that comes with age

**M**ilestone birthdays are a big deal. Probably because we hang a lot of baggage on them, like things we want to achieve by that age.

For some reason, there's something about a number that ends in a zero which feels more important and powerful.

When you're ten, it's double digits; excitement, the feeling of (finally) growing up. At 20, you're often living your best life too much to care, but it marks the end of teenage years and the start of proper adulthood. 30 is the biggie; the pressure of how sorted and under control your life feels can scramble minds, but come 40, it's likely you're there. Not in an "I have everything I want and need" way (do we ever?) but in a less selfish, bigger picture outlook. It's the decade that brings serious wisdom.

As we're sure the Duchess of Cambridge knows only too well, your 30s is often a time of exhaustion, raising small people, caring too much about what people think, trying to climb rungs of the career ladder, unnecessarily scrutinising changes to your body, clinging on to old friendships, worrying about money...



**'Your 40s are a time to shine, bathe in the knowledge and experience that comes only with age'**

And that's not to say any of that magically changes the day you turn 40, but it's a decade that brings confidence. The ability to feel less guilty about that exhaustion and say no to things you don't actually want to do. To feel it's OK to "cruise" or stay at this level at work if that's what works for you right now, or step back from relationships that don't give you anything back.

Of course, there are worries – new ones you might not have even contemplated as a 30-something, like sick or ageing parents, health woes, relationship trauma, kids going through much tougher life issues – but the wisdom that comes with having lived through four decades already, allows you the reflection needed to take a step back, be calmer, work out what's important for you and move forward on a path that feels right, knowing you can change things up if and when you want to.

Kate looks great at 40, like many of us do. And if we don't, it's probably because we're prioritising other more important stuff than our looks. In another decade, it's likely there will be more stress – bodies can start letting you down a little more once you hit 50, and those lucky enough to still have parents in their life will have old parents, who might well need a lot more help.

Your 40s are a time to shine, bathe in the knowledge and experience that comes only with age, let the pressure of life ebb and flow with the security of knowing situations will evolve and change, whether you're controlling them or not, and to let it be.





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# FAVOURERED FLAVOURS

Food writer Ed Smith is all about warming, comforting meals. He is also a pro at making delicious dinners from whatever is in his fridge

**E**d Smith's food ethos is all about working out what your body craves and sorting dinner out from there.

It is a reminder to listen to our bodies a bit more (something so few of us actually do), but it doesn't mean things are different every day. Smith returns to certain meals and ingredients time and time again – be it a bowl of brothy beans, or his beloved instant dashi powder.

This is (almost) everything you need to know about Smith's approach to food...

## Your death row meal is...

It depends on the craving, but I think I'd probably be seeking solace in some kind of brothy beans. Pork belly, brothy beans, olives – comforting, but there's a little bit of life in there as well. And then right now, I'm thinking tiramisu, to dive into.

## The one dish you can't get right in the kitchen...

I could improve my sushi rolling.

## Your favourite store cupboard essential is...

I am in love with instant dashi powder, it's excellent. It's such a layered and flavoursome and moreish and umami-ful base for loads of things. In the book – *Crave: Recipes Arranged By Flavour, To Suit Your Mood And Appetite* – it's used in the chicken and rice dish. What makes miso soup taste good is having a good dashi, for example. That's a great savoury fix to have your instant dashi, a mug of water and a spoonful of miso – suddenly you're soothed and everything is right again.

## You like your eggs...

I favour six and a half minutes, boiled, peeled and cut in half. That's great in a ramen, or on toast with some chilli oil.

## The kitchen utensil you can't live without is...

A silicon spatula.

## Your favourite late-night snack is...

Expensive sourdough toast with lots of butter; mature cheddar and kimchi, or some other chilled condiment.

## The ultimate childhood dinner you always remember is...

You can't go wrong with a good old spag bol.



## Your takeout of choice tends to be... Vietnamese.

## What did you eat last night?

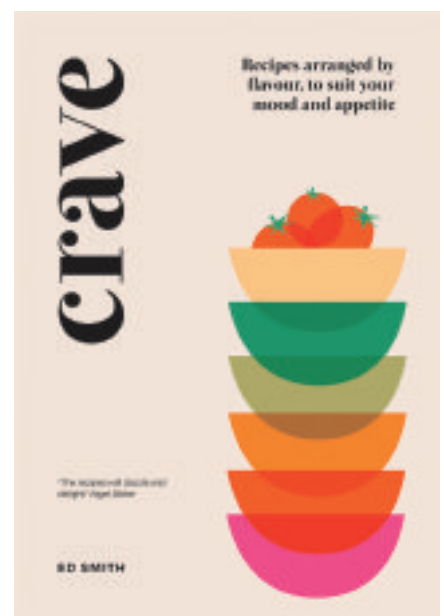
Last night we had meatballs made out of veal, smoky bacon, orange zest and sage, with some fregula [a type of Sardinian pasta] and a tomato sauce. It was lovely because it was cold, and we'd been outside all day with my son, who was pretty annoyed and upset at the weather – as was I. That was a rich, powerful and very comforting meal.

## Your signature dish is...

I don't have a signature dish, I like to cook everything all the time. Actually, my signature is a fridge forage – making something good from whatever's in the fridge.

## Your biggest culinary achievement is...

Convincing people who think they don't like certain ingredients that they're delicious – anchovies, mushrooms, sauerkraut and so on.



***Crave: Recipes arranged by flavour, to suit your mood and appetite* by Ed Smith, photography by Sam A Harris, is published by Quadrille, priced £25. Available now.**



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## RECIPE

# Rasta pumpkin pasta

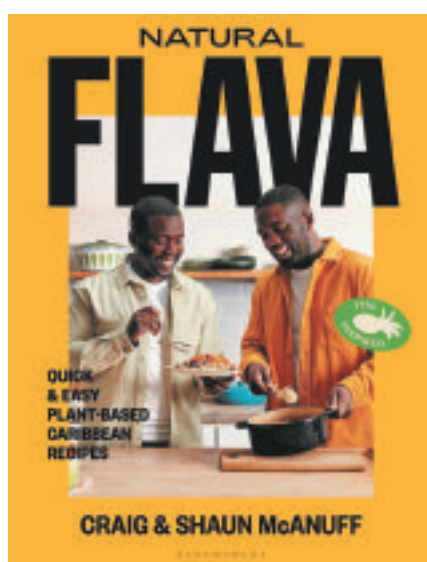
**Serves:** 6-8

## INGREDIENTS

500g pumpkin or butternut squash, peeled, deseeded and diced  
 1 whole garlic bulb  
 1 Scotch bonnet or chilli pepper, deseeded and chopped  
 Olive oil, for cooking  
 200g coconut yoghurt  
 Leaves of 2 rosemary sprigs  
 6 fresh thyme sprigs or 1tsp dried thyme  
 1 vegan stock cube  
 1 x 400ml can coconut milk  
 1tbsp golden syrup  
 500g dried penne pasta  
 1 onion, sliced  
 1 red bell pepper, deseeded and sliced  
 1 green bell pepper, deseeded and sliced  
 1 yellow bell pepper, deseeded and sliced  
 1tbsp jerk paste  
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper  
 Handful of parsley, chopped, to serve

## METHOD

- Preheat the oven to 170°C Fan/190°C/Gas 5. Place a sheet of baking parchment on a baking tray. Add the diced pumpkin or squash, garlic bulb and Scotch bonnet or chilli, then sprinkle two tablespoons of olive oil and one teaspoon each of salt and black pepper on it and mix together. Roast in the oven for 25 minutes until cooked through and starting to caramelise.
- Leave to cool for five minutes, then dash into a blender, squeezing the soft garlic cloves out of their papery skins. Add the yoghurt, rosemary and thyme and crumble in the stock cube. Add half the coconut milk, the syrup, salt to taste and a splash of water. Blend together until smooth.
- Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Add the pasta and cook according to the packet instructions, then drain.
- Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, heat two tablespoons of olive oil until hot. Add the onion and bell peppers and sauté for five minutes until soft, then add in the blended pumpkin sauce, remaining coconut milk and jerk paste. Stir, then simmer, uncovered, for five minutes until thickened.
- Add the drained pasta to the sauce and combine well to coat. Add a sprinkling of parsley and enjoy.



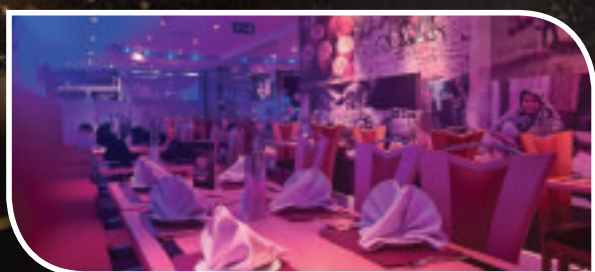
**Natural Flava: Quick and easy plant-based Caribbean recipes** by Craig and Shaun McAnuff is published by Bloomsbury, priced £22. Photography by Matt Russell. Available now.

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## Deserts

Apple & Rhubarb Crumble with custard

Lemon Meringue Tart with Berries & Vanilla Ice Cream

Dark Chocolate Brownie with Vanilla Ice Cream

Strawberry & Prosecco Cream Mousse

## RECIPE

# Trini split pea dhal *with* spinach *and* okra

Serves: 4

## INGREDIENTS

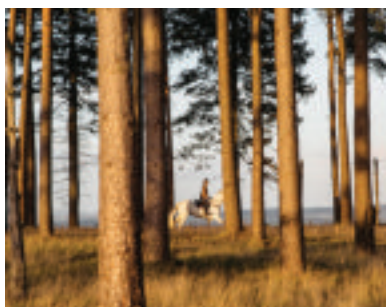
350g dried split peas  
1.7L water  
1 medium onion, very finely chopped  
1 scotch bonnet pepper, deseeded and very finely chopped  
2tbsp ground turmeric  
1tsp ground cumin  
1tsp ground pimento (allspice)  
1tbsp mango chutney, plus extra to serve  
Handful of spinach  
3tbsp vegetable oil  
4 garlic cloves, chopped  
1tbsp cumin seeds  
2 bay leaves  
8 okra, sliced lengthways  
Salt and freshly ground black pepper

## METHOD

- Firstly, wash and drain the split peas two or three times, until the water runs clear. Add them to a large pot with the water and bring to the boil. Now season with the onion, scotch bonnet, turmeric, ground cumin, pimento, mango chutney and salt and black pepper to taste. Simmer for 40 minutes until the peas are tender.
- Use a stick blender to blend until mushy but not completely smooth. Add a little more salt and black pepper to taste, stir in the spinach to wilt, take off the heat and allow to rest – the liquid will soak into the peas, thickening it. Add a little more hot water if it needs loosening.
- In a frying pan, heat the oil and add the garlic, cumin seeds and bay leaves. Fry for three to four minutes until sizzling and fragrant, being careful not to burn them, then dash them into the curry.
- In the same frying pan, pan-fry the sliced okra and serve alongside the curry, with rice and flatbreads. Serve extra mango chutney and hot pepper sauce on the side.

**Natural Flava: Quick and Easy Plant-Based Caribbean Recipes** by Craig and Shaun McAnuff is published by Bloomsbury, priced £22





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# IDEAL BREAKS

These are the hottest up-and-coming holiday destinations in the UK – and they might surprise you

Just when it looked like some kind of normality was returning, the Omicron variant arrived, along with new travel restrictions, causing 600,000 passengers to cancel flights from Heathrow airport in December. With continued uncertainty around international travel, it looks as though staycations – a major pandemic-era trend – are here to stay, as consumers opt to holiday closer to home rather than contend with Covid tests and risk long-haul trips.

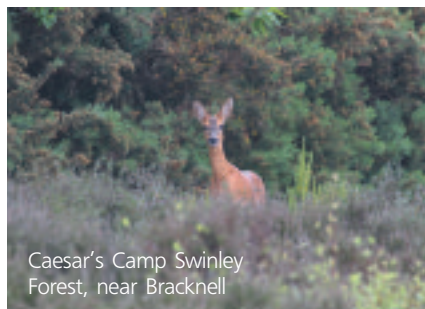
Now, holiday rental firm Vrbo has revealed the UK towns and cities that have seen the biggest growth in customer demand in 2021. From seaside escapes to country idylls, here are four ideas for where to staycation in 2022...

## 1. Bracknell Forest

Just west of London, Berkshire's Bracknell Forest is conveniently located for urbanites in need of fresh air.

The picturesque woodland area, which saw a 110% increase in interest last year, is home to Windsor Castle and the surrounding Great Park, where red deer roam. More adventurous visitors can get a bird's eye view of the forest from the tree-to-tree zip lines at Go Ape.

V&A Design Museum Dundee, Scotland



Caesar's Camp Swinley Forest, near Bracknell

## 2. Southend-on-Sea

The coastal town of Southend-on-Sea rose in popularity by 100% last year, while Essex as a whole jumped 80%.

The kid-friendly area has lots to keep little ones entertained, from Adventure Island fun park and the Sealife aquarium to the iconic Southend Pier (the longest in the world) and Railway, plus seven miles of sand and pebble beaches.

## 3. Dundee

The opening of the V&A museum in 2018 helped put Dundee on the holidaymaker map, with interest in the Scottish coastal city rising by 80% last year.

Culture vultures will love the museum's design-focused exhibitions, (not to mention the incredible Kengo Kuma-designed building) while the rugged natural beauty of Scotland is easily accessible with the likes of Baldrigon Wood in the city and Monikie Country Park close by.

## 4. Lincolnshire

The historic Lincolnshire town of Stamford was last year voted one of the best places to live in the UK by *The Sunday Times*, and visitors will find a lot to love about the market town, which boasts 600 listed buildings.

Impressive architecture is a big draw all over the county (which saw a 75% spike in interest last year), with two castles (Lincoln and Belvoir), a cathedral and stunning stately homes such as Harlaxton Manor.

Stamford, Lincolnshire





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# LUXURY CAMPING

***Bicester Caravan and Leisure are proud to announce that they are the new and exclusive importers for Comanche folding campers and trailer tents***



Come and have a look at the new range of folding campers. Comanche's Montana has more standard equipment and some clever innovations while still offering eye-catching value for money. The Comanche has been around for several years, but the basic design has evolved over time.

The Montana is a lightweight, easy-to-erect, no-peg trailer tent in the same vein as the Combi-Camp and new Trigano, offering compact accommodation for a family of four who want to move around, without the hassle of putting up an awning.

Built in Spain, the Comanche Montana offers two double beds, seating for four and a solid-floored living area. It can be fully erected in well under five minutes, with no pegging required.

The fixed trailer rack mounted on the 'lid' acts as a base for the living area once the unit is opened. That rack is great for carrying extra equipment and there is additional storage space under the two double beds.

The awning attaches side-on to the opened-up tent and virtually doubles the overall floor space. A generously proportioned sunroof further extends the available living space. Innovations include an easy-to-access spare wheel bracket, addition



ventilation for the sleeping compartments, and a neat cording system to tighten the gussets protecting the zipped seam connecting to the awning.

All-up weight is 345kg, and this and the over-length A-frame ensures the Montana is effortlessly towed behind even the most compact cars.

The maximum laden weight, however, can be increased to 450kg, giving around an extra 105 kilos of payload to play with. *Camping* says the Montana is a great lightweight folding camper for families.

## MORE INFORMATION:

- Folded size 99cm high x 250cm long x 190cm wide (380cm including A-frame).
- Erected size 237cm high x 328cm wide x 242cm long.
- Awning 251cm high x 360cm wide x 240cm long.
- Bed sizes 2 x 190cm x 121cm.
- Unladen weight 270kg.
- Laden weight 345kg to 450kg.
- Payload 75kg to 105kg.
- Materials: breathable 280g/m<sup>2</sup> cotton polyester TenCate ten fabric (roof 340g/m<sup>2</sup>)
- Steel trailer with GRP lid. AL-KO galvanized steel chassis and A-frame, with steel poles

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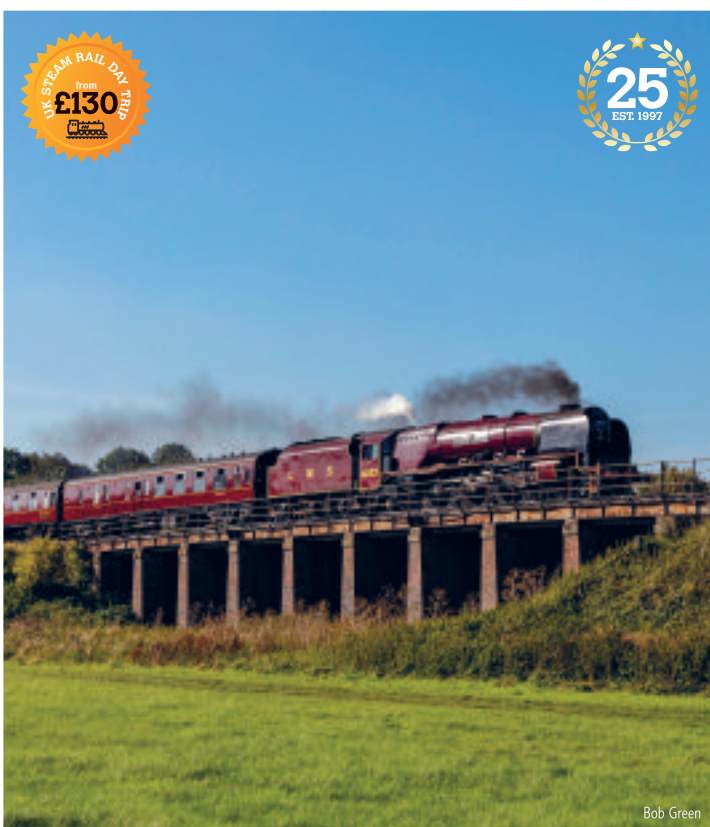
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# VIRAL CONCERNS

Why do some parents catch Covid from their children but others don't? GPs explain some of the possible reasons for transmission within households. By **Katie Wright**

**I**t is easy to think that if your child catches Covid, surely the whole household is likely to come down with it too. So, why is it that some parents catch Covid from their kids, while others somehow manage to stay virus-free?

After an initial steep fall, Omicron cases appear to have plateaued in the UK right now, levelling out at an average of around 90k a day. Particularly high levels of Covid are being detected in children, with cases rising amongst 10 to 19-year-olds, which is likely due to pupils returning to school after the Christmas holidays too.

Yet when it comes to parents, are some just luckier than others? There is no guarantee that just because a child tests positive, their parents are going to catch Covid too – even if you’re not really isolating from one another at home.

“I’ve got lots of families where some mothers or fathers haven’t got it – and there are lots of reasons for that,” says Dr Paul Ettlinger, founder of London General Practice ([thelondongeneralpractice.com](http://thelondongeneralpractice.com)).

### Viral load and immunity

Ettlinger believes there are two main factors that determine whether Covid will be passed from a child to a parent. “One of the reasons is the actual viral load that the child has. If they don’t have a high viral load, they may not be transmissible,” Ettlinger explains. “The other reason is the immunity of the mother or the father.”

Immunity can come from antibodies or T cells, meaning “the baseline immunity in the body. It’s something that you would have got from having either the vaccination, or you might have had the actual virus without knowing it.”

After all, some parents may have previously had asymptomatic Covid, giving them a greater level of protection. In addition, new research suggests another possible reason for increased immunity.

Dr Belinda Griffiths from  
The Fleet Street Clinic



## ‘The risks of catching Covid far outweigh the risks of vaccination – that is very, very important’

Dr Paul Ettlinger, founder  
of London General Practice



Dr Belinda Griffiths from The Fleet Street Clinic ([fleetstreetclinic.com](http://fleetstreetclinic.com)) explains: “There is no conclusive proof as yet, but the theory of why some people will catch Covid from close contacts and other people in the same close contact will not, is thought to be due to possible previous exposure to a coronavirus, such as the common cold, giving some form of immunity or protection.”

That does not mean that if you have had a cold you are immune to Covid, but the exposure may in some cases have helped: “It is thought that the pre-existing T cells from a previous coronavirus quickly deal with the threat of a new infection by triggering an immune response, so the individual does not have symptoms or signs of infection. But the tests are not yet fully conclusive and we need more data.”

Can you reduce the risk of transmission at home? While adults sharing the same house or flat may be able to isolate to some extent, it’s a lot harder when children are involved.

“If you want to be strict, then yes, you should do the strict isolation, wear a mask, etc,” says Dr Ettlinger. “But of course, you’ve got to take into account that [the parents] have probably been looking after their child anyway when they were actually infectious.”

And if your children are young, feeling poorly, and you do not have enough rooms to keep everyone separate anyway, then of course it is understandable that isolating within the home is not always realistic.

The most important thing you can do, says Ettlinger is: “Definitely to get vaccinated. The risks of catching Covid far outweigh the risks of vaccination – that is very, very important.”



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**‘Eton End children are confident and articulate with strong communication skills, displaying excellent attitudes to learning’**

and teaches them how to apply these skills across the curriculum”.

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4. Budding Gardener Gloves, £4.99, [dobbies.co.uk](http://dobbies.co.uk)
5. Wildlife seedballs, £15, [pompomlondon.com](http://pompomlondon.com)
6. Kids' digging fork, £19.99, [dobbies.co.uk](http://dobbies.co.uk)
7. Minibug spotter kit, £7.50, [whippersnappersonline.com](http://whippersnappersonline.com)
8. The Make A Pizza For The Birds kit, £19.50, [thedenkitco.com](http://thedenkitco.com)
9. Kent & Stowe kids' garden rake, £19.99, [dobbies.co.uk](http://dobbies.co.uk)



# THE READING ROOM

Terrific, tantalising tales – book reviews by **Tom Bromley**

**TITLE:** Off-Target

**AUTHOR:** Eve Smith

**PUBLISHED BY:** Orenda

**PRICE:** £8.99

Susan is desperate to conceive and have a baby with her husband, Steve. But then a drunken one night-stand with a fellow teacher from school succeeds where four years of trying has failed. Susan is torn: desperate to keep the child, but terrified her husband might find out the truth.

Advances in genetics, however, offers her a way out. Her friend, Carmel, had the genes of her child modified to avoid inheriting hereditary diseases that ran in her family. Carmel's doctor claims that he can use Steve's DNA to change the paternity of Susan's child. Susan is unsure, but agrees to the procedure. But when her daughter Zurel is born, there are unexpected repercussions, both from campaigners against the procedures, and in how Zurel is developing...



Eve Smith's second novel is a taut, tight piece of speculative fiction, drawing on the development of genetic technologies to create both a page-turning narrative and one that causes the reader to pause and think.

**TITLE:** Good Intentions

**AUTHOR:** Kasim Ali

**PUBLISHED BY:** 4th Estate

**PRICE:** £14.99

Nur and Yasmina are in love, and have been for the past four years.

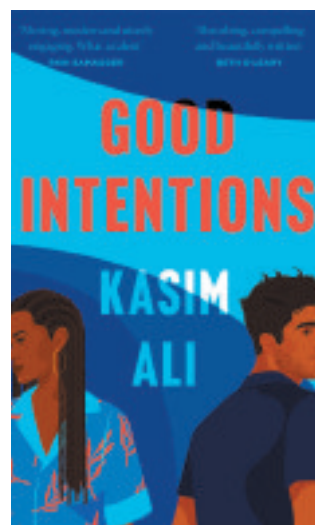
He is a young British Pakistani, and his girlfriend is Sudanese.

But Nur has never told his family about Yasmina, terrified of their reaction to the fact that she is black.

In his family's eyes, he is the golden child. But can he both be the good son his parents want him to be and also the good boyfriend that Yasmina needs him to be?

As the countdown to New Year begins, Nur has agreed to finally tell his family of the life he has been living, whatever the consequences ...

*Good Intentions* is the compelling debut by Kasim Ali and its one that is reminiscent of the likes of *The Big Sick* in



its storyline and *Ordinary People* in feel.

With a narrative that switches back and forth in time, this is a modern love story of romance and race, family and prejudice, capturing the conflicts that can underlie the most millennial of relationships.

**TITLE:** At Certain Points We Touch

**AUTHOR:** Lauren John Joseph

**PUBLISHED BY:** Bloomsbury

**PRICE:** £14.99

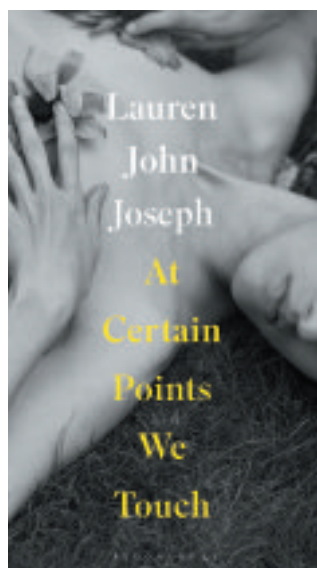
In the Tacubaya district of Mexico City, JJ is returning home from a club at 4.30am when they realise the date: February 29, the birthday of their former lover, Thomas James.

And so begins a retelling of a relationship that changed their life, sparking into life a decade before.

It was a love affair that began in the summer of graduation, fizzed with intensity and became both intoxicating and toxic in the years that followed.

Theirs was a story that began in London, but criss-crossed continents in its ongoing dance of repulsion and attraction, before ending in betrayal and tragedy.

*At Certain Points We Touch* is the first novel by Lauren John Joseph, and it's a rich and sensuous read, a coming of age



story that is full of life and love that reminded me of *The Line of Beauty*.

Tender and dark in turn, it brings the art world at its heart and its cast list of bright young things brilliantly to life.

**TITLE:** Metronome

**AUTHOR:** Tom Watson

**PUBLISHED BY:** Bloomsbury

**PRICE:** £16.99

Aina and Whitney has spent the last 12 years living in a croft on an isolate island: exiled for a crime they committed together. Every eight hours, they have to take a pill to ensure their survival. But as the deadline for their departure nears, the regular radio calls with the mysterious warden stop being answered. And when the boat to take them to freedom doesn't appear, the couple disagree as to what to do next.

Aina becomes suspicious of Whitney, and when she discovers he has been keeping secrets from her, she begins to keep secrets herself. As shipwrecks are washing up on shore, Aina begins to wonder where the biggest threat to her freedom is really coming from...

Tom Watson's first novel creates a bleak, evocative



dystopian world, with an unsettling feel that echoes the likes of Emily St John Mandel's *Station Eleven*.

This is a compellingly crafted debut, rich in tension and atmosphere.

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# IT'S TIME TO START RUNNING

**Hester Grainger** found out about RunFestRun, the ultimate feel good festival for keen runners which is coming to Englefield House in May

**I**f you are a keen runner and love a good festival then this is for you. RunFestRun is the only UK festival to combine three unforgettable days of running legends, beautiful scenic running routes and a feel-good party atmosphere. The three day festival takes place on May 20-22 2022 at Englefield House in Berkshire. The event's charity partner is Marathon Kids, who believe running has the power to show children they can achieve more than they dreamed possible.

The line-up for this year's event has just been announced and with Sophie Ellis-Bextor bringing her disco hits to the mainstage, you know you won't want to miss it. Having seen Sophie Ellis-Bextor live at Henley Festival last

**'For children and those early risers who will want to be up and running the next day, the second stage will be hosting a movie night'**

year, I am so excited that I will get to see her again. You can also dance in the moonlight with Toploader; there will be family favourites Dick & Dom to keep the children entertained and the UK's Number 1 Oasis tribute band Noasis will be on hand, providing something

for everyone to enjoy and let their hair down to. For children and those early risers who will want to be up and running the next day, the second stage will be hosting a movie night for all the family.

#### **A stunning location**

RunFestRun will take place at Englefield House, Theale near Reading. The Englefield Estate manages 14,000 acres of mainly rural land and property in West Berkshire and Hampshire between Reading, Newbury and Basingstoke. At the heart of the estate lies Englefield House, a large Grade II\* Listed building that has been home to the Benyon family for many generations. The location is one-of-a-kind, with grounds normally closed



**‘The weekend will boast a range of talks and workshops hosted on the festival’s Talks Stage by Happiness Guru Danny Bent’**



to the general public. Englefield House is an imposing mansion, with a range of richly furnished staterooms. Sitting in 12 acres of formal gardens with woodlands and a walled kitchen garden, it is enclosed by a deer park, offering far-reaching views down to our lake and across the Berkshire countryside.

The house and grounds have featured in numerous films and TV programmes including Netflix’s *Close, Jingle Jangle* and *Charlie Brooker’s Black Mirror*, ITV’s crime drama series *Unforgotten* and *Endeavour*, and Sky One’s *A League of Their Own*. Other credits include *X-Men First Class*, and *The King’s Speech*, as well as TV adverts for EE mobile phone network and Lloyds Bank.

**Get your running shoes on**

The weekend will boast a range of talks and workshops hosted on the festival’s Talks Stage by Happiness Guru Danny Bent and host of *Bad Boys Running Podcast*, David Hellard.

You can be inspired by stars, Olympians and experts including broadcaster and founder of RunPod podcast, Jenni Falconer; author Lisa Jackson; four-time Ironman Triathlon World Champion, Chrissie Wellington OBE; sports presenter and ultrarunner, Vassos Alexander; and Made In Chelsea star and founder of RunBuddy, Josh Patterson. Paula Radcliffe said: “I am ➔



so excited to be back as a team captain for RunFestRun 2022. We want everyone – families, beginners, solo and competitive runners – to come along for a fun weekend in the most breath-taking setting of Englefield House.

“I can’t wait to bring Families on Track back to the festival alongside all of the running opportunities there is available. It’s just the perfect stage to come together, enjoy and celebrate a sport so many of us love, after a tough few couple years.”

RunFestRun offers something for every level of runner, from 2.5k, 5k and 10k to half marathon; a road run suitable for buggies and wheelchairs; and the “Big Bug” Family Fun Run. For the first time, runners will also have the opportunity to join the Night Run, for adventurers who are not afraid of the dark.

Runners are encouraged to rest, recover, and relax between races in the brand new Stretch Studio, featuring a mix of group stretching classes as well as hands on, expert-assisted stretching. The new Recovery Zone will also offer hammocks, ice baths, massages and more!



### Time to refuel

When it’s time to refuel, be sure to visit one of the amazing street food traders at the festival. Runners can choose from buddha bowls to mouth-watering vegan sandwiches to every runner’s staple food: porridge!

Over 50 per cent of the vendors will be serving up delicious vegan and veggie options that are healthier for you and the planet. The Gnarbecue, Wholefood Heaven, Hola Guacamole, Tripoli Express and Oatopia will be keeping everyone energised.

Vendors will also use compostable serve-wear only and sell canned water, making the festival a plastic-free zone. So don’t forget to bring your reusable water bottle! RunFestRun is the ultimate event for those who can’t keep still. With day, weekend, and camping tickets available, you can choose a ticket that works for you.

**To book tickets visit [runfestrun.co.uk](https://runfestrun.co.uk)**  
**To find out more about Englefield Estate visit [englefieldestate.co.uk](https://englefieldestate.co.uk)**



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***Newbury Racecourse is gearing up for a fabulous new racing season with plenty of action-packed days both on and off the course for all the family***



**One of the first chances in the season to see some of the early Group races, this is always a weekend to savour, with previous winners across the two days**



**N**ewbury Racecourse has plenty in store for you in 2022, including the upcoming BetVictor Jumps Season Finale across Friday 1 and Saturday April 2. Then the action-packed 2022 Flat season kicks off over the Easter Weekend on Saturday 16 and Sunday, April 17, with the Dubai Duty Free Spring Trials meeting, where you can expect a host of action-packed family fun.

One of the first chances in the season to see some of the early Group races, this is always a weekend to savour, with previous winners across the two days including Alcohol Free, Kingman and Frankel. Two days of family fun include the Racing Experience Day on Saturday, April 16, where everyone, including young racegoers, will get the chance to have a look into the racing world with opportunities to meet and be a jockey, learn about ownership, book signings as well as a collection of fun family activities.

On Sunday, April 17 all the Easter fun starts! Get the whole family down to experience, storytelling, Easter egg hunts and crafts, a petting zoo, inflatables and much more. Harry the Horse is even joined by his good friend, the Easter Bunny!

Tickets are now on sale for all 2022 fixtures so make sure you take this opportunity to purchase early for best prices.

[newburyracecourse.co.uk](http://newburyracecourse.co.uk)



# SMART SUPPORT

Sarah Burns MBE, women's charity Smart Works Reading, chats to **Hester Grainger** about her organisation and how it is supporting International Women's Day 2022



**I**t takes a lot of confidence, self-belief, and determination to make change happen, and some women have to rely on a strong support group to help them succeed. No one knows this more than Sarah Burns, chair of Berkshire-based Smart Works Reading. It was six years ago when Sarah set up the charity, one of eight Smart Works centres across the UK, with the simple aim of helping unemployed women gain the confidence to get back to work.

Last year, despite Covid restrictions, the Reading charity delivered 345 appointments and 67% of the women who received support went on to get the job.

“One of my greatest joys is celebrating and supporting women. To see women reach their potential is what motivates me every single day,” Sarah says.

“Our goal is to ensure that each client leaves Smart Works feeling confident in her own abilities and equipped with the best possible chance of job success.”

In fact, it’s this simple mantra of ‘helping women’ that has propelled the charity to



such great success. Last year Smart Works Reading was awarded the prestigious Queens Award for Voluntary Service, the MBE for voluntary groups.

“It’s really important to make sure that our clients feel connected, courageous and confident. Clients come to us via our referral partners such as local job centres, other charities, support agencies and local schools and colleges. And we couldn’t achieve what we do for our clients without the dedication of our wonderful volunteers,” says Sarah.

The team of over 75 volunteers have a shared passion around empowering and helping women. Each client receives first class interview coaching through an expert team of over 35 volunteers, all with professional HR or coaching backgrounds.

And if that’s not enough, they each have a fabulous styling session with trained dressers so that they leave their visit with a complete outfit that is suitable for the interview. With support from retailers including Hope, ➔

## ‘Dressing and coaching unemployed women for job success is really such a simple and wonderful idea’

John Lewis, Winsor London and With Nothing Underneath, every Smart Works Reading client leaves with a complete outfit of high-quality clothes and accessories for their specific job interview. “Dressing and coaching unemployed women for job success is really such a simple and wonderful idea.

‘**T**hey spend two hours with us during their first appointment. In that time, they receive coaching and dressing which is incredible but really the most important thing they take away is a massive dose of confidence and self-belief. It really is magic. Seeing those transformative moments is so powerful,” enthuses Sarah.

### On your bike

Talking of powerful moments, this month teams of volunteers are putting their power into peddling in support of Cycle for Smart Works, an annual sponsored cycling challenge where teams of five cycle a collective 500 miles over one week.

Sarah says: “Last year local teams raised over £26,000 so we’ve got our sights set on smashing £30,000 in 2022. I’m proud to say that I stepped out of my comfort zone and took part in last year’s challenge. I loved it so much that, I’ve got my team ready to get peddling to even greater success this year.



“Cycle for Smart Works is one of our biggest fundraising events of the year and it’s wonderful to have our corporate supporters on board. Last year we had teams including from SAP, Microsoft, and Blue Yonder cycling the 500 miles, the distance between the eight Smart Works centres so it’s exciting to see who will be signing up this year.”

### Breaking the bias

The whole campaign ties in with International Women’s Day on March 8 which is such a special moment of celebration for Sarah and the whole team. As Sarah explains: “‘Break the bias’ is the theme for International Women’s Day 2022 and this year it couldn’t come at the better time.

Our key projects for this year are focused on our diversity and inclusion policy, our local partnerships and building a great presence within the community to help raise awareness of the fantastic service we offer. Collectively we can work together to celebrate the value and power of women to help them break

through the barriers that are put in their way.” The charity has a huge growth plan in place and the guiding principles remain the same, to continue to be a volunteered-powered, client-focused community ensuring that any woman who needs help is able to find their way to the Smart Works service.

“We are building on what we know works, focusing on our dressing and coaching service that has a tangible impact on the lives of our clients,” adds Sarah.

The future certainly looks bright for Smart Works Reading. “I come back to my mantra of ‘helping women’. It’s incredible what we can achieve if we lift each other.

By improving our support, extending our services to more women, and spreading the word about the work we are doing, well, there’s nothing we can’t achieve when we work together.” To find out more about Smart Works Reading and to get involved, please visit the website.

[reading.smartworks.org.uk](http://reading.smartworks.org.uk)



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# THE SUPPORT TEAM

*Going behind the scenes with the dedicated teams who care for racehorses ahead of Cheltenham Festival*

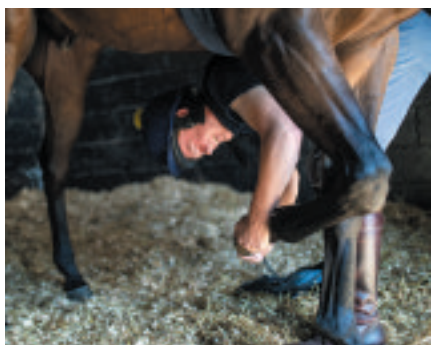


**K**nown as the Olympics of horseracing, it is no surprise that it “takes a village” to get the equine athletes to the start line during Cheltenham Festival. From 15-18 March, more than 150 horses will perform on one of horseracing’s greatest stages.

The thrill of horseracing has long captured our nation, in fact it’s our second biggest spectator sport. Cheltenham Festival itself hosts some of racing’s most talented animals and one of Jump racing’s most famed races, the Cheltenham Gold Cup that dates back to 1924. It is made clear by the racegoer’s legendary “Cheltenham roar” when a horse crosses the winning line, what an exhilarating and heart-warming sport horseracing is.

But the high-octane thrill of the raceday is a far cry from the calmer day-to-day life of these spectacular athletes. Whether it’s a morning run on the gallops, taking a restorative swim in a state-of-the-art equine swimming pool or a physiotherapy session to ease away any





**‘The thrill of horseracing has long captured our nation, in fact it’s our second biggest spectator sport. Cheltenham Festival itself hosts some of racing’s most talented animals’**

aching muscles, there’s a huge team involved in keeping a racehorse fit and healthy.

Like all athletes, racehorses have tailored training programmes to suit their individual needs and it takes an extraordinary partnership between a racehorse and those that support it to understand what works best.

Typically, a racehorse will have a team of at least six core people involved in the 365 days of care and raceday preparation. The core team is made up of a trainer, yard staff, work rider, farrier, vet and physio not to mention the wider dedicated team members such as the secretary, jockey, nutritionist, chiropractor, traveling team and equine dentist.

#### THE TEAM

**Trainer** – In charge of the running of the yard. It is their job to observe and know each horse individually. needs. They will plan a horse’s season and training accordingly.

**Work rider** – Rides the horse during training and is responsible for getting to know each horse to be able to give performance feedback to the trainer.

**Vet** – Regularly monitors each horse’s health and wellbeing. Tends to any horse with injury



**Secretary** – Responsible for entering horse in races and supporting logistics with all staff in the yard.

**Traveling team** – Responsible for the care of horses on a raceday. The travelling team will take charge of logistics and the horses wellbeing.

**Equine dentist** – Ensures that the horse is healthy and comfortable during its work.

**Jockey** – Rides the horse in the race and will school the horse over fences during training

**Farrier** – Responsible for looking after horse’s feet and shoeing the horse during training and pre-race (usually every four to six weeks).

**Physio** – Regularly visits racing yards to give horses pre and post-race care.

**Nutritionist** – Ensures that each horse has appropriate food to suit its temperament and amount of work during training.

**Yard staff** – Responsible for feeding and caring for the horse. This includes mucking out, washing horse and grooming.

**Chiropractor** – Visits yards to tend to horses during their off-season.

Yard staff spend the most time with the horse and have a vital role to play in a racehorse’s day-to-day care that contributes to their performance on a raceday. Each

#### Cheltenham Festival, the facts:

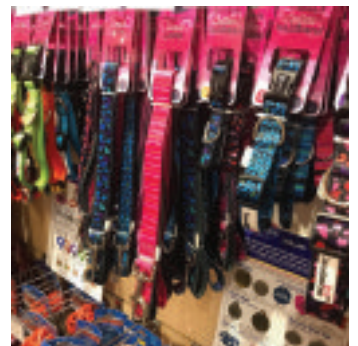
- 12,320 yards of running rails surrounding the track.
- 5,000 bundles of birch used every season to make the jumps.
- 28 Jump races run during Cheltenham Festival.
- 22 fences jumped during the Cheltenham Gold Cup.
- Five feature races run during the meeting including the Cheltenham Gold Cup, Betway Queen Mother Champion Chase, Unibet Champion Hurdle, the Ryanair Chase, and The Paddy Power Stayers’ Hurdle.
- The Gold Cup dates back to 1924 when Red Splash ridden by Dick Rees won.
- The shortest distance raced is two miles.
- On average 65,000 people attend the festival each day.

horse will be tended to by a member of yard staff who will feed them, wash them down after exercise, ensure the horse is the right temperature and often travel with the horse when racing for familiarity. It is also their duty to make sure the space in and around the yard is well-kept to create a calm and relaxing atmosphere each day.

Local trainers including Nicky Henderson, Warren Greatrex and Jamie Snowden will have racehorses competing during prestigious sporting event.

To find out more about the welfare of horseracing’s stars visit the website. *Cheltenham Festival* will air live on ITV Racing March 15-18.

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# HS2: Creating jobs and boosting skills in Buckinghamshire

By Helen Samuels, Managing Director, Eiffage, Kier, Ferrovial Construction and BAM Nuttall (EKFB), a joint venture partnership and main works contractor for HS2 Ltd

## What is HS2?

High Speed Two (HS2) is Britain's new zero carbon, high-speed railway. Currently under construction between London and the West Midlands, it's the largest infrastructure project in Europe and the most important economic and social regeneration project in Britain for decades. More than 34,000 people will be needed to help build the railway, including over 5,200 roles in and around Buckinghamshire.

Currently, more than 20,000 people, including graduates and 825 apprentices, are working on HS2. There is a plethora of job opportunities available for local people to be part of this once-in-a-lifetime project.

## What is the role of EKFB?

We're a joint venture civil engineering organisation, delivering a 50-mile section of HS2 that passes through Buckinghamshire and three other neighbouring counties.

Our work includes building 15 viaducts and over four miles of 'green tunnels' to help minimise our impact on the environment and local residents.

It's an honour to work in Buckinghamshire and lead such a fantastic and diverse team of people, as we build something for the entire country to be proud of. We're also proud to be working with and supporting our local communities. From STEM engagement with local schools to traffic management, we're doing all we can to minimise disruption and add value.

## What opportunities are there for people new to the industry?

We believe that whatever your experience or expertise, the HS2 project is a great place to start or develop your career.

Working with HS2 Ltd, we are delivering a programme of skills, education and employment activities to meet the requirements to build the railway. Together, we want to leave a legacy of a highly skilled and diverse workforce that will serve Britain for the future.



From learning to operate dumper trucks and excavators, or those looking to boost management skills, we have trained hundreds of people over the last year in partnership with local education providers close to our sites, including Buckinghamshire College Group.

## What roles are you currently recruiting for?

There's so much more than just tracks and trains involved in building a modern, high-speed railway, and you don't have to be an engineer to work in engineering.

We're currently supporting 900 roles in the area – and many more in the local supply chain. Additionally, we're looking to recruit 2,500 skilled operatives and have hundreds of office-based jobs coming up in the next few years. We'll need construction workers and site engineers, ecologists and IT specialists, project managers and designers. Everyone plays a part, and everyone counts.

## What opportunities are available for apprentices?

We are currently recruiting for 11 new apprentice roles on HS2 with two of our parent companies, Eiffage and Ferrovial

Construction. The jobs will be based in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire with opportunities in Civil Engineering, Business Administration, Project Controls, Commercial and Procurement.

## How do I find out more?

To see all the current available opportunities and to apply, visit [hs2.org.uk/careers](https://hs2.org.uk/careers)



Working in  
partnership with

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# Business Lasting Powers of Attorney

## What are they?

Most people are aware of Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPAs). These are legal documents which allow an individual or individuals referred to as your attorneys to manage your affairs. You can appoint your attorneys to either manage your 'Property and Financial' or 'Health and Welfare' affairs.

A Business LPA is a useful document which allows a business owner to appoint an attorney or attorneys to make decisions in the best interests of the organisation should the owner become mentally incapacitated, is abroad on holiday or business or has had an accident and does not have the capabilities to make a decision.

Business Lasting Powers of Attorney can be useful for business either as Sole Traders, Limited Liability Partnerships, Traditional Partnerships and Directors.

## What do they do?

The Business LPA would allow the appointed individuals or individuals to make decisions such as authorising the payment of invoices, signing company cheques, instructing employees to perform key tasks, employing new members of staff and dealing with the daily business activities.

## Who should I appoint?

It is advisable that the attorney is familiar with the business and is someone who can be entrusted with the affairs of the business.

The attorney should be someone who is confident, trustworthy, competent, reliable and can undertake the tasks to manage the business in the absence of the owner.

In the best interests of the business it may be pertinent to appoint two attorneys- one to deal with the dealings / everyday activities of the business (e.g. business accountant or employee) and the other attorney who deals with the personal financial issues (e.g. a member of the family).

## The Implications of not preparing a business Lasting Power of Attorney

If there is no business lasting powers of attorney in place, this could prove to be extremely detrimental to the business. If this is the case and there is an absence of a business lasting power of attorney, an application would need to be made and submitted to the Court of Protection which is time consuming and expensive. During this period, the business may suffer with no one in person to manage the daily affairs.

If you need advice in respect of these documents, please do not hesitate to contact the Wills, Trusts and Probate team at Blaser Mills Law on 0203 814 2020 or email [enquiries@blasermills.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@blasermills.co.uk).

## About Blaser Mills Law

With existing offices in London, High Wycombe, Amersham, and Silverstone, Blaser Mills Law has become recognised as one of the top full-service law firms in London and the Southeast.

The firm consistently ranks in the Legal 500 and Chambers UK Guide and, last year, secured a spot in the Legal 500 rankings for the seventh year running, with 10 practice areas listed and an additional 31 lawyers

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# BEV IS A BEAUTY

**Ian Lamming** has his interest sparked by a new name in the automotive industry, the Scandinavian Polestar2, which exceeds all expectations



Our collective heads are all over the place at the moment so why not launch a new brand? Not only do we have myriad marques, model types and specifications to consider but the added complication of whether we choose the familiar diesels and petrols or be brave and sensible and have a long hard look at electrics. There has been a massive shift towards clean battery-powered electric vehicles (now called BEVs) in recent times helped by the soaring price of crude oil, more affordable car prices and longer ranges.

Scandinavia has always been ahead of the ecology game, so it's no surprise that the new name should come from Sweden and have the support of Volvo.

Welcome Polestar2, a fully electric volume model with more than a hint of Volvo about it. It is a clean cut, high quality, five-door fastback and a very appealing alternative to mainstream brands.

The Polestar 2 model range now includes three variants – the long range dual motors with 300 kW, 408hp/660Nm, the long range single motor with 170kW, 231 hp/330Nm and the standard range single motor offering 165kW, 224 hp/330Nm. There are also three option packages – Pilot, Plus and Performance – to keep the choices simple.

Which did I have? Haven't a clue as I forgot to ask. If I had to guess I'd say the single motor variant and if that's correct it was more than enough car for me.

With BEVs, range is everything if you are to avoid the anxiety associated with the switch from fossil fuels to electric. Even the entry level model has more than enough performance, power that is so instant and controllable that it makes all internal combustion engines feel sluggish and unrefined. That said, in electrics your speed will seldom exceed 60mph on a long journey as after that point on the speedo it chomps through the battery reserve at an alarming rate.

Drive local and you are care-free, enjoying the blistering performance this BEV offers. If you have to travel 75 miles in one direction then you need to pace yourself to ensure you have enough charge to get back. You always do, generally with 30 per cent left in the cells, it's just a confidence thing but one that grows quickly the more journeys you make.

So, Polestar2 looks smart, modern, classy and from the rear is striking thanks to lights that stretch the full width of the car. It is also fabulous to drive with an attractive price tag.





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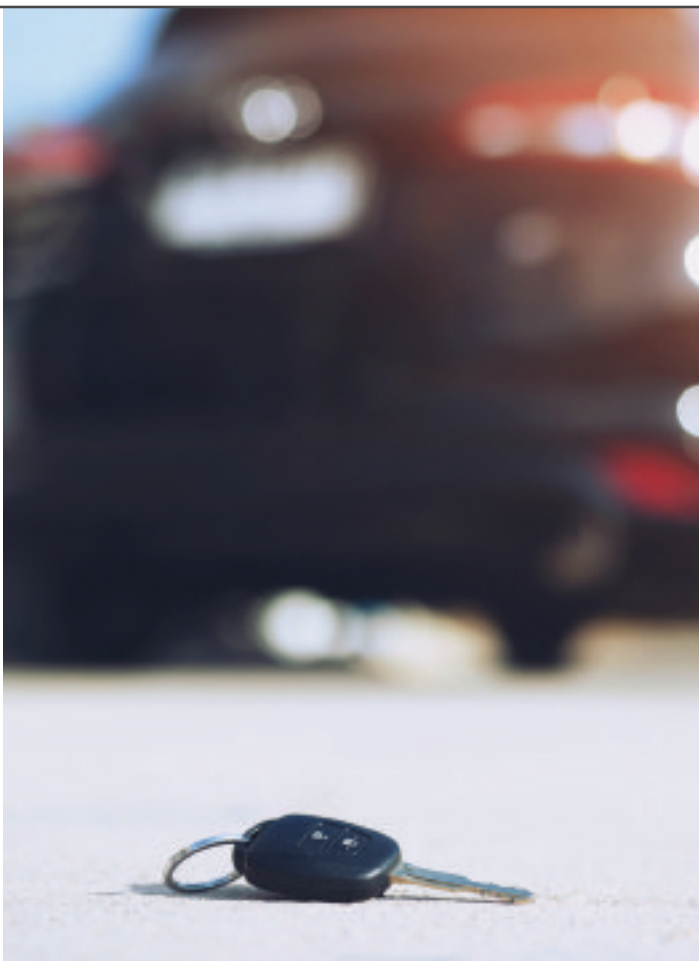
## Spare sets

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## MY BERKSHIRE

# JOYCE CONNOR

Joyce Connor has been working make-up magic on people across the county for years, and here shares her business achievements and what she loves about Berkshire

**J**oyce Connor is a professional make-up artist and runs Joyce Connor Make-up. Joyce shares why she loves Berkshire and her favourite way to spend a rare day off. Joyce is the go-to make-up artist for brides and also works on photoshoots including fashion, commercial, corporate and bridal. She also offers lessons and workshops in make-up, skincare and beauty. On top of all of this Joyce writes for various magazines and blogs and is a regular guest on BBC Radio Berkshire.

### Tell us about your business?

My business is helping women with their skincare and make-up. I set up my business 25 years ago. I had skin problems and had no idea how to do my own make-up. I was living in New York at the time and after visiting several counters and loving having my make-up done, I wanted to give that feeling back to others.

So on my return to the U.K. I enrolled on a beauty and make-up course at college and have been doing skincare and make-up ever since. I absolutely love what I do, making others feel good about how they look. My business is known for flawless skin and natural make-up looks.

### What has been your proudest achievement?

My proudest moment was being picked to appear in a Boots no.7 advert on TV last year. I felt absolutely amazing on the day of filming. Because I work hard on having a good skincare routine, I appeared make-up free in the advert!

### Where do you get your inspiration from?

I'm always inspired by keeping up to date with new make-up products and skincare ingredients. I love to watch Instagram posts to see what's new and trending. I design and create make-up looks for each individual person. No two faces are the

**'Most of my customers are over aged 30 so I tend to follow other artists and brands that target that age group'**



same. Most of my customers are over aged 30 so I tend to follow other artists and brands that target that age group.

### What is your favourite thing to do on a day off?

When I get a day off I like to book lunch with friends. It's great to have a catch up and eat nice food. I also love afternoon tea and have tried most of the places in Berkshire. Or a day spa to have a total wind down day. There's nothing better than to completely switch off from everything for a day!

### What is your favourite view/walk/place to eat in the county?

Whenever I have time to go somewhere in Berkshire it has to be Windsor. I love seeing

the castle, even though I have been there numerous times before. I think Windsor has everything, the river for nice walks, cute shops and so much history.

Choosing a favourite restaurant is a tough one! Best Sunday roast: Carnarvon Arms, Highclere. Best afternoon tea: Coworth Park, Ascot. Best lunch: The Bunk Inn Newbury. Best evening dining: The Reading Room, Reading.

### How would you summarise the county in one word?

In one word – Glorious!

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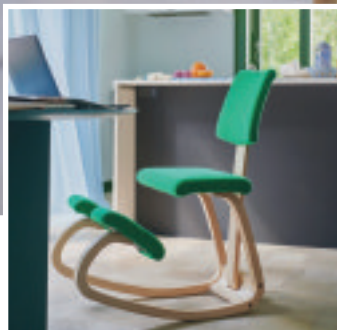
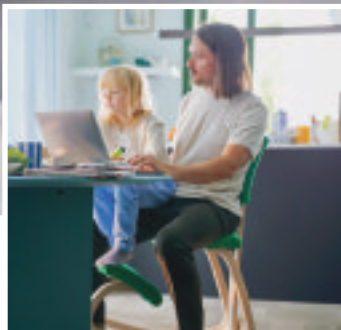


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