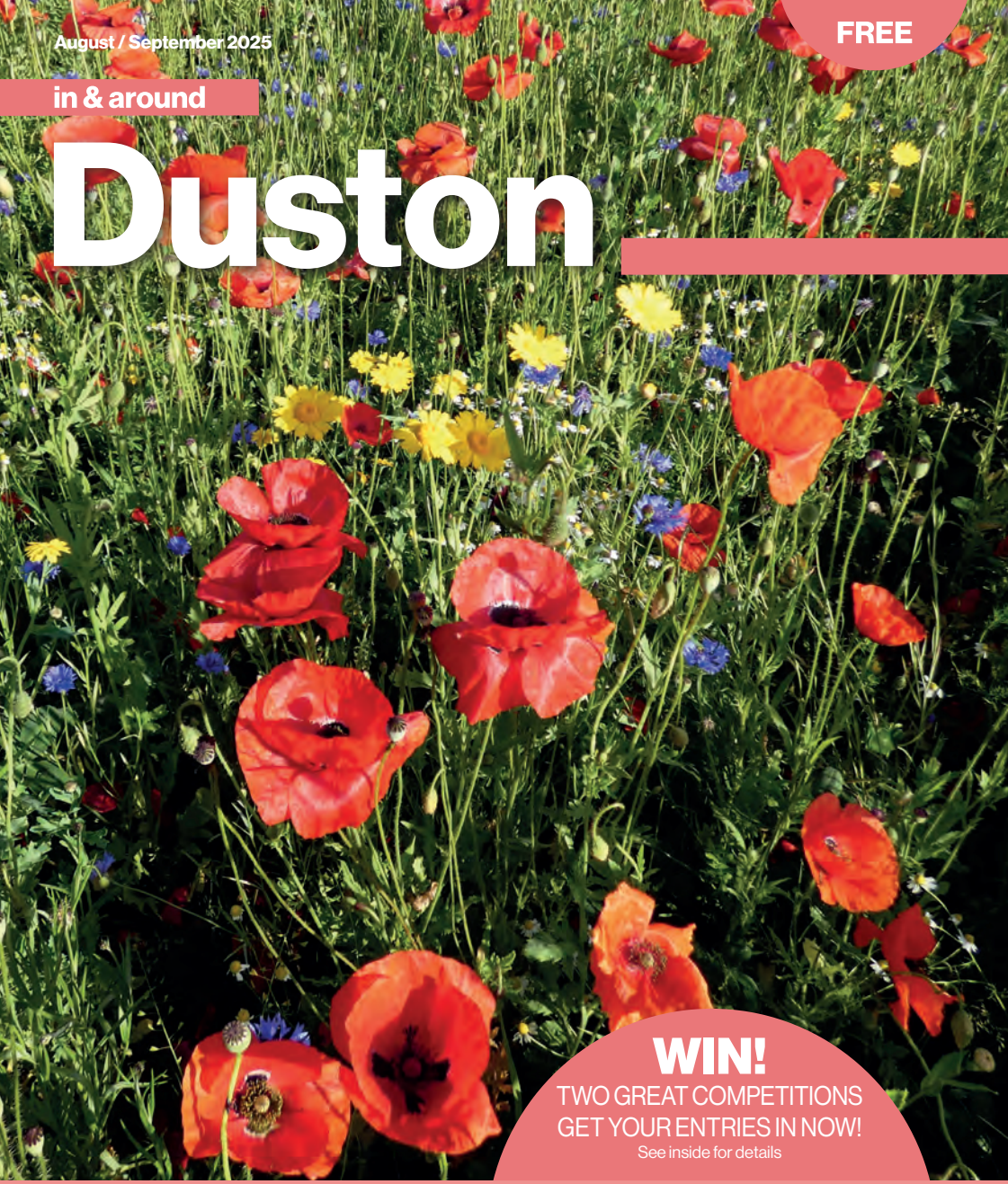
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Cover Image: The Poppyfields at Brampton, with thanks to Mary Mason

Hello and welcome to our Aug/Sep edition!

This bumper issue is packed with great reads, including a feature on the upcoming Women's Rugby World Cup. Did you know that six of the matches will be held right here at Franklin's Gardens? See p56 for all the details.

With the summer holidays upon us, are you looking for fun activities to enjoy with the kids or grandkids? We've included an article full of ideas to help them start their own mini gardening patch – even a simple shoebox can be the perfect place to begin if space is tight!

We're also thrilled to have the support of The Old Savoy, who are giving away 5 pairs of tickets to a show celebrating the music of Ed Sheeran. Plus, Whittlebury Hall is offering tickets for a group of four to enjoy a thrilling murder mystery night!

We hope you enjoy reading this issue!

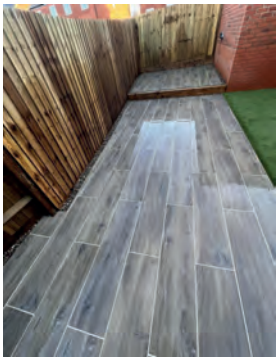
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Russell Keane
Branch Manager

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When talking to the Manager of Cloudy2Clear Northampton & Oxford, Trevor Skidmore, it became evident that the value of saving their customers money has been held dear for a number of years. Since buying the franchise in 2006, Trevor & and his wife Wendy now have their 2 sons, Lloyd & Ross, and daughter in law Lori, involved along with Dan, Tom & Jo, and they have committed to supporting the local community by providing a service that saves the public both time and money.

The Cloudy2Clear service only requires the glass to be replaced and not the whole window once the unit has failed. Trevor commented, "By doing this we make the customer considerable savings and there is much less upheaval in the family home. Also, whether communities find themselves in a financial crisis or not, saving money when you don't need to waste it is always the sensible option, and our truly family service does just that"



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The company, based locally, offers homeowners the opportunity to maximise their storage space with a loft ladder, 50sqft of boarding and a light - all fully fitted in less than a day from just £355! But it's not just the affordability of the package that makes Home Counties Loft Ladders stand out, as manager Jamie Oakley explains: 'Our watchwords are Quality, Integrity and Value. Quality in the materials that we use for all our installations and the fact that all our loft packages are fitted by time served tradesmen, so our customers are assured of the best job.

Integrity in that we will turn up at the time we say and make sure the house is spotless when we leave, and value in that we offer our services at a price people can afford.

Our business relies on referrals and we get a huge amount of our calls from people who have been referred to us by our existing customers - that simply wouldn't happen if we didn't adhere to our overriding principles.

At the end of the day the old adage that happy customers lead to more happy customers is true and we work hard to make that happen for every installation we carry out!' So, if you want to make use of your loft space, call **Jamie free on 0808 301 9559** and he'll be happy to pop round and give you a no obligation quote so you too can make use of your loft!

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Ready for your summer holidays...but is your garden?

So here we are in August and it is holiday time for many of us. The garden has been filled with summer colour and is looking great but how will it look when you get back?

Here are a few helpful tips to make sure your garden is ready for you to leave it and to ensure on your return there is not too much work needed to bring it back to perfection.

Watering

Watering will be needed to be done while you are away so if you have asked neighbours, friends or family here are a few tips to make sure their job is as easy as possible for them.

Hanging baskets always dry out more than pots on the ground as they have air circulating all around them and can be more difficult to water, so bring them down to ground level to make watering them easier. This will also help to prevent them drying out so quickly too, you could stand them on the floor or in pots to raise them off the ground slightly so as not to damage those trailing blooms.

Cluster your pots and baskets together in one place so none of them are accidently forgotten about. Putting all your pots and baskets in one place with easy access to the tap will also make watering them easier.

Move your pots and baskets out of the direct sun. This will reduce how often they will need to be watered while you are away. This is a good idea if you are not planning to get anyone in to water, your plants .

Deadheading

Removing the dead flowers on your plants not only keeps them looking nice and fresh but will also encourage the next set of buds to be produced. If the flower heads are left on once they have gone over, the plant begins to put its energy into making seeds rather than producing more flowers for you.

A really good idea is to not only dead head your plants before you go on holiday but to take off all good flowers too and just leave the



Bidens "Blazing Star"

buds. This will mean the plant will get on with producing more flowers and buds for you for and when you come home from your holidays there will be little to no dead heading needed on your return.

The Veg plot

Before you head off on your holidays make sure you harvest all of your veg crops even if they are a bit small. Better to get it off the plant and give away to friends and neighbours than to leave it on the plants to get too big and to go mouldy. Encourage friends and neighbours to harvest your plants while you are away to prevent too much wastage.

Lawn care

Give the lawn a last minute cut even if it is still a little short, this way it hopefully won't be too long by the time you get home.

Green houses

If you still have plants in your greenhouse, consider moving them outside before you go away – especially if we get two weeks of full sunshine! Greenhouses can become too hot for many plants at this time of year.

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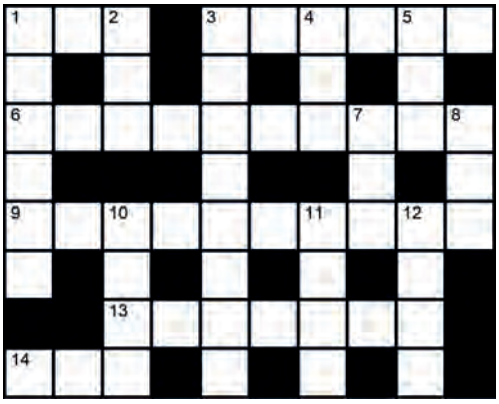
Sudoku

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

Mini Cross

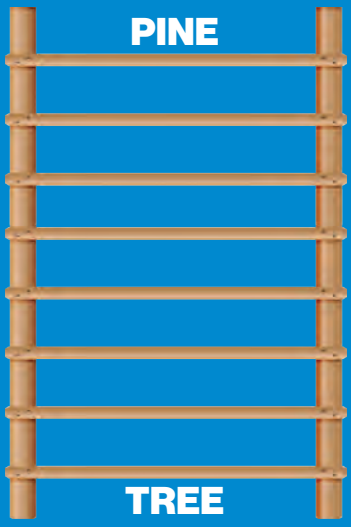
Solve the anagrams, then put the words into the grid.

AMR	IKS	INOT	ADEEIMRT
ASW	IST	NSTU	AEEHRTT
BMO	NRU	ACDEIV	ABIINORSTV
EOR	DEEN	DEEERST	CEEINNNOTV



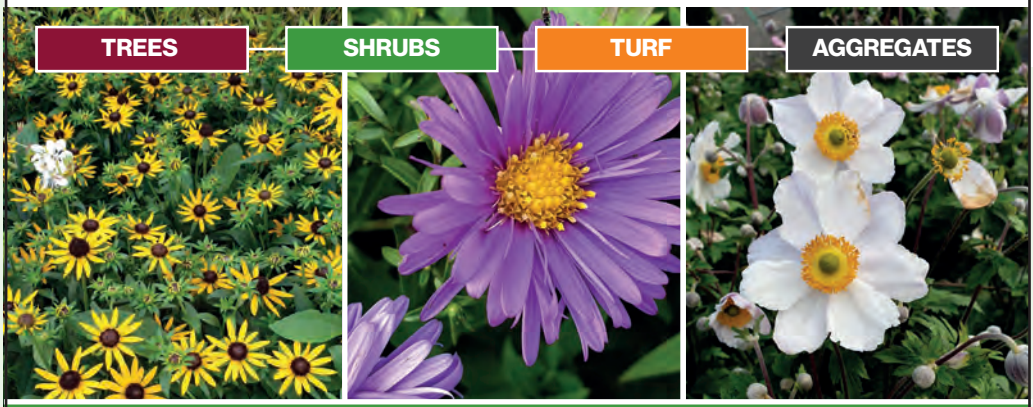
Wordladder

Change one letter at a time (but not the position of any letter) to make a new word moving from top to bottom.



Answers on p60

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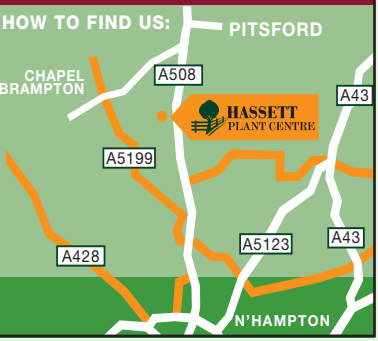
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How much do you love your wife?

Being newish to Northampton, I was somewhat confused when, whichever way I drove into Northampton, there was an electric sign saying about delays at Eleanor's Cross Roundabout.

Where was this? I was thinking, and then it clicked — the roundabout at the end of Mereway and over the A45 dual carriageway.

Why is that called Eleanor's Cross Roundabout, and what is the history behind it?

Queen Eleanor of Castile, born in 1241 in Spain, was married to King Edward I for 36 years. In 1290, during a Royal Entry in the Midlands, she fell ill and died at Harby while traveling from Clipstone to Lincoln.

Edward was grief-stricken, as he was deeply in love with the lady who had borne him 16 children, including four boys—though only one survived infancy. He arranged for her body to be brought to London for burial, which in those days meant a journey of at least 13 days. Each night, they stopped somewhere along the way, and between 1291 and 1295, it was decided to build



12 crosses at each of the stopping places.

One of Eleanor's Crosses was built in Northampton, on London Road in Hardingstone, about a hundred yards down from the roundabout. Sadly, the cross from the top of the structure is missing, but the main part of the monument is still there.

Duston Local History Society
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Busy Beavers Boost the Wetlands

Back in February this year, The Wildlife Trust BCN reintroduced a family of beavers into Delta Pit at the Nene Wetlands.

The beavers have been settling in very well so far, and we are already seeing the positive effects they can have on nature reserves. They have begun trimming the young stems of previously coppiced willow and have also moved on to felling bigger trees. They move to different areas, allowing previously used areas to regenerate naturally– a technique the reserves team often carry out themselves.

It's been a great example of how these creatures really are masters of their craft, instinctively finding the balance in creating disturbance to fuel new regeneration. Nature knows best, after all! By carrying out this work—creating dams, making ponds, and forming canals to swim around their territory – beavers create habitats that help lots of other wildlife to thrive.

The Trust are looking forward to seeing how the beavers will transform Delta Pit into a haven for wildlife. The team are also busy engaging with visitors, with lots of exciting beaver events planned. Make sure to keep an eye out for more information! You can also keep up to date with the latest trail camera footage of the beavers on The Wildlife Trust BCN website.


© The Beaver Trust

The summer holidays are also fast approaching, and there are lots of fun wildlife activities planned for all ages. Have a go at some bushcraft activities, become a nature detective, discover the magic of wild science – and so much more! Visit **wildlifebcn.org/school-holidays** for all the information.

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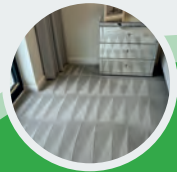


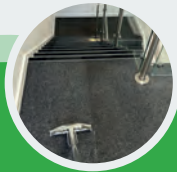
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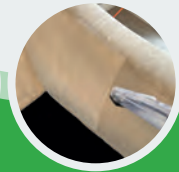
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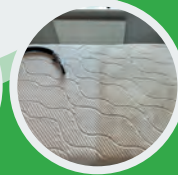
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Taking Care of Your Bones: Why It Matters

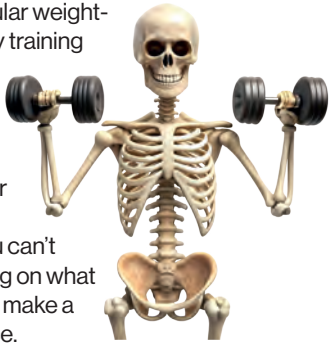
Bone health is something most of us don't think about until it becomes an issue. But it plays a vital role in our overall wellbeing, especially as we get older.

This article looks at osteoporosis, a condition that weakens bones and increases the risk of fractures. It develops gradually and is often not picked up until a fall causes a break. The good news? There are practical steps you can take to reduce your risk.

One of the most effective changes you can make is to stop smoking. Smoking interferes with your bone-building cells, lowers bone mineral density, and increases fracture risk. Reducing alcohol also helps, as higher alcohol consumption is linked to lower bone density and more fractures.

Eating well will support both your bone strength and help maintain a healthy weight. Aim for whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, with adequate calcium and vitamin D intake, and reduce your caffeine and fizzy drinks.

Balance and strength exercises are important, with regular weight-bearing and stability training reducing your fall and fracture risk by about 25-30%.



There are some risk factors, like your age, sex, genetics, or ethnicity, that you can't change, but focusing on what you can change will make a significant difference.

The best news is that it's never too late to start improving your bone health, and even after an osteoporosis diagnosis, you can make positive changes to benefit not just your bones but your overall health – and your body will thank you for it.



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Animals in Need Northamptonshire

This summer, make a difference close to home by supporting Animals in Need, the Northamptonshire-based rescue charity that provides vital care for abandoned, abused, and neglected animals all year round.

Our annual **Summer Fayre** on Sunday 14th September is fast approaching – a much-loved community event filled with family fun, stalls, vegan food, and the chance to meet some of the animals you're helping to support. It's not only a great day out, but a crucial fundraiser for the sanctuary.

Adding a fiery twist to this year's events is the **Fire & Glass Walk Challenge** on Friday 10th October, organised via Facebook. Brave participants will walk barefoot across burning embers and broken glass to raise money and awareness for the charity. Whether you're walking or cheering on from the sidelines, it's a spectacle you won't want to miss!



Beyond the big annual events, our **Abington-based charity shop** is always in need of donations and customers (Lea Road, NN1).

From clothes to bric-a-brac, every sale helps fund food, veterinary care, and shelter for animals in need. If you're clearing out this summer, or just fancy a browse, visiting the shop is an easy way to support us.

Animals in Need relies heavily on public support to keep going - so whether you attend the annual fayre, donate to the charity shop, or simply spread the word, your help really matters.

Find out more on the Animals in Need Facebook page or visit **animals-in-need.org** for the latest news, animals who need homes and all the work we do!

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Friends of West Hunsbury Parks

The Friends are looking forward to the return of the Vikings to Hunsbury Hill Country Park.

The event was nearly cancelled after West Northants Council introduced new land-use fees. For a small volunteer group like the Friends – who run FREE events and rely on fundraising – this was a major blow.

Our Chairman negotiated a reduced fee, citing our history of responsible, litter-free events. With help from a Parish Council grant, we avoided cancellation. However, this will be the last event of its kind we can organise, as it will use up our available funds.

Future events may be run by the Parish Council, with support from the Friends.

The Friends and Hunsbury Hill WI chose to leave the VE display at the Country Park entrance in place until VJ Day in August. It honours those who continued fighting in the Far East until 15th August 1945, and also aligns with Britain in Bloom, held in July/August.

The next Friends' Quiz Night is at St Benedict's Church on Friday, October 24th. These are always great fun, with refreshments and a raffle. We'll post a reminder on our website and Facebook page nearer the time.

Stay updated on our activities via Facebook, Instagram or our website: www.friendsofwesthunsburyparks.org.uk





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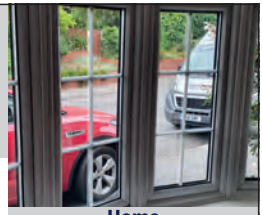
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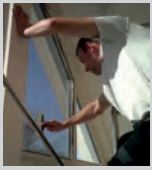


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Make gardening kids' play

With the start of the new school year, it's a good time to encourage any children in your life to develop a lifelong interest in plants. Donate a small patch of garden and help them design it.

Have you heard of a zoo garden? The plant names represent animals and each can be labelled, perhaps using a model of the animal. Here are a few easy-to-grow, child-friendly examples:

Lamb's ear refers to *Stachys byzantina*, a drought-tolerant evergreen perennial that forms a carpet of soft, fluffy 'ears'. Leaves and stems are covered in white, woolly hairs.

Bergenia cordifolia, or elephant's ears, is an easy-to-grow evergreen with big, tough leaves that look just slightly like the ears of Dumbo.

Catnip is *Nepeta cataria*, a member of the mint family, and cats love to roll around in it thanks to the chemical compound Nepetalactone, which is also an insect repellent.



Dogwoods *(Cornus sanguinea or alba)* are shrubs that are brilliant in winter. Cut them down to the ground in very early spring and the new growth will give you vertical stems of colour next year.

Fleabane *(Erigeron karvinskianus)* was so named because it was believed the dried leaves and flowers repelled fleas. This little daisy-like perennial self-seeds into cracks and dry places.

Try building a miniature garden in an unusual container such as a dish, bottle, box or shoe. It's not only the kids who'll become enthralled.

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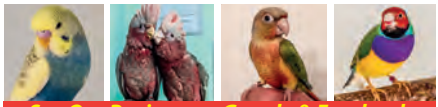
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Hit the sweet spot!
Apple tarte tatin

Ingredients

75g ready-rolled puff pastry
35g caster sugar
30g butter
¼ tsp vanilla extract
A small pinch of salt
140g baking apples cut into 1cm slices

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C, 160°C fan, gas mark 4.
2. Unroll your pastry sheet and cut it into a circle the size of a cast-iron frying pan.
3. Melt the sugar in the pan over medium heat without stirring. Swirl gently as it turns golden – this takes about 4–5 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and stir in the butter, vanilla, and a small pinch of salt.
5. Arrange apples over the caramel in a single layer. Cover with the pastry, tucking in the edges. Bake for 25 minutes or until crisp and golden.
6. Once baked, take your serving plate and place it face down on top of the skillet. Carefully but confidently flip the plate and skillet over, turning out the tarte so the apples face upwards. Serve with whipped cream, ice cream or creme fraiche

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Seeds of Change: *How to Plant New Intentions for Autumn Growth*



As summer begins to fade and the first signs of autumn appear, it's easy to feel like the year is slipping away. But this moment, right now, is the perfect time to pause, reflect, and plant fresh intentions for the months ahead.

Nature doesn't rush into change; it transitions with purpose. And you can do the same.

Start by asking yourself: *What do I want to carry forward, and what is it time to release?* Whether it's old habits, limiting beliefs, or emotional clutter, letting go creates the space you need to grow.

Then, get intentional. Think of this season as your personal planting time. What would you like to see blossom by the end of the year, more confidence, better balance, deeper connection, inner calm? Write it down. Speak it out loud, plant those seeds and begin to water those ideas with belief and small, consistent action.

Remember, growth doesn't always look dramatic. Sometimes it's quiet, steady, and unseen until one day, everything feels lighter.

Autumn is often seen as a winding down, but it's also a beginning. A chance to change direction, reconnect with yourself, and nurture something new.

If you're ready to plant your own seeds of change and grow with intention, I'm here to support you because your next chapter is ready when you are.

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What is the name of Ed Sheeran's first album?

A. ÷ B. X or C. +

Email your answer to: enter@northamptonmagazines.com by 8th September 2025, along with your full name, address and telephone number. Please ensure you include 'Shape of You Competition' in the subject line of the email. The lucky winners will be notified by 12th September 2025.

T & C's: Winners will be notified via email by 12th September 2025. The prize is ONE OF 5 pairs of tickets (2 tickets) for Shape of You on 11th October 2025. Seats must be booked by 25th September 2025. Travel is not included. Tickets are non-transferable. No cash or alternative will be given. If for any reason the show does not go ahead no alternative will be offered.


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Healthy Brain

by Felicia Jones



There's increasing news about Alzheimer's and dementia, which can be both informative and scary. But there are many things we can do to support mental health and maintain cognition. Let's look at a few.

Eat well – Our brains are about 60% fat, so it's important to consume the right types of fat: healthy Essential Fatty Acids (EFAs).

These are found in nuts, seeds, avocados, oils (olive, rapeseed, sunflower), fish (trout, salmon, sardines, herring, kippers), and also tofu and soy.

Stimulate the brain – Puzzles and crosswords can improve brain function, as can learning new skills like dancing, swimming, or graphic design. This helps create new neural pathways, and with practice, these connections grow stronger.

Dr. Michael Mosley also suggests balancing on one leg. It sounds funny, but it's challenging and involves muscles, the sensory system, and nerve cells – stimulating the brain.

Laugh – Have fun! Reducing stress and breathing well supports brain health.

This week, focus on food, balance, and laughter! More info in my healthy ageing guide: mailchi.mp/9acfc7e57d8a/eejk7aauiv

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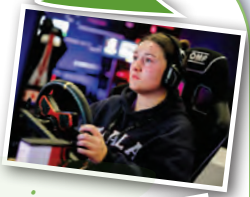
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Onions, **garlic**, and **chives** can damage red blood cells in cats and dogs, causing anemia. Rabbits may suffer digestive issues from them as well.

Dairy products often upset the stomachs of cats and dogs, many of which are lactose intolerant. Rabbits cannot process animal-derived foods at all.



Xylitol, a sugar substitute, is toxic to dogs. It can cause a rapid insulin release, leading to hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), seizures, liver failure, or death.

Raw dough can expand in the stomach and produce alcohol, leading to vomiting, diarrhea, coordination problems, central nervous system depression, and potentially death.

Avocados contain persin. While dogs and cats can tolerate small amounts, it may cause respiratory distress and heart failure in rabbits.

If your pet ingests any of these foods, contact a veterinarian immediately.




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Time for tea

What could be more British or more delicious than afternoon tea?

It was a glorious summer afternoon when my visiting French friend and I popped into a teashop in the charming medieval town of Dunster in Somerset.

There, within sight of the old yarn market, we gorged on huge homemade scones heaped high with local clotted cream and strawberry jam, and sipped tea from pretty blue and white china teacups that clinked delicately when we placed them on their saucers. It was a quintessential English ritual and my friend was delighted.

Tea-rific story

Afternoon tea in Britain has a fascinating past. Its invention in the 1840s is attributed to Anna Russell, Duchess of Bedford. Feeling peckish around 5pm and knowing dinner wouldn't be served until close to 9pm, she asked her servants for bread and butter and cake to go with her habitual cup of tea. She started inviting her friends to join her for tea at her home, Woburn Abbey. Queen Victoria was a close confidant, so it's possible that's how the monarch adopted the habit herself. In any event, a new tradition was born.

The craze affected society in sometimes surprising ways. It influenced fashion, from Victorian ladies' loose tea gowns, designed to be worn without corsets while entertaining





at home, to the colourful tea dresses of the post-Second World War era – and even those we're wearing this summer. The women's suffrage movement grew in strength thanks to discussions over tea and cakes in drawing rooms and tea rooms.

Tea dances were all the rage from around 1910. During the Second World War, they were a place for soldiers to unwind by jiving or dancing the Lindy Hop. Countless couples met and married thanks to a social event based on afternoon tea!

Who would have thought a steaming cuppa, accompanied by dainty sandwiches and cakes – not to mention the classic cream tea – could be so embedded in our culture?

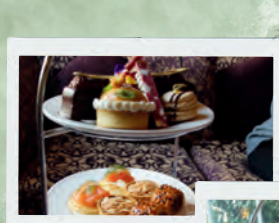
Storm in a teacup?

But where there's a concept, there's controversy. Do you put the tea or the milk in first? Originally, if you wanted to show you had a superior tea service, you poured the hot tea first in the certain knowledge the china wouldn't crack. But experts say that adding the milk first gives a better taste.

The battle about whether to spread cream or jam on your scone first continues to rage too. In Devon, it's clotted cream before the jam – and Devon is the home of the cream tea, right? With that argument settled, you can start fighting over how to pronounce 'scone'.

What's hard to dispute is the unique pleasure of afternoon tea, whether it's in a summer garden or beside a roaring fire in winter, whether you're sitting in a cosy café or living it up at the Ritz.

Afternoon Tea Week runs from 11-17 August. For more information, visit www.afternoontea.co.uk.





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When the Heat Hits Home, Head to Cromer!

by Maria Fox

Here in Northants, we've been basking in sweltering heatwaves, with temperatures soaring past 32°C, UV levels peaking, and nights barely dipping below 19 degrees.

It's felt more Mediterranean than Midlands! With sun-filled high-pressure systems and light southerly breezes, we've been reaching for the sunscreen, grabbing iced drinks, and searching for the shade.

So, it's no surprise that many are looking for cooler places to escape and what better way than heading east – not by air, but by car – to the golden seaside retreat of Cromer.

Perched on the North Norfolk coast, Cromer is the perfect antidote to sticky inland weather. Known for its Victorian charm and wide golden sands, Cromer Beach is ideal for sunbathing, swimming, beach games and dog walks – with designated areas for your four-legged friends. It's hard to believe you don't need a passport for this kind of holiday.

Just a few hours' drive from Northants, Cromer greets visitors with so much to do and



explore, whether you're paddling at the water's edge, crab fishing, trying your hand at surfing, or watching the sun dip behind the iconic pier, this seaside town brings instant relief.

With the pastel-coloured houses, cobbled streets, steady rhythm of the North Sea waves, Cromer is a timeless destination for all; whether you want classic fish 'n' chips, to browse the independent local cafes, shops and bars, or to stroll the expansive beaches – it's a classic British escape without the crowds.

So, if the heat gets too much – or you'd just like a mini getaway, pack up and head to Cromer – the coast is calling!

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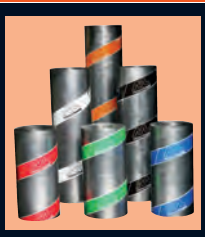
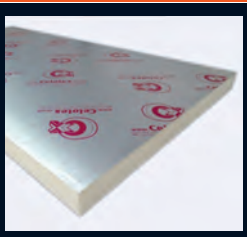

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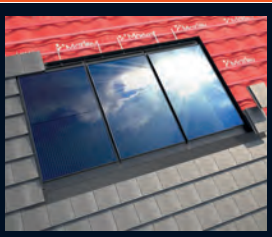
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Holiday health hazards

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Travelling over three hours by plane, train, or car can raise your risk of DVT, a blood clot in a vein. Symptoms include calf or thigh pain, swelling, and warm skin. To lower your risk, stay hydrated and move around regularly.

Sunburn
Use SPF 30+ sunscreen every two hours and stay in the shade from 11am to 4pm. If burnt, take a cool shower.

Food poisoning
Hotel buffets, unwashed salads, and shellfish are common causes. If you have vomiting, diarrhoea, or a fever, rest and drink fluids.

Jellyfish
Stings are painful, so follow any warning signs at beaches. Rinse the affected area with sea water and then soak it for 30 minutes in hot water.



Swimmer's ear
Otitis externa causes itchiness and intense pain. See a doctor if you have discharge or hearing issues. To guard against infection, don't use cotton buds in your ears and wear earplugs in the sea.

Lyme disease
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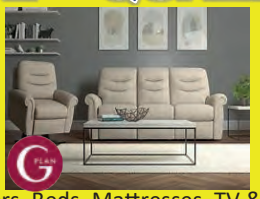


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If you've used the APP and have feedback, please let the surgery know.

Surgery Update

Current patient list size: 23,609

New staff have recently joined, mainly across non-clinical teams. The Care Navigation (Reception) Team has faced high absence levels, affecting call answering times.

Nursing recruitment remains difficult, but locum nurses continue to provide vital support.

New doctors have settled in well and made a noticeable difference to capacity.

Some patients report appointments running out just after 8am, but this isn't the case.

The current phone message may be causing confusion:

> "All our lines are engaged. Our care navigators are working through the calls as quickly as they can. Please call again later when the lines are less busy. Thank you."

An iPad will be available in reception for patients to access e-Consult, the NHS APP, and self-help resources.

GP Training Practice: The surgery is completing the necessary training and paperwork to become a training practice.

Storage Cupboard: Funding has been requested to convert the upstairs reception into storage, freeing space downstairs for patient use.

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Film reviews with Joseph Jenkinson

Together



Director: Michael Shanks. Starring: Dave Franco and Alison Brie

Years into their relationship, Tim and Millie (played by real-life couple Dave Franco and Alison Brie) find themselves on shaky ground as they trade the chaos of city life for the quiet, uncertain promise of the countryside. Hoping for a fresh start, they leave behind everything familiar, carrying with them only their shared history and growing doubts. But isolation has a way of magnifying what's already broken, and the cracks in their bond soon begin to widen.

I Know What You Did Last Summer

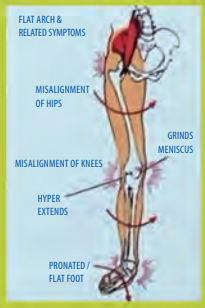


Director: Jennifer Robinson. Starring: Madelyn Cline

This bold pseudo-remake and sequel to the 1997 cult horror hit I Know What You Did Last Summer raises the stakes, the tension, and the body count. The story follows five friends whose lives are forever altered after they're involved in a tragic car accident. In a desperate bid to protect their futures, they make the fateful decision to cover up the incident. But secrets have a way of surfacing—and one year later, the group finds themselves stalked by a relentless figure who knows exactly what they did, and is determined to make them pay.

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It starts about a week before the trip, with a series of "Oh I mustn't forget to take" thoughts. But, being a black-belt procrastinator, I don't write them down. Too easy. The alternative, of course, is to overplan instead—spreadsheets detailing what I'm packing, down to sock colours and various leads for the moribund "smart" support systems. But honestly?

Somewhere along the line, I wildly overestimate the impact a forgotten item will have on a holiday – or how awful it is to lug something around all week unused. Packing-panic leads me to take three books and buy random magazines I'll never read. It makes me agonise about a week without nail scissors. For whatever reason, it convinces me that my place in the universe depends on packing a few disposable lens-cleaning cloths.



As the procrastination noose tightens, I tell myself to set time aside the evening before leaving. Knowing, of course, I'll end up in the pub – and start gathering underpants in a bilious cold sweat at midnight.

I get exhausted working out what I'm going to need. Or rather, avoiding deciding what I'm going to need. Procrastination wins out over perspective. So, "Buffer Manor," Northampton, will be the destination of choice again this year.

I've read people buy extra things at supermarket checkouts because, by then, they're suffering decision fatigue. That's what packing feels like to me. I daydream about moping in some foreign climate, furiously envious of another person's smugly appropriate decision on "layers."

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The revival of minority languages

by Kiera Caspall

Language is a fundamental part of all of our lives. Whatever language we may speak, it enables us to communicate with those around us.

There are over 7,000 living languages in the world, and 90% are spoken by fewer than 100,000 people. This means most are minority languages – spoken by a minority within a specific territory or country. Research suggests one language dies every two weeks, mainly due to globalisation, cultural assimilation, and political factors. Despite this, some communities are working to revive them. So, which minority languages are making a comeback, and how is it being done?

The Irish language (Gaeilge) has seen renewed revival efforts. With over one million active learners on Duolingo, it's the app's fastest-growing language. Irish's resurgence has been supported by its increased visibility in pop culture and social media. For example, the Irish rap group Kneecap, with over 1.2 million monthly listeners on Spotify, blends Irish and English while rapping about modern issues. Their popularity has helped make Irish feel more relevant and "cool," increasing its appeal and use.

Māori in New Zealand is another revival success. Once in sharp decline due to colonisation and suppression, Māori is now being revitalised through initiatives like "Kōhanga Reo" (language nest) programmes that immerse children from an early age. Māori is now heard in national media, public broadcasting, and politics, showing official recognition of its cultural value. Its growing role in public life has made Māori feel valuable again, rather than just historic.

Similarly, in Wales, the Welsh language has experienced an impressive resurgence. With over 800,000 speakers today, the Welsh government has implemented plans to reach one million speakers by 2050. Bilingual road signs, Welsh-medium schools, and Welsh TV channels such as S4C all contribute to normalising its use in everyday life. Welsh artists incorporating the language into music



and television have also helped reframe it as modern and adaptable.

However, the revival of minority languages is not solely dependent on government policies. Community-driven movements play a crucial role. From grassroots organisations running local classes to digital activists creating online content, these efforts build networks of speakers and encourage intergenerational learning. Technology has been instrumental, as seen with social media accounts sharing vocabulary and grammar tips, podcasts discussing identity in minority languages, and mobile apps making learning accessible globally.

Ultimately, while globalisation threatens linguistic diversity, it has also provided tools for communities to connect, share resources, and strengthen their languages. One of the most vital parts of a minority language revival is finding ways to assign importance to the language. If it is not viewed as useful by its speakers, there will be no incentive for them to use the language or pass it down to the next generation – especially when there is a more dominant and widely spoken language available to use. By combining education, pop culture, community action, and government support, many minority languages can continue to thrive rather than disappear.

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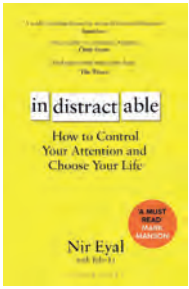
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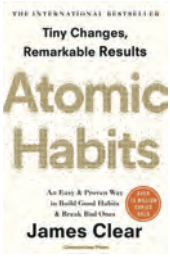
Nir Eyal combines science with actionable advice to help readers identify internal triggers, develop better habits and create distraction-free environments. It's an empowering guide for anyone feeling overwhelmed.

Eat That Frog
by Brian Tracy



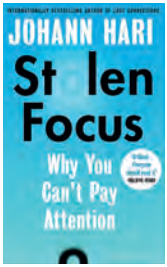
Successful people don't try to do everything. They learn to focus on the most important tasks. Tracy offers 21 steps to avoid procrastination and improve time management.

Atomic Habits *by James Clear*



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Women of the moment

Running from 22 August to 22 September, the 2025 Women's Rugby World Cup is set to be a landmark event in the sport's history

This tenth edition of the Women's World Cup tournament will be hosted by England, marking the second time the nation has held the event since 2010. Notably, the competition has expanded to feature 16 teams, up from 12 in previous editions, reflecting the growing global interest in women's rugby.

Who is in it?

England, as hosts, automatically qualified for the tournament, alongside New Zealand, France, and Canada, who secured their spots by reaching the semi-finals in the 2021 World Cup. The remaining teams earned their places through regional competitions and the WXV tournament in 2024. These teams include Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

Winning the pools

The pool draw has set up some interesting matchups. England is in Pool A with Australia, Samoa, and the USA. Pool B features Canada, Scotland, Wales and Fiji. Defending champions New Zealand are in Pool C alongside Ireland, Japan, and Spain. Pool D comprises France, Italy, South Africa and Brazil, the latter making their World Cup debut.

Where can I watch it?

Matches will be played in eight cities: London, Sunderland, Brighton and Hove, Bristol, Exeter, Manchester, Northampton and York. The opening match between England and the USA will take place at Sunderland's Stadium of Light on 22 August, while the final is set for Twickenham Stadium in London.

Want to watch on TV? The BBC has exclusive rights, so no streaming subscription is needed—great news for boosting women's rugby visibility and reach.



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Key dates

The first Women's Rugby World Cup was held in 1991 in Wales, where the USA defeated England 19–6 to become the inaugural champions.

The first two tournaments in 1991 and 1994 were not officially sanctioned by the International Rugby Board (now World Rugby) but they were retrospectively recognised in 2009.

New Zealand's Black Ferns are the most successful team, having won six titles, including four consecutive victories from 1998 to 2010.



England won twice (in 1994 and 2014) but was the runner-up six times. Wales and Ireland have both had one fourth-place result in 1994 and 2014 respectively.

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31 Aug Kettering Town Silver Band
7 Sep Gretton Silver Band
14 Sep Ni Ni Sessions - Acoustic Showcase with Hannah Faulkner & Friends
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28 Sep Milton Keynes Brass



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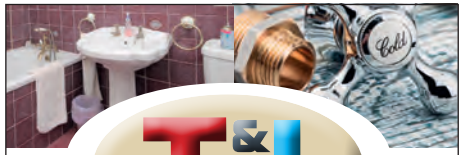
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ANSWERS:

Mini Cross

Across: 1 Arm, 3 Desert, 6 Vibrations, 9 Convenient, 13 Theatre, 14 Was.
Down: 1 Advice, 2 Mob, 3 Diameter, 4 Ski, 5 Run, 7 Ore, 8 Sit, 10 Nuts, 11 Into, 12 Need.

Pictograms

1. The game is up 2. Box office
3. Pile on the pounds

Word Ladder

Here is one possible solution (others may exist)
PINE, fine, find, fend, feed, fled, flee, free, TREE

Sudoku

2	1	5	7	8	3	4	6	9
7	4	3	1	6	9	2	8	5
8	9	6	5	4	2	7	3	1
3	5	4	8	7	6	9	1	2
1	6	2	9	5	4	3	7	8
9	7	8	3	2	1	5	4	6
5	2	1	6	3	7	8	9	4
4	3	9	2	1	8	6	5	7
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All about *Alison*

Alison Hammond's vibrant personality and infectious laughter have made her a TV favourite.

Physically, Alison Hammond may be half the person she was but she's still one of the biggest personalities on our small screens.

Driven by a desire for better health, she's lost 11 stone through moderation and exercise – reversing her prediabetes diagnosis.

She once spoke about the shame of needing two plane seats due to her size, describing herself as "morbidly obese." Now, things have changed: "People will say I'm big, but I'm 17 stone instead of 28, and I'm comfortable telling you my weight."

In 2002, Alison was the second housemate evicted from *Big Brother* series three — but she's never left our screens.

Acting roles have included *Palace Hill*, *Doctors,* and *The Dumping Ground*, with reality stints on *I'm a Celebrity..., Strictly, Celebrity MasterChef* and *Ready Steady Cook*.

From dream to reality

Born to Jamaican parents, Alison grew up in Kingstanding, north Birmingham, with two siblings. She joined Central Television workshops aged 11, but couldn't afford drama school.

Since 2002, she's been a regular on ITV's *This Morning*, co-hosting Fridays with Dermot O'Leary. In 2023, she took over *For the Love of Dogs* from the late Paul O'Grady.

She also joined *The Great British Bake Off* in 2023, co-hosting alongside Noel Fielding.

Popular choice

Alison's warm, fun persona is winning fans at the BBC too. She's rumoured to host the reboot of *Hole in the Wall*, and in spring, fronted *Alison Hammond's Big Weekend*, featuring celebrity 'sleepovers' – available now on BBC iPlayer.

Her showbiz career has earned her a net worth of up to £4 million. She's been dating 27-year-old David Putman since 2023, and rumours swirl of a move to the US. Alison once said she'd wait until her son Aiden, born in 2005, turned 21. But during her recent BBC Two travel series *Florida Unpacked* – filmed with Aiden – they explored family-friendly adventures on a budget. Was it also a sneak peek at a future life abroad?

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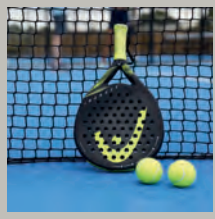
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