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**Hello.
And welcome to the
February edition of
The Local Life.**

This month I am celebrating 7 years since the first edition of The Local Life was published. Thank you to all of the businesses who have featured in the publication over the years. I hope that the magazine continues to be well supported by residents and that the businesses who advertise continue to get a good response. A special thanks must go out to my brilliant delivery team who deliver the magazines every month! Even in the snow and wet weather they always make sure that the magazines are delivered on time. If you are a local business owner or self employed and are interested in having your businesses included in the next edition please get in touch for more information.

Cuddington & Sandiway JFC U13s are looking for players to join their squad. Training takes place on Thursday evenings 5 - 6pm at Hartford High School and matches are played on Sundays. If your child is looking for a new team you can find more information on the community page.

St John's Church Hall is the venue for a couple of events taking place throughout the month. The first is 'Valentines sing-along with Paul & John' taking place 2 - 4pm on Tuesday 10th February. Tickets are £5 which includes tea, coffee and cake. On Saturday 28th February at 7:30pm 'Spitting Feathers' live cover band will perform a mixture of acoustic and upbeat music. Tickets are now on sale at £10 per person.

Have a great month!
Best Wishes,
Charlie

**THE DEADLINE DATE FOR
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**Some of the articles included
in this edition**

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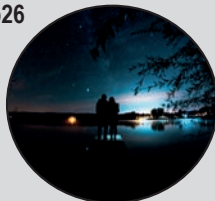
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PETULANT

How to read your pet's mood.

While it's true that many of us talk to our pets on a daily basis, it is a sad fact that they can't reply (at least not in words!); but animals do communicate constantly through body language, sounds and daily habits. All you need to do is know what the signs are and pay attention!

Dog days

Dogs are easier to read than most pets – though that toothy grin doesn't necessarily mean he's smiling! – with a naturally expressive nature, they wear their heart on their tail.

A happy pup will often have a loose body posture, wagging tail (broad and sweeping), soft eyes and playful bowing. They may also bring you toys or roll onto their back. Quick tail wags, bouncing movements, barking in short bursts and ears perked forward is generally suggestive of a very excited and playful dog.

However, anxious or nervous animals may pace or yawn when not tired, licking excessively with ears pinned back and tail tucked. Some dogs even avoid eye contact or hide.

Finally, there's the behaviour you hope your dog rarely exhibits as it can mean they are irritated and/or defensive: a stiff body, growling, showing teeth and tail held rigid is a warning to give space.

Cat chat

Cats are subtler, but once you know the signs, their moods are clear. Slow blinking, kneading with paws, purring, lying on their side or back with exposed belly (which is not always an invitation to touch!) often indicate a happy and relaxed cat; while dilated pupils, crouching with wiggle before pouncing and batting toys or your hand gently suggest a more playful disposition.

Beware of a feline that is hiding, over-grooming, tail flicking, with ears swivelling back, as this intimates anxiety; while hissing, growling, swatting, tail lashing and fur standing on end points to an angry mog.

Angry birds

Birds rely heavily on body posture and vocalisations to convey their moods. Singing, chirping, preening, standing tall with feathers sleek... all these behaviours suggest a cheery chick. Fluffed feathers, one leg tucked and eyes half-closed mean your avian pal is feeling at ease, whereas feather plucking, pacing, repetitive squawking and wings held away from body indicate stress. Finally, beak gaping, lunging, wings spread wide and loud screeches amount to one angry bird.

Rabbits (and other small pets)

As demonstrated in the animated classic, *Watership Down*, thumping hind legs, crouching low, wide eyes and hiding are markers of fear, while grunting, lunging and flicking back feet as they hop away insinuates irritation.

However, if they are lying stretched out, gentle tooth purring, hopping around curiously, engaging in joyful jumps and twists, nudging objects or zooming around, you've got yourself one happy bunny.



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Dublin The Fun

Dive into Dublin for an unforgettable adventure.

If you're looking for a destination that offers beauty, culture and craic, then Dublin is where you should head. As far as romance goes, the capital city of the Republic of Ireland is ideal for literary lovebirds who also appreciate a good time.

Getting there

Dublin is well connected by air, rail, and sea, so getting there is a breeze. Dublin Airport is located approximately 10km north of the city centre, with frequent bus and taxi services. If arriving by ferry, Dublin Port is close to the city.

Once in the city, you'll find an excellent public transport system including buses, the Luas (tram) and DART (suburban rail). The city centre is compact and easily explored on foot or by bicycle, with many bike hire schemes available.

What to do

A must-see is Trinity College, Ireland's oldest university, where you can marvel at the illuminated medieval manuscript, the Book of Kells, in the stunning Long Room library.

Dublin Castle is another delight, featuring beautiful gardens and impressive State Apartments. Then there's St Patrick's Cathedral, the national cathedral of the Church of Ireland, which dates back to 1191 and is famed for its Gothic architecture and connection to Jonathan Swift.

Who said culture couldn't be fun? A trip to the Guinness Storehouse suggests otherwise. Discover the history of Ireland's most famous stout, then sup on the black stuff at the Gravity Bar with its panoramic city views.

Continue the merriment at Temple Bar, Dublin's cultural quarter, packed with pubs, galleries, and a buzzing nightlife; or stroll in Phoenix Park, one of the largest enclosed parks in Europe, home to Dublin Zoo and wild deer.

Get stuck in

Dublin is a UNESCO City of Literature. Take a literary walk to see sites associated with James Joyce, Samuel Beckett and Oscar Wilde, with theatre lovers given the option of catching a show at the Abbey Theatre or the Gate Theatre. For music, traditional Irish sessions can be found in pubs throughout the city, while larger venues host international acts year-round.

Grafton Street and Henry Street are the main shopping thoroughfares, featuring high street brands, boutiques and street performers. In addition, for unique gifts, browse the stalls at George's Street Arcade or the Design & Crafts Council shops.

Finally, walking around Dublin will work up an appetite and fortunately, Dublin's food scene is thriving. Naturally, there are plentiful pub restaurants offering international cuisine, but it's also worth sampling local fare such as a full Irish breakfast, seafood chowder or coddle. Combined with an abundance of beautiful boozers packed with friendly locals, and you can discover, dance and raise a toast to this ancient, joyful city.

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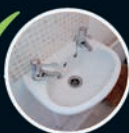
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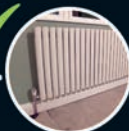
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How To Put Your Health First

By Rob Bullock

Looking after yourself by prioritising your physical and mental wellbeing is a way to stay happy and healthy. Here's how you can do it.

Whether it is eating healthily and sleeping well, getting more exercise, managing your work/life balance, and managing your stress levels to improve your mental wellbeing, there are plenty of ways you can begin to put your health first to live your best life.

Diet

Eating a varied, nutritious diet high in fruit and vegetables and lean sources of protein, whilst reducing salt and sugar intake can make a vast difference to your physical and mental health. Drinking less alcohol and caffeine and more water can improve bodily functions and brain activity, reduce your risk of suffering a heart attack or a stroke and just make you feel better about yourself.

Exercise

Daily activity and getting into good habits and routines is good for your health. It can help you reduce your weight and lower your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes and certain cancers. Exercise helps you sleep better and gives you more energy, and it improves how you feel about yourself. You can do different types of exercise, perhaps consider joining a gym or hiring a personal trainer but it could also include going dancing with people you love, swimming with friends, or even getting out for a walk every day. And, by setting small reasonable exercise goals they are likely to be achievable.

Sleep

Getting a good night's sleep of around 7 to 9 hours is the way your body recharges itself, physically and mentally, makes you feel better about yourself and strengthens your immune system.

Health screening

You can prevent certain health conditions by regular health screening. Early detection of certain diseases can often lead to more effective treatment and full recovery. Health screening can also prevent conditions from becoming serious by allowing you to make early, informed decisions about things like diet, exercise and your lifestyle.

Reduce stress and improve work/life balance

Modern life can be stressful, with many of us focusing on those around us, our jobs, the world around us, and the expectations of others. Simply reducing our screen time is a good place to start because it can cause stress, and we should prioritise ourselves and schedule in 'me time' to begin to improve our mental health. By practising mindfulness and learning breathing exercises, we can immediately begin to bring calm into our lives. Taking up a new hobby, pastime or skill or making time to spend with family and friends can also take us out of ourselves and can make us feel more self-assured and confident.

The best lifestyle changes are small, gradual ones; these often have a more lasting effect than unachievable dramatic changes. When starting to exercise, set small goals, when making dietary changes, allow yourself treats, and when trying something new, don't be afraid to take time to learn.

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Pan-fried Gnocchi

with broccoli pesto and grilled veg
by Michel Roux Jr

Fast and tasty green veg, then griddled for that smoky taste, these ready-made gnocchi are fried for extra crunch and served with a homemade chilli broccoli pesto.

Ingredients

For the pesto

- 350g/12oz broccoli (about 1 head), roughly chopped
- 100ml/3½fl oz olive oil, plus extra to loosen if desired
- 50-100g/2-3½oz toasted pine nuts, to taste
- 1 garlic clove, roughly chopped
- 1 green chilli, finely chopped
- 50g/1¾oz parmesan cheese (or vegetarian alternative), freshly grated
- salt and pepper, to taste

For the vegetables

- 300g/10½oz green vegetables such as asparagus, purple sprouting broccoli, courgettes and baby leeks
- olive oil, for drizzling and frying
- 1 pack shop-bought gnocchi
- 3 slices pancetta, baked or grilled, to garnish (optional)

Method

Blanch the broccoli in boiling salted water for 3-4 minutes, or until tender. Drain and immediately plunge into ice water to stop it from cooking any further. Drain again and add to a blender with the olive oil, toasted pine nuts, garlic, chilli and a good grating of parmesan cheese. Blend to a paste to make pesto. Taste and season with salt and pepper and add more olive oil if needed to get the consistency you like.

To cook the vegetables, heat a griddle pan to hot. Drizzle the green vegetables with olive oil and cook on a griddle pan. (You can use any vegetables you like for this, but if you choose root veg or anything bigger than asparagus you might need to blanch it first to soften before griddling.)

Heat a good amount of olive oil in a frying pan and tip in the gnocchi straight from the pack. Fry until golden-brown all over, so they look like mini roast potatoes.

Serve up the gnocchi and griddled veg with a good dollop of broccoli pesto. You could also sprinkle over some crumbled pancetta for a crisp, salty garnish.

Notes: This recipe is republished with the kind permission of BBC Good Food.



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By closely observing the daily activities of loved ones, their physical and behavioural changes and their emotional and mental state, you could spot the need for support.

Sometimes only the people closest to someone can spot the subtle signs that can indicate that they need support. The changes might be barely noticeable, but they could indicate that there is an underlying health issue that might need addressing. Here are some things to look for.

Physical and behavioural signs

Often the most immediately noticeable changes in a person are the physical and behavioural signs that could indicate that they might need help or support. Simply by noticing that someone might not have washed for a while or is wearing the same clothes day after day might indicate that they are struggling with an issue. Other signs to look for include indicators that someone might not be eating properly and has lost weight recently, might not want to leave the house as much as they did, and has lost interest in things that before were important to them. Perhaps someone is struggling to move about and possibly they have unexplained cuts, bruises and abrasions that could mean they are struggling with balance. All of these are signs and could be a warning that support might be needed.

Mental and emotional signals

Sometimes only the people closest to them can recognise that someone's moods are different to normal, can detect anxiety and subtle signs of depression. Forgetfulness, especially of events that happened recently and confusion about everyday things might be the sign that a loved one is struggling in some way and needs help. Lack of concentration, when previously this was not an issue, and an inability to make simple everyday decisions could indicate some kind of underlying mental health issue.

Neglected responsibilities

Regularly visiting a loved one's home can tell you something is amiss. If the home is untidy, cluttered or dirty - when before it wasn't, it could be a sign that they might be struggling to keep up with everyday routines. If you discover unpaid bills or unopened letters, then this could also mean that things are getting on top of someone.

What to do

Bringing up worries or concerns with a loved one about mental health is not easy and should always be done in as gentle and non-confrontational a way as possible. Getting professional advice before doing anything is a good idea and but you could begin to take a greater interest in them by calling on them more regularly. Talking with your loved ones, framing conversations carefully about how they are feeling will help you discover possible underlying issues, helping them see the signs that you see and exploring any options together.

You are not alone and there is help available. Talking with your GP is a good place to start as they can offer excellent advice and support, and there are many support groups such as MIND (www.mind.org.uk), and Dementia UK (www.dementiauk.org)

How To Spot When Loved Ones Need Support



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Date Night

A variety of activities for you and the one you love the best.

February 14th may be the most romantic day of the year, but spending time with your other half ought to be a priority year-round.

Here are a few ways to make the special person in your life feel extra-special.

Classic Dates

Sometimes you just want to keep it simple. Enjoy a hearty meal in a traditional country pub, for example, or exhibit your cool, nerdy side by watching an independent film at that local cinema which has a bar and posh crisps.

For those feeling really high-brow, why not treat your beloved to a play or musical or simply take a romantic walk in a beautiful park, because feeling comfortable enough to silently stroll is the ultimate couple goal.

Daring Dates

If things have become a little stale, why not try an escape room challenge (working together to solve puzzles and escape before time runs out), or go on a ghost tour. Adrenaline junkies can try go-karting (because a little racing competition is healthy for a couple), let loose at a trampoline park, or hit the ropes together by indoor climbing - the ultimate trust challenge to prove true love!

Quirky Dates

If dinner dates seem expensive and dull, check out a comedy night instead, because laughter is vital for a good relationship.

Alternatively, you could get creative at a pottery or painting café, check out an art gallery, have a game of miniature golf, or visit that food market you've always wanted to go to. Exploring and discovering the world with the one you love is a wonderful way to reinforce that special bond.

Outdoor Dates

Get a little wild with your sweetheart. Take a beach walk at sunset, pack a hamper with favourite treats and a bottle of wine, to be enjoyed in the wilderness, stay out late and look up at the stars.

Do something crazy like a hot air balloon ride, or go on a good old-fashioned pub crawl, by foot or by bike, because there is nothing more romantic than the birds and the bees.

Stay Home

Finally, whether everywhere is booked up or you simply can't be bothered to leave the house, you can still have a super romantic evening. Maybe you could cook a meal together, have a home spa night with facemasks, massages and a relaxing bath, watch the most romantic films on earth – e.g. Casablanca, True Romance, Titanic – play video, card or board games for some light-hearted fun. Ultimately, love is whatever you want it to be.



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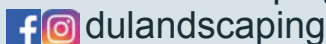


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Joke Junction

WHAT DO YOU CALL TWO BIRDS IN LOVE? TWEETHEARTS

What do you call two sweets in love? Mint to be

WHY DID THE SHOE PROPOSE? BECAUSE IT WANTED A SOLE MATE.

Why did the banana go out with the prune? Because it couldn't find a date.

Why did the vampires girlfriend break up with him? She found him a pain in the neck.

Why did the chocolate bar start dating? It felt like it needed a sweet companion





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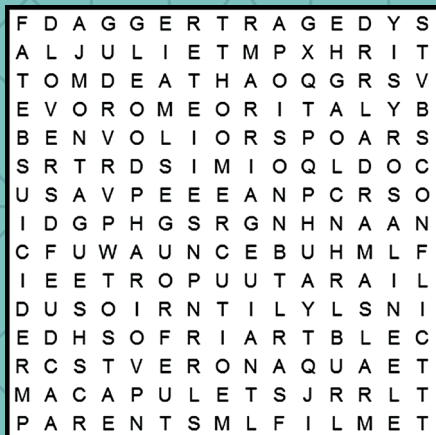
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PUZZLES

Word Search

Actor, Ballet, Benvolio, Capulets, Chorus, Conflict, Culture,
Dagger, Death, Drama, Fate, Feud, Film, Friar, Italy, Juliet,
Lovers, Marriage, Mercutio, Montagues, Nurse, Parents,
Paris, Passion, Play, Poison, Romeo, Rosaline, Rose, Stage,
Suicide, Tragedy, Tybalt, Verona



Sudoku

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

Crossword

Clues

Across

- 1 Breakfast food (6)
- 4 Reverie (5)
- 8 Finished (5)
- 9 Crack (7)
- 10 Farm vehicle (7)
- 11 Genuine (4)
- 12 Conifer (3)
- 14 Nothing (4)
- 15 Test (4)
- 18 Current (3)
- 21 Tone (4)
- 23 Sea creature (7)
- 25 Brutal, inhuman (7)
- 26 Goodbye (5)
- 27 Odour (5)
- 28 Digestive protein (6)

Mindbenders

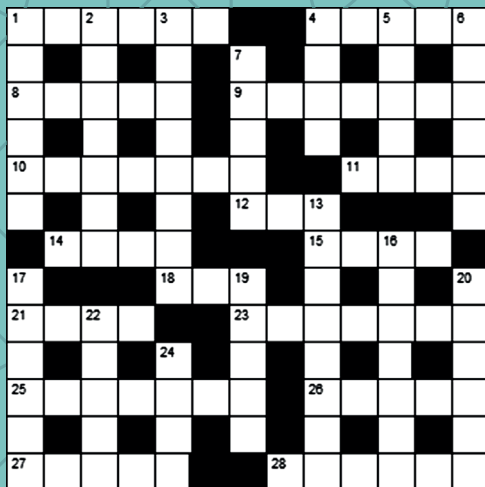
Find the three hidden phrases

PAT
EHT



FAIRY
WOLF
DUCKLING

Crossword



Down

- 1 Compose (6)
- 2 Transmit (7)
- 3 Mathematical process (8)
- 4 Profound (4)
- 5 Banishment (5)
- 6 Passively (6)
- 7 Neck warmer (5)
- 13 Bind (8)
- 16 Exaggerate (7)
- 17 Ancient Egyptian god (6)
- 19 The earth (5)
- 20 Shrewd (6)
- 22 One of the senses (5)
- 24 Present (4)

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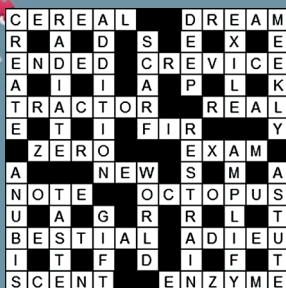


P U Z Z L E
S O L U T I O N S

Mind Benders

1. Pat on the back
2. Missing the point
3. The good, the bad and the ugly

Crossword



Sudoku

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

Word Search





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