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Issue 83 - December 2025



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Hello.
And welcome to the
December edition of
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The Novum Christmas wish list is here! Gift vouchers, gift boxes, massages, CACI, Medik8 facials, hair extensions & beauty appointments. Get ready for the festive season in style. Looking for ideas for gifts this year? Treat someone to one of the above as their Christmas present. For more details on what they are offering please see page 10.

Experience the magic of Christmas at Blakemere! Festive fun, shopping, meets & greets, magical woodland, Alpacca & Donkey experience plus much more. On the run up to Christmas enjoy all of the events taking place as well as over 20 shops and 100 independent retailers with unique gifts and festive food for all the family to enjoy. Open daily 10am - 5pm, see page 4 for all of the upcoming events.

This years Christmas craft market and brunch cafe is back on Saturday 6th December 10:30-3pm at St John's Church Hall, Cuddington. Handmade gifts, crafts, treats and art to browse. The brunch cafe will be open 11-2 serving brunch, cakes and a selection of drinks.

On the run up to Christmas there is a charity Christmas quiz for you all to take part in. You can either print off your quiz sheet at home or collect them from a number of locations. Over 200 questions with prizes for the top 5 teams. Please see the community pages for the full information.

Have a great Christmas!
Best Wishes,
Charlie

THE DEADLINE DATE FOR
THE JANUARY EDITION IS
10th DECEMBER

For advertising information please contact Charlie on:

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Some of the articles included
in this edition

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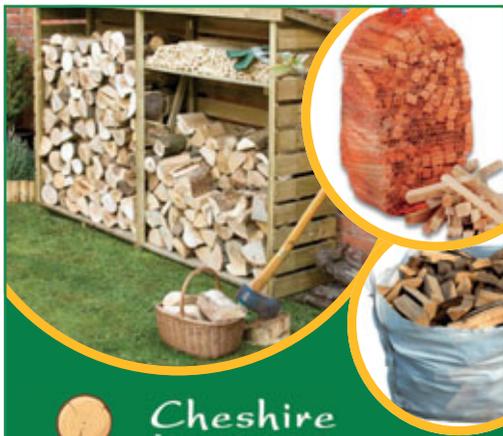
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Gifts for dogs

Your dog loves treats, and your dog loves you, so a treat from you is an extra special joy. Make those puppy eyes light up on Christmas Day with puzzle feeders, treat-dispensing balls, or squeaky toys that will keep them entertained and mentally stimulated during the day.

Mince pies may be off the menu (raisins are highly toxic), but adorable pup chews in festive shapes will keep them entertained while you eat lunch.

Another gift idea is a lovely new bed for that post lunch snooze, or maybe an upgraded dog lead, harness, or travel water bottle for that afternoon walk.

Gifts for cats

They might not act like it all the time, but your cat adores you! Bring some feline fun with pet-friendly laser pointers, feather wands, and battery-powered 'prey' toys that tap into your cat's hunting instincts.

Everyone wants to look good on the big day, which is why a new grooming brush is wonderful gift; and while you're sipping on Baileys, why not indulge Felix with catnip-filled mice, cushions, or even catnip bubbles that are irresistible for many felines?

Then, when the festivities get a bit much, gift your cat a place to hide away from the chaos with soft igloo beds, window perches or tunnel systems that offer comfort and a sense of security.

Gifts for small mammals

From rabbits and guinea pigs to hamsters, rats and ferrets, small pets also appreciate gifts! Enrichment toys such as tunnels, chew-safe wooden toys and climbing platforms provide entertainment and physical activity, while dried veggies or fruit and other species-appropriate nibbles mean they can fill up before taking a snooze in their cosy new bed.

Finally, consider creating festive-themed hideouts or tunnels, just avoid lights they might chew through!

Gifts for the rest of your pet crew

Don't make your feathered-friends sing for their supper, make them birds of yay with seed bells, or dried fruit treats that are healthy and festive, along with new cage accessories such as mirrors, bells and puzzle toys to make their world more interesting and interactive.

If you've got fish or reptiles you can jazz up their tank with colourful plants, new caves or unique ornaments to make the environment more stimulating for them and more visually interesting for you.

Finally, high-quality pellets, dried insects or freeze-dried foods can also be reserved for special occasions, which, if you've got a serpent, may include a frozen mouse... because Christmas really is for all!

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GOOD TIME GATHERINGS

Why spend the Christmas holidays shut up indoors when there's so much fun to be had (even if money is tight).

Ice skating

Now's the time to see if dad is truly the master skater he's made himself out to be as you hit the ice rink as a family. Once merely an American dream, as us Brits watched in envy as elegant skaters across the pond glided in Central Park, ice rinks are now a regular part of festivities in most towns across the country.

So whether you're a pro, or are just strapping on those skates for the first time, enjoy an evening of hot chocolate, frozen fun and possibly the odd tumble.

Festive theatre

Of all the time-honoured traditions, nothing quite beats going to a pantomime with your nearest and dearest.

Whether it's Snow White or Puss in Boots, you can guarantee plenty of silliness and songs for the little ones and a few rude jokes thrown in just for the grownups.

However, if panto is not your cup of mulled wine, how about a puppet performance instead? Or a Crimbo comedy show? A look at your local entertainment guide will surely reveal a host of tinsel-tickling options.

Christmas markets

Christmas isn't just about family; it is also about community. Look out for upcoming Christmas markets and revel in the communal spirit as you support local businesses, enjoy festive treats such as mince pies and

spiced cider, seek out unique and special gifts, and enjoy the choir or band.

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Movie nights

Whether it's a trip to the cinema to see the latest Christmas comedy or a night spent cosied up together around the TV as you introduce your children to such classics as A Muppet's Christmas Carol, It's a Wonderful Life and Die Hard (yes, it is a Christmas film), a movie can really make the season feel special.

Festive train rides

All aboard for a magical journey! Heritage railways often run Christmas specials where families can enjoy a scenic train ride, a visit to Santa, and perhaps a present gift. It's not quite the Polar Express, but you will be on track to making some magical memories.

Christmas Eve services

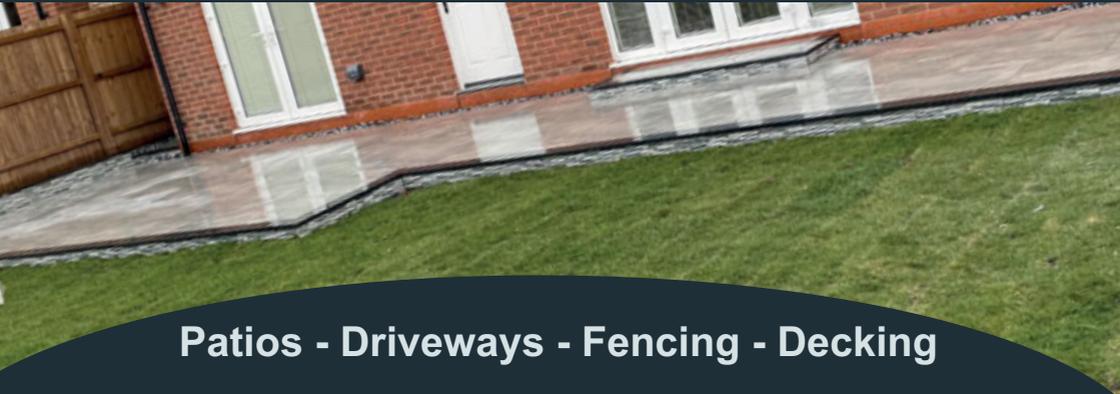
Teach your little ones the true meaning of Christmas by taking them to a service on Christmas Eve. Alongside the traditional Midnight Mass, most churches host a family event earlier in the day wherein they recount the story of baby Jesus.

Volunteer or donate

Volunteering as a family can be a wonderful way to celebrate within your community. In fact, simply encouraging your children to take toys to the charity shop for kids who are less fortunate can be a way of fostering the spirit of giving and kindness.



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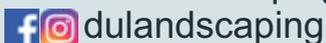


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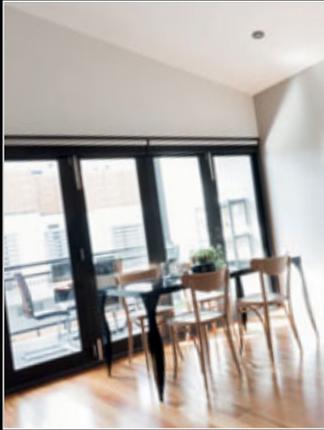


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FIT & FESTIVE

How to avoid overindulgence this Christmas and New Year

Whether it's mince pies, eggnog lattes or glasses of bubbly, it's very easy to overdo it around this time of year. It is for this reason that a time of joy can turn into one of remorse as the excess of calories and alcohol take their toll.

Fortunately, it doesn't have to be that way. With a little pre-planning and self-awareness, you can avoid those predictable pitfalls.

QUESTION CHRISTMAS CALORIES

As soon as those festive sarnies and coffee-shop beverages hit the high street, you might feel your resolve start to dissolve, but make sure you check the nutritional stats on that turkey gut buster or eggnog latte with extra cream, because you may be surprised.

It is certainly not unusual for such treats to contain at least half of your daily recommended calories, and often more. So while you may enjoy the odd item from the seasonal menu, it's important you don't indulge every day leading up to Christmas.

THINK BEFORE YOU DRINK

After all your hard work this year, it's understandable you may want to let your hair down. However, work-related soirees can soon lead to regret as you inadvertently vomit in the staff toilets or attempt to re-enact the scene from Flashdance using your desk chair.

To ensure such malady doesn't befall you, do the following: before going out, take time to eat. Protein is best, such as a couple of boiled eggs, nuts or even a small turkey salad to line your stomach and slow the absorption of alcohol.

Then, when at the event, aim to drink one glass of water for every glass of booze. Your ego will thank you.

STAY ACTIVE

Slobbing around in your PJs for an entire week may be tempting, but it isn't sensible. As work winds down, take time to indulge in self-care such as attending a fitness class, or go for a run or cardio in the form of gift shopping.

Then, on Christmas Day, insist on a family walk after lunch and balance all indulgence with a little activity.

RESIST STRESS

Stress is inherently bad for you, and this season can be incredibly stressful. Be careful not to overcommit yourself to others and leave some alone time in your schedule for a bath or long walk.

Be aware of the pressures you may put upon yourself on creating the perfect Christmas Day and instead focus on family, gratitude and love.

As soon as your local yoga, Pilates or meditation centre re-opens, hit the mats and re-centre yourself. Before you know it, you'll be fighting fit for the year ahead!

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Blueberry Cinnamon Breakfast Swirls

Treat the family to a luxurious Christmas breakfast.

Servings: 9

Preparation time: 2.5 Hrs

Cooking Time: 25 Min

Ingredients

For The Dough

- 420g Strong white flour, plus extra for dusting
- 4 tbsp caster sugar
- 2 tsp Dried fast-action yeast
- 100ml Milk
- 40g Butter, plus extra for greasing
- Oil, for greasing.

For The Filling

- 150g Blueberries, halved.
- Zest of an orange
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- Nutmeg
- 4 tbsp brown sugar

To finish

- 1 Beaten egg
- 70g Icing sugar.
- 1-2 tbsp lemon juice or water
- Fresh whole blueberries, to decorate.

Method

Dough: Pour the milk and 100ml water into a saucepan with the butter. Heat gently until the butter is melted. Leave to cool until it's lukewarm.

Place the flour, sugar, and yeast into a bowl (or the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook). Make a well in the centre. Pour the milky mixture into the well. Either mix with your hands or in the mixer on the slow setting with the dough hook. 'Knead' for about 5 minutes, or until a smooth dough has formed.

Oil a large bowl and place the dough inside. Cover with cling film and leave to rise in a warm place for about 2 hours. When the dough has doubled in size, place on a lightly floured surface and knead for a second time by hand for a few minutes. Butter a 23cm/9in round springform tin.

Roll the dough out to a rectangle. Scatter the orange zest, ground cinnamon, nutmeg, and brown sugar over the dough, then top with the blueberries. Strating from the long side, roll up the dough as though you were making a Swiss roll. Slice into 9 swirls using a sharp knife. Place the swirls gently into the buttered tin, eight around the edge and one in the middle, cut-side up.

Brush with oil, cover with clingfilm and place in a warm place to rise for about 30 minutes this time, or until doubled in size again.

Notes:



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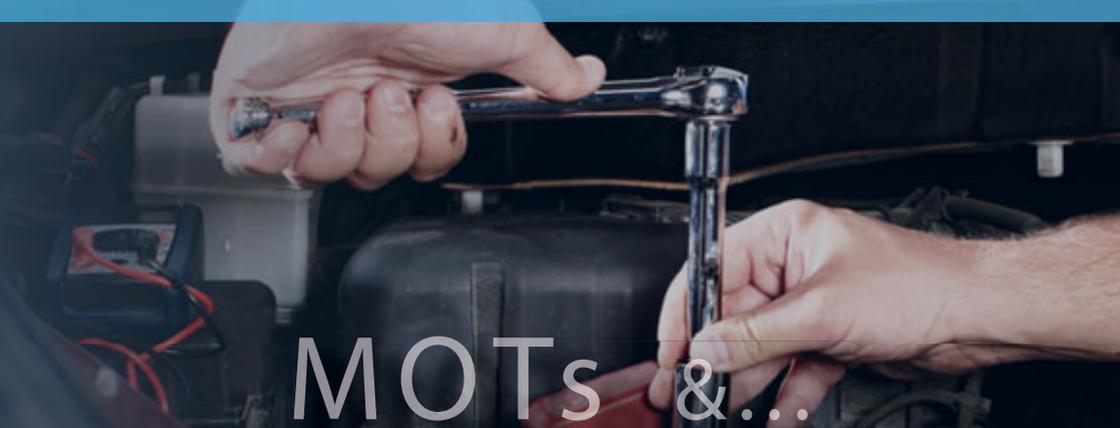
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P

U

Z

Z

L

E

S

Word Search

Advent, Angel, Bauble, Bethlehem, Birth, Candle, Candy Canes, Carollers, Celebrate, Cheer, Cheesy Songs, Chestnuts, Chimney, December, Elf, Fairy lights, Festive, Gifts, Glitter, Holly, Ivy, Jolly, Nativity, Reindeer, Santa, Tinsel, Tree, Wise Men, Yuletide

T	I	N	S	E	L	F	D	E	C	E	M	B	E	R
Y	U	L	E	T	I	D	E	T	G	E	L	F	E	B
C	F	G	J	J	C	H	E	S	T	N	U	T	S	A
P	A	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	E	T	R	W	U
B	I	N	C	H	I	M	N	E	Y	I	E	E	B	B
E	R	K	D	I	R	T	M	T	L	E	V	E	C	L
T	Y	J	A	Y	V	B	A	G	D	H	W	E	A	E
H	L	R	O	M	C	Y	I	N	B	Y	O	D	R	P
L	I	C	B	L	A	A	I	R	G	C	L	L	O	H
E	G	A	Z	P	L	E	N	G	T	E	H	A	L	N
H	H	N	M	F	R	Y	B	E	I	H	L	E	L	Y
E	T	D	A	D	V	E	N	T	S	F	N	E	E	B
M	S	L	W	I	S	E	M	E	N	L	T	X	R	R
C	H	E	E	S	Y	S	O	N	G	S	V	S	S	Y
N	A	T	I	V	I	T	Y	M	K	S	A	N	T	A

Sudoku

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

Across

- 1 Bordering (6)
- 5 Gradually pour from one container to another (6)
- 8 Bitter leafy green vegetable (6)
- 9 Beams of light (6)
- 10 Seventh letter of the Greek alphabet (3)
- 11 Mild and pleasant (weather) (5)
- 13 Fuel derived from petroleum (8)
- 15 Exist passively (8)
- 16 Hits with an open hand (5)
- 19 Neither liquid nor solid (3)
- 21 Bring back to consciousness (6)
- 22 Device which warms (6)
- 23 Thoroughfare (6)

Mindbenders

Can you find the hidden festive words and phrases?

FIR
here here here
here here

SMEFRANKLL

Legolas
Ledge

Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8			10		9	
11						12
			13			
		14				
15					16	17
18			19	20		
21				22		
23					24	

24 Wrote (6)

Down

- 2 Jeans with a bib and straps (9)
- 3 Turn of phrase (5)
- 4 Joy, satisfaction (4)
- 5 Be of different opinions (8)
- 6 Elucidate (7)
- 7 Errand (4)
- 12 Clock or watch (9)
- 13 Mournfully resonant, sonorous (8)
- 14 Coldblooded vertebrate (7)
- 17 Discover (5)
- 18 Weapons (4)
- 20 Sea-going vessel (4)

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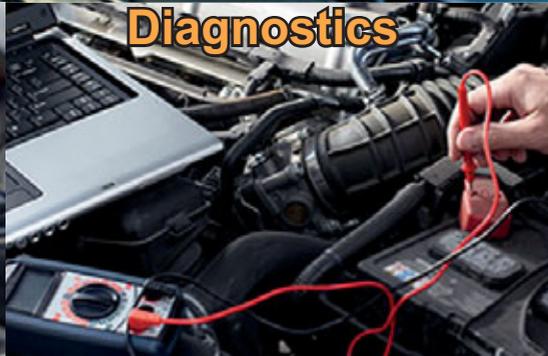
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Community Events & What's On....

FREE pages for charities and non-profit making organisations

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Treat yourself to brunch or a cake and drink at the Brunch Café 11-2pm

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Community Events deadline for the January edition is **10th December**

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P U Z Z L E

S O L U T I O N S

Crossword



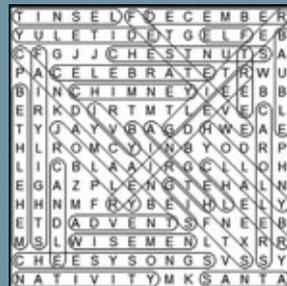
Sudoku

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

Mind Benders

1. Presents under the tree
2. Frankincense
3. Elf on the shelf

Word Search





HOWARD THE GUTTER MAN

RAIN ☁️, SLEET ☁️❄️ OR SNOW ☁️❄️❄️, GUTTERS MUST FLOW!

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