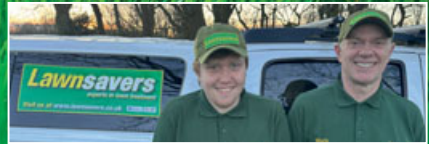




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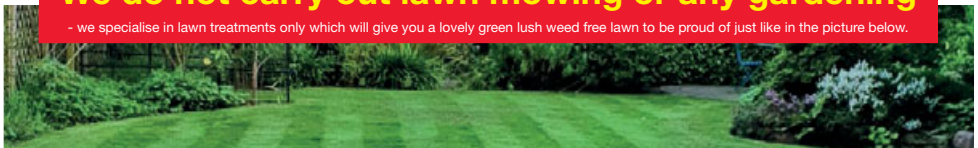
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Some of the articles included

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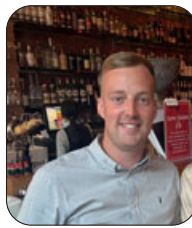
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Hello and welcome to this edition of The Local Life.

New local business 'Delamere Chimney Sweep' feature for the first time in this edition. If you are looking for a local, reliable, friendly chimney sweep contact Neil to book in. More details and their contact information can be found on the advert on page 4.

Are you self-employed or a business owner and would like to feature in the publication? Would you like your advert viewed by thousands of local residents? Get in touch today to have your business featured in the next edition and start making our loyal readers, your loyal customers.

If you are involved in a local club, team, charity, non-profit making organisation or event please get in touch. I would like to start to increase the amount of local content included in the publication and will be offering free space to local events, clubs, fund-raisers etc.

I am opening up the waiting lists for delivery rounds. If you would be interested in delivering the magazines every other month locally to where you live, please get in touch with your details. You must be age 13+ and delivery is over 5 days, once a month. More details will be provided on enquiry.

Enjoy this edition!

*Best Wishes,
Charlie*



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The tell-tale signs that your pet **might be suffering, and what to do** next.

Pets are remarkably good at hiding discomfort, which means infections can sometimes develop quietly before owners realise anything is wrong. The good news is that most common pet infections show subtle early signs, and when caught quickly, are usually straightforward to treat. However, knowing what to look for can make all the difference.

For dogs, the two most common infections are with the ears and skin. Ear infections often show up as frequent head shaking, scratching, redness, an unpleasant smell or dark discharge. Skin infections, including hotspots, can appear as red, inflamed patches, hair loss, excessive licking or scabbing. These often worsen in warm weather or after swimming. Treatment usually involves cleaning, topical medication and, in some cases, antibiotics prescribed by a vet. Early attention prevents recurring problems.

Cats are prone to upper respiratory and dental infections. Sneezing, watery eyes, nasal discharge and lethargy can indicate a respiratory infection, particularly in younger or older cats. Dental infections may show as bad breath, drooling, difficulty eating or pawing at the mouth. Cats often continue eating despite discomfort, so subtle behaviour changes are important clues.

For rabbits, respiratory infections and digestive infections are the most common. A runny nose, wheezing, head tilt or eye discharge can indicate

respiratory illness, often linked to environmental factors. Digestive infections may present as diarrhoea, loss of appetite or reduced droppings, all of which require urgent attention. Rabbits decline quickly when unwell, so prompt veterinary care is crucial.

Hamsters commonly suffer from wet tail and respiratory infections. Wet tail causes diarrhoea, lethargy and a damp appearance around the rear, and is a medical emergency. Respiratory infections may cause sneezing, laboured breathing or discharge around the nose. Clean bedding, good ventilation and stress reduction help prevent illness, but treatment always requires a vet.

In birds, respiratory and parasitic infections are most common. Fluffed-up feathers, tail bobbing, nasal discharge or changes in voice can signal respiratory issues. Parasites may cause feather loss, itching or restlessness. Birds hide illness extremely well, so any behavioural change should be taken seriously.

For fish, fungal infections and fin rot are frequently seen, with white cotton-like growths, frayed fins, lethargy and loss of appetite the key warning signs. Water quality is often the underlying cause, so testing and correcting tank conditions is essential alongside treatment.

As with so many of these issues, veterinary assessment is essential, as untreated infections can become serious.

By Rob Bullock



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Gardening In May

With its long, sunny days, May is the perfect month to tidy up spring plants, prepare for summer and plant up hanging baskets.

Although gardeners always keep an eye out for cold weather even in May, it is a month where the days are long, and warm weather invites us to spend time in the garden tending flowers and vegetables and looking ahead to summer.

General gardening jobs

In the vegetable garden earth up potatoes, covering the shoots with soil as they appear. Start sowing runner, dwarf and climbing French beans outdoors and harvest your delicious rhubarb whilst feeding the plants regularly. In the flower garden plant dahlia tubers after the risk of frost has passed. Sow annuals such as cosmos, marigolds and sunflowers directly into borders. Open greenhouse windows wide on warm days and water plants regularly. Mow your lawn regularly and begin to apply nitrogen-rich summer lawn feed. Consider varnishing, treating or painting any outside furniture to spruce it up for use.

Hanging baskets

May is the perfect month to create stunning hanging baskets that will hopefully bloom right through the summer and well into the autumn. With so much choice available, the type of hanging basket you choose will depend on several factors, including cost, amount of maintenance required and your personal tastes.

Lined hanging baskets are very popular and traditional. They consist of a simple cage of metal or woven natural material which will require a lining of moss, coir, plastic or a mixture of materials.

They look great and can be used year after year, although they tend to dry out quickly so will require more maintenance, or an irrigation system or perhaps water storing granules.

Simple plastic hanging baskets are cheap to buy and easy to plant, often coming ready-planted, and they retain water well. They generally don't last as long as lined baskets but could easily last a few years with careful use. They are also very strong.

Bloom around baskets also tend to be plastic, so retain water well but they have special holes or 'gates' in the sides to allow you to plant at the sides and top for a stunning look.

Wall baskets, or hay racks, don't hang but rather attach directly to a wall. They are strong and enduring and tend to be large enough for a magnificent display. They are a good choice for exposed spots.

Stone-effect hanging baskets are a great style choice, they are contemporary, sleek and stylish and make the basket a real part of the feature. They do tend to cost more, but can last for years.

Once you have selected your hanging basket, chosen a location and installed it, it might need lining and a few pebbles in the bottom to aid drainage. Fill with a peat-free compost and plant up. Begonias look stunning and are low maintenance and last well and the trailing varieties work well in hanging baskets. Fuchsias, petunias, geraniums and lobelia offer a good choice of colour. Water thoroughly before hanging!

By Rob Bullock

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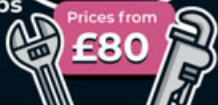
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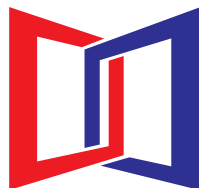
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Perched high on Mount Titano and surrounded entirely by Italy, San Marino is one of Europe's smallest countries, not to mention one of its most intriguing. With medieval streets, dramatic views and a fiercely independent spirit, it makes for a wonderfully distinctive short break.

Tiny in size but rich in history, San Marino claims to be the world's oldest surviving republic, founded in AD 301. That sense of deep-rooted identity is everywhere, from the city walls to the rituals of its political life, and it lends the country a character quite unlike anywhere else in Europe.

Most visitors begin in the historic capital, San Marino, a UNESCO-listed old town reached via winding mountain roads or cable car. Inside the stone walls, narrow lanes open onto postcard-perfect squares, lined with cafés, craft shops and small museums. It's compact enough to explore on foot, but every corner seems to offer a new viewpoint or hidden passage.

The defining landmark is Mount Titano, crowned by the country's famous trio of fortresses. The most striking is Guaita Fortress, whose towers rise dramatically above the cliffs. A walk along the battlements rewards visitors with sweeping views across the Apennines and, on clear days, all the way to the Adriatic coast. The connecting path to the second and third towers is steep in places but well worth the effort for the scenery alone.

San Marino

Culture lovers should allow time for the State Museums, including the State Museum of San Marino, which traces the republic's history through artefacts, coins and artworks.

Food in San Marino reflects its Italian surroundings, but with a rustic, mountain-influenced twist. Expect handmade pasta, slow-cooked meats and generous use of local cheeses. Try a plate of tagliatelle al ragù or nidi di rondine, often enjoyed on terraces overlooking the valleys below. Local wines and liqueurs, including the sweet dessert wine Moscato, are well worth sampling. Shopping is another quiet pleasure, with San Marino known for ceramics, stamps and coins... it's also tax-free!

As evening falls, the crowds thin and the old town takes on a magical calm. Lights glow against ancient stone, and the silence of the mountains settles in – a reminder that this is a place shaped as much by geography as by history.

Finally, even consider a trip to see one of the world's worst international football teams – a side who have lost all but 13 of the 200 matches they've played. Iconic and admirable they, regardless, press on hoping for glory, in spectacular and beautiful surroundings.

Getting there: The nearest major hub is Rimini, Italy. From Rimini, regular buses reach San Marino in around 50 minutes.

Getting around: The historic centre is best explored on foot. Cable cars and buses connect lower areas. **Accommodation:** Stay within the old town for atmosphere, or just outside for quieter, better-value options.





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The Social Catch Up

Why people are abandoning big days out for a much shorter meet-up with mates.

Somewhere between busy diaries, early mornings and the sheer effort of getting dressed after 7pm, our social lives have quietly changed.

Long dinners, late nights and big group plans are giving way to something softer and far more sustainable: the casual catch-up.

Coffee walks, early evening meet-ups, short lunches and quick drinks are now how many of us stay connected, and for most people, it's a welcome shift.

The appeal is simple - casual catch-ups fit around real life. A walk with a friend before dinner, a coffee after the school run or a quick drink straight from work feels manageable rather than draining. There's less pressure to perform, to stay late or to turn it into an 'occasion'. You show up as you are and leave when you need to.

Psychologically, these shorter, lighter meet-ups often feel more nourishing. They maintain social connection without tipping into exhaustion. Many people find they're more present during a 40-minute walk than they are during a long evening out where tiredness creeps in.

There's also something gentler about moving while talking. Walking side by side reduces social pressure and encourages more relaxed conversation, with spring and early summer making this style of socialising easier. Lighter evenings, better weather and longer days create natural windows for informal meet-ups.

Cafes, bakeries, parks and local walking routes become social hubs, replacing loud bars and late dinners. Importantly, casual catch-ups help keep friendships alive during busy seasons of life. You don't need to wait weeks for a free evening or a special reason to meet. The rise of the casual catch-up reflects a wider move towards balance. We still want connection, laughter and conversation, just without the burnout!

SIDEBAR:

The stats behind the casual catch-up
Recent research published by YouGov and the Office for National Statistics indicates that the average adult social meet-up now lasts between 45-90 minutes, compared to two to three hours in the early 2000s.

Coffee shops and casual food venues have overtaken pubs and restaurants as the most common meeting places, particularly during daytime and early evening hours. Spending patterns reflect this shift. The average casual catch-up costs under £10 per person, compared with £25-£40 for a full evening meal or night out, making short meet-ups easier to sustain regularly. Walking has also become a social activity in its own right. Walking groups and informal "walk and talk" meet-ups have grown steadily, with health surveys showing that people are more likely to stick to social plans that involve movement rather than sitting.

Perhaps most tellingly, people who socialise little and often report higher satisfaction with friendships than those who rely on occasional big get-togethers. In modern life, consistency is quietly replacing intensity.

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Why the month of May might represent the best time of the year to sort out your finances.

Money often feels like something we should only face during moments of crisis or resolution, January resets, tax deadlines or sudden expenses.

The month of May, however, offers a rare financial sweet spot, and the reasons are pretty straightforward.

After all, winter spending is behind us, summer costs haven't fully arrived, and there's just enough breathing room to look at money calmly rather than reactively.

SHEDDING LIGHT ON YOUR MONEY

After months of heating bills, darker evenings and comfort spending, May brings clarity. Energy bills often dip, moods lift and we naturally feel more capable of making decisions. This makes it an ideal moment for a financial check-in that isn't driven by guilt or fear.

PROCESS

The aim isn't to overhaul everything, but to understand where you are and where you're heading.

Start by reviewing the basics. Look at regular outgoings, subscriptions, insurance payments and direct debits. Many people discover they're paying for services they no longer use or need. Cancelling just one or two can create immediate breathing space.

Next, consider upcoming summer costs. Holidays, days out, fuel, childcare changes and social events all add up. Planning for them now, even roughly, reduces stress later. Setting aside small amounts each week in May can soften the financial impact of summer without feeling restrictive.

May is also a good time to review savings habits. If you don't have one, even a modest emergency fund brings peace of mind. If you do, checking interest rates and accounts ensures your money is working as hard as possible.

THE FINANCIAL FACTS

Importantly, this kind of financial review isn't about judgement; it's about awareness. Looking at money when things are relatively stable builds confidence and control. You're not firefighting, you're steering.

FREE MONEY, FREE MIND

There's also a psychological benefit to timing. Looking at money in May allows you to plan forward without the emotional weight that often comes with January goal-setting.

Remember, you're not trying to reinvent yourself or undo past mistakes, just simply adjusting course. Small changes made now have time to settle, whether that's tweaking a budget, building a habit or creating a buffer for autumn.

That sense of steadiness carries into summer, when spending naturally increases, and financial decisions become more reactive.

Ultimately, a short, calm check-in now can prevent a lot of anxiety later, and help money feel like something that supports your life rather than something that constantly interrupts it.

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- Stump grinding/removal
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- Emergency tree work
(storm damage clearance)
- Tree Preservation Order work



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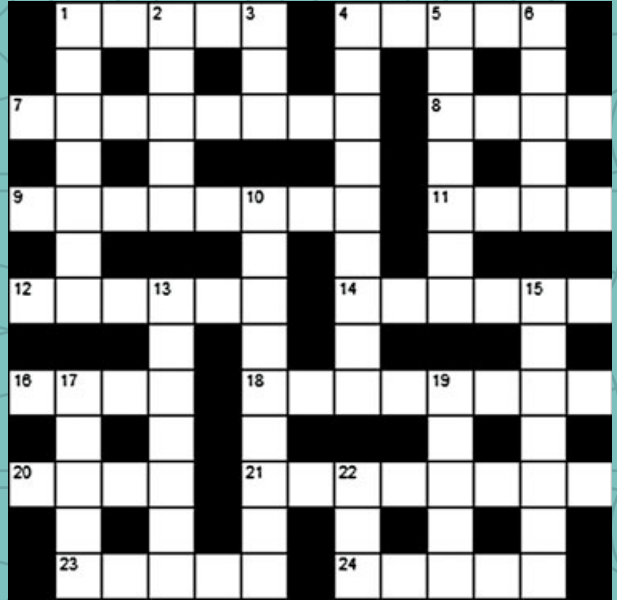
Crossword

Across

1. Stares open-mouthed (5)
4. Brief written comments (5)
7. Suspended in the air (8)
8. Greek God of love (4)
9. Most chaotic or sloppy (8)
11. Yorkshire river (4)
12. Baby swan (6)
14. Room in a church (6)
16. Narrow opening (4)
18. Elated (8)
20. Elliptical (4)
21. Implied (8)
23. Take an examination again (5)
24. Leaving (5)

Down

1. Mini-market, local store (7)
2. Iron (5)
3. Footwear for sliding on snow (3)
4. Minus points (9)
5. Involuntary shakes (7)
6. Premises which sell things (5)
10. Radical, zealot (9)
13. Plant covered with stinging hairs (7)
15. Fence-like barrier (7)
17. Romantic partner (5)
19. Legal excuse (5)
22. Flat-faced dog (3)



Wordsearch



Famous Battles

- | | | |
|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Agincourt | DDay | Musa Qala |
| Aliwal | El Alamein | Naseby |
| Balaklava | Goose Green | Plassey |
| Bannockburn | Hastings | Quebec |
| Blenheim | Imphal | Rorkes Drift |
| Bosworth | Kohima | Somme |
| Field | Lexington | Waterloo |
| Culloden | Lowestoft | |
| Darwin | Megiddo | |

Kids' Page

Did you know...?

Very few people in the world can lick their own elbow.

Crocodiles can't stick their tongues out

A shrimp's heart is in its head.

When you sneeze your heart stops for a millisecond.

The electric chair was invented by a dentist!

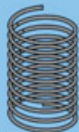
Can you work out what the two words are from the picture clues?



+



+



+



Last but not least...

Almost everyone who reads this page will try to lick their own elbow!

Mini Sudoku

Can you fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x2 box contains the numbers 1-6 with no repetition?

	5	1		4	3
3			5		
		6			2
4	2		3	6	



Daft Ditty

Mary had a metal cow,
She fed it safety pins.
And every time she milked her cow,
The milk came out in tins!

4	2	5	3	6	1
1	6	3	2	5	4
5	1	6	4	3	2
3	4	2	5	1	6
6	3	4	1	2	5
2	5	1	6	4	3

Sudoku Solution

Picture Puzzle
Solution
Moonlight
Sunflower
Spring time

Quiz

1. What is the name of the major Japanese game console company made famous with the Mario Franchise?
2. Which ocean surrounds Japan?
3. What is the national flower of Japan?
4. Which city was Japan's capital before Tokyo?
5. Sake is Japan's famous wine but what ingredient is fermented to make it?
6. What Pokémon does Ash famously start his journey with?
7. What is the term for Japanese comics?
8. Which Japanese city is known as the "City of Peace"?
9. What is the name of the toy with the aim of keeping a virtual pet alive and healthy by feeding, cleaning, and caring for it?
10. The tradition of folding 1,000 origami _____ symbolises healing, global peace, and hope?

Sudoku

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

Solutions

Quiz

1. Nintendo
2. The Pacific Ocean
3. Cherry blossom (Sakura)
4. Kyoto
5. Rice
6. Pikachu
7. Manga
8. Hiroshima
9. Tamagotchi
10. Cranes

Crossword

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

Wordsearch

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

Sudoku

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

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Zero Dry Time

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Plumbing Plus 12

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Kitchens

8 *Collins Kitchens* 7

MC Bespoke Joinery 8

Plumbing

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19 *Plumbing Plus* 12

3 *Rightio Plumbing & Heating* 6 & 22

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