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

Happy New Year! Best wishes to you all for 2026. Lets hope this year is a success and enjoyable one for businesses, residents and all of the local community.

If you are involved in a local club, team, charity, non-profit making organisation or an upcoming event please get in touch. I would love to increase the amount of local content included in the publication on the free Community Pages. If you have something you would like including for February, please send me the details before 12th January. Examples of things that can be included are: local competitions, players wanted for teams, fundraising activities, specific dates such as the Christmas light switch on, Church plays and activities.

One of the upcoming events taking place this month 'Quiz Night' at St John's Church Hall, Cuddington Saturday 10th January. Entry is £5 per person including nibbles. If you would like to register your team, please see the advert for more details.

Are you self-employed or a business owner and want to make 2026 your best year yet? Have you considered advertising in the next edition but haven't ever got round to it, now is the time to do so! Get in touch today to have your business featured in the next edition and start making our loyal readers, your loyal customers.

*Best Wishes,
Charlie*

**THE DEADLINE DATE FOR
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IS 16th JANUARY**

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**Some of the articles included
in this edition**

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YOGA FOR FLEXIBILITY

The ancient mind-body practice of yoga has been found to benefit physical and mental health, and especially flexibility.

Yoga, which in ancient Sanskrit means to unite, signifies a joining of mind, body and spirit has been around for thousands of years but here in the UK its popularity is growing every year with up to half a million of us participating every week. The benefits are many, better balance and strength, reduced stress levels and improved mental wellbeing, combats depression and improves concentration, and it can even help you get a better night's sleep. But for many improved flexibility, joint and muscle health is the main goal.

Exercise and breathing

Improved flexibility, balance and strength are attained in yoga not only through exercise but by mindful breathing which naturally helps the body to purge tension and gently stretch muscles. Unlike many forms of exercise yoga is gentle, but highly effective, and uses low impact movement to strengthen the body. It is these gentle yet effective movements that appeal to so many people.

Basic poses for flexibility

Child's pose or Balasana – is a basic and useful movement. This is often a pose that acts as a joining pose between other exercises but is easily achieved even for beginners and very effective for improving flexibility and strength. As you kneel and fold your torso forward on your thighs, place your head on the ground and gently stretch your arms forward on the ground beyond your head.

Downward-facing dog is perhaps the most famous yoga movement but highly effective at improving flexibility and strength in legs, arms and core. On all fours you create an inverted 'v' shape.

Bridge pose or Setu Bandhasana starts by lying on your back and lifting your hips, opening the chest. This pose is an excellent way to strengthen the core and hips in a gradual, gentle way.

Different kinds of yoga

There are many different types of yoga, but five main styles, hatha, lyengar, vinyasa, ashtanga and hot yoga. Hatha Yoga tends to encompass slower and more gentle movements whilst Ashtanga and Vinyasa tend to be physically demanding and better suited to people who are experienced in the practice. Lyengar tends to build upon Hatha Yoga poses and utilises props such as pads, blankets and straps. Hot Yoga takes place in a warm environment to promote deeper movements because the body is warmer. It can also encourage the body to detoxify by sweating, although great care must be taken to hydrate sufficiently.

Yoga is an excellent way to get stronger, fitter and more flexible. And especially when you are beginning your yoga journey doing the poses at home can help you decide if it is for you at very little cost and in the privacy of your own space. But professional guidance is an excellent way to learn correct technique and practice. Taking a yoga class is also an excellent way to meet new people and enjoy socialising whilst getting fitter and healthier.

By Rob Bullock

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WHY DID THE DONUT make a
RESOLUTION? - IT WANTED TO GET INTO
SHAPE.

Why did the gym close in January?
It just didn't work out.

WHY DID THE CALENDAR GO TO THERAPY?
IT FELT LIKE ITS DAYS WERE NUMBERED.

Why did the artist make a New Year's
resolution? She wanted to draw the line
somewhere.

Here's to 2025 — may your Wi-Fi be strong,
your coffee stronger, and your resolutions
optional!

What happened to the man who stole a
calendar on New Year's Eve? - He got twelve
months!



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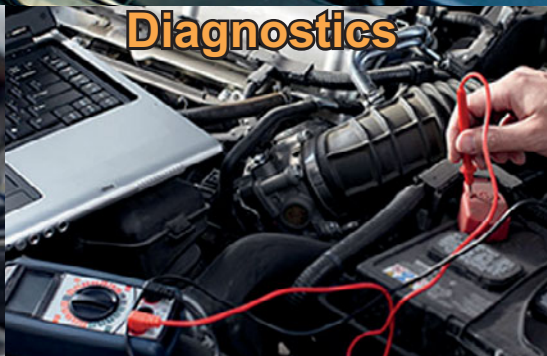
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A personal trainer, a woman with dark hair in a black t-shirt and bright orange leggings, is kneeling on a green mat in a gym. She is assisting a male client who is in a push-up position. The client is wearing a black t-shirt and grey sneakers. He is using red resistance bands under his hands. The trainer has her hands on the client's hips to provide support and ensure correct form. The background shows various gym equipment like treadmills and weights.

The Importance Of Personal Training

Whatever your exercise goals personal training can help you achieve better health, at your own pace, safely under expert guidance.

If you find it hard to get motivated to exercise or are worried about what will work best for you, perhaps a personal trainer is the answer. Personal trainers are qualified, highly skilled and experienced in tailoring exercise to meet an individual's health goals. They can plan, guide, encourage and inspire their clients to better physical health, which in turns helps improve mental well-being.

Personal Training

When choosing a personal trainer, recommendations from family, friends or colleagues are useful, as are independent references from people that might have similar health goals to you. Meet and speak with a trainer and get to know them. Be honest about what you want to achieve by training as this will help a professional plan and craft a programme tailored just for you. Personal trainers often help their clients achieve their goals quicker than if they were training independently.

Locations

Where and how you want to exercise will influence your choice of personal trainer. Many trainers work in gyms, but others are happy to visit clients at home, some like to take sessions outdoors, some specialise in resistance training, some aerobic exercises, and some like to combine different techniques. Some trainers use dance and movement, or boxing as a way for their clients to get fit and this might be something that specifically appeals to you and will influence where sessions take place.

Personal Exercise Plans, Correct Form and Progress Tracking

Personal exercise plans work best when they are realistic and utilise short and long-term goals. A plan will begin with defining what a client wants to achieve, maybe it is weight loss, muscle gain, strength, flexibility, or maybe it is to achieve a target such as a running marathon, or a long-distance swim. Maybe a client wants to use personal training to recover or recuperate from an illness. There are many personal trainers that specialise in helping clients recover health and fitness.

An exercise plan will create a programme of exercise tailored specifically to a client's needs which starts slowly and builds progress gradually. A trainer can use various techniques to track progress perhaps using a log or app to monitor aerobic and strength improvements in the form of endurance, repetitions, resistance increases and levels of flexibility. And, because of the trainer's experience proper form can be monitored to help avoid injuries.

Expect to pay between £40 to £80 per hour upwards for a good personal trainer. A trainer should at least hold a Level 2 Gym Instructor qualification and a Level 3 Diploma in Personal Training and these qualifications should be endorsed by the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA). If you want a specialised trainer they should hold an appropriate specialised qualification. And, before you engage the services of a personal trainer, you should check their levels of insurance, which should include Public Liability and Professional Indemnity cover.

By Rob Bullock

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Smart Swaps

Simple lifestyle changes that lead to big savings over time.

Saving money is often associated with huge sacrifices such as a ban on holidays, subsisting on beans and rice and, basically, having zero fun ever. Yet, in reality, some of the most effective savings come from small, consistent swaps in everyday habits.

Making coffee vs buying

If you're often left wondering where all your money has gone, consider your caffeine habit. A daily, basic barista-made latte is around £3.50. Multiply that by five days a week, and you're spending almost a thousand pounds a year on the dark stuff!

Compare this with brewing your own coffee at home and, even factoring in quality beans, milk, and electricity, the cost per cup is closer to 40p. That brings your yearly spend to roughly £100–£150, saving you in excess of £800. That's enough to cover several months of utility bills, or instead let it fund a cheeky weekend getaway.

Packed Lunch vs takeout

These days, grabbing lunch out can easily cost up to £10. If you do this four times a week, you're spending around £2,000 annually. Preparing lunches at home – think pasta salads, sarnies or leftovers – brings the cost down to about £2 per meal.

Walking or cycling vs. public transport

If you live in a city, commuting costs add up quickly. A monthly travel card in London, for example, can cost over £160 – that's nearly £2,000 a year. If your commute is short enough, cycling or walking will not only cut that cost dramatically, it will also improve your health and general wellbeing.

Even if you invest in a decent bike (£400) and maintenance (£100 annually), you could still save £1,500+ per year, so get on your bike!

Branded vs own-label groceries

Supermarkets charge a premium for branded items but own-label alternatives are often just as good. Swapping branded cereal, pasta and cleaning products for supermarket versions can shave 20–30% off your grocery bill. For a household spending £80 a week, that's a saving of around £1,000 annually.

This is not just a financial swap, but a psychological one. Pay attention to your own feelings and responses when it comes to labels and try to remove the powerful association between brand and personal status.

SIM-only vs contract phone plans

Finally, many people stick with expensive phone contracts long after their handset is paid off. A typical contract might cost £50 a month, while a SIM-only plan with plenty of data can be as low as £10. You could even use that saving to purchase a refurbished or second-hand device!

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Ginger Peanut Chicken

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Servings: 4

Preparation time: 20 Min

Cooking Time: 50 Min

Ingredients

Ginger chicken

500g chicken, cut into small bite-sized chunks

Thum-sized piece of ginger, grated

3 spring onion, thinly sliced

Zest and juice of 1-2 limes

2 tbsps brown sugar

1 1/2 tsp salt

1 tbsp olive oil or avocado oil

2-3 cloves garlic, minced

50g chopped roasted peanuts (dry roasted are great)

20g coriander

Pak choi

Coconut Rice

250-30g Jasmine rice

1 tin coconut milk

Method

In an oven-proof dish (either non-metallic or stainless steel), mix the chicken with the ginger, half the spring onions, lime zest, brown sugar, salt, and oil. Marinate for 2 hours.

For fluffy coconut rice

Wash the rice until the water is quite clear, to remove the starch. This is important because coconut milk is thicker than water, so without washing, the rice will be gluey. Then let the rice soak for an hour.

Preheat the oven to 200°C/ 180°C fan / Gas 4. In a large oven proof saucepan combine the can of coconut milk with a can of water and bring the mixture to the boil. Then add the rice. Cover with foil and bake, for 40 minutes. Oven-cooking allows the rice to steam without scorching the base of the pot. After 40 minutes, remove the pan from the oven and leave to rest for 15 minutes. The rice will absorb any remaining moisture and become fluffy.

The ginger chicken

Heat a large frying pan or wok to medium-high heat. Add the marinated chicken to the pan (split it into 2-3 batches depending on the size of your wok). Don't stir the chicken too much, to allow it to develop a caramelised surface. When all the chicken is cooked and caramelised, reduce the heat slightly and add the peanuts and garlic. Sauté for 3-5 minutes until the garlic is fragrant.

Add the coriander, the remainder of the spring onions, and the pak choi. Squeeze lime juice into the pan and season with more salt and pepper as needed.



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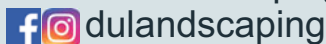


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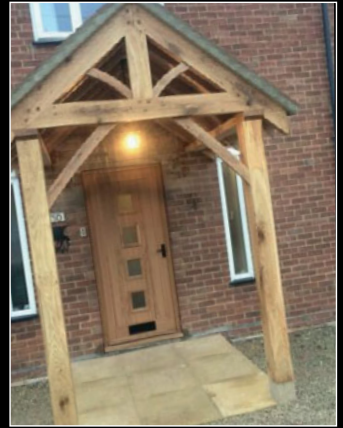


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You may or may not have written your personal list of goals and aspirations for the coming year, which likely cover everything from health hopes to positive habits in the home; but do any of these take into account your pet? It can be easy to overlook the needs of our beloved animals, but it's worth taking a moment to consider how you can make their life better at the same time as your own.

I will get those steps in

If you've promised yourself to hit the 10k daily steps mark, then why not set a goal for your furry friend too? A human can cover mile in as little as 2,100 steps, but for a dog it can take between five to eight thousand.

Really, the numbers are arbitrary as both dogs and humans can have vastly different fitness needs depending on lifestyle, diet and breed (the last one only applies to dogs!) - the point is to get outside and take your pup with you.

I will keep up-to-date

Pets can be pretty techy these days, with the standard collar tag being replaced by a microchip. A legal requirement for all cats and dogs in the UK, microchips are inserted in pets while they are young - a small device implants the tiny chip just under their skin and is not painful or invasive, allowing the owner to be identified should they get lost.

While such technology helps aid pet reunions, it can also have the opposite effect if the information on the database is not updated, so make sure your pet's chip has the correct name, address and contact number for you.

I will health-check

Similarly, it is really important to keep on top of the likes of immunisations and flea/worm medications, and to attend regular check-ups which help track weight and overall vitality. Many vets offer a 'pet club' whereby they charge a monthly fee that includes an annual checkup, vaccinations and a discount of food and medications. These are all designed to help you (and your pet) stay on track, whilst also saving you money.

I will be age aware

They may seem eternally young, but like us, pets have different needs throughout their lives. This includes dietary needs (both nutrition and amount change over time), supplements changes for issues such as bone density, and constantly altering physical needs and capabilities. It's worth seeking information for different life stages.

I will make every day wonderful

Stimulating walks, yummy food, plenty of cuddles and exciting toys and treats all make your beloved pet's life better, and why would you not want to make them feel loved and secure every moment of their lives?

Year of Cheer

New years resolutions for pet owners.





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If you're feeling the winter blues and simply can't wait till your summer holiday, then consider Las Palmas, a sun-kissed haven that's a mere four-hour flight from the UK, and where January highs hover around 21°C. Blending vibrant urban life with golden beaches, it's an ideal winter escape that will hopefully see you through the cold snap!

Weather

January in Las Palmas is refreshingly mild. Daytime temperatures average 19°C to 21°C, dipping down to around 16 after dark. Skies are mostly clear, with just a few light showers across the month.

This stable climate means you can swap your winter coat for light layers: think breathable fabrics and maybe a cashmere shawl for cool evenings.

Beach

Playa de Las Canteras is the city's crown jewel. Its golden shore stretches for 3km, framed by a natural reef that keeps the waves calm.

Morning swims and snorkelling sessions here feel tropical - water temperatures settle comfortably around 20°C. Just beyond the sand, the city's promenade bustles with joggers, cyclists and evening strollers. Rent a bike or join a group walking tour along the coast to spot local murals and hidden coves.

Viva Las Palmas

Seek out some winter sun with this vibrant island city.

Culture

Las Palmas has plenty of history and art for the intellectually inclined. Wander through Vegueta, the UNESCO-listed old town, where cobbled streets open onto grand plazas; or Casa de Colón where you can trace Columbus's voyages.

In January, you might catch a flamenco show or a live jazz night at a tucked-away tavern - check local listings for pop-up performances.

Cuisine

For foodies, this city doesn't disappoint. Start your day with a tostada topped by local mojo sauce. For lunch, try 'papas arrugadas' (wrinkled potatoes) served alongside fresh fish or grilled octopus. And don't miss 'gofio', a toasted grain flour that appears in soups, desserts, and even home-made ice cream.

Finish with a glass of sweet Malvasía wine as the sun sets over the Atlantic.

Practical Tips

Book accommodation near Las Canteras for beach and city access - this will make your entire trip a breeze. Then, if you do fancy an exploration of the more mountainous areas, you can rent a car for the day. Having said that, public buses are reliable and cover most tourist sites for under €3 a ride.

Though the temperatures may seem fairly low, be sure to pack sunscreen (remember, your skin has been in hibernation mode), ensuring you drink plenty of water too, especially if you are also having a few daily cervezas. In general though, Las Palmas is a friendly, modern and fun place to get your winter sun. Cheers to that.





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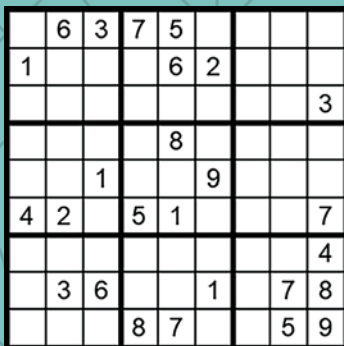
PUZZLES

Word Search

Abundantia, Acca Larentia, Aequitas, Apollo, Aura,
Bacchus, Bellona, Caelus, Ceres, Cupid, Cybele, Diana,
Faunus, Fortuna, Janus, Juno, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury,
Minerva, Neptune, Pluto, Venus, Vulcan



Sudoku



Crossword

Clues

- Across
1 Top prize (7)
5 All the animals (5)
8 Man made lake (9)
9 Bulgarian currency (3)
10 Doubtful, dubious (7)
13 Organic compound (5)
16 Narrow-bladed sword (6)
17 Elegant sight hound (6)
18 Hemispherical top (5)
21 Directive, communication (7)
24 Forty winks (3)
25 Counterfeit, unoriginal (9)
26 Vacant (5)
27 The most high in stature (7)
Down

Mindbenders

Can you find the hidden phrases?

TUOBA

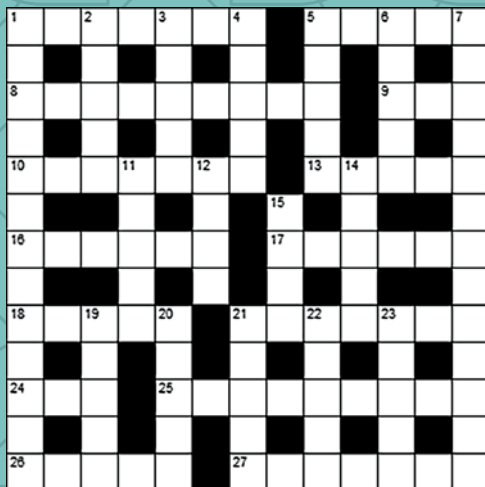
Ocadropean

absent
leave

absent



Crossword



- 1 Knowledge of law (13)
2 Prices (5)
3 Money bag (5)
4 Rainbow or brown _____ (5)
5 Blacksmith's workshop (5)
6 Dark (5)
7 Persuasive promotion or notice (13)
11 Heyday (5)
12 Keep in check (4)
14 Goes off in a huff (5)
15 Small area of land surround by sea (4)
19 Clean a liquid spillage (3,2)
20 Flower or girl's name (5)
21 Damp (5)
22 Woollen wrap (5)
23 Not dead (5)

COSMOS

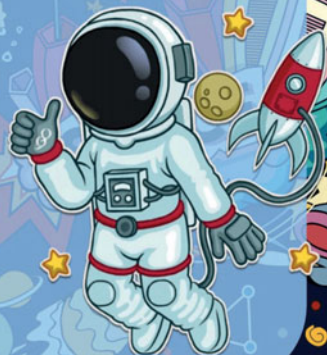
Kids' Page

COSMO

Can you find all the space-related words in the letter grid?

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

ASTRONAUT
COMET
GALAXY
GRAVITY
LUNAR
MODULE
NEBULA
ORBIT
PLANET
ROCKET
SATURN
VENUS



Space Scramble

All the scrambled words below are linked to space. Can you work out what they are?

TCKERO
SOALRGY
BNAELU
RBOIT
VYRTIGA
ACEOTSRSNUT

ALIEN MESSAGE

Scientists have managed to decode an alien message. They found that every letter in alphabet has been shifted three letters forwards, so A=D and B=E etc.

Can you decode their message to us for 2826?

NHHS ORRNLQJ XS DQC
GUHDP ELJ

ALLEN MESSAGE ANSWER
Keep looking up and dream big

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

Word Grid Solution

SPACE SCRAMBLE ANSWERS
1. ROCKET 2. GALAXY 3. NEBULA 4. ORBIT 5. GRAVITY 6. ASTRONAUT

Community Events & What's On....

FREE pages for charities and non-profit making organisations

Dementia Friendly Northwich Cafe

Dementia Friendly Northwich is offering a drop-in cafe for people living with dementia and their carers.

When?

Every 3rd Wednesday of the month from 11 am-12.30pm

Where?

The Salvation Army
Tabley Street
Northwich
CW9 5DP



For more information, please visit our Facebook Group



Hartford 2026 calendar



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Community Events deadline for the February edition is **12th January**

Please email Charlie - thelocalife@btinternet.com



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▶ **1-2 Hour** ◀
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time!



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Oakmere Wealth Management	12	Security / Alarms	
Flooring / Carpets		Kingsley Communication	12
Rodgers Flooring and Carpets	13	Will Writing / Family Research	
Zero Dry Time	2	CL Wills & Estate Planning	10
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DU Landscaping	21	Howard The Gutter Man	35
Northwich Tree Surgery	22	Northwich Glass	18 & 19
OJT Tree Services	25		



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

Crossword



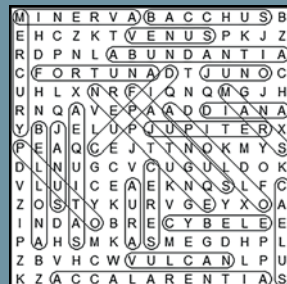
Sudoku

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

Mind Benders

1. About turn
2. A drop in the ocean
3. Absent without leave

Word Search





HOWARD THE GUTTER MAN

RAIN , SLEET  OR SNOW , GUTTERS MUST FLOW!

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