



The month of April gets its name from the Latin word *aperio* meaning “to open [bud],” because plants really begin to grow now. April’s full Pink Moon will rise on Tuesday, April 23.

SPECIAL NOTICE FROM THE CHAIR

I have to advise that there is real uncertainty about the future of our Higham & Rushden u3a. Despite the many requests and appeals for members to come forward and join the committee, no-one has responded, and this has put our continued existence in doubt. As many of our current committee members must stand down at the end of the year due to having served the maximum term permitted under our constitution, we may not be able to survive.

You enjoy the benefits provided by membership of H&R u3a, such as interesting and varied groups, monthly meetings with good speakers, special outings and visits organised by the groups to which you belong, social interaction and the chance to make new friends. None of this would be possible were it not for the efforts of our committee, volunteers and group leaders who generously give of their time.

Now it is over to you, the members. If you want our u3a to continue, we urgently need some of you to step up and become committee members. Failing this there is a real possibility that our u3a will have to close by the end of the year which would be a real loss to the community and in particular those people with limited social contact.

If you feel that you can help or need more information – please make contact with any member of the committee.

Trish Dewar
Chair

H & R u3a:

There are no age limits for membership to the u3a, but it is for people described as 'no longer in full time work –retired or semi-retired’.

For this reason, it attracts a lot of members aged 50 and over.

However, there's no lower-age membership limit and it would be good if more “younger” people could be encouraged to join and bring fresh ideas into the mix.

Our u3a has a lively membership but it could always do with being stirred up from time to time, so if you know someone who you think might be interested, invite them along to one of our meetings. Everyone is welcome.

ICE

(In Case of Emergency)

Have you ever thought about what would happen if you had an accident or fell ill during any u3a activity?

Please ensure we have a note of your “In case of emergency” contact details so that we can let them know.

If any H & R u3a members are trained First Aiders, can you please let a committee member know, so that we can compile a register.

USED POSTAGE STAMPS

If you save used postage stamps we can collect these for charity. Please cut them from the envelope and then hand them to any member of the committee who will ensure they are passed on. Thank you.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

A plant-rich diet in later life can help prevent memory loss later. A study published in *Alzheimer's & Demetia* found women who adopted the DASH (*Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension*) diet, designed to lower blood pressure, were 17% less likely to experience cognitive decline later in life. The diet emphasises wholegrains, fruit, veg and lean proteins, as well as reducing saturated fats and sodium.



DRIVING SAFER FOR LONGER

FREE Mature Driver Roadshow 7th May 2024

Northamptonshire
NSRA
Safer Roads Alliance

Advice on:
Car adaptations
Eyesight
Highway Code changes
How to stay safe
First Aid
FREE Hints/Tips Assessments

The Goods Shed,
227 John Clark Way, Rushden
NN10 0AW
<https://what3words.com/minority.mows.interrupt>

Free Mature Drivers Roadshow – 7th May 2024 - Rushden

Are you a mature driver (aged 60+)? Live in Northamptonshire? Rely on being able to drive? This FREE roadshow is for you!

Driving is an important part of our everyday life and we (Northamptonshire Safer Roads Alliance (NSRA)) are keen to help to keep mature drivers safer for longer.

Our driving ability changes over time for different reasons, especially as we get older. It's important that we recognise whether and how this is happening so we can stay safe and protect both ourselves and those around us.

This Mature Drivers Roadshow is aimed at drivers 60+ and will cover different aspects of driving. There will be a short talk and then plenty of time to meet informally with our many stand holders. Free advice will be available on car adaptations, eyesight, how your prescription medications may affect you, and much more. There will be free hints and tips.

Our aim is to keep mature drivers driving safer, for longer.

Book your Free tickets via Universe <https://www.universe.com/mature-drivers-rushden-2024>

The event is being held at The Goods Shed, 227 John Clark Way, Rushden NN10 0AW with two sessions, 9.30am and 1.00pm.





Buckingham Palace

Originally this trip to see the State Rooms at Buckingham Palace was booked for Thursday 19th September. However there was so much interest in this trip, (75 names taken at the last count), that I have decided to run a second, earlier coach trip on Monday 2nd September. The cost will be between £50 & £55, depending upon the number of members on each coach, but will be the same for everyone.

I now need all members who originally signed up, to let me know which date they would prefer. This means that I can ensure everyone who wants to go to Buckingham Palace can get on one or other of the coaches. There is, of course, now availability for any other member(s) to add their name(s) to my booking lists.

Either see me at the monthly meeting, text me on 07736 445 658, or email me on peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com together with your mobile phone number.

Turkey & Tinsel

This year's Turkey & Tinsel will be from Friday 6th to Monday 9th December, and the cost will be around £260 - £265 to include the coach and 4 days/3 nights at The Suncliff Hotel in Bournemouth. This popular event includes an a-la-carte 3 course meal every evening, followed by in-house entertainment. Also included is tea and coffee on arrival, a sherry reception on the first night and a Bucks Fizz reception on the Sunday. On the Saturday night which is designated "Christmas Day" there will be a traditional Christmas dinner with crackers & a Christmas gift. The hotel also has a heated indoor pool and sauna if you just want to relax. On the Monday we will be stopping on the way back at Winchester Christmas Market where you can stroll around, buy a coffee or have lunch...provided it is not pouring with rain!!

Pantomime - Jack & the Beanstalk" on Saturday 7th December.

For those of you coming to Bournemouth, I have booked 52 seats for the afternoon performance of Jack & the Beanstalk at the Bournemouth Pavilion. The cost of this is £35 for a seat in the stalls and includes a free ice cream. See me at the monthly meeting to sign up for the Pantomime.

Jean

Deposits:

Unfortunately if members cancel an event after final costings have been calculated, it may put the event into a loss-making situation. Therefore in order to avoid this I am now asking for a £10 non-refundable deposit in order to secure your place on all trips that I organise.

peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com

or contact Jean Mole on 07736445658



Home Dining

If you would like to join us for a nice meal and a convivial evening, please contact me as soon as possible with your menu choices. First to reply will get preference. Email: peterandjeanmole@btinternet.com or text/phone 07736 445 658.



Rock & Blues Group:

Please note there is no meeting in April as the leaders are on holiday. Our next meeting is at 14.00 hours on Thursday 30th May at the leader's house & the topic is the letter "L".

Jim Morrison



MMFC (Monday Morning Football Chat).

MMFC will now meet at Waitrose Cafe for the foreseeable future. Same time 10am until 11. New members welcome.

Mike Gibbons



Canasta

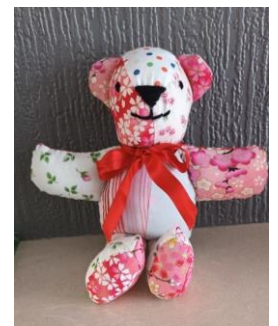
We play on the first & third Thursday morning of each month from 10am until 12am. Please contact me if you are interested in joining our small (*but select!*) group. 07736 445 658.

Jean Mole



Handicrafts:

In March we had a really good meeting, lots of people turned up. We were making memory bears with scraps of material. There wasn't enough time to complete the bears so everyone took them home to finish. We are looking forward to seeing the finished bears at the next meeting. I have attached a photo of one of the bears. This month we will be making a macrame gnome and if we have time possibly we will attempt a plant holder. The meeting is on Thursday 25th April, starting at 2pm until 4pm at Rushden Bowls Club.



Kathy & Jenny.



Computer Group:

We continue to meet in the Community Room at Waitrose, on the 1st & 3rd Saturday each month from 10:00 until 12:00. The next meeting will be on 4th May.

Whilst the main topics covered are the basics of Windows 10/11, we welcome more experienced users with any queries or issues they may have.

Further information from Jim or Maggie Morrison.



W.A.L.T: Would Anyone Like To:

Find some company foranything you fancy doing, but don't want to do it alone. Find some information or advice onanything you want to know about. Find someone to take away.....anything you don't need (but someone else might).

The new look W.A.L.T group is a bit of an amalgamation of social media, recycling, & a companionship group, & with 70+ members, you stand a good chance of some responses from your fellow group members.

Don't worry if you are hesitant about using email - we have a very successful Buddy system in place to ensure no one is excluded because of technology.

For more information either contact the group leaders, Janet, & Ken, via the website, or see us at the main u3a meeting.

Janet Embling & Ken Chambers, Group Leaders



Ten Pin Bowling:

If you would like to know more about this group or advise us of your interest: Please get in touch via the website Contact page, or contact: Group Leaders – Alan Collinson, Martin Cromwell or Alan Nixson



Country Dancing:

It is very pleasing to have two new members joining our group. There are quite a few past members who if only came occasionally would really boost our numbers and allow a greater variety of dances. We don't do any complicated dances but try and include one or two more interesting dances including some from the Jane Austen period. We are having a social lunch on 29th April at 12.30 at the Waitrose supermarket in Rushden. Past group members would be very welcome to join us.

George Hearnden 01933 622827



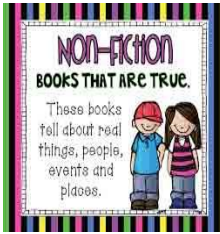
Sunday Lunch Group:

We meet once a month usually the 4th Sunday.

Next meal is at The Carriage House Higham Ferrers at 12 15 for 12 30 on the 28th of April.

All u3a members welcome.

New to Higham and Rushden u3a? Come and learn more from our members. Bookings and inquiries to Linda Walker spidar.girl@btinternet.com There are limited spaces.



Non-Fiction Book Group

New members very welcome.

We meet on the 4th Monday of the month 10:30-12:00.at the leaders' home. Details on the beacon calendar.

Are you a non-Fiction reader? Are you interested in Travel, History, Biographies etc. Members would need to commit to obtaining copies. listening as a talking book or reading on Kindle.

Our book choices are varied. Recently we have read Biographies,Diaries , Travel, & History, both newly published & from past years. We meet at the leaders' home in Rushden to discuss our choice of book & choose another.

More information from Linda & Chris Walker:.

Linda Walker



Wine Appreciation:

Only one group this month. This time from Türkiye: Öküzgözü & Boğazkere grapes - need a drink to say them, and from Uruguay: Tannat grape.

It was an interesting tasting of grapes that are not so well known, I do try to find different wines to try

If you would like to join us please phone me.

Cheers.

Steve 01933 356784



Golf:

Following a review of the group members, emails had been sent out to determine the actual playing courses with details of the required number of holes to be played and frequency.

If you have an interest in joining the group, contact the leader:

Hensley 01933 805547 or via the website contacts.

An interesting fact for this month: There are three times as many chickens on earth as people. *I want to know who counted them?*



Garden Group:

Following on from our coach trip at the beginning of April we are now undertaking some local garden visits.

The first being to Barton Seagrave to the home of Elaine Portch who gave us an excellent talk on NGS.

For further details please contact me, Lyn Dowsett or Marlene Llewelyn.

Look forward to seeing you soon.

Lorraine



Bookmarks Again:

The Wisdom of Sally Red Shoes By RUTH HOGAN

A very interesting and fascinating Victorian cemetery in Bedford that many have visited, sometimes on a guided tour, is the setting for this novel. Given the location it is not surprising this story is about how personalities deal with loss and grief. Masha who feels her life has stopped is a regular visitor to the graveyard seeking solace, and it is where she meets the women who help her begin to reshape her life. The eccentricities of the women, Sally and Kitty-Muriel, their rich and varied pasts, lends humour and interest to the novel as the past unfolds. Alice is an other Bedford resident who has a teenage son Matt whom she watches over incessantly, and he becomes part of the story. (I am trying not to introduce any spoilers to this review).

The reading group had very mixed views about the novel, and it provoked a lot of discussion about how we deal with grief and funerals, both the serious and the humorous, side. We all felt able to discuss our views openly. Those of us who have visited the cemetery would recommend a visit to others who have the opportunity to go.

In May we will be discussing *The Silent Wife* by Asa Harrison.. We will meet at 10.30 a.m. on the 6th of May at Waitrose Community room.

Any new members will be welcome.

Ann Kemp

Wellibus Transport Service (free to join).

This offers FREE travel for people with a concessionary (older and disabled people) bus pass.

Call 01933 223636, 9am–2.30pm Monday to Friday to find out more.

The Dial-a-Ride, door-to-door minibus service is wheelchair friendly and fully accessible for those with mobility needs.

- **book up to 5 days in advance or up to 12 noon the day before travel.**
- **Regular bookings can be taken if you attend a weekly group**
- **Membership joining fee is waived for the next year**
- **Transport is completely FREE OF CHARGE**

Visit the Shire Community Services website to find out more about the service and to download a form:

www.shirecommunityservices.org.uk



History Group

The April meeting was well attended with 68 people. The talk on the 150 million years of history of Peterborough in 50 minutes by Stuart Orme was very interesting, different and enjoyed by all.

The next meeting is on Thursday 3rd October at the Masonic Hall on Wellingborough Road Rushden at 2pm. The talk will be on Castles in the Air and other amazing inventions.

The trips:

Thursday 2nd May Stratford on Avon and guided tour of the theatre. This trip is full.

The pick up times are:

8am Higham Ferrers Market Place

8:10. Rushden Skinners Hill

Thursday June 6th Sandringham House and Hunstanton

The Pick up times are:

8am Higham Ferrers Market Place

8:10. Rushden Skinners Hill

Thursday 4th July King Richard III Visitor Centre and Tomb in Leicester Cathedral Coach £22, KRIII Visitor Centre £12, Cathedral entry is free Museum Entry is free.

The outstanding balance of £24 must be paid by May 16th as again I have to purchase tickets 30 days in advance.

Please note the pick up times are:

8:40am Higham Ferrers Market Place

8:50. Rushden Skinners Hill

Thursday 5th September Black Country Living Museum

Connect with the stories of how the region made a big impact on the world. From metalworkers, miners, nurses, schoolteachers and even a pub landlord or two. There is a lot to get stuck into, talking to historical characters and bringing history to life. This is a stunning historical site. This will be a wonderful day out with a lot to see and do.

There is still room The Black Country Museum.. Coach £26, Entry £18.25. The balance of £34.25 must be paid by July 15th.

Please note the pick up times are:

8:15am Higham Ferrers Market Place

8:25. Rushden Skinners Hill

Gerry Derbyshire and I will be at the general meetings to accept payments. Alternatively you can pay by BACS Sort Code: 54-41-05 Account No: 32986742 Higham and Rushden u3a. if you pay by BACS please let me know the amount paid and put the trip reference on the payment.

You can pay by cheque made payable to Higham and Rushden u3a or by cash at the meetings or to me at 8 Broadlands Raunds NN9 6QL.

Contact Brian Turner on 07812514456 or brianitatu@gmail.com if you have any queries.

Brian Turner

There may be waiting lists for some of the groups but if you are interested please contact the relevant group via the contact form on the website to be added & the group leader should contact you.

GROUP DETAILS	VENUE	DAY/TIME
Check the group calendar on the website for further details		
A Little Aloud	Leaders home	2 nd & 4 th Wednesday at Leaders' home 10.00 – 10.
Art for Fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.00-1600
Badminton Beginners & Improvers	Pemberton Centre	Wednesday 14.00-15.00
Intermediate Badminton	Pemberton centre, Rushden.	Every Tuesday, 10.00 to 11.00. £2.50 per session
Badminton for fun	Pemberton Centre	Tuesday 09.00-10.00 & Friday 12.00-13.00
Bookmarks Again	Waitrose Community Room	1st Monday of the month*
Canasta	Leader's Home	1 st & 3 rd Thursday 10.00-12.00
Computing	Waitrose Community Room	10-12am 1 st & 3 rd Saturday every month
Country Dancing	Hensman Hall Chichile St. NN10 8HT	Alternate Mondays 2 00-3.30pm
Cycling multi-Groups	Rushden Lakes	Every Monday 10.30 (Apr-Nov)
Digital Photography A	Rushden Hall	2 nd & 4 th Wed 10.00 to 12.00
Driving	On the Road	By request
Garden	Rushden Hall	2 nd Thursday 10.30-12.30
Guitar Improvers	Rushden Windmill Club	Tuesday 4pm
Handicrafts	Rushden Bowls Club	4 th Thursday each month 2-4pm.
History Group	Rushden Masonic Hall	1 st Thursday each month 14:00
Home Dining	Various	Three times per Month varying days
Knit & Natter	Leader's Home	Alternate Mon 10.00-12.00
Mahjong for fun	Waitrose Community Room	Alternate Mondays 14.30-16.30
MMFC	Waitrose Cafe	Weekly Mondays 10am – 11am
Non-Fiction Books	Leader's Home	4th Monday 10.30-12.00
Continued		

GROUP DETAILS	VENUE	DAY/TIME
Play Reading	To be advised	1st Tuesday 13.15-14.15
Rock & Blues Appreciation	Leader's Home	Last Thursday of the month 2-4pm
Scrabble	Waitrose Community Room	2-4pm Alternate Tuesdays
Singing for Fun	Rushden Hall, Hall Park	Alternate Thu 14.00-16.00
Special Events	Various	Various
Sunday Lunch	Various	Resuming 24 March 2024
Table Tennis	Pemberton Centre	Wed 13.00-14.00
Ten Pin Bowling	Hollywood Bowl, W'boro	Alternate Friday 1100-1300
Ukulele	Rushden Transport Club	13.30-15.30 Every Monday
Video Editing	Leader's Home	2nd & 4th Tues 10.00-12.00
W.A.L.T.	Various	Various
Walking	Various	Various
Wine & Dine	Various	Various
Wine Appreciation	Leader's Home	Now open again – check calendar for information.

GROUP LEADER CONTACT DETAILS –

In accordance with GDPR we don't publish contact details for group leaders on a publicly available website or newsletter. There is a contact form on the website which can be used to email group leaders & u3a officers.

If you wish to telephone a group leader you will need to log into Beacon at <https://www.u3abeacon.org.uk/u3aportal.php?u3a=118&sc=LUDE>. You will need to create a password the first time you use the members' portal & full instructions are available on our u3a website.

Clicking on the Higham & Rushden u3a groups link opens a page listing all our current groups & gives telephone numbers for each leader.



u3a MONTHLY MEETINGS

Please note there is a small charge for non-members. Details can be found on our website or call 01933 522934 for further information.

If you, or a friend, have had experience as a speaker at other groups on topics which you think would be of interest to our u3a members then please contact the Speaker Secretary.

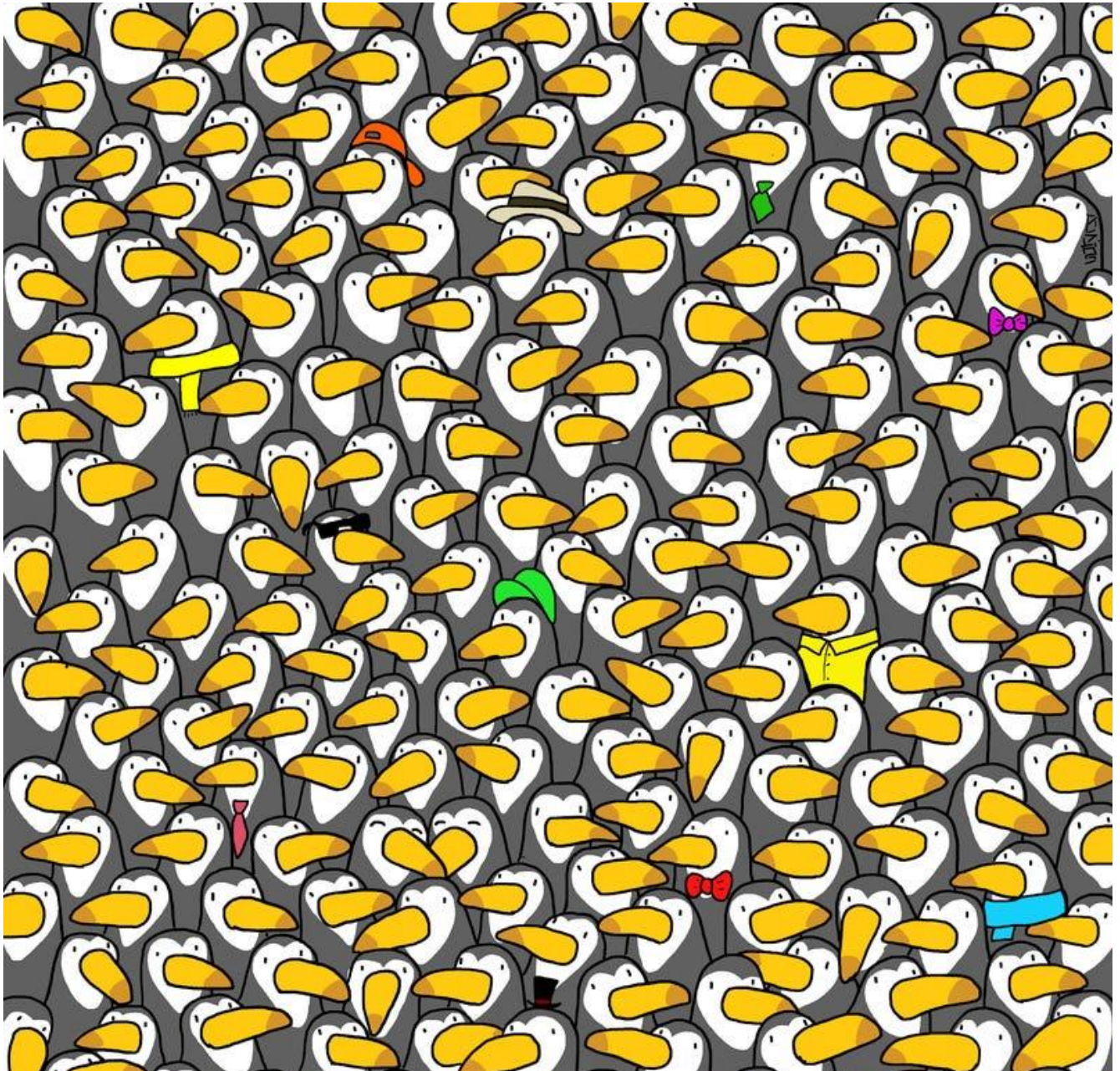
2024		
15 th Apr	Tricia Thompson	Getting to Know you (Rogers & Hammerstein)
20 th May	Tom Way	Wildlife Photography
17 th Jun	Mike Storr	Masters of Mirth
15 th Jul	Roger Prescott	Juke Box Jury 1960s
19 th Aug	Julie Kinnear	Wonderful Wicked Wallis
15 th Sept	Vince Eager	Life after Eurovision
21 st Oct	Alex Leger	Behind the Scenes at Blue Peter
18 th Nov	Keith Baldwin	When Doctors & Police start to look young
9 th Dec	AGM	H&R Singing for Fun
2025		
20 th Jan	Vince Eager	What Time's the Midnight Buffet?
17 th Feb	Steve Dimmer	Hercule Poirot
17 th Mar	Sweet FA	Musical Trio with Clever Ditties
14 th Apr	TBA	
19 th May	Roger Brown	Various Talks
16 th Jun	Nick Cosgriff	You do not have to say anything, but anything.....

SOMETHING DIFFERENT TO DO WITH SPRING ONIONS (in season now).**

Drain a can of black beans (or another bean of your choice – but not baked beans in sauce) and fry with a dash of chipotle paste until fragrant. Spread over a tortilla wrap then scatter over drained canned sweetcorn, plenty of sliced spring onions, some chopped red chilli and coriander leaves. Now sprinkle over a generous amount of grated cheddar cheese. Top with another wrap and lightly brush with oil. Cook in a hot frying pan, turning halfway until golden. Serve in wedges – delicious for brunch.

***Spring onions are fibre-rich and contain inulin and FOS (fructooligosaccharides) which support a healthy gut microbiome. They are also rich in vitamin C and B9 which can help to reduce tiredness. They are also a good source of flavonols which act as antioxidants which may protect against heart disease.*

CAN YOU SPOT THE LONE PENGUIN?





EDITORIAL:

One of the great joys of spring's golden hour around sunrise and sunset is the mellifluous, supremely relaxed, fluting of male blackbirds coming from high branches and rooftops. So close your eyes, tune in to the birdsong and feel your spirits lift. Many wildflowers are now blooming earlier, and the first flowering of bluebells has advanced by at least 17 days since 2001, according to data from the Nature's Calendar survey. Shimmering seas of bluebells are associated with ancient woodland, especially if the soil is damp and rich, though they also grow along hedges and even on open hillsides.

The common bluebell is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and must not be picked or uprooted. Care should be taken when going to see bluebells to ensure that they, and other species, are not trampled.

Unfortunately this is also the time when we need to tackle one of our most disliked chores – spring cleaning. Maybe some of the following will make the task easier:

SPRING CLEANING TIPS

1. Take it one step at a time

A common mistake when spring cleaning is to be overambitious by trying to get everything done in one day. Instead, just take it one room at a time. Finishing one room before starting another will give you a greater sense of achievement. Take as long as you need & break things down into separate tasks to focus on one at a time. More importantly, make it fun! Pop the radio on or your favourite podcast & lean into it.

2. Be prepared

Gather up all your ingredients, tools, & gadgets before you start cleaning. This will save time, as you won't be running back & forth looking for cleaning products.

If you have the space, separate your cleaning products by room, e.g. bathroom cleaning products, kitchen cleaning products, & living room/bedroom/hallway products.

The essentials can include:

Rubber gloves / Cleaning cloths / Multi-surface polish & multi-surface cleaning spray / Bleach / Old toothbrush / Floor cleaner / Mop & bucket if needed.

3. Keep it green

Want a greener alternative? Save time & money by using items you probably already have. For example:

- Vinegar is ideal for removing limescale build-up on taps & shower screens too. It's also great for cleaning windows.
- Mix bicarbonate of soda with a little water to make a loose paste. It's brilliant at removing stains from worktops, sinks, cookers, oven doors, & saucepans.
- Combine vinegar & bicarbonate of soda to create a fizzy chemical reaction – ideal for shifting grease & grime. You can use this to lift stains from grout or to help keep drains free-flowing.
- Lemon juice is a natural bleaching agent. You can use it to remove stains from chopping boards by rubbing the surface with either fresh or bottled lemon & leave overnight. It's also effective at removing rust stains.
- Washing soda crystals are handy to have around the home, too. They're effective at removing stains from fabric, including ink, red wine, grease, blood, tea & coffee. Simply soak the item in a strong solution prior to washing. Washing soda crystals are also useful for cleaning burnt pans & tea-stained cups.

4. Deal with clutter before you start

Have a few bin bags or boxes handy so you can sort things you want to keep, store, recycle, sell, give to a charity or chuck. Be honest & be ruthless — you almost certainly need less than you have! If you can, move all of your clutter into another room before starting, so you don't need to move stuff around.

5. Start from the top down.

Once you've chosen a room, work from the top down. Dust moves & resettles so wiping lower items before those above will just leave dust resettling on the clean surfaces & make more work. This order is worth remembering: - dust up then down, vacuum, & clean floors.

7. Make gadgets do the hard work

- Cleaning extractor fan filters or fridge shelves in the dishwasher means you'll save time - just make sure that they're definitely dishwasher-proof!
- Likewise, take advantage of your washing machine by washing the items you generally overlook, such as your shower curtains, pillows & even your gym bag. Always check the care label first to make sure your item is safe to machine-wash.
- Why not clean your floors automatically by investing in a robot vacuum which can be scheduled to pick up debris on a regular basis. & with some featuring mop functions, they can provide the finishing touches too.

LAST BUT NOT LEAST:

A big clean will be a lot easier if you establish ways to reduce or prevent mess. Try these:

Place an empty baking tray on the bottom of your oven to catch spills rather than baking them onto your oven floor.

Put sheets of old newspaper in the bottom of bin liners to absorb any liquids & stop them from leaking into your bin.

Spray shower surfaces after every use to stop limescale build-up. Make your own solution by using an empty spray bottle & adding half parts water to half distilled white vinegar.

ETYMOLOGY OF SOME COMMON PHRASES OR SAYINGS

Bite the bullet: Meaning: To accept something difficult or unpleasant

Origin: In olden days, when doctors were short on anaesthesia or time during a battle, they would ask the patient to bite down on a bullet to distract from the pain. The first recorded use of the phrase was in 1891 in *The Light that Failed*.

Mad as a hatter: Meaning: To be completely crazy

Origin: No, you didn't already know this one, because it didn't originate from Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*. Its origins date from the 17th & 18th centuries — well before Lewis Carroll's used it. In 17th century France, poisoning occurred among hat makers who used mercury for hat felt. The "Mad Hatter Disease" was marked by shyness, irritability, & tremors that would make the person appear "mad."

One for the road: Meaning: A final drink before leaving a place.

Origin: During the middle ages, condemned prisoners were taken through what today is s Oxford Street to their execution. During this final trip, they would stop, & would be allowed to have on final drink before their death.

Steal One's thunder: Meaning: Win praise by pre-empting someone else's idea.

Origin: You think that you've done something awesome & unique, but someone got there first & took your credit! Spare a thought for playwright John Dennis who, back in the 1700s, made a machine that could mimic the sound of thunder for a play he had written. Sadly, his play wasn't a success, but somebody had taken note of his clever invention. When, later on in another theatre, he found somebody had copied his thunder machine & was using it without credit, he got really mad. Somebody had stolen his thunder!.

My ears are burning: Meaning: One is subconsciously aware of being talked about or criticized.

Origin: This dates back to ancient Romans who believed burning sensations in various organs had different meanings. In fact, it was believed that if your left ear is burning it signalled an evil intent, & if your right ear was burning you were actually being praised.

Blue Blood: Meaning: Noble birth.

Origin: Saying that someone has blue blood comes from the Middle Ages, where it was believed that those who had pale skin (meaning their ancestors have not i-married with darker skinned partners) were noble/aristocrat. The main reason behind it is that when your skin is really pale, the veins are more visible, & they usually look quite blue.

