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**JANUARY 2024**

*Your Local Monthly Newspaper*

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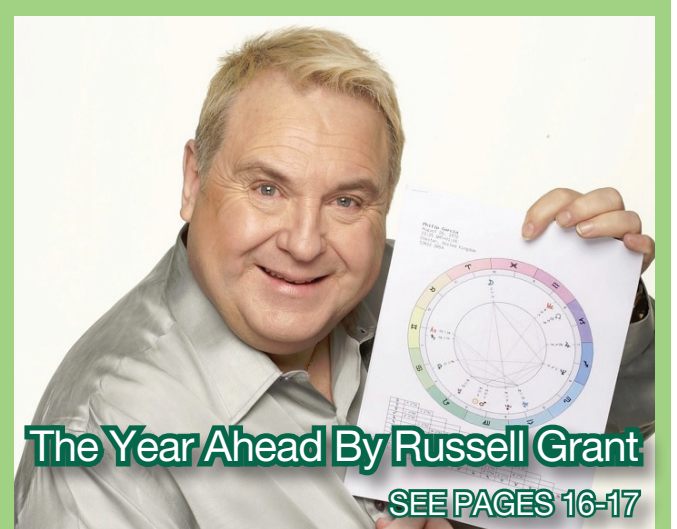
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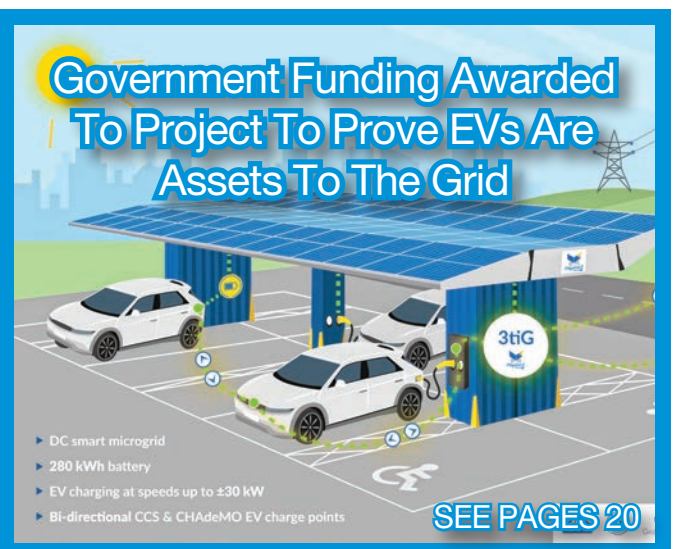
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*Lesley Ann, Editor*

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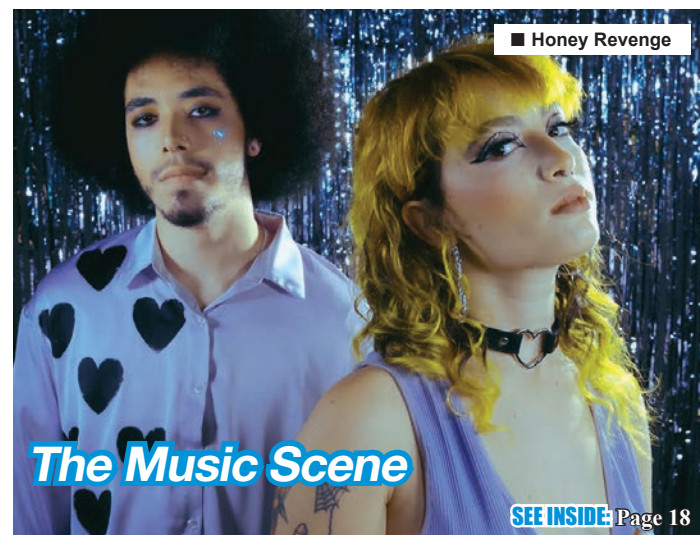
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# Council Launches New Scheme To Help Leeds Residents Cut Energy Bills



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[leeds.gov.uk/homeenergy](https://leeds.gov.uk/homeenergy) ☎: 0800 1977755 (Everwarm)

Hundreds of Leeds homeowners, renters, and landlords of properties without gas central heating can now get energy saving green measures installed free of charge or at a significant discount, thanks to a new Leeds City Council scheme.

The council's Home Energy Help team is working in partnership with energy services provider Everwarm Ltd to help as many households as possible benefit from £15.5 million of government funding secured for Leeds homes from the Home Upgrade Grant, before it expires in March 2025.

Upgrades available include different types of insulation, heat pumps, solar panels, and electric radiators.

Tackling heat loss by installing energy-saving measures and low carbon heating can improve existing buildings by making them easier and cheaper to keep at a comfortable temperature.

Homeowners that qualify for the new scheme will be able to get

upgrades fitted completely free of charge. Eligible landlords will be able to install the same improvements with a two-thirds discount.

Residents are being encouraged to check if they are eligible to benefit from the new funding (or any existing schemes) in a matter of minutes online at: [www.leeds.gov.uk/homeenergy](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/homeenergy). Alternatively, those interested can call the council's contractor about the new scheme on 0800-197-7755.

Everwarm will work with applicants to agree a combination of upgrades that will be installed to improve the energy efficiency (EPC) rating of their property.

Applications for the scheme will be dealt with on a first-come, first-served basis.

British homes are some of the least energy-efficient in Europe. Fewer than half of Leeds' privately rented or privately owned homes achieved a 'C' grade (or better) for their energy-efficiency rating in 2021.

One-in-six (17.6%) Leeds households were classed as living in fuel poverty in 2020, officially defined as living in a relatively inefficient home and having an income below the poverty line once energy bills are paid for.

Improving the energy efficiency and quality of Leeds' homes has been identified as a key aim of the council's Best City Ambition because of its benefits for health, poverty alleviation, and role in cutting the city's carbon footprint.

Residents can learn about the key benefits of energy upgrades, find out where to get impartial energy-efficiency advice, and learn more about the financial support available at: [www.leeds.gov.uk/homeenergy](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/homeenergy).

Councillor Mohammed Rafique, Leeds City Council executive member for climate, energy, environment and green space / Councillor Jessica Lennox, executive member for housing, said:

"Tackling heat waste from our homes is a win-win-win. It helps household finances, improves our health, and is good for the planet too."

"While some homeowners can afford to invest in energy-saving measures with the right financial and technical advice, we know that many others will need additional support to access the benefits of green home upgrades."

"As a council, we're determined to make it easier for Leeds homeowners and landlords to access the Home Energy Help they need to save money and cut carbon."

"I am therefore delighted to be able to launch this latest scheme which could see off-gas households benefit from up to £15.5 million of improvements. I would strongly encourage residents to check their eligibility online or phone while funding is available."

Scott Paton, operations director for Everwarm, said: "We are delighted to be working in partnership with Leeds City Council to deliver its new Home Upgrade Grant scheme."

"With the ongoing cost of living pressures facing many this winter, there has never been a more important time to make people aware of the support that is available to them."

"The measures we can install through the scheme can make residents' homes more energy efficient and importantly, can help residents make savings on their energy bills."

"We look forward to supporting local people to make the most of the funding on offer as the scheme commences."

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West Yorkshire Mayor Tracy Brabin and Cllr Helen Hayden are shown the plans for improving Leeds City Station's main entrance by Network Rail's Anna Weeks, accompanied by Lucy Pitts O'Connor and Tony Milburn of constructor partner Balfour Beatty

## Leeds City Station: Laying The Foundations For Construction

The transformation of Leeds City Station's main entrance is reaching its next milestone, with demolition works coming towards the end and construction to begin.

The Leeds City Station Sustainable Travel Gateway scheme is being delivered at the same time as essential maintenance work by Network Rail to reinforce the underground structure below New Station Street, which supports much of the station above it.

The previous cycle hub and rotunda steps outside the station have been demolished and a total of 13 iron beams – each weighing as much as 40 tonnes – are being removed to access a huge underground space known as the Mill Goit, a man-made channel off the River Aire which took the stream to power a nearby mill. When the station was originally built in 1869, New Station Street was built as a bridge over the Mill Goit.

Piling works are now beginning which will allow for the Mill Goit to

become home to the station's new high-quality cycle hub, and for wider construction to begin. This includes the two passenger lifts providing access between New Station Street and Bishopgate Street, and the pedestrian improvements which will create a much-improved and more people-friendly gateway to the city centre.

Delivering the Sustainable Travel Gateway scheme in tandem with the maintenance works will reduce longer-term disruption and provide value for money by reducing the need for further works at a later date.

The £46.1m Sustainable Travel Gateway scheme is being delivered by Leeds City Council on behalf of Network Rail as the landowner, and in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. The scheme is funded and being delivered through the Combined Authority's Transforming Cities Fund programme, which is aimed at making it easier for people to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Recently colleagues from the Combined Authority, Leeds City Council and Network Rail were given a tour of the works by constructor partner Balfour Beatty.

Councillor Helen Hayden, Leeds City Council's executive member for infrastructure and sustainable development, said: "It's amazing to see the scale of work involved in delivering these schemes, which will create a safer and more people-friendly gateway between the station, the city centre and the wider south bank.

"We thank everyone for their patience as we work towards construction continuing, and completion in 2025."

Paul Buchanan, Balfour Beatty's Project Manager, said: "This marks yet another milestone in the transformation of Leeds City Station, with demolition works nearing completion.

"We now look forward to starting main construction, working closely with Leeds City Council, Network Rail and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, to bring the new gateway to life and provide an accessible and vibrant new link between the station and the wider city centre."

The Sustainable Travel Gateway scheme will create a much improved and more people-friendly environment that can accommodate growing rail passenger number and ensure people can enter and exit the station safely.

The scheme will see:

- New Station Street pedestrianised, including the section which meets Boar Lane, with outdoor seating, rest areas, and landscaping.
- The taxi rank located to Bishopgate Street with a large and well-lit shelter and room for six vehicles, allowing for kerb-side boarding to help people with wheelchairs or assistance dogs to board more easily.
- Two 21-passenger lifts from Bishopgate Street to the station entrance on New Station Street, providing step-free access between the two streets.
- A high-quality cycle hub with electric charging points and storage for all types of cycles.
- Environmental improvements to Neville Street and Dark Neville Street including enhanced lighting and road surfaces. Works on the east side of Neville Street have been completed, with works on the west side of Neville Street and Dark Neville Street currently on-site. Once completed, these will offer safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Installing high quality cycle infrastructure on Bishopgate Street and Neville Street.

Find out more about both projects via;

[https://leedscitystation.commonplace.is/?utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_source=govdelivery](https://leedscitystation.commonplace.is/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery)

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## New Gelderd Footbridge Construction On The Armley Gyrotory Begins

The removal of the Gelderd Road footbridge over the Armley Gyrotory begins this month. It is the second of three footbridges around the Gyrotory which will be replaced with new footbridges with more accessible footways.

Gelderd Road footbridge is a single-span footbridge with a 24.9 metre beam and weighing around 75 tonnes. It will be removed by one of the world's most powerful all terrain cranes and self-propelled modular transporter vehicle.

Leeds City Council are making a local first by aiming to remove and replace an existing footbridge, over a single weekend on 12 – 15 January 2024.

Built in the early 1970's the footbridge along with Spence Lane will be replaced with a new footbridge to include accessible ramps to better meet the needs of non-motorised users and people with disabilities. All the new upgraded footbridges are designed to ensure they will need less maintenance work and inspection, over future decades.

### DIVERSIONS

To complete the Gelderd Road bridge work, motorists are advised there will be a weekend partial closure, starting 8pm Friday 12 January, until 530am Monday 15 January. With the Armley Gyrotory approach to A58 Wellington Road south east exit closed and Ingram Distributer south bound will be closed, re-opening again outside of these hours.

Further details about the works and any future partial weekend closures for Spence Lane, are on the project website [www.leeds.gov.uk/ArmleyGyrotory](http://www.leeds.gov.uk/ArmleyGyrotory)

For the Armley Gyrotory footway for people walking or wheeling, there will be a diversion in place until spring 2024, while works take place on constructing the new bridges.

The work schedule and activity is weather dependant which could change or delay work taking place.

Councillor Helen Hayden, Leeds City Council's executive member for sustainable development and infrastructure, said:

"The next phases of bridges work represent transformative changes to the overhead footways for people walking and wheeling – making it easier to get across the gyrotory, either going to or away from the city centre. The works are also a bridge engineering challenge, as well as programme challenge to carry out, with the least disruption as possible. I'm excited to see that we are looking to remove and replace Gelderd bridge over one weekend, which would be an amazing achievement by the project team and contractors.

"Please plan ahead for the weekend of 12 January and follow the road diversions in place. We thank everyone for their ongoing patience while we continue to work hard to minimise disruption and thank those who have already changed the way they travel into and around the city centre.

"I look forward to seeing these new footway structures built and open by the summer next year."

Diversion plans for motorists and footway users are found by searching 'Plan ahead Leeds' or visiting [www.Leeds.gov.uk/ArmleyGyrotory](http://www.Leeds.gov.uk/ArmleyGyrotory)

# Canal & River Trust Invests £10m In Vital Conservation Work Across Yorkshire's Waterways



Canal & River Trust has begun a programme of vital repairs and conservation work this winter to protect Yorkshire's historic canals and ensure they remain open and safe for boats and towpath users to enjoy.

Costing £10.1 million, the charity carries out a range of important and complex heritage and conservation tasks during the 'quieter' winter months to minimise disruption to canal and towpath visitors, as the nation's waterways boast more visitors now than at the height of the industrial revolution (1.5 million unique visits per fortnight to the Trust's Yorkshire waterways).

Repairs include replacing worn-out lock gates, repairing historic bridges, inspecting tunnels and dredging canals, to keep this important part of the country's infrastructure available for local people.

Still navigated by boats as they have been for hundreds of years, and acting as linear parks benefiting people and wildlife, the canals in Yorkshire are as important now as they were at the height of the Industrial Revolution, when they were the freight 'motorways' of their day.

But age and the extreme weather that is becoming more common due to climate change mean the year-round work of the Trust, including the support it is given by thousands of volunteers, is vital in looking after the network.

The winter schedule of works will continue until March, with the Trust's expert teams working on 18 sites, across 11 waterways.

Conservation works to the Bingley section of the Leeds & Liverpool Canal have recently completed. These works involved restoring a 50-metre stretch of washwall, situated just upstream of Grade I listed Bingley 3 Rise Locks, which had been leaning into the canal significantly, affecting boater mooring posts and causing potholes to form in the towpath.

Using reclaimed masonry and traditional lime mortar techniques where possible during the repairs at this important heritage site, works

also included re-grouting a wall at Grade I listed Bingley Five Rise Locks to minimise leakage along this historic structure which celebrates its 250th anniversary this year.

Sean McGinley, regional director for the Canal & River Trust, said: "Our region's canals are hundreds of years old, but they aren't locked away in a museum. They are here to be used and enjoyed daily by millions of people and provide important habitats for nature and wildlife. The work of our skilled teams, aided by our volunteers and partners, will make sure Yorkshire's canals are kept open and shipshape.

"Recently, we've faced some of the greatest threats to the future of the canals in over 60 years. Battered by storms and floods, the cost of keeping these ageing canals safe has soared. Against this backdrop, the government has announced significant cuts in the vital funding they will be making available for the care of this historic network.

"We are determined to safeguard the canals and all the benefits they bring to our local communities, so we'll be rolling up our sleeves to deliver the care and maintenance required, and to fundraise the money needed. The work we are carrying out this winter is part of our ongoing effort to keep canals in the Yorkshire alive and accessible for local people."

The lock gates weigh several tonnes and typically last around 25 years. Each new gate is hand-crafted in the Trust's specialist workshops at Stanley Ferry in West Yorkshire or Bradley in the West Midlands and is made to measure from seasoned oak so that it fits perfectly in each historic lock chamber.

This winter the Trust is investing more than £50 million on waterways across England and Wales with £10.1 million being invested across the Yorkshire region. For more information on the work of the Canal & River Trust, including how to support through volunteering or making a donation, go to [www.canalrivertrust.org.uk](http://www.canalrivertrust.org.uk).



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## Still Time To Take Part Consultation To Shape West Yorkshire's Career Support Services

People in West Yorkshire can shape the future of career support services by taking part in a consultation launched by Mayor Tracy Brabin.

The survey, open until 14 January, aims to improve how people are supported into training opportunities and jobs - particularly those facing additional challenges.

Mayor Brabin pledged to prioritise skills and training when she was elected in 2021, to ensure everyone in West Yorkshire has the skills they need to secure work.

Since then, over 90,000 adults in West Yorkshire have completed courses that have given them a chance to progress in their careers, follow a new path or enter the world of work for the first time.

This has been helped by regional partners working with the Mayor to ensure services that provide careers advice and support are accessible for people to engage, progress, earn more and have a better quality of life.

The survey aims to gain an understanding of people's personal experiences and opinions to improve these services further and is open to people of all ages who live, learn or work in West Yorkshire.

Mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy Brabin said:

"Devolution means we have the freedom to shape the future of our region when it comes to people finding and keeping good, well-paid jobs.

"I want to create a world class careers offer that will improve people's lives, whatever their circumstances.

"Ensuring people have the skills and support they need to succeed will help us to build a stronger, brighter West Yorkshire that works for all."

To find out more and have a say, visit:

[yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/careers-and-employment-support](http://yourvoice.westyorks-ca.gov.uk/careers-and-employment-support)



■ Piece Hall. Image © Ellis Robinson

**New initiatives designed to boost West Yorkshire's creative industries will be launched later this month, following investment from Mayor Tracy Brabin.**

The £2.3 million support package, approved by leaders in July, aims to grow the sector as part of the region's new 'You Can Make It Here' programme.

It includes business and skills training to support freelancers, help for creative businesses to increase their exports, and investment for venues to become more accessible to disabled artists and audiences.

The package includes £520,000 of funding from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport for the 'Create Growth' programme, to drive equity investment in creative industries businesses.

More opportunities for young people from disadvantaged groups to break down the barriers and secure employment in television and film production roles will also be introduced, through an extension of support for the Mayor's Screen Diversity Programme, run by Screen Yorkshire.

This will help creative sector businesses to develop a more diverse pool of skilled people to take on the specialist roles needed across the region. The sector is booming and the number of creative job opportunities advertised in West Yorkshire grew three times faster than the national average last year.

The investment into these new initiatives cements the Mayor's commitment to support freelancers that were excluded from receiving support during the pandemic, as well as her election pledge to deliver a 'Creative New Deal' for the region.

Mayor of West Yorkshire, Tracy Brabin said:

"Our creative industries and freelancers have had a rough ride over the last few years, so we're stepping up to ensure they're fully supported.

"It's an exciting time for culture in West Yorkshire and I want everyone to have the chance to unleash their potential.

"Culture drives growth, and devolution has given us this incredible opportunity to build a stronger, brighter West Yorkshire that works for all."

With the region's 'Years of Culture' now in full swing and Leeds 2023 and Kirklees Year of Music inspiring thousands, the baton has been passed to Wakefield and Calderdale for 2024.

Leader of Wakefield Council, Cllr Denise Jeffery said:

"This support package has come at a really important time as we gear up for Our Year - Wakefield District 2024, a huge 366-day programme of cultural and heritage activity.

"We have some exciting events and activities lined up and this funding offers a real boost to our plans. It will provide support for local creative individuals and businesses, helping them to grow and take advantage of the opportunities Our Year will bring, as well as building quality employment opportunities for our residents into the future."

West Yorkshire's 'Years of Culture' campaign is a collaborative approach between the Mayor and the five district leaders to celebrate creativity in the region, building momentum for Bradford UK City of Culture 2025.

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initial valuation, to marketing, showing, and getting that all important offer for you and the whole process is seamless and stress free. This approach means that your property is not just a listing for an agent to read from on a showing, Oliver will know your home well – and how to sell it. As someone who calls Roundhay, North Leeds home himself, he is also extremely familiar with the local area, which is a definite plus when showing prospective purchasers around.

Oliver has spent his working life self-employed in the housing industry and specialised for many years in the flooring business. This means he has a wealth of experience in different types of properties and approaches. More recently, he decided to further develop his skills and has trained extensively with the largest estate agency in the world for self-employed estate agents. Keller Williams are a huge name in the USA and are partnered with a vast amount of estate agents around the world. Now Oliver George is bringing the partnership to the north of England for the first time and is excited to offer sellers a fresh alternative.

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## Yorkshire Water Sites Awarded Bronze Accreditation For Biosecurity

Three Yorkshire Water sites have been awarded an AQUA Bronze Accreditation for Biosecurity, an act of combating the spread of invasive non-native species (INNS).

Three Yorkshire Water sites have been awarded an AQUA Bronze Accreditation for Biosecurity, an act of combating the spread of invasive non-native species (INNS).

Tophill Low Nature Reserve, Swinsty Reservoir and Fewston Reservoir were each awarded, for the work carried out to raise awareness of biosecurity and prevent the spread of invasive non-native species.

The AQUA biosecurity accreditation scheme, run by the Bristol Zoological Society, work with waterway users, to help them increase their biosecurity efforts to combat the threat of invasive non-native species such as fish, invertebrate and plant species.

Invasive non-native species cost the UK over £4 billion annually, and in Yorkshire, INNS include species such as giant hogweed, signal crayfish and Australian swamp stonecrop. Check, Clean, Dry, is the national biosecurity guidance, which asks people to check, clean and dry footwear and equipment before and after visiting a site, so if any invasive seeds or small organisms have become attached to your kit, they are removed and therefore not able to be accidentally spread elsewhere.

To achieve the award status, all three sites have taken steps to promote biosecurity and prevent the spread of INNS in the environment. At Tophill Low Nature Reserve, Swinsty Reservoir and Fewston Reservoir, there has been staff and volunteer biosecurity training, hosting of engagement stands, installing 'Check Clean Dry' signs, and monitoring the sites for any potential new INNS.

Yorkshire Water joins other water companies in having AQUA accredited sites, as well as recreational clubs and private landowners in the AQUA accreditation scheme.

Tophill Low Nature Reserve is also the first SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) site to be accredited too without any recreational sports taking place on the reserve, but due to the aquatic conservation activities carried out on site.

Steph Bradbeer, Senior Ecologist for Yorkshire Water said: "We are delighted to have received Bronze AQUA accreditation, reflecting all the great work done on these sites by Yorkshire Water staff and volunteers. It's a fantastic achievement but the work doesn't stop here, we'll be working to achieve silver and hopefully gold."

"Yorkshire Water is committed to preventing the spread of invasive non-native species and protecting the environment. As we celebrate the achievement of these Bronze AQUA awards, we look forward to working towards further sites being accredited and educating the public on understanding their role in preventing the spread of INNS."

Tophill Low Warden, Amy Watsam said: Tophill Low is a special site for visitors and members, old and new, collectively enjoying the magic of East Yorkshire's native wildlife. To be the first SSSI nature reserve to achieve an AQUA award is a great accolade, one that wouldn't have been possible without the support of our amazing volunteers and Biosecurity colleagues.

"Being part of the AQUA Biosecurity accreditation scheme has really helped to focus our biosecurity activities on and off the reserve, which will go a long way in helping us preserve the native biodiversity many come far and wide to enjoy."



**YorkshireWater**

## Industrial Cadet Programme Applications For 2024 Open

Applications are now open for the Yorkshire Water Industrial Cadet Programme, a five-day work experience programme.

Held at Yorkshire Water's flagship learning academy at Esholt in Bradford, the students will spend the week learning about sustainability issues within the UK water industry, and they will be given the task of completing a project tying into this.

At the end of the week, students will receive a nationally recognised Silver Level Industrial Award, similar to receiving the Duke of Edinburgh award.

There are 30 places available, and students will also gain insight to understanding how the sector impacts the environment and what it does to reduce those impacts.

If you secure a place, you'll have the opportunity to do the following:

- Meet people from around the business to understand how the water industry works, what work Yorkshire Water is involved in and the different professions within the industry
- Visit a water treatment facility to understand its journey from source to tap and some of the issues the UK water industry faces
- Take part in team building activities and work together to complete a short project linked to water conservation and water resource management.
- Present the results of the project back to Yorkshire Water

Applications are open until Monday 26 February 2024 and the programme starts on Monday 8 July 2024

Apply for the Industrial Cadet at:

[www.yorkshirewater.com/education/teachers/careers](http://www.yorkshirewater.com/education/teachers/careers)



# Tech Expert Issues Phishing Warning As Online Scammers Target Bargain-Hunting Brits



A tech expert has issued a warning about QR code scams that target online shoppers seeking a deal or discount during the January sales, also known as 'quishing.'

QR code experts QRFY predict a surge in scams as cybercriminals replace square barcodes in emails and texts with fraudulent versions that allow them to steal users' personal information - including their bank details.

And with many Brits feeling the pinch after Christmas, scammers will look to take advantage of bargain-hunting shoppers. This may include sending a fake QR code that offers an 'exclusive discount' or asking them to reinput their address to reorganise a 'failed delivery.'

Phishers may also create fake sites that mimic legitimate ones. To access the site or get a deal - such as those offered for joining a mailing list - users

will be asked to enter personal details after scanning a QR code, meaning their data can be sold or used to commit fraud.

Some shoppers may be more vulnerable to these scams than others, the experts say, due to a lack of awareness around this tactic or impulsiveness when buying online.

Speaking on the concerns, a QRFY spokesperson says: "Brits need to be particularly vigilant around emails offering discounts this time of year - especially if they include a QR code or lead you to a form to input information - as many scammers will offer 'too good to be true' deals to entice seasonal shoppers to input their personal information.

"Many will also include an urgent prompt to encourage shoppers to make rash decisions and not stop to check the authenticity of these deals, perhaps offering money off 'one day only' or stressing that a sale or discount ends soon. The difficulty is that many legitimate brands also utilise these tactics, so it's key that Brits learn the telltale signs of a 'quishing' scam."

Five ways that shoppers can stay vigilant amid a phishing surge this January are as follows:

### 1. CHECK IF THE QR CODE HAS BEEN TAMPERED WITH

If featured on a printed leaflet, in a shop window, or on a sign, there are often visible indications that a QR code has been tampered with. A recent example of this type of scam was seen in Newcastle last November, where the City Council reported con artists putting up fake codes in car parks to trick motorists into making £60 parking payments.

If the QR code looks like it's been interfered with - for example, if it has fraying edges, looks blurry or pixelated, or isn't aligned properly on the advert, poster, or sign - it's likely a fraudulent barcode that's been stuck over the authentic version.

### 2. INSPECT THE WEBSITE URL FOR SPELLING ERRORS

One of the key indications that a phishing scam is being executed is that the URL you're being directed to is spelt incorrectly. Before each and every time you open the URL, make sure that you recognise the web address and that there aren't any spelling mistakes or odd formatting choices that may indicate a fake domain.

Often, these codes lead you to a site that can easily be mistaken for your

favourite retailer as they've copied the logos and images from the original. If you're unsure whether the site you're visiting is authentic, always go the 'long way' and type in the site directly rather than accessing it via an emailed link or QR code.

### 3. BE WARY OF QR CODES IN EMAILS OR MESSAGES

Unless you know a brand will email or text you a QR code, it's always best to exercise caution. You'll likely receive an influx of promotion-based texts and emails throughout the January period as brands advertise their post-Christmas sales - but you'll rarely receive a promotion that can only be redeemed by scanning a QR code, as many brands instead opt for a letter-based discount code that's clearly visible on their site.

Poor grammar throughout the email is an immediate red flag that should arouse suspicion as a nonsensical email address or odd subject line. Be wary of texts or emails requiring you to input personal details via a QR code to 'rearrange a missed delivery'.

### 4. USE MULTI-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION WHEN LOGGING IN

Although it's easy to get caught up by a discount or deal when shopping online in the New Year, it's important that you follow security recommendations to prevent phishing. This includes implementing multi-factor authentication when logging into your email accounts.

Multi-factor authentication requires you to provide two or more forms of credentials when logging into a private account to confirm your identity, such as a mobile number, answer to a personal security question, or fingerprint. Following these measures can help secure your accounts against theft if you've accidentally lost your personal details to a phishing scam.

### 5. AVOID DOWNLOADING A QR CODE SCANNER APP

There's an app for everything these days, but it's key to be aware of which apps may be malicious and which aren't. Generally speaking, there's no need to download a specific QR code scanning app, as most phones have this feature built into their camera apps.

If you are set on downloading one, check - and then check again - that it is from a reputable and trustworthy source otherwise, your sales shopping could be cut short.



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# Orange Wallets Scheme Breaks Down Barriers To Travel For Bus Passengers With Hidden Disabilities



The Orange Wallet Travel Card gives people with communication difficulties or disabilities a subtle way of letting bus drivers know that they may need extra time or help.

The brightly-coloured wallets also have space for an additional travel assistance card, which can help specify to a driver what extra help the passenger may need.

Mayor of West Yorkshire Tracy Brabin said: "Here in West Yorkshire, public transport is for everyone.

"We want to break down the barriers that lead some people to feel they are unable to use buses through no fault of their own.

"And we're sending a message that says anyone who doesn't currently use West Yorkshire's buses is welcome, no matter what challenges they face."

The most common non-visible disabilities include mental health conditions; ADHD; autism spectrum disorder; visual impairments; hearing loss and cognitive impairments such as dementia.

West Yorkshire's Inclusivity Champion Fatima Khan-Shah added: "The Orange Wallets are a great idea, and will help us build a better-connected and more inclusive West Yorkshire.

"There are thousands in our region having to fight unseen battles every single day – this is our chance to say: 'we are on your side'."

Both orange wallets and travel assistance cards are available from bus station travel centres across West Yorkshire.

Travel assistance cards can also be printed off from: [www.wymetro.com](http://www.wymetro.com)

## Senior Councillors Approve New Play Sufficiency Priorities And Appoint New Leeds Play Champion

Senior councillors have approved the development of a play sufficiency action plan and have appointed Councillor Fiona Venner as the city's new play champion, at a meeting of Leeds City Council's executive board.

Leeds is leading the way by being the first city in England to commit to delivering an action plan, designed to optimise play opportunities for children and young people across the entire city.

Understanding the importance of play to wellbeing, and how children and young people can be negatively affected by a 'poverty of experience', the council has committed to obtain a better understanding children's experience of play.

The Leeds play sufficiency project is an ongoing process of research and action to assess, improve and protect children's opportunities for play. Extensive research has been conducted by the council, with over 50 hours spent listening to children, parent/carer and front-line worker focus groups, and almost 900 survey responses to help explore what is working for who, where and why at a neighbourhood and organisational level.

This has led to the development of nine strategic play priorities for Leeds to help improve opportunities to play. Priorities include the creation of streets that are safe, welcoming and encourage children's play, as well as improving access to nature-based play environments.

A new cross council approach has also been pioneered, aiming to embed play sufficiency principles in the heart of decision making

across the council, championing the rights of children and young people to access play. This has been supported by the executive board appointing Councillor Fiona Venner as the new Leeds Play Champion. In this role Councillor Venner will work to pull together council services, public and third sector organisations to increase opportunities for play in Leeds.

Councillor Fiona Venner, Leeds City Council's executive member for children's social care and health partnerships, said: "This is fantastic news for children and young people across Leeds, prioritising play is an important step forward to ensuring that everyone in Leeds gets the best start in life.

"I am really looking forward to getting involved in this journey as the city's new play champion and working with a wide range of partners to make the Leeds play sufficiency action plan a reality."

Councillor Salma Arif, Leeds City Council's executive member for adult social care, public health, and active lifestyles, said: "Play is at the heart of all that children want and need in life, so it is vitally important that we prioritise children's access to play across Leeds. Play sufficiency is a powerful organising principle and it will allow us to find common ground between our city's policies, strategies and partners.

"I am really looking forward to helping deliver a play sufficiency action plan helping realise our child friendly city ambitions. It also supports our Marmot City approach where we are targeting the reduction of health inequalities, particularly for children."

# Major New Plans For Ageing Leisure Centre Site



■ A computer-generated image showing plans for the new Fearnville Wellbeing Centre

A popular but ageing leisure centre site could be transformed into a state-of-the-art sports and wellbeing hub under exciting plans announced by Leeds City Council.

The council has had long-standing ambitions for Fearnville Leisure Centre in Gipton to be replaced with a facility that is fit for the 21st century.

This could soon become a reality, with good progress being made towards identifying funding for a scheme that would deliver a significant boost to communities facing sizeable social and economic challenges.

The council's plans would see a new wellbeing centre being built on part of the King George V Playing Fields, a 28-acre green space that is home to the current Fearnville facility.

Indoor amenities would include a large main swimming pool, learner pool, sports hall, fitness studios, spin room and a 120-station gym as well as a community café and adventure play area.



Major improvements would also be made to Fearnville's outdoor offer, with an all-weather pitch, tennis courts, skatepark and play zone among the proposed features.

Tree-planting and soft landscaping would increase the site's biodiversity, with insects, birds and other wildlife giving people fresh opportunities to get in touch with nature.

The new-look centre would encourage more take-up of physical activity among residents in Gipton & Harehills and Killingbeck & Seacroft – densely-populated wards which suffer from low life expectancy and high obesity rates – as well as benefiting wider east Leeds.

Local demand for sports and leisure facilities is set to grow in the coming years, with thousands of new homes planned through the East Leeds Extension and related development sites.

Fearnville also offers essential learn-to-swim provision for more than 30 primary schools – part of the largest programme of its kind in the city.

An application for planning permission for the wellbeing scheme has been submitted by the council and, if approved, it is hoped that work could get under way in the middle of this year.

The existing centre would remain open while the new facility takes shape on a part of the site that at present is occupied by a disused artificial football pitch. Then, once construction is complete, the current building – which dates back to the 1980s – would be demolished.

The bulk of the funding for the scheme is proposed to be sourced from a mix of external grant support, the council's capital programme and developer contributions.

Councillor Salma Arif, Leeds City Council's executive member for adult social care, public health and active lifestyles, said:

"Improving the health and wellbeing of all our residents is one of the foundations of the council's Best City Ambition – our vision for a Leeds that is compassionate and caring with a strong economy.

"To help us achieve this goal, we need to give people access to high-quality sports, fitness and leisure facilities of the type planned for Fearnville.

"The new centre will be a significant asset for Gipton & Harehills, Killingbeck & Seacroft and the wider east Leeds area, offering increased opportunities for physical activities while also fostering a greater sense of community inclusion and engagement among those who use it.



"We want to create something that is a real source of pride for people across east Leeds and has a positive impact on their health and wellbeing for many, many years to come.

"The council has made two unsuccessful bids to win support for a previous version of the Fearnville scheme from the Government's Levelling Up Fund, so I am pleased that we have been able to step in and move forward with the plans."



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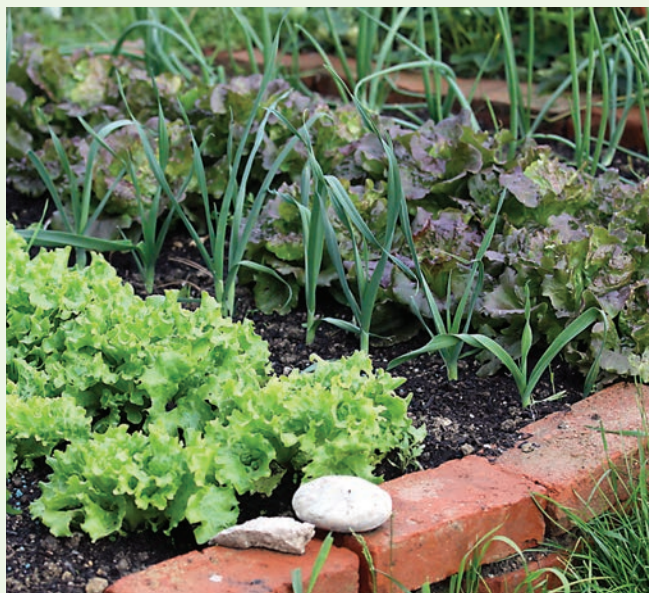
# GARDENING

## The Garden Yawns And Starts To Wake, Although The Gardener Rarely Takes A Break



BY MARTIN S WALKER

Here we are at the start of a new gardening year, although in reality gardening is a constant task, rather like cooking. Both cooking and gardening go hand in hand, much richer and more exciting when they come together.



Every year I choose something new to grow in the vegetable garden, a new cultivar or type of vegetable. Last year we grew spaghetti squash, a relatively easy vegetable to grow requiring much the same conditions as butternut or courgettes, and produces fruit of a similar size to butternut but more rounded. Cut in half and bake in the oven, once cooked scrape the centre flesh out with a fork and it comes away like spiralled vegetables, and tastes, you've guessed it, like squash. This year I am thinking of trying 'Yakon' (Peruvian Ground Apple) a root vegetable who's origins are around the Andes (South America), bought as plug plants rather than seed, it might be a bit of a challenge in Yorkshire but I'll give it a go. It's supposed to taste mildly of pear, although my advice is if you want the taste of pear then buy a pear.

At this time of year the weather is so unpredictable that you have to choose your days to garden carefully, if you can get out in the garden the fresh air will do you good and on a mild day a bit of tidying up or planting trees and shrubs can be very satisfying. Between November and March, nurseries sell what is known as 'Bare Root' plants, these have been grown in cultivated fields, lifted with little soil and sold as open ground plants, not in a pot. This makes them much cheaper and planting at this time of year when they are dormant gives them a better chance of establishing before spring growth starts. You can plant container grown plants any time of the year but they need a little more care if planted between May and September as they are actively growing.

If you order bare root plants and the soil is wet or frozen then delay planting until a fine day if possible. The plants should be placed in a large plastic sack and the roots sprayed with water if they start to dry out, they will keep in a frost free garage for about a week, but if you are unable to plant them for a couple of weeks then they are best 'Heeled in', this involves digging a hole in the garden ideally somewhere a little sheltered, if in a plastic bag then remove this and lay the plants (roots) with the stem at an angle in the hole, backfill with soil, checking the roots have not dried. firm the soil around the roots. They will be ok for a month or so but ideally plant them as soon as there is a break in the weather.

We often find that plants we bought or were given over the Christmas period are looking a little jaded by January, some indeed may be beyond recovery but I have always enjoyed the challenge of reviving plants, apart from the joy of success there's my Yorkshire tradition of saving money.

With pot plants such as poinsettia, cyclamen and Christmas cactus, the first thing to do is remove any damaged or flopping leaves, it's a good idea to wear disposable gloves when handling poinsettias as the sap can irritate the skin and eyes.



With cyclamen there is a technique in removing the faded flowers or leaves, grasp the stalk below the leaf/flower and give it a sharp tug, the whole stalk should come off down to the base. Cyclamen have a swollen tuber where the leaves and flowers emerge from, if the stem breaks part way up the remaining stem can rot and damage the tuber.

Move the plant into a cooler room ideally out of direct sunlight, although it's not usually that sunny in January. I like to use plant pot saucers to stand them in, and place a shallow layer of pea gravel in the bottom of the saucer. This ensures that the pot doesn't stand in water but can send roots out to drink. The plant will naturally die back a little so reduce the watering, keeping them a little on the dry side. In late spring early summer you can start to feed as you would your other pot plants.



Hippeastrum, (common name amaryllis) are a bulbous pot plant often given as presents at this time of year. Sometimes a dry bulb in a box or actually in flower. If a dry bulb then plant them up to half their depth in a pot just a little larger than the bulb, I use John Innes Compost (no 1) this gives added stability to the plant as it can grow quite tall. Water and place in a warm room the plant will develop rapidly sending up a large stalk with buds on the top. keep them warm and the compost moist. As the flower fades leaves will develop so cut the flower stalk down by half and move to a cooler room, or frost free greenhouse. Keep watering them and start to feed with a general liquid feed during late spring and early summer. As the leaves die back reduce watering allowing the bulbs to go dormant. Repot every two years into fresh compost and a slightly larger pot.

*Happy New Year gardening, Martin.*

*Next month, time to cut back grasses, divide snowdrops and think vegetables.*

## Top Tip - Fail To Plan, Plan To Fail!



**So a New Year's resolution for you all is to grow something edible, just one thing and it doesn't need to take much time or space to achieve something edible. The biggest mistake many new to gardening make is to try and take on too much, build on little successes, you will enjoy it much more.**

There is a saying 'Fail to Plan, Plan to Fail', time spent planning and writing down what to do and when is a great way of keeping on top of things. I am a little old fashioned and have a paper diary, to keep track of not only what I need to do but when, often referring to previous years to compare and see what worked well and of course what didn't quite make the grade.

We used to keep weather records at school, recording the minimum temperature of the previous night, the maximum daytime temperature and believe it or not the rainfall. Many of you will be very competent with new technology and recording notes on your mobile device, or you can buy electronic weather stations which can send you weather details via bluetooth, its amazing.

I find a hard backed desk diary most useful as it has plenty of space for notes and thoughts and even recording the weather conditions if you have time.



There are diaries available that are aimed at the gardener with weekly or monthly tips to help you keep on top of seasonal jobs and calendars that can be hung up in the shed as a ready reference. Hang a pencil on a piece of string next to the calendar so you can quickly and easily make a note or a reminder.



Image © Eleanor Bentall (rspb-images.com)

# The RSPB Shares Top Birds To Spot For Annual Big Garden Birdwatch

This winter, the RSPB are sharing their top tips for identifying the birds that may visit your garden as their popular Big Garden Birdwatch is set to return for its 45th year.

Hundreds of thousands of people across the UK will celebrate their love of nature and unite to watch and count the nation's garden birds this month for the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch weekend.

This year's event takes place on 26, 27 and 28 January 2024. Members of the public are asked to spend just one hour watching and recording the birds seen from their garden, balcony or window, then send their results to the RSPB. Taking part in the survey helps the RSPB in monitoring how the UK's garden birds are faring. Close to half a million people join in the Birdwatch every year.

Here are five bird species to look out for in your garden, balcony or local greenspace:



House Sparrow. Image © Ray Kennedy (rspb-images.com)

**1. House sparrows:** The house sparrow is one of Britain's most well-known and best-loved birds. Males and females are easily distinguished as males have a grey head and black bib whilst females are pale brown with a pale stripe behind the eye. House sparrows are noisy and gregarious, often sticking together in small flocks, and they'll repeatedly congregate in big hedges where they can all hide together. They socialise by taking dust or water baths, as well as "social singing" where they call together in bushes.

**2. Blue tits:** Streaked with a colourful mix of blue, yellow, white and green plumage, blue tits are one of our most attractive garden visitors. This species feeds on a diet of insects, caterpillars, seeds and nuts. They will happily take all kinds of bird food too, so keep an eye on your bird feeders for this vibrant garden bird.

**3. Robins:** Singing nearly all through the year, the nation's favourite bird is often one of the first to start in the morning and found to be one of the last singing at night – sometimes near a street light too. With its red chest that earns it the name "robin redbreast", look out for this garden favourite darting through shrubs or perching on tree branches this winter.



Long-tailed tit. Image © Chris Gomersall (rspb-images.com)

**4. Long tailed tits:** Often arriving at your feeders in large groups, long tailed tits are sociable birds with extended tails which have earned them their name. With grey and pinkish feathers, these birds are particularly fluffy at this time of year too. Primarily feeding on insects, autumn and winter sees them feed on seeds as well, which could bring them to your garden bird feeders, so keep your eyes peeled for a small flock of this species.



Goldfinch. Image © John Bridges (rspb-images.com)

**5. Goldfinches:** A much-loved little bird, the goldfinch announces its arrival with a tinkling, trilling call. Vibrantly coloured, goldfinches have red faces, black crowns and bold yellow wing patches. If you're lucky, you may even be visited by a small flock of them, appropriately known as a "charm".

To help you tell a house sparrow from a goldfinch check out the RSPB's bird identification guide at [www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/a-z](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birds-and-wildlife/a-z).

To take part in the Big Garden Birdwatch 2024 and help nature in the process, simply spend an hour watching the birds in your garden or local green space, and record what you've seen. Whether you see lots of birds or none at all, every recording is useful information.

To register to take part in the world's largest garden wildlife survey, visit [www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch](http://www.rspb.org.uk/birdwatch)

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# Antiques And Collectables

## With David Oddy



■ Inside Antiques & Collectables



■ Inside Antiques & Collectables

We have now been in the shop for six years and I would like to thank all our customers for your continued support. Although I have been in the antiques business for over 40 years, it was a big gamble to open a shop with all the expense that goes with it.



■ Inside Antiques & Collectables

There are very few small independent family businesses going in these hard financial times, there used to be 20 or 30 shops in Leeds a large city but now you can count them on one hand. I am very lucky because I am retired and the shop is more of a hobby and profit is not my priority. I get great pleasure in meeting people and having a good old natter about old times when life was simpler and much more friendly and relaxed.

I well remember as a small child going shopping with mum and dad in a pony and trap. There were hardly any cars on the road, we would stop and chat with friends and neighbours - everything was done at a leisurely pace. When growing up on a small farm I was taken under the wing of a local farm labourer by the name of Billy (I never knew his surname) at that time Billy would be in his 60s, never smoked or drank and was very fit. He was only small, about 5'5" but worked in the fields all day. He taught me lots of skills passed down through the generations – how to hoe large fields without getting backache, how to stook, making sure the seed heads on the corn don't get too wet and dozens of other old farm worker's tips to make hard work easier.

Billy never married but lived with his bachelor brother and sister in a tiny farmworker's cottage. He had a large garden and grew wonderful chrysanthemums for our local church and kept the graveyard spick and span. He told me countless stories about his early life as a horseman. He started work at 7am but he had to go to work at 6am to have the shire horses harnessed up ready. He didn't start getting paid til 7am. He once told me of an incident when working for a particularly stingy farmer, he stopped working for 5 minutes to talk to a passing neighbour. The farmer must have been watching and stormed out from behind a tree and harangued the poor person telling him not to stop Billy from working. He also told me of his childhood. He grew up in a small cottage on the Harewood estate where his father was head horseman and revealed stories when he was a child of going with his father to Temple Newsam pit to lead coal back to Harewood House. His father must have been working in the Victorian or Edwardian era, coal was king in those days and I believe Harewood House with its numerous fireplaces used about a wagon load of coal every two days. Even now the back road from Harewood to Leeds is called Coal Road. Billy spent his last few years doing free gardening for elderly people, forever

a kind caring person. We could all take a leaf from his book and look after our elderly in these hectic times – a little kindness goes a long way.



■ Inside Antiques & Collectables

On a separate note, I am again doing free talks to various organisations and church groups where I really enjoy meeting new people and seeing new treasures. Thank you for reading my ramblings and of course feel free to pop into the shop any time to see what we have in stock, or bring something you would like valuing or more information on.

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# Diary Of A Pawnbroker

Christmas is an expensive time of the year especially after the year we have just had, so for those needing a quick cash fix, Christopher Brown Jewellers are a great solution.



Pawnbroking lending has never been more needed and January and February are among the busiest months in the pawnbroking calendar. We are welcoming new customers every week and with most of us

struggling due to the overspending brought about by Christmas, two thirds of us spend our Januarys paying back credit card bills and overdrafts. The last year has been tough for many so if you or your business has been affected with cash flow issues, you should come and visit our branches as we really can help.

In fact the majority of us won't have paid off our Christmas debt until March payday and statistics from MoneySupermarket.com tell us that 13% of us go into the red within a week of being paid!

This is how our pawnbroking and Asset Lending Service helps. Pawnbrokers will lend on a variety of items but gold, gem-set jewellery and luxury watches are the most popular pawns. The gold price has remained strong all year and it still remains the solid investment it has always been.

## Local Lending

We have 9 shops in the North with six in Yorkshire including Christopher Brown Jewellers in Seacroft, York, Pontefract, Shipley, Goole, Prescott and Stockport and Brown & Gold at Batley and Toxteth.



Over the last 12 months we have made business and personal loans against Rolex, diamonds and gold for many thousands of pounds and our customers have been delighted with the service, speed and the value this type of loan offers.

These are happy stories and pawnbroking users are happy satisfied customers. They know what they wish to borrow, how long they will need the money for and that they will be able to get their goods back at

the end of the loan or ask us to sell their goods to cover the loan without ever getting into more debt. We really feel we are adding a valuable service to the community and with over 80% redemption and return rate in our branches, our customers are clearly happy too.

If you need cash, why not take advantage of our confidential lending and buying service and make your payday come sooner!

Chris Brown

## Bargain Time At Christopher Brown Jewellers

Christopher Brown Jewellers biggest ever HALF PRICE SALE has started.

We have slashed our prices on our Gold and Diamonds with offers simply too good to miss.



Many stunning pieces will have 50% off and over 1500 lines will have a massive discount to make big savings for 2024.

To grab yourself a bargain you will have to be quick though. We have 6 branches in Yorkshire including Christopher Brown Jewellers at Seacroft, York, Shipley, Pontefract, Goole, Stockport and Prescott and Brown & Gold at Batley and Toxteth.

Look out for our ROLEX sale – many watches discounted by over £500 with new lines added every week. Visit [www.christopherbrownjewellers.co.uk](http://www.christopherbrownjewellers.co.uk) and grab yourself a bargain!

There is also an incredible 50% OFF many diamond rings, 3 for 2 on SILVER JEWELLERY and other fantastic Manager's Special discounts to be found.

Every branch has unique items and the offer will not last for long so call in now and get 2024 off to an amazing start!

**UP TO 50% OFF SALE**

WAS £7,590  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£3,795**

9 CT WHITE GOLD MIXED CUT  
3.10 CT FANCY DIAMOND CLUSTER RING  
(MATCHING EARRINGS)  
CODE 4668765

**UP TO 50% OFF SALE**

WAS £2,840  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£1,420**

CHANNEL SET 1.50 CT  
DIAMOND 1/2  
ETERNITY RING  
CODE 254261

**UP TO 50% OFF SALE**

WAS £2,190  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£1,095**

DIAMOND  
0.80 CT 2 PIECE  
WHITE GOLD BRIDAL SET  
CODE 824321

**UP TO 50% OFF SALE**

WAS £610  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£305**

ILLUSION SET  
9 CT WHITE GOLD  
DIAMOND STUDS  
0.16 CT  
CODE 126011

18 CT WHITE GOLD  
0.80 CT  
DIAMOND  
RAINANCE  
RING  
CODE 260161

WAS £5,700  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£2,850**

9 CT WHITE GOLD  
DIAMOND  
TENNIS  
BRACELET  
3.29 CT  
CODE 322369

WAS £5,820  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£2,910**

9 CT WHITE GOLD  
MIXED CUT  
3.10 CT FANCY  
DIAMOND CLUSTER  
EARRINGS  
1.38 CT  
CODE 223783

WAS £3,700  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£1,850**

WAS £1,300  
**HALF PRICE**  
**£650**

9 CT WHITE GOLD  
0.57 CT DIAMOND  
CLUSTER PENDANT  
(CHAIN NOT INC)  
CODE 399231

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# The Year Ahead

## **ARIES** March 21st - April 20th

### **Love & Life:**

Expect to see some positive accomplishments during the first half of the year. The solar eclipse in your sign on the 8th April encourages you to look at yourself in a new light. If you had a chance to start over and reboot your life, what would you do to change things? Decisions made now will determine your future, taking you onwards and upwards as you find ways to overcome significant obstacles. You will be attracting some financial luck your way mid-August when your ruler Mars gets close to Jupiter. A wonderful time to splash out on creature comforts.

### **Money & Work:**

Keep on the lookout for better prospects in the spring. Even if you have no plans to leave your current job, be sure to take every opportunity to showcase your skills. You will win the respect of your superiors and a well-deserved promotion will follow. What's important is that you feel able to fulfil your considerable potential. Jupiter will be bringing some financial luck your way mid-August. Making plans for your financial future will give you a stronger sense of control. Get into the habit of putting a portion of your monthly income into savings and watch your nest egg grow.

## **TAURUS** April 21st - May 21st

### **Love & Life:**

Jupiter in your sign at the start of the year initiates a multi-year cycle of prosperity. Many things will be going your way between January and 26 May. Knowing you can be successful increases faith in your abilities and brings out the best in you. Your financial prospects will be given a lift in July. Whether shopping for luxuries or hoping to find a domestic bargain, you can afford to be a little more impulsive than usual with your money. In December you will draw spiritual strength from communing with nature.

### **Money & Work:**

Stay true to yourself and make it a priority to forge your own path. Instead of trying to satisfy other people, seek to please yourself. A career objective can be reached by July when making gradual changes will suit you better than an overnight transformation. Have payment plans in place if you are taking out a loan in the autumn. A legal matter could have long-term repercussions. When it comes to all and anything financial, keep your wits about you. An unexpected sum of money will find its way to you in November.

## **GEMINI** May 22nd - June 23rd

### **Love & Life:**

Adopting healthier habits as the year begins and sticking with routines that suit your lifestyle will have impressive results. With your ruler Mercury close to Jupiter as June begins, changes will be happening on a daily basis both at home and in the workplace. You will be taking these in your stride as you intuitively sense they are for the best. In the summer, be patient with people who aren't as adaptable as you are when they get stroppy and argumentative. Your creativity generates positive energy in the autumn, making it easier for you to attract good fortune.

### **Money & Work:**

A delayed bonus will arrive in January. This will be in recognition of your past hard work or it will be a one-off payment for something you did that was over and above your normal duties. Be ready to make a bold career move in March. Getting managerial training could be the start of something big for you. Financial links of the past need to be severed in the autumn if you are to build a more secure future for yourself. Whether this is the sale of some property or splitting pension benefits, you can't keep putting off the inevitable. Reaching a settlement will buy back your personal freedom.

## **CANCER** June 24th - July 22nd

### **Love & Life:**

As the year begins, anything connected with your community, social work or local politics will work out in your favour. A burst of confidence will allow you to interact with people and situations more positively. Travel or car problems might prove expensive in February. Before agreeing to any repairs suggested, find out how much it's going to cost. You will feel more sure of your standing in legal and financial matters after getting professional advice in the autumn. Career interests will run into some good luck in November. Make time to assess all new financial initiatives so you don't miss out.

### **Money & Work:**

Take any chance you get in April to mix, mingle and meet people on the business scene. You will meet several helpful professionals who will suggest new markets for your skills. People are starting to realise how accomplished you are. In the summer you will be offered a high profile job. Unless you are suitably qualified, seek professional advice in legal, financial and commercial dealings in the autumn. It is no bad thing to think before taking action. Besides, there will be undercurrents that aren't immediately apparent. A fabulous money making opportunity will come your way in November.

## **LEO** July 23rd - August 23rd

### **Love & Life:**

Jupiter encourages you to think big when setting new long-term goals. You need to have something specific to aim for. Getting your priorities straight will pay off handsomely. You will get the most out of events in the summer by being in the thick of all that is going on. Your leadership qualities shine and people will have confidence in you because you believe in yourself. Your social media presence will attract lots of attention in the autumn. Fame and acclaim will be yours. Becoming a charity trustee will be a great channel for our humanitarian impulses in December.

### **Money & Work:**

You will be in your element organising people in January and your management skills won't go unnoticed by those in high places. You will be packing so much power into anything that gets your interest and thoroughly enjoying your duties. Put some money aside for a trip you're planning in April. A show of enterprise and initiative in September will have unbelievable financial implications. You are going to have to act fast as there's a competitive spirit in the air. The moment you see an opportunity to outperform a rival, take it. Sharing your brilliant ideas will earn you a bonus in December.

## **VIRGO** August 24th - Sept 22nd

### **Love & Life:**

Study, travel and goals on the distant horizon all come under favourable stars between January and 26 May. You won't want to waste too much time hanging around familiar places when there is so much to be gained from being on the move. Hopes will be kept afloat as new and improved plans are launched in September. Best of all, everything will be going incredibly well and you can put this down to your excellent powers of organisation. December brings increased scope for you to explore new money making ideas.

### **Money & Work:**

Accept a chance to join an entrepreneurial venture in February. This will pave the way for you to move into a more profitable field. In July, you will be offered at least one job as a result of your earlier experiences. Adding to your skills makes it easier to climb the ladder to success. Frustrating financial delays mid-August will cause you some anxiety. A generous relative will offer to help pay your bills. Accept their kindness with a happy heart. A chance to work from home will suit you well in December. You work more quickly when left to your own devices.

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# By Russell Grant

## LIBRA Sept 23rd - Oct 23rd

**Love & Life:**

The chance to make a dream come true will fall into your lap in the spring. This promises to be a time of spiritual growth. Why wait for other people's approval when you could be doing something positive in May to make your life more fulfilling? Take any and every opportunity to expand your horizons during the latter half of the year. Plans you turned down earlier will suddenly seem exciting in July and you won't even feel guilty about admitting to your change of heart. It will feel good to keep challenging yourself to try new things.

**Money & Work:**

Feelings of optimism will make you a big spender as the year begins. An inheritance, insurance pay-out or legal settlement will arrive in April. As well as this putting you in a stronger position, financially, it will allow you to make some household repairs. Mercury will hit the top of your chart late in June making you more confident about your intentions and more assertive in protecting your main interests. Work that takes you overseas in November will be enjoyable. Alternatively, several business trips undertaken as the year ends will keep boredom from setting in.

## CAPRICORN Dec 22nd - Jan 20th

**Love & Life:**

Take pride in your creative talents and practical abilities. Be encouraged to develop your natural gifts further during the first half of the year. This is a great time to break out of habit forming rituals. Think about how you can make your usual routines more exciting. Your determination to learn or develop existing skills in July is almost certain to bring some good. Promoting your interests will enhance your career prospects. Don't hold back from walking through unlocked doors into the unknown. Breaking out of old patterns will lead you to new challenges and opportunities.

**Money & Work:**

Finances will be a sore point in the family in April. You will be relentless in your views and by July you will find out how right you were to stand your ground. Signing up for a training course in July will boost your job prospects. If you are handling cash or buying or selling in the autumn, keep your wits about you and you will come out of transactions in a stronger position. Make a list of goals according to priority in October and then decide on how you are going to reach them. The solar eclipse on the 2nd will keep you motivated and focused.

## SCORPIO Oct 24th - Nov 21st

**Love & Life:**

Joint arrangements will go extremely well between January and May. Joining forces with a creative friend to take on a challenge you couldn't do on your own, will pay off handsomely in April. There will be a lot of excitement in the air in July but you weren't born yesterday. You will realise the need for caution as well as optimism. This common sense approach will give you the stamina to cope when things go wrong. Even if problems throw other people off balance, you will refuse to be knocked down. Every challenge you overcome will make you shine brighter and stronger.

**Money & Work:**

Your dedication to your work will pay off nicely in March. A senior colleague who appreciates your work ethic will offer you all the plum assignments. It will be important for you to pursue your professional ambitions in July even if this means pushing yourself harder than ever before. An award, legal settlement or money from the sale of some property will have improved your financial situation by the end of the year. Finances will take a turn for the better even though, due to legal complications, it will take a while before you feel the benefit.

## AQUARIUS Jan 21st - Feb 18th

**Love & Life:**

Your efforts to find additional forms of income will bring long term security. In the spring, all those ideas you have to make your home a better place will be turned into breathtaking reality. Don't overlook the chance to turn a financial negative into a positive in March. This is a good time to make carefully considered investments. A partnership deal will be lucky for you in July. Be sure to satisfy a need to have some fun in the autumn. Don't feel guilty about making more time in your life for people and pastimes you love.

**Money & Work:**

There's only one thing standing between you and a special dream and that is: money. Instead of letting this stop you from going after what you want, act on any opportunity to make some cash that comes your way. This won't make you a millionaire overnight but by the end of May you will see an improvement in your financial situation. Accepting jobs over and above your normal obligations will impress your boss in October. Your fiery resolve not to let anyone down will earn the respect and admiration of your peers.

## SAGITTARIUS Nov 22nd - Dec 21st

**Love & Life:**

An appraisal of your life as the year begins will help you work out where, if anywhere, you have been going wrong and more importantly, what you have been doing right. Success will come from setting specific goals and taking a firm and forceful approach towards reaching them. Getting involved with a charitable organisation in October will put you in touch with people who share your beliefs. Bad news often dominates the headlines whereas the solar eclipse will link you with others who sacrifice their time, effort and money for good causes, proving there are many uplifting stories out there.

**Money & Work:**

Your career prospects are stronger than ever as the year begins. Your ruler, Jupiter, will push you to build a life that reflects your needs and ambitions. Accept an offer to take the helm of an important company or prominent organisation. You have the necessary skills to cultivate success. Landing a job with excellent benefits will make you financially secure. A creative use of resources in the autumn will enable you to achieve a degree of luxury with very little expenditure. You will be awarded a wonderful assignment in December, just when you need it most.

## PISCES Feb 19th - March 20th

**Love & Life:**

Using your imagination and being willing to go with the flow will help you get the best out of everything as the year begins. If improvements can be made, you will be happy to give it a go. In fact you might wonder why you have been so slow to make some changes. Taking a trip to a developing country in the spring will be the answer to a prayer. You might find a perfect volunteer opportunity overseas. It's a year to trust your intuition and follow your heart to create the life for yourself you keep dreaming of.

**Money & Work:**

Someone close will receive a windfall as the year begins. Before getting too excited they will have plans for this money and you will have to accept their decision whether or not you like it. A change in employment in April will allow you to repay your debts. You will be tuned in to opportunities relating to money and property in the autumn. Whether you are applying for a grant for a charity, buying a new home or seeking funding for a member of your family, you will do whatever it takes to bring about your intentions.



Everyday is a great day with Blue Sky!

## January

Sat 13th - Beverley Market **£16 PP**

Fri 19th - Ryedale Valley Tour **£16 PP**

Sun 21st - Robin Hoods Bay and Whitby **£16 PP**

Fri 26th - Hemsley Market & Pickering **£16 PP**

Sat 27th - Scarborough **£16 PP**

Wed 31st - Flamborough & Bridlington **£16 PP**

## February

Thurs 1st - Gothland and Whitby **£16 PP**

Sat 3rd - Richmond & Leyburn **£16 PP**

Wed 7th - Bury Market **£16 PP**

Sat 10th - Whitby **£16 PP**

Mon 12th - Chester Zoo **from £38 PP**

Visit [www.blueskycoaches.co.uk](http://www.blueskycoaches.co.uk) for a single Chester city trip

Tues 13th - North Yorkshire Moors Railway **£45 PP**

Fri 16th - Skegness **£16 PP**

Sun 25th - Skirlington and Bridlington **£16 PP**

Wed 28th - Bury Market **£16 PP**

Thurs 29th - Southport **£16 PP**

## 5 Day Holiday

Mon 19th February - Llandudno **from £249 PP**

**2024 Holiday Brochure Available On Request!!**

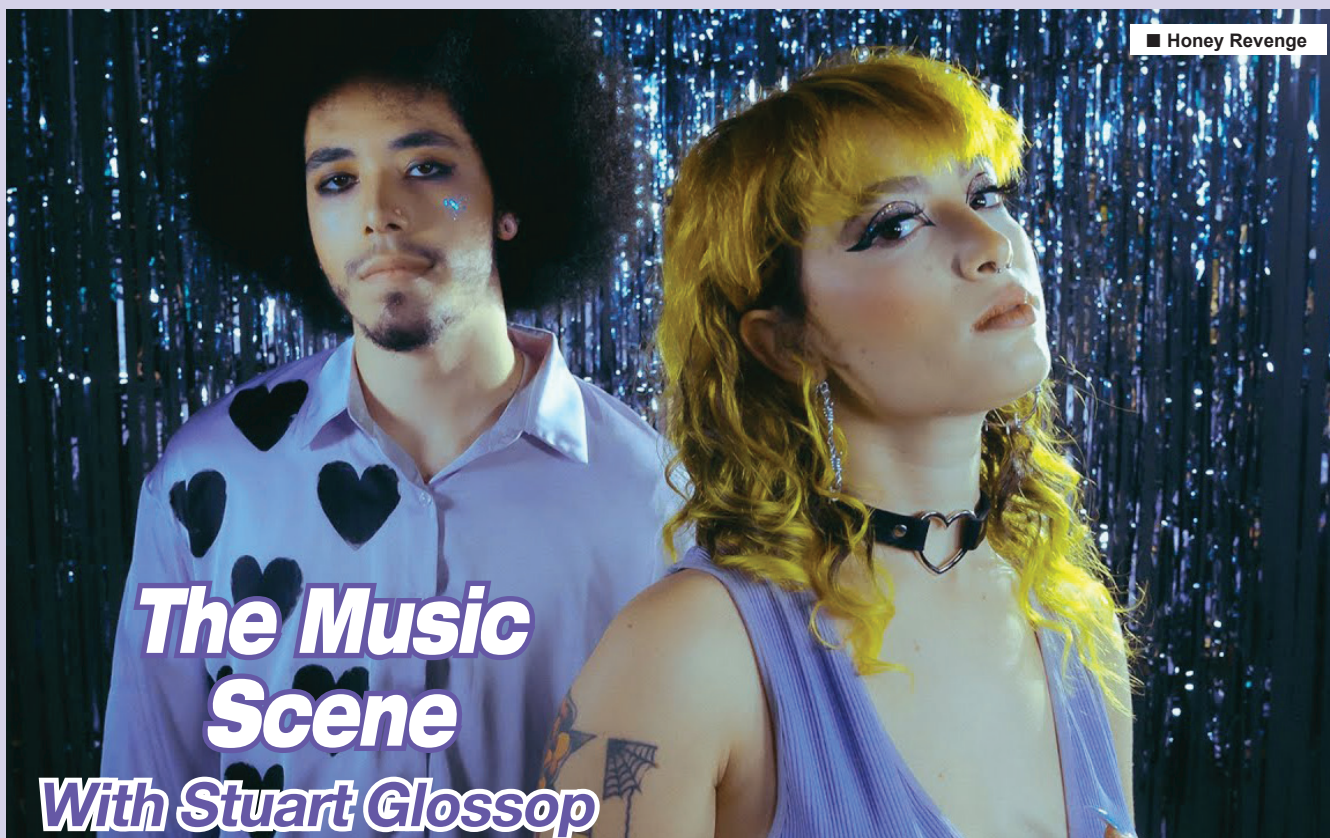
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**The Music Scene**  
**With Stuart Glossop**

Welcome to 2024 and as usual at this time of year it is customary to endeavour to point you in the direction of the best events and music in the next twelve months! Starting with the summer festivals.

Live At Leeds: In The Park is back with its much-awaited return and the first announcement for 2024. Set to transform Temple Newsam Park again on Saturday 25th May into the ultimate summer all-day festival experience, the festival maintains its sterling reputation as a tastemaker in new music discovery. Having fostered remarkable festival experiences where fans unearth their next favourite bands, Live At Leeds: has now unveiled the first selection of names set to appear for a festival that's becoming a true foundation of the summer to come. The Kooks, Declan McKenna, The Cribs, Melanie C, Future Islands, White Lies,, The Academic, Matalida Mann and Somebody's Child are just a few of the jam-packed line-up.



Slam Dunk Festival has revealed a mega second drop of artists lined up for 2024. The UK's biggest independent rock festival returns next summer, coming to its home in Leeds, Temple Newsam on Sunday 26th May 2024, and it's shaping up to be one for the ages. Joining the stacked line-up are The Ghost Inside, State Champs, The Blackout, Against The Current, Taylor Acorn and Honey Revenge. They're added to the bill

alongside already-announced You Me At Six, The All American Rejects, Funeral For A Friend, Asking Alexandria, Waterparks, Pale Waves. Tickets are available now.



This time last year we told you of two bands who would be massive and gain all sorts of accolades. The first, now Brit Award winners The Last Dinner Party have announced their debut album Prelude To Ecstasy will be released on 2nd February. It will feature the breakthrough singles, 'Nothing Matters', 'Sinner', and 'My Lady Of Mercy'. A preview of the record confirms that the band's songwriting is testament to all the buzz and excitement already accumulated. As it should be. Rather than wilt under the spotlight, they've become a tighter, stronger unit because of it. Prelude To Ecstasy is both the closing of that introductory chapter and the opening of the next. The Last Dinner Party? Believe the hype. They play an album launch show at The Brudenell on 11th February

Another Sky was also one of the bands we championed in 2023, They have spent the last few months teasing with a series of hard-hitting and exciting comeback singles, and we are excited to announce that their new album is on the way. With the band's sophomore album

Beach Day, they open a doorway to the most confident, fully formed and forthright version of Another Sky so far. Frontwoman Catrin Vincent points out the relationship between anger and freedom on this record. The anger and the fight is real, and it's everything – but that doesn't mean it always will be. Hold onto that feeling while it lasts: Another Sky are steadfast and galvanised to make you understand everything that got them here. How they survived. All you have to do is listen. A spring tour is in the offing but also expect to see them at some of the big festivals in the summer.



VENUS GRRRLS are a wonderful alternative rock band from Leeds and our recommendation for 2024. From twinkling synth motifs to raspy guitar lines, the girls present the dark yet empowering discourse surrounding their own synergistic experiences. It's the type of music that you simply want to manically jump around to! With singer/rhythm guitarist Grace Kelly (GK) fronting the band, she is joined by Eliza Lee (Lead Guitar), Hannah Barraclough (Bass), Grace Stubbings (Synth) and Gabby Cooke (Drums). VENUS GRRRLS seek to bring their gothic and ethereal aesthetics to an international audience. Hex, their latest single is stunning and find out how stunning at The Brudenell on February 10th



Finally, riding high on the success of their critically acclaimed, UK Top 10 debut album 'Reeling' released March 2022, the alt rock wunderkinds The Mysterines are another to watch and have been achieving remarkable success since the release, 'Reeling' saw stellar support across the board on release, from a TV appearance on Jools Holland.

Catch them at the O2 in Leeds on February 13th.

**Benidorm Tom Plays Holmfirth – Picturedrome On Friday 22nd March 2024!!**

By demand international cabaret and TV star Benidorm Tom returns to the Picturedome on Friday 22 March.

What's New Pussycat? Well, it's Benidorm Tom with his spectacular full band show all the way from the Costa Blanca to Kirklees!

From Stars in their Eyes to appearing in the Catherine Tate show Hard Cell, this impressive international globe trotter covers all the Tom Jones classics, and if you've got a favourite – from Delilah to Sex Bomb – it'll be in there. So, get your dancing shoes on for a night of absolute feel-good beltors, but be warned he's got the look, he's got the style, and hell's bells, he's got the voice.

Tickets for the show are available from;

[www.thegigcartel.com](http://www.thegigcartel.com)



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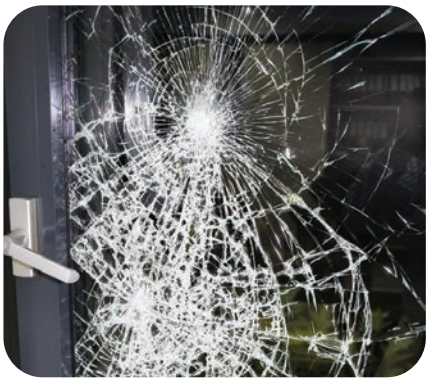
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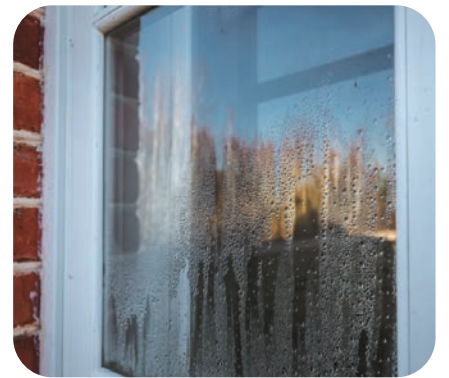
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## MOTORS

### RAC DECLARES 2023 THE 'UNOFFICIAL YEAR OF THE RAT'

Everyone knows a car breakdown can mean a nasty repair bill, but new data from the RAC reveals that it's not always a head gasket or a catastrophic engine failure that can cost you hundreds of pounds. Strangely, it can sometimes be very small creatures that cause very big problems.

In fact, the RAC has seen record numbers of mice, rats and foxes 'surprising' customers in 2023 and causing serious damage to their vehicles, after reviewing thousands of patrol breakdown reports dating back to 2016.

Breakdowns caused by rodents have risen by 55% from 196 incidents in the first 11 months of 2018 to a record 303 over the same period in 2023, according to the motoring organisation. The problem worsens significantly as the seasons change, averaging a 66% increase from summer to autumn over the last five years.

#### AN APPETITE FOR AUTOMOBILES

This year, patrol reports show rats had the biggest appetite for automobile parts and caused half (51%) of all animal damage incidents by gnawing fuel hoses, infesting engine bays and damaging headlights. Patrols also reported numerous cases of foxes chewing speed sensor wiring, windscreen wiper blades and brake hoses underneath cars.

Food left inside or in the vicinity of an unattended vehicle is a sure-fire way to attract unwanted visitors. Open bags of pet feed stored in garages can lure mice and rats into a vehicle's piping where they're drawn to their very own 'biting point' – peanut and soy-based oils and waxes used on parts including diesel injector wires, gearbox insulation and primer bulbs.

#### BABY IT'S COLD OUTSIDE

If left standing and unattended for long periods, vehicles can even become home to rodents and lost pets alike as they seek a bit of warmth and security.

RAC patrol Nick Isaac, who works around the South West of England, once found a squirrel using an air filter as its pantry. Nick said: "The car had lost power and had an odd smell. When I lifted the bonnet and revved the engine the air filter moved like it was being sucked towards the engine. It turned out a squirrel had been taking nuts from a bird feeder and storing them in the air box, restricting air flow to the car."

One patrol attended a Porsche where 10 mice had made a nest under the scuttle panel at the bottom of the windscreen, while another was called to retrieve a more exotic creature: a baby pet python which had taken up residence behind a wheel trim. The snake had gone missing from the member's home and was drawn to the car's warm brakes. When the patrol pulled the trim off, there was the python all cosy and coiled up.

Alister Hughes, an RAC patrol in Cornwall, remembers an incident from this year where a cat managed to disconnect a battery in a Peugeot van. The curious cat crawled onto the engine, disconnecting the quick release battery terminal in the process. Alister said: "The van wouldn't start, but the biggest giveaway was all the leftover fur and the neighbour telling me they'd been calling their cat the previous evening!"

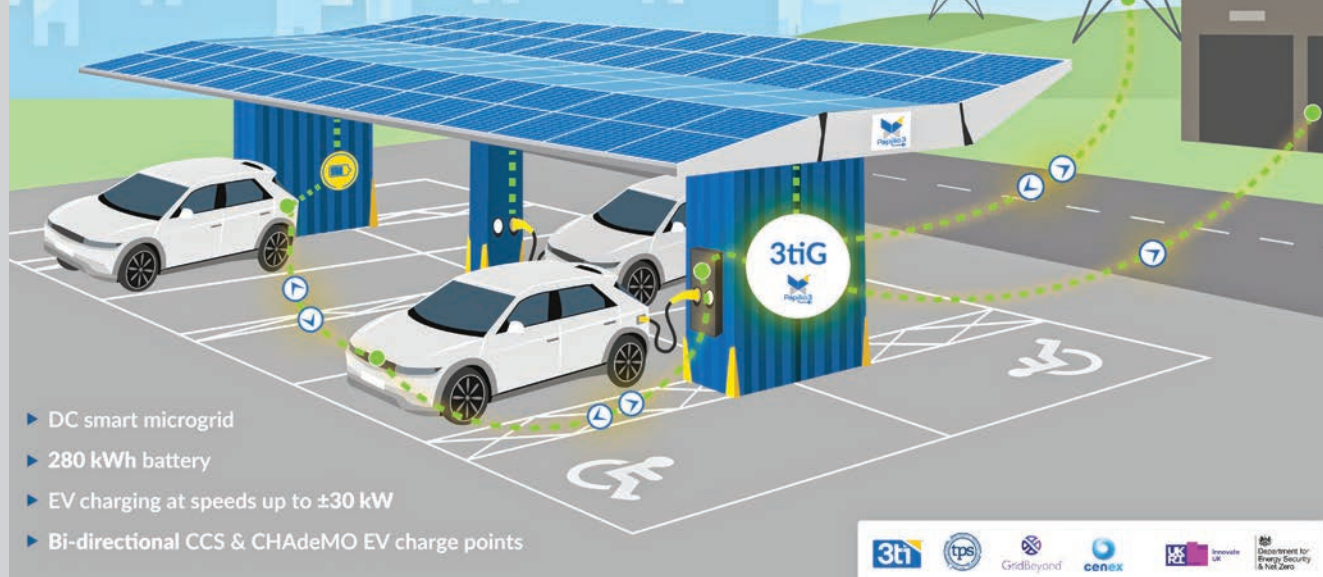
#### MINIMISING THE RISK

RAC Breakdown spokesperson Alice Simpson said: "Many of us are used to seeing the occasional rat or mouse on the street, but finding one in your car is not only a nasty shock but often the cause of very unwelcome and expensive damage. Unfortunately, incidents like this are more common than drivers might expect, particularly over the winter months when animals look to take shelter from the cold conditions.

"To reduce the risk of animal damage, check your car if it hasn't been driven for a week or more. The best advice is to make sure no food – for pets or humans – is left inside. Also check for unusual smells in the vehicle and be mindful of any dashboard warning lights that don't disappear after a minute or two. Any foodstuff in garages should be kept in airtight containers or locked in metal bins.

"If you suspect your vehicle has sustained animal damage, whether that's chewed cables, clogged air filters or a nibbled diesel priming bulb, you should contact a reputable mobile mechanic or use the RAC's Approved Garage Network to find a local garage that provides quality repairs. Car insurance does cover animal damage, but it's worth checking before you claim to see if the damage justifies the expense."

## Government Funding Awarded To Project To Prove EVs Are Assets To The Grid



A consortium of British companies has secured £1,344,552 in government funding to explore how electricity stored in electric vehicle (EV) batteries can be used to smooth out peaks in supply and demand on the UK's electricity grid. 3ti, the UK's leading designer, installer, funder and operator of solar car parks (SCPs), is leading the new project funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, delivered by Innovate UK. The project is setting out to integrate bi-directional DC charging and the associated power management systems into Papilio3, a pop-up solar car park and EV charging hub. The 'V2X FastHub' project will be a watershed moment for future energy security, providing a clear pathway to help resolve the issue of intermittent supply from renewables by using EV batteries as grid assets.

The project consortium brings together renewable energy experts 3ti with advanced EV power solutions provider Turbo Power Systems (TPS), smart energy company GridBeyond, and EV & decarbonisation experts Cenex, in a 17-month collaboration to deliver a state-of-the-art system, including a six-month real-world demonstration.

3ti will lead the project, delivering a customised Papilio3 with smart grid controls and a 280 kWh DC battery. TPS will harness its DC microgrid systems, managing the bi-directional charging technology through both CCS and CHAdeMO EV charge points, while GridBeyond will oversee energy management and aggregation services through its flexible Energy Management System (EMS). Cenex will host the vehicle trial, which will include the procurement of the trial vehicle fleet, data capture, analysis and final report to Innovate UK.

Specially adapted as a V2X FastHub unit for the project, 3ti's innovative Papilio3 is a smart grid 'in-a-box' that can host up to 12 EVs at a time, housed within an upcycled, rapidly deployable shipping container that can be placed almost anywhere. With a solar canopy and energy storage battery, the system has already delivered in a range of applications for factories, hospitals, leisure centres and council buildings across the UK. For this particular application, Papilio3 will implement a new DC microgrid system – integrating three times faster, bi-directional DC EV charge points with a 280 kWh integral battery storage system and 20 kWp solar roof array.

Through a 'charge-as-a-service' business rental model, the unit simplifies

installation and reduces up-front costs – or the need for long-term commitment. The result is a commercially attractive, replicable and scalable EV charging solution for a multitude of organisations, including medium dwell-time workplaces, destinations, return-to-base fleets and delivery depots. The provision of EV charging at amenity and business locations maximises revenue generation and enables the faster roll-out of EV charging while simultaneously reducing the burden on carbon-intense rapid charging infrastructure.

Mark Potter, CTO at 3ti, said, "Everybody wants more EVs on the grid. They represent a massive scale, distributed energy resource that can be used to balance real-time supply and demand. This project will prove that bi-directional EV charging can work in the real world. Connected EVs will be teamed together to act as virtual power and energy storage facilities, with each car releasing and replenishing its stored energy according to user preferences and grid demand. This generates income and cost savings, which can be passed on to our customers."

Smart Microgrids support a more sustainable and reliable energy transition, helping the UK meet its Net Zero and Energy Security targets. This project will be the first in the world to trial a 12 charge point DC Smart Microgrid for CCS V2X based on ISO15118-20, published in April 2022. Each charge point will also support CHAdeMO for compatibility with existing vehicles. This innovative set-up will provide faster, bi-directional EV charging at speeds up to ±30 kW, with much higher power and round-trip energy efficiency than AC solutions.

Micheal Phelan, CEO at GridBeyond, said, "GridBeyond are delighted to be participating in this innovative, ground breaking project which will help demonstrate the potential of vehicle to grid technology and how it can help support a low carbon grid of the future. We are excited to be working alongside key stakeholders and partners to bring all our expertise together for future market insight

The V2X FastHub project, part of the V2X Innovation Programme, is funded by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, delivered by Innovate UK. The V2X Innovation Programme is part of the up to £65m Flexibility Innovation Programme, funded from the £1 billion Net Zero Innovation Portfolio.

## URBAN AUTOMOTIVE PREDICTS TOP 5 MODIFICATION TRENDS IN 2024

Urban Automotive, the bespoke modifier of luxury automotive brands, has revealed its predictions for the hottest modification trends of 2024.

The bespoke modification market has seen increased growth in recent years, driven by the rising demand for unique and personalised vehicles. This is set to continue into 2024 and beyond, with car customisation being more widely accepted and desired.

With an international distribution network and associations with top tuning garages around the world, Urban Automotive is at the forefront of the latest trends and is helping to shape the future of the modification landscape.

### 1. Flat-Faced Alloys

A growing trend in America and slowly filtering onto UK roads, flat-faced forged alloy wheels are a style option that signal a move towards more retro-inspired builds.

### 2. Pastel Vinyl Wraps

Whilst satin black may still be the most popular vehicle vinyl wrap colour, fashion trends are shifting. For the early adopters, 2024 is all about the pastel aesthetic.

### 3. Bright Interiors

As pastel exterior colours grow more popular, bright and bold interiors are also predicted to be hot property in 2024.

### 4. Heritage-Inspired Builds

Restomod-style modifications have grown hugely popular over the last five years, often combining iconic designs with contemporary underpinnings. Urban Automotive's Signature Series often includes a heritage-inspired project or two, with demand for this type of vehicle set to continue in 2024.

### 5. Visual Carbon Fibre

Urban Automotive kits are centred around the use of carbon fibre, but this year's SEMA show in Las Vegas reflected how the material continues to grow in popularity – with many vehicles effectively showcasing exposed naked carbon body panels to create serious impact.

For more information on Urban Automotive, visit;

[www.urban-automotive.co.uk](http://www.urban-automotive.co.uk)

## ISUZU UK LAUNCHES NEW '100 DAYS OF TRADE-INS' CAMPAIGN

For 100 days from 1st January, UK pick up owners can say a fond farewell to their old pick-up and drive away in a new Isuzu D-Max with a fantastic part exchange deal. They'll get all the multi-award-winning substance you'd expect with loads of new-look Isuzu D-Max style, not to mention the 3.5-tonne towing capacity, one-tonne payload and a 5 year/125,000-mile warranty.

The benefits of taking part in the campaign are ensuring the best value by a local Isuzu dealership assessing a customer's pick-up, upgrading to the latest models by trading up to the newest Isuzu D-Max on the market. From the workaday Isuzu D-Max Utility to the top-of-the-range V-Cross models. Customers can also stay connected and entertained with the latest infotainment systems, navigation tools, and smart connectivity features. Plus get best-in-class safety features and a maximum 5-star NCAP rating.

George Wallis, Head of Marketing, Isuzu UK said "Due to a hugely successful 2023, quality used pick-up stocks are low going into 2024. This gives UK pick-up owners the opportunity to maximise their trade in and trade up to a new Isuzu D-Max. Being the pick-up professionals, we are happy to retail any used model. By running the campaign for 100 days provides a long enough window for to replenish our Used pick-up stocks and for customers to take advantage of a great part-ex deal, so it's a win-win situation."

The Award-Winning Isuzu D-Max versatile combination of impressive capability, durability, and reliability, along with a rear differential lock means it can handle any situation. Part-ex vehicles



must be a pick-up and be under 7 years old for a stronger part-ex value.

For full details visit [www.isuzu.co.uk/100-days](http://www.isuzu.co.uk/100-days)



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## Goodwood Announces The Themes And Dates For Its 2024 Breakfast Club Events



Goodwood is delighted to reveal the themes and dates for its highly anticipated Breakfast Club events this year, set to unfold at Goodwood Motor Circuit from May to August.

### Sunday 5 May: 100th Sunday

Join them as they celebrate their centennial Breakfast Club by welcoming the cars, bikes and everything else that has made them so special. Expect every kind of car, from supermini to supercar, bikes, buses - you name it. No type of vehicle is unwelcome as the 100th Breakfast Club is celebrated.

### Sunday 2 June: Super Sunday

Supercar Sunday? No, SUPER Sunday! This is a morning for all things at the top end of transport. Supercars, hypercars, superbikes, you'll see them all. From Ferraris to Ducatis and Koenigseggs to KTMs.

### Sunday 23 June: GRRC Sunday

A morning to celebrate GRRC Members, showcasing the eclectic, broad and brilliant collection of cars and bikes that the club has in its possession. In the last two years, GRRC Sunday has brought together some amazing vehicles and they expect no different in 2024. This Breakfast Club is open to GRRC Members and Fellows only. Join the GRRC to be there.

### Sunday 4 August: Classic Sunday

The traditional midsummer celebration of all things pre-tax returns for another year featuring cars and bikes that were registered before January 1 1984. As time moves on, this event only gets more and more interesting.

Now welcoming cars ranging from the classic line of the Jaguar E-type to working-class heroes like the Renault 5 Turbo.

Throughout 2024, Breakfast Club remains dedicated to supporting the Goodwood Estate Charity, Dementia Support. There will be many ways to donate, including participation in the GRRC Sunday Drives, providing visitors with the opportunity to enjoy a passenger ride in their dream car. Additionally, a variety of taster experiences will be on offer, such as off-roading in classic Land Rovers or trying the latest Race Simulators.

Sam Medcraft, Goodwood Motor Circuit General Manager said: "After the sold-out success of our 2023 events, we eagerly anticipate an exhilarating 2024 as we mark the milestone of our 100th Breakfast Club gathering. Witnessing the evolution of this event over the years has been truly fantastic. In addition to the centennial celebration, we are welcoming back our two most popular themes, Super Sunday and Classic Sunday, promising a truly special lineup.

"This year, thanks to the generous support of our Breakfast Club attendees, we have raised over £15,000 for our Estate charity, Dementia Support and we hope to build on this in 2024.

"Breakfast Club continues to be a fantastic family-friendly affair, with complimentary entry for all. We can't wait to welcome everyone back in May 2024!"

To find out more about registering your car for display at Breakfast Club, visit [www.goodwood.com/motorsport/breakfast-club/register-your-vehicle](http://www.goodwood.com/motorsport/breakfast-club/register-your-vehicle).

All attendees require a pre-booked entry ticket, which is free of charge. These will be available on 15th January 2024 via;

[www.goodwood.com/motorsport/breakfast-club](http://www.goodwood.com/motorsport/breakfast-club)

Sign up for Breakfast Club updates at;

[www.goodwood.com/motorsport/breakfast-club/sign-up/update-sign-up](http://www.goodwood.com/motorsport/breakfast-club/sign-up/update-sign-up)

## Squires Cafe

Squires Cafe Bar was originally known as 'Squires Milk Bar' when it first opened back in 1954. Situated in the small town of Sherburn in Elmet in North Yorkshire it quickly became a popular destination for motorcyclists, with many coming from all over Yorkshire, the North of England and all parts of the UK.

Squires Cafe is an ideal venue for all your event requirements, boasting large outdoor capacity that should meet all your needs plus large well equipped indoor facilities that make Squires an ideal year-round venue.

Visit [www.squires-cafe.co.uk](http://www.squires-cafe.co.uk) for more details



A customer reassurance scheme financially backed by the Independent Garage Association (IGA)

# WAGGING TALES!



## Crufts, World's Greatest Celebration Of Dogs

More than 20,000 dogs will be taking their paws to the NEC in Birmingham for Crufts 2024, which takes place from 7 – 10 March.

Organised by The Kennel Club, Crufts 2024 will run from Thursday and through the weekend, with a four-day action-packed schedule celebrating our four-legged friends and 'all things dog'. The event will showcase over 200 diverse breeds and see dogs from all walks of life put their best paw forward in fast-paced and fun competitions including agility, heelwork to music, flyball and obedience.

The family-favourite Scruffts final sees the nation's pets – who earned their place in heats across the country throughout the year – compete for the 'top dog' title and on Sunday evening, one of five very special finalists will be crowned as the winner of The Kennel Club Hero Dog Award, as voted by the public. Shortly after, following four days of competition, one canine Crufts competitor will put their paws on the coveted Best in Show trophy, which in 2023 was taken home by Orca, the Lagotto Romagnolo, whose 'tail never stops wagging'.

Each day will conclude with one dog earning their place in the Best in Show final on Sunday evening, beginning with the Utility and Toy groups on Thursday 7 March, Gundog group on Friday 8 March, Working and Pastoral groups on Saturday 9 March and concluding with the Terrier and Hound groups on Sunday 10 March.

For the 30th year, the popular Discover Dogs area will be welcoming over 200 different breeds, of all shapes, sizes and personalities, enabling visitors to learn more about the variety of our four-legged friends from

breed experts and see which canine might be the right companion for them.

From discovering the lesser known 'underdogs', like the rare Otterhound, to understanding what the popular family-favourites, like the Labrador Retriever, really need in a home, Discover Dogs is a unique area of the event. Each breed 'booth' can help prospective puppy owners on every step of their journey – from responsible puppy buying tips to day-to-day training and caring requirements.

For those hoping to rehome a rescue dog, The Kennel Club Breed Rescue organisations will also be on hand to provide visitors with everything they need to know about rehoming.

After a successful launch of the Stand Up To Cancer Crufts Walkies Challenge in 2023, which saw dogs and their owners raise an incredible £1.4 million, the challenge will be returning for a second year - encouraging two and four-legged friends to walk 60 miles in April to support life-saving cancer research.

Over 500 stands selling all sorts of doggy delights will cover 25 acres of the NEC at Crufts. The event also showcases a range of dog-focussed charities and organisations, including The Kennel Club Charitable Trust, who will demonstrate how dogs can support us, and how we can support them. Many of these organisations will also showcase their work through displays, like the super sniffing Medical Detection Dogs and the brave West Midlands Police Dogs.

The Young Kennel Club, for 6–24-year-olds, and The Kennel Club's

Good Citizen Dog Training scheme, will be running displays and demonstrations in dedicated rings throughout the four days. There is also a Dog Activities ring for those interested in learning more about getting started in activities such as agility, heelwork to music and obedience.

Catherine Guiver, Head of Events at The Kennel Club, which organises Crufts, said: "We are overjoyed to be rolling out the green carpet once again and welcoming thousands of wagging tails to the Midlands.

"It is hard to put into words the unique atmosphere created over four days at Crufts, there really is nothing like the greatest celebration of dogs – the buzz and excitement can be felt the minute you enter the NEC!

"The action-packed schedule ensures a great day out for anyone who loves dogs, from first thing Thursday morning the energy just continues to build in anticipation of the Sunday evening as the arena seats are filled with everyone trying to get a glimpse of the famous Best in Show trophy."

Over the four days Crufts welcomes over 20,000 dogs, 150,000 people and sees over 8 million TV viewers tune into the Channel 4, More4 and All4 broadcast. All the action is also live streamed on the official Crufts YouTube channel.

More information and tickets for the event are available on the Crufts website: [Crufts.org.uk](http://Crufts.org.uk). Tickets are free for under 8s, and advance tickets start at £14 for children (aged 9-15) and concessions, and £21 for adults. Please note that tickets are only available through our official ticketing partner, The Ticket Factory (fees apply).

## Three Overlooked Dogs at Dogs Trust Leeds Waiting For A Home

**Missi is a beautiful 6-year-old Lurcher who forms a very strong, loving bond with her family. She needs to get to know you properly before she'll show her true character, but she's well worth the wait. She has a few training needs, so she'll need her humans to continue the fantastic work that the team at Dogs Trust Leeds have been doing with her at the centre. She isn't looking to share with any other pets and prefers to walk in quiet areas where she won't see many dogs, as she can be quite vocal. She needs a calm and predictable home life, so children won't suit her. An adult-only home with a secure garden is a must. She'll need someone around all the time, as she doesn't like being on her own. The team will happily advise on ways to start introducing her to time alone.**

Staff at Dogs Trust Leeds commented, "Everyone who knows Missi absolutely adores her! She is a very sweet, loving, and playful girl. She loves lots of attention and will snuggle on the sofa with you all day! She is also great fun to train, and she's already learned lots and would love to learn more. Missi's perfect new family will be active adults who have an interest in dog training, enjoy peaceful walks, and love LOTS of sofa snuggles! All you need to do is give her a little space initially to let her come round in her own time."

For more information on Missi visit:

[www.dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/lurcher/1218358](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/lurcher/1218358)



Do you love cheeky little chaps? Do you enjoy spending lots of time interacting with your dog and going for long countryside walks? Then you will LOVE little Buster! He is a lively 9-year-old Patterdale Terrier seeking a new home where he will be the sole pet, getting all the attention he likes. Buster thrives in a calm, predictable environment, so an adult-only home with few visitors would be ideal. He must have a secure garden for off-lead play and exploration. His home should be in a peaceful location, as excessive noise unsettles him. Buster requires someone around all the time to help him settle in, and any alone time should be introduced gradually. Despite being on lifelong medication, don't let this be a barrier to applying for him, as Dogs Trust may be able to provide support.

Staff at Dogs Trust Leeds commented, "Buster is full of fun and exhibits classic cheeky Terrier personality. With energy for days, he enjoys spending time with friends, whether engaging in fun training or going for long walks. Currently living off-site in one of our wonderful foster homes, Buster is proving to be a superb house guest! While he may not be a lap dog, he expresses affection through playtime, which you'll undoubtedly enjoy too. In essence, if you lead an active life and would appreciate a lively companion like Buster, you could be his perfect match."

For more information on Buster visit:

[www.dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/terrier-patterdale/1257187](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/terrier-patterdale/1257187)



Looking for a super fun and clever Lurcher? Domino is 9 years old and has been waiting to find his forever home since being found as a stray. Due to him being with Dogs Trust Leeds for so long, he'll need someone around all the time initially to help him settle. He should be the only pet in an adult-only home (with no visiting children) and have a secure, private garden with at least a 6ft fence. There should be no dogs next door, as that would distract him too much. Out and about, he can be vocal when he sees other dogs, but he happily wears his muzzle, and his focus training has made him very manageable.

Staff at Dogs Trust Leeds commented, "Domino has absolutely stolen the hearts of all his handlers here at the centre! With his friends, he is lots of fun, very playful, and is becoming more and more affectionate too! He's got a super smart brain and loves doing his training. Being very food-oriented means doing more fun training with him will be a doddle, as he gets so much out of it. He loves his walks in quieter areas where he won't see other dogs and travels well, so he won't mind being driven to more peaceful walking spots. Domino is doing really well with all his training and has even been working on his doggy socialisation, so we know that in the right home, he will thrive. He just needs someone to give him the chance he deserves."

For more information on Domino visit:

[www.dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/lurcher/1147941](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk/rehoming/dogs/lurcher/1147941)



# Jack Russells Are The Most Popular Dog Breed In Yorkshire, According To A National Survey



New research from pet insurance provider, **Petsure.com**, has revealed why owners chose their particular breed of dog and how they feel that breed fits their lifestyle. The results from Yorkshire-based dog owners in the survey reveal Jack Russell Terriers take top dog spot for popularity, perhaps due to its adaptability to both family homes and rural farms.

The survey of 2,000 UK dog owners, commissioned by **Petsure.com** and carried out by **OnePoll**, asked respondents why they chose their breed of dog, with 41% answering 'for their temperament'. Yet a third (30%) admit to choosing the breed 'for their looks', and 25% for the breed's compatibility with their families and children. 37% of dog owners in Yorkshire chose their dog because it was 'cute'.

For Yorkshire in particular, the results show the most popular dog breeds are:

## JACK RUSSELL

Jack Russells are associated with being particularly fond of people, especially their owners. Though they are small in appearance, they are extremely active and have bundles of energy.

## LABRADOR

This breed is known for their strong, agile and active nature. They are thought to be family friendly, with a highly intelligent and calm temperament. They're obedient, affectionate dogs that are usually easily trainable.

## COCKAPOO

This crossbreed is made up of half Cocker Spaniel and half Poodle, and you'll find them in various colours from white to red. They're chipper, friendly dogs, with plenty of energy which can make them lots of fun to be around.

## BORDER COLLIE

Intelligent, speedy and responsive are common characteristics for the Border Collie. Usually famous for herding sheep and cattle, they appear to make excellent working dogs.

## COCKER SPANIEL

Commonly known as Cockers, these people-loving dogs are extremely playful, making them great for families with children. These happy, sociable canines are adaptable to their surroundings, but love to stay entertained.

*(Information on breeds taken from The Kennel Club, 2023 and the PDSA, 2023 and Purina)*

Most Yorkshire dog owners said they got their dog from a local breeder (28%), whereas in the South East, 27% of owners opted to get a dog from a shelter or charity. This differs to those in London, where more people answered that they got their dog from a friend or family member (19%) than any other route.

Dog owners across the nation were asked how much research they did on the dog breed before bringing them home, with 18% of them admitting to not doing very much research before making their choice. 9% said they did no research at all.

22% said they used social media to research their dog's breed, with 10% taking to Wikipedia, the publicly curated platform. The good news is that overall, 97% agreed the research they did was useful before bringing their dog home.

When it comes to Yorkshire folk, 41% conducted a fair amount of research beforehand, though you'll find the biggest researchers in Scotland (60%).

The survey asked UK dog owners whether their experience of owning their dog aligned with reality, with most admitting they were 'not fully aware' of what to expect. Nearly half of dog owners (47%) admitted they weren't sure how well their dog would fit their lifestyle and 48% didn't fully know the costs of vet bills and food.

When it comes to the temperament of their chosen breed, 53% of owners said they weren't completely confident they knew how their dog may behave. 56% said they were not fully aware of associated breed health problems, such as flat-faced dogs being more likely to have breathing problems.

Only 27% said they now think of themselves as 'very knowledgeable' about the breed of their dog.

34% of UK dog owners said their experience with how their dog breed fits in with their lifestyle was better than they expected. With more of us working from home than ever before, we found that over half (51%) of UK dog owners only leave their dog alone for up to six hours a week which is well within the recommended guidelines of four hours a day.

All dogs can suffer from accidents and unexpected health problems, so it's positive to see 64% of owners said they have pet insurance to help during the times they need it.

But with 36% respondents admitting not having dog insurance, many of these pet owners could be putting their pet's health and their finances at risk. In 2021, the Association of British Insurers (ABI) claims the average vet bill is £848 (The ABI, 2022).

45% of UK dog parents who chose not to take out pet insurance did so because it's too expensive. According to the ABI, the average cost of a pet insurance premium was £327 in 2022 (The ABI, June 2023). Nearly half (49%) of all dogs in London are uninsured, compared to just 35% in Yorkshire.

A quarter of dog owners who don't have insurance believed it wasn't necessary, while 17% of all dog owners found unexpected costs of owning a dog a challenge. Without insurance, dog owners could find themselves out of pocket for treatments and care for their pets as they won't be able to claim money back using their insurance policy.

Expert vet, Dr Scott Miller says: "Whether you're looking to buy or adopt a dog, you need to be responsible. Ethical breeders know so much about the animals they raise, including the good and bad of their health and behaviour. They want them to go to the right homes.

"Lots of people make massive mistakes when choosing a dog. Always think: Is the dog right for the family, or do I just like the look of them or feel sorry for them? Can I afford to look after them? Can I manage the progress and setbacks of training and settling them in?"

Rebecca Gardiner, at **Petsure.com** adds: "With so much information available online, it can be hard to know who to trust when it comes to choosing the right dog for you and your family.

"Think about seeking help from professional organisations like the Kennel Club, and speaking to current owners of the breed you are interested in. With careful financial planning and being fully informed about the health care needs of different breeds, dog owners can look forward to a long and happy time together with their pet."



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# HEALTH

## 3D Heart Replicas Help Improve Surgical Outcomes For Patients In Leeds

The three-dimensional models created by a biomedical engineer at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (LHT) are helping improve outcomes for patients with congenital heart defects.

Using computer-aided design, the engineer uses scans of a patient's heart and turns them into a 3D replica that can be explored and studied on a computer screen.

Clinicians can view the computer-generated model in augmented 3D using a Virtual Reality headset or even request a 3D-printed model. It means clinicians can get hands-on with a reliable replica of the patient's anatomy to visualise and test surgical approaches before committing to an intervention.

For some conditions, this can make all the difference between someone having to undergo open heart surgery or having a far less invasive stent – procedures which have vastly different levels of risk, and days spent in hospital, and recovery times.

Lisa Ferrie, Biomedical Engineer and 3D Planning Service Lead at LHT,

is the only employee at the Trust to have this unique role, which she started in October 2022. She said: "3D modelling provides a detailed level of visualisation that a CT or MRI scan simply can't provide alone, and leads to safer procedures more suitable to the patient's individual needs.

This innovative approach means that surgeons are able to make more informed decisions on the best surgical procedure for a patient, with the potential to lead to faster recovery times and less chance of the patient needing further surgery.

Lisa is involved from the start of a patient's case, working alongside the congenital cardiac team to provide a detailed model replica of the patient's heart. Her model offers a deeper understanding of the patient's personal anatomy, which widens the treatment options available to patients, including the potential for less invasive approaches.

"It's a relatively new field," Lisa explained, "but the potential of this work to improve patient outcomes is huge. More and more you are seeing

biomedical engineers or other technical specialists brought in-house to start similar services elsewhere in the NHS."

Clinicians may also request a model that features a simulated intervention, such as a stent or a synthetic conduit which is used to redirect blood flow.

The models can be viewed digitally, or they can be 3D-printed using a Polyjet printer to provide fully three-dimensional physical models where this is an advantage to the surgical team.

For some conditions, and if appropriate for the patient's anatomy, a stent procedure can be carried out instead of an open heart intervention. This has significant outcomes for the patient, including fewer days spent in hospital, significantly quicker recovery times, and reduced risks compared to open heart procedures.

Dr Vitor Ramos, Consultant in Adult Congenital Heart Disease and Cardiac MR at LHT, said: "The 3D designs have a tremendous effect on the way we treat our patients as it provides us with a far better understanding of their anatomies, allowing us to shorten procedures and reduce complications, where appropriate. It also gives us the means us to perform 'virtual' surgery beforehand and predict the results of several interventions without putting patients at risk."

The 3D model becomes an integral part of the information used by the patient's surgical team to determine what is the most appropriate treatment for each patient. This balances the risk and benefit of each possible intervention and ensures the patient receives the intervention that will provide the best possible outcome.

Ms Carin van Doorn, Consultant Congenital Cardiac Surgeon at LHT, said: "The 3D modelling service allows us to create individualised heart models for our patients and we use these to plan, and sometimes also practice, the surgical procedure. This advanced preparation is particularly helpful for cardiac surgery as at the time of the operation the heart can be stopped for only a limited amount of time and also the views of the inside of the heart may be restricted. The 3D models are also very useful for our trainees to help understand the many different congenital heart abnormalities."

Dr Jamie Bentham, Consultant Interventional Paediatric and Adult Congenital Cardiologist at LHT, said: "The 3D planning service is an invaluable part of the intervention service and allows us to make in-depth assessment and treatment plan prior to a case. It has become a critical part of increasingly complex procedures. The 3D models have become essential for patient safety, equipment choice, procedural suitability and planning procedural steps. We can minimise the risks, reduce radiation dose, and improve the likelihood of success."

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**Personalised treatment for the most common form of adult leukaemia helps patients survive for longer and stay in remission, a phase III trial has found.**

The trial, by the University of Leeds, has been identified as groundbreaking research by the New England Journal of Medicine and the 65th American Society of Hematology (ASH) Annual Meeting and Exposition in San Diego, where the results were presented.

The data shows that the duration of therapy can be individualised for each patient by using regular blood tests to monitor their response. In the trial, this approach resulted in significant improvements in both progression-free and overall survival in patients with previously untreated chronic lymphocytic leukaemia (CLL). The effect was stronger among patients with poorer outcomes to standard treatments, such as those with some genetic mutations.

Adult patients were given a combination of cancer growth blocking drugs over varied durations depending on how rapidly their disease responded.

The trial found that this approach significantly improved progression-free and overall survival compared to the standard treatment for CLL, with more than 19 in 20 patients in remission three years after starting treatment.

The study, named FLAIR, is a phase III randomised controlled trial for untreated CLL, taking place in more than 100 hospitals across the UK. It was funded by Cancer Research UK, Janssen Research & Development, LLC, and AbbVie Pharmaceutical Research and Development.

Lead author Peter Hillmen, Professor of Experimental Haematology in the University of Leeds' School of Medicine, and Honorary Consultant Haematologist at Leeds Teaching Hospitals

NHS Trust, said: "Our findings show that, for this group of patients, the treatment is very effective at tackling their disease and is well tolerated by them. This means that patients on our trial had better outcomes while also enjoying a better quality of life during their treatment. Most patients treated with the new combination have no detectable leukaemia in their blood or bone marrow by the end of treatment which is better than with previous treatments and is very encouraging."

Dr Iain Foulkes, Executive Director of Research and Innovation at Cancer Research UK, said: "We are delighted to see these results from the FLAIR trial which show the importance and effectiveness of tailoring cancer treatment to the individual patient. Not only this, but the trial has found a way to do so without requiring frequent bone marrow tests which are more invasive and can be painful.

"The collaborative effort that went into this trial - involving researchers, healthcare professionals, funders and dedicated patients and their families - point to a new standard of care which could see real progress made against leukaemia."

Chronic lymphocytic leukaemia is a type of cancer that affects the blood and bone marrow. It cannot usually be cured but can be managed with treatment. More than nine in 10 people are aged 55 and over when they are diagnosed.

Current treatments include chemotherapy, immunotherapy, or cancer growth blockers.

The FLAIR trial tested cancer growth blockers called Ibrutinib and Venetoclax (I+V). Also known by the brand names Imbruvica and Venclexta, these are usually administered either continuously or for the same fixed duration rather than tailored to each patient's response. This means that many patients may stop treatment too early and don't get the full potential benefit from their therapy or continue therapy for longer than necessary. This could lead to a

greater chance of relapse of their leukaemia and/or of treatment side effects.

FLAIR researchers aimed to discover whether it was possible to personalise I+V treatment duration for patients based on regular blood sampling and / or bone marrows, and whether this was as effective or better than standard treatment (FCR).

This regular blood and bone marrow monitoring gave researchers a more up-to-date picture of how patients were responding to I+V, and meant that the duration of I+V treatment could be tailored accordingly to each patient. In addition, it was found that basing the duration of treatment on less invasive, quicker blood samples was just as effective as using bone marrows, which can be painful and sometimes require sedation.

FLAIR was launched in 2014, recruiting 1,509 patients with CLL. They were randomised to four treatment groups, each receiving a different treatment.

This part of the FLAIR trial compared two of the groups, placing 260 patients on I+V and 263 on the standard treatment, known as FCR. Almost three quarters were male, which was to be expected as CLL occurs more frequently in males. The average age was 62, and just over a third had advanced disease.

At the end of this stage of the trial, 87 patients had seen their disease progress, 75 of which were on FCR, and 12 on I+V.

To date, 34 of these patients have died during the trial. Of these, 25 were treated with FCR and only nine with I+V.

The patients on I+V underwent blood tests and bone marrows to monitor their response to treatment. The technique used is known as measurable residual disease (MRD) which allows clinicians to see the number of remaining cancer cells. The number of cells may be so small that the patient is asymptomatic. An MRD positive test result means that there are remaining cancer cells.

The research team now hope that this more personalised therapy approach, guided by blood test monitoring will be adopted as a new standard of care for patients needing first line CLL treatment.

Professor Hillmen said: "The results of the FLAIR Trial, led by the Leeds Cancer Research UK Clinical Trials Unit at the University of Leeds, are exceptional and herald a change in the way chronic lymphocytic leukaemia will be treated. FLAIR has been a huge collaborative effort over the last decade by the UK's leading CLL specialists and by the haematology teams in over 100 hospitals throughout the UK. The participation of patient groups, individual patients and their families were critical to delivering such progress particularly through the challenges of the pandemic."

The trial was co-ordinated by the Leeds Cancer Research UK Clinical Trials Unit at the University of Leeds. Deputy Director Professor David Cairns said: "The vision of the Leeds Cancer Research UK CTU is to improve the length and quality of survival for cancer patients on a worldwide scale. Our strategy to do this is to ensure that we build evidence to identify the correct treatment, for the correct duration, for the correct patient. FLAIR is a trial well aligned to our strategy, and reflects team science including clinicians, laboratory scientists, methodologists and operational experts working together to deliver important trial results. None of this would be achieved without the selfless commitment of trial participants who contribute their time and data."

## Two Digital Technologies Recommended To Address Unmet Need In Rehabilitation Programmes For People With COPD

**More people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) could soon access rehabilitation programmes after draft guidance from NICE conditionally recommended two technologies to provide digital services to NHS patients.**

According to NHS Digital, approximately 1.17 million people in England have been diagnosed as living with COPD in 2021. It is estimated that a further 2 million remain undiagnosed.

COPD is a long-term and progressive respiratory condition that causes breathlessness, a persistent chesty cough, persistent wheezing and frequent chest infections. COPD includes chronic bronchitis and emphysema.

Respiratory tract infections, smoking, and environmental pollutants can cause symptoms of COPD to exacerbate or "flare up" and result in increased breathlessness or coughing, leading to urgent hospital care for some people.

Exacerbations caused by COPD are the second most common cause of emergency hospital admissions, accounting for 1 in 8 of all UK hospital admissions.

Evidence suggests that 90% of patients who complete a face-to-face pulmonary rehabilitation programme experience increased exercise capacity and improved quality of life. However according to the NHS Long Term Plan, they are currently only offered to 13%

of eligible patients, with a focus on those with more severe COPD.

NICE's medical technologies advisory committee has recommended two digital technologies— myCOPD and SPACE for COPD – to deliver pulmonary rehabilitation which are exercise and education programmes for people with COPD.

Both digital technologies offer exercise programmes and education sessions to help with people with COPD manage their own condition in a place and time of their choosing.

The two digital platforms could be appropriate for those people who do not have a service where they live, do not wish to be seen in person, or would prefer not to be treated in person for convenience.

The committee agreed with experts that the two digital programmes would not replace face-to-face pulmonary rehabilitation in the care pathway.

Mark Chapman, interim director of the Health Technologies Programme at NICE, said: "There is a huge unmet need for access to pulmonary rehabilitation programmes by people with COPD. Our committee hopes by recommending two digital technologies which provide these programmes they could help people living in areas without access to an in-person service to receive the vital care they need.

"With more than a million people suffering from this debilitating condition, it's important that NICE continues to focus on what matters most and continue to provide useful and useable guidance for the conditions which severely impact people and the health service."

It is recommended the two digital technologies are used by the NHS whilst further evidence is generated to address evidence gaps. There are no safety concerns with delivering pulmonary rehabilitation programmes via the digital technologies. These technologies can be used once they have appropriate regulatory approval and meet the standards within NHS England's Digital Technology Assessment Criteria.

A consultation has now begun on the recommendations and comments can be submitted via [nice.org.uk](https://www.nice.org.uk) until Wednesday 10 January 2024.

**NICE** National Institute for Health and Care Excellence

## New Plans Launched To Make Leeds A Healthier City



**Two new plans to improve people's health and wellbeing in Leeds have been launched.**

The Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy aims to break the link between poverty and poor health; and the Healthy Leeds Plan outlines how the health and care system will transform over the next five years to improve health outcomes for the people.

The plans have been produced by the Leeds health and wellbeing board which is a partnership of senior representatives from organisations across the city including Leeds City Council, the NHS, the community sector and Healthwatch, which represents views of the public.

Both plans aim to tackle the city's health inequalities; statistics show 26% of the population live in the 10% most deprived communities nationally. The life expectancy gap between the most affluent and least affluent parts in Leeds is 14 years for women and 11 years for men.

Research shows that people's health is determined not just by the services they receive, but also where they live and the quality of housing, jobs, and the local environment. Making improvements in these areas can help prevent illnesses.

At the heart of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy are 12 priorities where city leaders agree they can make the biggest difference.

These range from improving housing, to maximising the benefits of world leading research and technology, through to better support for carers.

Councillor Fiona Venner, Chair of the Leeds health and wellbeing board, and executive member for children's social care and health partnerships at Leeds City Council said:

"It's more important than ever that we work together to improve people's health and wellbeing and ensure everyone can live healthier lives.

"We know that people's health is affected by the jobs they have, the homes and communities they live in and the quality of services they receive.

"This strategy recognises that by creating improvements in all these areas, we can help people be healthier for longer."

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is closely aligned with the Inclusive Growth Strategy which recognises that a healthy city is reliant on a healthy economy. This work also supports the city's zero carbon ambitions, recognising the positive impact that a green city can have on health and wellbeing.

Tim Ryley, Accountable Officer, Leeds Office of the West Yorkshire NHS Integrated Care Board, said:

"The new Healthy Leeds Plan reaffirms the commitment of health and social care partners in Leeds to work together to address the biggest challenges we collectively share.

"Now more than ever, it is essential that we put more focus on improving people's health and preventing them from becoming ill in the first place.

"Equally, people need to be assured that when they need to access health and care services, they can do so in an equitable way and that the care they receive will be tailored to their needs. This new plan will help us to achieve these ambitions."

*The Leeds Health and Wellbeing Strategy is available at;*

*[www.leedshws.org.uk](http://www.leedshws.org.uk)*



**The NHS has launched a brand new smokefree campaign to encourage all 5.3 million smokers in England to make a quit attempt this month not only for their health, but also to help ensure young people are not being influenced to start smoking.**

In a hard-hitting campaign film, former England goalkeeper and ex-smoker David James joins a number of other ex-smokers to discuss the influence their parents' smoking had on them taking up the habit themselves and how being around children was their motivation to quit.

Research lays bare the stark reality - teens are more than 3 times as likely to smoke if their parents, caregivers or friends do. In a new, poignant film released, the former England goalkeeper discusses how his family members and friends smoked around him when he was a youngster, which led to him taking up the habit. In the film, he describes how smoking impacted his performance on the football world stage.

The UK is now in the lead to be the first country in the world to create a smokefree generation by phasing out the sale of tobacco, and is set to introduce a new law to stop children who turned 14 in 2023 - or are younger - from ever legally being sold tobacco in England.

Three-quarters (76%) of people in England support the principle of creating a smokefree generation a YouGov survey - commissioned by campaign group Action on Smoking and Health (ASH) - has found, with only 9% opposing. Support for creating a smokefree generation is similar regardless of age or region.

Former England goalkeeper, David James, said:

"I smoked for about 15 years and at the time, it was normal. My mum smoked, my friends smoked, it was around me. It didn't take long for me to be hooked.

"Looking back, it had a huge impact on my health and performance at the time, I wish I never started.

"My health, my children and my fans were huge motivators for me to quit - I didn't want younger people to see me smoking and think it was okay."

David James is joined by a number of other ex-smokers in the film to discuss the influence their parents' smoking had on them taking up the habit themselves.

They are accompanied by Nick Hopkinson, Professor of Respiratory Medicine at Imperial College London, who was involved with the UK Millennium Cohort Study research, and TV doctor, Dr Sarah Jarvis, who talks through the wider impact of generational smoking.

Chief Medical Officer for England, Professor Sir Chris Whitty, said:

"Smoking causes a range of diseases that affect people throughout their lives.

"Stopping people becoming addicted to smoking and helping those who have been addicted to quit are 2 of the most important measures we can take to improve health.

"Quitting will improve your health whatever your age and no matter how long you have smoked, it's never too late to stop."

The government continues to go further and faster to support people to quit smoking. Under the world-first Swap to Stop scheme, the government has so far received requests from local authorities nationwide for an unprecedented 259,000 vapes.

Vaping is rightly used by adults as a tool to quit smoking, but the health advice is clear: if you don't smoke, don't vape - and children should never vape.

As part of the scheme, almost 1 in 5 of all smokers in England will be provided with a vape starter kit alongside behavioural support to help them quit the habit. This is part of a series of new measures to help the government meet its ambition of making England smokefree.

Public Health Minister, Andrea Leadsom, said:

"Smoking is the biggest preventable killer in the UK and places a huge burden on our NHS.

Cigarettes are responsible for 64,000 deaths a year in England alone - no other consumer product kills up to two-thirds of its users.

That's why we need to act now to prevent our children from ever lighting one. Our historic Tobacco and Vapes Bill will protect the next generation from the harms of smoking and risk of addiction.

Smoking is still the single largest preventable cause of death in England. Almost every minute of every day someone is admitted to hospital with a smoking-related disease.

Smoking costs the economy and wider society £17 billion a year. This includes an annual £14 billion loss to productivity, through smoking-related lost earnings, unemployment and early death, as well as costs to the NHS and social care of £3 billion. This is equivalent to the annual salaries of over half a million nurses, 390,000 GPs, 400,000 police officers, or 400 million GP appointments.

Reducing the prevalence of smoking will reduce those costs, lower pressure on the NHS and help the economy become more productive.

Professor of Respiratory Medicine at Imperial College London, Nick Hopkinson, said:

"We know that most people who smoke start as teenagers, and taking up smoking at a young age is linked to a greater risk of health problems later in life.

"Our research shows that the influence of family and friends is a significant driving force in young people taking up cigarettes in the first place, making them more than 3 times as likely to start smoking if their parents, caregivers or friends do.

"We must do what we can now to ensure our children are the first smokefree generation."

Research suggests that people who start smoking under the age of 18 have higher levels of nicotine dependency and are less likely to quit smoking later in life. Imperial College London's analysis of UK Millennium Cohort Study data also found that 1 in 10 (10.6%) teenagers were regular smokers at the age of 17 - this equates to approximately 160,000 young people in the UK being regular smokers by the age of 17.

Currently, 4 in 5 smokers start before the age of 20 and smoking from a younger age is linked to being more likely to smoke in later years. This has a significant lasting impact, as someone who quits before turning 30 could add 10 years to their life.

TV doctor, Dr Sarah Jarvis, said:

"Smoking is highly addictive, particularly for our children. We know that most smokers start in their youth and many want to quit - but the addictive nature of cigarettes means they cannot.

"But there's help available for those looking to stop smoking. The NHS has a range of free support, including local stop smoking services."

Better Health offers a range of free quitting support, including a local stop smoking services look-up tool, as well as advice on stop smoking aids including information on how vaping can help you quit smoking.

For free support to quit, search 'Smokefree'.

*YouGov survey information*

*The total sample size of the YouGov survey was 3,533 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken between 15 and 17 November 2023. The survey was carried out online by YouGov. The figures have been weighted and are representative of all adults in England (aged 18 and over).*

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# QUIZTIME

## WELCOME TO OUR QUIZ PAGE

Every month we give you new and hopefully challenging puzzles for your enjoyment.

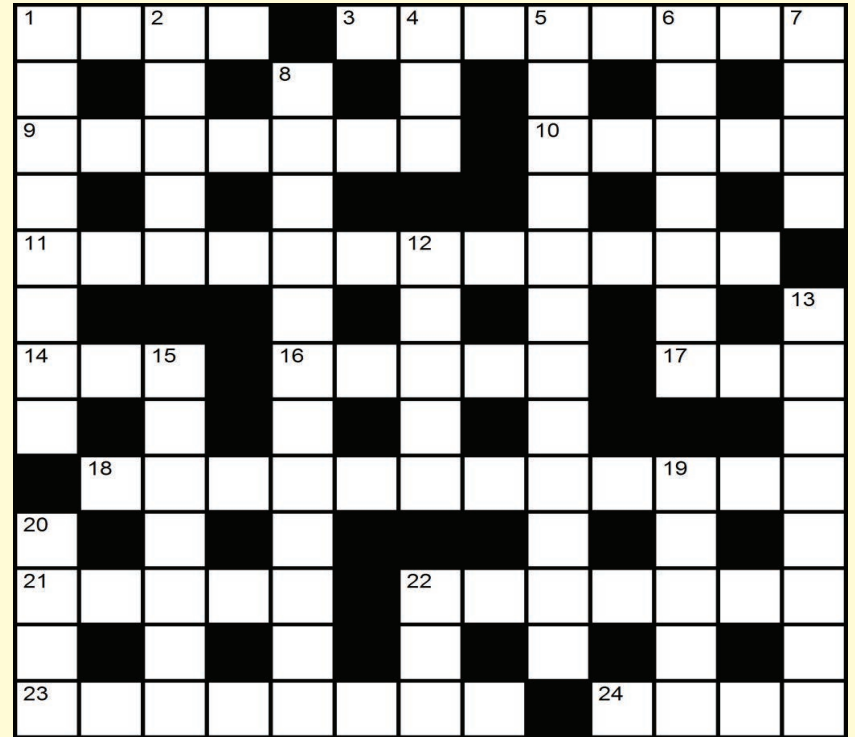
Make sure to pick up next month's issue for all this month's answers & solutions.

### Wordsearch

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

- ALCOHOL
- CELEBRATIONS
- CHEERS
- COUNTDOWN
- FAMILY
- FIREWORKS
- FRIENDS
- GAMES
- HOLIDAY
- JANUARY
- MUSIC
- NEW YEAR
- RESOLUTIONS
- TOAST
- TRADITION

### Crossword



### Clues:

#### Across

- 1 Stop
- 3 Candid
- 9 Organize
- 10 Monarch's headgear
- 11 Directions
- 14 Training hall
- 16 Came to
- 17 Snow runner
- 18 Unintentionally
- 21 Maturing
- 22 Incomplete
- 23 All the people
- 24 Eons

#### Down

- 1 Page titles
- 2 Noblemen
- 4 Foot digit
- 5 Building design
- 6 Gardens of an estate
- 7 Aquarium
- 8 More
- 12 Within walking distance
- 13 Bikes
- 15 Engine
- 19 Fibbing
- 20 Battering wind
- 22 Secure ATM code

### HOW MUCH INFO HAVE YOU RETAINED?

Can you answer these questions about articles in this edition?



- 1 - Set to return for its 45th year, when will the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch take place in January?
- 2 - Who are playing the O2 in Leeds on February 13th?
- 3 - Who has declared 2023 the 'Unofficial Year Of The Rat'?
- 4 - What is the most popular dog breed in Yorkshire, according to a national survey?



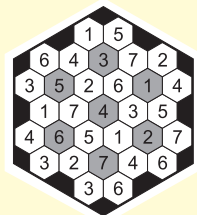
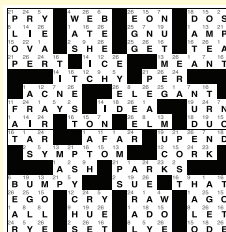
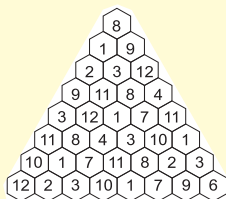
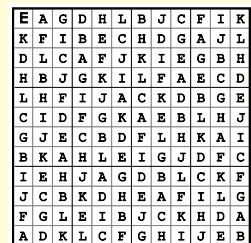
WIN A ME & THEE CARD, EE LAD THA'S ANSOME MUG & COASTER OR EE LASS THA'S GORGEIOUS MUG & COASTER FROM THE GREAT YORKSHIRE SHOP - P29

### Drop Quotes

Drop Quotes are similar to cryptograms, in that the goal is for the solver to uncover a hidden quote. A black-and-white crossword-style grid is set up for each quote, with a number of letters "hovering" above each column. Your task is to "drop" each of those letters into the appropriate square in each column, until the entire quote is revealed. All punctuation (commas, periods, dashes, etc.) has been removed. Good luck!



### December edition answers



How Much Info Have You Retained answers:

- 1. In the Swiss Alps
- 2. Masham, North Yorkshire
- 3. 1. What Colour Jewellery Do They Like?, 2. Do They Have A Gemstone Preference Or Stone Colour Preference?
- 3. Finally What Interests Does The Person You Are Buying For Have?
- 4. Dogs Trust Leeds

#### Word Scramble:

- 1. Ueshima Coffee
- 2. Beast Labs
- 3. Gel Blaster Surge
- 4. Tamogotchi Original
- 5. Mood Beers
- 6. Squishmallows Pet Bed
- 7. How Did Life End Up With Us
- 8. Gillian Young
- 9. Wire Fox Terrier
- 10. Shackletons

#### Drop Quote Answer:

For a time I believed that mankind had been swept out of existence, and that I stood there alone, the last man left alive

# COMPETITIONS

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To enter go to page 28 and answer the 'How much info have you retained' questions then;

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Terms & Conditions – Entries must be in by the 23rd January 2024. The winner will be contacted by phone or email and may be required for a photoshoot of them receiving their prize. Yorkshire Reporter's decision is final and no cash alternative will be offered.

## DECEMBER EDITION COMPETITION WINNER

The Great Yorkshire Shop competition - *Maureen Newton*

Swing into Christmas tickets - *Peter Halmshaw*

Carpenters At Christmas tickets - *Joanne Torrance*

*Congratulations!*

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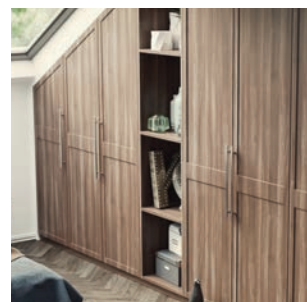
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