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The Flitwick and Ampthill Directory



March 2019

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Covering Flitwick, Ampthill, Westoning, Harlington,
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You know how some things can stay on your 'to do' list for a very, very long time... Well, I have to admit that 'amending my will' is one of my things. So, how very fortuitous that this month I got to meet Mark Tucker, writer of wills



(amongst other things). Finally, I've been good into action. Thank goodness, as this is a serious business and something you really shouldn't leave languishing!! Find out more about Mark and all the other things he can help you with on pages 8 and 9.

I also got to meet Steve and Marge this month. Steve is a volunteer driver for Link-A-Ride, a community transport service. They have recently lost their funding so desperately need help to keep this vital service going. Turn to page 24 to see if you can help.



And it's March ... that means daffodils, lighter evenings and Mothers' Day (look at top left advert my children!!)

All the best,
Kirsty

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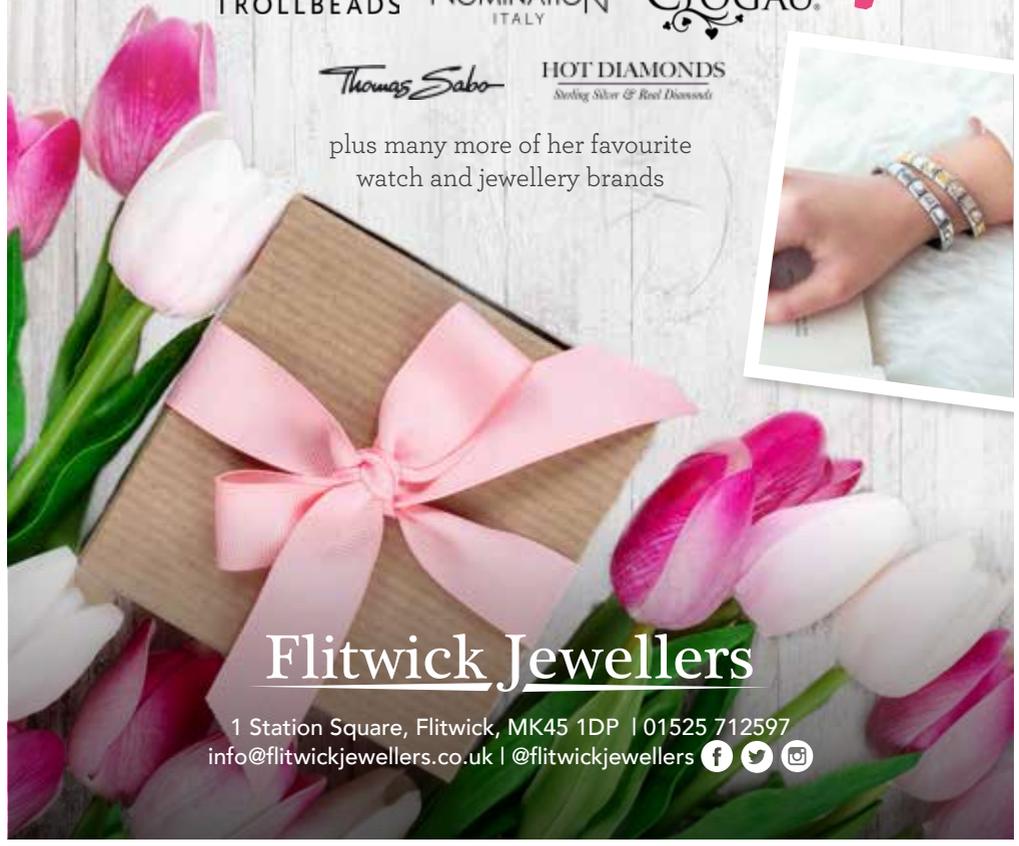
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DO YOU HAVE A WILL?

My name is Mark Tucker. I am an experienced Private Client lawyer, specialising in the writing of Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney. I also offer a Probate/Estate Administration service and I can help you mitigate any Inheritance Tax liabilities and put in place measures to help protect your assets from Long Term Care implications and expensive Probate costs.

From 1981 to 2001 I worked for leading law firms in the Northampton and Milton Keynes areas. But I always wanted to be my own boss so in 2001 I set up my own company: MT Legal Services Ltd.

A Will is one of the most important legal documents you will ever sign. If you die without a valid Will in England or Wales the law can decide who has responsibility for children under 18 and who receives your money and property. But making a Will can be quick and easy when you receive the right guidance. There is no such thing as a standard will. Your Will is personal to your circumstances, your wishes and your assets.

The cost of paying for Long Term Care is of serious concern to many clients. The cost of care is soon to amount to approximately £60,000.00 per year, and the last published figures showed that 70,000 homes each

year are sold to pay for the owner's care. This is an area I specialise in and I can offer you solutions to protect your assets for your future beneficiaries.

For many people, the thought of visiting a lawyer's office to discuss their personal circumstances can be quite daunting. I've always had a very modern approach to the provision of Legal Services, and in this day and age I couldn't see why clients were not given the opportunity of having a far more relaxed and welcoming discussion with a lawyer in the comfort of their own home.

I strive to connect with my clients in a way that extends beyond the normal lawyer/client relationship. I want to be someone they use more than once, and would be happy to refer to their family and friends.

As a way of introducing myself, I am holding some legal surgeries in Ampthill in March. Why not come along and have an informal chat over a cup of tea/coffee and if you think I can help you, we can arrange a time for me to visit you at your home.

Mark Tucker

mark@mtls.co.uk | www.mtls.co.uk



LEGAL SURGERIES

WHEN: Mon 18th Mar & Mon 1st April

WHERE: Heritage Park Chambers,
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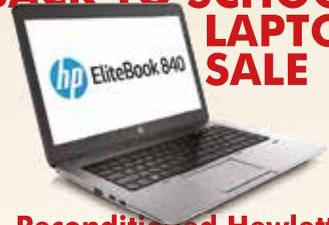
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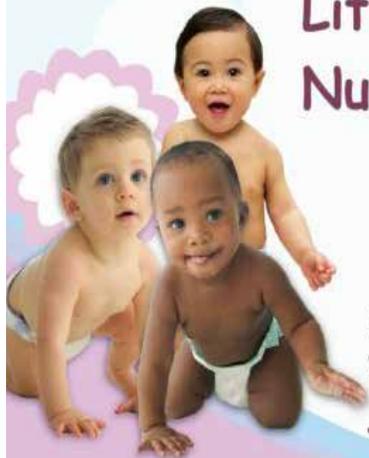
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The Festival runs from 1 – 31 May and will encompass a wide variety of events, provided by our partners, local businesses, special interest groups, clubs and visitor attractions across the landscape.

Greensand Country is an island of distinctive, beautiful and loved countryside, based on a band of higher ground stretching from Leighton Buzzard to Gamlingay, rising out of the surrounding clay vales. It contains all of Bedfordshire's remaining heathland, more than half of its woodland, and more surviving historic parkland than any other landscape in the country, all crossed by networks of cycle tracks and footpaths.

The vision is that by 2020 Greensand Country will become a living and working landscape that will be cherished by present and future generations and we will have reversed the gradual decline in the area's landscape character.

The Festival is a celebration of Greensand Country, helping to encourage those living within this distinct landscape to get out and explore the beautiful countryside on their doorstep. There are a variety of events already scheduled, including open gardens, churchyard tours, history talks, nature walks, village treasure trails, introductory sessions for bowls, photo and poetry competitions, art workshops, children's activities and traditional country crafts.

Lindsay Measures, Events and Engagements Officer at the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership explains: "We were overwhelmed with the fantastic response to our first Greensand Country Festival and have therefore decided to extend the programme this year. With family fun, trail runs, countryside walks, horse-rides, guided trains and nature activities, there really is something for everyone to enjoy."

The Greensand Country Festival is a great opportunity for local organisations and businesses to promote our shared landscape for the benefit of everyone. If you have an idea for an event or would like to run an activity, please contact lindsay@greensandcountry.com

The Greensand Country Landscape Partnership is led by the Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity and the Greensand Trust and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is made possible by National Lottery players. Without them we couldn't fund the project.

For further information about the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership visit www.greensandcountry.com and for regular updates follow @greensandsocial on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

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The Garden Diary

Visiting Gardens

As I'm writing this, the sun is absolutely pouring through the window, and the sky is crystal blue. It's days like this that really make the heart soar! And if that wasn't enough to lift the spirits, how about some suggestions for gardens to visit over the coming few months...

National Gardens Scheme

ngs.org.uk

In March and April there are a few open gardens available to see locally - I find these are a great opportunity to see gardens that aren't always open to the public (they always feel a bit secret to me) and to share ideas, of course!

The Old Rectory - open 7th April

Townsend Farmhouse - open 28th April and 26th May

West Oak - open 28th April

Check the NGS website for details.

Kew Children's Garden, Colchester

If you're looking for something completely new, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is opening its Children's Garden on 16th May. The gardens are huge - the size of 40 tennis courts - and built on the theme of elements that plants need to survive: earth, air, sun and water. Apparently there's also a 4-metre high walkway, not that I'll be volunteering to go on that!

The Beth Chatto Gardens

If you've not visited these gardens, then what have you been waiting for? They really are a

masterclass in planning and planting to make the most of the soil conditions and climate. I'm reading Beth's book 'Shade Garden' at the moment, and it's simply gorgeous. She talks about the medieval tapestry of the Little Grassy Wood, with its pale blue anemones, white and cream narcissi and the nodding purple heads of *Fritillaria meleagris*, drawing gasps of appreciation from visitors in early spring. March is the perfect time to see these flowers in their glory.

Swiss Garden, Shuttleworth

This recently restored Regency-style garden will always have a place in my heart as it's alongside where I studied at Shuttleworth College. There are acres of grounds to stroll around, with lots of intriguing landscape features to keep you interested. On the 31st March they're holding Mothering Sunday garden tours, which could be a great way to treat a certain someone in your life!

I'll leave you with a few words from Beth Chatto OBE VMH. "It is a calm March evening, the air full of bird song... In the blink of an eye we have passed from winter gloom ... to fountains of delicate colour here and there among the largely leafless trees and shrubs."



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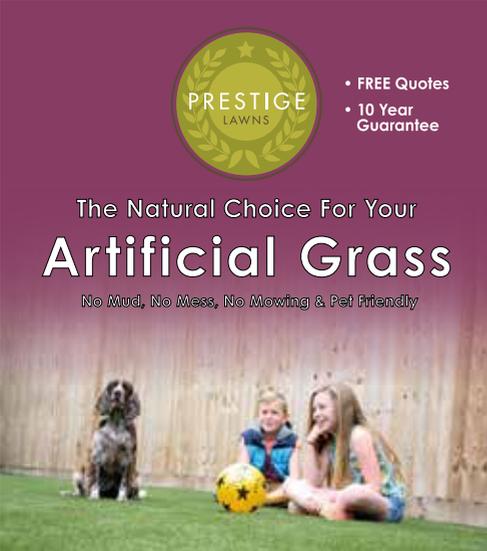
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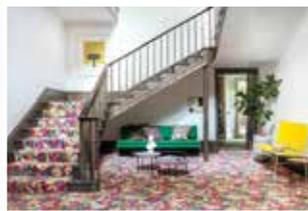
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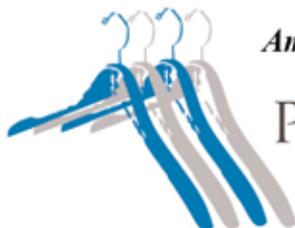
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Peugeot 308SW

After driving a Mitsubishi Eclipse Cross last month, stepping into the Peugeot 308 SW comes as a bit of a shock! The Mitsubishi had a pretty high driving position and the Peugeot is a complete contrast. It's surprisingly low to the ground with a really sporty feel and I love it.

Looking at the car as it sits on the driveway its front side profile could easily be mistaken for a sports coupe. A quick glance and you could be forgiven for thinking it was a Mercedes especially with the wing mirrors folded as they do when it is locked shut. But, this is also a really practical family car. It has a cavernous boot that allows for all the luggage we need to take on a trek to Devon.

The only way to beat the traffic, especially on a bank holiday, is to leave as early as possible. So, feeling like a family of moles, we venture out at 6am and arrive in Paignton for 9am. To my surprise we beat the estimated time by 10 minutes. For a change I really enjoy the journey. There are no traffic jams, few red traffic lights and the lack of traffic means that I can put the Peugeot through its paces. This is a diesel and so the engine does rattle a bit but I love its gutsiness. Slam it into second gear, floor it and it delivers a smile for me ... and a tut from my wife. I like the way the dial on the rev counter shows the engine's progress from right to left; the opposite way to usual.

It corners and holds the road well and is pretty economical. There's auto stop start and a six speed gearbox.

I do have some criticisms: the gearbox is indecisive and while I am waiting for the car in front to move on a steep hill on the edge of Brixham, it stalls. I panic and I can't get it to start again. It's probably driver error, perhaps my foot slipped off the clutch too quickly, I don't know but auto start stop usually sees the engine start again once it has stopped but it doesn't happen on this occasion. I throw my hands up in the air and the van driver behind is thankfully patient. I turn the ignition a couple of times and thankfully the Pug surges back to life. Thank goodness the automatic roll prevention that comes with the electric handbrake works.

Facts at a glance

Peugeot 308 SW

Price: Around £23,000

Engine: 1.5-litre

Power: 129bhp

0 to 60mph: 10.3secs

Top speed: 126mph

Economy: 74mpg

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Let's Cook



Sue Lang owns and runs the Black Cat Farm Shop. She delights in offering locally grown, fresh, seasonal fruit and veg, along with hand-crafted bread, cheese, meat, milk, oil, honey and preserves. She's passionate about supporting local producers and is now sharing her favourite recipes with The Oracle.

Chick Pea and Cavalo Nero Curry

Even in March you can get really good quality, locally grown green vegetables. One of my favourites is Cavalo Nero – a member of the Kale family. This has green stems, and isn't bitter – unlike the black stemmed Russian Kale. The leaves cook much quicker than the stems, so strip the leaves off and shred fairly finely. Good substitutes are Spinach and Curly Kale, and even finely shredded Savoy Cabbage is good – again remove the leaves from the stems.

Like most recipes, this is fairly adaptable, and you can easily add some chunks of cooked chicken breast at the end if you feel the need for some meat.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, finely chopped
- A little oil
- 1-2 tablespoons curry paste (Madras, Rogan Josh or whatever your favourite is)
- 2 tablespoons tomato puree
- 160g mushrooms cut into small pieces
- 400g can chickpeas, including the liquid from the can
- 160g Cavalo Nero (stripped off the stems and leaves chopped - you can also use Spinach, discard the stems)
- 1 teaspoon Garam Masala
- A few coriander leaves (optional)
- 1 tablespoon natural yogurt (optional)

METHOD

1. Fry the onion and garlic in the oil until soft. Add the curry paste, and continue to cook for about a minute, stirring continuously.
2. Add the tomato puree and mushrooms, cook for another couple of minutes. Add the chickpeas and their liquid. Add a little more water if it seems a bit dry.
3. Turn down the heat and cook for about 10 minutes. Add the Cavalo Nero, stir well and cook for another 5-7 minutes.
4. Sprinkle over the coriander and garam masala and stir in the yogurt if you like a creamy curry.
5. Serve immediately. This delicious curry only takes about 20 minutes to prepare and cook - about the same length of time as the rice. You can also serve it with chapattis or naan bread.



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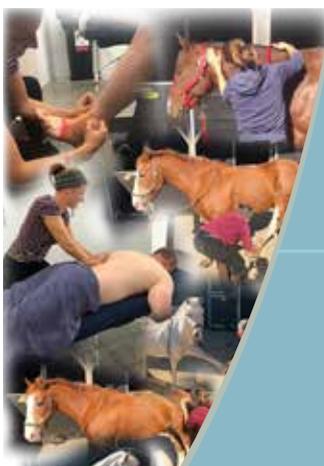


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WHERE TO GO ON HOLIDAY & WHEN

When deciding where to go on holiday it's always important to taken into consideration the ideal time to travel there. Unfortunately, the weather is one thing we cannot completely control but this quick guide can help point you in the right direction!

January – March

This is a great time to visit the Caribbean so many destinations to choose from. Whether you wish to relax and soak in the sunshine in laidback Antigua or party in vibrant Jamaica, there is a Caribbean island to suit. Indian Ocean destinations such as The Maldives and Sri Lanka are ideal to visit for some winter sun. The Maldives offers the picture perfect island getaway, whilst Sri Lanka is a great option to consider for fantastic culture in places such as Sigirya, Colombo and Kandy.

April – June

The Far East is a superb destination of choice during these months. Thailand has plenty to offer from idyllic beaches in Koh Samui, Krabi, Phuket and more, thriving city life in Bangkok, fascinating culture and delicious cuisine. Bali is another great holiday if you are looking for tropical paradise matched with rich heritage and culture. Immerse yourself in the Balinese culture and visit Ubud, home to stunning vistas of natural beauty and temples.

July – September

Europe comes into its own during the summer months, especially along the Mediterranean coast. Destinations such as Sardinia and Sicily in Italy are ideal for short haul getaways with turquoise seas and white sand beaches. For the ultimate tropical island holiday, consider a holiday to the South Pacific Islands. Choose from islands such as Fiji, Cook Islands and French Polynesia and experience exotic surroundings. Hawaii offers all year round sunshine, has an array of amazing beaches and plenty of water sport activities.

October – December

A visit to Dubai during the winter months is best for pleasant and warm weather. Enjoy activities such as dune buggy driving, a trip to the souks for a spot of culture and tax free shopping. If the glitz of Dubai isn't for you it's worth considering some of the other Emirate states, the traditional opulence of Abu Dhabi, the therapeutic springs and fascinating history of Ras Al Khaimah or maybe staying in the magical Arabian Desert!

These holiday ideas are mere suggestions. If you need some inspiration for your next holiday please do not hesitate to contact me.

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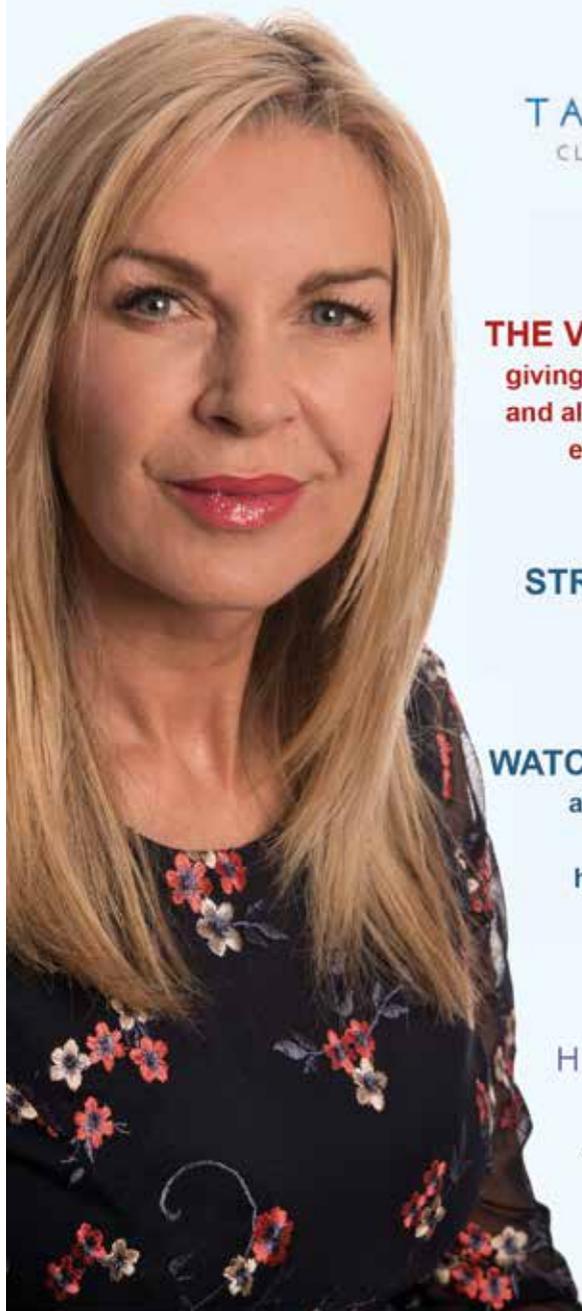
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Facilities

There are 4 floodlit carpet courts, 3 tarmac courts and 1 acrylic court. Members of the club have access to these courts 7 days a week free of charge. There is a large clubhouse with changing facilities, kitchen, bar and lounge. Also within the clubhouse lies Topspin Racquets, a well-stocked Pro shop supplying all your needs for any racquet sport. The club is accessible to all regardless of disability, gender, age, ethnicity, etc, and open year-round with plenty of opportunities to play socially or competitively for both Adults and Juniors.

Coaching and Events

- Adult Club Social Sessions run at various times throughout the week (Tuesday Evening, Saturday Afternoon and Sunday Morning).
- A Junior Social Club Session runs throughout the summer.
- Adults and Juniors can play for the club in teams in the local leagues.
- Several tournaments are run throughout the year for all age ranges.
- Coaching runs on several days of the week for both Adults and Juniors of all levels (members and non-members), and this is organised through Topspin Racquets.
- Junior multi-sport holiday courses are run through Topspin Racquets for members and non-members of the club.
- An excellent social life exists at the club, with many events such as Quiz Nights, Carol Concerts, Cake Sales and Games evenings.

Please come along to one of our Open Days to find out more. We also have information tables at Silsoe Leisure Centre on Thursday 21st March from 3:00pm-6:00pm and Flitwick Leisure Centre on Monday 25th March from 9:30am-11:45am and 4:00pm-6:00pm. Or book onto our Open Day via

<https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/FlitwickAmpthillTennisClub/Events>

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With Anne Bryant

Feeling run down? Tired all the time?

I'm going to let you into a secret. What's the number one way that you can positively influence your wellbeing starting today?

Sleep. Get more of it. And not just the 'fell asleep after four glasses of merlot and a curry' type sleep, but proper, good quality sleep. Good quality sleep makes us more alert, less anxious, improves our cognitive function and even reduces the risk of strokes, heart attacks and diabetes. And did you know that sleep deprivation is so harmful to humans that the Guinness Book of Records now refuses to recognize new attempts to break the sleep deprivation world record?

So why is it so important to get our 7-9 hours of ZZZs each night?

Well the body does most of its repairing when we're asleep. One of the ways it does this is by using a process called autophagy - which literally means 'self-eating'. Special cells called microphages go hunting for bits of old, used-up, dead or diseased cells which they can either recycle to make new cells or excrete from the body. In short, autophagy helps us get rid of toxins and slow the aging process.

But what can you do to improve your quality of sleep and therefore optimise how well this process works?

One easy and effective thing you can do when you go to bed tonight is simply this: switch off your broadband router. I can practically hear the gasps of horror echoing across the county, but hear me out.

As well as being chemical and biological beings, we humans are also electrical systems. And things like Wi-Fi, mobile phone radiation, and electromagnetic fields from electrical appliances can impact the body, disrupting sleep patterns.

You may have heard of the cress experiment carried out by a class in Denmark who were struggling to concentrate on lessons? The cress seeds they grew in a room without Wi-Fi were just fine, but the cress seeds grown in a room with two Wi-Fi routers didn't grow at all.

Perhaps try it for a week and see if you notice the difference in your quality of sleep: when you go to bed, switch your broadband router and any electrical appliances in your bedroom off at the plug, and switch your mobile phone onto airplane mode. Sweet dreams!

For my Top Ten Tips for Refreshing Sleep, visit www.lifesparkcoaching.net/resources/ or scan the QR code below.

Wishing you great wellbeing!





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Tricia's BEAUTY



Vegan MAKE UP

Just as with vegan food, there has been a huge increase in the popularity of vegan makeup products. It may seem as if this is a new fad but vegan makeup has actually been around for years but it's now getting more attention from beauty influencers and social media.

From March 2013 it became illegal to test products on animals and to sell products that have been tested on animals. This does not apply to the rest of the world so make sure that you carefully check labels for the ingredients and that the product carries the Vegan Society logo of the sunflower.

Don't confuse vegan makeup with vegetarian and cruelty free products as these products may not have been tested on animals but may still contain ingredients that are derived from animals. For example beeswax is a natural cruelty free ingredient but it is not vegan as it has originated from a bee.

It may seem like a minefield to try and find products you know are vegan and authentic. There are a number of websites you can visit that will give you the names of the company's and products that are verified to be 100% vegan. For example: www.soilassociation.org, www.paulaschoice.co.uk, www.peta.org/living/personal-care-fashion/these-companies-dont-test-on-animals. These sites also provide a wealth of information and some have links to sites and products that carry the Vegan society trademark logo, making it easy for anyone who wants to use just vegan products.

It's important to know that not all beauty company's products are 100% vegan at present. Their products may all be cruelty free but only some will be vegan, it is important to check the label. If it is not clear, you can simply call them or check their website for details.



The key ingredients to look out for are:

Gelatine or collagen
(made by boiling animal bones or skin)

Keratin
(made by grinding up feathers, hooves, hair of animals)

Carmine or cochineal
(the red pigment used to make shades of red lipstick, nail polish or eye shadow by crushing female cochineal beetles)

Lanololin
(wax that coats sheep's wool to keep dry and protect, used in some creams, lotions, lipsticks)

Snail slime or gel
(pretty much self-explanatory!)



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A Drop of the Black Stuff

Sunday 17th March is St Patrick's Day - a celebration of all things Irish - and people around Ireland and throughout the world will commemorate it with a pint or two of Guinness, Ireland's unofficial national intoxicant, with more than a 25% share of the beer market.



Arthur Guinness founded the brewery that makes the famous drink. Born in 1725 in County Kildare, Arthur inherited £100 at the age of 27 from his godfather, and three years later he set up business as a brewer. In 1759 he signed a 9,000 year lease on a disused brewery in St James Gate, Dublin where he began brewing porter and ale.

Porter is a dark, well-hopped beer made from brown malt. Its history is closely intertwined with that of stout, a term which originally referred to a beer's strength but which now refers to the drink's body and colour.

Today's Guinness is a dry stout available in a number of variants and strengths, including Guinness Draught, Guinness Original/ Extra Stout, Guinness Foreign Extra Stout, Guinness Special Export Stout and Guinness Bitter. It is nicknamed 'the black stuff' on account of its dark colour, although it is actually a very dark shade of ruby!

Now brewed in 60 countries and available in over 120, the first Guinness export was to England in 1769, and by 1824 it had become

a worldwide brand. Sales soared from 350,000 barrels in 1868 to over a million eighteen years later. However, by the 1970s sales were in decline and the company decided to make Guinness Extra Stout 'more

drinkable', resulting in a brand re-launch in 1981 with pale malt being used for the first time.

Contemporary Guinness Draught and Extra Light Stout are weaker than their 19th Century counterpart, with Foreign Extra Stout and Special Export being closer to the original in character. Modern Guinness has a burnt flavour and is famous for its smoothness and thick, creamy head.

The production of Guinness continues to change with the times. In November last year the company announced plans to make their beer suitable for vegetarians and vegans by the end of 2016, through the introduction of a new filtration process that will avoid the need to use isinglass from fish bladders.

Claims have been made in the past that Guinness can benefit the heart by helping to prevent harmful deposit build-up on artery walls. It has also been described as a 'meal in a glass', and at 198 calories per pint, has slightly fewer calories than skimmed milk, orange juice and most other light beers.

So, I wish you a happy St Patrick's Day, filled with friends, fun, smiles and a drop of the black stuff.

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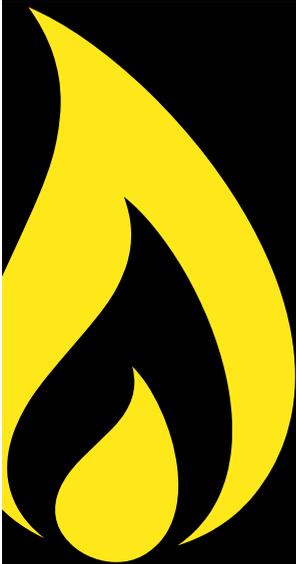
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The society was founded in 1995 by 8 local villagers and over the years expanded to 30 members. At present we have on average 25 members per meeting, so we have vacancies for newcomers. The evenings consist of a basic demonstration with a hands-on approach so it is possible to gain experience and also produce a piece of art.

Mid-summer we have outdoor painting sessions so that we can capture the vibrance that daylight brings to a painting and in 2019 we plan to try sketching from a boat on the River Ouse. Another highlight is

our "Big Paint" where we enlarge a painting by a well know artist and divide it into equal sections for members to copy, then the sections are joined together like a jigsaw to give a larger than life reproduction.

We meet on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of every month from 7.30pm to 9.30pm at Houghton Conquest Village Hall. We also hold Saturday workshops with guest demonstrators, usually from 10am to 4pm. Annual Individual Membership is £20, £35 for a married couple and £10 for a Junior.

Every year in May we hold an Art Exhibition in the village hall where work is put on display for sale. The Tea Room at this event serves refreshments so why not visit us, try some homemade cake and a cuppa after browsing the display! This year's date is Sunday 5th May.

We are friendly group anxious to welcome, help and advise fellow artists:

Full details and dates of our programme and events are on our website www.houghton-conquest-art-society.co.uk where you will also find details of who to contact to get involved or find out more information.

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Houghton Conquest Art Society**

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Fri 8 Mar 10 am	Walk 4 Health. 75 min friendly, led walk. About 3 miles. Free.	The Compasses Greenfield	Lynda 01234 740788
Sat 9 Mar 2-4pm	Pilates for lower back pain at Akarmalife Studio.	4a Church Street Amphill	www.akarmalife.com
Sat 9 Mar 9am-1pm	Farmers' Market Free parking.	High Street Shefford	Paul 07807 219044
Sat 9 Mar 2.30pm	Vauxhall Male Voice Choir concert. Tickets £10 on door. Refreshments.	Parkside Hall Amphill	Ken Jones 01525 753110
Sun 10 Mar 10-4.30pm	Meditation Urban Day Retreat at Akarmalife Studio	4a Church Street Amphill	www.akarmalife.com
Thu 14 Mar 7.45pm	Mid Beds Flower Club demonstration by Doug Howard. Visitors welcome. £8.	Village Hall Flitwick	Marion Tucker 01234 742396
Sun 17 Mar 11.30-2pm	Wedding Showcase. Free entry. Pre register for welcome bag.	Rufus Centre Flitwick	01525 631900
Tues 19 Mar 2.30pm	Bedford National Trust Assoc. Presentation by poet John Greening.	Addison Centre	Betty Thomas 01480 860421
Thu 21 Mar 7.30pm	Bedford RSPB presentation on Rebirthing; Restoring our birds & rewilding landscape	ARA Club, Manton Lane, Bedford MK41	www.rspb.org.uk/groups/bedford
Fri 22 Mar 7.30pm	Amphill Town Cricket Club : evening of darts with Peter Manley. £15 incl food.	Parkside Hall Amphill	Ian Smith 07880 850269
Sat 23 Mar 2-3.15pm	NCT Nearly New Sale. Baby & children's clothes, toys, equipment etc.	Village Hall Flitwick	midbedsnctnns@hotmail.co.uk
Sun 31 Mar 9am-3pm	Antiques and Collectables Fair.	Parkside Hall Amphill	www.parksidehall.org.uk
Sun 31 Mar 10.30-4pm	Summerfields Miniature Railways.	A600 btwn Bedford & Shefford at Haynes	www.bedfordmes.co.uk
4-6 Apr 7.30pm	Westoning Players present Agatha Crusty & the Health Spa Murders. Tickets £10	Village Hall Westoning	Box Office 01525 719695
Fri 5 Apr 7.30pm	Rod Stewart Tribute Night. Tickets £18. Profits to Town Mayor's charities.	Rufus Centre Flitwick	01525 631900

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Four local swimmers led by Greenfield resident, Neil Marshall, have formed Team TAZ to take part in this year's charity Swimathon. Last year they came 17th out of 500 teams nationally and this year they are looking to do even better and raise even more money.

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