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Publisher The Warfield Word Ltd

Printer Norwood Press

This publication has been printed using eco-friendly inks, on paper from responsible sources.



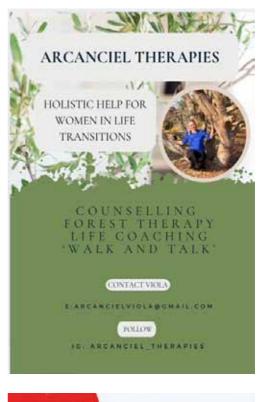


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Welcome to the June update from Warfield Parish Council

Warfield Village Fete

The Warfield Village Fete is taking place on **Saturday 14 June** from midday until 4 p.m. There will be plenty of fun for all the family including rides, bouncy castle, raffles, children's farm and much more. The event is all organised by volunteers and the money raised is donated to local charities so please go along and show your support.



Councillor Surgery

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	Saturday 28 June	
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Councillor surgery is on **Saturday 28**

June at Brownlow Hall 10am – 12

midday. Councillors will be here to help with any concerns you may have regarding the parish.

Warfield & Winkfield Family Cycle Ride

The Warfield & Winkfield Family Cycle Ride will be taking place on the morning of **Sunday 29 June**. Look out for more information on taking part on our website in the coming weeks. Please note that pre-registration is required to enter this year.

Contact the Parish Council

The Parish Office is located at the Brownlow Hall and is open Monday-Friday 9.30am -12.30pm.

If you need to contact us out of opening hours, please call us on

01344 457777 and leave a message or e-mail **info@warfieldparishcouncil.gov.uk**. You can also use these contact details if you wish to reach your local councillor.





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References Available

If you're dealing with back pain or musculoskeletal issues, you may be considering visiting an osteopath or a chiropractor. While both professions aim to improve physical function and reduce pain, there are key differences-and similarities-worth knowing.

Similarities - Both osteopaths and chiropractors are trained to assess. diagnose, and treat problems affecting the muscles, joints, and spine. They use hands -on techniques like manipulation and mobilisation to improve mobility and ease discomfort. Many also offer lifestyle advice, stretching routines, and posture correction as part of a broader treatment plan.

Differences - Chiropractors often focus on spinal alignment, using specific adjustments-particularly to the spine-to influence the nervous system and overall health. They may use X-rays more regularly and often follow a model based on regular, ongoing adjustments.

the Difference



Osteopaths typically take a more holistic approach, considering the body's structure and function as a whole. They tend to use a broader range of handson techniques, such as soft tissue massage, stretching, and joint manipulation, to address a

wider range of musculoskeletal complaints.

Finding a Qualified Practitioner - In the UK, both osteopaths and chiropractors must be registered with their respective governing bodies: the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) for osteopaths and the General Chiropractic Council (GCC) for chiropractors. These registers ensure practitioners meet professional standards and complete regular continuing education.

Before booking, check the practitioner is registered, and feel free to ask about their approach to treatment. It's important to choose someone whose style and philosophy align with your health needs.

By Louise Addison

Warfield Environment Group

The Year So Far

2025 has been busy. We have:

- Pruned, weeded and mulched the community orchards at Edmunds Green and Warfield Chase,
- Sampled water quality in 3 locations for the Thames21 road run-off citizen science project,
- Removed many more tree guards at Frost Folly to prevent the spread of plastic shards across the site,
- Picked up 10 sacks of litter at our annual Great British Spring Clean community litter pick at Larks Hill,
- Picked up another 2¼ sacks of litter with the help of the 2nd Bracknell Beavers around Whitegrove,
- Held another well-attended newt survey at the Newt Reserve where we recorded 16 smooth newts but sadly no great crested newts this year,
- Taken part in the TVERC City Nature Challenge for Berkshire, where our volunteers contributed to the 1165 wildlife observations made, and
- Tested water quality in 5 locations along the Bull Brook and The Cut for the Earthwatch Great UK WaterBlitz. (unsurprisingly the results mostly identified our local waterways as of 'poor ecological status').

Coming soon

- Surveys of our wildlife verges along Harvest Ride,
- Bat field and waterways surveys, and
- Himalayan balsam bashing. We're in the early stages of planning to remove an area of this invasive species and will publish event details as soon as possible.

Please do get in touch if you would like to join us for any of our surveys.



warfieldenvgroup.wordpress.com warfieldenvironmentgroup@hotmail.com Warfield Environment Group













Join our mailing list for the latest information on upcoming events



Why Wimbledon's Surface is the Ultimate Test for Tennis Players

Wimbledon is the crown jewel of the tennis calendar with its long and glorious history, strict traditions, and celebrity spectators. It's also known for presenting players with one of the sport's most unique and demanding surfaces: grass. Unlike clay or hard courts, grass courts offer a fastpaced, low-bounce game that demands quick reflexes, precision, and adaptability. For some players, it's a dream: for others, a nightmare.

The primary challenge of grass lies in its unpredictability. Fresh grass is slick and causes the ball to skid and bounce lower than on any other surface. This can throw off a player's timing, particularly baseline players, who prefer long rallies and high bounces. On grass, hesitation is costly. The margins are slimmer, and reactions need to be sharper. Games are shorter, and there's less time to recover.

The environment naturally favours aggressive, attacking players - especially those with a strong serve-and-volley game. A big serve is even more potent on grass, often resulting in aces or weak returns that can be finished at the net. Historically, this has been the domain of Players who move well and can maintain balance during fast exchanges have the edge. The ability to stay low and adjust quickly is essential, and those who struggle with foot speed or stability will find themselves at a disadvantage.

Players who dominate on clay - like Rafael Nadal in his early career - have to adapt significantly to succeed at Wimbledon. Clay allows for long, grinding rallies and favours heavy topspin, which grass tends to neutralise. However, Nadal's evolution as a more complete, all-surface player is a testament to his desire to win on the green stage.

Modern tennis has seen a blending of styles, and adaptability is now king. Players who can blend power with finesse, aggression with defence, and can do so quickly, tend to thrive.

In many ways, Wimbledon's grass courts act as the sport's great equalizer. They reward boldness and punish hesitation. To win here is to conquer not only your opponent, but the nature of the game itself.

By Amelia Palmer-Jackson

legends like Pete Sampras, Boris Becker, and, more recently, Roger Federer players who mastered quick points and the ability to control the tempo of a match.

Footwork also plays a pivotal role. Grass can be slippery, particularly in the first week of Wimbledon when the turf is lush and untouched.



A Walk Through Time

Explore the UK's Historic Trails This Summer



own. It's a gentler walk, both in terrain and tone, but rich in atmosphere and meaning.

For those drawn to prehistoric mystery, the Ridgeway is Britain's oldest road, in use for over 5,000 years. Running from Wiltshire to the Chiltern Hills, it passes Iron Age forts, Neolithic burial mounds, and the awe-inspiring stone circle at Avebury. There's a real sense of walking in the footsteps of ancient peoples whose beliefs and traditions still whisper through the landscape.

There's something uniquely powerful about walking where thousands have walked before you - along tracks worn by Roman legions, medieval pilgrims, or ancient Britons. The UK is criss-crossed with footpaths steeped in history, offering walkers the chance to immerse themselves not just in nature, but in the stories of the land.

One of the most iconic historic walks is Hadrian's Wall Path, an 84-mile National Trail that follows the route of the Roman wall built in AD 122 to mark the northern boundary of the Roman Empire. Stretching from Wallsend on the River Tyne to Bowness-on-Solway on the Irish Sea, the route offers a dramatic blend of windswept moors, rolling farmland, and incredible archaeological remains. Along the way, walkers can explore Roman forts like Housesteads and Vindolanda, where centuries-old artefacts continue to emerge from the soil.

In the south, The Pilgrims' Way offers a spiritual journey through England's pastoral heart. This ancient route, once used by pilgrims travelling to the shrine of Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral, overlaps with the North Downs Way. It passes through chalk hills, beech woodlands, and centuries-old villages, each with a church, inn, or legend of its To make the most of these journeys, preparation is key. While many of the UK's trails are well-signposted, a good Ordnance Survey map and compass—or a reliable GPS hiking app—can be invaluable, especially in more remote areas like Northumberland or the South Downs.

Footwear is arguably the most important choice: opt for well-broken-in hiking boots with good ankle support and grip, particularly on uneven Roman roads or muddy footpaths. Lightweight, weatherproof clothing is also essential the British weather is nothing if not unpredictable.

Depending on the length of your walk, pack energy-rich snacks, a refillable water bottle, a basic first aid kit, and a power bank for your phone. For longer treks like Hadrian's Wall or the Ridgeway, a comfortable daypack, blister plasters, and even trekking poles can make all the difference.

Historic walking in the UK is more than just exercise - it's an experience that blends landscape with legacy. Whether you're tracing the Roman frontier, following a pilgrim's path, or walking among ancient stones, each step brings you closer to the lives, struggles, and stories of our ancestors.

By Tracey Anderson



Perfect for afternoon tea

Ingredients

For the hazeInut shortbread:

4 oz (110 g) hazelnuts

5 oz (150 g) softened butter

2½ oz (60 g) unrefined golden icing sugar, plus extra to serve

2½ oz (60 g) rice flour, sifted (or use dried semolina)

5 oz (150 g) plain flour, sifted, plus a little extra for rolling out

For the strawberry purée:

8 oz (225 g) fresh strawberries, hulled 1 level tablespoon golden caster sugar

For the strawberry filling:

1 lb (450 g) fresh strawberries, hulled, reserving 8 for decoration

7 fl oz (200 ml) crème fraîche

5 fl oz (150 ml) fresh custard

2 drops vanilla extract

Method

Toast the hazelnuts by spreading them out on a baking tray and placing them in the oven for 5 minutes. Use a timer so they don't burn.

When cool, grind them to a sand-like consistency in a blender, or chop finely, pop them in a polyethene bag and crush them as finely as possible with a rolling pin.

Cream the butter and icing sugar together in a large bowl until light and fluffy, then gradually beat in the sifted flours or semolina, followed by the ground hazeInuts.



Bring the mixture together to make a dough. Place this in a polythene food bag and leave it in the fridge to rest for about 30 minutes. Then roll it out on a lightly floured surface to a thickness

of about 5 mm (1/4 inch).

Use a 9cm cutter to make 16 rounds of shortbread dough.

Arrange the biscuits on the baking trays and lightly prick each one with a fork. Bake for 10-12 minutes. Remove them from the oven and leave to cool on the trays for 10 minutes before removing them to a wire rack to cool completely.

Place the puree fruit in a bowl, sprinkle them with the sugar and leave for 30 minutes. After that, purée them in the food processor, then press them through a nylon sieve to remove the seeds.

Cover and set aside.

Whisk the crème fraîche in a mixing bowl with an electric hand whisk until it becomes stiff, then add the custard and vanilla extract and whisk again until thick.

Cover the mixture and chill until just before serving.

Reserve 8 strawberries for decoration. Roughly chop or slice the remainder. Spread equal quantities of the cream mixture over the biscuits, then arrange the strawberry pieces on top of eight. Spoon some purée over each one, then sandwich with the remaining creamcovered rounds.

Now place a reserved strawberry on top of each one and finish off with a light dusting of icing sugar.

SUN SAFETY ESSENTIALS

Best practice for maximum protection.

Choosing the right suntan lotion and applying it correctly are key to sun safety. Sunscreen helps prevent painful sunburns and protects against longterm damage caused by harmful UV rays.



Look for a broad-spectrum

sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Opt for a *minimum* sun protection factor (SPF) of 30. Additionally, consider sunscreens that are waterresistant, especially if you plan to swim or engage in water activities. Sunscreens with physical blockers like zinc oxide or titanium dioxide provide an added layer of protection.

Apply sunscreen **generously** to all exposed areas of skin, including the face, neck, ears, arms, and legs. Don't forget often-missed areas like the back of the neck, tops of the feet, and ears. Pay attention to the lips and use a lip balm with SPF. Apply sunscreen at least 15-30 minutes before going outside to allow it to fully absorb into the skin. For an average sized body aim to use the equivalent of a full shot glass of lotion.

Remember to reapply sunscreen every two hours, or more frequently if you are sweating or swimming. Even water-resistant sunscreens will wash off and become less effective over time, so be diligent about reapplication. Set reminders or use a timer to ensure you don't forget to reapply, especially during extended periods of sun exposure.

Consider using UV protective clothing for added sun safety. These garments are specifically designed to block harmful UV rays and provide an extra layer of defence. Look for clothing with a UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) rating. The higher the UPF rating, the better the protection. Wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses with UV protection, and UV-blocking swimwear are also excellent additions to your sun safety arsenal.

Whenever possible, seek shade during the peak sun hours between 10 am and 4 pm when UV rays are the strongest. If you need to be outside during these hours, use extra caution and ensure you have proper sun protection in place. Plan outdoor activities for the early morning or late afternoon.

Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water.

Prioritizing sun safety ensures that you can enjoy the outdoors while keeping your skin healthy and protected.

By Tom Hancock

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Sudoku

How to Play

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9, *with no repetition*!

That's all there is to it.

You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic - there's no maths involved and no adding up.

It's fun. It's challenging. It's addictive!

(solution on page 18)



The 3 Counties Cycle Ride is back! Reserve the date - Sunday 8 June 2025. This year's 3CCR will again start and finish at Garth Hill College in Bracknell, and offers the usual choice of three routes. The 15, 34 and 52-mile routes are signposted, with both the longer routes offering friendly marshals and drink stations along the way.

One important innovation this year is that **you** can choose to ride for **your favourite charity**, and every penny of your sponsorship money goes directly to your nominated charity. Our volunteer marshals will receive money for their own nominated charities, and any residual funds from our 2025 3CCR will support Garth Hill College PTFA projects.

More great news, the enrolment fees are unchanged from our last 3CCR and we're again offering an **Early Bird discount**. If you're 18 or over and register on-line in February, take advantage of the 20% discount. There's also a 10% discount for March registrations, or register on the day for £25.

And all under 18s ride for just £1, whether they register on-line or on the day!

Also on the day, every rider can enjoy a bottle of water and a mars bar thanks to Tesco Superstores at Warfield and Martins Heron, and Fraser Budgens at Three Mile Cross. And every 3CCR rider receives a certificate and a medal for taking part.

For full details, maps and photos of previous 3 Counties Cycle Rides go to <u>www.3ccr.org</u> And you can register on-line for this year's 3CCR from 1 February.

To follow us on Facebook, go to https://www.facebook.com/ThreeCountiesCycleRide/

The first 3 Counties Cycle Ride was way back in 1983, and over the following four decades, our riders have raised close to £1 million for local charities. And they've done it riding tandem bikes, trailer bikes and even penny farthings ... and we're looking forward to our pedalling panda joining us again this year!

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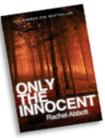


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A Good Read

Only The Innocent by Rachel Abbott

Rachel Abbott is a consummate storyteller

with a knack for peeling away the perfect facades her characters present to the world. Only the Innocent is a gripping psychological thriller that delves into the complexities of guilt, innocence, and the dark secrets people try to bury. The story centres around the mysterious death of a young woman, found murdered in her home, seemingly without a trace of the killer. The case is handed to Detective Tom Douglas, a seasoned investigator with a keen eye for details and a deep commitment to finding the truth.

As Tom digs deeper, he uncovers a web of lies surrounding the victim, who led a seemingly perfect life. Friends, family, and colleagues all claim innocence, but each of them harbours a hidden truth. Among them is Olivia, a woman whose past is tightly linked to the victim's. She becomes embroiled in the investigation, though her own secrets raise suspicions about her involvement in the murder.

The story twists and turns as Tom navigates a maze of false leads and buried emotions, all while questioning whether he can trust anyone, including those closest to him. As the investigation reaches its peak, startling revelations about the victim and the suspects begin to surface, leaving Tom (and the reader) wondering if anyone is truly innocent.

Tom is no maverick detective. His team are a dedicated and tight-knit group. The details of police procedures offer a fascinating insight into how good policing works, but they never get in the way of the plot. If you fall in love with Tom and his team you're in for a treat because there are ten more books after this one; each as intricately plotted as the last.

Murder Most Unladylike by Robin Stevens

This the first book in the captivating *Murder Most Unladylike* series, blending mystery, friendship, and adventure in a delightful setting. The story follows two schoolmates, Daisy Wells and Hazel Wong, who attend Deepdean School for Girls in 1934 England. Daisy, the fearless and clever leader, and Hazel, her thoughtful and observant companion, form the Wells & Wong Detective Society, determined to solve any mystery that comes their way.

When the school's gym teacher, Miss Bell, is found dead under suspicious circumstances, Daisy and Hazel take it upon themselves to investigate, despite the potential danger of going against the grown-ups' advice. The girls quickly discover that Miss Bell's death is not an accident—it's murder. But the more they investigate, the more secrets about their school and its staff begin to surface, and the deeper they find themselves entangled in a web of mystery.

As the duo navigates the clues, they must rely on their wits, bravery, and unshakeable friendship to uncover the truth. Along the way, they learn that not everything is as it seems, and that even in

the safest of places, danger can lurk just around the corner.

Murder Most Unladylike is a fast-paced mystery that will have young readers hooked from the first page to the thrilling final reveal.



By Tash Donovan



Elegance, Fashion, and Fascination

Royal Ascot, one of the most prestigious events in the British social calendar, is known not just for the horse races, but also for its association with fashion. While the event spans five days, Ladies' Day — held on the Thursday of the



meeting — is the one for fashionistas, with glamorous outfits, and extravagant hats on display. The day draws in celebrities, socialites, and fashion enthusiasts from across the globe.

Royal Ascot dates back to 1711 when Queen Anne founded the racecourse. However, it wasn't until the 19th century that Ladies' Day became an integral part of the event. Queen Victoria's love of fashion and societal expectations dictated that women cover their heads in public. Even today the Ascot dress code specifies that women must wear a formal hat, though fascinators are allowed, as long as they adhere to standards of elegance. Over time, hat-wearing has evolved into a full-blown spectacle, and they have become the defining feature of any ensemble.

They say that if you want to get ahead, get a hat, and there have been many celebrity titfer wearers at Ascot over the years but one of the most famous and adored was Gertrude Shilling, mother of David Shilling the fashion designer, famous for his flamboyant millinery.

David was just 12 when he first designed a hat for her. It was over a metre wide with layers of black and white tulle, and it caused a sensation when she wore it to Ascot in 1966. It is said to have stunned the rather staid folk in the enclosure and even made the front page of the evening papers.

Every year that followed David encouraged his mother to dazzle Ascot with his extravagant creations. Until well into her eighties she sported her son's towering designs

with her cheeky trademark confidence. Highlights included a 1.5m tall giraffe design, an enormous daisy hat, and a huge apple pierced by an arrow. The hats often reflected current events. Gertrude once wore a large football in honour of the football World Cup, and she donned a television for the launch of breakfast TV.

Following Shilling's example in the 1960s many women began to push the boundaries of fashion, opting for larger, bolder, and ever more flamboyant headwear. Today, Ladies' Day is an event where the best of British fashion, creativity, and sometimes controversy, share equal billing with the races.

Highlights from 2024 included a 'Hedwig' hat, with a large white stuffed owl perched on top, a towering red hat made of oversized glittery poppies, a 'Sakura' cherry blossom hat, and a playful number covered in tiny 'My Little Pony' unicorns. In 2012 there were many Olympic-themed hats, but other sporting events also provide inspiration. For UEFA Euro 2004 one woman appeared to be wearing a full in-play Subbuteo game on her head!

Ladies' Day is so much more than a day of horse racing. It is a celebration of all things millinery: the glamorous, the ornate, and the downright barmy, all solidify Ascot's reputation as one of the most fashion forward events in the world.

By Sarah Davey



The smack of leather on willow is the quintessential sound of a British summer. The bright red cricket ball is almost iconic, but its design and construction have undergone significant changes over the course of history.

The earliest cricket balls were made of leather, stuffed with rags. They were heavy, hard to hit, and needed to be replaced after a few overs. In the 18th century, the cork cores were introduced. These were wound tightly with string before they were covered in leather. This went a long way towards improving durability and bounce.

Until the mid-19th century, there was a lot of variation in ball size. It was decided to standardise the balls and the size was fixed at 9 inches (22.86cm) in circumference, with a weight of 5.5 ounces (156g). The ball was also required to be round, smooth, and covered with leather.

In the early 20th century, the introduction of machine stitching improved the quality and consistency of cricket balls. The stitching created a more uniform seam, which made the ball easier to grip and allowed bowlers to impart more spin. The use of machine stitching also made the ball more durable, which reduced the need for frequent replacements. Bowlers began to use the seams on cricket balls to achieve different types of movement in the air and when bounced off the pitch, leading to the development of seam and spin bowling.

During the 1960s, the introduction of synthetic materials such as PVC and polyurethane led to the development of the plastic cricket ball. These balls were lighter and more durable than traditional leather balls, but they were mostly rejected by the cricketing community, and their use was eventually banned by the International Cricket Council (ICC) in 2000 for having a negative impact on the game.

Today, cricket balls come in a variety of

type for different formats of the game. For example, red balls are used in test cricket, while white balls are used in one-day international (ODI) matches and pink balls are used in day-night test matches.

The evolution of the cricket ball has been driven by a desire to improve the game, and its design and construction continue to be refined to meet the needs of modern cricket.



Seam Bowling - When a bowler holds the ball with the seam facing towards them, it is known as seam bowling. This technique is used to achieve lateral movement in the air or off the pitch. By angling the seam towards the batsman, the bowler can make the ball swing towards the batsman or away from them. This movement can make it difficult for the batsman to judge the ball's trajectory and can lead to wickets being taken.

Finger Spin and Wrist Spin Bowling -In finger spin, the bowler holds the ball with their fingers, with the seam running perpendicular to their fingers. By rotating the ball with their fingers, the bowler creates spin causing the ball to turn in the air or off the pitch. Wrist spin is a similar technique, but the bowler releases the ball with a flick of the wrist, which adds extra spin to the ball.

By Tom Hancock

More Than Music

The Enduring Magic of Glastonbury Festival

From Wednesday 25th – Sunday 29th June, the quiet fields of Worthy Farm in Somerset will be transformed into something extraordinary: a sprawling, kaleidoscopic world where music, art, activism, and counterculture



collide. The Glastonbury Festival isn't just a music event - it's a rite of passage, a cultural institution, and for many, a pilgrimage. With its roots in the 1970s hippie movement and its heart still firmly tied to values of community and expression, Glastonbury has grown into the world's most iconic festival. But what exactly sets it apart from the rest? Glastonbury's story begins in 1970, when dairy farmer Michael Eavis hosted the first event, inspired by a nearby open-air Led Zeppelin gig. For £1 (that's £13.50 in today's money), attendees were treated to performances by Marc Bolan and free milk from the farm's cows. From these humble beginnings, the festival has grown into a massive five-day celebration of contemporary performing arts, drawing over 200,000 attendees and showcasing everything from world-famous headliners to circus performers, poets, and political speakers.

At the heart of Glastonbury is its atmosphere -an intoxicating mix of hedonism, creativity, and openmindedness. It's the kind of place where you can dance to a secret sunrise DJ set in the woods, listen to a talk on climate activism, take part in a yoga class, and then catch an historic Pyramid Stage headline act, all in a single day. Unlike many festivals focused solely on lineups and brand sponsorships, Glastonbury feels like a living, breathing community with its own ethos and soul.

Part of what makes the atmosphere so unique is its sheer scale and diversity. While the Pyramid Stage might grab headlines, some

of Glastonbury's richest experiences lie away from the spotlight - in the immersive wonderland of Shangri-La, the tranquil Healing Fields, or the radical activism of Left Field. It's this multi-dimensional nature that allows festivalgoers to curate their own experience, from wild partying to introspective escape.

Glastonbury is also deeply intertwined with social and environmental causes. It has long supported campaigns for Greenpeace, Oxfam, and WaterAid, and places a strong emphasis on sustainability - encouraging attendees to reduce waste, go plastic-free, and respect the land. In an era of increasingly commercialized festivals, Glastonbury stands out by staying true to its activist roots.

And then there are the special moments career-defining performances by legends like David Bowie, Radiohead, Beyoncé, and Stormzy - that become etched in music history. These sets often transcend entertainment, becoming cultural milestones that reflect broader societal shifts.

Glastonbury isn't just about who's playing - it's about the experience, the ideals, and the sense of belonging. It's a place where, for five days, reality is suspended and something deeper takes hold: a shared belief in the power of art, community, and the possibility of a better world.

By Asma Bakir

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Sudoku Solution

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

Garden View

This month - Create a pollinator friendly garden

As our gardens burst into life this month, so too do the essential workers of the natural world – the pollinators. Bees, butterflies, hoverflies, and even some beetles and birds play a vital role in maintaining healthy ecosystems and ensuring our food crops thrive. Without them, many of the fruits, vegetables, and flowers we love would cease to exist.

But pollinators are under threat. Habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change have all contributed

to a worrying decline in their numbers. The good news is that we gardeners can make a real difference. By creating pollinator-friendly spaces, we support wildlife and also enjoy more vibrant, biodiverse, and resilient gardens.

Start with Nectar-Rich Plants. One of the most effective ways to attract pollinators is by planting flowers rich in nectar and pollen. Bees and butterflies are drawn to brightly coloured, open-faced blooms that are easy to access. In June, classic choices like lavender, catmint (Nepeta), foxgloves, alliums, and single dahlias are excellent options. For continuous feeding, aim to stagger blooms from early spring to late autumn. Start with crocuses and primroses in spring, then echinacea and verbena bonariensis in summer, followed by Michaelmas daisies and sedum in the autumn.

Include single-flowered varieties instead of (or as well as) doubles, which may look impressive but often lack accessible nectar. Herbs like thyme, oregano, marjoram, and borage do double duty delicious in the kitchen and brilliant for bees.



Create a Wildflower Patch. Even a small corner of our darden can be transformed into a haven with a wildflower patch. Native wildflowers are perfectly suited to local pollinators and usually require less care than cultivated plants. A wildflower mix containing cornflowers, poppies, oxeye daisies, and red clover can be sown on bare soil or incorporated into a lawn. These not only attract a wide range of insects but add natural charm to an outdoor space.

Letting parts of your lawn grow long or reducing mowing frequency is another easy win. Long grass provides shelter for insects and allows naturally occurring wild plants like clover and buttercups to bloom.

Embrace Wildlife-Friendly Gardening. Beyond planting, there are simple techniques that make a big impact. Avoid pesticides and herbicides, which can harm pollinators directly or deplete their food sources. Choose organic or natural alternatives where possible.

Provide shelter and water by leaving a pile of logs or twigs for insects to hide in and hang up a bee hotel. Provide a shallow dish of water with stones for insects to land on to offer crucial hydration during hot spells.

By turning our gardens into mini sanctuaries for pollinators, we play an active role in protecting biodiversity. And in return, we will enjoy a garden buzzing with life - more flowers, more fruit, and the joyful hum of nature in balance.

Happy gardening,

By Rachael Leverton

Five Delicious Marinades to Elevate Your BBQ Game



A great marinade can transform your barbecue from basic to brilliant. infusing meat, fish, or vegetables with bold flavours and tender

juiciness. Here are five standout marinades to try this summer:

Classic Garlic & Herb

Perfect for chicken or lamb.

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tbsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and pepper

Sweet & Smoky BBQ

Ideal for ribs, wings, or burgers.

- 4 tbsp tomato ketchup
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tbsp smoked paprika
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp cider vinegar

1 tsp mustard powder

Asian-Inspired Soy & Ginger

Great with beef, salmon, or tofu.

- 3 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 garlic clove, grated
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
- Juice of 1/2 lime

Spicy Harissa & Yogurt

Perfect for chicken thighs or halloumi.

- 3 tbsp natural yogurt
- 1 tbsp harissa paste
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- Pinch of cumin

Mediterranean Balsamic & Basil

Ideal for vegetables or pork.

- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 1 garlic clove, mince
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh basil
- Salt and pepper

Marinate for at least an hour-longer for deeper flavour-and get grilling!

By Sarah Davey

Stay Safe This Summer

Essential BBQ Safety Tips

Barbecues are a beloved part of summer, but a fun afternoon can quickly turn dangerous without the right precautions. Whether you're firing up a gas grill in the garden or using a disposable BBQ in the park, here are key safety tips to keep in mind.

Lighting a BBQ - Always read the manufacturer's instructions. For charcoal BBQs, use firelighters or a chimney starter-never petrol or paraffin. Let flames die down and coals turn white before cooking. With gas BBQs, check connections for leaks and light with the lid open to avoid gas buildup.

Food Hygiene - Prevent food poisoning by following proper hygiene. Keep raw meat separate from cooked foods and use separate utensils and chopping boards. Cook meat thoroughly - especially chicken, sausages, and burgers - until juices run clear and no pink remains. Keep cold items chilled until needed and don't leave food sitting out in the sun.

Portable and Disposable BBQs - If using a portable or disposable BBQ in public spaces, place it on a flat, nonflammable surface away from grass, wooden

benches, or tents. Never leave it unattended, and ensure it's completely cooled before disposal. In some areas of the country there is a ban on portable and disposable BBQs so check local rules before you light up.

Other Precautions - Keep a bucket of water or sand nearby in case of fire, and never BBQ in enclosed spaces because carbon monoxide can be deadly. Keep children and pets at a safe distance and always supervise your BBQ.

With a little care, your BBQ can be delicious and safe.

By Tracey Anderson





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