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1 “What comes once in a minute, twice in a moment, but never in a thousand years?”

2 I can be cracked, made, told, and played. What am I?



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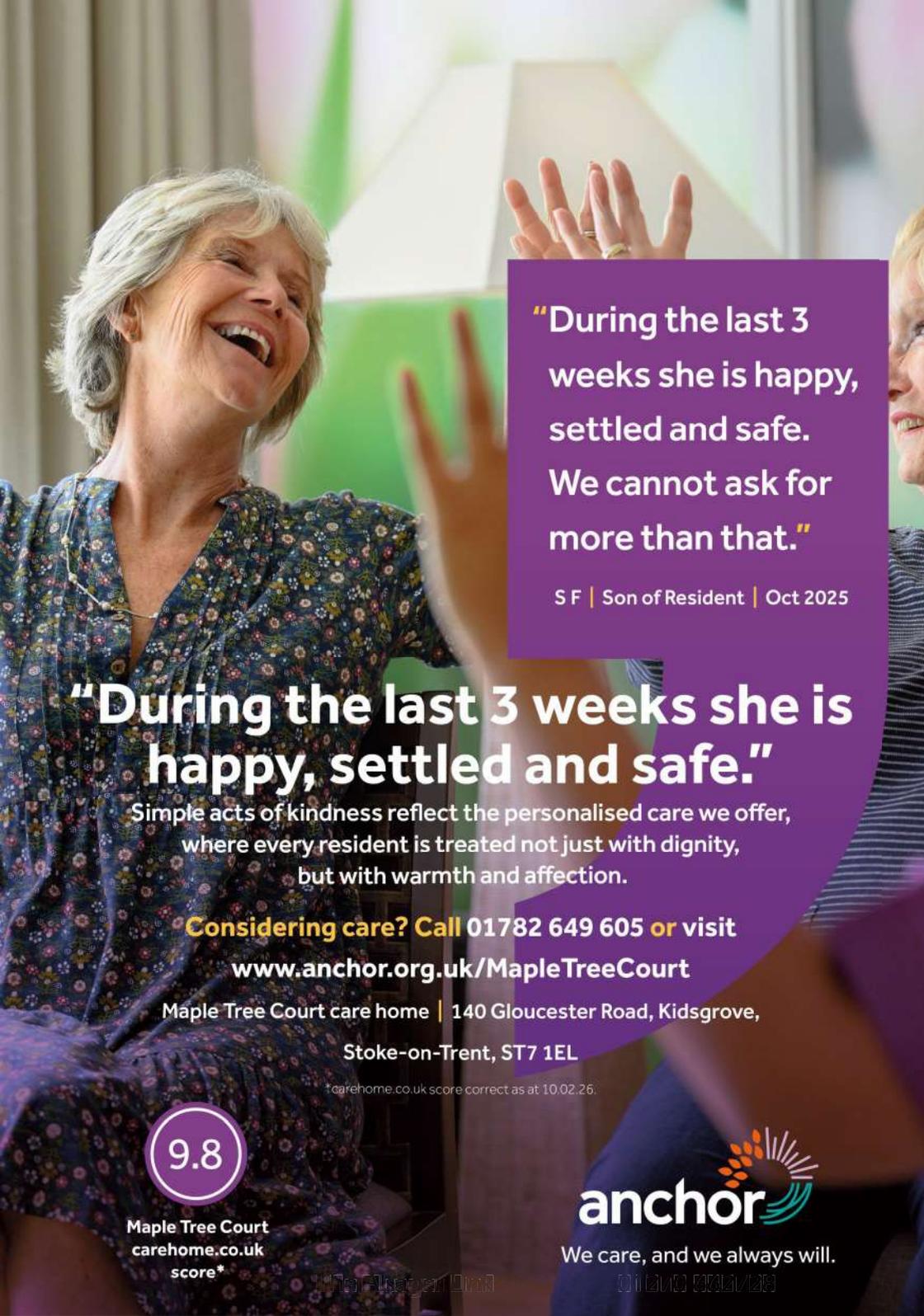
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Royal seal of approval

By Caroline Knight

The best thing about spring for garden-lovers is the thought of adding some beauty to the borders. You probably know what you like, but how do you choose a variety or cultivar of a particular species?

One way to decide is to look for plants that bear the RHS AGM (Royal Horticultural Society Award of Garden Merit) logo. The familiar marker with its cup-shaped design evokes a feeling of trust and acts as a stamp of approval. These plants have been judged by the RHS to be reliable performers.

Tried and tested

Testing and assessment take place during a trial period that can last several weeks, months or even years. These trials are often carried out at RHS Wisley in Surrey.

There are currently more than 7,500 plants carrying the RHS AGM and more are being added to the database all the time. Some, however, leave their glory behind if they are shown to have deteriorated or even become invasive. The AGM is subject to regular review and, since its inception in 2002, more than 3,000 plants have been dropped from the list.

Some popular choices

During March, when many Camellias are in glorious bloom, some are more revered than others. A selection of those granted the RHS AGM include:

- The bright pink, semi-double Camellia 'Leonard Messel'
- Bi-colour Camellia 'Tom Thumb', with compact growth, glossy foliage and small, rose-pink double flowers with white edges
- Semi-double, crimson-flowered Camellia 'Mars'
- Camellia 'Silver Anniversary' with its peony form of white flowers and bright yellow stamens

A surprising number of Rhododendrons have earned the coveted RHS AGM, including:

- Rhododendron 'Scintillation', an evergreen, compact variety with free-flowering purple-pink flowers with a golden blotch
- Rhododendron (also known as Azalea) 'Golden Eagle', a deciduous variety with fiery orange-yellow flowers and attractive autumn foliage
- Rhododendron 'Cunningham's White', a reliable evergreen with glorious trusses of snow-white flowers
- Rhododendron 'Horizon Monarch', loved for its beautiful yellow flowers with pink streaks

One particular early-flowering shrub seems to have fallen from favour. It may be that Forsythia lacks structure or the fact that the flowers contain little in the way of pollen or nectar. But its bright yellow blooms bring a welcome splash of colour at a time of year when we need it the most.

- Forsythia 'Lynwood Variety' has the prestigious RHS AGM. Its tiny but profuse yellow flowers offer emergency food during a time of scarcity and attract insects, which are an important part of the food chain.

The range of plants that carry the RHS AGM is extensive, from perennials, shrubs and trees to fruit and vegetables. You can search for particular plants or browse the lists at www.rhs.org.uk.





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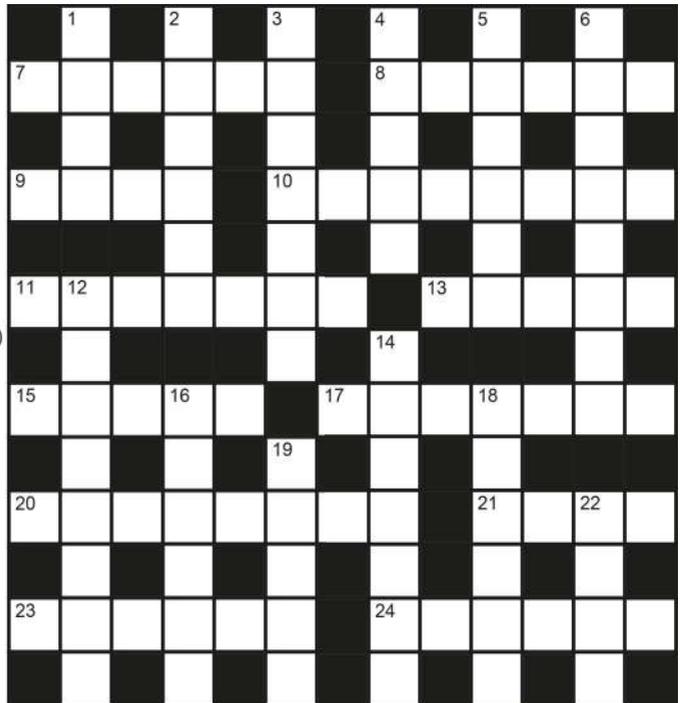
Quick crossword

Across

- 7 Swap over (6)
- 8 To be on a ship (6)
- 9 Not new (4)
- 10 Outside (8)
- 11 Angry (7)
- 13 Funeral fires (5)
- 15 Almost two pints (5)
- 17 Below (7)
- 20 Observing (8)
- 21 Story (4)
- 23 Educational establishment (6)
- 24 Required (6)

Down

- 1 Female sheep (4)
- 2 Recording room (6)
- 3 Burglars (7)
- 4 Belief (5)
- 5 Every sixty minutes (6)
- 6 Widest (8)
- 12 Inconvenience (8)
- 14 Combining (7)
- 16 Calculate (6)
- 18 Respect (6)
- 19 Foolish (5)
- 22 Vegetable (4)





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Mushroom and watercress French toast



This quick and easy any-time-of-day savoury dish isn't just delicious; it combines the healthy super-ingredients mushrooms and watercress for maximum oomph!

Serves 1

Preparation time 10 minutes

Cooking time 10 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 slices thick crusty bread
- Butter
- 50g grated Swiss cheese, grated
- 1 clove garlic, minced (optional)
- 100g mushrooms, wiped and halved
- 80g watercress, chopped

Method

1. In a bowl, beat the egg and add a little salt and freshly ground black pepper. Dip in the slices of bread, covering both sides in the mix.
2. Heat some butter in a frying pan over a medium heat and fry the eggy bread for a couple of minutes, flip it and sprinkle the grated cheese over the side that is cooked so it melts.
3. Meanwhile, heat a knob of butter in a clean pan over a medium heat and add the garlic, if using, and the mushrooms. Add the watercress as the mushrooms start to brown and cook for no longer than a minute, so the watercress has just wilted.
4. Serve the mushrooms and watercress heaped on top of the cheesy toast and finish with a generous grating of black pepper.

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A photograph of a modern, dark-colored building with large glass windows, showing an interior dining area with a table and chairs. The building is set against a backdrop of trees and a clear sky.

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As the cost-of-living spirals and more of our children struggle to get a footing on the property ladder it is now more important than ever to plan our family's inheritance. The team at Sanctuary Tax & Trust explain how many families find themselves victims of avoidable losses and why simply writing a will does not guarantee our family will inherit as we wish.

For the vast majority of people, we spend all our lives working to build up wealth, through property, savings and pensions we look at providing financial security for our families and when our final day arrives, we hope these assets will pass to the people we care about the most, partners, children, relatives and friends. Traditionally, people have chosen wills to document their wishes and while writing a will is important, it does not provide any protection for the assets within it.

Considerations when planning Inheritance

Care Fees – As we live longer the likelihood of needing care becomes greater and under the government's changes to the social care act should the need for care arise, we could see our asset taken down to just £23,250. The new assessment process will see everybody with property and saving over a combined value of £100,000 being required to pay for their care.

Relationship Failure – When passing assets purely through a will we see many leaving their assets to their children but not giving consideration to what would happen if one of their children was to divorce. This can lead to a child seeing half of their inheritance in the hands of an ex-partner and in the event of early bereavement this can lead to grandchildren being disinherited.

Inheritance Tax – The current IHT framework can be complex and unknowingly people can leave their children and even grandchildren with an Inheritance tax issue.

Probate – The cost of probate has risen dramatically over the last few years, and it can be a lengthy and drawn-out process. On average, with a will, probate will typically take 6 – 12 months to complete, without a will it could take up to 2 years.

Its Never the Wrong Time To Do The Right Thing – While people appreciate that inheritance planning is important many will delay seeking the correct advice. By putting off today what we can do tomorrow we run the risk of running out of time or, in the event of an illness, seeing our options being dramatically reduced.

Why Sanctuary Tax & Trust Services?

With over 20 years of experience in Estate and Inheritance planning we have helped families in the area protect their assets and plan their inheritance in the most cost-effective way. While the individual family's circumstance may vary, the one constant is that each family aims to provide the maximum amount of inheritance possible without the stress of complexed legal jargon.



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Apple and pistachio Rabri



This dish is inspired by the classic North Indian sweet dessert Rabri (also known as Rabdi), often flavoured with nuts, cardamom and saffron, and served in earthen clay pots.

Serves 2

Preparation time 20-25 minutes

Cooking time 15-20 minutes

Ingredients

- 2 Jazz apples
 - 125g pistachios
 - 250ml plain yoghurt
 - 125ml sweetened condensed milk
 - 125ml evaporated milk
 - 1 tsp vanilla extract
-

Method

1. Slice 1 apple into thin wedges, arrange on a lined baking tray and bake in the oven on a very low heat until the thin apple wedges have dried out.
2. Finely chop the pistachios and dried-out apples, then set aside.
3. Preheat the oven to 160°C, fan 140°C, gas mark 2.
4. Peel and grate the remaining apple and add to a bowl with the yoghurt, condensed milk, evaporated milk and vanilla extract. Mix well and divide between 2 clay pots or ramekins.
5. Place on a baking tray and cook in the oven for about 15-20 minutes, or until set completely.
6. Generously add the reserved apple and pistachio crumble over the Rabri and serve straightaway.

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Chris Shemilt's Money Corner

The power of LPA's

The common misconception around Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA) is that these documents are only for the older generation. I hear "I don't need one yet at my age", or "There is no risk of me getting dementia this early" all the time.

This is totally wrong!

An LPA is a legal document that lets you (the 'donor') appoint one or more people whom you trust (your 'attorneys') to help you make decisions or to make decisions on your behalf in the event that you suffer something catastrophic.

There are two types of LPA, one which caters for health and welfare and the other regarding finances. These give more control over what happens to you, your assets and your immediate family if you have an accident or an illness and cannot make your own decisions (in other words you 'lack mental capacity').

Did you know that without a property & financial affairs LPA in place, even joint assets are frozen? Hard to believe I know, but this is the case.

I believe that LPA's should be in place for everyone. If a younger person is incapacitated by illness or accident, who looks after financial affairs so that their family can function properly in terms of cash flow? If compensation is received, who manages it?

A spouse or children cannot access assets, potentially leaving the affected person and their loved ones in a very vulnerable financial position. If a catastrophic event should happen with no LPA in place, the only alternative is to apply for 'deputyship', a long-winded (this was 4-6 months even before Covid!) and unpredictable process costing in the region of £3,000. But this still does not guarantee that a family will gain full control, as about **30% of deputyship orders are granted to social services, effectively putting the local authority in control.**

Deputyships are specific to requirements at the time and the Court of Protection will only grant an order to deal with (for example) the sale of a home on behalf of someone, or to move money from one account to something more beneficial. Deputyship Orders will not give complete control in the same way that a Lasting Power of Attorney does.

Without a Health and Welfare LPA, family members (even a spouse) cannot challenge care options made by the authorities nor make decisions on health treatments.

Remember that the LPA kicks in only if you lose mental capacity. Your Attorneys look after affairs and make choices for you only if you are unable to make decisions through temporary or permanent incapacity. If you recover or decide to take back control you should be able to do so and begin making your own decisions again.

So, act now to join the **1% of the UK population** with LPA's in place. Lyon & Co are offering Money Corner readers LPA's - call us for pricing.

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KIA EV4



Kia has been quickly expanding its line-up of electric vehicles, so what can the EV4 do differently? Jack Evans drives it to find out.

What is it?

Kia now has an electric-car range spanning the compact EV3 SUV right the way up to the seven-seater EV9. Next to enter the gang is the EV4. It's not another high-riding SUV or crossover, but is offered in hatchback and eye-catching saloon-like 'Fastback' body styles.

What's new?

The EV4 shares a modular platform with the EV3, so you'll find similarities when it comes to range and interior architecture. However, with the EV4, you're getting a more traditional shape – with the hatchback, at least.

What's under the bonnet?

You can get the EV4 with either a 58.3kWh battery or an 81.4kWh version; we're driving the former. While it can't eclipse the 362 miles you'd get from the big-battery model, this variant manages 273 miles from a single charge. You get a decent maximum charge speed of 127kW, too, taking the batteries from 10% to 80% in under half an hour.

What's it like to drive?

In the entry-level 'Air', with its 17-inch wheels and big, squishy tyres, the EV4 shrugs off lumps and bumps well, though there's a bit of a wobble through the bends. It also remains hushed at motorway speeds. While it goes from 0-60mph in 7.3 seconds, it's the comfort and refinement which shine through.

How does it look?

Our EV4 has a classic hatchback shape. However, with its tall roofline and boxy dimensions, it still has quite a lot of presence. The Fastback version has a completely different look but also stands out, though its sloped roofline has an impact on rear-seat headroom.

What's it like inside?

There are plenty of good materials and even this base-spec 'Air' car has well-finished areas that feel solid. There's a great blend of physical and digital controls, too, so that everything feels intuitive. The boot stands at a very impressive 435 litres.

What's the spec like?

Prices for the EV4 start from £34,695 for this small-battery car in Air trim. For the bigger battery and longer range, prices begin at £37,695 – and we're expecting a lot of people to opt for this version. We'd argue that Air trim level is a great place to be; a 12.3-inch infotainment system, heated front seats and steering wheel, and front and rear parking sensors are included.

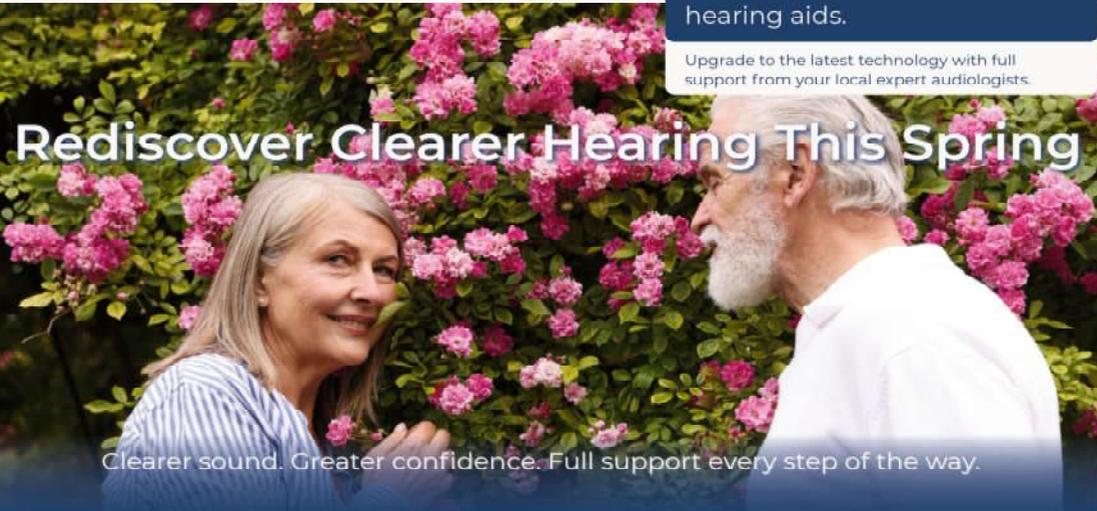
The range-topping GT-Line S, with features like an upgraded Harmon Kardon sound system and ventilated front seats, comes in at £44,795 in big-battery form.

Verdict

The Kia EV4 does a great job of standing out from the electric vehicle crowd. On the one hand, it's practical, with a large boot and plenty of space inside, but it also has all the features you need.

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LIFE SPAN

How long do hearing aids last?

An average life span is 5-7 years. Hearing aids are a little like running a car, you can keep on running them, albeit with occasional repairs, or you can simply choose a newer and better model. Some people keep hearing aids for 20 years, others want a newer model after a few years.

CHOICE

How many different hearing aids are there?

Literally thousands! There are only about 10 manufacturers who each produce a huge range of different hearing aids. At Congleton we are independent and therefore can source any hearing aid from any manufacturer, we do though help you to narrow the choice down to just a few from the thousands out there!

**With Anthony Berg,
Hearing Aid Audiologist and Director
The Congleton Hearing Centre Ltd**

Tech talk

THREE-FOLD

Samsung is launching a tablet that folds to become a phone – at a price.



How many screens should your smartphone have? The new trendy number appears to be three. Following in the footsteps of firms such as Huawei, Samsung has launched its first triple-fold phone. The Galaxy Z TriFold has a ten-inch screen that folds twice to become smartphone-sized, essentially offering the best of both worlds – the pocketability of a phone and the big screen of an iPad-sized tablet.

Unfortunately, it isn't as cheap as either of those devices: the Korean launch price of 3.59 million Won is more than £1,800 plus tax. It'll launch in the US in 2026 and should come to the UK shortly afterwards.

SPLIT SCREEN

You can now double the desktop on your laptop.

Folding screens aren't just appearing on phones. They're coming to laptops too, with manufacturers including Asus and Lenovo offering laptops with dual screens: one in the usual place and one where you would normally have the keyboard, almost doubling the amount of screen space available to you. Models such as the Asus Zenbook DUO then have a detachable wireless keyboard for typing, but some lesser-known manufacturers simply use the second screen as a virtual keyboard, similar to that of a tablet. As with folding phones, dual-display laptops are premium priced – the ASUS Zenbook DUO UX8406 is £1,699.



FULL STEAM AHEAD

There could soon be a new kid on the gaming-console block.

Gaming giant Valve, makers of titles including 'Half-Life', 'Portal' and 'Counter-Strike', is having another go at making a dedicated gaming console. The 2026 Steam Machine is a powerful gaming PC that runs the Steam operating system and provides access to its massive library of games, and it looks like a serious rival to the Xbox Series X and PlayStation 5. We don't yet know the price of this device but Valve says it's "a powerful gaming PC in a small but mighty package". There will also be a new VR headset, although again, pricing hasn't been announced just yet.



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Conveyancers: making moves happen

When you're buying or selling a house and it's taking forever, it's tempting to blame the conveyancers. Not all conveyancers are great communicators, but they do handle a myriad of tasks you might not be aware of.

Conveyancing caseload

A conveyancer is a lawyer who's there to protect your interests as a buyer or seller. They'll handle the sale process, which includes exchanging contracts, dealing with stamp duty and capital gains tax, the transfer of mortgage funds and legally recording the change of ownership with the Land Registry. Conveyancers also have a legal duty to carry out anti-money laundering checks.

However, it's the stages before the final sale that often seem to drag on. This is when your conveyancer will be looking for anything that could cause legal problems. This includes scrutinising the title deeds, making sure the seller really does own the property and checking exactly where the boundaries lie. If it's a leasehold property, they'll also examine the lease for any concerns.

Conveyancers look for 'restrictive covenants'. These are restrictions on land use, often dating from the property's construction, that automatically transfer to new owners. These can often seem irrelevant, such as a ban on putting up advertising hoardings, and unlikely to be enforced. However, conveyancers must still make you aware of them.

Other searches

Other searches include environmental risks such as mining in the area, potentially dangerous gases and flooding. The conveyancers are often waiting themselves for government authorities, so it can be difficult to know who – if anyone – is dragging their feet.

A conveyancer isn't responsible for a property survey. This isn't actually part of the legal agreement for a house sale, as the building's condition comes under the 'caveat emptor' (buyer beware) principle.

How to choose

For most buyers, it doesn't matter where your conveyancer is based, as long as they're qualified in the relevant legal system (Scotland has its own legal system, for example). Larger national chains may be cheaper, often using junior staff for admin, while senior solicitors handle the legal elements and declarations. They may also offer online portals that let you access status updates.

On the other hand, you may prefer a local company which is more accessible and can give you more personal attention. This may also be a good option if local issues, such as mining, apply.

Look for conveyancers registered with the Solicitors Regulation Authority or Council of Licensed Conveyancers in England and Wales, and the Law Society in Scotland. Technically, you can hire anyone as a conveyancer, or even do it yourself, but this is ill-advised given the legal consequences of getting anything wrong. In practice, if you have a mortgage, your lender will almost certainly insist on a licensed and qualified conveyancer.



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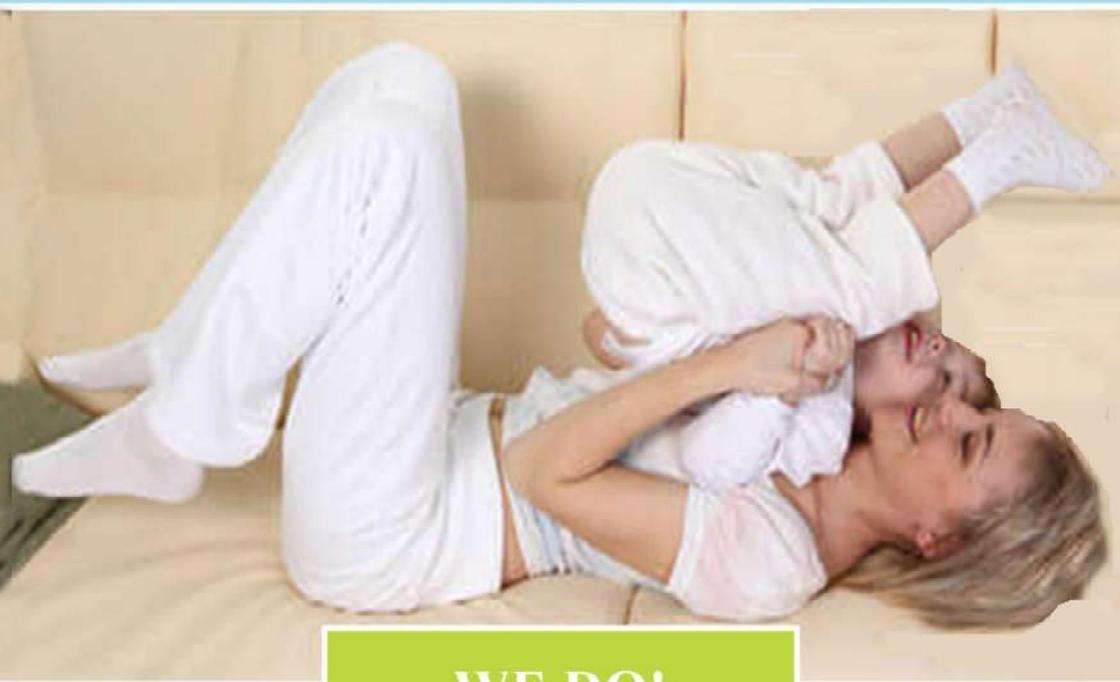
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Next Coffee Morning 14th March 2026. 9.30 - 11.30 a.m.

Alsager Civic Centre - Admission 50p

We help with stray & abandoned cats & dogs and find their forever homes. We also provide a rehoming from home service.



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**Oakhanger
Project**

2026 ACTIVITIES

30th March

Shutlingsloe Walk

1st & 8th April

Kayak & Canoe Taster Session @ Brereton Heath

12th - 14th June

Rhos-on-Sea Camping Trip

14th - 16th August

Anglesey Camping Trip

29th August

Family Fun @ Oakhanger Church & Community Centre

26th October

Kayak Taster Session @ Sandbach School Pool

28th October

The Roaches Walk

14th November

Snowdonia Walk

26th December

Boxing Day Paddle @ Brereton Heath

1st January

New Years Day Walk - Oakhanger

**Activities
For All**

Activity days @ Brereton Heath

29th July

5th August

12th August

19th August

26th August



FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO BOOK:



op.admin@oakhanger.org



www.oakhanger.org

Registered Charity No. 1189721

Alsager Library

Opening Hours

Monday 10am to 5pm

Tuesday 10am to 6pm

Wednesday 10am to 5pm

Thursday **CLOSED**

Friday 10am to 5pm

Saturday 9am to 1pm



PRE SCHOOL

RHYME TIME

MONDAY 11AM

*

STORIES AND SONGS

FRIDAY 11AM

*

BABY BOUNCE

FRIDAY 2PM

*

FAMILY STORIES AND SONGS

SATURDAY 1ST

NOVEMBER 11AM

**FREE, NO NEED TO
BOOK**

CHILDREN'S

LEGO CLUB

MONDAY 3:30PM

*

GAMES CLUB

FRIDAY 3:30PM

**FREE, NO NEED TO
BOOK**

**TAKE A LOOK AT OUR
FACEBOOK/
WEB PAGE**

FOR FUTURE EVENTS

*

**FAMILY HUB LITTLE STARS
WEDNESDAY 1:30PM
CALL FOR MORE DETAILS**

ADULT

**COLOUR AND CHAT
MONDAY 2PM TO 4PM**

*

**2ND TUESDAY MURDER
CLUB**

**THRILLER BOOK
GROUP**

**TUESDAY 11TH
NOVEMBER
2:30PM**

*

**COFFEE MORNING
WEDNESDAY
10AM TO 12PM**



Alsager Community Support

Become A Supporter - 'You Can Make Local Lives Better'

Lots Of Ways To Help

One off donations or regular monthly donations, no matter how small really does make a difference!

Get involved as a volunteer, meet new people, and give your support to those who need it.

Spread the word, like our FB page and share our posts.

Visit our website, learn more about what we do.



SUPPORTER

19-21 Crewe Road, Alsager, ST7 2EW 01270 876925

Info@alsagercommunitysupport.org.uk www.alsagercommunitysupport.org.uk



Music for INNER PEACE



Choral Opus by Nigel Vaughan Williams, Tallis, Copland, Tchaikovsky and Stanford

3pm Saturday 28th March 2026
St Mary's Church, Nantwich CW5 5RG

Registered Charity Number: 2212249 01270 662728 www.thelinkmagazines.co.uk

ALSAGER CANCER SUPPORT

COFFEE MORNING

at

ALSAGER CIVIC CENTRE

on

WEDNESDAY

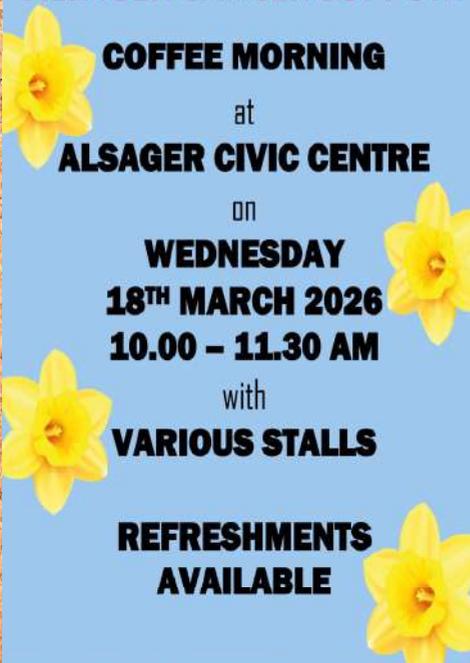
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with

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What Am I

1.M 2. A Joke

Across: 7 Switch, 8 Aboard, 9 Used, 10 External, 11 Annoyed, 13 Pyres, 15 Litre, 17 Beneath, 20 Watching, 21 Tale, 23 School, 24 Needed.

Down: 1 Ewes, 2 Studio, 3 Thieves, 4 Faith, 5 Hourly, 6 Broadest, 12 Nuisance, 14 Merging, 16 Reckon, 18 Esteem, 19 Silly, 22 Leek.

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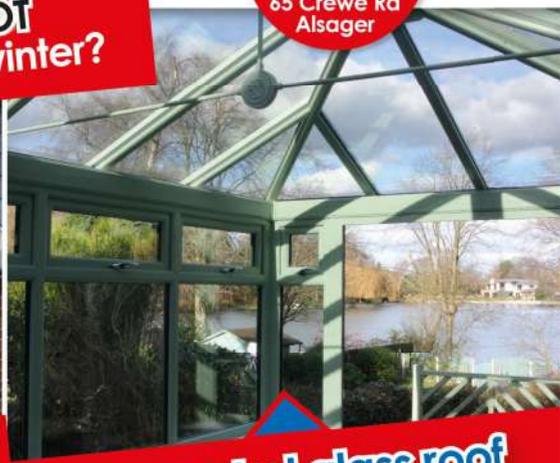
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