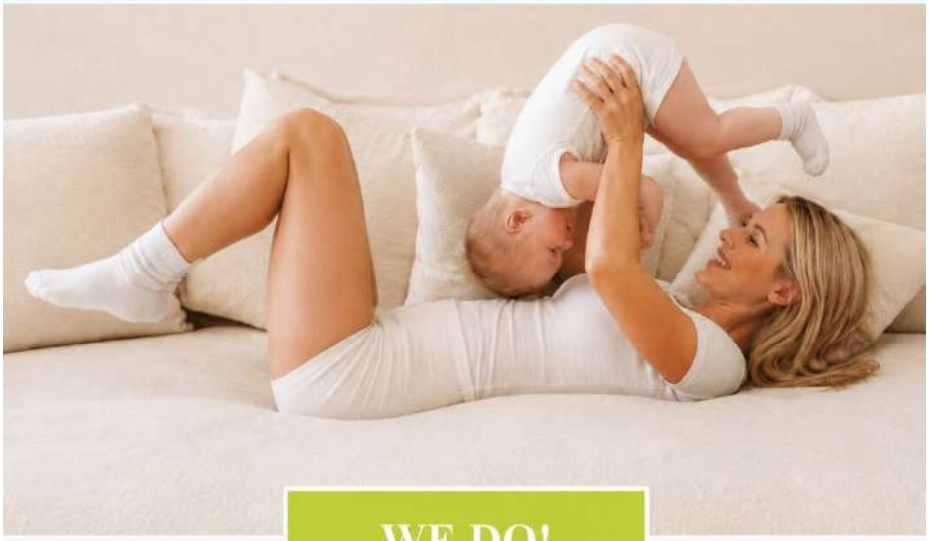
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What am I ?

1 "I have to be broken before you can use me.

What am I?"

---

2 "I am so fragile saying my name destroys me.

What am I?"

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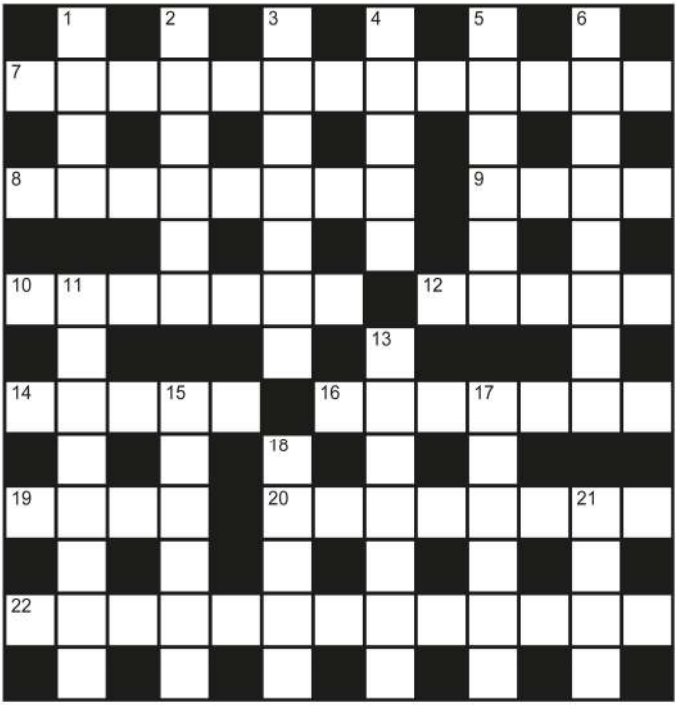
Quick crossword

Across

7 Companies, corporations (13)
8 Thin layer, film (8)
9 Large stringed instrument (4)
10 Places of education (7)
12 Cinders (5)
14 Crustaceans (5)
16 Roads (7)
19 Chemical element, Zn (4)
20 Courteously (8)
22 Relaying of messages (13)

Down

1 Vacant (4)
2 Strong Asian grass (6)
3 At last (7)
4 Enclosed (5)
5 Desires (6)
6 Most furious (8)
11 Passageway (8)
13 Slanted letters (7)
15 Turn into (6)
17 Manor (6)
18 Unlocks (5)
21 King of the beasts (4)



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

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through to 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


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Pay later, think sooner

Buy-now-pay-later services seem to be everywhere these days, particularly online. Here's what you need to know.

Buy-now-pay-later, legally known as deferred payment credit, is when a third-party lender pays the retailer when you make a purchase. You then repay the lender.

The best-known version is a "pay-in-three" format where you pay a third of the price up front, another third a month later and the final third a month after that. Another variant has no up-front payment, with the full balance due a month later.

This is different to a credit card facility or overdraft as it covers one specific purchase. However, it's still a form of debt.

Most forms of buy-now-pay-later have no interest charges or fees to use the facility, but some charge fees if you miss a payment. Make sure you understand when these fees apply and what happens if you miss multiple scheduled payments or go significantly past a deadline.

Credit considerations

Some services will stress that using the facility doesn't affect your credit record, which is technically true but somewhat misleading. You must formally apply and get approval to use the facility, which involves a "soft" credit check. That means the lender can access your credit record, but your record won't show you made the application.

Missing a payment absolutely can affect your credit record, however. It will usually stay on your record and potentially reduce your credit score for up to six years. That means it could be harder to get loans or credit in future and, if you are approved, the rates may be higher.

Time is money

Buy-now-pay-later is more of a time-management than a money-management tool. You should only really use it if three things apply: you don't have the money to pay for the purchase now; you genuinely can't wait until later to buy it; you know for certain when and where the money is coming from to pay for it.

If you can afford to pay for something now, it's usually best to do so. Even if you repay on time, your use of buy-now-pay-later services will show up on your bank statements. If you then later apply for a mortgage, potential lenders may treat it as a sign you've been living beyond your means.

New rules

The rules on buy-now-pay-later changed significantly in July 2026. Services are now regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority, lenders must give you complete details of the repayment schedules and fees, and they must also run basic affordability checks to stop users taking on excessive or unaffordable debt. They must refer people in difficulty to a debt advice service. You can also now complain to the Financial Ombudsman Service about any rule breaches.

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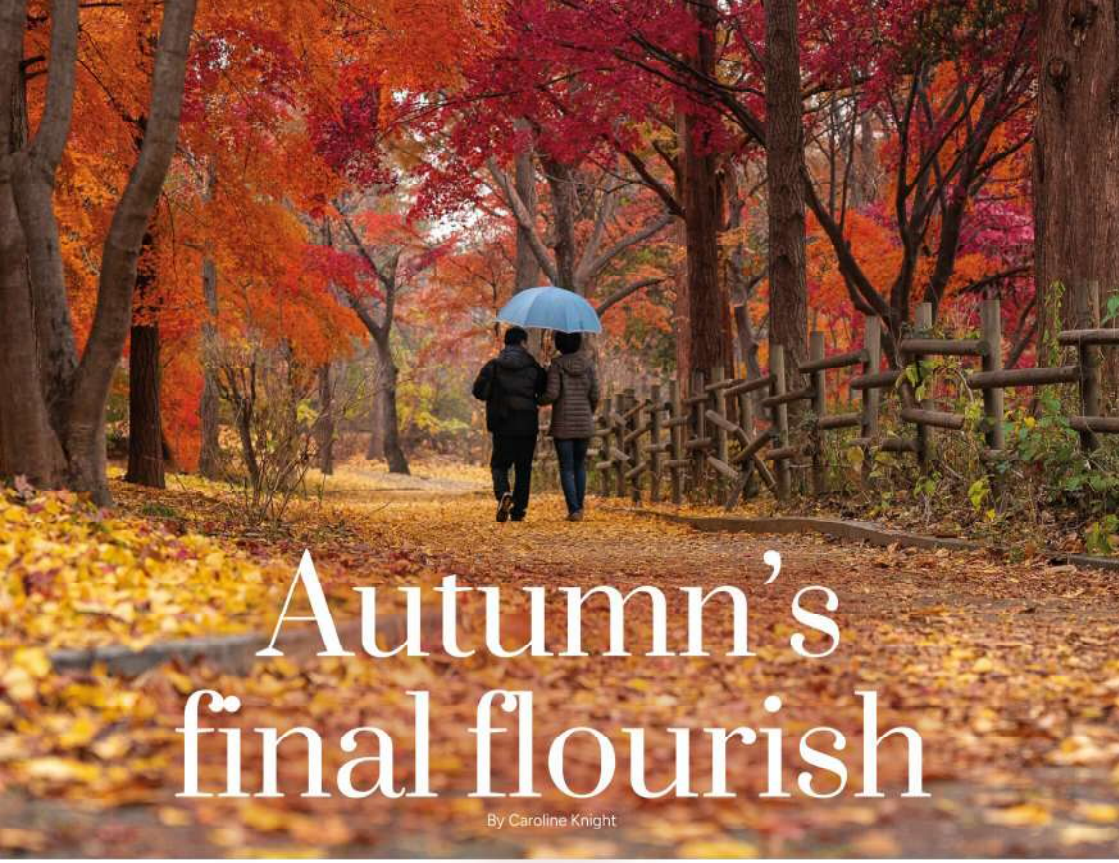
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Autumn's final flourish

By Caroline Knight

Enjoy November in all its surprising glory while preparing for next year's spectacular show.

November brings mist, long nights and some chilly days, but it can be a magnificent month. Golden, orange and red leaves adorn borders where stems and berries are showcasing the benefits of certain shrubs. It's a great time for planting, so bring some of those visual delights to your own garden if it's lacking.

Light is in short supply, making it vital to go outdoors whenever you can. The average temperature is between 5 and 10 degrees C.

True colours

Some of the brightest interest at this time of year is provided by berries on shrubs such as Pyracantha (firethorn), Cotoneaster and Ilex (holly).



Pyracantha berries

They provide a winter larder for many birds. The colourful stems of Cornus (dogwood) add dazzling red, orange, lime green and yellow radiance to borders throughout the winter, especially if they were pruned down to the ground back in early spring. They can be as spectacular as any flower border when planted in bold, contrasting groups.

Gather fallen leaves into heaps and cover them with something heavy to squeeze out the air. Within a couple of years, you'll be rewarded with wonderful leaf mould which could be described as the caviar of compost.

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Top tips for November

- Plant as many tulip bulbs as you can squeeze into your pots and borders so that you will be able to anticipate a joyful spring show. If squirrels tend to dig them up, pop a bunch of holly leaves into the planting holes so that the rodent rogues receive prickles whenever they nibble.
- You can tidy your borders a little and move things around, including splitting and replanting herbaceous perennials while there is warmth in the soil.
- Cover your beds with a generous mound of home-made compost or mulch, remembering to give tender plants such as Agapanthus (African lily) and Kniphofias (red hot pokers) an extra layer of padding. It will help protect their shivering roots. Tucking up your beds for the winter seals in the cosiness so that your plants will emerge fresh from dormancy.
- Prune roses to help prevent wind-rock, then give them some mulch to act as winter fuel.


Collect leaves from paths and lawns


Winter stem colour from Cornus and Salix



- Avoid cutting spring-flowering shrubs during winter; you're likely to cut off the flowering buds.
- Don't prune stone fruit trees now, as they are susceptible to diseases like bacterial canker and silver leaf.
- Clear leaves from ponds, paths and lawns but not from borders where they will provide food and habitat for wildlife.
- Leave your seed heads and fading blooms intact; they'll be appreciated by birds and bees at a time they're most needed.
- Purchase and plant bare-root shrubs and trees now.
- Add mycorrhizal fungi to planting holes. It forms a mutually beneficial symbiotic relationship with roots, which helps the plants for their entire life.
- Water newly planted trees and those still establishing from last season. Their roots take time to grow and, if it's dry, they're unlikely to be able to access enough moisture.
- If you are still mowing the lawn, raise the cutting height so that the grass sward is longer. This will help protect the roots during frost.
- Use horticultural fleece to wrap tender plants, and those that tend to suffer in cold wind.
- Raise your outdoor pots and containers off the ground, using pot feet. It will help prevent waterlogging.

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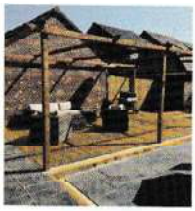
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Neat for Noël

By Katherine Sorrell

How to minimise clutter ahead of the festive season, ensuring your home is calm, organised and looking its best.

If you're entertaining this Christmas, you'll need room for mingling, as well as capacity in the kitchen. For overnight guests, clearing a bedroom and preparing the bathroom will be a priority. Your hall needs to make an inviting first impression too.

Sort through your stuff

First, get rid of as much clutter as possible. Prepare boxes or bags labelled rubbish, recycle, donate, sell, mend, move. Then aim to tackle one room a week or try ten minutes a day.

Look for efficient storage solutions

Seek out every nook and cranny that can be used to organise your possessions neatly. Can you invest in some hidden storage heroes, such as underbed boxes, behind-the-door hangers and stackable pantry containers? If your storage will be on show, look for attractive solutions like baskets, vintage trunks and lidded pots.

This all-in-one storage solution combines country charm with practical efficiency. Ash hallway coat rack with shoe storage bench in cream, £99.99, Vonhaus. www.vonhaus.com





There's plenty of space for bathroom bits in this slim but tall cabinet and its little brother, a handy shelved cupboard. Chester pure white bathroom high cabinet, £550, and bathroom cupboard, £275; both The Cotswold Company. www.cotswoldco.com

Make an entrance

Now focus on making your hallway welcoming. Move as many of your shoes, bags and coats away from the entrance as you can. Consider a slimline shoe rack, a storage bench or extra wall hooks, or even an all-in-one unit that holds everything.

Find space for entertaining

From serving mulled wine to neighbours to hosting a family Christmas lunch, a little extra space will help a lot. Tidy children's toys away, hide cables and everyday clutter, and empty side tables for snacks and glasses. Ensure serving platters, table linen, napkins and any special tableware are clean, usable and accessible.

Organise the kitchen

To free up space for all those festive goodies, go through your pantry and your fridge, discarding expired ingredients and anything you're unlikely to use.

Get bedrooms guest-ready

Tuck complete bedding sets inside one pillowcase so they're easy to grab. Two great options for spare bedding are a large blanket box or, less expensively, a jumbo vacuum storage bag. You may wish to make room in a wardrobe and drawers.

Blitz your bathroom

Clear away everyday toiletries into a lidded basket. Provide somewhere for guest towels – perhaps a portable towel ladder or an over-radiator rail. For more long-term organisation, look for wheeled carts, hanging caddies or tall, narrow cabinets.

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HEARING AID ADVICE

BACKGROUND NOISE

I struggle to hear people when I'm in a noisy place, for instance in a restaurant or a meeting. Will a modern digital hearing aid help me to hear clearly in the presence of background noise?

Most people do find it more challenging to hear clearly in a noisy location. Of course the volume and clarity of the person you are trying to listen to is an also important factor. As we age we generally lose the ability to hear high frequency sounds. This tends to make it harder to hear the beginning and ends of words. Background noise is generally low frequency so does not diminish with age.

Therefore a noisy room will still sound loud as we get older, however the beginning and ends of certain words will fade making it harder to actually distinguish what is being said. This is when we either ask the speaker to repeat themselves or we take a guess at what is being said, sometimes with embarrassing consequences!

Whilst normal hearing can never be fully restored with a hearing aid, some modern hearing aids can help to boost the high frequency sounds without boosting the background noise thus helping you to regain some clarity in the presence of noise.

LISTENING TO THE TV/RADIO

I have the T.V turned up too loud, how low will I be able to watch it with a good hearing aid?

Good up to date hearing aids are very effective at enabling the wearer to listen to the T.V or radio at a greatly reduced volume level. There are also "wireless" hearing aids available that can send the T.V signal straight to the hearing aid which means you can watch the T.V as low as you want, even on muted volume!

What will the hearing aids look like?

Hearing aids range from tiny in the ear aids which are invisible once inserted into the ear canal to slightly bigger but still very discreet in the ear aids. There are also more powerful over the ear types. Hearing aids nowadays come in many different sizes and even colours. It is important to choose a hearing aid for a variety of reasons such as durability, ease of handling etc not solely on cosmetic factors.

With Anthony Berg,
Hearing Aid Audiologist and Director
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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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FIRST DRIVE

AUDI SQ5





The SQ5 has always been seen as the "everyday" high-powered SUV, but is that still the case? Jack Evans finds out.

What is it?

The Q5 has been a core part of Audi's SUV line-up for decades. For nearly as long, the SQ5 has brought heightened performance.

This time Audi has opted for petrol power with a little help from a mild-hybrid system to boost efficiency.

What's new?

The latest SQ5 still aims to combine an upmarket driving experience with the practicality that families need, albeit with more technology. Its exterior has been sharpened up and it has a 475-litre boot.

What's under the bonnet?

The SQ5 uses a 3.0-litre turbocharged V6 engine, firing 362bhp and 550Nm to all four wheels via Audi's famous quattro system. All cars get a seven-speed automatic gearbox, with steering-wheel-mounted paddles.

It has a 4.2-second 0-60mph time and a 155mph top speed. It's also nice that the latest SQ5 gets "proper" quad exhaust pipes.

What's it like to drive?

The V6 engine brings wonderfully smooth performance and, on the motorway, it's refined and quiet. The SQ5 will creep at slower speeds on electric-only power, making driving quieter around town.

The steering is more than accurate enough. Plus, you get a nicely elevated view of the road.

How does it look?

The latest design is impactful but not outlandish. Being an Audi model means there's plenty of scope for customisation, with a wide choice of exterior colours and alloy wheel designs.

What's it like inside?

We like the large door bins and well-sized central cupholders, though It's a shame so much gloss black plastic has been used, as it's a nightmare to keep clean. The window switch panel also feels a little flimsy.

But space is definitely just right. Those in the back do well in terms of headroom and legroom.

What's the spec like?

Prices for the SQ5 currently start at £72,905. Black Edition specification kicks off the range of trim levels, bringing standard features such as 21-inch alloy wheels, a Bang and Olufsen sound system and Audi's high-performance Matrix LED headlights. The large central screen is easy to operate, and we like that a standard row of heating and ventilation controls remains a permanent fixture on the display.

Upgrade to top-tier Vorsprung specification and the price rises to £79,655. However, the standard car is so well equipped that it seems the better choice.

Verdict

The SQ5 continues to offer the classy and well-executed experience you'd expect from a premium SUV. There's enough performance to keep things interesting, but this car will still come in handy day-to-day.

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Tech talk



SEE NO EVIL

Has Samsung solved smart glasses' privacy problem?

Many tech firms are hoping smart glasses will be the next big thing – and many privacy advocates hope they won't. This is because there have already been multiple cases of people using smart glasses to surreptitiously record other people without their consent.

Samsung may have the solution. Its forthcoming smart glasses feature multiple safeguards, such as disabling video recording when the glasses aren't being worn or if the recording status light, which lets people know the camera is rolling, is covered up. The glasses are expected to go on sale this winter with a predicted price of around £500.

Picture credit: Samsung



NEW HUE

How a joke turned into reality.

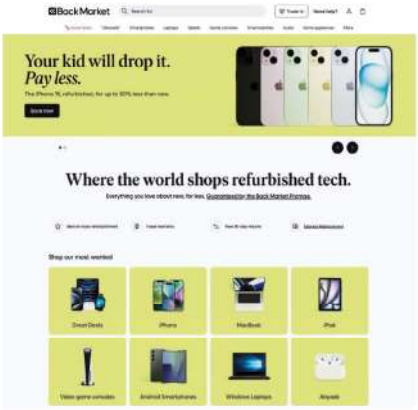
Last year, a convincing April Fool's joke persuaded lots of people that Philips Hue was going to make a giant bowl-shaped light called the Hue Go XXL that you could use as a coffee table. This year, it's an actual product. The Hue Go XXL has appeared in several places: as an icon in the official Hue app, in a promotional video by Hue's owner Signify, and in the photograph you see here. It looks fantastic but don't expect it to be cheap – the Hue Go portable lamp, which is only 15cm wide, is £79. The Go XXL appears to be three or four times larger, so it's likely to be considerably more expensive.

REACH FOR REFURB

Cut the cost of Christmas tech by opting for pre-owned devices.

One of the unfortunate results of the AI boom is that the cost of electronics such as computers and accessories has rocketed. If you're thinking of buying something electrical or electronic for Christmas, one way to save money is to shop for Certified Refurbished products.

Refurbished products have previously been sold and returned; any faults have been fixed and you usually get a warranty too. eBay has an entire Certified Refurbished department, while firms such as Apple and Dell have their own refurbished stores, and retailers such as Back Market provide a safe marketplace for buying pre-owned goods.



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(Editors decision is final. One Specific word will be the correct answer. Vouchers cannot be exchanged for cash)

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As many are now aware of these threats the number of families using Will Protection Plans and Trusts has risen dramatically. The benefits of Trusts cannot be achieved through a Will alone and it is increasingly important we seek information and advice from an experienced Estate Planner about how Trusts and Will Protection Plans can enable us to better provide for our families.

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Serves **4**
Preparation time **20-25 minutes, plus marinating**
Cooking time **45-50 minutes**

Ingredients

- 100g miso glaze (store-bought)
- 4 x 180g cod loins

For the crispy rice salad

- 2 x 250g packets of microwave basmati rice or 500g cooked rice
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp sesame seeds
- ½ cucumber, chopped into small cubes
- A good handful of sugar snap peas (about 100g), sliced lengthways
- 2 tbsp chopped coriander
- 1 tbsp chopped mint, or a few small mint leaves

For the salad dressing

- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp mirin
- 2 tsp sesame oil
- Juice of 1 lime

Recipe from "John and Lisa's Midweek Dinners" by John Torode and Lisa Faulkner, published by Quadrille, price £25, with photography © Dan Jones.



Method

1. Pour 25g of the miso glaze onto each cod loin, spreading it out evenly. Leave to marinate for about 30 minutes or up to 4 hours (or overnight if you can).

2. For the crispy rice salad, mix the cooked rice with the sesame oil and soy sauce, ensuring the grains are well separated. Sprinkle over the sesame seeds and mix through again.

3. Preheat the oven to 200°C, fan 180°C, gas mark 6. Spread the rice out on a baking tray and cook for 30 minutes, giving it a good stir a few times during cooking.

4. Meanwhile, make the salad dressing by whisking all the ingredients together in a small bowl. Set aside.

5. Once the rice is golden and crispy, remove from the oven and transfer to a large heatproof bowl. Add the chopped cucumber, sugar snaps, coriander and mint, then stir through the dressing. This can be served warm or cold.

6. When ready to cook the cod, roast in the baking tray in the oven for 12-15 minutes.

7. To serve, spoon the crispy rice onto serving plates and serve the miso cod on top or alongside.

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- Bottlebola (adults only!)
- Chocobola (for everyone!)

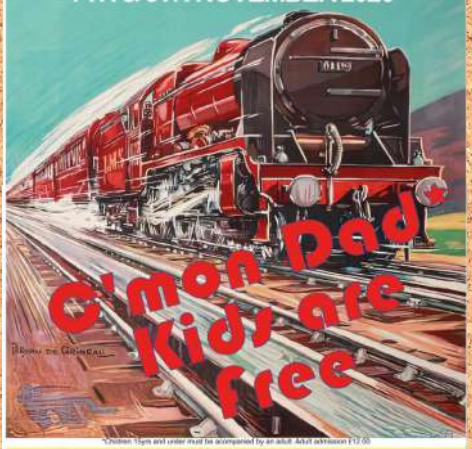


Want a stall? Reserve a table for £30 and join the fun!
Email **wardenb@stmarysalsager.org**

ALSAGER RAILWAY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL EXHIBITION

LEGENDS LEISURE CENTRE, BENTLY MOTORS, CREWE CW2 8WD

7TH & 8TH NOVEMBER 2026



*Children 15yrs and under must be accompanied by an adult. Adult admission £12.00

ALSAGER RAILWAY ASSOCIATION

GRANT PRICE

Painter & Decorator

INTERIOR & EXTERIOR

Over 28 Years Time Served



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All Aspects Covered
For A Free Estimate
With No Obligation

Please Call 07939 056 944



Joy to the Whole World

Family time together

Having Fun, Exploring Faith

Sunday 22 November

11am-1pm Christ Church Hall

Light lunch included

Hands On

Crafts

Paint

Baking

Games

Challenges

Songs

Bible Stories

Baby Zone

Action

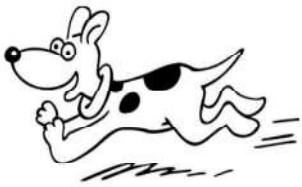
FREE!

find us on facebook
www.facebook.com/christchurchfamilies

christchurchalsager.uk



ALSAGER ANIMALS IN NEED



CC REG No. 519969 www.alsager-animals.net

Please support your local Animal Rescue

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

Alsager Civic Centre - Admission 50p

We help to rescue, rehabilitate and rehome cats & dogs. We also provide a rehoming from home service.





ALSAGER CANCER SUPPORT



CHRISTMAS COFFEE MORNING



WEDNESDAY 18TH NOVEMBER 2026



10:00 - 11:30am



ALSAGER CIVIC CENTRE

FREE ADMISSION



REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE






GEORGE FORMBY SOCIETY
South Cheshire Branch
George Formby Society
★★★ present ★★
Ukulele
FUN Night
Country
Cottage
Ukulele Open-mic
ALL MUSIC welcome
★ on stage with sound ★
7pm - 10pm
Friday 27 November 2026
Wistaston Memorial Hall CW2 8ER
RAFFLE
SING, PLAY, WATCH, | BYO | £2
info.georgeSCB@gmail.com | www.SouthCheshireFormby.com

Alsager Community Support's Toy Appeal

Let's make Christmas Special

As winter draws closer, many of us are already thinking about Christmas. Could you buy an extra toy or gift for a child in the local area whose family is going through a difficult time?

We are needing donations of unwrapped gifts for children aged 0-16.

You can drop them off at any of the following drop off points:

- **Alsager Community Support**
  19-21 Crewe Road, Alsager, ST7 2EW
- **Rose's Refills**
  4 Lawton Road, Alsager, ST7 2AF
- **Merepark and Cedars Medical Centres**
  Sandbach Road, Alsager, ST7 2LU
- **Greenmoss Medical Centre**
  Portland Drive, Scholar Green, ST7 3BT





Drop off dates: 9th - 27th November

Scan the QR code or use the link to see our Amazon wishlist - a simple way to donate if you prefer online shopping.

https://shorturl.at/xt8m0

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

*

MINI BUILDERS
WEDNESDAY 11AM

*

STORIES AND SONGS
FRIDAY 11AM

*

BABY BOUNCE
FRIDAY 2PM

CHILDREN'S

LEGO CLUB
MONDAY 3:30PM

*

CRAFTERNOON
WEDNESDAY 3:30PM

*

GAMES CLUB
FRIDAY 3:30PM

FREE, NO NEED TO BOOK

TAKE A LOOK AT OUR
FACEBOOK/
WEB PAGE
FOR FUTURE EVENTS

ADULT

COLOUR AND CHAT
MONDAY 2PM TO 4PM

*

2ND TUESDAY MURDER
CLUB
THRILLER BOOK GROUP
TUESDAY 10TH
NOVEMBER
2:30PM

*

CRAFTY NATTER
TUESDAY 2PM - 4PM

*

COFFEE MORNING
WEDNESDAY
10AM TO 12PM

Alsager Library , Sandbach Road North, Alsager. ST7 2QH
Tel No. 01270375325, alsager.library@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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

What Am I

1. An Egg 2. Silence

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