

PROPERTY NEWS



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STAY IN ENGLAND FOR THE UPCOMING EASTER BREAK

PAINTING YOUR HOME
PAINT TYPES AND WHEN
AND WHERE TO APPLY THEM

EASTER RECIPES
TWO GREAT RECIPES FOR
THE PERFECT EASTER MEAL

GRAND NATIONAL
OUR GUIDE TO THE
GRAND NATIONAL 2022

OUTDOOR KITCHENS
HOW TO BUILD A KITCHEN
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GARDEN DESIGN TRENDS

Our look at the hottest garden design trends this summer

It's officially spring, which means it's time to get outside, and after such a long winter, check on the state of the garden. With so much time spent outside over the next few months, now is the perfect time to take stock and make design changes to your current setup, and with that in mind, here are some of the hottest design trends suitable to most gardens this year...

ADD A PERGOLA

A pergola isn't the same as a gazebo. While gazebos are more functional, throwing total shade over an area, a pergola is more aesthetically pleasing with a slatted roof that allows sunlight to shine through in a delicate pattern. A pergola is perfect over a seating area, pathway or an outdoor kitchen and comes in a range of materials.

Typically, once a pergola is up it stays up, whereas a gazebo, more often than not, is able to be taken down and transported. So, you need to be certain it is in the right position when you finally put it up. Another great thing about a pergola is the ability to plant climbing plants and vines at the base that will grow quickly and over the slatted beams, thus creating a truly magnificent centrepiece to the garden.

WELCOME TO THE APRIL ISSUE!

The sun is shining, the evenings are lighter, the weather is getting warmer and this month we are celebrating all things outdoors.

On pages 2&3 we look at the hottest garden design trends of 2022. Meanwhile, on pages 10&11 we have your monthly gardening guide.

Keeping with the outdoor theme, for those budding chefs and alfresco aficionados, we have a step-by-step guide on how to build your own fully functional outdoor kitchen.

It is also Easter this month and with that in mind we have three 'eggscellent' features for you including Easter Holiday travel

ideas, perfect Easter recipes and a selection of the best Easter eggs for all ages.

Moving indoors, for those of you looking for a fresh look inside, we have a guide to different types of paint and where to use them, and finishing off we look at the biggest blockbusters coming to the cinema this month plus a guide to the biggest horse race in the world, The Grand National.

So, grab a cuppa, pull up a chair in the garden, and enjoy this month's magazine.

Jonathan Wheatley
Editor



OUTDOOR KITCHENS

With so much time spent outside, and the hope of a beautiful, dry Spring/Summer, more and more people are opting to create an outdoor kitchen in their garden to properly cook alfresco. The difference between an outdoor kitchen and a simple BBQ is massive. An outdoor kitchen has worktops, units, multiple cooking appliances and usually a sink with running water.

So, as opposed to a BBQ, where the chef is often out of the way and not socializing, an outdoor kitchen brings guests to them. The most popular appliances are pizza ovens, BBQ grills and smokers, and with the worktops in situ outside, there is no more running from the kitchen to outside.

Check out our guide to build your own on pages 14&15



EDIBLE GARDENING SPACE

Gardens and gardeners are becoming more functional, and with the rising price of fruit and veg, now is the perfect time to dedicate an area of your garden to edibles. You may think that for fruit and veg you're going to need an expensive greenhouse, but this is simply not the case, although it does help with certain vegetables and fruits.

The first thing you will need to do is find a nice sunny, sheltered spot and then choose whether you would like raised beds or standard beds. Depending on their size, this will determine what you can grow. But you will be surprised how much you can fit into a small space. To get ahead with fruit and vegetables, it is always best to start them indoors before moving them outside when the weather is warmer.

USING YOUR GARDEN AS AN EXTENDED LIVING SPACE

Gardens are no longer treated as just a lawn outside. In fact, more and more people are treating them as an extended living space from the home. To truly create an extended living space, it is recommended to integrate indoor design outdoors. For example, if you have herringbone flooring inside, create a herringbone patio that starts directly at the back door.

Likewise, if you have certain colours indoors, for example, grey furniture, then keep this running through into your garden. Same for plants; whatever you have growing indoors have a few of these outdoors in planters to really create a flow from indoors to outdoors.

WILDLIFE FRIENDLY

With climate change still being so prominent in people's minds, it is no surprise that one of the biggest design trends this year is for wildlife-friendly gardens. This could be something as simple as having a 'No Mow' zone or planting a fully-fledged wildflower meadow. This will help attract bees and other wildlife into your garden which in turn will help the biodiversity.

A huge benefit to wildlife-friendly gardens is that they also help to bring nature back into your garden which has a calming effect on our own wellbeing and mental health. The sound of buzzing bees and insects is always special, and they in turn bring more nature, such as birds, with them into your outdoor space.





YOUR EASTER STAYCATION

The UK has so many stunning and interesting places to spend a few days for your upcoming break

There is no need to jet off around the world this Easter holiday in order to get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. Rather than enduring long flights and expensive extras, pluck for a staycation and create memories to last forever.

Whether planning to take the little ones away to the seaside or aiming for a romantic getaway with your favourite person, the United Kingdom boasts a number of destinations just waiting to be discovered and enjoyed. Here are a few of our suggestions for great places to visit this Easter holiday.

YORK

A fantastic place to visit for a weekend city break within the United Kingdom is York. The Yorkshire city, which has deep Roman and Viking roots, sits mid-way between London and Edinburgh so is easily accessible from across the country. The shopping scene combines modern-day high street chains and restaurants with

the “Shambles”, an old street and overhanging timber-framed buildings dating back hundreds of years filled with unique independent traders.

The River Ouse flows through the city, overlooked by riverside restaurants and can be explored on rented boats. Those looking for a truly memorable experience can join one of the nightly ghost walks exploring the history and mystery surrounding the city.

WINCHESTER

Another beautiful English city for the whole family is Winchester, which sits right on the edge of South Downs National Park, in Hampshire. The cathedral city is the former seat of King Alfred the Great, and sits just an hour from London but has an air of the countryside that many desperately seek on their well-deserved breaks. Winchester is the birthplace of the popular English sport, cricket, and is home to one of the country's largest farmers' markets. The city boasts a jam-packed calendar of annual events to keep each visit feeling fresh and offering a new experience, including upcoming Easter family activities at the cathedral.

Fans of the silver screen, particularly Harry Potter, may get a strong sense of familiarity on their first visit to the city, as Winchester College was used as a location for the magical hit series of films.



WEYMOUTH

When taking the family away and asking children where they want to go, one of the first responses will always be “to the seaside!” Here in the UK, we are treated to many beautiful seaside towns and fishing villages - the hardest choice is picking which one to visit. One of the best beach destinations is Weymouth, in Dorset, southern England. Stunning golden sands stretch across the seafront looking out over Weymouth Bay. The town underwent a massive regeneration as it hosted sailing events during the 2012 Olympic games.

Families can see intricate sand sculptures along the sea front and aquatic creatures at Sea Life Weymouth, while also paying a visit to the unique Nothe Fort, consisting of a network of underground tunnels built by the Victorians to protect Portland Harbour.

One romantic thing to do in the city is to simply wander along the streets

PLYMOUTH

A unique break by the sea for couples could be a trip to the vibrant waterfront city, Plymouth. The port city, which sits in Devon, in the southwest of England, boasts scores of shops, attractions and sightseeing opportunities. Take a romantic walk along the cobbled Barbican quayside and discover a brand new place to eat or visit the National Marine Aquarium. Stay at the unique Royal William Yard, a Grade I listed former naval victualling yard, which has been regenerated into a space to explore. There is a large collection of listed military buildings brought back to life with modern-day restaurants, shops and places to stay.

EDINBURGH

Another historic and fascinating city to visit with your favourite person is Scotland’s capital, Edinburgh. The charming and historic city is filled with narrow, cobbled walkways, beautiful buildings and insightful free-to-visit museums, including the National Museum of Scotland and City Art Centre. One romantic thing to do in the city is to simply wander along the streets when the sun is streaming down in rays creating a warm and memorable atmosphere. Tag along with one of the regular ghost walks to hear a mixture of the horrific tales that have unfurled in Edinburgh throughout time, while also learning about the history that has made the city what it is today. No trip to Edinburgh would be complete without a visit to the castle, which sits on Castle Rock and boasts breathtaking views of the surrounding city.





PAINT A MASTERPIECE

Painting a home isn't always as simple as it sounds

A fresh coat of paint brings a home to life. But with so many different types of paint available, what sort do you need? Never fear DIYers, we are here to guide you so that your home comes out as brilliant as in your dreams.

EMULSION

Emulsion is easily the most well-known paint for your home. This water-based paint contains small polymer particles with pigments inside. Once dry, the particles combine producing the look and feel of paint we all know and love. The beauty with emulsion paint is how easy it is to apply. Whether you are using a roller or a brush, the texture and liquidity of the paint goes on walls super easy, and it comes in a huge range of colours.

When it comes to the look and feel of your walls, you have two main options in most major retailers, matt or silk. Matt paint is the least reflective and as such is

great for dark colours and feature walls, whereas silk is more reflective and great for whites and lighter shades which help to make the rooms feel larger.

The final type of emulsion is the most reflective, gloss. Brilliant white gloss is often used on staircases and bannisters and gives the liquid-style look wherever it is painted. It is incredibly popular for doors and skirting boards too.

CHALK

Chalk paint is a relatively new trend, although it has been around for years. Chalk paint is great for furniture and wooden surfaces such as kitchen cabinets. In fact, more and more people are choosing to paint their kitchen cabinets instead of replacing them when they start to look dated. It is also great for feature furniture that needs upcycling and doors.

EXTERNAL MASONRY PAINT

If you're interested in freshening up the exterior of your home as well as the interior, then external masonry paint is what you need. Masonry paint covers bricks, stone and render and is the perfect way to freshen up the external walls of your home. It is also available in a good-sized range of colours.





EASTER EGGS FOR ALL AGES

Easter isn't just a time for kids, it's for everyone. So splash out this Easter on the best chocolate you can get your hands on.



Hotel Chocolat: Abundantly Easter Hamper - £150

The Abundantly Easter Hamper is your one-stop-shop for holiday goodies, as it's brimming with quirky characters, dinky chocolate drops, and some sizable eggs. There truly is something here for everyone. Inside, you will find: Extra-Thick Eggs; Soft Boiled Eggs; Eggs & Soldiers; Delicious Bunnies; Speckled Eggs; Elizapeck and Wooliam.

<https://www.hotelchocolat.com/uk/abundantly-easter-hamper.html>

Hotel Chocolat: The Ultimate Easter Hamper - £100

Is there anything better than finding a luxurious Easter egg this time of year? Well, we think there might be — finding a whole hamper of them! Nestled within the chic wicker basket of The Ultimate Easter Hamper, you'll uncover an array of petite and large treats for all the family. There's something for everyone in this comprehensive collection, though it might be hard to know where to start.

<https://www.hotelchocolat.com/uk/the-ultimate-easter-hamper.html>



Lindt LINDOR Milk Chocolate Egg x 48 - £34

Since 1845, the Lindt Master Chocolatiers have combined expertise and the highest-quality ingredients from around the world to produce the finest chocolates to delight your taste buds. Experience bliss with Lindt LINDOR smooth melting milk chocolate this Easter.

<https://www.lindt.co.uk/lindt-lindor-milk-chocolate-egg-28g-x-48>



Amazon: AN EGG-CELLENT EASTER GIFT - £24.99

INCLUDES: 2 x Cadbury Creme Eggs, Cadbury Mini Eggs Bar, Cadbury Oreo Egg, Lindt Lindor Milk Chocolate Egg, Kinder Surprise Egg Multipack, Milkybar Mini Eggs Bag, Malteser White Bunnies Bag & much more!

<https://tinyurl.com/3k8xym63>



MOUTHWATERING EASTER RECIPES



LAMB AND RED WINE GRAVY

Gathering the family round the table for an Easter dinner is always a special occasion. And what better way to turn a special occasion into a memorable one than preparing a delicious lamb dinner for the main course.

Celebrity chef James Martin has put together a herb-crusted leg of lamb dish with red wine gravy for BBC Good Food that is certain to make the mouth water and would certainly make for a stunning centrepiece to an Easter Sunday roast dinner.

INGREDIENTS

2.25kg leg of lamb
Three small sliced garlic cloves
Two onions cut into chunks
One carrot cut into chunks
Two tablespoons of dijon mustard

For the crust:

175g of white breadcrumbs
A small bunch of parsley
A small bunch of mint

Five rosemary sprigs
Two crushed garlic cloves
3.5 tablespoons of olive oil

For the gravy:

Two tablespoons of plain flour
400ml of red wine
One litre of lamb or beef stock
One to two teaspoons of Dijon mustard
A knob of butter

This dish will take less than half an hour to prepare and two hours to rest and will feed eight people.

Start off by heating the oven to 220c, or 200c for a fan oven or gas mark 7. Using a knife, make small slits into the lamb and place a slice of garlic into each hole. Put the onions and carrot into a flameproof roasting tin and pop the lamb on top, before seasoning with salt and pepper. Pour 250 millilitres of water into the base of the tin and roast for 30 minutes.

While the meat is cooking away, make the crust by combining all the 'for the crust' ingredients and season with salt and pepper. Take the lamb out of the oven after the 30 minute mark and turn the oven down to 190c, 170c or gas mark 5. Brush the mustard over the lamb then layer on the crust, before returning the lamb to the oven for a further one-and-a-half hours. Make sure to keep an eye on the lamb while cooking and add water to the base of the tin if it dries out.

After cooking, take the lamb out of the tin, cover with tin foil and leave to rest for 30 to 40 minutes.

Celebrity chef James Martin has put together a herb-crusted leg of lamb dish with red wine gravy for BBC Good Food that is certain to make the mouth water.

The final step is making that all important gravy. Take the roasting tin, with the vegetables still in it, and put it on the hob. Whisk in flour and cook for one minute, before adding the wine and leave it to bubble for one minute. Add the stock, bring it to the boil then simmer for roughly 10 to 15 minutes until thick. If you want your gravy even thicker, stir in some of the crust which may have fallen from the lamb earlier. Put the gravy through a sieve into a pan, add mustard and stir through the butter. And there you have it, an incredible lamb roast that is sure to live long in the memory.



EASTER EGG BROWNIES

Let's face it, Easter is mainly about seeing how many sweet treats we can enjoy using the excuse "it is Easter after all".

One recipe which is bound to go down well with the whole family, from ages two to 102 is some good old brownies, with an Easter twist.

INGREDIENTS

175g of butter
200g of milk chocolate
225g of soft brown sugar
Two medium eggs
One tablespoon of vanilla extract
100g of plain flour
30g of cocoa powder
Mini chocolate eggs



Start off by preheating the oven to 180c, 160c for a fan oven or gas mark 4.

Grease a baking tin with butter and line it with baking paper.

Combine the butter and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the chocolate in a bowl and microwave for one minute.

Stir the mixture and heat in short bursts under it has fully melted.

Let this mixture cool down a bit while you move on.

Mix the eggs, sugar and vanilla extract in a different bowl before adding the chocolate mixture and the mini chocolate eggs and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ of the chocolate. Stir in the flour and coco powder and mix the whole thing well.

Pour it into the tin and bake for around 20 minutes, until a crust starts to form on the surface.

Leave it to cool for around half-an-hour before slicing, and more importantly, enjoying the chocolate treats.

One recipe which is bound to go down well with the whole family, from ages two to 102 is some good old brownies, with an Easter twist.





SPECIAL GUEST GUIDE MONTHLY GARDENING



Angela Greaves

Instagrammer, The Learner Gardener, aka Angela Greaves, who has been featured in Kitchen Garden magazine, gives us her top tips for the month of April in the garden.

It might not feel like it, but summer really is just around the corner, and from this month onwards, the gardening calendar really starts to get going. You've spent the winter months planning and now it's time for action. But where to start?

Here's a few jobs to get you prepped for the buy season ahead.

- 1. Continually deadhead spring flowering bulbs.** This will tidy up any messy borders and put the energy back into build development for next year's displays
- 2. Sow hardy annuals indoors or under glass.** It's time to get a head-start on those annuals, by sowing seeds indoors. If, like me, you're lucky enough to have a greenhouse you can start to make use of this, alternatively a sunny windowsill will

work just as well. Native wildflowers can be sown now, along with many varieties of more traditional flowers, such as marigolds, sunflowers, and calendula. Remember to save some seeds for direct sowing outside once the risk of frost has gone (approx. mid May)

3. Set tomatoes, aubergines, and chillies seeds now! If you haven't set them already, now is your last chance to get those seeds going. You can also start, marrows, courgette, summer cauliflower, spinach, Swiss chard and lettuce indoors for planting out later.

4. Resist the temptation to head to the garden centre until later in the month. For most UK gardeners it is still slightly too early to think about buying "garden ready" plants. With the risk of frosts still looming, you will be much better to hang on until the end of April/beginning of May before you can indulge in some instant gardening. Although, of course, if you have a greenhouse and the temptation and lure of the nursery is too real, then you can pop them inside for a few weeks!

5. Protect new shoots from slug and snail damage. Using Eggshells or grit around



the bottoms of fresh new shoots of vulnerable plants will defend against dreaded slugs. As they grow, plants will be less susceptible to attacks.

6. Plant out potatoes. If you're planning on growing potatoes, now is the time! If you've managed to pop them on a windowsill to "chit" (start to grow shoots) then great but if not, don't panic. Pop them in a windowsill for a week or so and then plant on.

7. Keep calm and carry-on weeding! Getting ahead with your weeding now will really save you some time in the height of the season. The earlier you can get in and pull out the perennial weeds, the less vigorously they will be able to establish themselves. If you're into digging, then make use of any colder weather by turning over any empty spaces in the vegetable garden and allowing weed roots to get frosted... if you're a fan of no dig, now is the time to mulch, if you haven't already.

8. Protect fruit blossom from late frosts. Use plant fleece or bubble wrap to protect your precious blossom overnight if temperatures are due to drop. This will prevent any reduction in harvest

9. Wash down your garden furniture and patio! You'll soon be wanting somewhere to

sit and enjoy the summer evenings, so get ahead now and wash down all your furniture. You can buy all sorts of specialist cleaners, but I prefer to use The Pink Stuff multi-purpose cleaner which really does do it all! When it comes to the patio, I don't like to use harsh chemicals, for fear of them getting into the soil. Mix a bucket of water with White Vinegar or baking soda and using a good stiff brush most patios will come up as good as new!

10. Repair and prep your lawn for the summer. If you have a scarifier, then now is a great time to get using it! Firstly, make sure to get out and weed, getting rid of all of those larger perennial weeds to start with. Then either scarify or rake through the lawn to remove moss and then use a fork to place small holes at regular intervals throughout the grass. This will aerate the lawn, allowing it to grow back greener and fuller. Repair any bare patches with seed and keep well-watered.

Follow Angela's gardening journey here - <https://www.instagram.com/the.learner.gardener/>

BLOCKBUSTERS TO WATCH AT THE CINEMA IN APRIL

Films are a part of our lives more than ever, and that very much includes the cinema, despite the rise in home streaming services like Netflix and Amazon Prime

The cinema experience is like no other. The adverts, followed by the trailers, then the announcement that the film is about to begin, then the lights dim, the screen stretches out, and the magic starts. It truly is an experience to behold, and one you can't get at home. So why not visit your local cinema in April? There are plenty of blockbuster movies being released which have been highly anticipated.

MORBIUS (1ST APRIL)

Starring Jared Leto, this new entry from the Marvel/Sony universe acts as a kind of spinoff of the Venom films. Michael Morbius, a doctor who attempts to cure himself of a rare blood disease, inadvertently becomes a super-strong, flying, blood-thirsty vampire.

It truly is an experience to behold, and one you can't get at home.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2 (8TH APRIL)

The sequel to the early 2020 hit, Sonic is back along with two fan-favourite characters from the popular video games. Jim Carrey's evil Dr. Robotnik recruits Knuckles, a spiky-fisted, red echidna voiced by Idris Elba, to take over the world with the Chaos Emeralds. Luckily for Sonic, he'll have the help of Tails, a yellow, two-tailed flying fox, in his latest adventure.

FANTASTIC BEASTS: THE SECRETS OF DUMBLEDORE (15TH APRIL)

With the first of this so-far three part series of films released in 2016, Warner Bros. continues to expand the Wizarding World of Fantastic Beasts by digging into the secrets of Hogwarts' legendary headmaster, portrayed by Jude Law. Mads Mikkelsen takes on the role of the nefarious Grindelwald for this entry, while Eddie Redmayne, Ezra Miller and other Fantastic Beast alumni return for this new spin-off in the "Harry Potter" universe.

EIFFEL (15TH APRIL)

This upcoming flick revolves around celebrated engineer Gustave Eiffel (Duris) as he finishes his collaboration on the Statue of Liberty and is pressured by the French government to design something spectacular for the 1889 Paris World Fair.

THE NORTHMAN (22ND APRIL)

Following up his 2019 psychological thriller *The Lighthouse*, Robert Eggers enlists Alexander Skarsgård, whose Amleth embarks on a quest to avenge his father (Ethan Hawke) and save his mother (Nicole Kidman). The Viking revenge tale takes place in 10th century Iceland and also stars Anya Taylor-Joy, Willem Dafoe, Björk and Claes Bang.

THE GRAND NATIONAL 2022

40 horses and their jockeys will line-up in what is the ultimate test in British horse racing

A National Hunt horse race taking place every year at the Aintree Racecourse in Liverpool, the Grand National is also a steeplechase which first ran in 1839, with horses jumping 30 fences over two laps. The course features much larger fences than those found on conventional National Hunt tracks. Many of these fences, particularly Becher's Brook, The Chair and the Canal Turn, have become famous in their own right and, combined with the distance of the event, create what has been called 'the ultimate test of horse and rider'.

The Grand National is considered the most valuable jump race in Europe, which boasts a total prize fund of £1 million. It is

an event which is prominent in British culture, and has been broadcast live around the world since 1960.

An estimated 500 to 600 million people watch the Grand National in more than 140 countries. The Grand National has been broadcast live on free-to-air terrestrial television in the United Kingdom since 1960, and on radio since 1927.


An estimated 500 to 600 million people watch the Grand National in over 140 countries.

Last year's Grand National was won by Minella Times. This year, the 2022 Grand National will take place on Saturday 9th April at Aintree Racecourse at 17:15, and more than 70,000 people are expected to be in attendance at Aintree on the day.


Here is a list of the top riders and horses expected to perform the best in the event:




CONFLATED - 16/1
Age: 8 / Weight: 11-10 / Official Rating: 167
Trainer: Gordon Elliott



GALVIN - 20/1
Age: 8 / Weight: 11-10 / Official Rating: 167
Trainer: Ronnie Bartlett & Gordon Elliott



MELON - 50/1
Age: 10 / Weight: 11-06 / Official Rating: 163
Trainer: Marie Donnelly & Willie Mullins




CHRIS'S DREAM - 50/1
Age: 10 / Weight: 11-05 / Official Rating: 162
Trainer: Robcour Henry de Bromhead



FRANCO DE PORT - 33/1
Age: 7 / Weight: 11-04 / Official Rating: 161
Trainer: Bruton Street V & Willie Mullins



MINELLA TIMES - 25/1
Age: 9 / Weight: 11-04 / Official Rating: 161
Trainer: J P McManus & Henry de Bromhead



ANY SECOND NOW - 14/1
Age: 10 / Weight: 11-02 / Official Rating: 159
Trainer: J P McManus & Ted Walsh

All odds were correct at time of writing.

ALFRESCO IN STYLE

How to
build an
outdoor
kitchen

An outdoor kitchen takes cooking and eating outside to the next level. As opposed to a simple BBQ or pizza oven, with all the mess that comes with treks back and forth between the kitchen, why not embrace the ultimate outdoor cooking experience and build your own outdoor kitchen with worktops, a range of cooking abilities and a sink, all made stylish to impress friends and family.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

1. Cement backer board
2. Porcelain tiles for back and sides
3. Porcelain tiles for worktop
4. Treated timber
5. Heavy duty nails
6. Waterproof tile adhesive
7. Heavy duty screws
8. Waterproof grout
9. Waterproof tile adhesive
10. Spirit level
11. Drill
12. Grout float
13. Tile adhesive float



STEPS

1. Ensure you have a flat base, ideally concrete or a patio before starting your build. Then decide what is important to you. Is it a pizza oven, a BBQ, a smoker, or something else? Then design around your focal point. For this design we are using a homemade BBQ as the focal point with a pizza oven in the corner on the worktop.
2. Pick your tiles. Depending on what style you want, you may want a plain outdoor kitchen, alternatively, you may want a more Mediterranean feel. So, mosaic tiles for the worktops would look fantastic with some warm terracotta tiles on the walls and back.
3. Once you've picked your tiles, you now need to design and measure your kitchen. Do you want a U-shaped kitchen, an L-shaped kitchen or just a simple straight kitchen? A U-shaped or an L-shaped kitchen doesn't make it any more difficult, just potentially a little more expensive because of the materials you need.
4. Once you have your design, now you need to measure to work out how much timber you need. To work this out, we have measured the homemade BBQ in the centre with two worktops/units on either side. For these worktops/units you will create a frame with the treated timber. The average, comfortable height for worktops is 90cm so use that as your height, and then measure the depth and length of the other timber you want.



Why not embrace the ultimate outdoor cooking experience and build your own outdoor kitchen with worktops and a range of cooking abilities.

5. Once you have picked up your timber and other tools and materials, now is the time to start the initial build. Screw the timbers together using heavy-duty, extra-long screws until it is sturdy. Put the frames into place and get the cement-backer board ready. You will need two people to put the cement backer board into place. One to hold the weight and another to seal it into place using a nail gun. You will be putting cement backer board on the top, sides and back, so keep going until you have a solid unit.

6. When you have a solid unit, apply waterproof tile adhesive using a tiling float to the sides of the units and start sticking your tiles on. Once you are happy with one side, move onto the back and ends and then leave to set as per the tiling adhesive instructions.

7. Now apply tiling adhesive to the worktop cement backer board and start applying the decorative tiles you have chosen. Again, leave to set before then going over all sides and the top with waterproof tiling grout.

8. Move the units into their final place either side of the handmade BBQ. These are your basic units and worktops for your outdoor BBQ.



A pergola makes a fantastic addition and aesthetically pleasing finish to any outdoor kitchen.



EXTRAS

- If you wish to add a sink, during step 5 cut-out a hole in the backerboard for a sink and put into place with sealant before tiling. You can plumb this up with running water simply from the mains using pipe, likewise, you can add a waste pipe to run into the drains.

- Likewise, if you want to add doors to the units, when you are building the base include a shelf at the bottom and the middle using MDF. Cut out a door hole from the cement backer board at the side and attach this to a piece of MDF which is the same size as the door cut-out using tile adhesive. Add a hinge to create the door. Close the door and continue tiling as per step 7.

- A pergola makes a fantastic addition and aesthetically pleasing finish to any outdoor kitchen. These are best to source from FB marketplace, eBay or from an outdoor shop as it will be easier to build.



Longfields, Swaffham

£475,000



Extremely well presented, spacious detached four bedroom chalet style house with balcony situated on the popular Longfields area of Swaffham. This superb property offers two reception rooms, conservatory, two luxury shower rooms, tandem garage and ample parking. Viewing is highly recommended.

01760 721389

info@longsons.co.uk

CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE NO OBLIGATION VALUATION

Bishop Drive, Brandon Road

OIEO £300,000



Very recently built detached three bedroom house situated on the outskirts of Swaffham. This superb property has much to offer and includes underfloor heating to the ground floor, en-suite shower room, air source heat pump, triple glazing and electric car charging point. Viewing highly recommended

Coburg Close, Watton

OIRO £240,000



NO CHAIN!! A detached two bedroom bungalow with stunning views over open countryside to the rear situated in a quiet cul-de-sac location on the edge of the Norfolk town of Watton. The property offers garage, parking, electric heating and UPVC double glazing. Viewing is highly recommended.

Mill Street, Necton

OIEO £325,000



CHAIN FREE! Modern detached 3 bedroom bungalow with garage, built in 2015 and situated in the well serviced popular village of Necton. Located in a cul-de-sac location, this superb property benefits from en suite shower room, kitchen/diner, under floor heating, enclosed gardens and double glazing.

Lee Warner Road, Swaffham

£335,000



A very well presented link-detached four bedroom house situated on a popular development on the outskirts of Swaffham. This superb property is tucked away on the development and offers modern open plan kitchen/dining/garden room, garage, parking and en-suite. Viewing highly recommended.

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Old Vicarage Park, Narborough

£300,000



CHAIN FREE! Well presented spacious three bedroom detached bungalow situated in the popular Norfolk village of Narborough. The property offers two reception rooms, garage, parking for several vehicles, gardens, oil fired central heating and UPVC double glazing. Viewing highly recommended.

Westfields, Narborough

OIEO £240,000



NO CHAIN! A detached two bedroom bungalow with garage and gardens situated in the popular Norfolk village of Narborough with good links to the A47. The property offers oil central heating, UPVC double glazing, log burning stove in the lounge and parking. Viewing is highly recommended.

We're now well into 2022 but we're still celebrating the opening of our new office in Watton!



“

We are absolutely delighted to be taking over the reins of Mullenger & Co in Watton. We wish Tim and his colleague Alan both a very happy and long retirement. To say we are excited about the new venture in Watton is an understatement.

We can't wait!

”

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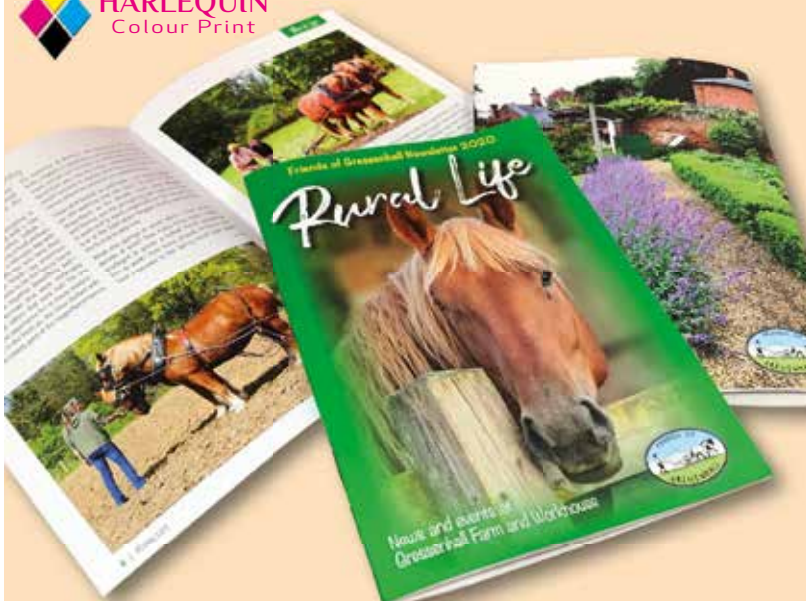
Southlands, Swaffham

£270,000



CHAIN FREE!! A detached two bedroom bungalow situated on the sought after Southlands development in the market town of Swaffham. The property offers garage, parking, gardens, kitchen/dining room, gas central heating and UPVC double glazing. Viewing is highly recommended.

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MEET OUR TEAM...



Gary Long
Director

01760 721389
gary@longsons.co.uk



Kevin Wilson
Director

01760 721389
kevin@longsons.co.uk



Kyle Clarke
Manager

01760 721389
kyle@longsons.co.uk



Imogen Walker
Negotiator

01760 721389
imogen@longsons.co.uk

01760 721389

info@longsons.co.uk

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Vicki Bowen
Negotiator

01760 721389

vicki@longsons.co.uk



Larry Faircloth
Lettings Negotiator

01760 721389

larry@longsons.co.uk



Kerrie Blowers
Administator

01760 721389

kerrie@longsons.co.uk



Sharon Pascoe
Lettings Administrator

01760 721389

sharon@longsons.co.uk



Amber Wilson
Digital Marketing

01760 721389

amber@longsons.co.uk

Present your house for sale by de-cluttering...

Maximise your home's potential and create spacious rooms enticing potential buyers – simply by de-cluttering!

“ De-cluttering allows you to... maximise your space, emotionally prepare you to move, and will allow you to focus your buyers on what is important ”

If you are looking to sell your house, or have had your home on the market for a while now, then you probably want to get the maximum sale price in the quickest time. There are a few things you can't control – but the one thing that is in your control, is the look and feel of the interior and exterior.

While it's worth spending time fixing and cleaning your house before potential buyers come and view, it's also important to de-clutter. This creates spacious rooms and also allows you to decrease and organise your personal items before you move yourself. Of course it's understandable that you don't to want spend money, time and energy on a home you are about to leave, however, a lot of people are looking for a house in which they can move straight into. Maintaining your

property might even save you thousands of pounds; it could even reduce added expenses of living in your home whilst waiting for a sale. And it might even help avoid possible reductions in the asking price.

The main reason in which people move house tends to be because they lack space in their current home. They want a home that is spacious and in which they can grow into. If a potential viewer comes to your home and sees that there is lack of space, then this will turn them away.

De-cluttering allows you to remove any unnecessary items in an untidy or overcrowded place. It will help maximise your space, emotionally prepare you to move, and will allow you to focus your buyers on what is important.



So where should you start?

You need to create a great first impression and focus on the rooms themselves. You will notice that the first things you see in each room are personal items. Where possible you want to create the look of a

them into things you want to keep and things you want to get rid of. You may even find that you have collected a cupboard full of paper work. Get yourself organised! Don't just throw it all away, but file it and go through it thoroughly. This will also make it easier when you move.

De-personalising can also be a great way to de-clutter. Too many personal effects can be distracting to buyers. They want to see a house in which they can make their own memories rather than seeing yours. Again, personal items can be stored away. Remember

“ Where possible you want to create the look of a lifestyle that the potential buyer want. This usually has a ‘show home’ feel, rather than a ‘lived in’ feel. Minimising your things is the quickest way to do this: you want to ensure that potential buyers can do simple things, like, open any doors easily, ensuring that there are no obstacles.

lifestyle that the potential buyer want. This usually has a ‘show home’ feel, rather than a ‘lived in’ feel. Minimising your things is the quickest way to do this: you want to ensure that potential buyers can do simple things, like, open any doors easily, ensuring that there are no obstacles.

So, what do we mean by clutter? There are two types: genuine clutter, and items that you want to keep but don't work for the sale of your property.

Genuine Clutter:

You need to go through the space and sort out each item, categorising

You also want to focus on little things like DVDs, books and trinkets. These items may have some small value so sell them or donate them to charity. Get rid of any old shoes and coats that are lying about in your porch or hallway. You might want to hide away the coats and shoes you do currently wear. Store them in your wardrobe, while you have viewings.

Items that you want to keep but don't work for the sale of your property:

You may want to consider putting some items in storage while you sell your home. Sometimes items are too large or even too small for some spaces and can make the room look odd. If you want to keep these particular items, then store them until you move into your new home.

that this is only a temporary way of living and hopefully it won't be for long! If you find you are keeping more things than you are throwing out, then think about whether or not it's in the right room or do you even need it now?

As previously mentioned, you can attempt to sell some of the things you have acquired over the years. Use sites like eBay, Gumtree and social networking sites to try and sell items. You may want to even hold a house sale for the remaining items that you can't sell. Failing that, why not donate to charity.

The end goal is still the same and it's important to help potential buyers envision your house as theirs. So remember, de-cluttering will make your home more spacious and entice potential buyers!

Top Tips!



If you are throwing away paperwork, shred anything that is confidential



De-clutter before agents come and take photos of your property. This will help attract more potential viewers online and get that first good impression



Don't spend too long on certain items and don't get distracted. Keep yourself motivated and race against the clock!



Make it fun! Play some music or watch TV while you de-clutter





Your step-by-step guide to the conveyancing process

Once a sale has been agreed and is in the hands of your solicitor, it will go through the following stages. Sometimes additional work will be needed – for example, if the property is leasehold or is yet to be registered with the Land Registry. It is also important for buyers to discuss the availability of their deposit with their solicitor early in the transaction, and we strongly recommend that you contact your solicitor regularly so that they can keep you fully up-to-date with the progress and the latest timescales.

Seller's solicitor's steps

- Obtain a copy of the Title Deeds (or office copies if the title is registered)
- Obtain a copy of the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) (if applicable)
- The seller(s) will return a completed Property Information Form and a Fixtures, Fittings and Contents Form to the solicitors
- Copies of the above documents, plus a draft contract – this is known as an 'Information Pack' – will be sent to the buyer's solicitor
- Answer the buyer's solicitor's additional enquiries (for example, specific questions about fixtures and fittings) and obtain copies of any planning consent documents
- Agree the contract and arrange for the sellers to sign it in readiness of the exchange (below)
- All parties agree completion dates and the contracts are exchanged

Between exchange and completion

- Obtain redemption figures from the mortgage lender and reply to requisitions on title
- Approve the transfer and arrange for the seller(s) and buyer(s) to sign
- Receive the agent's fee account and seek the seller's consent to settle this out of completion funds

Completion date

This is the date the ownership of the property passes from the seller to the buyer, and it follows the successful transfer of funds. It's the date that the whole process works towards.

Upon completion

- Receive completion funds and (only when this has been completed) instruct your estate agent to release the keys to buyers. Redeem mortgage and forward the financial statement. Forward any surplus funds (unless these are being used to fund an onward purchase). Ensure all outstanding bills are paid
- Forward transfer documents and deeds to the buyer's solicitors
- Forward evidence of 'discharge of mortgage' to the buyer's solicitors

Buyer's solicitor's steps

- Obtain the Information Pack, including a copy of the EPC (if applicable) from the sellers' solicitor and raise any additional queries
- Initiate any specialist searches (for example: a coal search). Submit local, environmental and water searches and a chancel check. This takes about 10 working days in total, and enquiries are then usually raised from the results
- Approve the contract when all enquiries are satisfactory and complete. (At this stage, a mortgage transfer deed will need to be signed and witnessed)
- Receive a mortgage offer and instructions from the lender and deal with any conditions set out by them. Make sure that life cover and buildings insurance is being arranged
- Request the deposit, report back to the buyer, and arrange for the contract to be signed. Place buildings insurance and life cover in force
- All parties agree completion dates and the contracts are exchanged

Between exchange and completion

- Raise 'requisitions on title' and prepare the draft transfer deed
- Report on title to mortgage lender and obtain funds for completion, including Stamp Duty (if appropriate)
- Prepare accounts, obtain signature to mortgage deed and undertake final Land Registry and Land Charges searches

Completion date

This is the date the ownership of the property passes from the seller to the buyer, and it follows the successful transfer of funds. It's the date that the whole process works towards.

Upon Completion

- Forward to the seller's solicitors the balance of funds - it is only then that they can authorise the release of the keys. Receive from the seller's solicitors, the transfer document deeds
- Stamp the Transfer Deed, register the buyer's ownership with the Land Registry and forward the deeds to the lender or client (where appropriate)

Contract - The agreement that sets out the main terms that have been agreed - for example: price, address, names, etc. Two copies are drawn up, and each party signs one in readiness for the exchange of contracts.

Deposit - The part of the purchase price (usually 10%) which the buyer pays on exchange of contracts.

Exchange of contracts - The swapping of signed contracts by the solicitors (together with the buyer's deposit). After this, the contract is binding.

Energy Performance Certificate - This contains information on energy use, energy performance, carbon dioxide emissions, and fuel bills.

Land Registry - The Government department that records who owns what land, and under what conditions.

Local Authority Search - A list of questions that are specific to the property and intended, for example, to discover if there have been any planning applications on the property, if the road to the house is maintained by the council, etc.

Mortgage Redemption Figure - The amount required to repay the outstanding capital/ interest of a mortgage.

Property information form/fixtures, fittings and contents form - Standard forms about the property that the seller answers for their solicitor (for example: what will be left behind, details of guarantees, etc.)

Title Deeds - Legal documents that prove ownership of land/buildings, and the terms on which they are owned.

Transfer of Title - The document that passes the ownership from the seller to the buyer.

Stamp Duty for buy to let investors and second home owners - An additional tax, paid by the buyer purchasing an additional property that is not their main residence. It includes buy to let landlords and those buying second homes and holiday homes. The higher rates will be 3 percentage points above the current rates of duty shown below.

Requisition on title - An enquiry relating to the completion arrangements.

Seller's Pack - This comprises a Property Information Form, a Fixtures, Fittings and Contents Form, a copy of the title deeds and the draft contract.

Stamp Duty - Currently, the Stamp Duty threshold for residential properties is £125,000. For first-time buyers, you'll get a discount as long as the purchase price is £500,000 or less.

However, how much you pay is also dependent on whether you already own another property or if you're a non-UK resident.



Moving house?

From meter readings to removal companies, there's so much to remember when moving house. Here's our checklist of what to do and when

First of all, congratulations on your new home! The excitement has probably now kicked in but moving home can also be one of the most stressful and emotionally draining things you can do. However, careful organisation and planning can help decrease the stress and anxiety of moving. This comprehensive and essential checklist will help you do just that.

Eight weeks - Research

Ideally, you want to start packing away any non-essential items as early as possible. This includes any items stored away in the loft, garage and shed. If you are not using it, pack it. Looking into your new area is also important, try to do this around eight weeks before you move. You might need to think about transferring your children to different schools and ordering new uniforms too. At this point, ensure you are also documenting all your important information away: that includes contact details, dates, contracts and information regarding your solicitor.

Six weeks - Removal companies or do it yourself?

Now would be the perfect time to decide on a local removal company. Or if you don't have too much to move, you may want to do it yourself. You could even look into different van hire companies. At this point you've probably started packing away some bits, but if there is anything you decide not to take, then look into selling these items or donating them to charity. This will also give you an idea on the volume of items you have to move.

Four weeks - Notify utility companies

This would be a good time for you to notify utility companies and inform them about your move to switch over. This includes gas and electricity, council tax, internet, phone rental and TV. You should also consider changing any car insurance, tax, memberships, phone contracts and inform your bank about the move. Now's the time to also arrange a date to have your new house cleaned before you move



“ It will be worth packing a night bag each to help everyone settle in, which means you won't have to rummage through everything to find your toothbrush! ”

in, and start ordering any new furnishings for your new property. Start packing away more items, that being, out of season clothes, books, dvd's and even bulky items, like TV's that aren't used often.

Two weeks - Confirm all details

Confirm your move with your removal company or van hire, estate agents and schools. If possible, try to organise someone to look after your pets and children for the day of your move, as this can also be a stressful time for them too. If your removal company doesn't disassemble any furniture or sort out the un-plumbing for the washing machine, then now would be the ideal time to organise these. Remember to also cancel any local services you receive: this could be window cleaners, gardeners and newspaper deliveries. You should now also think about re-registering to vote and getting your post re-directed after your moving date. Continue packing away more furnishings, kitchen appliances and crockery that you won't be using for the next couple of weeks.

24 hours - Final check and walk round

You now have only 24 hours before you move, so double check that everything is packed away and ready for transit. It will be worth packing a night bag each to help everyone settle in, which means you won't have to rummage through everything to find your toothbrush! You may want to create an inventory of your boxes and

furniture to help you keep track of what you have and to help you ensure it doesn't go missing.

Moving day

Today is the day! You need to be ready for when your removal company comes. Ensure that you let them know if there are any fragile boxes that need extra care when handling. If you're moving yourself, then pack up your car or van and work out how many trips it may take. Before you leave, also take note of your final meter readings and send these off to your provider. Don't forget to leave your keys for the new owners!

You have arrived at your new home!

Give your removal company instructions of which boxes go in which rooms and make sure you are happy with everything that has arrived. Ensure you check for any damage before the movers leave. Read your new utility meters and send your readings of to your supplier. Taking photos of them will also ensure you have the correct reading if you need them again in the future. Unpack your essentials such as bed linen and clean towels. Don't worry about the rest, it isn't going anywhere! Order a takeaway, have a cup of tea and enjoy your first night with your family.

Right, so now you're all moved in, it's time to settle down, unpack and enjoy your new place. Remember, planning is essential to ensure your move runs stress free.

Checklist

Eight weeks

- Pack non-essential items
- Research your new area (transfer schools and order new uniform)
- Keep all important documents

Six weeks

- Decide on a local removal company
- Clear out any unwanted items
- Keep packing

Four weeks

- Notify utility companies
- Start preparation for your new house
- Keep packing

Two weeks

- Finalise all details
- Organise pet and child care
- Cancel local services
- Keep packing

24 hours

- Check every room and ensure everything is packed
- Pack a night bag so everything is to hand
- Collect your new keys
- Make sure your phone is fully charged so you can get in touch with the estate agents or removal company

Moving in

- Prepare for the arrival of the removal company and give them directions/your contact details
- Ensure everything is ready to move
- Record meter readings

On arrival

- Give removal company instructions of what goes where
- Check for any damage before they leave
- Read your new utility meters and send them off to your supplier
- Check if the previous owners have left anything behind
- Unpack essentials
- Order a takeaway and sit back and relax!



Want to treat yourself to a proper removal company for your next move or are you prepared to do it yourself

Removal company or brave it yourself?

You're excited about your new home and location but the process of packing, organising and actually moving all of your items is something no-one really ever looks forward to. Not only that but you also have to contact utility companies, maintain a job, keep your children happy and clean your entire house. You do have super powers, right?

Removal companies

Unless you live in a small property or flat, it could be worth hiring a professional removal company to help relieve some of the stress on the day. They have many skills and experience and some of the services they can provide include packing and

unpacking, dismantling and assembling furniture, loading your belongings quickly and securely, including those fragile and specialist items. They can even supply you with packing materials.

Hiring a removal company will also allow you the time to collect the keys to your new home. You also won't have to worry about the exhausting physical side of things, that being carrying boxes back and forth. Some services are great if you don't have much time to plan and get these done yourself; however these do often come at a premium and may not be suitable for those on a budget. When choosing a removal company

You also won't have to worry about the exhausting physical side of things, that being carrying boxes back and forth



its key to look at those which have good recommendations and reviews, as you need a company you can rely on. You can use comparison sites, such as comparemymove.com and reallymoving.com, to help find you the best deals.

Getting quotes

You should aim to get at least three quotes from removal companies, preferably from firms which will come out to your property rather than those who just estimate the cost over the phone, as you don't want any nasty charges later on. Plus it will give the company an accurate idea of any restricted areas in your home, if they can park a van or lorry, and how many

items you have. You should also ask for the price to be broken down so you can see just how much you are paying for when it comes to certain aspects like insurance, packing, an hourly rate, mileage and any storage costs.

Once you have found a removal company, it can be useful to send them a briefing sheet that includes information about any items which need to be specially packed, any difficult or large items, plus any carpets and curtains which need moving. Finally, it can also be helpful to send them a floor plan of the new property so they can unload efficiently.

Top tips for packing

When packing, ensure you don't overload your boxes with heavy items, as these will be difficult to lift and could cause a back injury.

Fill any empty gaps using old newspaper, clothing, socks or even tea towels. This will help secure any items when they are being moved.

Create an inventory and label all your boxes and write the contents on each box with a marker. That way you will know which room each box is to go in. And if you are super organised, you could even colour code each room!

Pack heavier boxes on the bottom. This might seem like common sense but it will ensure that any of your fragile items won't break.

Pack a survival box. These are the things that you will need first and should include paper towels, bin bags, cutlery, the kettle, some mugs, tea, coffee, milk, sugar and finally, some toilet paper!

MOVING HOME THIS SPRING

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Spring has sprung and we here at Longsons have everything you need to get moving. With our innovative marketing and excellent customer service, get a spring in your step today.



Contact us to book your **FREE** property valuation today.