

PROPERTY NEWS



HALLOWEEN HISTORY

WHY WE DO WHAT WE DO AT HALLOWEEN

HALF-TERM BREAK

HALF-TERM BREAK IDEAS IN
THE UK FOR THE FAMILY

OCTOBER GARDENS

THINGS TO DO IN THE
GARDEN IN OCTOBER

JAMS & CHUTNEYS

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR
FRUIT AND VEG HARVEST

HALLOWEEN TV & FILM

A SELECTION OF SPINE
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HOW TO DEAL WITH SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER DURING THE COLDER, DARKER MONTHS



Those who tend to suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder will sadly find themselves facing their seasonal challenge soon when the clocks 'fall back' for the autumn and winter months. But there are effective ways you can deal with this condition

With the clocks soon to fall back to standard time in accordance with Daylight Saving Time (DST), and now that the summer weather is beginning to slip away, mood changes will be beckoning on the horizon as for many Seasonal Affective Disorder will soon begin to loom.

WHY DO THE CLOCKS EVEN NEED TO CHANGE TWICE A YEAR, AND WHY DOES THIS CHANGE OUR MOODS?

In 1784 the American hero Benjamin Franklin (an inventor as he partly was) proposed the idea of aligning waking hours with daylight hours for the main purpose of conserving candles. In his formal proposition, Franklin suggested that waking up earlier in the summer would economise candle usage and he calculated considerable savings to be had by doing so. It wasn't until 1905, however, that the idea

WELCOME TO THE OCTOBER ISSUE!

October is one of my favourite months. Despite the clocks changing, and the cooler weather, it is a perfect time to get snuggled up with friends and family on the sofa and enjoy catching up with everyone after a busy summer.

And in October you are never short of something to watch. On page 7 we reveal our top list of spooky movies and TV to watch out for in the runup to Halloween. Talking about Halloween, on pages 4&5 we uncover the origins of this spooky festival.

However, for a lot of people, October can be a struggle. With earlier, darker nights, and cooler weather, Seasonal Affective Disorder can set in. On pages 2&3, we investigate S.A.D and offer some tips on how to combat it.

As always, on pages 10&11 we look at what to do in your garden this month, and coming inside, on pages 8&9, we get in-depth looking at open-plan extension ideas and how to make the most of your space. Which is a good thing with our feature on pages 14&15 which will give you some fantastic DIY science projects to try out in half-term.

Topping all of this off, we also have a sneaky three-ingredients recipe page, a look at this year's Champions League, and some ideas for a UK half-term getaway.

So get cosy, grab a cuppa and enjoy!

Jonathan Wheatley
Editor

started to be taken more seriously, when it was conceived again, this time by prominent English builder and general outdoorsman William Willett when during a pre-breakfast ride he observed how many Londoners slept through a large part of a summer day.

Thanks to DST, in the warmer, brighter months we make the most of the sunshine and warmth by having an extra hour of it during the evening, so it gets colder and darker later than what would be 'standard.' We put the clocks forward by one hour in spring ('spring forward'), whereas we put the clocks back again to standard time at the end of October ('fall back'), since the warmer, brighter weather is burning out at this stage of the year.

A seasonal pattern, this can have an effect on our moods. Especially for the initial night the clocks have gone back because it means an extra-long night, which has been known to cause disruption to some people's sleep and thus moods. This problem can prove to be a domino effect of sorts and sustain throughout many weeks and months for some, which would then qualify as Seasonal Affective Disorder. Many of us know what it feels like when the sun's out and shining hard – our moods are considerably brighter for it. The opposite is likewise true for many people whereby when the sun and warmth goes away so does the optimism and positivity. As the sun lowers and sets, so to do our moods.

WHAT IS SAD, AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

In more detail, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression which comes and goes in a seasonal pattern, and is sometimes referred to as 'winter depression' since the symptoms are usually more apparent and more severe during the winter periods, although some people with SAD may exhibit symptoms during the summer rather than the winter. The most common symptoms include sleeping too much, having little to no energy, and overeating.

Less sunlight and shorter days are generally thought to be linked to a chemical change in the brain and may be part of the cause of SAD. Having said that, strictly speaking the exact cause of SAD is not fully determined, but it's typically most often linked simply to reduced exposure to sunlight during the shorter autumn and winter days, the main theory being that a lack of sunlight might stop a part of the brain called the hypothalamus working properly, which may affect the production of several hormones including melatonin and serotonin, which can in turn mean sleep deprivation and depression.

Signs and symptoms of SAD may include:

- Feeling depressed most of the day, nearly every day.
- Losing interest in activities you used to enjoy.
- Having low energy.
- Experiencing sleep deprivation.
- Experiencing changes in your appetite or weight.
- Feeling sluggish or agitated.
- Having difficulty concentrating.



WAYS TO DEAL WITH SAD

If you feel your symptoms are similar to most if not all of the above, speaking to a GP would be a healthy next step, and a range of treatments are available for SAD which your GP can refer you to or simply recommend.

The main treatments of which include:

Simple lifestyle measures – glean as much natural sunlight as possible and exercise regularly.

Light therapy – a special lamp called a light box is used to simulate exposure to sunlight.

Talking therapies – cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or counselling can help significantly.

Antidepressant medicine – such as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs).

SHRIEKS AHEAD

Why we do what we do at Halloween

It wasn't that long ago that Halloween was the overlooked autumnal celebration, coming a very distant second to Bonfire Night, that quintessentially English event which marked the demise of Guy Fawkes and his doomed attempt to create chaos by blowing up Parliament.

In fact, Halloween was seen purely as an American thing, before it swept across the western world on a tidal wave of commercialism and a lust for free sweets. However, it all started on this side of the pond around 2,000 years ago.

NIGHT OF THE DEAD

The Celts, who occupied Ireland, mainland Britain and northern France, celebrated their new year on November 1st, a date that marked the end of summer and ushered in the dark, cold days of winter – a time associated with death. They believed that on the night before the new year the boundaries between the living and the dead became thin enough for the spirits to wander the Earth, causing trouble and damaging crops.

The festival of Samhain was created with Druids (priests) tapping into The Other Side to make prophecies to keep the Celts happy and sacrifices to appease their deities. During which time the natives dressed up in animal skins and heads, keeping the spirits from their homes by carving faces on turnips and inserting a lighted candle into the hollowed out vegetable to emit a scary glow.

So, you can see where we are going: Mischievous spirits, dressing up, carving faces into vegetables...

AP-PEEL-ING TO THE ROMANS

As the legions from Rome conquered the Celtic territories, they absorbed Samhain with two of their own festivals: Feralia, a day in late October to commemorate the passing of the dead, and Pomona, the goddess of fruit and trees whose symbol is an apple. Which brings bobbing for apples and toffee apples into the equation.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Eventually, the Catholic feast of All Martyrs Day was established but was later expanded to include saints and moved from May 13th to November 1st. The spread of Christianity supplanted the majority of Celtic beliefs and in 1000AD, the Church made November 2nd All Souls Day in an attempt to replace Samhain with a sanctioned holiday featuring bonfires, parades and more dressing up, this time as saints, angels and devils as a disguise to dupe wandering spirits into believing they were all on the same side. As you can see, a theme is developing.

And as All Saints Day was also widely known as All Hallows Day, the evening before – the traditional night of Samhain – became Hallows Eve and, eventually, Halloween.

SOUL FOOD

During the All Souls Day parades, the poor would wander the crowds begging for food, pretending to be representatives of the dead. Families would take pity and give them "soul cakes" in return for a promise that they would pray for that family's dead relatives.



The Church encouraged this, as it replaced the practice of leaving food and wine for roaming spirits and it was taken up by children who would roam the neighbourhood asking for ale, food and money. The premise was that if the household gave food they would have good fortune for a year, if they didn't a prank would be played. Hence "trick or treat"...

AN AMERICAN TALE

The mass migration to the colonies from Europe meant various ethnic interpretations of Halloween meshed with the beliefs of the Native Americans and a different form of festivity originated. The telling of ghostly stories, witchcraft plays and fortune-telling became popular, but it took the arrival of the Irish escaping the Potato Famine to spread the celebration and as they did so, they replaced turnips with the more readily-available pumpkins.

By the 1800s it became more community based with parties for children, focused on games, seasonal foods ... and festive costumes. The more grisly, supernatural aspect was diluted over time, largely due to the efforts of newspapers and community leaders who wanted to remove the grisly and grotesque. Even the art of "trick or treating" revealed its sweeter side ... a significantly sweeter side.

COUNTING THE COST

And so was born a cultural phenomenon, worth billions to the economies of both the US and Britain. In America, it is the second largest commercial holiday after Christmas, with more than \$6billion spent annually, while in Britain, retail experts predict more than £450million will be spent on ghoulish goodies, making it a more profitable retail event than Valentine's Day.

Romance isn't dead, it's just wearing a skeleton mask.



HALF-TERM BREAK IDEAS FOR ALL THE FAMILY

With half-time arriving, as too do our needs to enjoy the last remaining rays of sunshine of the year



THE COTSWOLDS

Picturesque is perhaps the first word which comes to mind when thinking of the Cotswolds. Famous for some of the most beautiful villages in all of the UK, including Burford, Bourton-on-the-Water, Stow-on-the-Wold and Bibury, the Cotswolds might just be one of the most perfect places to be visiting, and staying, this autumn, either as a family, a couple, or alone. Offering traditional, charming and quaint characteristics, along with fantastic places to eat and drink and an abundance of rural walks and activities to embrace, the Cotswold is a winner all round.

STONEHENGE

Perhaps the most famous collection of prehistoric monuments in the entire world, Stonehenge is a phenomenon which captures the imagination like no other, encompassed as it is by its own mystery. Said to have been built in several stages, the first monument is estimated to have been erected approximately 5000 years ago. During the early Bronze Age many burial mounds were built nearby making this not only a sight to behold but an educational and inspirational trip for the youngsters especially.



GLAMPING LOCATIONS

Glamping has become very well-established in recent years, and encompasses the entire experience of luxury in the great outdoors. Basically the posh version of camping, here are some of the best glamping spots in the UK today:

Little Seed Field, Ripon, North Yorkshire.
The Wildings, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire.
Hill Top Huts, Middleton in Teesdale, County Durham.
Tan-y-Capel Hideaway, Pwllheli, North Wales.
Wheems Organic Farm, Orkney, Scottish Isles.



ZOOS AND WILDLIFE PARKS

There are around 300 licenced zoos in the UK, each of them offering an abundance of wonder to childrens' imaginations everywhere. Last year was a tough year for many zoos and wildlife parks across the UK, since they can be very expensive to run. But there are still plenty operating healthily with happy and chipper animals at the ready to welcome any new visitor to their home.



OUR HALLOWEEN TOP 10 FILM AND TV FIX

As October rolls around, the usual spine-tingling films and TV shows will be available at our fingertips. And among the classics, there are set to be a number of new watches during this spooky season. So as Halloween approaches, here are our picks of all things horror that you should be getting your teeth stuck into.

LAST NIGHT IN SOHO

Arriving in cinemas just two days before Halloween, this new mystery horror centres around an aspiring young fashion designer who finds herself back in time, during the 1960s. It's not just the eerie premise which is exciting though, as the film will be directed by the multi-award winner Edgar Wright (Shaun of the Dead, Hot Fuzz), and will star one of 2020s breakout stars in the acting world, Anya Taylor-Joy (The Queen's Gambit).

THE ADDAMS FAMILY 2

Coming to a screen near you in early October, is this much-anticipated sequel to The Addams Family. In this instalment, Morticia and Gomez grapple with the fact that their family is growing up, and therefore choose to embark on one last family holiday, leading to the usual levels of chaos. Oscar Isaac, Charlize Theron, and Chloe

Grace Moretz will reprise their roles in this animated film, which will also feature voiceovers from Bill Hader and Bette Midler.

LOCKE & KEY

Fans of this Netflix horror drama will be pleased that it will return for a second series. Although an exact release date is yet to be announced, we can expect the plot to follow on from the conclusion of the first series. The first chapter centred around the lives of three children, following the murder of their father. This led them to move into an ancestral home, where they discovered doors which harnessed magic. Although nothing official has been released, we can expect a lot more doors, and a lot more keys...

YOU

A hugely popular addition to Netflix in October will be the third series of the American psychological thriller You. And we've been waiting a while for this one, as the third series was ordered way back in January 2020, just after the release of the second instalment. Little has been mentioned in terms of the plot for this third season, but fans will be glad to know that all of the regular faces will be back on our screens, including Penn Badgely as Joe Goldberg and Victoria Pedretti as Love Quinn.

OPEN PLAN LIVING IS IT FOR YOU?

The Pros and Cons to this Living Trend and how to make it work for you



Open plan living is the buzz word which has taken the housing market and housing renovation market by storm. So, what is it? Is it worth it? And how can you apply this to your home?

The Oxford English Dictionary defines open plan as, "an area or building which does not have inside walls dividing it up into rooms". This usually refers to the main living areas of the home: the kitchen, living room and dining room which are combined into one large free-flow space with few internal walls and fewer 'fixed' zones. In practice, this could mean you dine in your kitchen or can relax in the

space usually allocated as a living room.

Whether open-plan living is suitable for you is a question that needs to be answered by the individual. British architect Andrew Brown spoke to 'houzz', commenting, 'Open-plan living remains extremely popular in the UK, as it seems to sit comfortably with the way most people (and in particular families) live nowadays. There has been a marked downturn in the popularity of formal dining, and this has tied in with the rise of open plan living. While it's common to be asked to design open-plan spaces, it's unusual for clients to request the opposite.'

One benefit of open-plan living is that it brings the family together, whether you're helping the kids with their homework whilst cooking tea or reading a book whilst your partner has a coffee, open-plan living provides space which is multi-functional and can easily be used by multiple people for multiple purposes. Open-plan living is also great for entertaining. A larger space means it is easier for more people to comfortably socialise in one room. Choosing bi-fold doors also offers the possibility of extending the space you have available by opening your room up to the garden. Open-plan living also naturally creates a brighter, lighter space. With fewer light-blocking barriers, natural light is able to pour into the room from rooflights, windows and French or bi-fold doors. Open-plan living will also add value to your home as it is one of the most searched for filters when potential buyers are looking for a new home.

Potential cons are the noise levels. With all family members using one space it can be quickly become noisy as the kettle, dishwasher, kids toys and voices all battle to be heard. You also can't close the door on a messy space. If you

seek solace in an ordered, clutter-free room, this becomes harder to achieve when one space is used for multiple functions. Another thing to consider is the higher heating costs. In homes with more walls, you can choose to heat the spaces you will use that day or evening. With an open-plan layout, you will have to heat the entire space.

If you've considered the pros and cons and decided that open plan living is for you, are ready to consider how to

There has been a marked downturn in the popularity of formal dining, and this has tied in with the rise of open plan living

make it work in your space. If you are fortunate enough to have high ceilings, you could incorporate a mezzanine floor into your design. Mezzanines work well as study spaces, reading nooks or libraries.

If you've knocked through walls to create your open-plan space but are

now finding yourself short on storage, room dividers are a great way to create zones within the space and squeeze in some additional storage. Furniture is also a good way to zone off parts of the space. A breakfast bar separates the kitchen and dining space whilst the sofa is a great way to create a sociable space. Another way to create different zones is to sink sections of the floor. The area around the TV can be sunken to create a cosy, intimate space within the open plan space. Double sided fireplaces can also be effective at creating zones within the room and are a wow feature you're sure to fall in love with. Opt for a bio-ethanol fire as these don't require a chimney so can be placed anywhere. Sliding glass panels or doors can also divide the space into smaller sections within affecting the light flow.

When it comes to open plan living, less is often more. As the space is going to be used daily and will always be 'on-show', keep clutter and unnecessary furnishings to a minimum. Sticking with a simple colour palette and aesthetic will ensure the whole space feels functional and seamless.





GARDENING JOBS FOR OCTOBER

What you need to do this month

Gardening is much like painting the Forth Bridge – in order to have a garden which looks great all year round, it requires continual upkeep. Fortunately, gardening, unlike the painting of the Forth Bridge is an enjoyable past time with a variety of different jobs to do. As we reach October, we have well and truly entered autumn which brings with it (hopefully) crisp skies, sunny mornings and slightly cooler temperatures.

LAWN CARE

A job not to be neglected this month is looking after your lawn. Leaves seem to be perpetually falling this time of year so make sure you take care of your lawn by raking or brushing leaves off the grass. This will prevent your lawn from becoming yellow. You could collect them in a leaf bag, which will turn them into leaf mould which is a fantastic soil conditioner.

Towards the end of the October is also the perfect time for the final grass cut of the year. In order to protect your lawn from winter frost damage, make sure this last cut is leaving the grass slightly longer than in the summer

months. If you're planning on laying fresh turf, October and November are the best months to do so.

TIME TO TIDY UP

Check your greenhouse, pond, gutters and water butts in case they need clearing out. Now is also the time to cover wooden garden furniture or to store it away for the winter. If you have any terracotta pots in your garden, make sure you bring them inside, so they don't freeze and crack.

There will undoubtedly be a lot of leaves and clippings to dispose of so now is the perfect time to start a compost heap or bin. Gather the ingredients together and mix them. Then, put them in a container and cook until they're warm and blended together. A full compost heap will cook itself. Try to get a balanced mix of wet ingredients such as leaves clippings and vegetable peelings and dry elements such as wood ash and newspaper. A good way to mix these together is to pile them into a plastic sheet, mix with a garden fork and then shovel back into the compost bin. In 9-12 months, you



will have rich, crumbly compost ready to feed your plants and soil. Once established, you can routinely add both wet and dry ingredients to the mix.

Look after your trees and shrubs by removing any dead, diseased or dying branches from ornamental trees. In order to reduce the risk of blackspot on your prized roses, remove any leaves which fall around the base of the plants. This prevents sores of fungal disease overwintering in the soil. Do not put these on your compost heap but straight into the bin.

HARVESTING

Have a look over your trees and pick off any rotting fruit as this will spread disease to the tree. Regular pruning of the tree will ensure a consistent yield and make sure the fruit is of good quality. Now is also the time to gather sprouts, leeks, potatoes, carrots and squashes ready for stews, soups and casseroles. For any other late root crops or

salad, invest in fleeces and cloches to keep them dry and warm. Pumpkins are also ready to harvest in October, ready for Halloween! If you have any spare, try hollowing them out to make a bird feeder. If your veg patch is currently empty, dig over any bare patches mixing in organic matter such as horse or chicken manure as you go.

PLANTING

October is the ideal time to plant spring-flowering bulbs to ensure a colourful display when spring arrives. A good rule of thumb is to plant bulbs at a depth which is twice the height of the plant. In borders, plant clumps of bulbs together for an intense hit of colour. Pots and hanging baskets can also be planted now with spring bedding. Pair with bulbs, grasses, cyclamen and violas for a wonderful array of texture and colour. For a Christmas treat, look for hyacinths that are labelled 'prepared' and plant them in vases in early October to guarantee a winter fragrance and hit of colour.



3 IS THE MAGIC NUMBER

3, Yes 3, Ingredient Delights you can make at Home



Our lives just seem to be getting busier and busier, yet we still want to make and eat nutritious and delicious meals. At the end of a busy day, the last thing you want to be doing is opening a recipe book and being faced with a meal which requires a shopping list for its ingredients all on its own- I'm looking at you Ottolenghi. Read on to discover some dinners, desserts and even a canape recipe which require just 3 ingredients.

MAIN COURSES

HAM AND POTATO CASSEROLE

A great option for batch cooking and freezing, this filling casserole is ideal for feeding the whole family. You will need: 4 large potatoes (peeled), 600g cream of mushroom soup and 180g shredded ham hock – that's it! Preheat the oven to 210. Peel 4 large potatoes, chop two into small cubes and parboil for 5 minutes, then drain. Slice the remaining two as thinly as you can and put to one side. In a baking dish, mix the soup, cubed potatoes and ham hock. Top with the thinly sliced potatoes and brush with olive oil. Bake for 55 minutes, serve and enjoy!

MEATBALL AND RED CABBAGE BAKE

Another one suitable for batch cooking and freezing. For this recipe you will need: 400g three bean salad, 300g frozen shredded red cabbage, 360g meatballs (pork or beef – you can choose). Preheat the oven to 200. Bake the meatballs in a large baking dish for 15 minutes. Remove from the oven and scatter with the three bean salad. Spoon over the frozen shredded red cabbage. Mix together and then return to the oven for 10 minutes. Serve and enjoy.

BROCCOLI AND CHICKEN BAKE

You can use chicken, quorn or even salmon in this bake. If you choose to use salmon, stirring through a spoonful of Dijon mustard to the cheese sauce before baking will add a whole new flavour dimension. You will need: 1 large broccoli, 600g cheese sauce, 225g cooked chicken, hot smoked salmon or quorn. Preheat the oven to 220. Cut the broccoli into florets, boil for three minutes and drain. Microwave the cheese sauce for 5 minutes, stirring halfway – add the mustard if using salmon. Tip the broccoli florets into a large baking dish, pour over the cheese sauce and add the cooked chicken, hot smoked salmon or quorn. Bake for 20 minutes and then serve. For extra decadence add grated cheese and breadcrumbs to the dish before baking.

DESSERTS

CHOCOLATE CAKE

Who knew you could make a cake with just 3 ingredients? For this treat, all you need is 8 large eggs, 225g unsalted butter and 450g dark chocolate. Icing sugar and raspberries do look fantastic to serve it with though! This will serve 12. Preheat the oven to 160. Beat the eggs in a mixing bowl until doubled in volume. Add the unsalted butter and chopped dark chocolate to a pan and gently melt over a low heat. Allow to cool slightly and then fold into the eggs. Pour the mixture into a prepared cake tin and wrap the outside of the tin in foil. Place in a large roasting tin one-third filled with boiling water. Bake for one hour or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

CUSTARD TARTS

This recipe will make 6 creamy and delicious tarts. You will need 50g caster sugar, 300g custard and 375g of shortcrust pastry. Preheat the oven to 200. Unroll the ready-rolled shortcrust pastry and cut out 6 pastry discs. Use these to line a 6-hole muffin tin. Fill each pastry case with custard and bake for 20 minutes. Allow to cool and transfer to a rack. Next, in a saucepan, mix together the sugar with 1 tbsp of water and place over a medium heat. Boil until the sugar has dissolved and turned into a dark caramel colour – don't stir! Pour some of the caramel into the middle of each tart. Allow to cool and set, then serve.

CANAPES

MINI MEATBALLS

You will need mini meatballs, cherry tomatoes and mozzarella pearls. Preheat the oven to 200. Spread the mini meatballs out onto a tray and bake for 10 minutes. Halve the cherry tomatoes and thread one half and one mozzarella pearl onto each cocktail stick. Insert a stick into each meatball and return to the oven for 5 minutes. Voila!



HEY, BIG SPENDERS!

Mega-rich clubs are chasing the jewel in European football's crown

The cheques have been signed, the deals done, and the opening shots have been fired. Now the Champions League starts to get serious.

European football's flagship competition is now well into its group stage with the continent's elite clubs and their high-profile recruits hitting their stride as they slip into the two-games-a-week cycle.

This is where coaches and managers earn their mega-bucks salaries, rotating expensively-assembled squads for trips to far-flung locations.

It is also the first time the lesser lights have come into contact with the cash-driven big boys, who did their best to derail the gravy train in the spring by announcing their intention to break away and form their own European Super League with a few of their wealthy mates.

That the majority of the rebels were made to toe the line after a bitter backlash from fans and their domestic bosses has proved, ultimately, to be nothing more than a mild rebuke, as their relentless extravagance hammers a massive golden wedge between them and the have-nots.

It makes the Super League less of a perceived threat and more of a grim reality.

In the meantime, though, the projected return of UEFA's Financial Fair Play regulations – the mechanism by which clubs are encouraged to manage with the money they generate, instead of continually dipping into the deep pockets of their owners – should be an interesting sideshow,

particularly given the intense activity it has allowed in its pandemic-induced break.

It will certainly give the accountants at Manchester City and Paris St Germain something to get their teeth into.

Having hoovered up all their domestic trophies, the biggest bauble of all has so far eluded these two Middle East-owned behemoths, despite substantial investment. City went close last season, losing to Premier League rivals Chelsea in the final, and they have signalled their intent with the ambitious recruitment of Jack Grealish for a record fee.

By contrast, PSG sidestepped a targeted approach and went full-on 'supermarket sweep', their shopping list including the good, the very good and the awesome. Admittedly some were free agents, but adding Lionel Messi, Sergio Ramos, Achraf Hakimi, Gianluigi Donnarumma and Georginio Wijnaldum to a squad including Mbappe, Neymar, Marquinhos, di Maria and Icardi means their payroll probably matches the social care budget for a small European nation.

Yet a bunch of superstars do not necessarily make a cohesive, happy team, and it may be the strategic strengthening by City and their fellow Premier League qualifiers Chelsea, Liverpool and Manchester United will prove more effective... even if they have spent eye-watering sums doing it.

So, don't be surprised if the Champions League semi-finals are heavily populated with English clubs and certainly don't rule out another all-Premier League final in St Petersburg on May 28th next year.

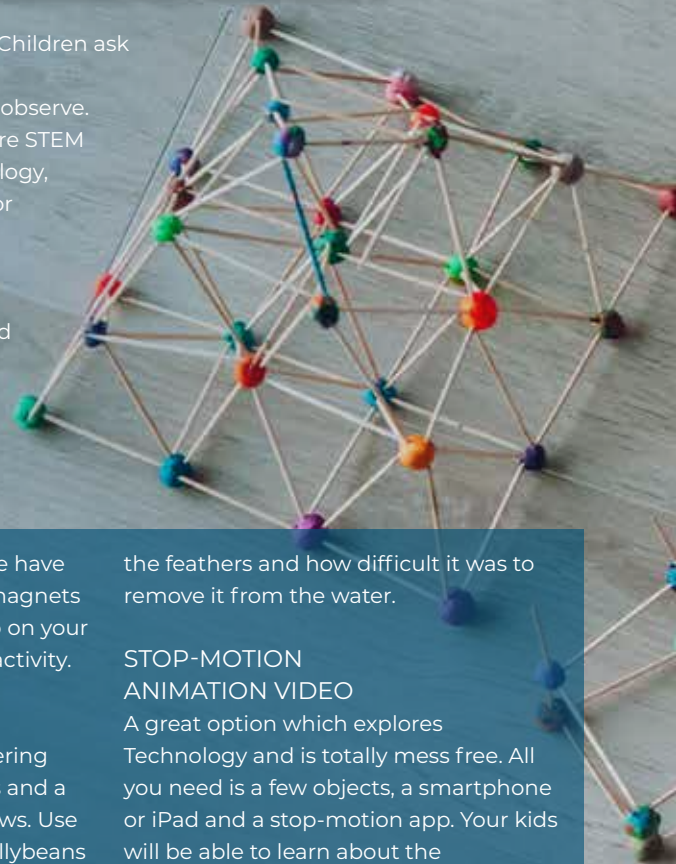
THE FUTURE IS STEM

Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths Projects you can do at Home.

Why is the ocean blue? How do planes stay up? What is a rainbow? Children ask the most intriguing and sometimes difficult to answer questions.

Their innate curiosity about the world around them is a delight to observe. This intrigue is something to be celebrated, nurtured and grown – this is where STEM comes in. When parents or guardians realise STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and maths however, the prospect of completing such activities or projects with their kids can be a tad daunting.

With STEM careers making up a huge part of today's (and likely the future's) economy, it makes sense to feed this fire. The younger children are introduced to such activities, the quicker they will become technologically fluent, innovative and able to work out how and why things work the way they do. There are so many simple STEM activities which can be facilitated at home so why not try one of the below ideas with your kids?



POST-IT NUMBER MATCH

All you need for this Math activity is some sticky notes, a sheet of paper taped to a wall and a marker pen. This 'game' requires kids to hunt around the house for the sticky note numbers and sticks them on the wall over the grouping of dots (or any sticker or your/ your child's choosing) that matching the number. You could also ask the kids to find the sticky notes and then find a set number of objects which matches the note, e.g. 5 toy cars next to the number 5 etc. This will help children to understand the meaning of numeric values and will help with their subitizing skill (ability to look at a group of objects and know how many there are without counting them).

MAGNETIC SLIME

If you have kids, the chances are you will already be adept at making slime. Homemade slime is fun to make and offers a great tactile experience for kids of any age. Add a Science twist to this activity by including iron oxide and magnets to the mix. Getting the slime consistency correct can be a little tricky so can usually be balanced out by either adding more liquid starch or glue. Once the slime is made, you will be able to manipulate it with a strong neodymium

magnet. Your kids are bound to have tons of questions surrounding magnets so make sure you've brushed up on your knowledge before starting this activity.

EDIBLE CONSTRUCTION

All you will need for this Engineering based task is a pile of toothpicks and a bag of jellybeans or marshmallows. Use the toothpicks to connect the jellybeans or marshmallows to create the most interesting structure you can. You will soon see which shapes hold well together, which stack well and which are the most aesthetically pleasing. Try challenging your kids to make a specific house or structure. If sharp toothpicks are not suitable for your child, uncooked spaghetti also works fairly well.

OIL SPILL

This is a great Engineering/Science activity which will get your little people talking about the big issues. Simply mix oil and water in a large container and add a few feathers. Hand out materials such as sponges, paper towels, mini spoons etc and challenge the children to remove the oil from the water and feathers. You can then discuss how oil spills affect the environment, allowing your kids to see how the oil has affected

the feathers and how difficult it was to remove it from the water.

STOP-MOTION ANIMATION VIDEO

A great option which explores Technology and is totally mess free. All you need is a few objects, a smartphone or iPad and a stop-motion app. Your kids will be able to learn about the technology behind film-making and create their own video. Both 'Lego Movie Maker' and 'Stop Motion Studio' are great free apps which will allow you to create basic stop motion animations.

If the idea of setting up STEM activities doesn't appeal to you, there are some great subscription services which will deliver projects (fully resourced) straight to your door. KiwiCo offer a variety of crates full of fantastic activities that you can choose from. Pick a crate to suit your child's interests and their age (KiwiCo have crates suitable for 0-2 years up to 16+). Other companies which offer a similar service include circuitmess, melscience and curiosity-box. Engaging in STEM activities with your child is fun and rewarding. After all, it's often the smallest of people who have the biggest of ideas.



Their innate curiosity about the world around them is a delight to observe.

Montagu Close, Swaffham

£425,000



PRIVATE PLOT, EXTENDED FLEXIBLE FAMILY HOME! Situated in the popular Norfolk market town of Swaffham, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this modern four bedroom detached house offering a spacious and flexible layout throughout with further potential to enhance the property also. The property offers 4 double bedrooms with en-suite to master, Karndean & Amtico flooring to most of the ground floor, large gardens, 3 reception rooms and conservatory!

Priory Place, Sporle

£210,000



Situated in the popular Norfolk village of Sporle, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this semi detached three bedroom house. The property boasts two reception rooms, utility room, gardens, parking and double glazing. Offered for sale CHAIN FREE! Viewing highly recommended!

01760 721389

info@longsons.co.uk

CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE NO OBLIGATION VALUATION

Mill Farm Nurseries, Swaffham

£325,000



A newly refurbished and extended four bedroom detached bungalow, located within the desirable Southlands development in the popular market town of Swaffham. Situated in a cul de sac position on Mill Farm Nurseries, the vendors have thoughtfully extended and refurbished the property to provide flexible accommodation catering to the needs of most. Early viewing is highly recommended to avoid disappointment.

Station Street, Swaffham

£100,000



Situated within close proximity of Swaffham town centre, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this well presented 2 bedroom split level apartment. The property boasts en-suite facilities and main bathroom, living room with feature fireplace, off road parking (accessed via Spinners Lane) and two double bedrooms.

Newton, Castle Acre

OIEO £500,000



Situated in a riverside location on the outskirts of the village of Newton near Castle Acre, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this very well presented detached four bedroom bungalow with sizeable gardens backing onto the River Nar. With open countryside views to the rear across the River Nar, the property offers plenty of opportunity to spot wildlife from the good size rear garden. The bungalow offers a double garage, parking for numerous vehicles, en-suite shower room and four piece bathroom suite, kitchen/dining room and double glazing.

Low Road, Pentney

£230,000



Situated in the rural Norfolk village of Pentney, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this attractive carrstone character cottage with good size gardens backing onto open countryside. This superb property is full of character and boasts a large fully insulated summer house/garden office with electric light and power enjoying field views to the rear, a wooden workshop with electric light and power, kitchen/breakfast room, wood burning stove, good size gardens and oil fired central heating.

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CALL US TODAY FOR A FREE NO OBLIGATION VALUATION

Northwell Pool Road, Swaffham

£130,000



Situated on a popular retirement development for the over 55's with warden assisted living, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this well presented detached two bedroom leasehold bungalow. Located within easy reach of Swaffham town centre, the property offers a modern re-fitted kitchen and shower room, modern electric heating, communal gardens and residents parking. Offered for sale CHAIN FREE! Viewing highly recommended.

Lynn Road, Swaffham

£125,000



Conveniently situated within easy reach of Swaffham town centre, Longsons are delighted to bring to the market this two bedroom end terraced period property. Boasting a brick built inglenook fireplace with inset multi fuel burning stove, gas central heating and a rear courtyard garden with a brick/flint outhouse/store. Offered for sale CHAIN FREE. Viewing highly recommended!



MEET YOUR BROKER DAVID ALLEN



David has many years of experience in the Mortgage & Protection industry.

If you would like more information or to setup an appointment, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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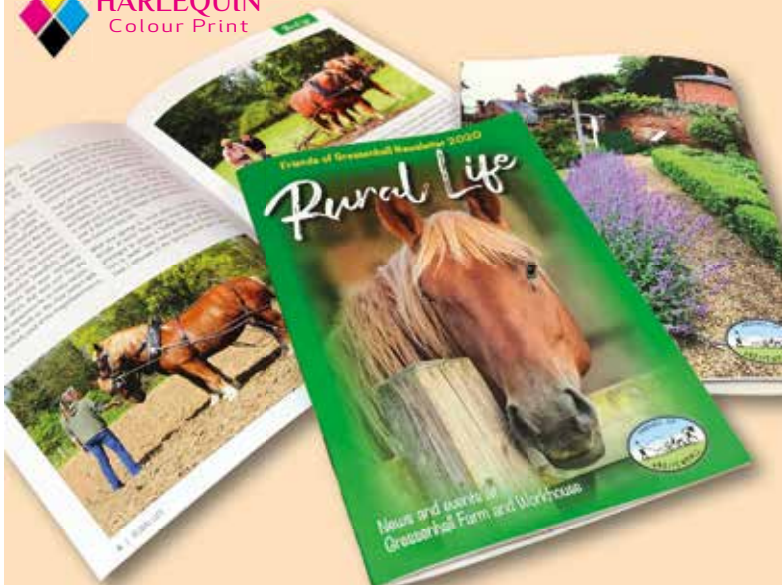
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Gary Long MNAEA | DIRECTOR

Gary is a co-founder of Longsons and has been a director since the business was created in 2010. He is still very 'hands-on' within the business and as a keen photographer provides professional high-quality property photos and floorplans for most of our new instructions. Gary has lived in Norfolk for 30 years and has recently taken up golf and is a keen cyclist! His chosen superpower would be the ability to fly, his dream holiday destination would be anywhere warm, sunny and with a beach; his ideal party guest would be Carl Pilkington because he never fails to make him laugh.

Kevin Wilson | DIRECTOR

Kevin co-founded the business in 2010 with friend and colleague Gary. His knowledge of the local property market, along with his superb business and organisational skills have been a major contributing factor to the relentless steady growth and ongoing success of Longsons. Born in Norfolk he has lived here all his life, hence his love for Norwich City Football Club. Kevin enjoys an occasional 'flutter' which would explain his dream holiday destination of Las Vegas. His ideal party guest would be Dynamo Magician so he could find out some of his secrets.



Kyle Clarke | MANAGER

Kyle joined Longsons early in 2017, bringing with him a wealth of knowledge of both sales and lettings. His role as office manager also involves property valuations which is a part of the job Kyle particularly enjoys. Born and raised in Norfolk, his spare time is spent socialising with family and friends and playing the occasional game of football for a local team. Being a Liverpool fan, Kyle's ideal party guest would be Steven Gerrard "because he is an icon!", his chosen superpower would be the ability to time travel and his dream holiday destination would be the Caribbean Island of Aruba.

Lynn List | VALUER

Lynn has spent most of her working life working for both independent and corporate estate agencies. When Lynn joined Longsons in 2013 she brought with her a multitude of sales experience and knowledge. Blessed with endless energy, Lynn brings genuine enthusiasm and a love of the industry to her role. Lynn was born in Norfolk and other than living abroad for 10 years, she has lived here all her life. Her love of gardening takes up a lot of her spare time and her dream holiday destination would be Australia. Her ideal party guest would be Sir Paul McCartney and she would love to have teleportation as a superpower.



Kerrie Blowers | ADMINISTRATOR

Kerrie joined Longsons in 2017 and soon proved herself to be a highly valued member of our team. She has fully immersed herself into her role and is now involved in many aspects of the business. Kerrie has lived in Norfolk most of her life and enjoys spending time with her young family and friends, plus Pilate classes and baking: the constant supply of cakes in our office is certainly proving very popular! Kerrie's ideal party guest would be Michael Jackson "he's the King of Pop!" her dream holiday destination would be the Maldives and her ideal superpower would be the ability to read minds.

Imogen Walker | NEGOTIATOR

Imogen joined Longsons early in 2019 having previously worked at a corporate estate agent. With her warm personality, friendly demeanour and passion for estate agency, she is a popular, valued member of our team. Imogen was born and raised in Norfolk and she has a busy social life and enjoys playing hockey, following St Helens rugby league team and unwinding with some retail therapy at the shops. As a huge fan of the TV show Friends, her ideal party guest would be Jennifer Aniston, her dream holiday destination is Australia and her chosen superpower would be shapeshifting!



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 buyers want ”

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 - A tax paid by the buyer purchasing their main residence.

The current Stamp Duty Holiday runs until the 30th June and as such you won't pay stamp duty on purchases up to £500,000.

After this date the nil-rate band will be set at £250k until the end of September.



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!

THE Times ARE Changing

...and you can too. The weather may be cooling down, but the property market is heating up.

When you **market your property** with Longsons, we will provide you with expert local advice combined with innovative marketing techniques to guarantee you an unrivalled home move in your local area.

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