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# Around Colchester Christmas 2023 Edition



**Adams**  
Publishing Ltd.

**Editor:** Steve Adams  
**Telephone:** 01206 855444  
**Mobile:** 07837 247008  
**Email:** [info@adampublishing.co.uk](mailto:info@adampublishing.co.uk)  
**Website:** [www.adampublishing.co.uk](http://www.adampublishing.co.uk)  
**Address:** Suite 7,  
Highwoods Post Office,  
Highwoods Square,  
Colchester CO4 9BB



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Front cover image courtesy of Janie Pirie



*Wishing all our readers and customers a very Merry Christmas  
& a Happy New Year in 2024*



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# Festive Foliage

Whether you are an avid gardener or just someone who loves to embrace the spirit of Christmas, adding a few festive plants to your home can really elevate the festive mood. Here are some alternatives to the familiar poinsettia this festive season.

## Christmas cactus

It stands out distinctly from its desert relatives, offering a fresh and vibrant appeal tailored for indoor settings. Originating from the rainforests, this plant is well-suited for home interiors, shunning the typical arid conditions its name might suggest.

As December draws near, the Christmas cactus unveils its captivating beauty, bursting into an array of splendid blooms. The cascading flowers, with their diverse palette of pinks, reds and pristine whites, stand in stark contrast to its dark green segmented stems.

## Amaryllis

The amaryllis, a distinguished bulbous plant, stands tall with its slender stems that proudly bear large, eye-catching blooms. As Christmas nears, the red amaryllis becomes a favourite, encapsulating the holiday's vibrant spirit. However, its beauty doesn't end there.



## Norfolk Island Pine

For those contending with limited space or perhaps living in smaller urban abodes, the prospect of housing a grand Christmas tree can seem daunting. Enter the Norfolk Island Pine, a perfect solution for such settings.

While compact in stature, this delightful houseplant embodies the quintessential charm of its larger counterparts. Resembling a mini Christmas tree, its delicate branches prove ideal for draping with petite ornaments and weaving strands of twinkling lights. It's a testament that festive grandeur can also come in smaller packages.

## Rosemary

Often, when we think of festive decor, herbs might not immediately come to mind. Yet, rosemary, with its fragrant needles and potential for artful shaping, begs to differ. Many have adopted the practice of trimming rosemary into a conical silhouette, mirroring the iconic Christmas tree.

## Mistletoe and holly

Mistletoe and holly, with their verdant leaves and vibrant berries, have etched their presence into the tradition of Christmas. Their historical and cultural significance transcends generations, evoking

nostalgia and festive cheer. When you see mistletoe and holly, you know it can't be any other time of year.

## Cyclamen

Often celebrated for its understated elegance, the cyclamen effortlessly graces spaces with its intricate heart-shaped leaves and uniquely poised, upswept petals. A testament to nature's artistry, its bloom palette sweeps from the purest of whites to the richest, velvety reds.





# Greenfingers... the Alan Titchmarsh column

He's a magnificent broadcaster, gifted gardener, brilliant author and all-round horticultural visionary. This month, Alan Titchmarsh talks about adding water features to your garden to improve it even more.

Ah, the gentle burble of a garden fountain! It has a certain timeless charm, doesn't it? It's not just the preserve of stately homes or grand public gardens. With a dash of patience, a sprinkle of know-how, and an eye for design, you too can bring that touch of serenity to your own plot.

Many a time, whilst wandering the meandering pathways of my Hampshire home, I've paused by my own water feature, momentarily transfixed by its aquatic ballet. Yet, I remember the days when I would regard these structures with some scepticism, thinking, 'All that plumbing! All that fuss!'



It's true that the construction of a water feature can be somewhat involved, but the rewards – both aesthetically and in terms of wildlife attraction – are undoubtedly worth it.

A well-designed water feature becomes the lifeblood of the garden. It draws in local wildlife, from birds seeking refreshment to frogs looking for a cosy nook. The sounds it produces can mask the ambient noise of urban life, transforming your garden into an oasis of calm.

However, before plunging headlong into the world of water features, it's wise to consider a few practicalities.

First and foremost, you have to think about the plumbing. Pipes need to be buried, but not too deeply; you don't want to run into trouble come winter when the ground freezes. The supply

is another matter and while it might be tempting to tie it directly to your home's mains, this can prove costly. Instead, consider a recirculating system which will save on both water and your pocket.

In terms of style, it's essential to find a design that complements



the surroundings. There's little sense in plonking a sleek, modern sculpture in the midst of a cottage garden or conversely, placing a rustic barrel in a space that is edgy and contemporary.

When I was planning mine, I took inspiration from the age of the house, the types of plants around and the overall 'feel' of the garden. Your water feature should enhance, not clash with, its environment.

And let us not forget maintenance. Algae blooms and the occasional mischievous leaf can plague water features.



*Continues on page 8*



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Continued from page 6



art for the interior of your home. It needs to speak to you, to resonate with the space and reflect your personal style. But equally, it needs to be functional – there's no point in having a beautiful fountain that sounds like a misfiring car!

Reflecting on my own water feature journey, it's clear to me now

A little routine cleaning and perhaps a strategic water plant or two, can keep these issues in check. Remember, this is a living feature and like all living things, it requires a touch of tender loving care.

In choosing the right feature for your garden, think of it as you might when selecting a piece of

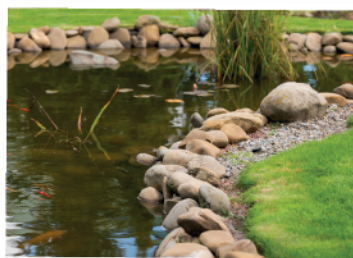
that these constructions are more than mere decorative pieces. They're transformative, turning a simple garden into a haven of peace, an attractor of wildlife, and a focal point of design.

So, if you've been toying with the idea of introducing a water

feature to your patch, I say dive in!

But as you do, keep in mind the delicate balance of practicality and aesthetic. For, as with so much in gardening and design, it's the harmonious marriage of function and form that will bring you the most joy.

Till the next, may your gardens grow lush, your fountains flow smoothly and your spirit remain ever buoyant.



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# Nigella's Turkey Hash

## Introduction

She's the undisputable queen of Christmas, but Nigella Lawson doesn't just have you covered for the big day, she also knows exactly how to use up those Christmas lunch leftovers.

Though written as an actual recipe, the doyenne of dining makes it clear that the quantities are meant to be a guide only. They are more of the "a handful of this, a handful of that" school of cookery, allowing you to add your own specific brand of festive flair.



## Ingredients

*(serves 2 hungry people as a main course, or 4 with a baked potato and a green salad to go alongside)*

- 50g flaked almonds
- 15g butter
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 red peppers, deseeded and chopped
- 1 clove garlic, peeled and minced
- 250g shredded cold turkey
- 75g pitted black olives
- 2 tbsp soured cream
- 2 tbsp leftover turkey stock
- 1 egg
- A few dashes of Tabasco sauce, or to taste
- 75g grated Parmesan
- 1–2 tbsp chopped flat-leaf parsley to garnish (optional)

## Method

1. Toss the flaked almonds in a hot, dry pan over a medium to high heat until toasted. Remove to a plate for a while.

2. Add the butter and oil to the pan, then throw in the chopped onions and peppers and cook, stirring, over a medium to low heat for about 10 minutes.

3. Stir in the garlic, then add the shredded turkey and cook until piping hot. Return the reserved toasted flaked almonds to the pan, add the olives and mix in.

4. Whisk together the soured cream, turkey stock and egg, then pour into the pan, give a quick stir to combine and shake in the Tabasco sauce.



5. Finally, add the grated Parmesan and stir until it begins to melt into the hash. On serving, sprinkle with chopped parsley, if wished.

## Top Tip

• Channel your inner Nigella and feel free to make whatever swaps necessary to suit your tastes and provisions at hand. No turkey? No problem, shredded gammon would work just as well.



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# Why investing Outshines Cash for Financial Success

In times of market ups and downs, it's tempting to try to predict the perfect moment to buy low and sell high. However, predicting market movements can be tricky, and the risks involved can hurt your long-term investment returns. "The stock market is a device for transferring money from the impatient to the patient." (Warren Buffet)

Reacting quickly to changes in the financial market might not be the best approach for investors. Markets can be unpredictable in the short term, and impulsive decisions could lead to missed opportunities or losses. Instead, sticking to a well-planned, long-term investment strategy provides stability and the potential for lasting growth. By staying focused on long-term goals, investors can avoid making emotional decisions, ride out market ups and downs, and position themselves for more significant gains over time.

Consider this: if you had invested £10,000 in global equities and missed the best 10 days in the market, your returns could have been nearly 50% lower. This underscores the importance of being patient and strategic in your investment approach.



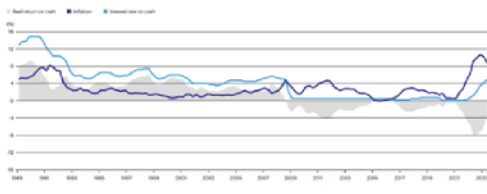
## Why cash is not always king?

What about keeping money in your local bank? While interest rates on cash accounts in the UK are currently attractive, the 'real' return on cash (after adjusting for inflation) is at its lowest in

decades. Despite earning up to 5% on your cash savings, this return may lose its shine if your expenses increase by more than that.

For those who can, staying invested in assets with the potential for a positive real return seems prudent. Although investing in markets comes with some volatility and the risk of capital loss, a diversified portfolio that includes various bonds and equities is well-positioned to grow the real value of your money over the long term.

In summary, while market fluctuations may create uncertainty, adopting a patient and diversified investment strategy can help you navigate changes and potentially enhance the growth of your capital.



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# Merry Clickmas

However much we cherish Christmas rituals, it is impossible to ignore the extent to which technology is transforming our festive experience.

## E-Commerce and online shopping

Before the rise of the internet, Christmas shopping meant braving crowded shopping centres, long queues and limited selections – with the hope that you would be able to pick up that year's must-have popular toy.

Now, with just a few clicks, anyone can have gifts, decorations and even gourmet Christmas dinners delivered to their doorstep.

## Virtual gatherings

Christmas has always been about spending time with loved ones – but what if you have relations who literally live across the other side of the planet? Fear not, as the rise of video conferencing tools means that even if you're miles apart, you can still celebrate together.

## Augmented reality and decorations

The way we decorate our homes and trees has seen a digital twist. With AR (augmented reality) Christmas cards, gone are the days of folded paper. Now, with AR apps, your Christmas cards can come alive with animations and music.

## Christmas entertainment

In the past you would have to buy your favourite Christmas film on DVD. Nowadays, streaming services offer almost all the traditional movies and shows, as well as busily commissioning new festive media, meaning you are no longer at the mercy of terrestrial TV stations.



## Social media and sharing

Another huge renovation in communication comes in the way platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and TikTok have made sharing holiday moments instantaneous.

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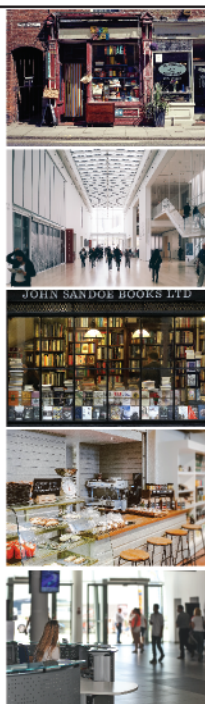
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## Do I need Lasting Powers of Attorney?

If you lose capacity and can no longer make decisions for yourself, there is no automatic right in law for your family, friends, or next-of-kin to make the decisions that you no longer can. Without Lasting Powers of Attorney in place, those that must make those decisions have to apply to the Court of Protection to be appointed your Deputy. This can take several months and cost thousands of pounds in legal fees and Court fees.

For this reason it is recommended that everyone should have Lasting Powers of Attorneys, to save their loved ones the time, expense and stress of a Deputyship application, and the ongoing costs associated with this.

There are two types of Lasting Power of Attorney:-

**Financial Decisions LPA** – Under this document you appoint one or more attorneys to make a decision on your behalf in relation to their property and affairs.

**Health & Care Decisions LPA** – under this document you appoint one or more people to make decisions on your behalf in relation to your personal welfare matters, health care and medical treatment including life sustaining treatment.

### Financial Decisions

Attorneys appointed under a Financial Decisions LPA can make any decision you could make about your property and finances, such as buying or selling property and investments and managing bank accounts.

Attorneys can only make gifts from your money to relatives or charities in accordance with your previous habits. They cannot gift themselves, but can give gifts to those people that you might reasonably have benefited if available to do so i.e. family members.

You can also restrict what attorneys can do by stating in the LPA that certain things cannot be done and that certain helpful guidance be given to help the attorneys, for example "Do not sell my property until absolutely necessary".

### Health & Care Decisions

Personal welfare decisions are those that relate to your welfare alone, such as medical treatment and decisions as to where you live and with whom. It stretches as far as

obtaining medical information and deciding what you wear, what you eat and how you spend your day. This can include a wish to stay in your home for as long as possible before being moved into care.

It is important to note that under this LPA the attorney(s) cannot make any decisions where you still have the capacity to do so yourself.

An important part of this LPA is your decision whether to let your attorneys decide whether to consent to life-sustaining treatment or to leave this decision with medical professionals.

With both LPAs, the you must have a level of capacity to create an LPA. If this is not present, the Court of Protection and the Office of the Public Guardian must become involved under a Deputy application. Deputy applications are far more costly and time consuming to set up and can also be stressful and burdensome on family members.

### Summary

By creating LPAs you have peace of mind that if you lose capacity, you would know who is managing your affairs and that they would be fully aware of your wishes.

If you later wish to revoke your LPAs you can revoke them by serving a notice on your attorneys and sending this to the Office of the Public Guardian.

If you were to lose capacity and did not have LPAs in place, a Deputy may need to be appointed, and this would lead to large annual charges which would come out of your estate. However, while there are the initial costs of creating and registering LPAs, there are no ongoing costs at all.

If you have any questions or queries or would like to proceed with the preparation of Lasting Powers of Attorney, please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Christopher Meadows,**  
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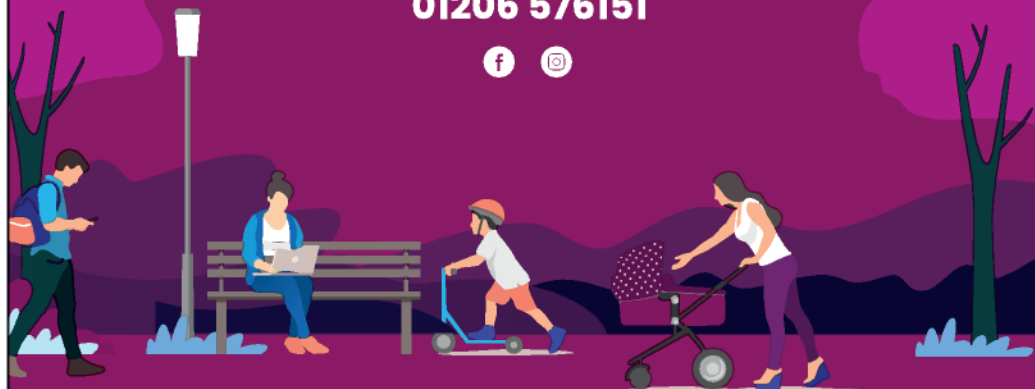
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# Puzzle Page

## Quick Crossword

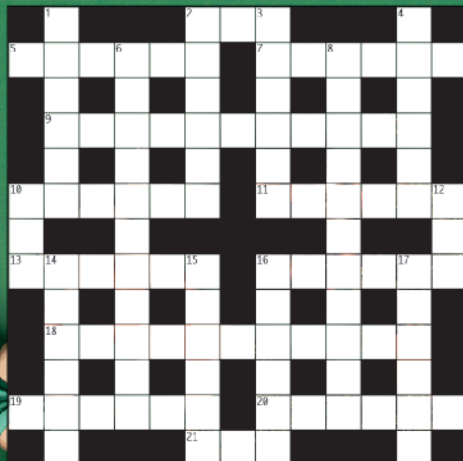
#034

### Across Clues:

2. A container often used to carry items (3)
5. Foamy soap (6)
7. Rod with an eye-shaped hole (6)
9. Threatened (11)
10. Deep parts (6)
11. Using oars to move a boat (6)
13. A large, aquatic rodent (6)
16. Warnings (6)
18. Quality of being easy to like (11)
19. A creamy, spiced drink (6)
20. A diversion (6)
21. Distinct period in history (3)

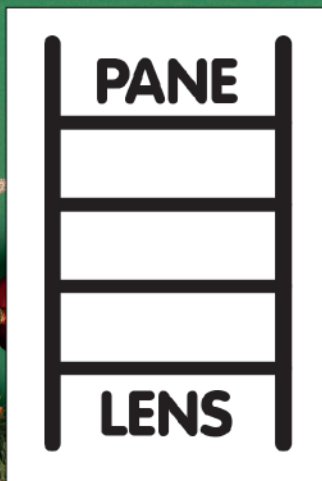
### Down Clues:

1. Popular fashion doll (6)
2. Mechanical devices to slow down (6)
3. Italian-style ice cream (6)
4. Young unmarried woman (6)
6. Devastated emotionally (11)
8. Act of making something larger (11)
10. Secluded (3)
12. State of matter (3)
14. The space left in a container (6)
15. A roundabout (6)
16. A list of things to be discussed (6)
17. A group of cells with a specific function (6)



## Word Ladder

Make your way from PANE to LENS by changing one letter on each step to make a new word!



ANSWERS: PANE, LANE, LAND, LEND, LENS

## World Capitals

Please give the capital city for each country listed below:

1. Japan
2. Australia
3. Brazil
4. South Africa
5. Argentina
6. Turkey
7. Nigeria
8. Thailand
9. Greece
10. South Korea

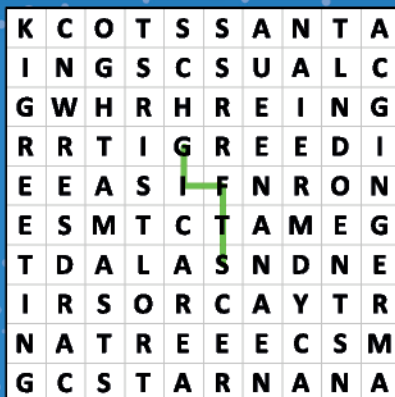
Answers on page 28

# KIDS PUZZLE PAGE

## Christmas Sudoku



## Christmas Wordsearch

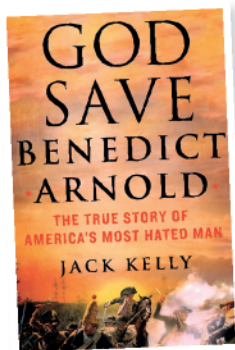


CANDY CANE  
CAROL  
CHRISTMAS TREE  
GIFTS  
GINGER MAN  
GREETING CARDS  
ORNAMENTS  
REINDEER  
SANTA CLAUS  
STAR  
STOCKINGS  
WREATH

Answers on page 28

# Christmas Crackers

Snuggle up this December with one of these dazzling reads. From a non-fiction slice of American Civil War history to some serious self-improvement guides, these books will have you shunning even the fanciest festive bash.



**God Save Benedict Arnold: The True Story of America's Most Hated Man by Jack Kelly**  
Benedict Arnold committed treason-- for more than two centuries, that's all that most Americans have known about him.

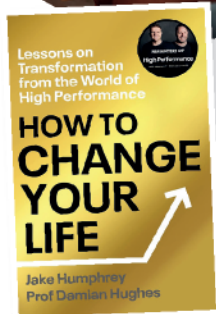
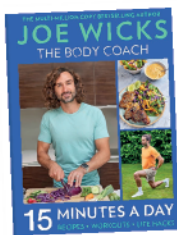
Yet Arnold was much more than a turncoat - his achievements during the early years of the Revolutionary War defined him as the most successful soldier of the era. *God Save Benedict Arnold* tells the gripping story of Arnold's rush of audacious feats - his capture of Fort Ticonderoga, his Maine mountain expedition to attack Quebec, the famous artillery brawl at Valcour Island, the turning-point battle at Saratoga - that laid the groundwork for American independence.  
Published by St. Martin's Press on December 5th

## **The Body Coach by Joe Wicks**

You can achieve so much with just fifteen minutes. From delicious recipes whipped up in moments, to workouts you can do on your lunch break, Joe Wicks will show you easy wins for a happy and healthy life.

Joe Wicks, the nation's favourite Body Coach, teaches you how best to harness your day with life hacks, tips and tricks to help you feel your best.

With delicious recipes for breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks, as well as life advice for how to sleep better and find focus, this book will help you manage your time in the way that works best for you. Whether its fifteen minutes meal prepping for the week, fifteen minutes working out on your lunch break, or fifteen minutes journaling before you go to bed, Joe has the recipes, workouts and advice to help you to make better decisions every day.  
Published by HarperCollins on December 7th



**How to Change Your Life: Lessons on Transformation from the World of High Performance by Jake Humphrey and Damian Hughes**  
How did the world's most remarkable people get that way?

This is a book about how the highest-performing people changed their lives - and how you can change yours. Drawing on interviews with record-setting athletes, Olympic coaches and billionaire founders, Jake Humphrey and Professor Damian Hughes introduce the five simple steps that take you from where you are to where you want to be.

And they introduce the cutting-edge research that explains why these surprisingly simple tools are so effective.

It is never too late to change. This book shows you how.  
Published by Cornerstone on December 7th



### **Ruthless Vows by Rebecca Ross**

The epic conclusion to the intensely romantic and beautifully written story that started in *Divine Rivals*.

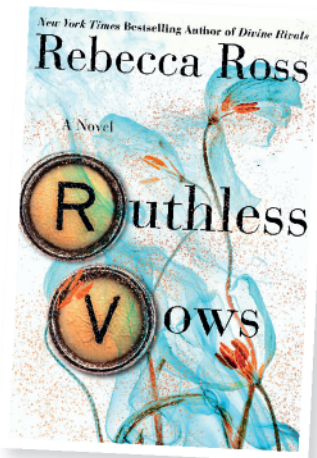
Two weeks have passed since Iris Winnow returned home bruised and heartbroken from the front, but the war is far from over. Roman is missing and the city of Oath continues to dwell in a state of disbelief and ignorance. When Iris and Attie are given another chance to report on Dacre's movements, they both take the opportunity and head westward once more despite the danger, knowing it's only a matter of time before the conflict reaches a city that's unprepared and fracturing beneath the chancellor's reign.

Since waking below in Dacre's realm, Roman cannot remember his past. But given the reassurance that his memories will return in time, Roman begins to write articles for Dacre, uncertain of his place in the greater scheme of the war. When a strange letter arrives by wardrobe door, Roman is first suspicious, then intrigued. As he strikes up a correspondence with his mysterious pen pal, Roman will soon have

to make a decision: to stand with Dacre or betray the god who healed him.

And as the days grow darker, inevitably drawing Roman and Iris closer together...the two of them will risk their very hearts and futures to change the tides of the war.

Published by HarperCollins on December 26th



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# Stepping In To The New Year

You don't need to hit the reset button on your fitness New Year resolutions if you maintain a balance throughout December. One refreshingly simple way to strike this equilibrium? Incorporate a daily walk into your routine.

The festive allure of Christmas often brings with it the warmth of gatherings, indulgent feasts and the joyous spirit of the season. While the holiday magic envelops us, our health-conscious routines can sometimes take a back seat.

Committing to a brisk 30-minute walk daily might seem humble, but its rewards are bountiful. Whether you're braving the winter chill or soaking up some morning sunlight, this regimen can gift-wrap numerous health benefits for you.

## **The benefits:**

### **Combating the festive calories**

As the festive season rolls in, the pull of decadent Christmas puddings is undeniable. Yet, there's good news for those with a sweet tooth: indulge in your

favourite festive treats without guilt, knowing that a brisk stroll can effectively balance those extra holiday calories.

### **Heartfelt benefits**

A regular walking routine greatly enhances heart health. By consistently engaging in this simple exercise, you can not only strengthen the cardiovascular system but also significantly reduce the risk of serious conditions, including heart disease and strokes.

### **Disease prevention**

Incorporating a daily walk into your routine serves as a protective barrier against various health challenges. This proactive step notably guards against major threats such as cancer and type 2 diabetes.

### **Boosting immunity**

As winter unfolds, the risk of colds and flu intensifies. Engaging in regular walking activities strengthens and invigorates your immune system, transforming it into a formidable defence against these seasonal adversaries.

### **Brain and mood boosters**

The cognitive and emotional rewards of walking are vast and undeniable. Regularly embracing this simple activity acts as a potent remedy:

promoting brain health, uplifting mood and bolstering overall mental well-being.

### **Night-time bliss**

During the season characterized by its shorter days, many find their sleep patterns disrupted. However, taking regular walks - particularly bathed in the morning sunlight - can promote deeper, more restful slumbers.

## **Tips to get you started:**

### **Gear up simply**

To embark on your walking journey, simply equip yourself with snug shoes for foot comfort and don appropriate warm clothing to shield against the brisk winter temperatures.

### **Track and trek**

To feed your motivation and monitor progress, employ apps like Strava or the NHS Active 10. These digital companions make your journey both enjoyable and efficient.

### **Scenic routes**

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# A Design for Life... The Kevin McCloud Column

Designer, writer and television presenter, Kevin McCloud leapt into our consciousness with his vastly successful *Grand Designs* show on Channel 4. This month, the affable architectural business owner talks about why horrendous setbacks can ultimately become a blessing.

The process of creating a home, whether from the skeletal remains of a renovation or the soil of a virgin plot, can often resemble a Shakespearean play: dramatic, filled with highs and lows and occasionally, a touch tragicomic.

It was John Steinbeck who once mused: "We value virtue but do not discuss it." Perhaps in the realm of architectural endeavour, it is not virtue we neglect, but the inevitable mishaps and misadventures.

Many a romantic soul has been lured by the poetic narrative of designing and constructing their dream home and while the end can indeed be a magnum opus of personal expression,

the journey is often punctuated by events that challenge, if not our sanity, then at least our patience and pocketbooks – not to mention the bank balance.

I've borne witness to countless architectural tragedies in my time – from the discovery of lurking damp beneath that 'perfect' Victorian wallpaper, to the devastating subsidence that can threaten a home's very foundations.

It's important – if not essential – to remember that architectural pursuits, like any creative endeavour, are vulnerable to the vagaries of fate. Acknowledging the possibility of such setbacks isn't pessimistic; it's pragmatic. Because more often than not it's not the setbacks themselves, but our reaction to them, that truly defines our architectural experience.

Recall the couple who unearthed a medieval well in what was to be their contemporary kitchen extension. A disastrous discovery? To some, perhaps. Yet, they chose to embrace this artefact of history, turning it into a feature underlit glass floor, harmoniously marrying ancient history with modern design.

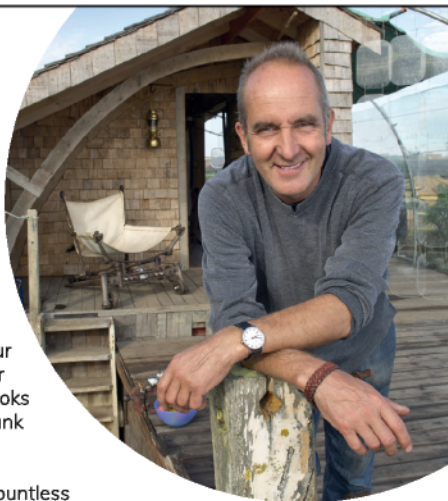
Or consider the family who found their chosen

roofing materials were no longer available, leading them to opt for an eco-friendly grass roof – unintentionally setting a trend in their locale.

In the scenic vistas of Bowness-on-Windermere lies a £1m eco-lodge, sporting a geodesic roof which I found utterly breath-taking: The Dome. It's a story rich with ambition and aspiration; Robert Gaukroger, once the proud owner, confessed: "It was an endeavour fuelled by my ego," speaking of this modern marvel cradled by the hillside.

After being caught in the quagmire of an eight-year land tiff, the structure sadly began to wear the marks of neglect. But as fate would have it, the tides turned when an undisclosed benefactor, later unveiled as Yvonne Malley, resurrected its charm, transforming it into an upscale guesthouse.

It's tales like these that make me muse: perhaps there's room for a 'Grand Designs' offshoot – 'Woman Made Home', celebrating practical women mending the overreaches of ambitious men.



*Continues on page 26*



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Continued from page 24

When treading the tumultuous path of home construction, it's worth embracing two allies: contingency and preparation. A well-thought-out contingency plan acts as your architectural safety net. Reserve at least 10% of your budget for unforeseen expenses. It might seem generous, but those who've ventured down this path will testify to its wisdom.

Equally important is the mental preparation. Understand that you're embarking on an odyssey filled with unknowns. It's an adventure, and like all great adventures, there will be challenges.



Being mentally equipped for these 'surprises' can make the difference between a momentary setback and a project-derailing disaster.

In the grand artistry of home construction, it is not the absence of problems that defines a successful project, but the grace and fortitude with which we face them. After all, even the grandest cathedrals faced their fair share of misadventures.

So, when you find yourself in an architectural pickle, take a breath, perhaps pour a glass of wine, and remember: the most compelling stories often come from the most unexpected detours.

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## Sudoku - #034

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

Answers on page 29



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## Puzzle Page Answers

### Quick Crossword Solution

#034

#### Answers:

- Across: 2. Bag, 5. Lather, 7. Eyebar,  
9. Blackmailed, 10. Depths, 11. Oaring,  
13. Nutria, 16. Alerts, 18. Likableness,  
19. Eggnog, 20. Detour, 21. Era.  
Down: 1. Barbie, 2. Brakes, 3. Gelato,  
4. Maiden, 6. Heartbroken, 8. Enlargement,  
10. Den, 12. Gas, 14. Ullage, 15. Ambage,  
16. Agenda, 17. Tissue.

### World Capitals Answers

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Tokyo   | 5. Buenos Aires |
| 2. Canberra  | 6. Ankara       |
| 3. Brasilia  | 7. Abuja        |
| 4. Pretoria<br>(administrative),<br>Bloemfontein<br>(judicial), Cape<br>Town (legislative) | 8. Bangkok      |
|  | 9. Athens       |
|  | 10. Seoul       |

## Kids Puzzle Page Christmas Wordsearch Solution



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## Sudoku Solution #034

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

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# Double Gold Medal Olympian James Cracknell OBE Inspires Evolution Networking Event



Colchester based business networking group Evolution Networking celebrated a special event on Wednesday 15th November featuring the two times Olympic gold medal winner James Cracknell OBE.

The event took place at The Old Siege House Bar & Brasserie, the historic and vibrant venue in Colchester that provided an inspiring backdrop for this unique networking event where the renowned British rower gave an insightful 15 minute talk which contained insights into his training, discipline and Olympic glory. This was followed by an engaging Q&A session which gave attendees the opportunity to delve deeper into the mind of an Olympian.

James then joined attendees for a two-course lunch which gave them the chance to talk to him one to one.

Evolution Networking is run by Colchester based business owners Simon Crow, who runs digital marketing agency OutFront, and Steve Adams whose business Adams Publishing publishes the free Around Colchester magazine. The group has been meeting fortnightly for business networking lunches at The Old Siege House Bar & Brasserie

since 2016, and gives members and their guests, who are drawn from a broad spread of local businesses and includes a charity, an opportunity to connect, collaborate, and build valuable relationships.



Simon Crow said "When James made Colchester his new home I leapt at the opportunity to ask him if he would like to join us at one of our meetings. Our members are constantly striving to achieve the best outcomes for their businesses and clients, so it was a fantastic opportunity to be inspired by such an accomplished athlete sharing his experiences, insights, and lessons learned from his illustrious sporting career."

James said "It was a privilege to meet and talk to such a diverse group of established and ambitious Colchester/North Essex businesses, charities and sole traders. Taking learnings from each other and making the most of the opportunities Colchester provides."

For further information contact Simon Crow:  
07870 154554  
[simon@simoncrow.co.uk](mailto:simon@simoncrow.co.uk)



# Celebrating 30 Years of Celine Dion Hits – Catch Celine: My Heart Will Go On at Charter Hall on Saturday, January 27



Thirty years ago this month, Canadian songstress Celine Dion's breakthrough solo single *Power of Love* was released, announcing a career that saw her crowned "Queen of the Power Ballad".

Hit stage show *Celine – My Heart Will Go On* comes to Charter Hall on Saturday, January 27, 2024, playing the busy Colchester venue 30 years to the day since *The Power of Love* was certified Gold on the UK singles chart.

The Colchester performance launches the production's 2024 tour, following sold-out shows throughout the UK and Europe throughout 2023.

Brought to the stage by well-established theatre show producers Carlton Entertainment, the *Celine – My Heart Will Go On* 2024 UK tour promises to be "bigger and better than ever".

Carlton Entertainment's Kerry Carlton says: "The concert is a stunning celebration of the music of one of the greatest singers of our time."

The production stars Alexandra Darby – as seen on ITV's *This Morning* – backed by a talented live band. The singer holds a BA Honours in Musical Theatre and attended London's famous Brit School, which counts Adele, Amy Winehouse, Katie Melua, Katy B, Jessie J, Raye and even actor Tom Holland among its alumni.

"The audience is taken on a magical ride through four decades of hits," says Kerry.

All of Celine Dion's million sellers feature, including: *The Power Of Love*, *It's All Coming Back To Me Now*, *I'm Alive*, *All By Myself*, *Because You Loved Me* and, of course, *My Heart Will Go On*.

During her long career, Celine amassed 200m sales and bagged herself an Academy Award, Golden Globe and several Grammys.

"Join us for an unmissable evening as we pay homage to the Queen of Power Ballads," says Kerry. "Then, dance the night away with the glorious concert that is taking Europe by storm!"

Music lovers are encouraged to experience the "next-best-thing to the real artist" and book their seats today.



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