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MAGAZINE



JANUARY 2023  
Issue 69

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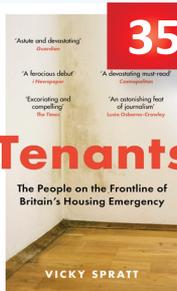
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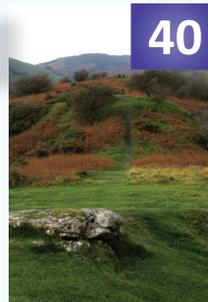
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**Cover Photo:**  
Lake view in Delamere Forest



Dear Friends,  
As another year comes to a close, we are sure you are all wondering where this year has gone!

We hope you manage to keep to your 'New Year Resolutions' and have a year filled with good health, happiness and prosperity.

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*Best Wishes Maxine & Mike*

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# DO YOU KNOW?

1. 70% of all animals in the jungle rely on figs for their survival.



2. The name "Argentina" comes from the Latin word for silver, argentum. The original European settlers believed the country was full of silver.

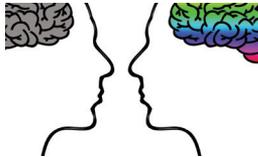
3. The five worst cities in the U.S. for air pollution are all in California.

4. One pint of donated blood can save up to 3 lives.

5. Small animals such as flies and hummingbirds experience time in slow motion, which is why they can avoid your newspaper swats.

6. The Amazon accounts for more than half of the planet's remaining rainforest and is home to more than half the world's species of plants and animals.

7. Your brain keeps developing until your late 40s.



8. The Lut Desert in Iran is the hottest place on earth.

9. Headless cockroaches are capable of living for weeks. They die from starvation.

10. There are about 500,000 detectable earthquakes in the world each year. 100,000 of those can be felt, and 100 of them cause damage.

11. More Colombians die every year from American tobacco than Americans die from Colombian cocaine.

12. In 5,000 years of human history, only one disease has been eradicated: smallpox.

13. During the Christmas season, almost 28 LEGO sets are sold every second.

14. Publisher Bloomsbury offered just £2,500 in advance for Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, the first book of the series.



15. There are more left-handed people with IQs over 140 than right-handed people, a study found.

16. Facebook has over 100 million active users in Africa.



17. It would take less than 6 months to get to the Moon by car at 60mph.

18. Anne Frank's sister, Margot, also had a diary. It was never found.

19. Firefighters in Dubai use jetpacks to tackle blazes in high-rise buildings.

20. Microwaving food does not diminish the nutrients. When done right, it's actually one of the most nutritionally sound methods in food preparation.

21. With over 520 million followers as of 2019, Buddhism is the world's 4th-largest religion.



22. The word 'Buddha' is a title, which means 'one who is awake', in the sense of having 'woken up to reality'.

23. When Columbus "discovered" the Americas, the continent was already inhabited by 90 million people which was a third of the world's population.

24. Bananas have more trade regulations than AK-47s.



25. Until the year 2000, Disney theme park workers were forbidden from growing facial hair.

26. In professional shooting, Alcohol is considered to be a performance-enhancing drug because it relaxes you and slows your heart rate enough to give you an edge.

27. People drink more slowly when alcohol is served in straight-sided glasses than when it's served in glasses with curved sides, a research found.

28. China has treatment camps for Internet addicts.

29. There's high-speed Internet on the way up to Mount Everest.

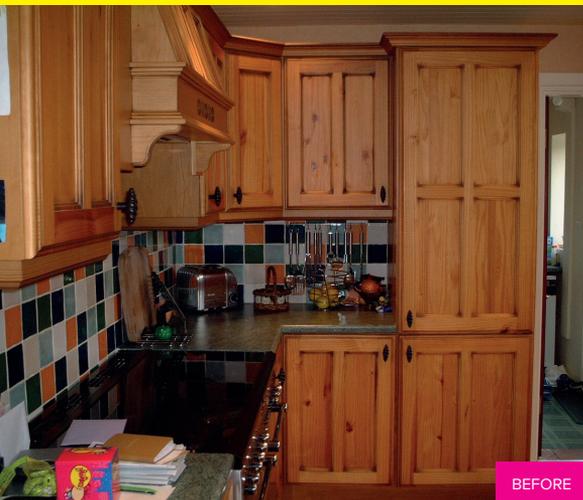
30. When Montenegro became independent from Yugoslavia, its Internet domain name went from .yu to .me.

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# THIS MONTH'S HISTORY

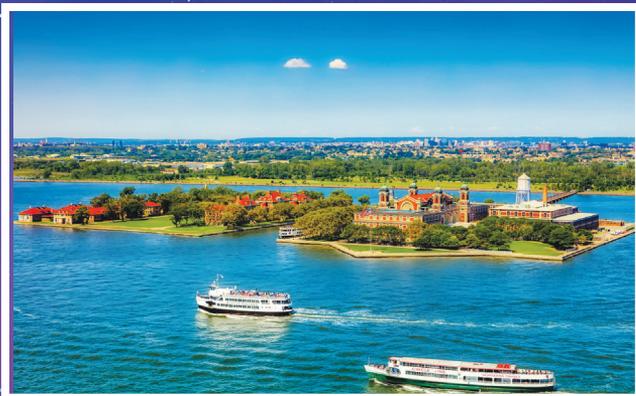
This feature each month will give interesting facts from years gone by. See what you remember that happened in your lifetime.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY

### 1st January 1892

Ellis Island opened in New York.

It is a federally owned island in New York Harbor, situated within the U.S. states of New York and New Jersey, that was the busiest immigrant inspection and processing station in the United States.



From 1892 to 1954, nearly 12 million immigrants arriving at the Port of New York and New Jersey were processed there under federal law. Today, it is part of the Statue of Liberty National Monument and is accessible to the public only by ferry. The north side of the island is the site of the main building, now a national museum of immigration. The south side of the island, including the Ellis Island Immigrant Hospital, is open to the public only through guided tours.

### 1st January 1973

The accession of the United Kingdom to the European Communities (EC) – the collective term for the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (EAEC) – took effect on this date.



*Edward Heath - former prime minister*

This followed ratification of the Accession treaty which was signed in Brussels on 22 January 1972 by the Conservative prime minister Edward Heath, who had pursued the UK's application to the EEC since the late 1950s. The ECSC and EEC would later be integrated into the European Union under the Maastricht and Lisbon treaties in the early 1990s and mid-2000s.

Denmark and Ireland also joined as part of the same expansion:

## 17th January 1912

Captain Robert Falcon Scott was the first British explorer to reach the South Pole and explore Antarctica extensively by land.

Scott was an officer in the Royal Navy, who had joined his first ship when he was 13. He was born in Devon and came from seafaring family, though his father ran a brewery. He married a sculptor named Kathleen Bruce in 1908, and they had one son, Peter, who became a famous naturalist.

He led two expeditions to the South Pole, his first expedition, in the ship Discovery, took place between 1901–04 and was partially funded by the Government. Discovery was specially built for the voyage, as a research ship to go through icy seas. This expedition was significant as it was the first time Antarctic land had been explored extensively for zoological and geological purposes.

In 1910, Scott sailed on another scientific voyage, this time in the Terra Nova, originally a whaler. Scott was determined to be the first explorer to reach the South Pole, but he faced stiff competition from Norwegian Roald Amundsen.

Scott achieved his dream and reached the South Pole on 17–18 January 1912. The achievement was bittersweet as he discovered that Amundsen had got there first. The 800-mile journey back to their base camp was torturous, and all five of Scott's party (including Scott) died from cold and hunger.

A search party was sent out from McMurdo Sound after the end of the Antarctic winter of 1912. It found the bodies of Scott, Dr Wilson and 'Birdie' Bowers on 12 November. They were in their sleeping bags inside a tent covered with snow. Their journals and papers were recovered but the bodies were left, wrapped in the tent and buried under a snow cairn. Captain Oates's body was never found.



## 22nd January 1970

On this day, the first Boeing 747 touched down at London's Heathrow airport.

The Pan Am flight came direct from New York, with 324 passengers onboard. As you can imagine, it was a momentous occasion, with one eyewitness describing the scene like a 'media circus.'

The historic flight had launched from JFK in the early hours of the morning on January 22nd and took seven hours and 20 minutes to cross the Atlantic.



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# PLAY DOUGH RECIPE

## You will need:

2 cups plain flour  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil  
1/2 cup salt  
2 tablespoons cream of tartar  
1 to 1.5 cups boiling water  
food colouring

## To make it:

Mix the flour, salt, cream of tartar and oil in a large mixing bowl. Add about 10 drops of food colouring to the boiling water, then add it in stages into the dry ingredients. Stir continuously until it becomes a sticky, combined dough.



Allow it to cool down then take it out of the bowl and knead it vigorously for a couple of minutes until all of the stickiness has gone. \* This is the most important part\* If it remains a little sticky then add a touch more flour until just right. Store in cling film after play and it will last for a few weeks.

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# HOROSCOPES FOR JANUARY

BY JAMES GRIFFITHS

## Capricorn

Take some time to relax and connect with your inner voice, this is a moment when your intuition is at its peak.

## Sagittarius

You give up things you no longer need and begin to understand how crucial it is in your relationships to feel people are making time and effort for you.

## Scorpio

The new beginning, where you examine a different perspective or experiment with a new form of expression. This moment is hectic.

## Aquarius

It's a beautiful time to take a peaceful retreat, try meditation, or just get some rest.

## Libra

Now is the moment to examine your priorities, especially in relation to your home and personal life.

## Pisces

It's important to feel emotionally understood, as well as appreciated for your intellect, humour, and aspirations for the future.

## Aries

What do you hope people will remember you for? A fresh path to money and recognition has begun.

## Virgo

It's the perfect time to have fun, dance, and party! Virgos are normally careful, diligent individuals, yet this is the time to relax.

## Taurus

People will be surprised by the ideas you're expressing, you're in an experimental frame of mind. Don't hurry into commitments.

## Leo

As the sun rises in January, unexpected job prospects present themselves. Top priority is wellness, focus on it.

## Gemini

You feel freed from the past or a negative emotion that has been holding you down.

## Cancer

A new beginning has begun. You will be developing a new connection and a new link with someone close.





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# OUR ZOO

## What's happening at Chester Zoo.

A new star in stripes... and spots! An endangered Malayan tapir has been born at Chester Zoo – giving an important boost to conservation efforts to protect the species.



**A rare Malayan tapir has been born at Chester Zoo in what has been hailed as an “important moment” for the conservation of the endangered species.**

The female calf, which has been named Nessa, arrived to parents Margery (10) and Betong (10) in the early hours of Wednesday 30 November, weighing just 9kg. It followed a 13-month-long (391-day) pregnancy.

Chester Zoo is one of just two British zoos currently caring for the Malayan tapir – a species listed as endangered on the International Union of Conservation of Nature’s (IUCN’s) Red List of Threatened Species.

Fewer than 2,500 are estimated to remain across Malaysia, Sumatra, Thailand and Myanmar, with hunting, illegal logging and mass deforestation blamed for a decline in numbers, which has seen more than half of the world’s Malayan tapirs lost in the last 40 years.

**Mike Jordan, Director of Animal and Plants at Chester Zoo, said:** *“We’re over the moon that Margery has delivered a healthy female calf – a birth that marks an important moment in our efforts to prevent the extinction of this wonderfully charismatic but sadly endangered species.*

*“The Malayan tapir is a species that’s under enormous pressure – its numbers have crashed over the course of the past four decades to frighteningly low levels, with hunting and habitat destruction being the main threats to its survival.*

*“Here at Chester Zoo we’re doing all we can to reverse that and carve out a brighter future for the species. Margery’s precious calf is a highly significant new arrival who will add valuable new genetics to the European endangered species breeding programme, which is working to ensure a safety net population of Malayan tapirs in conservation zoos like ours, guarding them from extinction. Meanwhile, we’re out on the ground in various parts of South East Asia where the species is found, working with our conservation partners and local communities to protect and restore its rainforest home.”*





To save Chester Zoo head to: [www.chesterzoo.org/saveourzoo](http://www.chesterzoo.org/saveourzoo)



### Malayan tapir facts

- Malayan Tapirs are found in Malaysia, Sumatra (Indonesia), Thailand & Myanmar.
- The population of the species in the wild is estimated to have declined by more than 50% in the last 40 years, driven primarily by the wide-scale conversion of their habitat to unsustainable palm oil plantations and agricultural land. As a result, they are listed as an endangered species by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and are also threatened by increased hunting for their furs, road-kills and trapping in snares left for other animals.
- Chester Zoo is part of a European-wide conservation breeding programme for the endangered species.
- Malayan Tapirs typically give birth to one calf after an 11-13 month gestation period.
- They have unusual, long flexible noses that they use to forage for food, and are known for their unusual courtship ritual which involves an assortment of wheezing and whistling sounds. They will then sniff each other, walking around in circles before mating.
- Malayan tapirs also have poor eyesight, which makes them rely heavily on their excellent senses of smell and hearing.

The Malayan tapir is the largest of the world's four tapir species and is related to both the horse and the rhinoceros. It is an 'odd-toed' animal, having four toes on each front foot and three toes on each back foot.

At birth, baby tapirs have distinctive coats featuring a series of spots and stripes. This patterning is to help camouflage them on the forest floor, but slowly changes over the first six months of life to mirror the unique black and white pattern of their parents.

**Rosie Owen, a zookeeper at Chester Zoo, added:** *"It's so lovely to once again hear the pitter-patter of tiny, spotty and stripy Malayan tapir feet. They're really special animals, a highly endangered species and very few zoos in the whole of Britain care for them, so it's fair to say that Nessa's arrival has put huge smiles on all of our faces.*

*"Mum Margery is ever so good with her calf. Nessa is a real bundle of energy, confident and is often looking to explore but Marge is extremely attentive and always retains a watchful eye on her. The pair of them doing really, really well together."*





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## Hollywood superstar Leonardo DiCaprio hails Chester Zoo's conservation efforts as 'extinct' fish returns to the wild

**Nearly 30 years after the golden skiffia disappeared from Mexico's waters, conservationists have returned the rare fish to the wild.**

The team, made up of global experts from the UK, North and Latin America, released 1,200 golden skiffia into the Teuchitlán River in central-western Mexico, where the fish had not been seen since the 1990s. The group of golden skiffia had been successfully bred by aquarists who created a conservation breeding programme that prevented the fish from becoming globally extinct.

With one in three freshwater fish threatened with extinction, they are the most threatened group of vertebrates on the planet.

The reintroduction of the fish coincided with the country's Day of the Dead celebrations – where families honour their departed ancestors and welcome them back from the dead.

**Omar Domínguez-Domínguez, a professor and researcher from the Michoacan University of Mexico, who is leading the golden skiffia reintroduction, said:**

**"The Day of the Dead is a traditional Mexican celebration, when it is believed that people's deceased ancestors return to the land of the living for one night, to talk and spend time with their families. Releasing the golden skiffia at this time is a metaphor for how the species has come back from the dead to return to its home, not for one night, but forever.**



**"Releasing this species back into the wild is a light of hope for this wonderful family of fishes - the goodeids - and for the conservation of freshwater fish more generally. Knowing that universities, zoos and aquarists can come together to fix some of what has been destroyed and return to nature some of what has been lost is an amazing thing."**

Human disturbance caused by dam construction, water extraction, pollution and the introduction of invasive species have caused major changes to the skiffia's habitat - pushing it to extinction in its only known home. But in 2014, scientists from the Michoacan University of Mexico and passionate fishkeepers from the Goodeid Working Group helped restore the degraded habitat and remove non-native species from the Teuchitlán ecosystem.

Conservationists hope that the fish being released will ultimately result in a healthy, self-sustaining population that can fulfil its important natural role in the ecosystem of eating algae and mosquito larvae, which helps keep populations of those species in check.

**Paul Bamford, Regional Programme Manager for Latin America at Chester Zoo, added:**

**"This project is a great example of how zoos can contribute to conservation in the field through conservation breeding and research, utilising the skills and experience that have been developed in zoos to help strengthen existing and new wild populations. By supporting freshwater conservation in Mexico and the ecosystems where the fish live, we're not only protecting biodiversity and the wellbeing of freshwater environments, but also the people and communities that live alongside them."**

The golden skiffia release comes just a few years after the successful reintroduction of the tequila splitfin, which faced very similar threats to the golden skiffia and was also prevented from extinction as a result of a conservation action by experts from Chester Zoo and its partners. Following a successful reintroduction into the Teuchitlán River, the population of tequila splitfin is now thriving and the project has been cited as an International Union for the Conservation of Nature case study for successful global reintroductions.



This project is part of Fish Ark Mexico, a conservation project in central Mexico that focuses on 41 highly threatened species of freshwater fish. Fish Ark Mexico has more than 20 years of experience in Mexican fish conservation and has succeeded in keeping 39 species of endangered and extinct-in-the-wild goodeid species in zoos and aquariums. The Fish Ark facility at the Michoacan University of Mexico in Morelia has been supported by several national and international conservation organisations, including Chester Zoo, Re:wild and SHOAL.

**Harmony Patricio, SHOAL conservation programme manager and Re:wild's freshwater fish conservation programme manager, said:**

**“With thousands of freshwater species threatened with extinction, the story of the golden skiffia returning to the wild is inspiring evidence of the many opportunities for conservation impact that together can reverse the freshwater biodiversity crisis. The SHOAL partnership is expanding freshwater species conservation awareness, funding, capacity and action to meet the level of the challenge, and positive stories such as the golden skiffia reintroduction can help draw attention to the challenges facing freshwater ecosystems, which have historically been overlooked and underfunded.”**

In preparation for the species return to the wild, the fish were first placed in ponds, so they could begin to adapt to different conditions. The fish were then taken to floating pods in the river known as mesocosms where they live for at least a month, so that they can further adapt to natural conditions before release. Individuals released into the wild were tagged and will be monitored for the next five years to assess whether the population is increasing and whether the fish are reproducing and growing successfully in the river.

Conservation reintroductions such as the release of golden skiffia back into the wild will be vital to ensuring extinctions are halted and populations are given the best possible chances of bouncing back from the brink.

Bringing the species back from the 'dead' is the result of collaborative efforts between experts from Chester Zoo, Michoacan University of Mexico, Goodeid Working Group, Re:wild and SHOAL who are developing a plan to save Mexican goodeid species - one of the world's most threatened group of fish - which includes the golden skiffia and tequila splitfin.





## John Dwyer

Police & Crime  
Commissioner  
for Cheshire



### Cashback fund open county-wide for Christmas

**Police and Crime Commissioner John Dwyer is encouraging local community groups, businesses and members of the police family across Cheshire to apply to the Community Cashback Fund over the Christmas period.**

Taken from money seized under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA), each of Cheshire's nine Local Policing Units (LPUs) has been allocated £10,000 from the fund. The aim is for local residents and businesses to work with their neighbourhood policing teams on projects to improve their community.

'Not for profit' organisations such as charities, 'friends of' groups, neighbourhood groups, social enterprises and community groups are encouraged to apply. Local businesses and Parish Councils can also apply to the fund, as well as local policing teams themselves.

**The fund is open now and will close at 9am on Friday 27 January 2023.**

Police and Crime Commissioner John Dwyer, said:

"I'm delighted to be able to support Cheshire's communities with funding that has been seized from the ill-gotten gains of criminals. This money should be used to fund community improvements, not criminal lifestyles.

"Through the Community Cashback Fund, local people will be able to work hand-in-hand with their policing team to improve their area. This is all about working together to make Cheshire even safer so if you've got an idea for a project that will make a real difference, I want to hear from you."

Applications will be considered by a panel including representatives from the local community, which will decide which projects to fund.

All applications must meet the criteria and support one of the six aims of the Police and Crime Plan. These are:

- Prevent and tackle crime
- Make Cheshire's roads safer
- Deliver justice for victims of crime
- Protect vulnerable and at-risk people
- Improve public confidence in policing
- Modernise our police service

**For information about the criteria, frequently asked questions and how to apply, visit [www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/community-funding/community-cashback-fund](http://www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk/what-the-commissioner-does/community-funding/community-cashback-fund)**



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**£250** could help buy a month's supply of tiny molecules that light up under a microscope – these are used by researchers to see what's going on inside our heart and blood vessel cells.



**£500** could buy human blood vessel cells, so researchers can grow these cells and study how our blood vessels work.

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## Resolution Poem by John Fowler

Tomorrow, I'm going to get in shape, I think I've found the solution.  
Eat less and exercise more, that's my New Year resolution.

Tomorrow, I'm going to diet, I'm going to be so slim,  
Everyone is going to stare, and say, "OMG, look at him"

Tomorrow, there's a new me, I've so much to lose,  
It's really got so bad, I may even give up the booze.

Tomorrow, It's a brand new start, I'll watch what I eat.  
No more takeaways for me, perhaps just chocolate for a treat.

Tomorrow, I'll turn a leaf, and exercise each day  
I might even join a gym, the fat will melt away.

Tomorrow, a new way of life, no more biscuits, crisps, or cakes  
Perhaps the odd glass of wine, just for old time's sakes.

Tomorrow, I'm determined, my clothes will start to fit.  
Friends won't recognise me, I'll look just like Brad Pitt.

Tomorrow, I'll achieve my steps, might even do some runs.  
But everybody knows, tomorrow never comes.



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### **GET WITH IT - by John Fowler**

“Will you get out of my doorway, Tub of Guts, I am trying to iron my new leather thong and you are taking the light. It’s like an eclipse in here.” Exclaimed Pablo.

“But your Highness,” retorted Billy, “I doth beg your pardon, it is indeed very rare to find someone so handsome and so full of wit. Anyway I would like a word in your shell-like, Oh Domineering one, because I am fed up cleaning your boots, my tongue is getting there”

“What is bothering you, old chubby bottom face?”

“I have heard that you are devising some sort of action plan for me, and I don’t like the word “action.”

“Well I want you to get with it, as they say, and move into the modern world. I want you to learn how to use a laptop computer like all my other coaches.”

“I hate all this internet lark. How is a laptop going to help us win matches? I see the other coaches on their laptop all day. What exactly do they do?”

“You are so old fashioned, Blubber Chops. You don’t seem to understand, they have a lot more to do than you. They are planning, and arranging meetings---and er, planning, and writing things on walls, and analysing, and er, making plans, and ---things.”

“I see them showing the substitutes their laptop screen before they come on, when I am sure that’s the last thing they want before they enter the fray. What exactly are they showing them?”

“Well, they show them which way we are kicking, what boots we are wearing, what colour shirts our team are wearing. They tell them which of our players speak English, and players’ nicknames---very important. All good stuff.”

“I haven’t the faintest idea about computers, and have no idea how I am going to learn about them.”

“Well, no use asking me.” Replied Pablo.

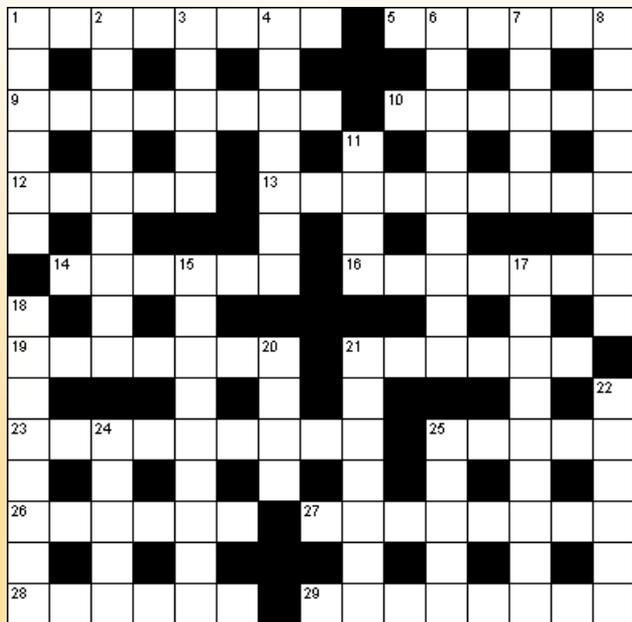
“The trouble with you, oh Heartthrob, you have no man-management skills. You are supposed to listen to my troubles and have empathy. I have been talking to you for the last half an hour, and you haven’t made eye contact once. You have hardly looked up from your paperwork. You haven’t even asked me how I am getting on generally.”

“I am sorry, Chubbs, how are you getting on?”

“Huh-----don’t ask!”



# PUZZLE CORNER



## Down

- 1 Avoid (6)
- 2 Employees (9)
- 3 Not those (5)
- 4 Something very ugly (7)
- 6 Swordsman (9)
- 7 Enlist (5)
- 8 Financial supporters (8)
- 11 Utilizer (4)
- 15 Atoning (9)
- 17 Fazed (9)
- 18 Revolted (8)
- 20 Beige (4)
- 21 Excavator (7)
- 22 Found on most pencils (6)
- 24 Assertion (5)
- 25 The mountain of the Ten Commandments (5)

## Across

- |                                  |  |   |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 Law enforcement assistants (8) | 14 Main course (6)                       | 26 An introductory section to a story (2 words) (6) |
| 5 Evaluate (6)                   | 16 Savior (7)                            | 27 Found on roofs (8)                               |
| 9 Dimmed (8)                     | 19 When the moon blocks all sunlight (7) | 28 Harm to property (6)                             |
| 10 Coiffure (6)                  | 21 Expel (6)                             | 29 Baffle (8)                                       |
| 12 Draw out (5)                  | 23 Bizarre (9)                           |   |
| 13 Hindrances (9)                | 25 Forest god (5)                        |   |

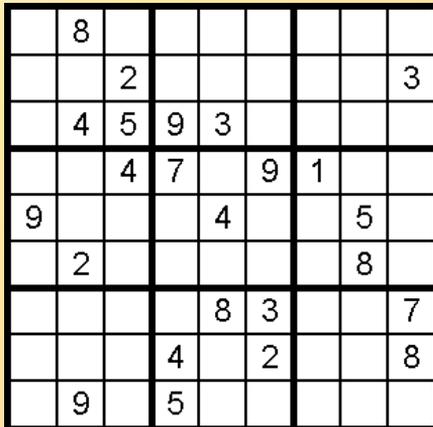
## Sudoku Puzzle

How to play:

The numbers 1 through 9 will appear once only in each row, column, and 3x3 zone. There are 9 such zones in each sudoku grid.

There is only one correct solution to each sudoku. Good luck!

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## Book review:

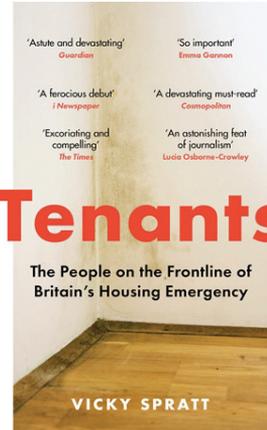
### Nice Areas/Bad Areas; Social Problems in the Economic Crisis

#### Tenants

Author - Vicky Spratt

Publisher - Profile Books

Britain is currently struggling from an economic and social depression highlighted by the increasing costs of energy, food prices and “borrowing rates” on credit cards, bank overdrafts, mortgages and “short term money lenders”. **The “economic crisis” has resulted in considerable efforts by communities, religious groups, organised charities and others to establish support for those experiencing difficulties.** Support varies between areas but includes food banks, clothing banks, hot meals, drinks, and “warm areas” to provide physical and social “warmth” to reduce isolation. **Evidence shows that the growing public health crisis has resulted in an increasing number of families being made “homeless”.** In a challenging, thought provoking and at times harrowing overview, **Vicky Spratt “Tenants”, explores the background to the “housing crisis and homelessness” and its devastating impact on the health of individuals and communities.**



Wendy Spratt considers, from her extensive experience and collation of evidence that the dearth of appropriate “social housing” available from councils or housing associations has forced people into renting from private landlords. Vicky points out that **voters during the “Thatcher era” were tantalised by the “hidden wealth” to be gained if they became shareholders in major companies such as British Gas, BT, Marks and Spencer, etc or became homeowners.** Those families living in council houses were offered financial incentives to purchase their homes. Undoubtedly, for tenants of council houses in “favourable areas” who bought in, the catchphrase of Bruce Forsyth, “You Lucky People” could be appropriately applied! **However, as the author states, the “right to Buy” agenda has taken millions of council houses out of the “social housing bank” since the 1980’s which has resulted in repercussions both socially and financially for many local authorities.**

As the author highlights, the sale of council houses within **“the right to buy and privatisation” political agenda, has been a “win, win” situation for those who bought their homes but has resulted in a dearth of social housing.** The lack of social housing available from councils and housing associations has forced individuals and families into private renting. Despite the fact that there are undoubtedly a great number of “fair landlords” and well run housing associations, **the author provides clear evidence that we cannot ignore the implications resulting from the unravelling of the safety net of social housing.**

In a wide range of insightful case reviews and interviews with tenants, the author enables the reader to empathise with the plight of tenants who, as a result of personal or economic circumstances such as illness, shorter working hours, redundancy, increased rents or “no fault” evictions are faced with losing their “home” or being unable to afford an alternative property within the same area.

**The author contends that the current system is dysfunctional. The assumption that “Getting on your bike” and moving is an easy task fails to address practical implications involving the breakdown of personal commitments, work, schooling for children,**

As the author notes, **many people have a multitude of problems including money, mental health issues, and addictions, but these are all exacerbated by inappropriate houses in poor condition or isolation in HMOs.** From her in depth research issues problems arising include “modern slums”, actions of rogue, unscrupulous and sometimes criminal landlords, alongside the failure of many local authorities to take action by prosecuting landlords for housing offences. In addition **Vicky’s evidence highlights that “rogue landlords” exploit the “supported housing system” at the expense of the more vulnerable.** Readers may well be aware of the case of 4 year old Asaab Ishak who died as a result of exposure to mould in a house rented by the Rochdale Housing Association, who are financed by Central Government.

**Vicky’s hypothesis is that if we treat housing as an essential infrastructure of society we will find that other social and economic issues take a shift.** However, I am disappointed that the author fails in her evidence to address the problem of rogue tenants. It is evident from anecdotal evidence that an increasing number of landlords are, unfortunately, faced with non payment of rent, sub letting with multi occupancy of rooms, damage to and violation of property.

Overall this is a well researched and all embracing insight into the situation facing many individuals and families who are struggling with “Life for Rent”. **I am certain that the evidence base collated by the author and the quality of presentation will promote an increased knowledge base of readers regarding the current social housing disaster and the need for change and innovation.**

## One Kensington

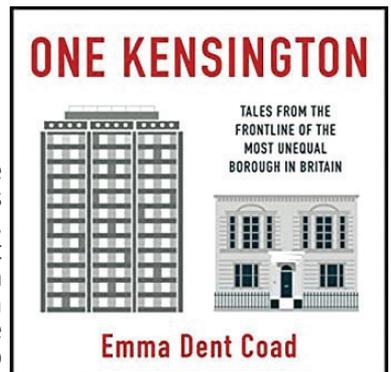
**Author - Emma Dent Coad**

**Publisher - Quercus**

Many readers may have heard of, or possibly gone shopping to Harrods in the luxurious surroundings of South Kensington, surrounded by luxury hotels, restaurants, lavish properties, and a lifestyle that openly displays “wealth”. In contrast if you jump on the Number 74 bus, you can be in North Kensington in less than fifteen minutes and be on the Golborne or Wornington Road, a stones throw from Portobello Road market. This is an area of poverty, overcrowding and multi occupancy housing. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is a divided borough which highlights inequality and a disparity in social and educational support structures. In an insightful and thought provoking book, **“One Kensington”, by Emma Dent Coad** takes an in depth insight into the possible reasons for the great chasm in lifestyle, opportunity and social care between the “two communities” of the “haves and have nots”.

The author, who was the labour MP for the borough from 2017-19 pulls no punches as she highlights the massive wealth and class divisions within the “one borough”. It was during her time as an MP that the Grenfell Tower disaster(2017) occurred, with the death of 72 residents and far reaching emotional and social implication for so many families and individuals who lost their loved ones, homes and possessions. The vivid pictures of the devastation on television channels and the internet shook the nation. The author notes that in its quest for “efficiency savings” the resultant enquiry exposed neglect of resources, corruption and a lack of “duty of care” for the more vulnerable members of an “upstairs, downstairs community”.

I taught physical education at Isacc Newton school on Wornington Road from 1967 -1972 and was fitness coach at the North Kensington College and Middle Row Boxing Club four nights a week. During this time, the notorious “rogue landlord” Peter



Rachman became a multi millionaire by buying up run down slum housing and exploiting and intimidating tenants. The majority of tenants were new arrivals from the West Indies who were unable to rent houses elsewhere due to blatant racism with signs displayed saying "To rent; no blacks or Irish". The families were forced to rent rooms of multi occupancy in the large barely habitable dwellings with limited facilities.

It is significant that the term "Rachmanism" is an entry in the Oxford Dictionary to define "the exploitation and intimidation of tenants by unscrupulous landlords". The text is full to overflowing with evidence from council meetings, committees and reports from "experts" that the long term impact of Rachmanism in terms of "social care and support" was still in evidence in 2017. The section on the Sultan and Mrs Braithwaite is particularly pertinent in terms of housing costs and the social and emotional implications for tenants.

It is unfortunate that Emma frequently gets bogged down with over analysis of meetings and a tendency to promote her own agenda and contribution within meetings. This detracts from the overall analysis of how neglected the most vulnerable members of North Kensington had become as a result of local government mismanagement and "corruption". The text lacked oral evidence from those affected and pictorial evidence of the "squalor" in underprivileged areas compared with the "luxuries on the other side of the wall" particularly for readers not conversant with the "extremes within the borough".

Despite these limitations, the book is a challenging insight from a "crusader" into the politics of solving the challenge of housing tenants, particularly the more vulnerable within "poorer communities". The key hurdle is that, as a result of previous failures residents have developed a lack of belief and trust in the process of consultation. The author has "set the record straight" but she fails to address strategies that will help to re-build trust within communities and reconnect with "those in need" by putting local people at the heart of the decision making process to address the "extremes of inequality". Well worth reading.

### **About the reviewer**

**John T Morris BA(Hons),MEd,MPhil,DipPsych,CertEd.**

John taught physical education in Ladbroke Grove, was fitness coach at the Middle Row Boxing Club, weight training and fitness coach in Wrexham, a graduate member of the British Psychological Society and a Mental Health counsellor. He was head teacher of three specialist centres for young people in North Wales. His research at Lancaster University was on promoting "growth mindsets". He currently works with individuals and teams to develop resilience, tenacity, determination and team skills .



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# THE JOSHUA TREE

SUPPORTING FAMILIES AFFECTED  
BY CHILDHOOD CANCERS

## Ladies who Lunch raise vital funds for local cancer charity The Joshua Tree



Cheshire based children’s cancer charity, The Joshua Tree, hosted a Ladies Lunch at Delamere Manor, Cuddington on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> November. The successful event raised £11,000 thanks to their huge generosity.

TV presenter, Bruce Turner who gave freely of his time to the children’s cancer charity, entertained more the 70 guests to highlight the importance of the charity’s work and telling one family’s story about their 11 years old son’s incredible survival of one the rarest cancers in the world, a Malignant Rhabdoid tumour of the liver, and the support they still receive from The Joshua Tree.

Guests enjoyed a three-course meal and champagne reception while entertained by Beat Bandito followed by Robbie Williams tribute act, alongside fundraising games, a live auction, and raffle with fabulous prizes to be won.

Speaking about the event, Bruce said: “I thoroughly enjoyed attending The Joshua Tree Ladies’ Lunch for the second year running and helping tell the story of the vital work they do and helping to raise funds for families affected by the devastating impact of a childhood cancer diagnosis.”

Pippa Watson-Peck, Communications and Events Lead for The Joshua Tree, said: “What an amazing day we had raising the profile of the charity. The generosity of our guests was simply astounding during such turbulent times, we cannot thank them enough for their continued support.”

“The Joshua Tree can make a real and lasting difference with this support. On average we were receiving 15 new family referrals a year, but during 2021 this increased to 54 and so far, this year over 80 new family referrals.”

For further information about how you can support The Joshua Tree visit:

[www.thejoshuatree.org.uk](http://www.thejoshuatree.org.uk)





## New boots for old

Chester Rambling & Hill Walking Club have some winter traditions that are almost set in stone and looked forward to with great gusto each year. One of these is a Sunday spent walking, followed by dinner in a local hotel. Being deepest, darkest December, with limited daylight hours, there was no A grade walk in Snowdonia that day. Instead, a choice of two hikes was offered – a B walk of up to 1,500ft of ascent, and a lower level C walk. Both routes were in the Llanferres area, not too far from home or our evening meal venue.

My other half and I led the C walk that day, an 8½ miler starting from Gwernymynydd, near Mold. We'd reconnoitred our chosen route on a showery day 3 weeks earlier, setting off across fields from Gwernymynydd, and passing Colomendy Outdoor Centre to reach Aberduna Nature Reserve. This former limestone quarry was landscaped in the early 1990s and since then Mother Nature has firmly reclaimed what was once hers. Now, where quarrymen's boots once trod, nature flourishes, and delightful paths interweave between limestone outcrops, woodland and grassy plateaus. Nearby, in Maeshafn, a myriad of tracks offers big choices for walkers, and ours emerged from a small wooded area to reveal a fabulous view of the Clwydians to the right! A mile further on, we discovered that our proposed footpath, running adjacent to another old quarry, had been closed off since we last used it some months previously. An explanatory notice informed us that the path would be out of use for the foreseeable future due to 'ground movement'. Our alternative route made the walk a little longer and slightly hillier than

planned, but this was more favourable than losing club members over the edge of a cliff! With the glitch sorted, we strode onwards, dodging heavy downpours to reach Moel Findeg Nature Reserve. Skirting the summit, a lower footpath would ultimately lead us back towards Gwernymynydd. Along here are glorious views of Moel Famau and we lingered awhile to enjoy the palette of autumn colours on the hillsides, spot lit here and there by shafts of sunlight. We were being stalked, however, by more dark clouds that threatened to drench us fairly soon. The promised torrents appeared for the last half mile of our walk, and lashed us relentlessly. My ageing boots had kept my feet dry all day, despite tramping through damp grass and the occasional muddy swamp, but now decided to start leaking! Let's just say that by the time we reached our parked car we were a tad soggy from head to toe...

We may have had a wet reconnoitre, but when we led the walk for club members the weather was mostly dry, despite a cloud canopy hovering low enough to obliterate the beautiful Clwydian summits. No shafts of sunlight shone through to dry the grass beneath our feet, and we didn't see Moel Famau once that day. However, there were positives. We didn't get a soaking and members shared a comradely day's walking prior to tucking into a delicious dinner later. And, my new walking boots didn't leak, despite being introduced heartily to their new, and currently very damp, stomping ground.

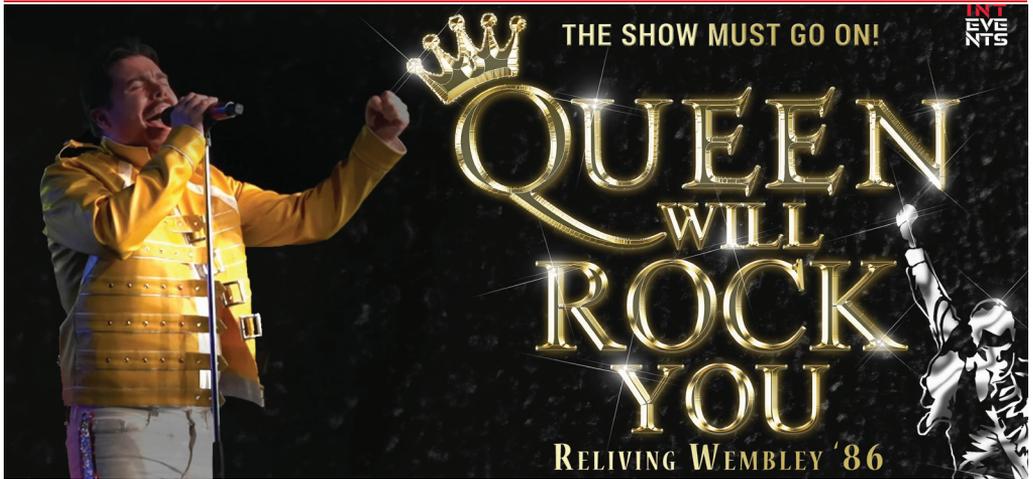
If you fancy discovering new walks in North Wales, Cheshire and beyond, then why not start the New Year off by joining a hiking group with experienced leaders? We have a choice of 2 - 3 grades of walks most Sundays: C's can be up to around 1,000 ft of ascent, B's up to 2,000ft, and A grade walks tackle the higher crags, usually in Snowdonia. We are also out every other Wednesday for a hike of 8 - 9 miles, and our winter social calendar is in full swing, offering a programme of talks and social evenings.

We are a very friendly group and new members are always warmly welcomed. Whatever your walking ability, if you love the outdoors and fancy meeting like-minded folk, come and join us!

**To find out more about Chester Rambling & Hill Walking Club, head over to our website: [www.chesterwalkingclub.com](http://www.chesterwalkingclub.com) Joining details can also be obtained by emailing [chesramclub@yahoo.com](mailto:chesramclub@yahoo.com)**

*Maria Owen, Press Officer, Chester Rambling and Hill Walking Club*





Queen Will Rock You are well established as one of the world's most authentic tributes to the legend that is Freddie Mercury and Queen.

This electric theatre production fully imitates the enthralling appeal of rock's most ostentatious front man, faithfully and accurately recreating the unique Queen experience, from the movements of Freddie to the same equipment Queen used themselves to create their distinctive sound.

The extraordinary vocal range and outstanding delivery of Dominic Creighton as Freddie Mercury and the intricate guitar work of Alex Gaskell as Brian May are backed by superbly crafted harmonies, a driving rhythm section and state-of-the-art production. This show is a carbon copy experience of Queen's famous 1986 Wembley Arena concert.

Including performances of the most popular Queen hits, such as Bohemian Rhapsody, Radio Ga Ga, We Are The Champions, We Will Rock You and many more, this show will captivate any audience - from die-hard Queen fans through to new generations of music lovers in a way that Freddie and Queen themselves would be proud of.

Tickets for the QUEEN WILL ROCK YOU – Liverpool M&S Bank Arena – Friday 1st September 2023 show are available from:

LIVERPOOL – M&S Bank Arena Box Office No – 0344 800 0400

Website – [www.mandsbankarena.com/whats-on/queen-will-rock-you-reliving-wembley-86/](http://www.mandsbankarena.com/whats-on/queen-will-rock-you-reliving-wembley-86/)

Tickets Price - £20.00 Doors Open – 7.30pm





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