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May 2021

INTERVIEW
**JANE
McDONALD**

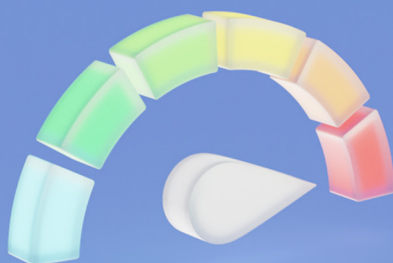
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Welcome from the EDITOR

It's time to get outside and hopefully enjoy some spring sunshine. Why not make a cuppa and sit in the garden to read Beacon Magazine.

This month John Hannam interviews singer, Jane McDonald, while we head off for a walk in the south of the Island.

Our history feature delves into the growth of one of the Island's most loved businesses, Grace's Bakery and we bring you a mouthwatering recipe for summer salads...a herb crusted salmon.

We'll also help you fill up your diary once more, as we investigate which Isle of Wight businesses and events are inviting guests back over their threshold — and Ventnor Botanic Garden offers one lucky reader and their guests the chance to enjoy a free day out in the garden.

We hope you enjoy it.

Amy Shephard

Editor amy.shephard@iwbeacon.com



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Beacon

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A day to remember with

JANE McDONALD

There are days in your life that you will never forget. One of mine was September 26th, 2006, when I met up again with Jane McDonald. Her welcoming hug and comforting words were just what I needed

By John Hannam



Our original interview was planned for September 5th at London's Wise Buddah Studio but with my wife, Heather, dangerously ill in hospital, it was obviously cancelled. Sadly, she died two days later.

Jane had made a promise, via her PR lady, that she would arrange another date and I was invited to the Congress Theatre, Eastbourne. It was not an easy day. The Sussex seaside town had been one of our favourite places and we had spent a few short holidays there. I felt so lonely going there on my own and I was in one shop, that we regularly visited, having a difficult moment. Suddenly my phone rang and it was my daughter Caroline. It couldn't have come at a more opportune moment. Suddenly my mood changed for the better.

Within a few minutes I was sat in the Congress Theatre's hospitality room awaiting Jane's arrival. In she came and I will never forget her opening words: "I've been thinking about you. Come here, I want to give you a big hug." That was just the instant tonic I needed to record a 30 minute interview for my IW Radio chat show.

I had been an admirer of Jane McDonald since I first saw her in that

brilliant 1998 series called *The Cruise*. Our first meeting was back in 2003 in London's Berkeley Square and, luckily, she was the only nightingale in sight. I quickly realised just how nice a person Jane really is. She simply lights up a room when she walks in. No airs and graces. Just an everyday Yorkshire lass, who is not full of her own importance. I love her stories from the early days when sometimes she struggled to make an impact in the clubs. Some audiences expected more than just singing.

In Eastbourne I just had to tell her how great she looked, eight years on from *The Cruise*. I expected a quick answer and I got one: "John, I reckon your eyes are going."

I was also fascinated by the fact she originally played an accordion on her chest, a subject I'd briefly touched upon a year or two earlier. Would she expand on the story?

"I was in the Wakefield Accordion Band and was rather good until I grew a bust and the accordion always seemed to be caught up in my jumper. That's why I switched to piano," teased Jane.

That Sussex one-nighter came during her British tour. Suddenly she was in great demand and since then she's enjoyed phenomenal success with huge sell-out tours. On one she played to 150,000 people.

To my mind, Jane is a 21st century Dorothy Squires. She's working class, very gutsy, a supreme entertainer with a powerful voice and she simply gives it

her all. Unbeknown to me, she'd been a fan of the amazing Welsh legend and was flattered by my comparison.

In a way Jane's career has followed the path of Cilla Black, who also began as purely a singer before becoming a great television presenter.

Jane's advisors were shrewd enough to broaden her horizons and add a new direction to her career. Suddenly she acquired thousands of new fans via her appearances on *Loose Women*. Even I would switch on just to watch her. Don't tell anyone. Mind you, at my age I don't really have any street cred!

A few of my male showbiz friends have been tempted on to *Loose Women* and a few may have regretted it. I asked Jane if she had a theory?

"When guys came on to the show I found their body language was hilarious. They either crossed their arms or covered up their bits. What were they expecting us to do — attack them?"

Channel 5 producers also realised the potential of Jane as a television presenter and very quickly millions were tuning in to *Cruising With Jane McDonald*, of which there were six series, *Holiday With Jane McDonald* and *Jane McDonald And Friends*. They all showcase her as such a natural presenter.

Lockdowns permitting, Jane is all set to start her *Let The Light In* British tour in June. It's going to just over 30 venues, including the Congress Theatre, Eastbourne, which is where we began this *A Day To Remember*. ☺

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IoW COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The choice facing the Island

Number of candidates

ISLAND CONSERVATIVES

39

LABOUR

28

← 20 seats - a majority to run the IoW Council

Only the Conservatives or Labour can secure a majority to give the IoW Council a clear direction.

The alternative is a return to a chaotic coalition of "independents" - this time with their Lib Dem and Green allies - prevaricating amongst themselves. Let's not go back to that. The Council must continue to have strong leadership.

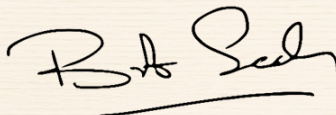
A MESSAGE FROM BOB SEELY

In December 2019, I was re-elected as the Isle of Wight's MP, with Labour in second place. On 6th May, the Island faces the same political choice, in terms of the parties which could run the Council.

Over the past four years, I have worked with the Conservatives at County Hall to help secure investment — including over £100 million extra for health and transport investment. **But there is much more still to do, so that the Island makes a sustainable recovery from the pandemic.**

We must keep up the progress we're making — and a strong Conservative Team on the IoW Council will enable us to do this. I was a councillor prior to 2017 and saw the chaos of disparate "independents" trying to run County Hall. The Island can't afford to go back to that.

If you voted for me in 2019, please support your local Conservative candidate for the IoW Council. These elections are as important as those to Westminster — and will affect the future of the Island. **Let's make the right decision on 6th May.**



✓ Leading the Island to a safe, strong recovery from the pandemic

✓ Protecting our green spaces from development

✓ Working together for the future of the Island

Vote Conservative on Thursday 6th May



Promoted by David Pugh of the Isle of Wight Conservative Association, 58 The Mall, Carisbrooke Rd, Newport, PO30 1BW on behalf of all 39 Conservative candidates standing in the IoW Council elections.

Herb Crusted SALMON FILLETS

Fresh salmon is available all-year round, it's quick, easy and makes the perfect light, stress free mid-week meal. Accompany Adele Trathan's recipe with asparagus and hollandaise sauce for a delicious lunch with friends



SERVES

4

INGREDIENTS

4 x 150g (5oz) salmon fillets (skinned and boned)
100g (3oz) low-fat garlic and herb soft cheese
Drizzle of vegetable oil
Pinch of salt and black pepper

Topping

30g (1oz) fresh white breadcrumbs
30g (1oz) mature Cheddar cheese, grated
2 tbsp fresh flat-leaf parsley, chopped
1 lime, finely grated zest

To Serve

Lemon wedges
Flat-leaf parsley sprigs

METHOD

1 Place the salmon fillets on a lightly oiled baking sheet and season with salt and pepper. Spread the soft cheese on the top of each fillet keeping it away from the edges.

2 Mix together the topping ingredients, add salt and black pepper seasoning to taste, then sprinkle on the top of each salmon fillet. (This can be prepared ahead and kept covered in the refrigerator for up to 12 hours.)

3 Pre-heat the oven to 220°C (425°F, Gas 7) and bake for 15-20 minutes until the salmon is cooked through and flakes easily. Garnish with slices of lemon and fresh parsley.



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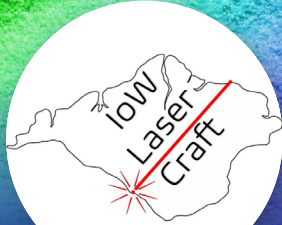
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FORWARD TO
WELCOMING
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By Amy Shephard

Start in Godshill. If you're driving, you can park in the car park opposite The Griffin, or if you're coming by bus, there's a stop just along the High Street.

You'll find a footpath behind The Griffin which heads towards Stenbury Down (it's to the right of the pub, turning left round the back of the beer garden).

Follow the route through woodland and farmland until you reach a set of steep steps directly in front of you which head up to the Worsley Obelisk. This route is incredibly steep so if you'd



rather avoid the section which includes the obelisk, take a left before the steps.

The obelisk was erected in 1774 by Sir Richard Worsley in memory of Sir Robert

Worsley of Appuldurcombe House.

In 1831, the obelisk was struck by lightning and partially destroyed, before being restored in 1983.

If you've climbed up to the obelisk, now head back down off the downs and rejoin the path to Godshill.

Continue along the path until you reach the Freemantle Gate. This Grade II* listed ornamental gateway was built in the late 18th century of Isle of Wight stone ashlar. It has Portland stone dressings and

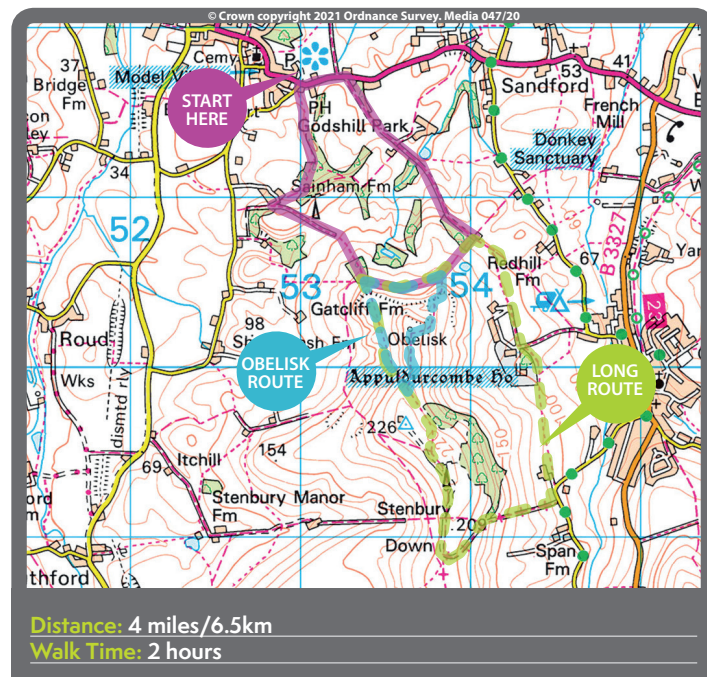
beautiful cast iron gates. Take a left here.

Now you'll walk along Godshill Park Road towards the main road, where you'll take another left and head onwards to the car park where you started.

There are longer versions of this walk, which include Appuldurcombe House. Simply continue heading towards Stenbury Down after the obelisk and follow the path in a loop to Freemantle Gate. Allow an extra hour for your walk if taking this route.



This Grade II listed ornamental gateway was built in the late 18th century of Isle of Wight stone ashlar.*



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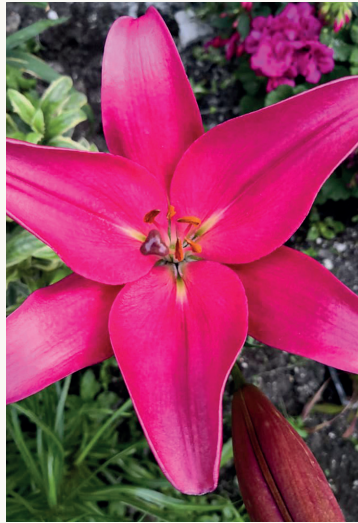
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Enjoy a day in the exotic outdoors, with a trip to Ventnor Botanic Garden. Stroll around the garden's 22-acre microclimate with plant collections from South Africa, New Zealand, Australia, the Mediterranean Basin and Japan.

View the National Collection of half-hearty Puya, the flower within the logo and the inspiration behind naming the boutique gift shop, full of locally sourced and ethically made products.

For those of you that wish to grab

a drink or some food during your day, Ventnor Botanic Garden has The Plantation Cafe and Terrace, with panoramic views of the garden and sea. You can enjoy a VBG Beer, cake or cream tea, to name a few. Or, for something more substantial, why not head to the edulis Restaurant, with luck the chef will be presenting what he foraged in the morning.

Whether you're a visitor or an Island

resident, you can escape the every day and relax in the tranquillity of the gardens.

Ventnor Botanic Garden's "Get off the path" ethos encourages you to explore the many hidden trails, from the Secret Gardens to the Dinosaur Plants for children. VBG is a great base from which to walk the coastal path and visit Steephill Cove, with all day parking included in your admission to the garden, it's a no brainer.

#Britainshottestgarden 

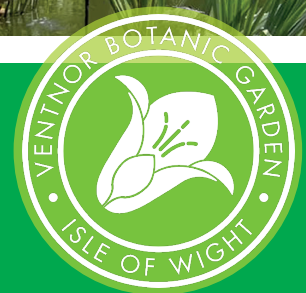


WIN A DAY IN THE GARDEN!

For either two adults or a family of four. Simply answer the following question via email to win@iwbeacon.com.

Q: Name three countries with native plants found at Ventnor Botanic Garden

Closing date 31st May





Charity to host summer drive-in CINEMA

Wessex Cancer Trust's drive-in cinema is heading to Sandown Airport this summer.

The event will feature eight epic blockbusters screened over two days to raise money for Wessex Cancer Trust. The films to be screened on the Saturday are Jurassic Park, The Greatest Showman, Dirty Dancing and Bridesmaids while, on Sunday, The Lion King (2019), Mamma Mia, Grease and The Hangover will be shown on a giant LED screen, with the soundtrack played through each car radio. The event will take place with Covid-19 restrictions and social-distancing

Jack Up The Summer *Family-friendly retro festival*

Jack is BACK! Returning 6th-8th August to North Fairlee Farm, this popular outdoor event provides the ideal Summer reunion with friends and family, featuring feel-good music from the 80s and 90s. Now in its eighth year, the 2021 line-up features the phenomenal voice of M People Heather Small, Heaven 17, Strangler's frontman Hugh Cornwell, Aswad, From The Jam, Dario G, Phats & Small, Baby D, Queen's greatest hits with The Bohemians, Abba Chique, Black Lace, Ska'd For Life and more!

With plenty of green space for everyone to spread out and tickets available at 2020 prices for a strictly limited time only, it's the ultimate pick-me-up weekend
jackupthesummer.co.uk

Book Release: Compton. From the Skies to the Seas

Retired graphic designer and photographer, Rosy Burke, has been missing her regular trips to the West Wight over the last year.

She usually spends a lot of time in Brighstone and Hulverstone with her two sisters. So stuck at home near Banbury, Oxfordshire, she has been dreaming of splashing along the beach or climbing the downs with the blue butterflies. As a love letter to the landscape, Rosy has

written her first book in poetry prose, sprinkling the pages with over 140 photos and illustrations that she has gathered from her West Wight photo library.

In fact it was with one of those photos of bathers running away from big waves in Freshwater Bay that she won the Judges Prize in the BBC Countryfile Photo Competition in 2005.

Rosy envelopes the landscape, from the moon, winds and skies, to the tall

downs with distant Atlantic views, the farm and animal stories, the Military Road and ancient cliffs, to the ever-changing beach and the mysterious seas. She tells fascinating, informative and funny stories from the local landscape.

The book costs £12, available from May 3rd from Brighstone Newsagents, Brighstone Village Shop and Orchards. £15 inc. p&p from www.comptoniow.uk.



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The Entertainment GUIDE

Visit iwbeacon.com to see our full events guide



Drive-in Cinema

Sat 5th & Sun 6th June 2021
Sandown Airport

Sat 5th June
10:00 Jurassic Park
13:30 **SOLD OUT!** Superman
17:00 Dirty Dancing
20:30 Bridesmaids

Sun 6th June
10:00 The Lion King (2019)
13:30 Mamma Mia!
17:00 Grease
20:30 The Hangover

WESSEX CANCER TRUST

www.wessexcancer.org.uk/event/drive-in-cinema-2021/

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rules in place.

Tickets for each screening are limited and are available at wessexcancer.org.uk/event/drive-in-cinema-2021.

All money raised will help Wessex Cancer Trust support Islanders affected by cancer.

JUNE
5TH & 6TH

Wight Proms plans 2021 return

Festival organisers have said that they hope the Wight Proms will take place this summer. The four-day festival is scheduled to take place on 19th-22nd August in the grounds of Northwood House in Cowes, celebrating comedy, musical theatre, and of course the 'Last Wight of the Proms'. It is also hoped that opera will be making its debut appearance in its own right at the Wight Proms this year.

Last year, the Wight Proms decided to go online with three exclusive concerts, to help support the festival financially and to offer work to performers who had otherwise lost all their income.

The online 'Wight Proms At-Home' concerts are still available to watch from the Wight Proms website:

www.wightproms.co.uk

The 1-hour online concerts consist of a musical theatre gala and a vintage proms finale, plus for the first time at the Wight Proms, the online series includes an opera soiree.

AUG
19TH - 22ND

THE
WIGHT PROMS

It is hoped that a final decision will be made in the coming month as to whether the Wight Proms can feasibly go ahead this year, and you can join the Wight Proms mailing list on their website to hear first.

The Wight Proms has hosted a number of big names since its inaugural festival in 2018, including musical theatre divas Ruthie Henshall and Kerry Ellis, classical stars Aled Jones, Russell Watson, Blake and Lesley Garrett, and comedians Omid Djalili, Shappi Khorsandi and Alan Davies.



Sarah Millican at Shanklin Theatre

JULY
24TH

Comedian, Sarah Millican, is heading to Shanklin Theatre with her new stand-up show.

On Saturday, July 24th at both 3.30pm and 7.30pm, she'll be making audiences laugh as part of her sixth international tour, recalling her hilarious account of every day dramas, including the time when she lost the tip of her finger. shanklintheatre.com



The Mental Health Podcast

ISLAND MINDS
THE MENTAL HEALTH PODCAST

Isle of Wight based podcast, Island Minds, aims to normalise conversations about mental health and provide a platform for individuals who wish to speak out.

Co-hosted by Hannah Brewer and Tia Jackson, who say stigma, judgement and misconceptions are still widely prevalent when it comes to mental-ill health. A fact that can stand in the way of people seeking help.

Hannah and Tia aren't looking to give out unqualified advice, but are hopeful that their little podcast will grow and help towards the call to end stigma.

The first episode went down really well with listeners, with great feedback received.

Island Minds can currently be found on Acast, Apple, Spotify and Amazon music (visit linktr.ee/islandmindspodcast for more details). You can also follow Island Minds on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook.

Hannah and Tia aim to produce a podcast at least once a month.

Snowdrops and Rosemary

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- Our 'Island Way' is £1,695.00, this is for a direct cremation at the Isle of Wight Crematorium
- Our 'Wessex Way' is £1,495.00, this is for a direct cremation at a mainland crematorium.

We offer this option for families that would like to take advantage of the savings that mainland crematoriums offer. We then pass this saving onto families. Both these options are all inclusive with no hidden additional costs; unlike mainland providers who charge additionally for ferry fares.

Can I get help with the cremation costs?

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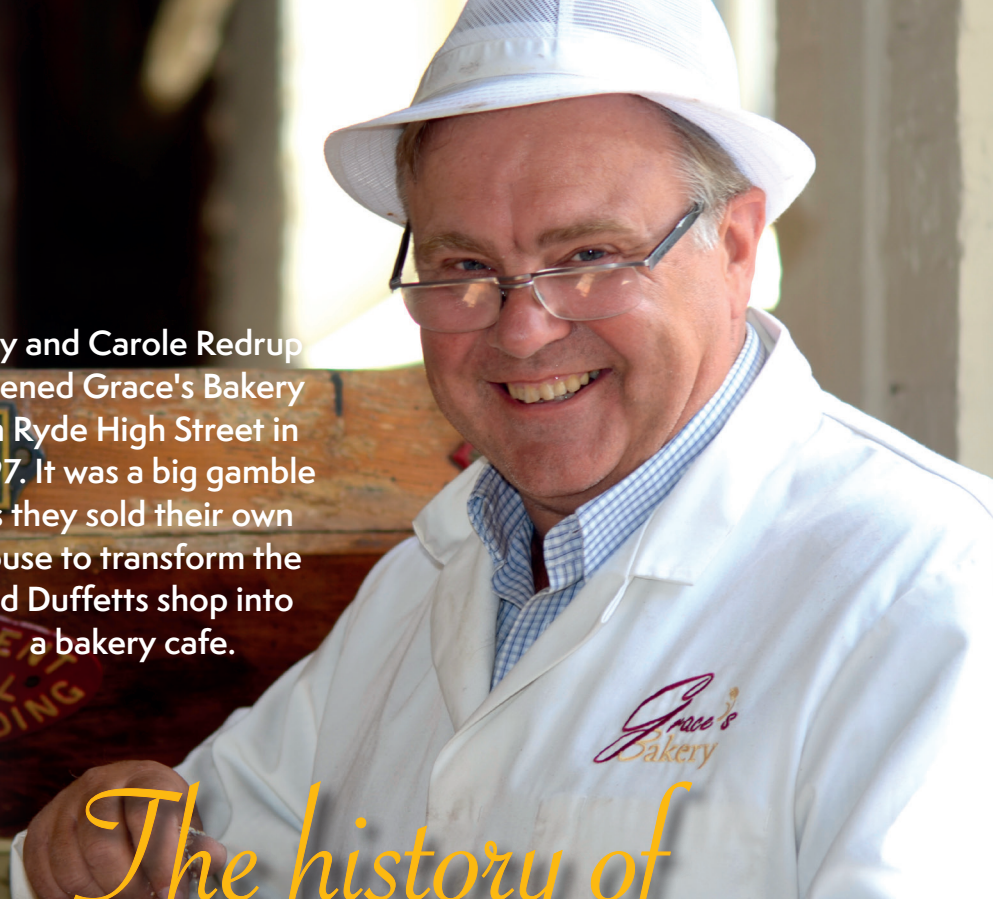
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Ray and Carole Redrup opened Grace's Bakery on Ryde High Street in 1997. It was a big gamble as they sold their own house to transform the old Duffetts shop into a bakery cafe.



The history of

RACE'S BAKERY

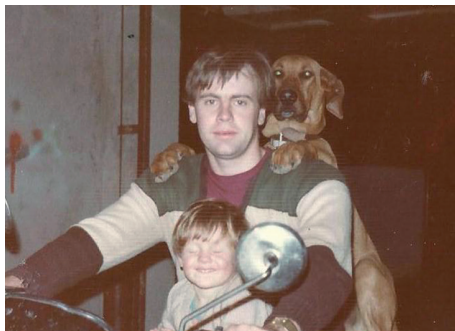


On opening day they had to borrow money from a friend so they had enough money for a float in the till.

Carole took up front of house in the shop, while Ray worked in the tiny bakehouse, with some help from Ray's parents. They crossed their fingers and hoped it would work.

At the time, the couple's four children were just 17, 13 and three (twin daughters). Often Ray would have to sleep on a camp bed at work instead of travelling home to their rented house in Totland.

Ray had been baking since the age of 15. Something which incredibly started off as a bet! Ray and his school friend Jimmy had a bet on who could get a job first. They stood outside the milk depot and asked the staff if they needed a hand. Jimmy got the job, so Ray carried on walking down the road and went into a local bakers, *Rose's Fresh Bake* and Mr Rose gave him a job cleaning and greasing the tins. He learned a lot from Mr Rose and was inspired to go to bakery college after leaving school. Mr Rose even turned up to watch Ray give presentations at college, something that Ray remembers fondly.



Ray with son Daniel in South Africa



Sarah outside Ryde shop in 1997 and right, in 2017

Ray met Carole at just 15 years old, and they got married at the age of 18. After having their first son, Daniel, they moved to South Africa where Ray worked as a bakery manager for Pick and Pay. He was

soon head-hunted by an international company. Working as a bakery specialist he travelled all over the country to help new bakeries start up and solve problems for established ones. They soon had their second child (David) in South Africa. After a few years out there Ray got into a 'disagreement' with someone trying to steal his car outside his house. He lost the argument when the gentlemen decided to shoot him! He survived, but they decided it was time for the family to go back home to the UK.

Once home, Ray started up a bakery business of his own. He ended up having bakeries around Essex and West London.

Ray's mother suggested that he move to the Isle of Wight. Ray's family was from the Island but moved to Essex. So,

Ray took a trip down to Ryde and sat in town observing shoppers' habits. He was fortunate

to meet Fred Ward, the owner of Duffetts. So, they sold their house in Essex, ferried the kids down to the Island and used the money to start Grace's!

Around four years after setting up shop in Ryde, the family were opening up their second shop in Newport Pyle Street.

"I still have a very distinct memory of sitting on the floor playing with tiles watching my dad stick them to the walls,"





Grace Taylor
(Grace's Namesake)



Collette, Ryde shop manager

large houses in London cleaning and waiting on the owners.

"She didn't have an easy life and experienced a lot of hardships. So, Dad wanted to remember her by naming the bakery after her," said Sarah. "After all, we are in service to the people of the Isle of Wight too."

Today, three generations of family members work at Grace's Bakery. Ray and Carole have been joined by their sons, Daniel (Operations Director) and David (Sales Director), their daughter Jodie (Human Resources) and her husband Jacob (Trainee Operations Manager/Baker) and daughter Sarah (Marketing Manager).

Ray's brothers Derek (Head Baker) and Mark (Packer), niece, Kirsty and grandson, Dylan.

Ray named the bakery after his nan, Grace Taylor. She spent her life in service, working in large houses in London cleaning and waiting on the owners.

said daughter Sarah. "You can still see the tiny burgundy tiles in our Newport Shop!"

As the business grew, Ray convinced the owner of the building in Ryde, Fred Ward, to let them expand the bake house further back. The building had been in Fred's family for a long time and used to be a working mill. They still have lots of the old equipment today in their offices and the pulley systems from the third floor down are still visible.

Fred would go and sit in the bakery at the end of the day and chat to the twins while they waited for their mum to finish cleaning up.

"We'd often run up to his house and leave him a loaf of bread on the doorstep. After he sadly passed away my parents bought the building and found all of the things he had been collecting over the years including really old vans and cars!"

Ray named the bakery after his nan, Grace Taylor, a woman who he has lots of fond memories of, from his childhood. She spent her life in service, working in

Their longest serving staff member, Collette is a familiar face for a lot of people in Ryde and has been managing the Ryde Shop for over 20 years.

She's watched the four children grow up. "I remember her sitting me and Jodie down in the cafe after school and getting us to fold napkins and cake boxes to keep up busy. And when we turned 13 she started training us on Saturdays to work in the shop."

Grace's Bakery now has six shops across the Island, over 60 staff members and over 60 wholesale customers. They supply St Mary's Hospital, Wightlink, Co-ops, Central Stores and lots of wonderful local businesses. And they deliver to Islander's homes Island-wide, five days a week.

They started a home delivery service in March 2020 after lots of regular customers asked for help getting their essential shopping during lockdown. Within a week they had made an online shop and website from scratch, despite not having a proper website before. Ray and Carole's son Daniel studied computer science at university and put his skills to good use.

Grace's has had people ordering from as far away as Canada and Australia to get gifts sent to their family on the Island.

"The best feeling is when someone opens the door to you, you tell them it's a gift from their son/daughter/grandchild/brother/sister etc and their face lights up!"

For these efforts, Grace's won the Customer Service Award at the 2020 Bakery Industry Awards: "We've never even been nominated before...so to have won a whole category was amazing! We also won Best COVID-19 Response Award at the 2020 National Best Small Shops Awards." ③



The family outside the newest shop on Newport High Street

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News from Cowes West

by Cllr Paul Fuller

COWES/ GURNARD SEAFRONT PARKING CHARGES: I am advised meters are not now due to be installed until after 4th June. I have again contacted the council leader requesting a rethink on proposals.

BARING ROAD PLANNING APPLICATIONS: My grateful thanks to the IW Planning Committee who supported myself, local residents and Gurnard's Neighbourhood Plan in refusing the proposal to develop on the green 'gap' between Cowes and Gurnard. In the meantime proposals to increase the size of The Dottens development were refused by planners.

ESCOOTERS: Given recent feedback and residents concerns over safety and the lawful use of scooters, Cowes Town Council have followed up issues and have asked to 'virtually' meet with Beryl, the e-scooter operator.

ENERGY SUPPLIES: With OFGEM's price cap for energy bills set to increase, residents are being urged to consider switching suppliers, for details visit: www.moneysavingexpert.com and www.uswitch.com

SCHOOL HIGHWAY SAFETY: Following an incident involving a child being hit by a vehicle outside Gurnard School, please drive (and park) safely outside schools. Because of this, it seems inevitable that further restrictions will follow sooner rather than later.

GURNARD GREEN: Overfilled litter bins were reported to the IW Council and in response, I've increased signage. Please avoid overfilling bins and if you can take your rubbish home please don't hesitate to do so.

MORNINGTON CAR PARK: Dialogue continues regarding this car park. From my perspective, I have asked the IW Council to consider transferring the car park to Cowes Town Council.

GURNARD BEACH: Following occurrences of residents getting stuck in blue slipper and by high tides, a request was made to the IW Council to increase signage between Gurnard Sailing Club and Gurnard Marsh.

☎ 289595/ 07935 090 835

✉ paulfulleriw@gmail.com

Printed by Beacon Magazine, 8-10 Dodnor Park, Newport, PO30 5XE and promoted by Paul Fuller of 45 Oxford Street, Cowes. PO31 8PT.



Hospital parking remains free despite letters

By Oliver Dyer

Parking at St Mary's Hospital remains free says the Isle of Wight NHS Trust, despite patient letters claiming otherwise.

The Trust told Isle of Wight Radio that free parking is not going anywhere for now.

Letters sent to some patients warned of parking charges across the hospital's car parks.

A line in one letter sent out in

April, reads:

"Car parking charges are in operation on the St Mary's Hospital site, please allow sufficient time before the stated appointment time for parking."

Free parking was implemented during the coronavirus pandemic for both visitors and staff. The Trust said patients will be informed at least a month in advance before charges are restored.

The Beast Must Die to air in May

By Oliver Dyer

Isle of Wight-filmed thriller *The Beast Must Die* will air late in May, it's been revealed.

A new trailer has also been released by streaming service Britbox.

The series was shot at a total of 69 Island locations last year. Those included Ryde, East Cowes, Freshwater and Yarmouth. It also saw hundred

of Islanders land roles as extras, courtesy of the Island People Agency.

Watch the trailer for the Isle of Wight-based series at iwbeacon.com.

The stellar cast includes Bafta, Golden Globe & Emmy nominated Jared Harris (Chernobyl, The Crown, Mad Men) and Cush Jumbo OBE (pictured in Ryde with Islander Christopher Jackson, below).

The first two episodes of the five-part thriller will be available on the streaming service from May 27th. A further three episodes will be shown weekly on Thursdays.



The Beast Must Die premieres 27th May on Britbox



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Reconnected with Southampton

By Iona Stewart-Richardson

Red Funnel's Red Jet timetable has expanded and the Quayconnect bus has been reinstated — in line with the easing of lockdown.

The Red Jet service has returned to all-day coverage, offering customers 12 departures from each side of the Solent, Monday to Friday and 11 departures on weekends.

From West Cowes, sailings will depart every 80 minutes between 06:15 and 20:55 Monday to Friday, and between 07:35 and 20:55 on weekends. From Southampton, sailings will depart

every 80 minutes between 05:35 and 20:15 Monday to Friday, and between 06:55 and 20:15 on weekends.

Red Funnel's Quayconnect bus service has been reinstated — which offers transport from its Southampton Red Jet terminal at Town Quay, taking passengers into the city with stops including West Quay Shopping Centre and Southampton Central Train Station.

The Quayconnect will remain available to all Red Jet passengers as normal and will be free of any additional charge. Bus times will align with Red Jet departures/arrivals times and offer full coverage with the exception of picking up passengers departing West Cowes at 19:35 and 20:55 or dropping off passengers departing Southampton at 05:35 or 20:15.

By law, face coverings continue to be mandatory for all travellers, except in specific cases of exemption as outlined by the government.

For FAQs and more information visit www.redfunnel.co.uk



News from Central Newport

by Cllr Julie Jones-Evans

It's been so good to see so many people returning to Newport to shop and get their long overdue haircuts! Businesses in Newport are thrilled to welcome people back and seeing people having catch ups in the square and park over a coffee is a lovely sight.

The Government have announced the Welcome Back Fund which places can spend on making their town centres more desirable, such as creating more seating, more planting, markets etc as a temporary feature to kick start the come back. The Island has been allocated £191k but we are still awaiting the detail on how it can be spent.

Ideas I have are to take over one of the empty large units in town for a few months to trial an indoor market and food court to support new businesses and those looking to grow, more planting, a car free day with entertainment and play streets, a bigger Christmas Fair and lights. If you have any ideas please let me know.

Just one update on the return of the Post Office they will now consider offering two or three smaller post offices instead of a main post office counter, which may prove to be more attractive to an existing business and more convenient for customers. Rest assured I'm not letting up on getting this matter resolved, Newport must have a post office!

☎ 521068/ 07886437688

✉ julie.jones-evans@iow.gov.uk

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New Bereavement Support Helpline from Mountbatten

Mountbatten Isle of Wight has opened a new Bereavement Support Helpline available to all those across the Isle of Wight who have been bereaved.

Bereavement is a natural response following the death of a person you have loved or cared for. The death of a friend or relative can be devastating and, at times, seem unbearable.

As part of the psychology and bereavement service provided by Mountbatten, trained and supported volunteers will be offering a listening ear to those who are bereaved and anyone who feels they would want to talk to someone. As well as listening the volunteers will be signposting individuals to other services depending on the nature of the calls they receive.

Jane Hazeldine, Mountbatten's Director of Director of Psychosocial Care



says: "Dealing with a bereavement can be devastating. You may react by feeling angry, sad or guilty. It can affect your memory, concentration, motivation, thoughts and beliefs.

Sometimes it can help to talk to someone who is independent and trained to listen to, and support you. I'm grateful to the volunteers who have signed up to help provide this important listening service."

The service is available between 10 am – midnight, seven days a week on 01983-217297. The new Bereavement Support Helpline replaces the Keep Connected Line set up at the start of the pandemic.

Anyone interested in volunteering with the Bereavement Support Helpline can find out more by telephoning Sally on 01983-217368 or visit www.mountbatten.org.uk/bereavement-support-volunteer

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News from Cowes Medina

by Cllr Lora Peacey-Wilcox

HRH PRINCE PHILIP: I met Prince Philip on a number of occasions. He was funny and quick witted; we shared a joke or two. My heart goes to Her Majesty The Queen and the Royal Family at this time.

DISABILITY ACCESS: I am delighted that I have been able to assist with ramps going in at Maxted Close. An absolute necessity. Thanks to the resident that raised the issue and thanks to Island Roads for acting swiftly.

PAVEMENT PARKING: I have been contacted by a young girl who is partially sighted. She is having a number of issues accessing roads due to pavement parking. I know for some it is the only option, but please can you ensure a double buggy width is kept.

UNEMPLOYED: Over 18? Want or need to update or advance your employability skills? Over 13 weeks you have support and training on health, employability, digital inclusion, finance and work ethic and attitude. Please call 01794522106 or email Dave Logan on d.logan.rcs@gmail.com

VACCINATION CARDS: I have been informed these are not necessary. Your doctors have all the information stored with them. The new 'possible



passport cards' are something quite different.

COWES WEEK: Is going ahead this year. Sat 31st July-6th Aug. No fireworks at this time. No red arrows. Limited access to parade activities during the evenings. Enjoy the week and stay safe!

PANDEMIC MEMORIAL: I am pleased the town council agreed that we should have a memorial, in Cowes, for those who have passed during Covid. We are progressing the memorial stone. More details to follow.

STRUGGLING? With finances, emotions, housing, food, pets? Please do not sit and worry. Pick up the phone to our incredible Citizens Advice team in Newport. 0800 144 8848 9-5 Mon-Fri. www.citizensadviceiw.org.uk. They are even on Facebook and you can message that way.

Once again, thanks for your support over the past 22 years that I have been writing articles and keeping you informed in one way or another! Take care, be kind to each other.

 **645765**  lora08@sky.com

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Veteran fundraises for Ectopic Pregnancy Trust

By Iona Stewart-
Richardson

An HM Armed Forces veteran is walking the Island's coastal paths for a cause close to him and his wife's heart — The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust.

Steve Smith, who lives in Totland, wants to give something back to the charity that supported him and his wife Rebecca — after she had an Ectopic pregnancy three and half years ago.

Steve, who now works for the police in Newport will start walking around the Island on Saturday, May 8th — aiming to finish on the day his baby was due to be born — May 10th.

Steve said: "The Ectopic Pregnancy Trust helped us a lot when we were initially going through the early stages of bereavement. Internet advice, guidance on how we should be feeling and what we should expect to feel and ways to move forward as well."

Steve, who has done fundraisers similar previously, will start the



Steve Smith and his wife
Rebecca and daughter
Constance

walk from Cowes and aim to stop off and camp overnight in Freshwater and near Sandown.

To practise, Steve, who was in the military police for 22 years, has been carrying his 17-month-old daughter Constance on back!

Steve said: “Because of the ectopic pregnancy, my wife and I got told the only way we could have a child together was to go through the IVF route. We ended up having five failure rounds in Germany — because I was part of the forces at the time. The only option was to go down to Prague for the sixth try and we did that expecting closure and it not to work — but thankfully it did!”

You can sponsor Steve at www.gofundme.com/f/walk-round-the-wight



Dedicated dance studio could open in Newport

Dance and gymnastics business, The Starlight Boutique, has been so successful over the last decade, that it's now looking for a permanent studio, in Newport.



The owner has submitted plans to make a unit at Barry Way, Newport Business Park The Starlight Boutique's permanent home.

In plans submitted to the IW Council, the unit could be transformed to contain two dance studios as well as a dedicated ballet studio.

The Starlight Boutique has been teaching youngsters on

the Island for more than nine years. Owner, Mary Bowdery said: "I want to create a safe space for our students, a hub where dancers and gymnasts can learn and thrive. We want to be able to support those students who want to stay in this industry achieve their goals."

The business specialises in dance for all ages and abilities, and teaches more than 300 children and adults in over 40 classes each week. Mary said: "Having our own venue would mean we could increase this to around 50 classes upwards, on a weekly basis."

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Platform One launch post-16 Music Technology course

Platform One College of Music keeps going from strength to strength, with results significantly above national benchmarks for the last 20 years.

And now Platform One is delighted to announce the introduction of a brand-new Level 3 Music Technology Extended Diploma — starting in September.

The full-time two year programme is designed as an alternative to A Levels in a sixth form setting, offering real life music industry experience.

Despite the global pandemic, the world of creating music has never been busier, or such a viable career pathway.

Education Director, David Pontin said:

“There has never been a better time to be a working in the creative industries. You only need to consider the amount of new digital platforms, channels, websites, games and content that all require music. This exciting course is right at the heart of the new music industry.”

The Extended Diploma offers all things music technology including studio recording, creating music for film, television and games, music production and live events. Students

will also study video editing, marketing and promotion.

Year two of the course allows students to specialise on their own individual project, linked closely to progression into employment or higher education.

Film and Games Composer and Patron of Platform One, Andy Gray said: “It is great news that Platform One are launching a brand-new production and

music technology course. I have been composing music for films, television and games for many years now — this is a serious career path and opportunities are constantly

growing. Platform One have such incredible connections with the actual industry and that makes what is taught relevant to long term careers.”

Potential students do not have to play a musical instrument, however must have a passion for music production.

The study programme is equivalent to three full A Levels — so is ideal for progression to university degrees.

For more information or to make an application for September 2021 please email study@platformone.org

There has never been a better time to be a working in the creative industries

Socialise with Age UK's free virtual workshops

By Iona Stewart-Richardson

Free activities are on offer to give Islanders the chance to socialise again after COVID.

In a bid to boost wellbeing, charity Age UK IW wants to support people to make connections, regain social skills and develop new networks.

Each week they will deliver an exercise class or a similar activity to encourage us to get active.

The themes of the sessions will vary each week, covering aspects of heritage, wildlife, poetry, and creative writing, to name but a few, so that their audience will be keeping their brains active by learning something new.

The programme will build from an initial three sessions each week, depending on uptake.

Sessions are available via Zoom and you can also watch



at your leisure on Age UK Isle of Wight's YouTube channel.

Age UK IW's Digital Inclusion Project offers one to one support for those who may need it to get online to join their virtual activities programme.

They offer a technology borrowing service for those who do not have any access to technology but would like to get involved.

For more info visit bit.ly/AUKIWactivities or call Kelly on 525282.



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Quality Care from CARE AT HOME

The management work alongside local authorities such as social services and the CCG. They also support a number of clients from the private sector. Some may be part funded by the local authorities, while others are able to cover their own costs.

Because Care at Home believes their cared-for people should have the best care possible, staff are given set days of working and the same clients every week. This allows the person receiving care to have regular contact with the same staff. The company believes a personal touch makes the care special for the individual – and building a relationship between cared-for person and carer can provide a bond of reassurance and trust, making it comfortable for all involved. If you have a query regarding care for a loved one, please email info@careathomeiow.co.uk or call 01983 216400.

Family-oriented company, Care at Home, is run by a professional, local team – and has been providing community based care across the Isle of Wight for over 10 years.

Care at Home also prides itself on a level of training that ensures the whole care team are fully up to date with the latest knowledge, methods and abilities expected in the care industry. A specialist training department and on-site facility help the team keep its high level of quality maintained at all times. In-house trainers and an audit and monitoring team provide assurance that the quality will never drop. And where necessary, additional training programmes are added. The training department is based in the centre of the Island, in Newport, to provide ease of access for everyone.

This educational facility is now also extending its welcome to other companies across the Island. Care at Home has

enhanced its training department to be able to accommodate external parties. With an even wider range of courses from Care, to First Aid, Health and Safety, and more, the company can now offer this to any individual or company that believes it has a need, at highly competitive prices.

A recent leaflet drop has distributed the offer to schools, holiday parks, care homes and domiciliary care companies. Should any Personal Assistant wish to update their qualifications or gain new ones, or any companies want to learn about training their teams, then don't hesitate to contact the Care at Home training team on training@careathomeiow.co.uk. They will be happy to discuss your requirements. ☺

“My aim is to provide person centred care to the clients I visit, promoting their independence and supporting them with their own choices. I feel privileged to care and support them in their own home environment.”

Claire Langan, care worker



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The Perils of Do It Yourself Wills

You may have seen offers to purchase DIY Wills either in stationery stores or online in the past and with the various lockdowns over the last 12 months you may even have been tempted to prepare one yourself, rather than getting in contact with a Solicitor as you would usually.

Many practitioners are predicting that there will have been a sharp rise in the number of people preparing these documents themselves during the pandemic. This has brought with it the concern that there may also be a rise in the number of inheritance disputes in the future, due to the increased likelihood that unintended mistakes will be made when people have drafted the Wills themselves.

A Solicitor will ensure that your Will achieves what you would like it to. They will also be able to provide you with advice on the inheritance tax exposure of your estate that you would not receive if you prepared a DIY Will. Other instances

in which Solicitors can provide valuable advice (just to provide a few examples) are if you are disinheriting a child, if you are leaving money to a beneficiary with mental health problems or someone who is in receipt of means tested benefits, or if you own a business or have assets abroad.

One case in which a homemade Will should never be attempted would be if the person making the Will has any form of health problem affecting their memory or cognitive functioning. One ground upon which your Will can be challenged after your death is if someone were to claim that you did not have mental capacity when you made it. It would be harder for them to prove this were the case if you had been to see a Solicitor to prepare your

Will and the Solicitor had documented that when you signed it they believed you were fully cognisant.

There are many possible pitfalls in preparing a Will yourself. There are strict rules on how a Will should be signed and how any amendments should be made, which is a common stumbling block for homemade Wills.

Ultimately when you sign your Will you are signing one of the most important documents you will ever sign in your life and the consequences of getting it wrong are potentially disastrous for those you leave behind. When you are considering the cost of obtaining legal advice to get it right, please bear in mind the cost of not seeking legal advice and getting it wrong.

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PROPERTY PLANNING FOR RETIREMENT

One of later life's great challenges is how to ensure we have a comfortable retirement. The two most important factors within our control are 'where to live' and 'what to live on.' If you are lucky enough to have a generous private or company pension pot to keep you in the manner to which you are accustomed, this is not a major problem. If, however, you are concerned about how to pay the bills and afford a few essential luxuries once your regular monthly salary ceases, then there are decisions to be made.

One option is downsizing to a smaller house with lower overheads, thereby releasing capital and reducing outgoings. While this could solve any long-term financial concerns, it might also involve a drastic change in lifestyle and moving further away from close friends and family — plus the immediate expense of estate agents, solicitors and removal firms. If you are determined to remain in the family home, there are ways to utilise the money invested in your bricks and mortar. These products come under the umbrella title of Equity Release and give access to the capital tied up in your home, which is then reclaimed by the lender when you die. Equity release is an easy way to raise cash — though it is not necessarily the cheapest. However, any beneficiaries of your estate will find their inheritance reduced accordingly.

If you are aged 55 or over, you can take out an equity release product to free up some of the money locked into your main residence — whether as a one-off lump sum or in several smaller

amounts (or, as a combination of both). It's important, however, to remember that equity release can be more expensive in comparison to an ordinary mortgage. There are two main routes to releasing the capital in your property. The most widely used is a Lifetime Mortgage, which allows you to borrow some of your home's value at a fixed or capped interest rate. The Lifetime Mortgage is a popular choice, as it allows the homeowner to take money out of their property in instalments up to an agreed amount — with interest charged on the sum taken, rather than the whole amount available.

The borrower does not have to make any interest repayments during their lifetime but, if they do, it reduces the ultimate cost to their estate.

There are several factors to consider before committing to a Lifetime Mortgage. The earlier you start, the larger the ultimate cost — as unpaid interest is added to the loan. The maximum you can borrow is 60% of the value of your property. You can remain in the property for the rest of your life or move to another property — as long as the new house passes muster with your equity release provider. When your property is sold, even if the amount left is not enough to repay the outstanding loan to your provider, neither you nor your estate will be liable to pay any more — due to a 'no negative equity' guarantee. The loan amount, plus any accrued interest, is paid back to the lender

Property, equity and retirement can be a complex topic, so we asked Peter d'Aguilar to shed a little light on some of the options currently available

“There are several factors to consider”



when you die or move into long-term care.

For those aged 65 plus, another equity release option is a Home Reversion Plan. This involves an equity release provider paying you a tax-free lump sum for a portion of your home at below-market value. You can then live rent-free in the property until you die. When it's sold, the proceeds are split based on the percentage owned by you and the lender respectively – if the value of your property rises significantly, the lender stands to benefit. Home Reversion Plans allow the homeowner to ring-fence a percentage of their property. The percentage you retain will always remain the same regardless of the change in property values, unless you decide to take further cash releases. At the end of the plan your property is sold and the sale proceeds are shared according to the remaining proportions of ownership.

Another idea worth considering is a Retirement Interest-only Mortgage. While this is similar to a standard interest-only mortgage, it has two key differences — the loan is usually only paid off when you die, move into long term care or sell the house and you only have to prove you can afford the monthly interest repayments. While there's no minimum age requirement, retirement interest-only

“Seek advice from an independent financial adviser”

mortgages are generally aimed at older borrowers who might not qualify for a typical interest-only mortgage. Unlike a Lifetime Mortgage, you only pay off the interest each month; so monthly repayments are lower and it's likely there will be more left to pass on as an inheritance or to pay for long-term care.

There are two parts to paying off a retirement interest-only mortgage — the interest and the outstanding capital. During the term of the mortgage, you will make monthly repayments to cover the cost of the interest on your loan. The outstanding capital still owed will be paid off when the house is sold, you die, or when you move into long-term care.

In conclusion, there are a few considerations to keep in mind. Equity release is generally more expensive than an ordinary mortgage. It's best not to borrow the full amount you need in one go, as this will end up more expensive. You should check whether you can



transfer the scheme if you move home, what happens if you die

soon after taking out the scheme, whether it will affect your state or local authority benefits and if there are penalties for early repayment.

Always seek advice from an independent financial adviser first and take the time to check they are a member of the Equity Release Council, on the Financial Conduct Authority register and signed up to the Financial Ombudsman Service. Find out what their fees are, what type of equity release products they can offer and any other costs you may have to pay. ³

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register.fca.org.uk/s/
www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk

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This month, Flo Whitaker's on the veg patch. If you're new to veg growing, you can be sure of success with beans — and now's the best time to plant them.

EASY BEANS

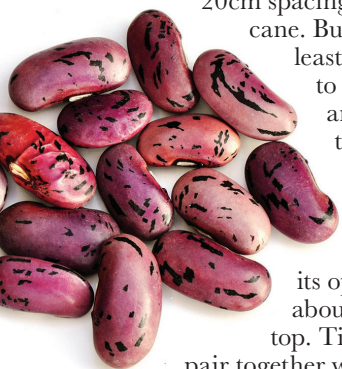
Provided you give them a sunny, sheltered site and fertile soil, runner beans are easy to cultivate. They're quick-growing and vigorous, so put a strong support framework in place before setting out the plants. Using 8ft (240cms) garden canes, arrange two parallel rows of canes approximately 45cms apart, with

20cm spacings between each cane. Bury the canes at

least 30cms deep to give sufficient anchorage. Push them into the ground at a slight angle so that each cane crosses

its opposite partner about 30cms from the top. Tie each opposing

pair together with twine. Place a cane horizontally along the 'V' shapes above the string ties and bind everything together. Finally, drive two more canes or tree stakes at the ends of the row and secure to the framework.



A simple wigwam-shaped support can be made using canes arranged in circle and tied together at the top

Alternatively, a simple wigwam-shaped support can be made using canes arranged in a circle and tied together at the top. As they climb, the plants will cast shade, inhibiting growth inside the wigwam, so crop yield will be reduced. However, wigwams have some advantages; they're highly decorative, are quick to construct and can be fitted into awkward areas where there is insufficient space for rows.

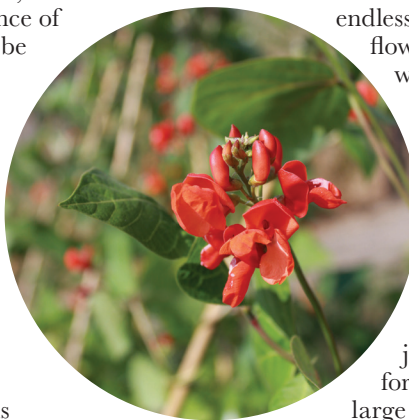
At this time of year, when there is minimal chance of frost, bean seeds can be sown direct outdoors but this method is not without risk as the emerging shoots are highly attractive to slugs and birds, so there is much to be said for raising plants in the controlled environment of a greenhouse or sunny windowsill. Sow seeds 5cms deep in individual 9cm pots — they'll germinate within a week. 'Tall' pots specifically designed to accommodate their long, vigorous roots can be purchased — or make your own paper pots using a jam jar as a mould. When the plants reach 10-15cms high,



set them into ground that has been enriched with multipurpose fertiliser and water-retaining organic matter such as leaf mould or compost. Young plants may need tying in at first, but they'll soon develop the climbing instinct.

Runner beans come in seemingly endless varieties. Some produce flowers in dainty pink or white, while others have striking bi-coloured blooms. Tall varieties will easily attain 2 metres and are best 'pinched out' at the growing tip when they've reached the desired height. 'Bush' types such as 'Hestia,' (50cms) require just a few twiggly branches for support and do well in large patio pots or half barrels.

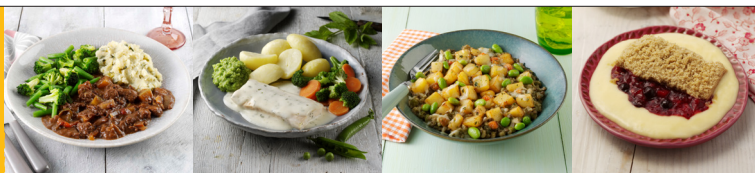
If you ask me to name one vegetable I would not be without, the climbing French bean, 'Cobra', (150cms) gets my vote every time. Prolific, stringless and super-tasty, it keeps on going until October, so if you've never grown beans before — give 'em a go! ☺



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Since the Isle of Wight Donkey Sanctuary re-opened to visitors on April 12th, the donkeys have been enjoying the sunshine — and have absolutely loved seeing their public again.

There are 21 new donkeys who have arrived since the Christmas lockdown.

From May 17th, when the next set of restrictions are eased, the sanctuary will be able to offer indoor dining and snacks at Grazers Café. Until that date, there is outdoor seating available in the café courtyard.

Complementing Grazers café is the Browse and Brays gift shop, which offers a variety of gifts and donkey adoptions, the proceeds of which go to support the welfare of the donkeys.

iowdonkeysanctuary.org



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THIS MONTH'S PRIZES...

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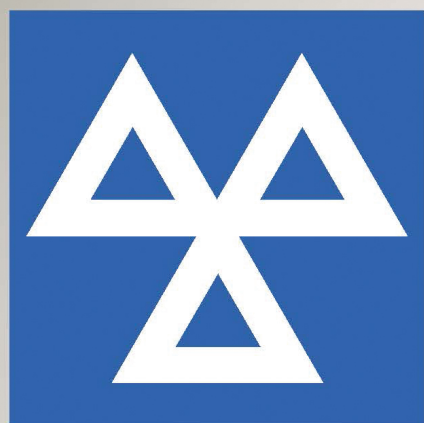
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