



Your View

Tweets, emails and letters to:
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Fight is with the developers

Simon Kelner is right when he says "this is the wrong fight", citing the rare spiders that have kiboshed housing development plans in Ebbsfleet ("Starmer should tread carefully around rare spiders", Opinion, 14 March). The fight should not be with protesters, nor council planning departments, but with developers.

When will politicians recognise that housing developers are commercial businesses and not social enterprises? It's not just about the number they build, important though that is. They need to be the right sort of homes, built to high standards of insulation and energy efficiency, and accessibility, in the places where homes are needed.

That means including one and two bedroom dwellings (when did you last see such a thing?) and it also means access to jobs, schools, shops, hospitals, good transport links and other amenities.

Developers are the problem – take the fight to them.
JUDITH OUGHTON
WOOLER,
NORTHUMBERLAND

Brilliant article by Simon Kelner on the plight of our indigenous spiders and other endangered species.

More like this please. Our beleaguered natural environment needs all the help it can get.
PAUL JOYNER
LEWES, EAST SUSSEX

Appalled by the scale of litter

Re: Anne Hollington's letter about stopping littering (Your View, 14 March).

I totally agree with this sentiment. I'm afraid

that every time I venture anywhere in this country I am appalled and saddened by the litter that is everywhere. What is wrong with people? Hopefully they wouldn't throw rubbish on the floor in their own homes and leave it there.

It must be costing councils a huge portion of money clearing the mess up. Why aren't people who are seen littering made to do community service cleaning up the streets? Maybe it would be a lesson to them not to repeat it.

As a society we need to take pride in our country and protect the countryside and nature. We are wasting so much money which could be better spent.
LYNNE MEALING
VIA EMAIL

Commonhold is way forward

Further to Sebastian O'Kelly's column regarding Chelsea Bridge Wharf (The i Paper, 19 February), I am a long-time leaseholder there and I welcome the achievement of Right to Manage (RTM) in principle as it will allow us, rather than the freeholder, to choose the managing agent.

However, RTM legislation does not currently require directors of RTM companies to be elected, nor even for an AGM to be held. These deficiencies have the potential to be exploited.

Commonhold will hopefully become the default flat ownership model within a few years, and the governance checks and balances proposed are much stronger.

These improved democratic inputs should also be incorporated into RTM legislation.
MIKE O'DRISCOLL
LONDON



Girls' confidence often grows higher at single-sex schools, says one reader GETTY

Balancing feat is tricky for me

It is reassuring to know that my favourite paper is keen for its readers to live a healthy life ("Simple health tips the experts swear by", The i Paper, 13 March).

Most of the 30 tips require no expensive equipment or technical knowledge. But I must take issue with Dr Vijay Murthy, who recommends balancing on one leg while brushing one's teeth.

I tried it last night. If my experience is anything to go by, our ambulance service is likely to be stretched even further.
DAVID WILLACY
VIA EMAIL

Holiday excuse not acceptable

Referring to recent correspondence from readers on the subject of parents taking children out of school during term time, ("I'll book a term-time holiday – because even if we get fined we'll save £1,000",

The i Paper, 13 March), the only lesson that children will learn from their holiday experience is that you can do what you like, when you like; rules don't matter.

Not the best preparation for adult life, I would suggest.

G HALL
GARFORTH, WEST YORKSHIRE

Girls thrive in own schools

I couldn't agree more with Nadeine Asbali's call to protect girls' schools (Opinion, iweekend, 15-16 March).

I went to a girls' school and enjoyed the freedoms Nadeine talked about, taking for granted the ability to be whatever and whomever I chose, from sports captains to

prefects, it was open to us all. I taught in a mixed further education college for years and witnessed first-hand the confidence of the boys, always willing to put up their hand, thinking their voice was valid.

The girls were always reluctant, worried (rightly in a lot of cases) that their answers would be ridiculed by the boys. They had to be encouraged twice as hard by teachers to participate and were happy to melt into the shadows.

When it came to choosing secondary schools for our daughters, I was adamant that I wanted the chances I had enjoyed for them. Similarly, they thrived in that environment and became confident, lively

young women sure of their own voices and, most importantly, sure that their voice mattered, in a world where that is increasingly questioned.

I wish this basic right for all young women and hope that girls' schools will continue to provide this vital service into the future.

GILLY WILKINSON
ST ALBANS,
HERTFORDSHIRE

Thank you Nadeine Asbali for the most insightful and concise defence of girls' schools I've yet seen.

I too taught in both mixed and all-girls' schools and I support every word she says.
ROWENA HACKFORD
WHITSTABLE, KENT

Stolen children report praise

Saturday's paper had a story about the stolen children of Ukraine (iweekend, 15-16 March).

Just to say a massive thank-you for this: one of the main reasons I buy The i Paper is its superb investigations.

MAREK WESOLOWSKI
VIA EMAIL

Sour note for Reeves' choice

Rachel Reeves has been strongly criticised for accepting free tickets to watch the recent Sabrina Carpenter gig at the O2 (iweekend, 15-16 March).

I believe the only wrong Ms Reeves can be properly accused of is being in possession of an appallingly bad taste.
IAN HEY
MILFORD ON SEA,
HAMPSHIRE

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Spare me the cards and burned breakfast in bed

MOTHER'S DAY

Lucy Mangan



Mothering Sunday seems to come round quicker every year. Mainly because my inbox starts filling at least six weeks in advance with emails from firms and brands asking if recipients want to opt out of Mother's Day emails, in case they are triggering to the recently bereaved or to those who do not enjoy a good relationship with the distaff side of life.

To which I can only reply: no, I wish to opt out because I can't stand it. I object on so many grounds that it's hard to know where to begin.

Mothering Sunday, which began in the Middle Ages, was the fourth Sunday in Lent, when people returned to the "mother church" – where they were baptised.

Then there was mission creep and secularisation, and the day became about celebrating real mothers – the actual fleshly kind.

Now, this would be a welcome

development if somehow we had kept all the awe and reverence attached to the medieval church and its rites, if mothers inherited the respect that was given there as well as the power over their offspring and society that the early church enjoyed.

But guess what? We didn't. Instead, we got one day of lip service. In the 1900s we used to get bunches of violets too, which I would quite have liked, and even iced buns or Simnel cakes, which I would have liked even more.

But now? It's generally a card written under conditions of bribery and duress by your crotchfruit and maybe a badly-made breakfast in bed, when you could be having a lie-in if you'd just seen sense and kept your coil *in situ* until the danger years had passed.

But it's the idea that one day is enough that gets me. Mothering Sunday – or, go on then, Mother's Day – is not conceived of as the crowning of a year of appreciation.

That would be right and proper. It is regarded as a day of "treats" that makes up for all the crap a mother is put through the rest of the time, and for which she is supposed to be grateful.

As if one extravagant flurry



A tradition born in the Middle Ages is now purely ritualised lip service GETTY

makes up for the preceding 364 days of grind and the endless attempts to civilise, support, encourage and build a life of security, contentment and maybe even happiness for the little scrotes.

Usually while holding down a full-time job so you can pay for their food and clothes.

(And that's if the extravagant flurry actually even materialises,

and, if so, that it doesn't actually result in more work for its recipient overall – I don't know if you've ever cleaned up after a burned breakfast made by poorly-attended young children because their father's morning bowel movement cannot be postponed no matter what the other exigencies of the day are? Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.)

It increasingly seems that the

As if one extravagant flurry makes up for the preceding 364 days of grind

Mother's Day phenomenon is part of the wider, growing tendency to pay only lip service to all things, to dicker around with superficialities rather than rolling up sleeves and attacking the root of anything.

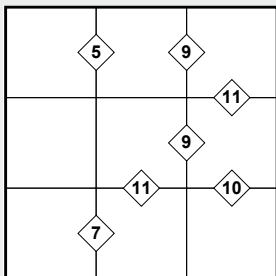
Half-measures are the curse of our age. Instead of actual economic, structural or political change or large injections of cash for clearly appropriate and desperate projects, we get nothing but flannelly talk of goals and targets.

But we are running out of slack and time for that. Sanctimony and circumlocution will no longer do now so much of our country and its infrastructure is on its knees.

You might as well give a mother of seven a plate of ruined toast and a Clinton card and expect her to go back to her duties with a jaunty smile and a rejuvenated will. Let me tell you – it doesn't work that way.

One-minute Wijuko

How to play Place 1 – 9 once in the grid, obeying the sums between pairs of squares



Solution: page 48

Tomorrow, in THE i PAPER

FEATURE
'I feel personally attacked' - the women falling out of love with Labour



Plus
CULTURE
Helen Oxenbury
The children's illustrator on her first solo solo exhibition and collaborating again with Michael Rosen, 35 years on

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