

How can I stop the spread of colds and viruses?

Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze and put the tissue in a rubbish bin.



Wash and dry your hands with soap or hand gel. Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes.



Disinfect kitchen and bathroom surfaces after someone with a contagious infection has used them. Ensure your space is well ventilated.



If you're sick: Avoid crowded places and stay away from others. Wear a mask.



What else can I do?

- Prepare for being sick – keep supplies of tissues, soap, masks and disinfectant.
- Make sure your vaccinations are up-to-date.

Book Sale / Swap – Monday, 14th October 2023
09:30 am – 4.30pm, The Office, 23 Southam House


DEBT FREE CHRISTMAS CHECKLIST

- Set a budget based on how much you have to spend (not what you want to buy)
- Consider homemade gifts (eg. goggle "gifts in a jar" to get ideas)
- Draw names or do a gift exchange instead of buying for everyone
- It's okay to say "I can't afford it"
- Use last year's Christmas decorations
- What others spend on you doesn't dictate what you spend on them
- Focus on the spirit of Christmas (not the "stuff" side of Christmas)
- Be upfront with family and friends that things will be different this year

by via.com

Is your home ready for winter?

As the nights close in, clocks go back and Halloween draws closer, now is the time to start to prepare our homes for the onslaught of wet, cold weather.

1. If sofas, beds, wardrobes, etc. are touching the walls, move them slightly away to allow air to circulate freely behind them.
2. If wall hanging picture/photo frames are flush against the wall, get some small pads to fix on the rear corners to allow air to go behind them and stop them marking the walls.
 Can be bought from B&M Bargains, Screwfix, Wickes, The Range, The Works, Amazon, etc.
3. Check and, if necessary, clean extractor fans, behind radiators, washing machine pumps, vacuum cleaners, etc. to ensure they are working efficiently.
4. If you don't have smart meters, check and submit gas, electricity and water meter readings.
5. Check when your last gas service was completed. If it was over a year ago, call the council contact centre and request a service.
6. Report any internal repairs to the office as soon as possible.

Why should you clean your extractor fan?

Ideally an extractor fan should be cleaned at least once every six months to help it do its job properly.

A clean, extractor fan can help to protect a room from moisture and prevent the appearance of mould and mildew.

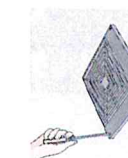
If dust and dirt is left inside a fan, it won't be able to remove moisture from the room. What's more, it may lead to a build-up of mould in your kitchen, bathroom and in the fan itself. When the fan is then switched on, it will spread any mould spores around the room.

Mould and mildew can be extremely harmful to health. Cleaning an extractor fan helps protect you and your family from them. It will also keep the room drier and smelling fresher. A clean fan is also quieter and more efficient so it won't need to be switched on as long, saving you money.

How to clean an extractor fan:

Time needed: 20 minutes (approx.)

1. **Turn off the power**
Before you begin, turn off the power. This is very important, as it will keep you safe while working and prevent electrocution.
2. **Put down protective sheets**
Place old sheets or newspapers below the fan to catch all the built-up dirt and dust that may fall out.
3. **Remove the extractor fan cover**
You might need to unscrew the cover to remove it. In some cases, there are spring clips to undo.
4. **Clean the cover**
Use a slightly dampened cloth to wipe away any dust off the fan cover. If there is a build-up of dirt or grime, soak the cover in a bowl of warm soapy water whilst you clean the fan unit.
5. **Take out the extractor fan unit**
Carefully unplug and remove the extractor fan assembly from its housing, if you can.
If you're not sure how to do this, look for the manufacturer's detailed instructions on-line or miss this step out. Cleaning all the other parts will help to improve the fan's efficiency. Doing this, will maximise it.
6. **Dust the fan blades**
Use a cloth, duster or a vacuum cleaner, to clean the extractor fan blades.
7. **Wipe the fan with soapy water**
Dip a cloth in soapy water, wring it out so it is only damp and give the fan a good wipe. Use an old toothbrush to scrub off more stubborn grime. Try to clean both sides of the fan blades.
8. **Vacuum the fan housing**
Vacuum any dust away from the housing and the vent. If possible, vacuum the vent cover on the outside of your flat, as well.
9. **Rinse the cover**
Take the fan cover out of the bowl and scrub the dirt off with a cloth. Rinse with warm water.
10. **Dry the parts**
Use a clean towel to dry the fan and the cover. Alternatively, leave the components to air dry.
11. **Re-assemble fan**
When all parts are completely dry, put back in to place and switch power back on.



If you're planning to join in the fun on Halloween (Thursday, 31st October 2024), why not also use the inside of the pumpkin to make some delicious warming soup?

(Recipe from BBC Good Food)

Ingredients:

- ✓ 2 tablespoons olive oil
- ✓ 2 onions, finely chopped
- ✓ 1 kg pumpkin or squash, peeled deseeded and chopped into chunks
- ✓ 700 ml vegetable or chicken stock
- ✓ Salt and pepper, to season
- ✓ 150 ml double cream

Method:

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan, then gently cook 2 finely chopped onions for about 5 minutes, until soft but not coloured.
2. Add chunks of pumpkin or squash to the pan and carry on cooking for 8 – 10 minutes. Stir occasionally until the pumpkin starts to soften and turn golden.
3. Pour the vegetable or chicken stock into the pan and season with salt and pepper.
4. Bring to the boil, then turn down the heat to simmer (slow, rolling bubbles) for 10 minutes until the pumpkin or squash is very soft.
5. Slowly pour in the double cream, turn up the heat to bring back to the boil, then use a hand blender to puree in to a thick soup consistency. For a smoother texture, pour the soup through a fine sieve before serving.

If you've made more than you need, this soup can be frozen for up to 2 months.

How I'm doing my guacamole dip for my Halloween party this year. 🍻👻

