



# Blackhall magazine

Promoting local organisations and informing residents

Dec 2025

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## Blackhall magazine

December 2025

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The big news in my life is a recent move into the Blackhall magazine catchment, to a house on Orchard Brae, and I am trying to make the most of it with walks around Corstorphine Hill and along Blackhall Path, coffee in the Blackhall Dip, and shopping at Craighleith.

Not only that; You may have heard I am standing at the Scottish Elections next year and the Edinburgh office of the Scottish Conservatives is on Quality Street Lane so lots of visits there too.

Just as attending a couple of Blackhall Community Council meetings in person gave me a better feel for their energy and enthusiasm, so does living here allow a better feel for the area, even in my short spell so far. The news items on Pages 6 & 7 offer a different perspective for me now as I visited the Davidsons Mains War Memorial for a photo of the wreaths and walk along the Blackhall Path

where the tram extension is proposed. I am an elected Councillor and our Conservative Group is the only one to have resolutely voted against this proposal from the outset while all the others agreed to assess options. By the time this issue is printed the public consultation will be over and I heard the response is one of the largest with around 7,000 submissions reported a just days before closing. It will take time to collate the data and report it in any kind of understandable form but I am sure we will be hearing plenty more about this in the New Year.

For now, I hope you all pass a very merry Christmas and have a happy New Year.

Yours

*Christopher Cowdy*  
(Editor)

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Here is a summary of some of the main articles reported by a range of media outlets online and that relate to our local area for Blackhall, Silverknowes, Craigleith, Ravelston & Orchard Brae. I have added a bit of my own.



Residents from **Strachan House Care Home in Blackhall**, took part in their first ever singing group at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

Detectives were called in October after two **men broke into a property in Silverknowes** Midway and demanded car keys to a BMW 1 series.



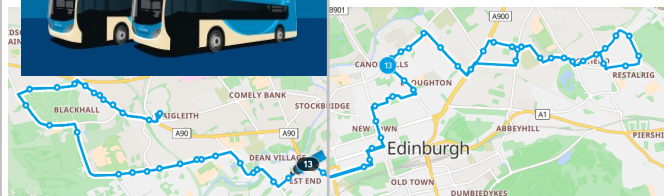
The occupants were shaken but not injured, according to the **Edinburgh Reporter**

Edinburgh High Court heard how a gang war 'footsoldier' used a metal detector to find **pistol hidden near**

**Roseburn cycle path** at St Georges school. The man was arrested as part of Operation Portaledge and pleaded guilty to being involved in organised crime. Sentencing to take place very soon according to **STV**



The number 13 bus running through Blackhall between Craigleith Retail Park and Lochend is at risk because of timetable reliability issues. In a Report to the Councils' Transport Committee, operator McGills said if obstructions from parked cars can't be resolved, they may have to reduce the service.



The **City of Edinburgh Music School** held an open doors event to find young, gifted musicians interested in a full-time musical education.

The school is a national centre of excellence for 4-18yr olds, based between Broughton High School and Flora Stevenson Primary in Comely Bank. Entry is by audition for students to demonstrate above average ability on any instrument/voice, with all instruments and differing styles of music considered.





## SAVE ROSEBURN PATH

One of the biggest, and continuing, stories is the proposed **£3Bil tram extension and the route it might take along the Roseburn Path**. **Herald Scotland**, alone, had 4 articles in close succession -

"Save the Roseburn Path. Why campaigners are fighting tram route."

"I helped save Edinburgh's disastrous tram project - here's what city should do now" by Labour's ex Transport Convener Lesley Hinds who is in support

"Why huge extension is needed and where it could go."

"Main reasons people are objecting to the trams."



Remembrance Sunday on 9th November saw services across the city remember the service and sacrifice of all those that have defended our freedoms and protected our way of life. Rev Julia Cato from Cramond Kirk presided over the **Davidsons Mains War Memorial where wreaths were laid**.







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## Isn't it time we took a different approach to saying goodbye?

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## A new plan to put the economy first.

One of the most effective paths to a productive life is having a good job and I want to do what I can to make sure current residents of Edinburgh Northern, and those who move into the huge number of houses planned, have the opportunity to earn a good living. This means well paid jobs and less tax.

The leader of the Scottish Conservatives (Russel Findlay) recently published a plan for the economy and Edinburgh Northern could benefit directly from our proposals.

**We will oppose tax rises. Scotland's tax burden on individuals and businesses is already too high and those earning more than £30,300 pay more income tax than the rest of UK.**

Introduce Regeneration Relief so areas with little economic activity could qualify for discounted Business Rates



and attract shops or jobs to support new homes in Edinburgh Northern.

**Attract businesses to the area by guaranteeing incentives for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses.**

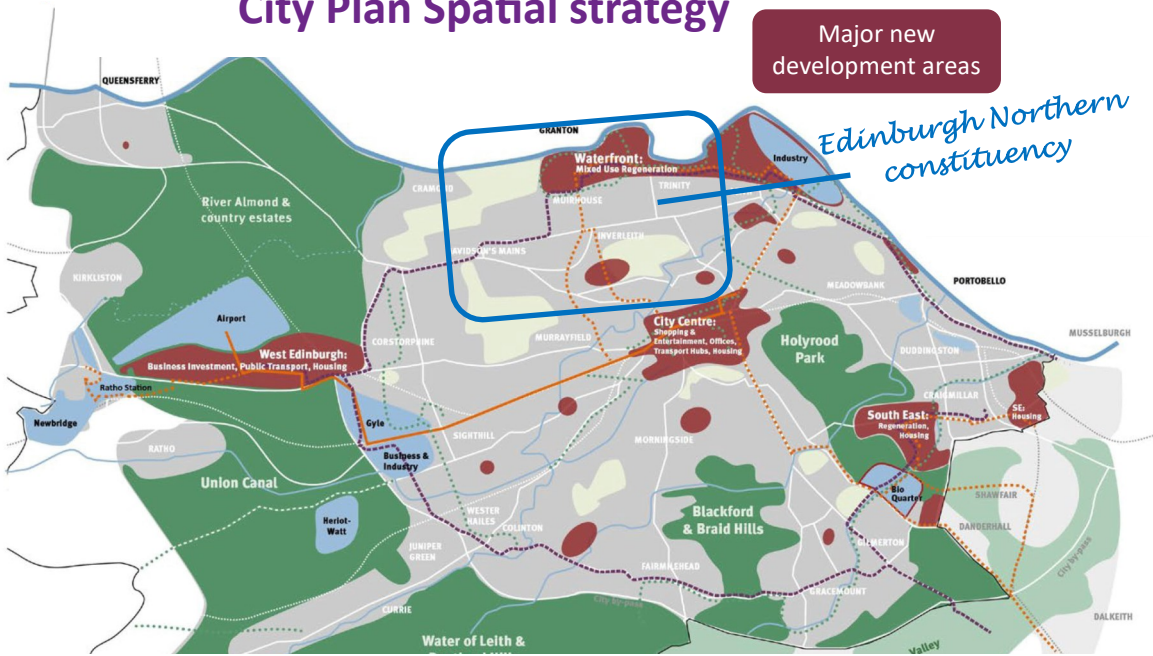
**We can build on the success of local facilities from World of Football or Access Parkour and encourage more restaurants and cafes to help service the new homes in the area.**



**Christopher Cowdy**  
is standing for  
Edinburgh Northern  
at the Scottish  
Elections  
in May 2026



## City Plan Spatial strategy



## End the 'woke' mandates of business agencies

and instead have a singular focus on Growth. Many Scottish Government business agencies want to use funding for diversity and inclusion or to prioritise net zero above economic productivity. We would end this culture so funding is used only to grow Scotland's economy and attract high skilled, well paid jobs to join the likes of Leonardo and BAE systems who already benefit from the talented workforce in Edinburgh Northern.



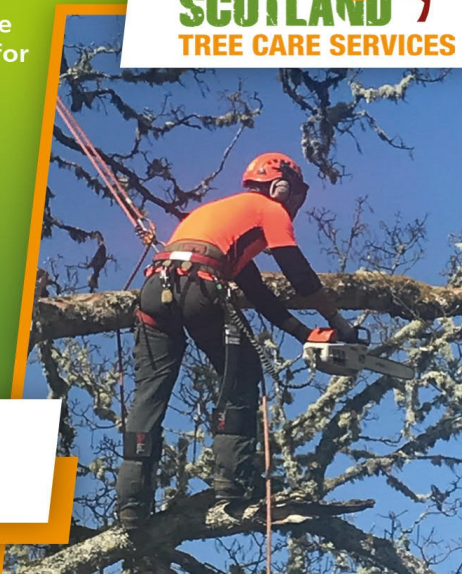


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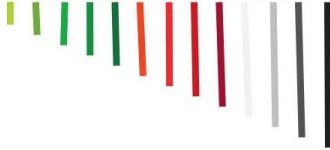
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Every month we publish a selection of things to do in the local area. This is usually found as a result of an online search and we may not have had time to verify all details are correct but we try to set out a good spread of interesting activities and local organisations. So if you see

## Blackhall St Columba

### Nativity Trail & Christmas Tree Festival

Thur 18th Dec 5-7pm & Fri 19th, 4-7pm

The second community Nativity Trail has some changes to make it even better than before. An interactive exploration of the Greatest Story Ever Told using the church itself and all its halls and buildings. Follow the star and discover the shepherds, King Herod and some busy innkeepers until you finally reach the stable with Mary and Joseph and discover the most wonderful gift we have ever been given.

There will also be a Christmas Nativity Escape Room for older children (and maybe more advanced for the adults!) Christmas treats, teas, coffees and juice in the sanctuary and all our little visitors can enjoy the craft area before taking home a small gift.

**Last year saw 300 through the doors in one day so, Go! enjoy the fun.**



## Gallery of Modern Art - Modern One

### Resistance

Daily until 4th Jan, 10am - 5pm

Conceived by acclaimed artist and filmmaker, Steve McQueen, Resistance explores how acts of protest have shaped life in the UK and the powerful role of photography in documenting and driving change. Drawing from diverse public archives and personal collections, these photographs testify to the importance of the camera bearing witness.



something of interest and want to join in, please do some of your own research and contact the organisation in plenty of time to make sure the event is still on and the details are accurate.



## Lauriston Castle

### A Family Edwardian Christmas at Lauriston Castle

Sunday 14th December, 12:30pm (check availability online)

An annual Christmas event where you can capture the magic of Christmas past. Lose the commercialism surrounding Christmas and get back to basics. With crafts, stories, and special tours. Have fun with the trail in our gardens. Includes a traditional magic lantern show. with Christmas treats.



## Lauriston Agroecology Farm

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There's a good mix of tasks, so you can choose something that suits your health and energy on the day. You don't need experience or special gear but it's all outdoors, so dress for the weather and wear scruffy shoes. Tools and gardening gloves supplied.

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winter hours from 28 October 2025





# Selling your home in winter

Selling your home at this time of year has some benefits. There is less competition with fewer properties on the market and there are only usually serious buyers at this time of year.

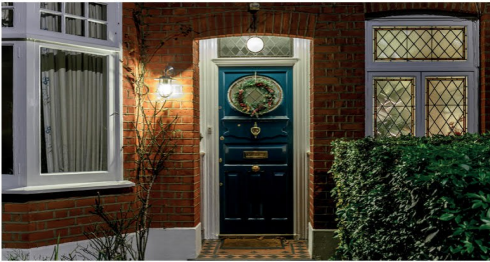


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We find that there can be an influx of enquiries just after new year, as this is a popular time to make plans for the year ahead. If you are considering selling in the winter months, here are some helpful tips on getting your home sale ready.

### First impressions count

Stand back and look at your property from a buyer's perspective. Do you need to have the guttering cleared? If it rains at viewings, you don't want a leaking guttering putting people off. Does your front door need a fresh coat of paint? Maybe something eye catching to compensate for the lack of greenery/planting in the garden due to the time of year. That said some winter flowering plants or ever green shrubs strategically positioned at the door will transform your entrance, as well as having good outside lighting for evening appointments. Make sure other maintenance is up to date such as clearing leaves away, cleaning pathways which will neaten the area immediately. If it is icy outside remember to make sure pathways are safe for guests.

On a cold and dull winter's day, one of the most important things you can do to ensure you capture the attention of potential buyers is to have an inviting atmosphere in your home. To step into a cosy, well-lit home is very welcoming and uplifting. Having all

internal doors open with room lights on, allows viewers to see the flow of the property. Remember that viewers first impressions are made within a few seconds, so it is important to make them count. It is more difficult to have our windows open in winter, bringing in fresh air, so a few diffusers or candles around the property is ideal. If you have an open fire or wood burning stove, it is always a good idea to have this on for the viewing because it is so welcoming and we are usually drawn to a warm fire.

### It's the small touches that make the difference...

As with any time of year it is important to dress your home to show it at its best, so that buyers can visualise themselves living there. Keep your rooms clear from clutter, this will allow your viewers to concentrate on the space and how you have presented the room. To achieve this, try and find a balance between accessorising the room but not too personalised.

To summarise, the easiest way to test your home's flow is to put yourself in the shoes of your buyers. Take yourself outside of the property and enter it as if for the first time. How does it feel? The attention to detail will make such an impression on your potential buyers, so be sure to do all you can to make your property memorable.



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**Meetings are usually at 7:30pm on the third Monday of the month, in Blackhall St Columba's Church Small Hall, Queensferry Road.**

They are always open to the public and are attended by Inverleith and Murrayfield Ward Councillors and Police Scotland. All local residents are welcome to attend.

**Next meeting: 15th December**

For more info:

**Visit:** [www.craigleithblackhall.org](http://www.craigleithblackhall.org)

**Email:** [sec.cbcc@gmail.com](mailto:sec.cbcc@gmail.com)







## A summary of the Minutes from the October meeting. 20 in attendance

### **Police Report – PC Paul Gunderson**

156 calls - 2 garage break-ins with cycles stolen - a drink driver arrested, 2 reported for careless driving, & 3 without insurance so vehicles seized. - Eggs thrown at vehicles on Hillhouse Rd and Crewe Rd South, youths in possession of fireworks - Op Crackle for Halloween and bonfire night included dispersal zones in the north-west - An abandoned caravan removed following 2yr Police intervention - Social media is encouraging individuals to try car doors and flat doors to establish whether any have been left unlocked.

### **Tram Extension Consultation**

Following discussion at the September meeting, a draft of the Community Council's comments had been circulated. Concerns about the £2.9Bil cost were again aired as was the absence of funding. Despite the existing tram line being well used, it is financially non viable and an extension could add to financial burden. Alternative solutions should be investigated for better value e.g. bus rapid transit or lighter weight trams, without a major environmental impact on the Roseburn Path.

### **Craikleith Tunnel**

Options considered including closure & improvements to be implemented by March 2026 to reduce traffic speed, improve sight lines and an better matrix warning for a safer pedestrian route but no solution will be absolutely safe.

### **Ward Councillor Reports**

Strachan Road pedestrian lights crossing

Groathill Road South tunnel - rumble strips to be installed to assess traffic volumes.

Blackhall Primary School area - measures being considered including a pedestrian crossing and improvements to Ravelston Dykes Road / Craigcrook Road junction.

No 13 bus - delays are due to inconsiderate parking.

Blackhall Library - a temporary library at Davidson's Mains Primary School is being installed.

### **AOCB**

Maidencraig Steps in poor condition and 2 residents had fallen -  
Blackhall Dip Christmas Tree - the community council agreed to fund the tree and lights again.







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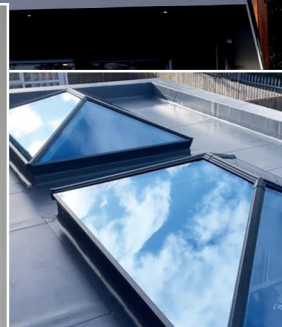
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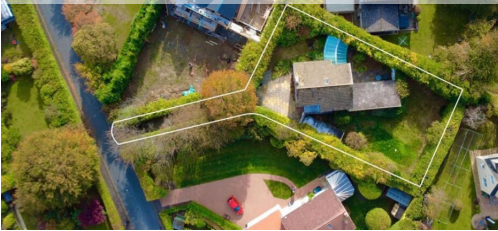
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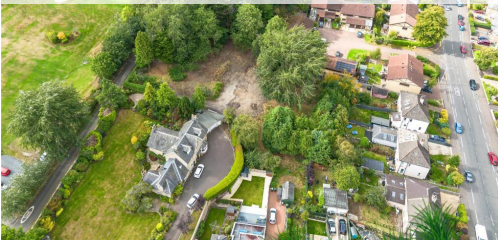
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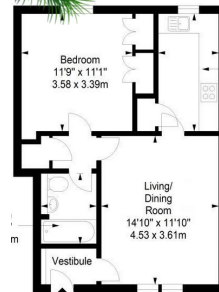


- Substantial building plot
- Planning permission for a detached 5,000 sq ft. House
- Cleared house

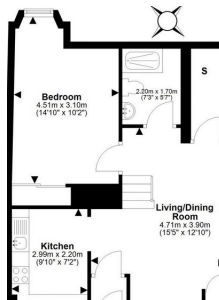
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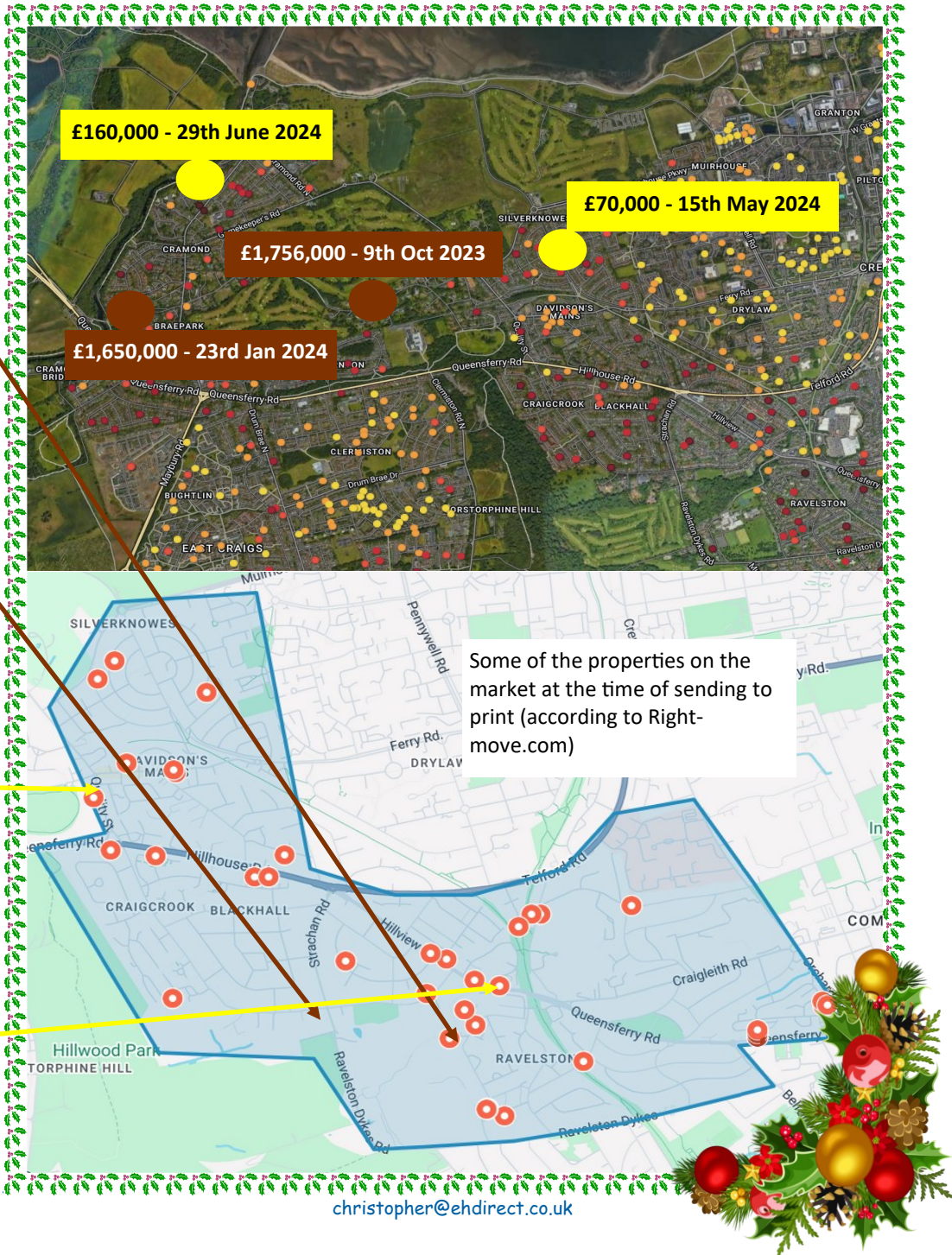


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# HOLIDAYS



Autumn Term 1 (86 days): Wed 13th Aug - Fri 19th Dec

**Total: 189**



7th Apr - 21st Apr (11 days)

[illegible]



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## Reduce your Stress Burden

Pay attention when people talk about the sudden onset of bizarre and unusual ailments. This is especially true at this time of year. The answer can be found in a little word with big implications: **stress**. Our bodies endure stress, which can be simply defined as anything that causes a reaction. There are three main areas in which we experience stress: physical, emotional and chemical. Stress involving any of these areas can affect us profoundly. Here are some of the common signs of stress, along with ways to reduce your stress burden.

### STRESS SIGNALS

**Unusual fatigue:** Stress weighs on you physically, emotionally and mentally. It wears you down and drains you. Can't get out of bed in the morning? Stress may be what's keeping you there.

**Sleeplessness:** You may feel like sleeping for a day or two, but stress tends to keep you up at night.

**Impulsivity:** If you find your eating habits changing suddenly, you may be turning to comfort foods to deal with stress. The same is true with impulse buying, particularly when it involves items you don't really need.

**Anger/impatience:** Stress can make you short-tempered and easily roused to anger, even if your demeanour is normally calm, quiet and reserved.

**Lack of concentration/forgetfulness:** Stress usually occupies our mental time, so much so that we can have trouble remembering things or make more mistakes. Never forget your keys in the morning? When you're stressed, you just might.

**Physical ailments:** Back pain, neck pain and pain in general that doesn't have a clear cause (e.g., an injury) is often related to stress. The same is true for colds and flu; stress can lower your immune system, increasing your risk of developing illness.

### WAYS TO REDUCE STRESS

**Work it off:** Find the time to exercise. Whether it's a quick trip to the gym, a peaceful run or a brisk walk with family or friends, exercise puts the focus somewhere else for a while. Biochemically, exercise has a big anti-stress benefit. It helps reduce levels of the stress hormone (cortisol) and increases your "feel-good" hormones, endorphins.

**Get away from it:** This can be challenging, but doing what you can to distract yourself can go a long way toward reducing stress. Schedule a holiday, visit old friends, take a long walk; whatever it takes to remove yourself from your stress environment.

**Smile about it:** It's much harder for stress to exist in a fun, laughter-filled environment, so put yourself in a position to smile when you're under stress. After all, laughter truly is the best natural medicine.

**Talk about it:** When you're stressed, your mind can be a continual stream of negative, overwhelming, stressed-out thoughts. Don't keep it all to yourself; sometimes the best way to reduce your stress is to vent about it and get a neutral perspective, rather than staying in a bottled-up, stressed-out state.

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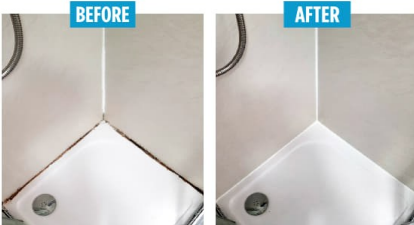
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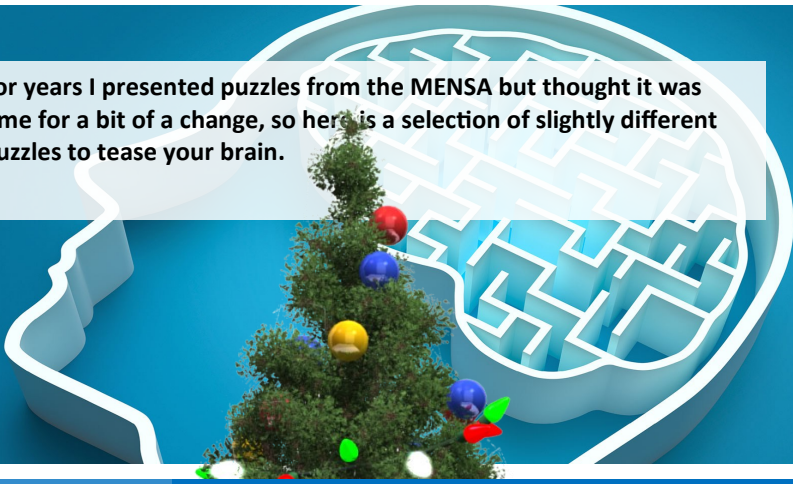
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For years I presented puzzles from the MENSEA but thought it was time for a bit of a change, so here is a selection of slightly different puzzles to tease your brain.



As a Christmas gift, parents buy 16 computer games for their 3 children. The youngest gets  $\frac{1}{8}$  of the games, the middle child gets  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the games and the oldest gets  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the games. How many games does each child receive and how many do the parents keep?



Two mums and 2 daughters went out for Christmas dinner each ate one portion, yet only three portions were eaten in total. How is this possible?



If it takes 5 elves 5 minutes to make 5 dolls, how long would it take 100 elves to make 100 dolls?



### Last month's answers:

- Q1: Antelope, Juvenile, Repeated, Snowball, Estimate  
 Q2: More Hours in 10 years (87,600) than Secs in a day (86,400)  
 Q3: Too many cooks spoil the broth



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