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Hello Readers,

Welcome to the **February 2026** issue of Look Local Magazine.

While winter still holds its grip on our villages and rolling countryside, there's a quiet sense of anticipation in the air from frost-tipped hedgerows to the promise of lighter evenings just around the corner. It's a wonderful month to slow down and make the most of local life here in our region.

This issue is packed with seasonal inspiration, practical ideas and community spirit. For all gardeners feeling the mid-winter lull, our regular **Over the Garden Gate** feature from Mimosa Landscapes reminds us that this quieter season is the perfect time for planning, patience and slow creativity in the garden.

Health and wellbeing are front of mind too. **222 Healthcare** tackles the challenge many of us feel this time of year, offering sensible tips to eat well even when seasonal produce feels limited. For those seeking a natural way to support focus and balance, our exclusive piece from **get dopa** offers insight into mindful nutrition without relying on stimulants. And as the cold evenings linger, we also explore warmth from home. **Cool Heat Solution** shares why now is a great time to consider adding efficient, EcoDesign - compliant warmth to your living space, with practical advice for choosing the right model. There's also an informative article from **Home Counties Loft Ladders** on safe, smart loft access and how to make the most of that often forgotten space.

Don't miss our regular competition from **Thame Players Theatre** giving you the chance to win tickets to one of their fantastic upcoming shows so you can enjoy some local culture!

And of course, February brings its own calendar highlights. Valentine's Day offers a chance to support local restaurants and share a special meal, Half Term gives families time to explore and enjoy village life and Pancake Day adds a delicious twist to winter evenings.

Until next month, enjoy reading and remember to shop local.

Love Emma

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**BOOKING DEADLINE FOR
MARCH 2026 ISSUE:**

Wednesday 18th February

7,100 copies of Look Local Magazine are printed on a monthly basis and delivered to households in, **Aston Rowant, Chalgrove, Chinnor, Great Haseley, Great Milton, Henton, Kingston Blount, Lewknor, Little Milton, Milton Common, Stadhampton, Sydenham** and **Watlington**. In addition, the magazine can also be picked up from businesses in these areas and also **Thame & Wheatley**.

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Why is your house full... but your loft is empty?

Local homeowners are discovering storage space they already own

With growing families, home working, and ever-increasing storage demands, many homeowners are finding their houses feel cluttered, even though there's often a large, unused space directly above them.

Home Counties Loft Ladders is a local company that helps homeowners safely and correctly use their loft space. By improving access, lighting and boarded storage areas, most installations are completed in less than a day, with minimal

disruption to the home.

Jamie Oakley, Manager at Home Counties Loft Ladders, explains: *"Most people know their loft is there, they just don't use it because access is awkward or unsafe. Our job is to make that space easy, safe and practical to use."*

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That approach has led to much of the company's work coming from recommendations by previous customers, homeowners who wanted the job done correctly, without mess or hassle.

To find out how you could make better use of your loft, call Jamie on **0808 301 9558** or visit homecountiesloftladders.co.uk to book a free, no-obligation quotation. You may be surprised how much space you already have.

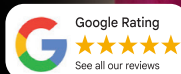


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OR SCAN ME!

February in the UK: When Eating “Fresh” Feels Like a Challenge...

By Dr. Large, Private GP at 222 Healthcare with a Postgraduate Diploma in Allergy from Imperial College London.

February can be one of the hardest months to eat well in the UK. Cold weather, short days and low energy often lead to comfort foods and quick snacks, even when we want to eat better.

At this time of year, much of the “fresh” food available has travelled long distances and been stored for longer, which can affect flavour and quality. If fruit and vegetables feel less appealing in winter, it's often due to seasonal food supply rather than lack of effort.

The good news is that eating well in February is still achievable — it simply requires a different approach than in summer.

Why February feels harder

During winter, we naturally experience:

- Less local produce variety with fewer easy options like salads and berries
- Greater reliance on stored foods which encourages comfort eating and snacking
- Lower energy for cooking from scratch

None of this means you're doing anything wrong - it's a normal seasonal shift.

What “healthy” looks like in February

At this time of year, eating well is less about perfect produce and more about consistency with the basics:

Protein first

Protein supports energy levels, fullness and stable blood sugar. Good winter options include eggs, yoghurt, chicken, fish, tofu, lentils and beans.

Don't forget fibre

Fibre supports gut health and appetite regulation. Oats, lentils, beans, vegetables, wholegrains, nuts and seeds are reliable winter staples.

Use frozen and tinned foods confidently

Frozen fruit and vegetables are often frozen soon after harvest, retaining much of their nutritional value. Tinned pulses and fish are also affordable, nutritious and convenient.

Choose winter-friendly fresh produce

Carrots, onions, leeks, cabbage, kale, broccoli, mushrooms, apples, pears and citrus fruits all work well in winter meals

A simple winter plate to aim for

- Half the plate vegetables (fresh, frozen or in soups)
- One quarter protein
- One quarter slow-release carbohydrates (potatoes, wholegrains or pulses)
- A small amount of healthy fat such as olive oil, nuts or seeds

One extra thing to consider

Vitamin D levels are commonly low in the UK during winter due to reduced sunlight. Many people benefit from a daily supplement during the colder months.

The takeaway

February makes healthy eating harder not because of lack of willpower, but because the environment is working against us. By focusing on protein, fibre and reliable winter staples, you can keep your nutrition steady until spring arrives.

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get dopa: Calm Focus for Busy Brains...

In today's always-on world, many of us feel mentally stretched, overstimulated, and constantly juggling demands. Founded in the UK in 2023, **get dopa** was created for people who recognise that feeling - and want a calmer, more sustainable way to support focus and energy.



Developed by founder Matt Buff following his own experience of prolonged mental fatigue in high-pressure environments, get dopa takes a grounded, no-nonsense approach to cognitive support. At the heart of the brand is a once-daily, all-in-one supplement designed to support calm focus, steady energy and mental clarity - without caffeine, stimulants or exaggerated promises.

Unlike many focus supplements that rely on short-term boosts, get dopa is formulated for consistency rather than intensity. Its evidence-informed blend brings together vitamins, minerals, amino acids, botanicals and probiotics, carefully selected to support normal brain function and energy metabolism. The result is a supplement that fits easily into everyday routines, without

the jitters or crash often associated with stimulant-based products.

Transparency sits at the core of the brand. get dopa avoids dramatic claims, instead encouraging informed choices around routine, nutrition and balance. The supplement is made in the UK, vegan-friendly and third-party tested, offering reassurance to those seeking a more considered approach to wellbeing.

As awareness grows, get dopa continues to build a loyal community across the UK and beyond - supported by education-led marketing, practitioner interest and word-of-mouth. For those navigating busy days and full minds, it offers steady, reliable support you can return to every day.

Calm focus for busy brains

Once-daily cognitive support -
without caffeine or stimulants.

get dopa is a UK-made, vegan-friendly supplement designed to support focus, steady energy and mental clarity – helping you feel balanced on busy days.

- ✓ No caffeine or stimulants
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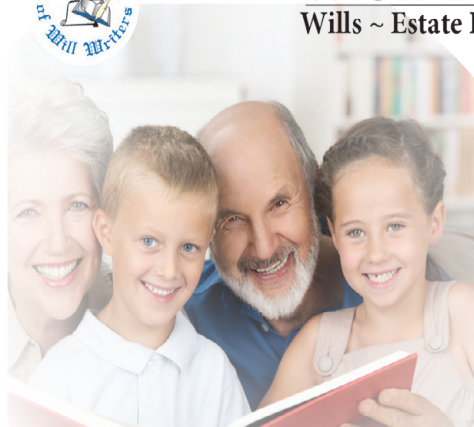
Discover more at getdopa.com  [@getdopa](https://www.instagram.com/getdopa) | matt@getdopa.com

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STILL TIME TO STAY WARM:

Why February Is Perfect for a Log Burner

As winter settles into its final stretch, February often brings some of the coldest and dampest days of the year. While many homeowners think of log burners as something to plan for “next winter”, this quieter month is actually an ideal time to consider adding one to your home.

Modern log burners are a far cry from older, inefficient stoves. Today's EcoDesign-compliant models are built to burn wood more cleanly and efficiently, producing more usable heat while significantly reducing emissions. This makes them a practical and responsible heating option for UK homes, particularly during prolonged cold spells when heating systems are working hardest.

At **Cool Heat Solution**, we specialise in a carefully selected range of contemporary wood-burning and multi-fuel stoves, chosen for their performance, reliability and suitability for a wide variety of properties - from period cottages to modern family homes. We work with trusted manufacturers and focus on models that combine strong heat output with high efficiency, helping homeowners enjoy warmth without unnecessary fuel waste.

February is also a sensible time to plan. Installation schedules are often more flexible, allowing homeowners to take time choosing the right stove, flue system and finish without the pressure of peak-season demand. All installations must comply with UK building regulations and EcoDesign standards, ensuring safe, efficient operation and long-term peace of mind.

A log burner isn't just about warmth - it creates a welcoming focal point, adds character to a room and provides a sense of comfort that continues long after winter fades.

Expert Tip

When choosing a log burner, size matters. A stove that's too powerful can overheat a room, while one that's too small may struggle to perform efficiently. As a general guide, the size of your room, insulation levels and chimney setup should all be considered before selecting a model. Seeking professional advice ensures you choose a stove that delivers comfortable, efficient heat and meets current UK regulations.

To explore our range of EcoDesign-ready Log Burning Stoves and learn more visit our website.

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NEWS & EVENTS

The Jazz Club at Chinnor presents Stuart Henderson Quartet..

Local music lovers can enjoy an evening with the Stuart Henderson Quartet at Chinnor Village Hall on **Saturday 21st February at 7:30pm**. Stuart Henderson is celebrated for his rich trumpet style and will be joined by top local musicians for a memorable performance, blending jazz classics and improvisation.

Visit www.chinnor-village-hall.com for more information.

Valentine's Night Live Music - Nettlebed...

Looking for something different this Valentine's Night?

Enjoy a relaxed and entertaining evening of live music with the much-loved Pat & Caroline – The McGrath Duo, performing live on **Saturday 14th February**.

Expect a warm, friendly atmosphere with a brilliant mix of 60s and 70s classics, popular country favourites, and well-known Irish tunes. Whether you fancy a jig and a bop, a quickstep, rock 'n' roll, a waltz, or simply want to sit back and enjoy the music, there's something for everyone. No pressure to dance - just good music and great company.

Details:

- Nettlebed Country Music Club, High Street, Nettlebed, RG9 5DD
- 8:00pm - 11:00pm (doors open 7.30pm)
- No need to book tickets, its just a £10 per person donation on the door
- Free parking | Disability access | Bar available (also serving soft drinks and tea)

More upcoming Nettlebed Country Music Club events to note:

- Live Music Nights: Sat 11th April | Sat 16th May | Sat 27th June (and more to follow)
- CD Dance Nights: 1st & 3rd Tuesdays of the month, 7:30pm - 9:30pm – just £5pp, pay on arrival

If you require any further in formation, call Keith on 07752 374610.

Valentine's Quiz Night at The Lamb, Chalgrove...

A fun quiz night with Ben from OX Gins and food available on **Thursday 12th February**. Great for couples or friends looking for a social evening out.



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WHAT'S ON AT THE PLAYERS THEATRE

Saturday 14th February at 7.45pm

Duo Destino play Flamenco Fusion

Duo Destino bring their exhilarating Flamenco Fusion style to the Thame Players stage.

Tickets £18, concessions £16



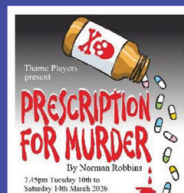
Tuesday 10th to Saturday 14th March at 7.45pm

Thame Players present

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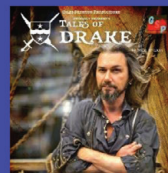


Saturday 21st March at 7.45pm

Tales of Drake

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Saturday 28th March at 2pm and 7pm

Haddenham Youth Theatre

Haddenham Youth Theatre perform a double bill of two plays

Jurassic Parp and **She Who Was Changed**

Tickets £12.50



Saturday 11th April at 7.45pm

The Greatest Love Songs

Susannah Ruth performs a captivating evening of some of the greatest love songs ever written.

Tickets £15



Exclusive Competition

For a chance to **WIN** complimentary tickets for a family of four to a Thame Players' production* answer the following question:

Q: WHO WILL BE PERFORMING THE GREATEST LOVE SONGS?

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info@look-localmagazine.co.uk by 28th February 26th.

*There are five Thame Players' productions a year. See website for details.





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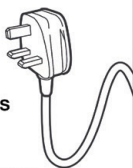
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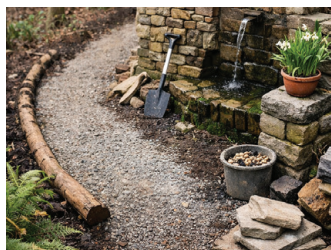



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Paths, Patience and the Quiet Work of the Garden...

February is the month of muddy boots, slipping and sliding, and biting rains. Not the most inspiring time in the garden - even for keen gardeners. Yet it offers a valuable pause: a chance to think about practicalities, particularly those access paths that make garden life easier all year round.

Paths can be both decorative and purposeful. In my design work, I always aim for elements to serve more than one function—so they are aesthetically pleasing, logically follow your life flow and are environmentally sensible. When you invest money, time and labour into something structural, it should truly earn its place.

This year, my focus is on a woodland nook in the middle of my own garden, forming the daily route to the ducks, chickens, the occasional sheep and the vegetable patch. I'm planning an access path with a solid sub-base, topped with a decorative dressing that I'll set myself in concrete. I'm also considering building a small wall to insert a reclaimed water feature, creating a calm, reflective space within the trees.

It's a project that will take a couple of years—and that's part of the joy. Gardening encourages us to settle into slow progress and enjoy aspiration as much as achievement. While professionals can always be brought in, our home is very much a case of the cobbler's children: we make beautiful gardens for others while our own evolves gradually.

At present, I'm collecting materials from Facebook finds, recycling yards and waste stone from gardens we install, and found in my own soil! Nothing is truly waste! But there's always labour involved in collecting and storing materials, and so no such thing as a free ride.

On the growing front, sweet peas are sown, and tomatoes are underway. If early sowings fail—through damping off, curious cats or hungry mice—don't be discouraged. There's always time to sow again, which is why I always keep seed back for a second chance.

I hope your garden plans feel as quietly aspirational as mine, and I look forward to sharing more thoughts next month.?

With love, Lucie x

CONTACT ME: T: 01844 354949 | M: 07737 286784

E: info.mimosadesign@gmail.com | Insta: [@lucieponsford_mimosagarden](https://www.instagram.com/lucieponsford_mimosagarden)

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What our customers say



Mary Clements

Mimosa carried out a full redesign and build of the front and back gardens in 2024. Their design gave me exactly what I wanted and more by creating a low maintenance garden full of round year interest. The planting has settled and grown so well and each month so far has shown new areas of interest. It's difficult to find a company that will provide a full design and build package, with the skills to deliver, on time and in budget.



Olwen Comino-James

Firstly I LOVE my new garden! The whole process was really great - Lucie came up with a lovely design, then successfully tweaked it to take budgeting considerations into account without compromising too much on the end result. The construction team were great. The planting is looking lovely and I can't wait to see it all flourish. Thank you Mimosa, highly recommend!

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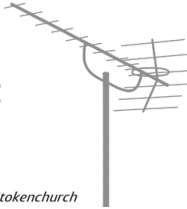
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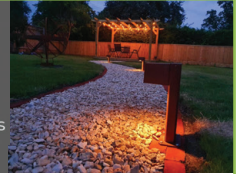
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