



Malachi Justin (middle) outside the new centre.

## £5 inspires homeless centre

On 24 February, 10-year-old Malachi Justin welcomed one of the first residents to Malachi Place, a homeless centre that was built thanks to his donation of £5 of tooth-fairy money. Justin donated the money to charity five years ago, to help the homeless where he lives in Ilford, England. His donation inspired the local council and the charity the Salvation Army to put £5 million towards building a brand-new homeless centre, which has now opened. Justin said "everyone should have a home".



Priti Patel

## MP is accused of bullying

The Home Secretary, Priti Patel, has been accused of bullying her staff. The Home Secretary is a senior member of the Government, and is in charge of immigration, law and security. The accusations were made by Sir Philip Rutnam, who worked closely with Patel. Rutnam resigned on 29 February. He said he had received complaints that Patel shouted and swore at her staff. The Government says it will investigate. Prime Minister Boris Johnson has defended Patel, saying he has "full confidence" in her.



The hidden passage.

## Hidden passage discovered

Historians have rediscovered a hidden passageway in the House of Commons. The tunnel is 360 years old and was built for the coronation of King Charles II in 1661, so that people could get to a celebration next door in Westminster Hall. It was covered up in 1851, before being rediscovered after the Second World War (1939–1945) and then blocked off again. One expert says that it shows that "the Palace of Westminster still has so many secrets to give up".

How often do you connect with nature?



# Most children are not connecting with nature

More than three quarters of children aged between eight and 15 rarely or never listen to birdsong, according to a new study. The nationwide survey revealed that even more young people never watch the Sun rise (90%), look at clouds (79%) or smell wildflowers (83%).

Slightly more adults take the time to enjoy the natural world. Of those who responded, 62% rarely or never listened to birdsong and 57% rarely or never watched the Sun rise. More than 1,000 children and 2,000 adults took part in the study.

The research was carried out by the National Trust – an organisation that protects more than 500 historic buildings, ancient monuments, gardens, parks and nature reserves. Professor Miles Richardson from the University of Derby, who helped analyse the results, said the survey showed that people who spent more time with nature were more likely to help protect animals and the environment.

He explained, "This report for the first time demonstrates that simple everyday acts of noticing nature, that build a closer connection, are key to people taking action for nature. Every bit of connection makes a difference."

The report found that young people were happier if they were relaxing outdoors, such as sitting in a garden. Wellbeing was also improved by engaging with activities connected to the natural world, such as writing poems and songs about animals or celebrating natural events.

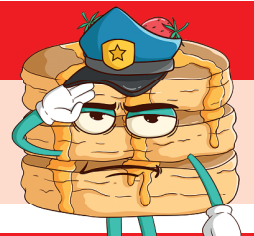
To help tackle the problem, the National Trust has launched a guide to help people connect with nature.

The week-by-week Get Connected to Nature programme has lots of tips for activities, all of which take between 20 seconds and 20 minutes to complete, including how to watch butterflies and bees, grow a plant on your windowsill, or build a home for animals. Find the nine-week plan at [tinyurl.com/TWJ-connect](https://tinyurl.com/TWJ-connect)

**WHAT A LOAD OF RUBBISH**  
According to the study, slightly more children (34%) than adults (32%) pick up litter to help wildlife.

## THE WEEK'S SILLIEST HEADLINE

"Police use pancake art in bid to find 'most wanted'" [getsurrey.co.uk](https://www.getsurrey.co.uk)



# Most children are not connecting with nature

## Hold a debate

*Read the article and then try the following activities...*

If connecting with nature is so important, should we make it an official part of the school week? This would be in addition to the way we study it as part of science lessons. After all, what could be more important than an appreciation of the world in which we live? Wouldn't that make us more likely to take better care of it for future generations? Or would that just be a waste of time that we cannot afford to squeeze into an already packed learning schedule? Anyway, isn't our enjoyment of anything a purely personal thing and one that we should do in our own time? Furthermore, if we're not particularly interested in, or moved by, nature, that's a perfectly acceptable opinion too. What do you think?

## Writing challenge!

Choose one of the following writing warm-ups.

**1** Write a recount of the last time you spent in a natural environment. Describe where it was and what you saw, smelled, heard and felt. Remember to finish with a summary that shows your opinion of this event.

or

**2** Write a pretend letter from nature to you, begging you to spend more time with it. You can make it funny or emotional, but remember to provide persuasive reasons and, of course, follow the conventions of an informal letter.

## Investigate

Identify three to five different species of bird that you have actually seen in the wild near where you live. For each one, provide a description (and, if possible, a sketch) as well as brief details about its key characteristics such as diet and reproduction.

