



Your letters

Your say

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Your comments on articles that you've read in Which?



Rus thinks councils should be charged for mistaken parking tickets

Parking fines

May 08, p9

You reported last month that two thirds of parking fines are overturned on appeal. The system does nothing to discourage councils from slapping a ticket on any vehicle and hoping that drivers won't appeal.

If councils had to pay a small amount of compensation to each driver whose appeal was upheld, would that not encourage a more level-headed approach to parking enforcement?

RUS NEWTON, LONDON

Treatment abroad

April 08, p30

I am a travel health nurse and see increasing numbers travelling abroad for surgery and dental treatment, but nowhere in your article on this did you discuss vaccinations or malaria.

For many countries, vaccines such as hepatitis A, hepatitis B, typhoid and tetanus/diphtheria/polio are recommended. Those travelling to certain countries should be told about the risks of blood-borne viruses, such as hepatitis B.

Malaria may also be an issue in tropical countries, along with other mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue, yellow fever and chikungunya.

SUE BARNES, SURREY

WHICH? SAYS It's vital that

medical tourists speak to health professionals about vaccinations and other preparations needed.

Go to www.fco.gov.uk and click on 'travelling and living overseas' for more information.

In your article on treatment abroad, your orthopaedic expert recommended finding information about surgical results before committing to surgery abroad.

This would perhaps be more relevant if the statistics for surgery at home were available. Many hospitals' websites don't list consultants' names and none lists results, as far as I can tell. Cardiac surgery is an honourable exception.

We clearly need to know these statistics if the government's decision to allow patient choice is to be anything other than meaningless.

Choice is only valuable if it's informed.
MARTIN MCNICOL, HUMBERSIDE

Greener wood floors

April 08, p24

To add a green perspective to your advice on wood floors: I have a sitting room with real ash floorboards from a sustainable source laid 15 years ago. The rest of the house is laminate wood – all I could afford back then.

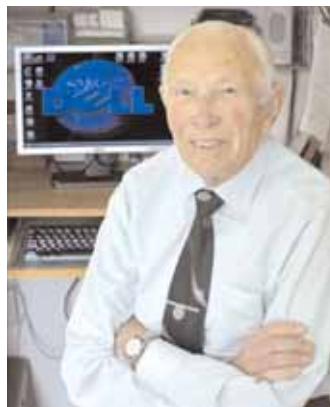
While the real wood is warm and still looks fantastic, despite a few dirty

marks and dents, the laminate is badly scratched and ice-cold to touch.

Real wood won't emit noxious fumes, whereas some laminates give off formaldehyde. When I throw out my laminate, I'll have to pay to dump it in a landfill site or use a contractor to burn it, hopefully legally – emitting CO2 and nasty volatiles.

FRANCES BELL, PENRITH

WHICH? SAYS Laminate is made from wood fibres generated by the processing of wood for other products so it reuses an otherwise waste material. It's just a shame that reusing it requires something as toxic as formaldehyde.



Brian was impressed with the helpful service he had from Dell

Thumbs-up for Dell

April 08, p12

Your online shopping report case study may have had a poor experience from Dell, but mine has been quite different.

After three positive reports from others about the company – and your own website gave it a reliability check of 87 per cent – I ordered a Dell 531 Inspiron computer on 7 March 2008. I was advised that it would arrive on 13 March between 9am and 1pm and it duly arrived at 9.53am.

I was able to get it up and running within a couple of days, save for a problem with sending email through Outlook. I telephoned Dell, and a staff member worked on my computer remotely to rectify the problem. Eventually, it was found that earlier editions of Office 2000 can conflict with Vista and I was advised to use Windows Mail instead of Outlook – problem solved.

In all the dealings, Dell personnel were most courteous, patient and helpful.

BRIAN TALL, DORSET

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

■ Long-term care, April 08, p34

Needs assessments for continuing NHS healthcare are the responsibility of primary care trusts rather than social services. To qualify, your primary need must be a health one.

■ Charity cards, Dec 07, p4

We reported that independent researchers had concluded that Next plc donated between 6.3 per cent and 13 per cent to charity from the sale proceeds of seven packs of its charity Christmas cards examined for our article. Next has pointed out that last Christmas it sold 28 packs of Christmas cards and 20 individual cards in all, and that it made a

donation of 25p from each pack and from each individual card to charity from the sale of all the packs and cards in its range. We are happy to make the position clear for the benefit of our readers.

■ Isa transfers, May 08, p25

Isa rules don't let you partially transfer funds in the same year you deposit them, but you can get a new Isa provider to transfer the whole amount. See www.hmrc.gov.uk/isa/faqs.htm for more.

■ Trades, Jan 08, p28

Corgi is not part of the Trustmark scheme, but we still advise that you should use a Corgi-registered gas fitter.