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Agricultural Show



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Broadcaster Andrew Castle  
on house hunting in Surrey  
and his hopes for Wimbledon



**ARTS &  
CULTURE:**  
Men can do  
embroidery too!

# SURREY LIFE

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# 50

Fab summer  
**DAYS OUT**

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Comedian  
**RUFUS HOUND** on  
politics, the West  
End stage and his  
Surrey school days

Behind the  
scenes with

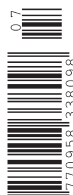
**GUILDFORD  
FRINGE  
FESTIVAL**



# 10

of the best  
***Festivals***

£3.80







MY teenage son suddenly felt compelled to have a day trip out with Husband and I. He insisted it was to help me research my column but I suspect it was simply a better alternative than revising for his exams. Either way, we were not going to look a gift horse in the mouth; ask any parent – teens volunteering to spend time with family is miraculous and welcome. We discussed where to spend this much-valued quality time and, as it was a beautiful summer day, we dismissed the usual fail-safes of bowling, cinema or restaurant. Son came up with idea of visiting Go Ape in Alice Holt, near Farnham.

For the benefit of the uninitiated, this basically involves committing to two or three hours in treetops taking on zip-wires, Tarzan swings, rope ladders and a variety of obstacles and crossings. There was a glint in Son's eye because, while I'm not a categorical acrophobic, dendrophobic or even climacophobia, I'm no action woman and I do have tendencies to worry (not about heights, trees or climbing, but about falling from said heights and trees while climbing). With it being exam time in our household I'd been in the habit of spouting inspirational and motivational sound bites, such as, 'You've nothing to fear but fear itself' and 'Every achievement starts with the decision to try'. Every one of my giddy little witticisms was quoted back to me. I could see that they'd been annoying but, to save face, I got in the car.

### All action heroes

Alice Holt is a royal forest on the Surrey/Hampshire border. Part of the South Downs National Park. The leafy hideout boasts an epic backdrop and is just a stone's throw away from where they



## Freedom in the treetops

*In her latest instalment, best-selling author Adele Parks finds escape from life's stresses and strains by climbing, jumping and swinging through trees*

filmed the opening battle from *Gladiator* and, more recently, scenes from *Skyfall*, and *Captain America* and *Avengers: Age of Ultron*. Husband kindly offered up these little facts to me as a form of distraction as I faced the 126-metre zip wire.

On arriving, the park's friendly staff conscientiously talked us through safety procedures and made sure we were harnessed correctly and wearing appropriate gear. After a training briefing and



Above and main: Adele enjoying her Go Ape adventure

a practice run, we were off.

What can I tell you? While much huffing and puffing ensued, the truth is I've never had so much fun in my life! Well, not the sort of fun I'm prepared to write about in *Surrey Life*! There's a reason kids laugh a lot, it's because they frequently run, climb, jump, swing and scramble about – and it feels fabulous! With each zip-wire I soared down and tree crossing I conquered, I felt increasingly equal to any *Gladiator*, *Bond* or *Avenger*. It wasn't just me - the place was full of young and old testing and impressing themselves; everyone left validated, exhilarated, united. If there's stress or tension in your home I'd say go on, go ape! ♦

*"Ask any parent – teens volunteering to spend time with family is miraculous and welcome..."*