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# Spring is in the air (hopefully)!

Welcome to the March edition...

It's a great time of year to start thinking about your next house move, or having a Spring clean, or maybe getting around to those home and garden improvements you've been putting off and off...

We have a wide range of organisations and tradespeople who advertise in here who are all local and keen to take on more work in the area.

Don't forget **Mothers' Day on Sunday 22nd March** – there's loads of lovely restaurants and walks in the area to treat her to - and check out page 6 for some ideas on local events.

Until next month,

Zoe

Zoe Reece

Tel: 07557 220585

Email: [zoe@dorridgedirectory.com](mailto:zoe@dorridgedirectory.com)

[www.knowleanddorridgedirectory.com](http://www.knowleanddorridgedirectory.com)



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# OAKLAND



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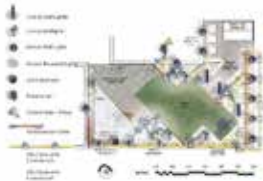
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# community events

## Springtime Quiz Night

**26th March, 7.30 pm**

**Knowle Village Hall, B93 0NH**

Join the KVHA for a fun Quiz Night (Knowle Village Hall fundraising event). Book your team in now (max. 6 people). Please bring your own drinks and "nibbles". Great prizes! Tickets £6 each from 01564 778163 or 01564 779898 or from the Friday Coffee morning at the Hall (10am – noon).

to purchase to spruce up your home. A Continental Street Market will also be in town so you can taste flavours from around the world whilst you shop.

## Get Crafty in the Wild

**7th April, 10.30-11.30am**

**The Parkridge Centre, Brueeton Park, B91 3HW**

Off we go to get arty in the wild! We'll be making massive stick pictures and getting muddy with our special mud paint recipe. Suitable for children aged 2+. £4 per child. To book tickets: [www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/events](http://www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk/events)



## Outdoor Cinema

**1st May, 7-10.45pm**

**Arden Academy, Knowle**

Come and see "The Greatest Showman" on a big screen under the stars! Sing along, bring a chair, have a picnic or indulge in some great street food. This event, which is open to the whole community, will raise funds for Arden Academy. Prices: Family £25 (2+2), Adult (18+) £10, Child (U18) £5. For more information and to book tickets: [www.jumblebee.co.uk/Ardenpftatthegreatestshowman](http://www.jumblebee.co.uk/Ardenpftatthegreatestshowman)



## Foraging Courses at Elmdon Park

**21 March, 12noon – 3.30pm**

**Elmdon Park, Solihull B92 9EJ**

Join us for an informative foraging walk where we will ID the various wild plants and mushrooms we find. Enjoy homemade refreshment along the way and a light 'Wild Food' lunch with us to finish the day. Call 01981 590604 for more information.



## Solihull Spring Fair

**2nd – 5th April**

**Solihull Town Centre**

Get your garden summer ready at the Solihull Spring Fayre. There will be plenty of garden plants and furniture available

## KNOWLE LIBRARY

- **Jellybeans** – held monthly on a Thursday morning for story-time and rhymes for the under 5's 10.45am -11.30am
- **Monday Story Times** - Weekly story time and rhymes for toddlers and pre-school children 10.30am-11.00am
- **Under – fives** Rhyme Times at 2pm every Friday
- **Knowle Knit and Natter Group** – held monthly on a Tuesday 10.30am -11.30am
- **The Reading Café** – Monthly on a Friday morning 10.30am -11.30am
- **Self-Running Family History Group** – Monthly on a Tuesday 2.15pm -4.00pm
- **Reader's Circles** – Knowle Readers Circle meets monthly on a Friday 2.15pm
- **Knowle Library Self Running Readers Circle** monthly meeting Tuesday 11.00am -12pm
- **Poetry Group** - Monthly on a Tuesday 11.00am -12.00pm
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### Easter Markets

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### Morris Minor Owners Club

Saturday 26th April

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## The most dog-friendly places to visit in the UK

When your pet is part of the family, they shouldn't miss out on the holiday fun and we believe our four-legged friends deserve a break too.

### Cornwall

As one of the most popular UK destinations for a getaway, this is sure to tick all the doggy-boxes. An incredible 51 beaches welcome dogs all year round, and a further 81 have seasonal restrictions. Several attractions found in Cornwall also welcome our dogs, so you can explore the area with the whole family in tow. Take a steam train ride along the Bodmin and Wenford Railway or explore the Eden project where dogs are allowed in outdoor areas on a lead. You can even head to Truro and introduce your dogs to stand up paddleboarding!

### Devon

Thousands flock to the South Coast for its incredible coastal walks, great summer weather and miles of beaches. Some of its finest attractions welcome dogs including The Donkey Sanctuary, the Miniature Pony Centre and the Devon Railway Centre which means your days out can include your dogs too. You can find designated sections of many

beaches that allow owners to relax on the sand while their dogs run off their lead. Many of the country-side pubs allow dogs in on their lead, with many beachside cafes providing water and treats for our beloved pets. Beer allows dogs on its beach all year round October to April. The rest of the year allowed on half of the beach.

### Peak District

The Peak District is an ideal holiday destination with your dog, with glorious views from up high, picturesque villages and attractions galore that welcome both human and dog. Head to the Peak Rails heritage line running between Rowsley and Matlock and be welcome on board the train. For a relaxing drink, head to The Cobbles where you and your canine champions can enjoy views from a large beer garden and young and old can enjoy the play area. In fact, you can find over 100 dog-friendly pubs in the Peak District area!

### Snowdonia

The best way to enjoy North Wales' scenery is by climbing to its highest peak, Mount Snowdon's summit, which stands at 1085m. The National Park here allows dogs on a

lead, and as long as fitness permits, they can accompany you on the journey to the summit. From high to low, head to Sygun Copper Mine which offers a fascinating day of adventure exploring underground, just bear in mind that the metal steps to climb could prove more difficult for larger dogs.

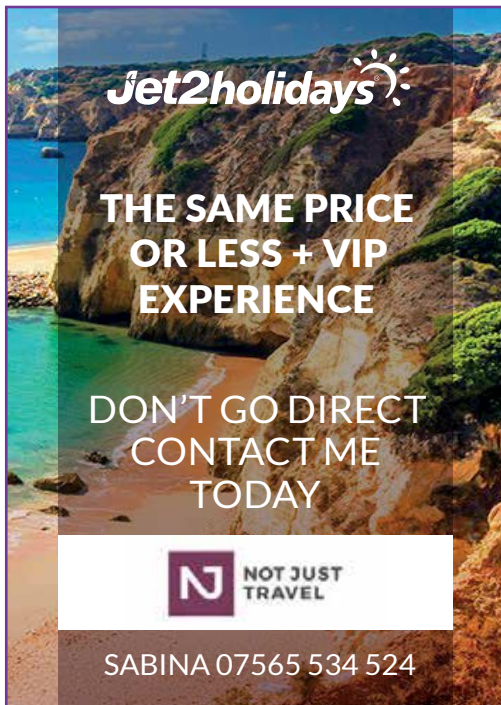
### The Lake District


A trip to the Lake District won't be complete without experiencing some of their incredible day outs from Lakeland mountain walks to the Claife viewing station and the west shore of Windermere. After a long day of exploring, quench your thirst at the many dog-friendly pubs, we recommend The Snooty Fox Country Inn which dates back to 1624! For a cosy welcoming, head to Jasper's Coffee House, rumour has it they're the friendliest dog café in Kenswick.

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**What age is this show suitable for?**

Email your answer to: [thecoretheatre@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:thecoretheatre@solihull.gov.uk) – and please put 'Woodland Tales' as the subject line.

**Closing date for entries is 31st March. The winner will be drawn at random and notified by email after this date.**

**Please note there is no cash value nor exchange for this prize so please don't enter if you cannot attend the date shown above.**

## **About the show:**

Something is happening in the woods, voices can be heard, and a strange metallic smell fills the air. Machines are gathering at its edge and a mysterious call is heard across the valley.

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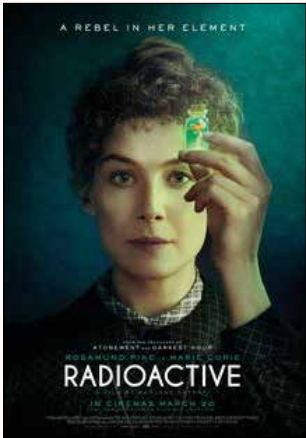
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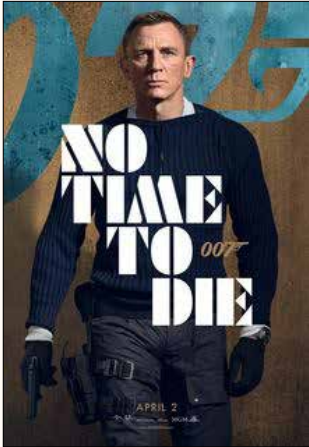
This is a journey through Marie Curie's enduring legacies – her passionate relationships, scientific breakthroughs and the consequences that followed for her and for the world. After meeting fellow scientist Pierre Curie, the pair go on to marry and change the face of science forever by their discovery of radioactivity.

Mulan  
from 27th March

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Bond has left active service and is enjoying a tranquil life in Jamaica. His peace is short-lived when his old friend Felix Leiter from the CIA turns up asking for help. The mission to rescue a kidnapped scientist turns out to be far more treacherous than expected, leading Bond onto the trail of a mysterious villain armed with dangerous new technology.

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# To a Special Mum

Remembering mums of kids with additional needs on Mothers' Day

On Mothers' Day my Facebook and Instagram feeds fill with photos. The captions declare, 'Beautiful bouquet from my son!' #mothersday or 'My daughters

took me to see Les Mis' #mothersday. In spite of the fact that I have a much-loved son he will never send me flowers or take me to the theatre. Tom has Down Syndrome and is also autistic, non-verbal and has a myriad of complex health problems. I love him and I know he loves me, but I will be his carer long after my friends' kids have left home and started their own families.

This is my shout-out to other mums whose Mothers' Day celebrations will be bittersweet.

You are not alone - There are more of us than you think. Our children may all have different problems, but we understand each other's sense of being on the outside, at the celebrations 'normal' families take for granted: Christmas, birthday parties, family get-togethers and Mothers' Days.

You are AWESOME - You are a full-blown superhero my friend. Your superpower is the ability to deal with situations other parents could not conceive in their worst nightmares. You might acquire knowledge and skills beyond those required by most doctors, memorising medication regimens, side effects, and how to inject or infuse the drugs. You deal calmly with your hysterical child during horrendous medical procedures. You deal with melt-downs in public toilets over hand-dryers! You encourage your child to do the things doctors assured you they would never do. You crash, you burn, and you get up and do it all again the next day anyway.

You celebrate your kids' achievements on their terms - Other parents crow about their child's GCSE results or a grade 4 piano exam passed with distinction or a star-of-the-week award for neat handwriting. Our celebrations look different though they are no less important. We celebrated Tom signing 'Mum', 'Dad' and 'love' for the first time, and we definitely celebrated him taking a bath without screaming, drowning us or flooding the house!

You have the best black sense of humour - 'nuff said. We know that we laugh at things parents

of typical kids would not find the least bit funny, like the weird people you meet during all-nighters in A&E departments, discovering excrement smeared over your freshly-painted walls, or an aquarium full of dead fish because your child wanted to feed them and the only box he could reach was the small one posted through the door containing a sample of washing powder! RIP Tom's fish!

You accept, and don't compare - You become the mum other mothers confide in

because their child doesn't walk, talk, read, or ride a bike as well as their peers. Never mind that your child is 10, non-verbal and rides a large trike because of balance issues! You accept (mostly) other parents' rights to brag or worry about their kids even though you often feel that sense of 'otherness'. You are special. To mothers of additional needs kids everywhere.



Happy Mothers' Day  
Love from,  
**Lorraine**



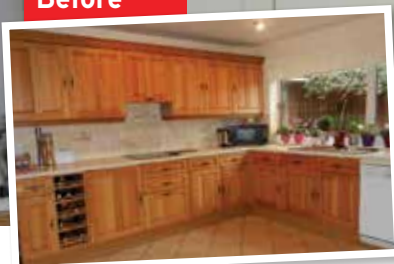
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# Beef in Guinness with Herb Dumplings

## Ingredients

### For the stew

2 tbsp oil  
1kg braising steak , cut into large pieces  
2 tbsp plain flour , well seasoned  
3 onions , sliced  
500ml Guinness  
2 sprigs thyme

### For the dumplings

75g butter, frozen and grated, or 75g suet  
150g self-raising flour  
1 small onion , grated  
2 sprigs of thyme , leaves  
stripped and chopped  
Water for mixing

## Method

Heat the oven to 150C/fan 130C/gas 2.  
Heat a little of the oil in a large oven-proof pan.

Lightly flour the pieces of braising steak and fry in small batches until well

browned. Remove them with a slotted spoon and place them on a plate.

Add the onions to the pan and fry on a fairly high heat until they soften and tinge brown at the edges.

Pour the Guinness into the pan, letting it bubble up, then return the meat to the pan along with the thyme. Cover the pan and transfer to the oven for 2-2 1/2 hours or until tender. The sauce will sweeten and thicken during the cooking time.

Make the dumplings (towards the end of the cooking time by mixing the grated butter or suet, flour, onion and thyme together and season well.

Gradually add water to the dry ingredients until you have a soft dough. Divide into 12 balls. Place the dumplings on top of the casserole and return it to the oven, uncovered, for 25 minutes.

Serve with shredded Savoy cabbage



Prep time: 20 minutes  
Cooking Time: 3 hours  
Serves: 4-6



# Get Motivated. Get Fit

Reinvigorate your fitness routine.

It's several weeks since my New Year resolution to lose weight and get fit. It's cold and damp outside. The gym is miles away, and there's a TV program on about a knitting group in Nicaragua that looks interesting, and this sofa is ever so comfortable.

## My self-motivation tank is empty!

Does your determination and energy to get fit after New Year's Day seems to run out sooner each year? Do you need to get fit? Do you need to lose weight? Do you know you'll feel better if you do? It's so much easier to fall back into old habits than to actively make a difference to our health isn't it? So how do we stay motivated?

Motivation is all in the mind. There is no physical difference between those who get fit and those who get fat. The fit people are just those who manage to leave the house and move their bodies. Clearly, we need to help our mind overcome the inertia currently preventing us moving from the couch.

## Get up, get dressed, get out.

It sounds simple but getting out of the door is the biggest hurdle. If you can force yourself to go through the motions of getting into your exercise kit, walking to the door and out of the house you're

90% of the way towards actually exercising. If you're standing outside dressed for exercise it's harder to change your mind and sneak back inside for another slice of cake.

Set an alarm to tell you when it's time for your exercise class, run, etc. Make sure you've got workout gear that makes you feel good.

Something stylish, comfortable, colourful, or high-tech; it doesn't matter, use whatever works for you. Make the getting dressed part something to look forward to. Baggy, stained, holey jogging bottoms will put you off the idea of stepping outside. Then just grab your keys, open the door and step outside.

## Start slowly.

It's important to pace yourself. Just because your neighbour can sprint 5 km in 20 minutes doesn't mean that you have to. Whatever exercise you are doing find a pace that is comfortable while still pushing you. As you exercise more you will gradually increase your exertion. Push yourself too hard at the beginning and exercise will seem exhausting, painful and make it harder to get going the next time. Once you begin to see your performance improving, you'll

get excited about beating your personal best and want to prove to yourself just how good you are.

## Set a short-term goal.

The ultimate goal might be to fit into a size 10 dress, or have a perfect six pack with matching biceps, but realistically that's probably more than a few months away. Pick a goal that you can achieve within the next two months. Dropping one dress size, being able to run non-

stop for 1 km, being able to do a proper pull-up. Achieving goals is as important as setting them when trying to keep your motivation high. Small successful steps build one on the other until all of a sudden, your ultimate goal is just within reach.

Keep on keeping on. Don't over-think it, just do it.

**By Robert Grant**



# Suck it up!

Is it time for a new vacuum cleaner?

**M**y previous vacuum cleaner was over a decade old, a bit unwieldy and mostly held together with duct tape. I hadn't realised that the world of vacuum cleaners had moved on so much in the intervening years. Different shapes, sizes, colours and features. Perusing my local electrical retail establishment felt like a bizarre speed-dating event for dust-busters, complete with its own jargon, 'bagless, HEPA, light ball, and Roomba.

But I did the research, so you don't have to. Here's what I discovered:

Upright vacuums remain popular because they're easy to use and don't involve much bending. They are great on carpets and rely on a spinning brush bar.

Cylinder vacuums are smaller, lighter, mostly cheaper, and take up less storage space. They are good for cleaning stairs, upholstery, and small spaces.

Dust bags capture and store dust, dirt, and hair picked-up as you clean. Some can be emptied and re-used, but most are disposable. Bags are hygienic, airtight and good for asthma and allergy sufferers. Obviously, the downside of disposable is that the bag has to be replaced when full, which could prove costly over time. There used to be a loss of suction as a bag filled up, but this is less of a problem with newer vacuum models.

Bagless vacuum cleaners tend to possess a filter within the dust canister to trap the dirt, dust and hair. Some, like the Dyson use a cyclonic action to separate the dust from the air and trap it inside the canister. Bagless means you never

have to replace the bag and can see when the canister needs to be emptied, or whether you've sucked up a mislaid earring or a prized Lego piece. They can be messy though when emptying out and are often more expensive to purchase than cleaners which use bags.

If you're a pet-owner, you might want to consider a vacuum which targets pet hair and odour. Miele produce one with a high intensity motor and a turbo brush to make it easy for to get rid of stubborn clumps of pet hair. It also has an ActiveClean filter to capture odours to keep

your home smelling fresh.

Trailing cables are a trip hazard for older people, and those with poor eyesight. You might want to consider a cordless vacuum cleaner. Some of these are very light too, weighing in at just over 3Kg, making them easy to carry upstairs. A couple of models even have LED lights, like little headlights to improve dust visibility. They run for between 40-60 minutes and then have to be

recharged which can take 4 hours.

Finally, you might want to consider the vacuum of the future, a robovac. The Roomba sets the standard though there are cheaper models available. They trundle around your house using sensors to detect the dirt particles. They are even stair-aware, so they don't take a tumble! They connect to an app meaning you can schedule a time for them to clean, and even programme them to stay out of certain rooms. They return to their charging port on their own after 90 minutes. Truly a 21st century cleaning experience!

**By Tracey Anderson**



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# a good read

reviews By Willow Coby

## The Handmaid's Tale

by Margaret Atwood



You'd have to have been living under a rock over the last couple of years to have not heard of The Handmaid's Tale even if it is just through the hugely successful TV series on Channel 4. However, the novel itself is not was first published in 1985 and appears on set text lists for English Literature courses from A Level to university degrees. Fans of the book have not been disappointed by the TV series and so this bodes well for people wanting to go the other way. Like the TV series, the novel tells the story of life in Gilead from the point of view of Offred, a handmaid to commander in the new political regime. A dystopian view of America presents us with a country where fertility levels have declined due to radiation poisoning and so Offred's ability to reproduce means that she is forced to bear children for the upper echelons of society. Atwood uses a form of dual narrative to present the story to us, as chapters alternate between 'night' revealing more of Offred's feelings and glimpses into her past, and 'day' showing us glimpses of day to day life in Gilead. It is hard to put your finger on what has made this novel so successful, but Atwood's sources of inspiration may offer a clue. She has said that everything she writes about in the novel is based on events that happened at some point in history. There is nothing fantastical here, but purely the uneasiness of realising what human beings might indeed be capable of.

## Lost and Found

by Oliver Jeffers



'Once there was a boy and one day he found a penguin at his door'. This is the opening line of this wonderful picture book. A very simple story but one that can't help but draw you in emotionally.

Finding a penguin at your door is not a normal everyday occurrence, and what happens next isn't normal and everyday either. The boy realises that the penguin is lost and is determined to help him find his home. After checking and the 'lost and found' and realising that no one has reported a missing penguin, he sets out to return him to the South Pole in a small rowing boat. But is the penguin really lost and will returning him to the South Pole really be what the penguin wants? This is a wonderful story of an unusual friendship and finding what is missing in life.



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# Saints Days

Why do we have them and how are saints chosen?

**M**arch 1st is St David's Day and March 17th is St Patrick's Day. Most of us know they are the patron saints of Wales and Ireland respectively. But why do we have saints? Who chooses them and to what purpose?

Saints derive from the Catholic Church; they form no part of Protestant faiths. The process the Church uses to name a saint is called canonization. Prior to the tenth century saints were chosen by public acclaim but gradually bishops and finally the Vatican took over the authority. Canonization is a complex and lengthy process which begins after the death of a catholic regarded as particularly holy. Mostly it starts many years after the death to allow for perspective on their life and work. Initially the local bishop investigates the candidate's life then the case is referred upwards to a panel of theologians at the Vatican. If approval is granted the pope proclaims the candidate 'venerable.'

Beatification is the next step and requires evidence of one miracle or act of martyrdom. A miracle must have taken place after the candidate's death as a direct result of an appeal made to them. They are generally related to recovery from a deadly medical condition. For such a recovery to be declared miraculous, it must be complete, instantaneous, durable (so it can't return) and scientifically inexplicable. If the pope bestows beatification the person may be venerated by members of the catholic faith.

Canonization can only occur, even for martyrs, after a further miracle. The title of saint means that the person lived a holy life, is in heaven and is to be honoured by the Church. Canonization does not make someone a saint; it is simply recognition by the Pope of

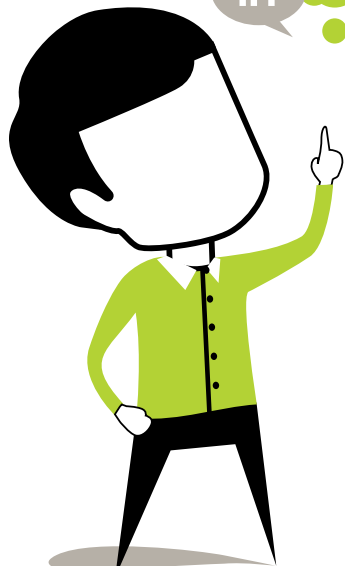


what he declares God has already done.

St David and St Patrick are both patron saints. These are saints chosen as special protectors or guardians over certain areas of life. The areas can include occupations, illnesses, countries or causes. While the Pope decides whether someone can be canonized, patrons may be chosen by individuals or groups of people. Patron saints are often chosen because an event in their lives or a talent overlaps with a particular area. For example, David, a Welsh bishop who helped to spread Christianity across the continent was born in Wales and served his country through the church. Patrick, though not born in Ireland was taken there in slavery after being kidnapped by pirates. He became fluent in Gaelic, turned to God and helped to bring Christianity to the island of Ireland. For many people saints are still relevant in the 21st century as they act like mentors, providing people with an example of a good life to follow.

**By Eloise Constantine**

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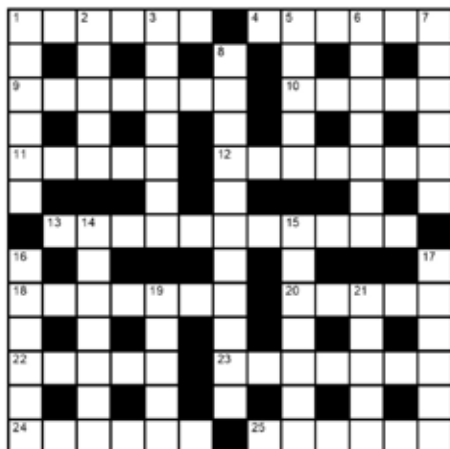
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## crossword



### Down

- 1 Tinker, play at (6)
- 2 Frivolous, nonsensical (5)
- 3 Danger sign (3,4)
- 5 Curved path around a planet (5)

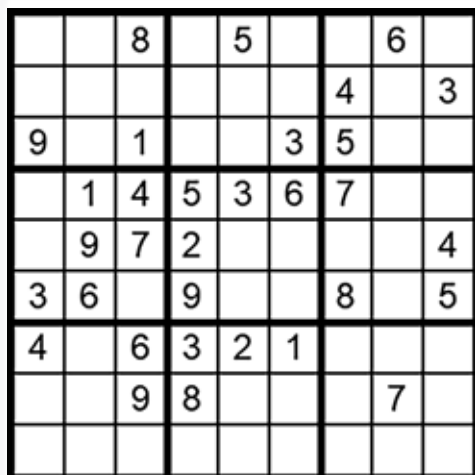
- 6 Gin cocktail (7)
- 7 Snuggle, caress (6)
- 8 Humiliating (11)
- 14 Personification (7)
- 15 Crate used as a makeshift stand for a speaker (7)

- 16 Implicate, seduce (6)
- 17 Sheep's woolly coat (6)
- 19 Exterior (5)
- 21 Tropical fruit (5)

## clues

### Across

- 1 Deactivate, neutralise (6)
- 4 Infinite, grandiose (6)
- 9 Sturdy, powerful canine (7)
- 10 Disinterested (5)
- 11 Devoted, faithful (5)
- 12 Before the court (2,5)
- 13 Dinner jacket and white shirt (coll) (7,4)
- 18 Kenyan capital (7)
- 20 Seraph (5)
- 22 Perch (at night) (5)
- 23 Displeasure, chagrin (7)
- 24 Expressive verse (6)
- 25 Breathe out (6)



## how to play sudoku

### It's simple!

Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box, contains the numbers 1 through to 9 with no repetition. You don't need to be a genius. These puzzles use logic alone. Watch out! Sudoku is highly addictive.

answers on page 49

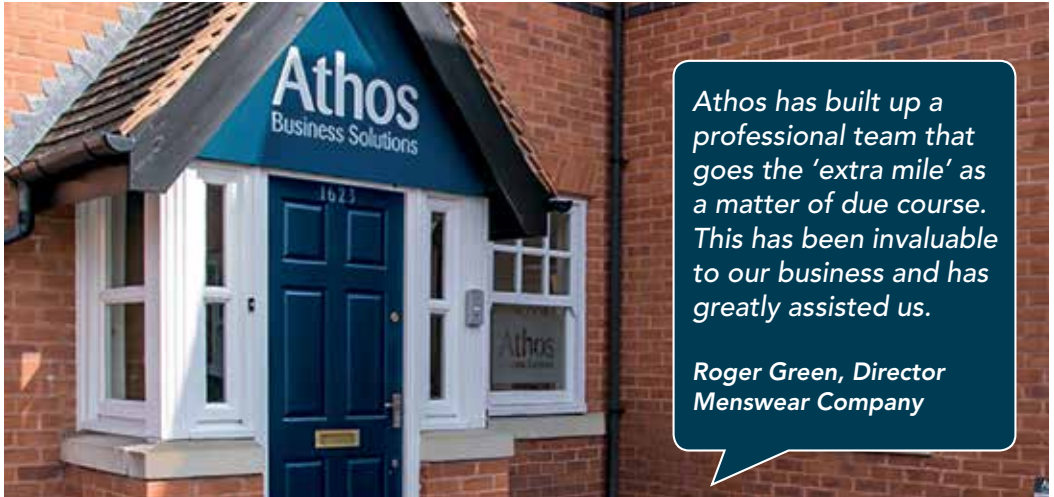


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# More Fool Us



**W**ith April Fools' Day looming it's always fun, trying to spot the fake story. Some would say that in the current political climate it's now almost

impossible to separate fact from fiction. But back in the good old days when regular news stories didn't sound as though they'd been dreamed up by the team who wrote *Twin Peaks* or *Walking Dead* newspapers and TV channels vied to see who could pull off the best prank.

The most famous is definitely the BBC's 1957 Panorama report on the bumper spaghetti crop. Huge numbers of British viewers were fooled by the footage of Swiss peasants gathering long strands of pasta from the trees!

In 1962, Swedish television viewers were duped into thinking that they could magically transform their black-and-white TV sets into colour by stretching a nylon stocking over the screen!

Australians were confused in 1975 when they were told they were converting to metric time, with 100 seconds to the minute, 100 minutes to the hour and 20-hour days.

In 2002 Tesco got in on the act and published an advert for genetically modified carrots. The advert said it each vegetable had air holes in the side which let them whistle when fully cooked!

Finally, in 2008 people were amazed to see a BBC film of Adélie penguins flying across the Antarctic on their way to spend the winter in the rainforests of South America. This became one of the most viewed videos on the internet. Totally fake.

With the boundaries between ridiculous and reality becoming ever more blurred, I suspect that spotting the fake story this year might prove more challenging than ever!

**By Sarah Davey**

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# The Mad March Hare



Countless stories have been told about the hare. It's a witch and trickster, a fertility symbol and even the real Easter Bunny.

The hare is incredibly agile, evading capture through hairpin swerves, flips and leaps, often seeming to vanish suddenly. It's a mercurial character, and one which has inspired copious mythology. Is there any other animal that appears so often and in so many guises within our folklore? The hare of legend is magical, in constant danger, proud, wicked and inventive.

Brown hares are not indigenous to the UK. They are thought to have been imported from mainland Europe in the Iron Age specifically as both sport for hunters and a source of food. We do have a native species of mountain hare but most of our folklore relates to the brown hare.

In the Middle Ages, hares were linked to

witchcraft. There is a story of a hunter who wounded a hare and tracked its blood trail back to a cottage in the woods. He discovered an old woman cooking at her stove and spied a fresh wound on her arm which she claimed was the result of an accident with a kitchen knife. It was thought that witches could assume the shape of a hare, along with the attributes of speed, agility and the ability to vanish. This circumstantial evidence was enough to condemn the poor woman to death.

Hares devote a lot of time to courtship and coupling and can be seen most easily at this time of year. They breed quickly so became icons of fertility, and by association with the pagan rituals celebrating spring. They may even have become associated with Easter though they are definitely NOT bunnies!!

**By Sarah Davey**



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# A Pre-nuptial Agreement offers protection

**A pre-nuptial agreement is a formal document which describes what assets each party owns at the time of the marriage. It also sets out how these assets and finances will be divided in the event of divorce or separation.**

**A**lthough couples marry in the belief that the marriage will be forever, it is an unfortunate fact that almost 50% of marriages now end in divorce and parties need to protect their financial position.

## Pre-nuptial agreements are important where...

- One party has or is likely to have significant inheritance prospects.
- One party has significantly greater capital or income than the other.
- One party has a successful business that they would like to keep separate from personal finances.
- One or both parties are entering into a second marriage and they wish to retain their previous divorce settlement.
- One or both parties have children from a previous marriage and they wish to protect their children's inheritance rights.

## The court's starting point

In deciding financial settlements, the Court's starting point is a 50/50 split of all the assets. It then considers a variety of factors in deciding whether to move from this position such as whether or not the couple have entered into any prior agreements.

## Given significant weight by the Courts

Although pre-nuptial agreements are not legally-binding documents, since the landmark Supreme Court case of *Radmacher v Granatino* in 2010, the courts now give significant weight to them when assessing finances.

If it can be shown that both parties freely entered into the agreement and understood the implications of signing it at the time, then as long as it is not unfair to hold the other party to the agreement the courts should uphold it. Pre-nuptial agreements must be drafted and dealt with carefully to ensure the Court have no reason not to uphold it.



**Dipika Mistry and Kathryn Ferris**  
**Wallace Robinson & Morgan Family Lawyers**

## Saving you a lot of time and money

A well prepared pre-nuptial agreement could save you a lot of time and money should your marriage come to an end.

If you are getting married, contact us to talk to one of our family law solicitors who can advise you as to whether such an agreement will be right for you.

## Co-habitation Agreements

If you are not getting married but are planning to share a home with your partner, you may want to consider a co-habitation agreement. As the law does not afford the same protection to cohabiting couples, there are a number of things which should be taken into consideration when setting up home outside of marriage, including:

- Whether the home should be held as joint tenants or tenants in common, and how the parties' contributions to the purchase price can be protected
  - Whether a life insurance policy should be taken out
  - Whether the parties need to make a Will and, if so, what provisions should be made for each other.
- Under the intestacy rules unmarried partners will not inherit upon the other's death, and so this is an important thing to consider.

The legal position regarding any children will also be affected by the fact the parents are not married. A cohabitation agreement sets out arrangements to apply both whilst the parties are living together and on the breakdown of the relationship.

### How we can help

Wallace Robinson & Morgan Solicitors have the expertise to help draw up an appropriate agreement that both you and your partner are happy with and one that the courts will uphold.

We will make sure that both of you have obtained independent legal advice and fully understand the implications of the agreement.

We will make certain that both of you have given full and frank financial disclosure and ensure that the agreement is realistic and fair.

Our specialist family lawyers can advise you as to whether these agreements are right for you.

Head of the Family Law department, Kathryn Ferris is a qualified Collaborative Family Lawyer and offers the benefits of this revolutionary approach to her clients. Dipika Mistry, is an accredited Law Society Family Law solicitor. Kathryn and Dipika are both members of "Resolution", an organisation that promotes constructive, non-confrontational methods to resolve family issues.

**If you would like to discuss any family law issues please contact us on 0121 705 7571 or email [kathrynferris@wallacerobinson.co.uk](mailto:kathrynferris@wallacerobinson.co.uk)**



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Knowle Surgery	0121 796 2777
Solihull Hospital	0121 424 2000
Spire Parkway Hospital	0845 850 1451

## Council

Solihull Council	0121 704 6000
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## Utilities

Electricity power cut	0800 6783 105
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7	3	8	4	5	2	1	6	9
6	2	5	1	7	9	4	8	3
9	4	1	6	8	3	5	2	7
8	1	4	5	3	6	7	9	2
5	9	7	2	1	8	6	3	4
3	6	2	9	4	7	8	1	5
4	7	6	3	2	1	9	5	8
2	5	9	8	6	4	3	7	1
1	8	3	7	9	5	2	4	6

**Sudoku Solution**

from page 40

D	I	S	A	R	M	C	O	S	M	I	C
A	I	E	I	R	A	U					
B	U	L	D	O	G	B	O	R	E	D	
B	L	F	N	I	T	D					
L	O	A	L	O	N	T	R	I	A	L	
E		A	M		N	E					
P	E	N	G	U	I	N	S	U	I	T	
E	P		N	O						F	
N	A	I	R	O	B	I	A	N	G	E	L
T	T	U	O	P	U	E					
R	O	O	S	T	U	M	B	R	A	G	E
A	M	E	S	O	V	E					
P	O	E	T	R	Y	E	X	H	A	L	E

**crossword Solution**

from page 40

**Solution to Mind benders**

1. An American in Paris
2. Iron curtain
3. Mixed emotions

**mindbenders**

from page 17

# An annual fiesta

By Rachael Leverton

I've always loved an annual. From Bunty to The Blue Peter Annual, they were crammed full of interest and fun. As I grew older my taste in annuals has become more horticultural. One little pack of seeds is now my gardening equivalent of the Beano - a brief shelf-life and packed with colour.

Hardy annuals are the most obliging. They don't need a propagator or a greenhouse, or even a windowsill; all they need is a sunny spot and some well-drained soil. Just sprinkle the seeds in the ground and you can look forward to a fiesta of summer colour for very little work.

The choice of plants and hue is wide. If blue is your thing try a soft shade of love-in-a-mist, or a vivid blue cornflower, or the most gorgeous tiny phacelia. For pinks try a fluffy clarkia or delicate godetia. Nasturtiums span the colour wheel from cream through yellow and orange to deep red.

Annual doesn't mean small either. Both larkspurs and amaranthus are tall and elegant, and cleomes which also provide height probably only need to be planted once as they are prolific self-seeders!

Look around your garden for gaps in beds and borders which are in a sunny spot and well-drained. Don't plant when it's cold or the soil is wet and sticky. Wait until the weather is mild and soil is damp and crumbly, then fork it lightly to break it up. Use a rake to create shallow furrows, sprinkle the seeds over and rake them gently in, raking across the furrows to cover them. Bigger seeds like nasturtiums can be pushed into the soil a couple of centimetres deep and 10-15cm apart. Label the area so you know what should come up.

The biggest enemy of the newly-planted hardy annual seed is the domestic cat! They



love a patch of freshly raked soil, and will happily do their business in your handiwork and then kick up all your seeds without a second thought. Thwart the moggies by laying twiggy pea sticks over the area (and particularly twiggy and thorny prunings will do!). Remove them with the shoots are big enough or stand them up and use them to support the taller annuals.

Thin them out a little to one plant per 10cm and water them if the weather is very dry. You don't need to feed them, they flower best when the soil is not rich. Food and manure will favour leaf production whereas we're after flowers and lots of them!

Happy gardening.





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**Senka Dragicevic**  
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