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# Summertime!

Welcome to the July edition...

**At the time of writing this the sky is distinctly overcast but here's hoping by the time this reaches you we are firmly in Summertime!**

After all, there's loads of great places to visit in the local area, which are so much more enjoyable if the sun's shining. If you want some inspiration on what's on in the area, then head to page 6 where you can find out about al fresco theatre and afternoon tea. Wishing you a great month ahead. Until next month,

*Zoe*

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# community events

## Awful Auntie

**3 August, 7pm. Brueton Park.**

Awful Auntie by David Walliams, adapted for the outdoor stage by Heartbreak Productions, is a heartfelt but hilarious hoot of an adventure. Make sure you bring a blanket or chair to sit on, weather-appropriate gear, and a picnic. Call the Core Theatre Box Office to book on 0121 704 6962.

## Solihull Producers' Market

**6 August, 9am – 5pm.**

**Solihull High Street.**

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## Afternoon Tea at Jacques Restaurant

**26 August. Knowle High Street.**

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## Singing Together

**10 September, 7.30pm,**

**Knowle Village Hall.**

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## Comedy Night

**10 September, Knowle**

**Royal British Legion.**

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**17 September, Shirley**

**Royal British Legion**

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**15-16 October. Resorts**

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# The Year of the Bikini Body

When I was younger, I used to spend hours with my friends fretting over how to get the perfect bikini body before our girls' getaway holiday. I'd berate myself for not having long slender limbs and an ample bosom like my friend Claire, as I scrutinised my pasty pear-shaped figure in the mirror for signs of cellulite. I'd imagine everyone on the beach was mocking me in my choice of swimwear and spent most of our holidays covered up with a T shirt or a towel.

Fast forward twenty years, three children and two years of COVID weight gain later and the pale, pear-shaped body of my youth is now a distant dream. Oh, how I wish I'd appreciated at the time!

Yet oddly in 2022 as holiday destinations open up again and we're all yearning for a bit of sun, sand, and sangria, I feel more liberated than my anxiety-ridden 20-year-old self. Collectively we've all been to hell and back; we've lost loved ones, home-schooled our kids, openly discussed mental health issues with strangers on the internet during lockdown, and the trend definitely seems to be towards being kinder to each other and ourselves. We're getting our lives back and our lives are for living, not worrying about our muffin tops and cellulite. The secret to a bikini body in 2022 is to put your body in a bikini...and that's it.

Choose your swim wear in a colour you love and that you feel fabulous in. Choose a skimpy two piece or a shape-supporting one-piece, but whatever your choice wear it with confidence. Don't let the judgement of others, real or imagined terrorise you into covering up and feeling miserable. Don't compare yourself to anyone. Your body is yours. It is nobody else's

business. Feel that sun on your skin and rejoice.

Don't try to starve your body into submission before your holiday. Holidays are meant to be relaxing and fun and goodness knows we all need some relaxation and fun right now. Your amazing body has come through two of the most stressful years in living history and you survived. Give yourself a pat on the back and let your hair down.



And for goodness' sake don't hang out on any social media sites where 'influencers' post #nofilter pics of themselves looking like catwalk models. It's all #abunchoflies. Life is real and raw and we're going to live it anyway...our way.

The choice of beach wear this year is amazing. There are supportive bra-sized sets for women who have bigger boobs. There are some gorgeous swimsuits with pretty details and cut outs and (my favourites) cute beach tops and skorts for those who feel more comfortable a bit more covered up but still want to swim and run around with the kids on the beach. There really is something for everyone.

So put on your new bikini, slap on your suntan lotion, and feel the sand between your toes. Congratulations. You now have a bikini body.



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# a good read

## Hamnet

by Maggie O'Farrell

This novel is the fictional retelling of the life of Anne Hathaway, who was married to William Shakespeare. The bard is never actually named in the book, which forces us to concentrate on Anne. Shakespeare left no documentation about his personal life: if he wrote diaries, they are lost. This leaves O'Farrell free to use her imagination within an historical context. Agnes - pronounced 'Anyis,' also known as Anne, is a farmer's daughter, who is married for love to a younger man with few obvious prospects. She is a gifted herbalist with psychic abilities, whose confidence and self-assuredness marks her out among women of her time. He is the son of a bully, with a love of the intricacies of language and a penchant for wordy puns. They certainly make an unusual couple. O'Farrell's novel comprises of a series of interwoven short stories, centring on each of the characters. Some of the earlier stories involve Anne's extended family of in-laws, which whom the couple live following her first pregnancy, and her arrangements for her husband to seek his fortunes in London, while she's pregnant with twins. In spite of their separation, the couple remain close until one of the twins, Hamnet, dies aged 11. The stories then centre on their shared grief and the strain this puts on their relationship, which culminates in him publishing his most famous tragedy, 'Hamlet'. O'Farrell writes beautifully and if you like attention to historical detail coupled with elegant storytelling then you'll love this book. If you prefer a spare, more fluid style of writing then you might find the going a little slow. O'Farrell also adopts the trend of writing women from history as possessing contemporary traits. I didn't find this an issue, but I can imagine purists wondering if Anne really would have been quite as liberated as she's written here. A wonderful read for history-lovers with a satisfying ending.



## Through the Mirror Door

by Sarah Baker

Books like 'The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe', 'The Secret Garden' and 'The Ghosts of Motley Hall' are timeless children's novels which immerse the reader in another world. This was Sarah Baker's entry into this particular genre of children's literature, and it doesn't disappoint.



Angela is orphaned and living in foster care when she's invited on a family holiday with a distant aunt. Whisked away to crumbling manor house in France, she's bullied by her cousins, Kitty and Fliss. Angela feels isolated and lonely in the spooky house until she discovers Julien who becomes her only friend. But Julien is in danger, and she has to keep him a secret. His life is at stake, and Angela is the only person who can save him. As Angela races against time to save her friend, she also has to cope with the nefarious plans of her aunt and cousins. This delightful, spookily dark story is ultimately an uplifting tale about the power of friendship. And it has a nice twist at the end too.





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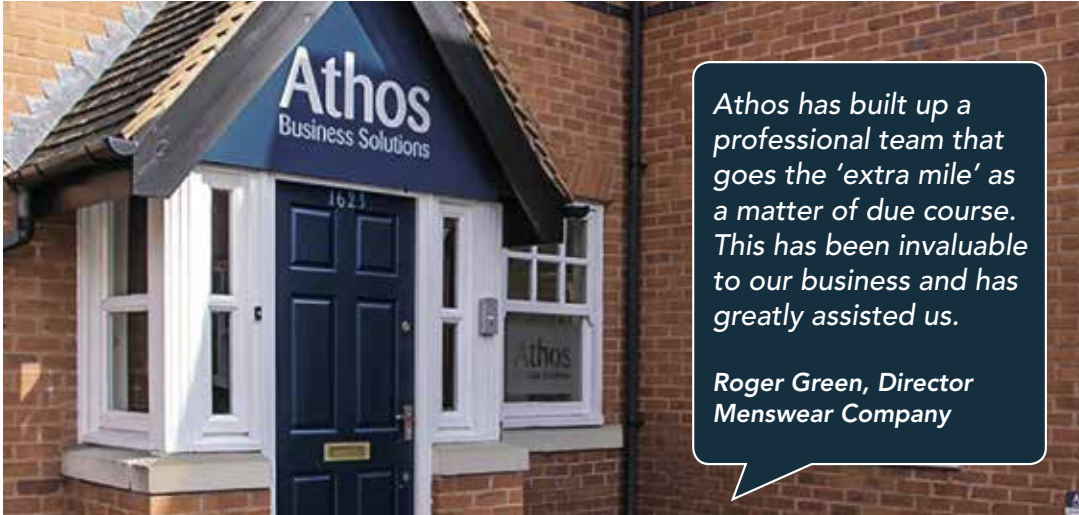
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## Limiting family fallout

Inheritance disputes can cost tens of thousands of pounds – even if you don't go to trial.

**Hannah Tait**, partner at Shakespeare Martineau in Solihull, explains what you should prioritise to ensure your affairs are in order...

### Will

Your will is the cornerstone of your succession planning and ensures those you trust are in control when you pass away.

Your Will ensures your assets pass to your chosen beneficiaries and family members – guaranteeing this happens in the most practical and tax-efficient way to protect your loved ones and assets in the future.

It is important to keep this up to date, particularly if you get married, divorced or have children. Ideally, you should review this every few years.

### Lasting powers of attorney (LPAs)

Apart from in the special case of children, no individual has the ability to make decisions on behalf of another without being legally appointed as their attorney under a LPA or as a court-appointed deputy.

Your attorneys are nominated individuals – such as a professional, family member or friend – you appoint to make decisions relating to your financial affairs and health and welfare on your behalf if you become unable to do so yourself due to mental incapacity.

A deputy is appointed by the Court of Protection. This can be a long process, so it is best to be prepared and put in place and crucially, register LPAs before the long-winded deputy route is your only option.

### Consider how your property is held

If you own your home with someone else, the property can be held as joint tenants or tenants in common.

Where property is held as joint tenants, on the death of one owner, the property passes automatically to the other – regardless of the provisions of that person's Will. Many family homes are held as joint tenants as this is often seen as the "default" for couples. Although this may work well for many people, it is not always the best or most practical option.

Where property is held as tenants in common and one person dies, the share belonging to them passes in accordance with the terms of their Will. If they don't have a Will, it will pass via the intestacy rules to potentially unwanted beneficiaries. So, if you're an unmarried couple and neither of you has a will, if one person dies, it may be that their share in the house passes to their family and not their living partner. It is therefore crucial that property ownership is checked so it works holistically alongside your Will.



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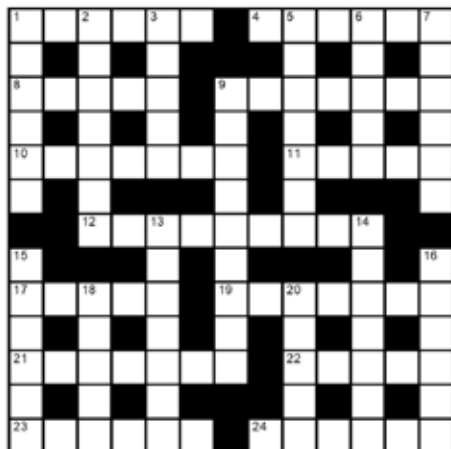
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## crossword



## clues

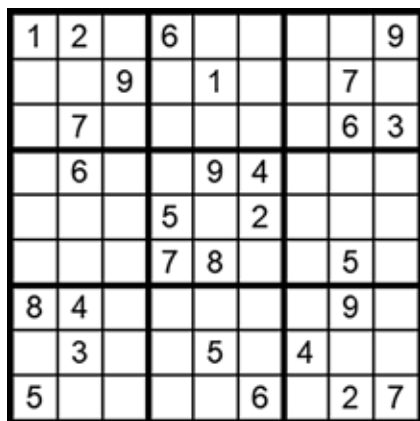
### Across

- 1 Pierced, punctured (medical) (6)
- 4 Atones (6)
- 8 Squander (5)
- 9 Disciple (7)
- 10 Extend (7)
- 11 Divide in two (5)
- 12 Maze (9)
- 17 Regulations (5)
- 19 Authorise, enable (7)
- 21 Aid, assist (7)
- 22 Bestowed (5)
- 23 Plundered goods (6)
- 24 Catches, traps (6)

### Down

- 1 Furthest down (6)
- 2 Nasal hole (7)
- 3 Occurence (5)
- 5 Black water bird (7)
- 6 Pre-\_\_\_\_, before birth (5)
- 7 Brochette, spit (6)
- 9 Despicable (9)
- 13 Coy, reticent (7)
- 14 Nevertheless (7)
- 15 Blackmails (6)
- 16 Sips, gulps (6)
- 18 Slow tempo (musical term) (5)
- 20 Follower of ancient religion (5)

answer on page 36



## 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.

answer on page 36

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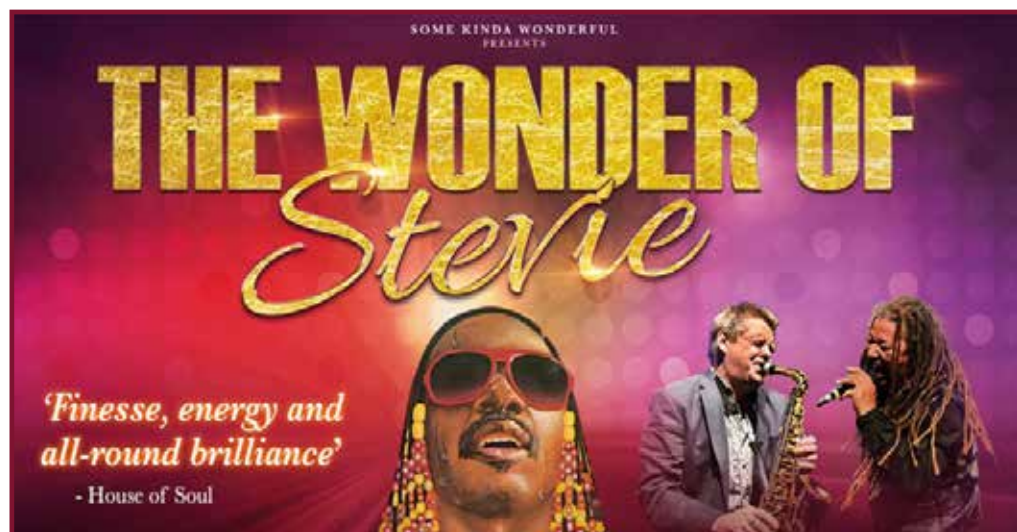
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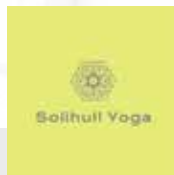
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1	2	3	6	4	7	5	8	9
6	5	9	3	1	8	2	7	4
4	7	8	9	2	5	1	6	3
2	6	5	1	9	4	7	3	8
3	8	7	5	6	2	9	4	1
9	1	4	7	8	3	6	5	2
8	4	6	2	7	1	3	9	5
7	3	2	8	5	9	4	1	6
5	9	1	4	3	6	8	2	7

**Sudoku Solution**  
from page 28

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

**Crossword Solution**  
from page 28



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