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 saqibbhatti.org.uk

 saqib.bhatti@parliament.uk

Please note my office remains open as usual, and we are conducting surgery appointments, so do not hesitate to book a slot.

This advert is funded by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) for the purpose of assisting Saqib Bhatti MP in the performance of their Parliamentary duties.

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Festive mood?

Welcome to the November edition

By the time this arrives Christmas will only be about 6 weeks away! Check out page 6 to see what local events are coming up to get you in the festive mood.

You've just about got time to make any last-minute changes to your home in time for Christmas so remember to support local businesses as they really value their customers – we have a great collection of local tradespeople and businesses who are local and are looking for your custom. Here's hoping the pre-Christmas build up isn't too hectic and that you find the time to relax, maybe over a glass of mulled wine and a mince pie!

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community events



Christmas Fair

**30 November 10am - 1pm,
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Come and browse amongst a lovely selection of Christmas gifts and cards, Christmas wreaths for the door, books, Bric-a-Brac, competitions and lots more, including the Grand Christmas Raffle! Refreshments will be available. All proceeds to the Hall refurbishment fund.

Whitney Houston Tribute Night

14 December, Knowle British Legion

Immerse yourself in an evening filled with the timeless hits and unforgettable melodies that made Whitney Houston a legend. Tickets from www.tributenightpromotions.co.uk



Could it be Magic?

29 November, The Lake at Barston

Fantastic 4 piece boyband performing all of Take That's biggest and best tracks from the early days to now. Now with second set dedicated to Boybands, Backstreet Boys,

Westlife, Boyzone, Sive, Blue, One Direction & The Wanted and a bit of anything goes to get you up on the dancefloor. Ticket price is £40 per person, or £35 in the Annexe, which includes a 3 course Dinner, Entertainment and late bar. Call 01675 444890 to book.

QE2 - The very best of QUEEN

7 December, Land Rover Sports & Social Club

QE2 - The Very Best of Queen have been performing at some of the best known venues, festivals and arenas across the UK and Internationally for over 25 years. Their aim is to recreate the Live Magic that Queen provided during their live career. Queen formed in 1970 and were active up until 1991. Buy tickets online from www.landroversc.co.uk.

The Greatest Showman Tribute

31 December, Shirley British Legion

Join in for a spectacular New Year's Eve celebration at Shirley British Legion. Get ready to ring in the new year with a night filled with music, dancing, and memories with The Greatest Showman Tribute! Tickets from www.tributenightpromotions.co.uk

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Don't let inheritance tax spoil your family Christmas

Gift giving is a Christmas tradition that everyone loves, whether a shopping voucher or a car, it always adds a bit of extra cheer to the holiday. However, for people who like to splash out on their gifts, inheritance tax can put a dampener on things. **Hannah Tait**, partner at Shakespeare Martineau in Solihull explains.

What is inheritance tax?

Quite simply, it is a tax on a person's assets when they die. It can also be applied to the recipient of a gift that costs over a certain amount and the giver has then died within seven years. The gift does not have to be monetary; it could also be property or possessions.

What's the limit?

Per tax year, a person is able to give away a cumulative total of £3,000 to whoever they choose. They can also give as many small gifts under £250 to different people as they like.

What's the seven-year-rule?

The seven-year-rule becomes relevant when a person gives away over £3,000 in one tax year. It states that the giver must survive for seven years after the gift for it to be exempt from inheritance tax. If not, the value of the gift is counted back into their estate when calculating the inheritance tax due. Such gifts will use up the tax-free allowance (nil rate band) available on their death and, if the value exceeds this, the recipient is liable to pay inheritance tax. However, the tax payable does start to taper if it has been more than three years since the date of the gift.

Are there any gifts that are exempt?

Donations to charity and some gifts for marriages or civil partnerships are not liable for inheritance tax, depending on how closely related a person is to the happy couple. All gifts between married couples or those in civil partners are also exempt.

Is there a way to avoid inheritance tax for certain?

Unfortunately, unless a person is psychic, there is no sure-fire way to avoid inheritance tax on gifts over £3,000.

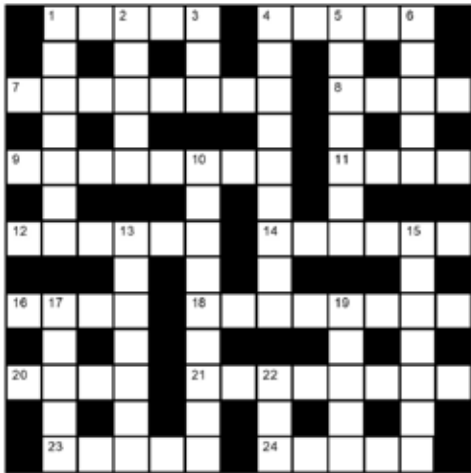
Nevertheless, there is the option of using 'excess income'. If a person can prove their income meets all their living costs, and that their standard of living can be maintained after the gift, then it may be possible to claim an exemption for inheritance tax. However, to qualify, there must be a regular pattern to this gifting.



For more information call 0330 024 0333
email hannah.tait@shma.co.uk or visit www.shma.co.uk

Shakespeare Martineau Radcliffe House, Blenheim Court, Solihull, B91 2AA

crossword



clues

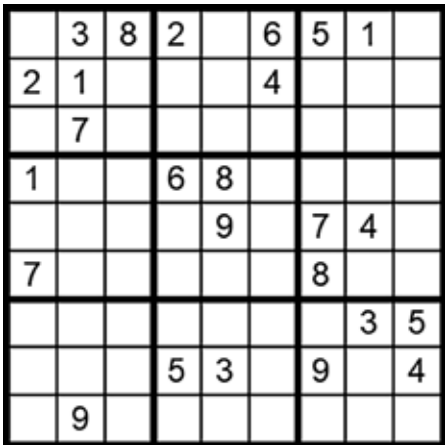
Across

- 1 Indicator, meter (5)
- 4 Artist's stand (5)
- 7 Not fit for purpose (8)
- 8 Back, behind (4)
- 9 Territory (8)
- 11 Highest point, peak (4)
- 12 Middle (6)
- 14 Yield (6)
- 16 Golf club (4)
- 18 Concepts, proposals (8)
- 20 Cab (4)
- 21 Muse, ponder (8)
- 23 Musical or colour harmony (5)
- 24 Layers (5)

Down

- 1 Real, true (7)
- 2 Overturn (5)
- 3 Fade, wain (3)
- 4 Conductor, terminal (9)
- 5 Attendant, minion (7)
- 6 Depart (5)
- 10 Indistinguishable (9)
- 13 Strain, stress (7)
- 15 Ineffectual, futile (7)
- 17 Respond, reply (5)
- 19 Lift, elevate (5)
- 22 Enmesh, nab (3)

answer on page 28



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 28

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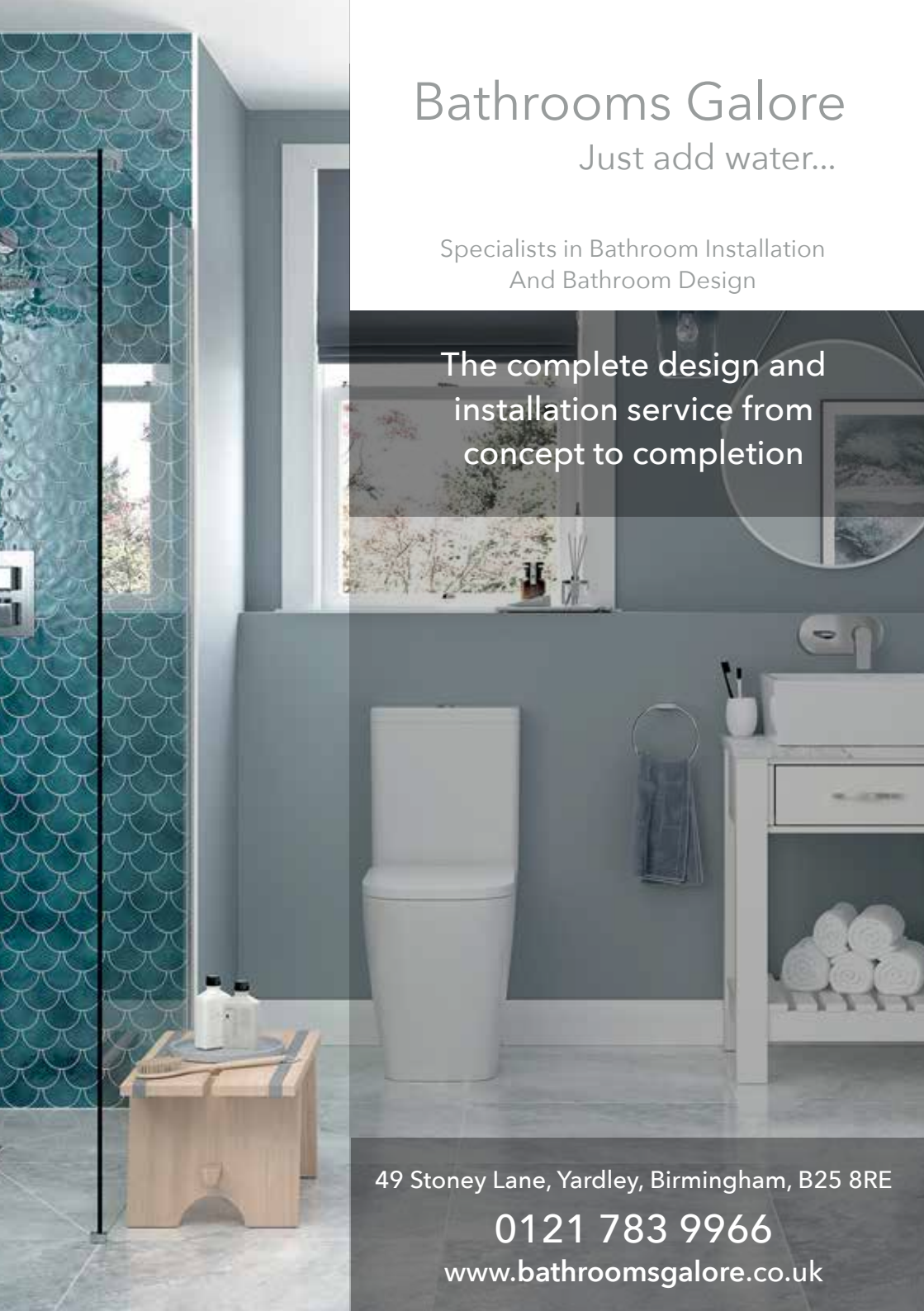
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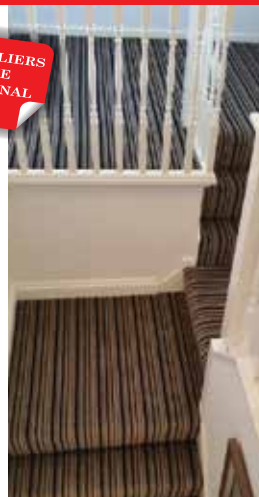
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Kids' Page

Can you solve our bonfire night crossword?

Across

2



3



5



7

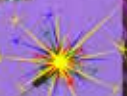


Down

1



4



6



Can you complete the Firework Puzzle pattern? Each line and each box should contain four different fireworks.



Crossword Solution



Firework Puzzle Solution

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Beyond the Classroom

The arts subjects are being squeezed in in secondary education as successive Governments put ever more emphasis on maths and science.

Improved academic results:

Studies show that students who participate in the creative arts tend to perform better academically across all subjects. In schools where the arts are integrated into the curriculum students perform better in maths, English, critical thinking, and verbal skills, suggesting that arts education positively impacts overall academic achievement.

Enhanced Wellbeing: Arts subjects provide an outlet for self-expression and help build confidence. Many students report that arts lessons act as a release from academic pressures and everyday stresses, contributing to improved mental health.

Cultural Awareness and Empathy: Engagement with the arts helps young people develop a sense of their own identity and values, while also fostering awareness and appreciation of diversity. This cultivates empathy and understanding of different perspectives, essential



qualities in our increasingly interconnected world.

Closing the Achievement

Gap: Arts education has been shown to have a particularly positive impact on students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students from low-income families who participate in arts activities at school are three times more likely to earn a degree, demonstrating the potential of arts education to level the playing field.

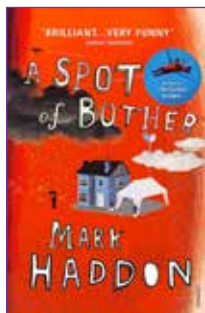
a good read

By Natasha Donovan

A Spot of Bother

by Mark Haddon

A Spot of Bother is a darkly humorous and poignant exploration of a family unravelling under the weight of its own dysfunctions. The central character, George Hall, is a retired man in his late fifties who becomes obsessively convinced that a lesion on his hip is cancerous, leading to a gradual mental breakdown. While this sounds a depressing premise for a story, Haddon's deft handling of the anxieties of middle age and the fragile nature of mental health, ensures that the reader is able to smile, wince, cheer along and empathise with everyone involved. The narrative weaves together the perspectives of George's immediate family, each dealing with their own crisis, as is often the way of families. His wife, Jean, is having an affair, while their daughter, Katie, is preparing for a second marriage to a man that no one in the family likes. Their son, Jamie, is struggling both with his identity and his and his own relationships. Each of them is so wrapped up in their own little world that they fail to notice that George, who is like an extra in the film of their own lives, is falling apart in front of them. The blend of dry wit and deep empathy, keeps all the relationships authentic and relatable and there are moments when the reader, no matter which generation they belong to will recognise themselves and their own family relationships. Haddon's prose is sharp, and his ability to balance humour with moments of genuine emotional depth is impressive. A Spot of Bother is a compelling read, offering both laugh-out-loud and moments of introspection.

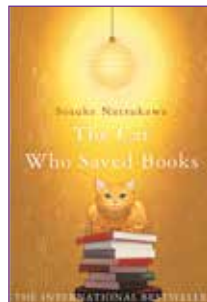


The Cat Who Saved Books

by Sōsuke Natsukawa, translated by Louise Heal Kawai

Rintaro Natsuki has always considered Natsuki Books, his grandfather's tiny, second-hand bookshop, a place of wonder and the perfect refuge for a quiet, introverted young boy. He has spent many happy hours there reading.

Then his grandfather dies leaving Rintaro grieving and alone and the boy turns inwards even more and even stops going to school. Then he encounters a talking tabby cat named Tiger who wanders in and asks Rintaro for help. Tiger explains that he needs a book lover to accompany him on a mission to save books from people who have imprisoned, mistreated, and betrayed them. Together they embark on a series of book-themed adventures. Sayo Yuzuki, is a strong, sensible girl who Rintaro has known since primary school. She calls by the bookshop to bring Rintaro homework, because she is concerned about his increased reclusiveness. They begin to discuss the power of books throughout the centuries; how books can introduce us to new ideas and how every difficult book offers us a new challenge. The children begin to develop a friendship through their shared love of stories. This children's novel was originally published in Japan in 2017, and Kawai's elegant translation renders it accessible to English-speakers, without losing any of the essence of the Japanese language and culture. A wise and whimsical novel, about how love and loss affect our lives. Beautifully written and thought provoking, it will appeal to both children and adults alike.



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Mindbenders

Can you find the hidden phrases?



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answers on page 28

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

Sudoku Solution
from page 8

Solution to Mind benders

1. Deep dive
2. Elevesens
3. No faffing around

mindbenders
from page 27



Crossword Solution
from page 8

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Sausage and Bean Bowl

Give sausage, mash and beans an autumnal makeover.



Preparation time: 5 mins
Cooking time: 34 minutes
Serves: 4

Ingredients

1 tbsp olive oil
 2 onions finely sliced
 1 large garlic clove,
 finely chopped
 8 pork sausages
 400g tin chopped tomatoes
 2 tsp Dijon mustard
 ½ chicken or vegetable stock
 cube, made up to 175ml
 420g tin baked beans
 Mashed potato, to serve

Method

Heat half the oil in a lidded saucepan over a medium heat. Add the onions and fry until golden. Stir in the garlic and fry for 2 more minutes. Transfer to a plate and set aside. Increase the heat, add the remaining oil and the sausages, and cook for until caramelised browned all over.

Return the onion and garlic to the pan with the tomatoes and mustard. Add the stock, season with pepper, and cook over a medium heat for 10 minutes, adding the beans after 5 minutes. Cover and cook for 5 more minutes until the sausages are cooked through. Serve poured over creamy mashed potato.

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