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knowle & dorridge  
directory

april 2024

a community magazine and business directory  
for residents of knowle and dorridge



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# Did you have an Eggsellent Easter?!

Welcome to the March edition

**I hope you enjoyed your lovely long Bank Holiday weekend - whether you relaxed at home, jetted off on a long-awaited break, or just used the time to catch up on all those jobs that never seem to get done.**

And if you need help sorting out that never-ending list, why not see if some of the people and businesses who advertise in here can help you. Whether you need your roof fixed, the kitchen updated, your washing machine repaired, the house decorated, or a new carpet, there's lots of lovely local and helpful people in here who can help.

Zoe Reece  
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# community events

## Soul, Funk & Disco Night

**27 April 7pm, Knowle British Legion Club, Warwick Road, Knowle**

Get ready for a night of great fun, singing and dancing away to your favourite soul and disco classics. Tickets from [www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk)

## Boogie Bingo

**4 May, Nailcote Hall**

Are you ready to shake your booty and win big at Boogie Bingo? There's disco lights, a groovy DJ, and the best game of bingo you've ever played! But that's not all - fantastic prizes will have you jumping out of your seat with excitement! Tickets from [www.nailcotehall.co.uk](http://www.nailcotehall.co.uk)

## Matilda in Concert

**12 May, 11am and 3pm, NEC**

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## Art exhibition

**21 May - 10 June, The Courtyard Gallery, The Core, Touchwood**

Local artist and art lecturer, Vicky ArtsAndCraftsV, is set to captivate audiences with her solo exhibition Beautiful Open Spaces. The exhibition promises a feast



for the senses, inviting visitors to immerse themselves in the vibrant world of her acrylic paintings. For more information visit [www.ArtsAndCraftsV.com](http://www.ArtsAndCraftsV.com)

## Charity Plant Sale

**25 May from 12 noon, 64 Lawnswood Avenue, Shirley**

Shirley Lions annual plant sale in aid of Prostate Cancer Research. Hundreds of plants, shrubs, flowers, and vegetables for sale plus numerous gardening books. The sale will finish when everything is sold. As the aim is to raise funds for charity, attendees can donate what they feel their purchases are worth.



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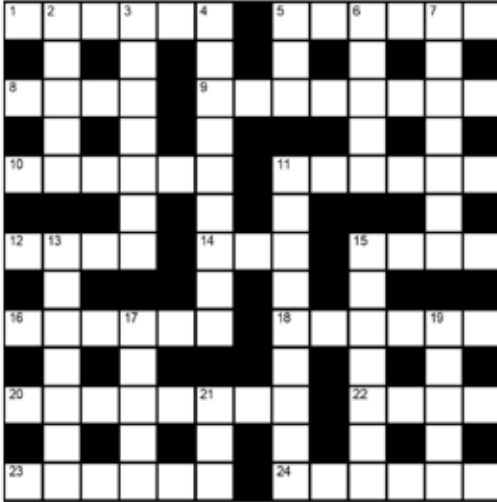


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# crossword



# clues

**Across**

- 1 Material used to make tents (6)
- 5 Skimpy knickers! (6)
- 8 Earth, compost (4)
- 9 Green vegetable (8)
- 10 Bendy fruit (6)
- 11 Hard yellowish tooth deposit (6)
- 12 Area, region (4)
- 14 Frozen water (3)
- 15 Nip, chomp (4)
- 16 Expression, brief utterance (6)
- 18 Lightweight waterproof jacket (6)
- 20 Sticky insect trap (8)
- 22 Barrage, bombardment (4)
- 23 Undercover, secret (6)
- 24 Brine (6)

**Down**

- 2 Odour, scent (5)
- 3 Group of houses, rural community (7)
- 4 The Beatles sang about a yellow one! (9)
- 5 As well, also (3)
- 6 Coveted film award (5)
- 7 Dashing, debonair (7)
- 11 Dictionary of synonyms and antonyms (9)
- 13 Shakespearean play (7)
- 15 House of ill repute! (7)
- 17 Bramley, Granny Smith, Cox (5)
- 19 Extra-terrestrial (5)
- 21 Container, vessel (3)

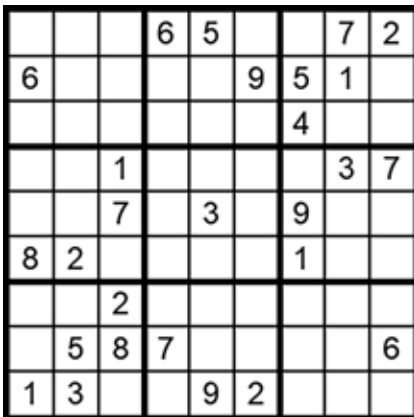
answer on page 34

# 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 34



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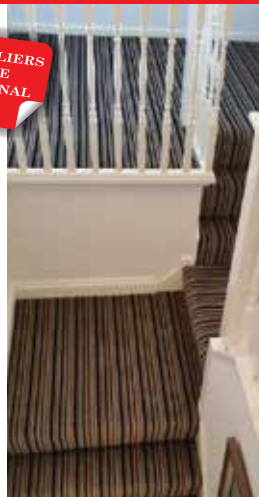
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When asked about how she felt after being awarded Franchisee of The Year, Delpreet told us that it was a moment she will never forget! She went on to explain that her team are still 'beaming with pride and are determined to make 2024 just as big a success as 2023.' 'I really believe the mindset we chose to have in that moment, and through the difficult times we faced throughout the year, is what has helped to reach our goal.'



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# I have separated from my partner. Can I change the locks?

If you've separated from your spouse or partner can you change the locks? Dipika Mistry legal director at Shakespeare Martineau in Solihull explains your legal rights when you break up.

## **Are you both named on the deed?**

Where a property is jointly owned, the simple answer is no. The legal position is that both parties have an equal right to access and to occupy the property. Even if only one party is paying the mortgage or the other party has made zero contribution, you cannot change the locks without the agreement of the co-owner or an order from the court.

In certain circumstances, the court may be prepared to grant an Occupation Order to one party to prevent the other party from returning to the property where there has been domestic violence or threats of harm. The threshold is fairly high and in some cases, where the evidence is insufficient, an order can be made for the parties to occupy certain parts of the property.

## **Is the property just in your name?**

If the property is in your sole name then you are entitled to change the locks, even if your ex has contributed to the bills previously.

## **My ex is kicking me out – do I have any rights?**

In certain circumstances, an Occupation Order can be secured through the courts for the person without legal title to the property, particularly if they would be made homeless by virtue of the locks being changed and/or have a beneficial interest in the property.

In the case of a marriage breaking down, the person without legal title can seek to register a home rights notice against the property, provided it has been occupied as the matrimonial home. This is advisable for protection as it prevents disposal of the property without notice before the financial matters have been resolved.

For unmarried couples, it may be possible to secure a unilateral notice or other restriction against the property depending on the circumstances to prevent a disposal taking place before an agreement has been reached.

If your relationship has reached a point of irretrievable breakdown, it's important to get legal advice to help protect you, your assets and your children.



**For more information call 0330 024 0333**  
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AndyE-230 / 31 Jan 2024



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# a good read

By Natasha Donovan

## The Seven Deaths of Evelyn Hardcastle

by Stuart Turton

Our hero awakens in a mysterious, damp forest, clad in an unfamiliar tuxedo and inhabiting a body that isn't his own. With no recollection of his identity or how he came to be in this situation, he makes his way to Blackheath House, and soon discovers he is Aiden Bishop, trapped there for a purpose. A masked figure reveals to him that a disguised murder is set to occur that day. Bishop has eight attempts to unravel it, reliving the same day in different bodies, each termed a "host." He retains memories from each host, but failure to identify the killer by the eighth cycle means a reset to day one, with all memories wiped, a cycle he has already undergone numerous times. As Bishop gradually begins to make sense of his predicament, he learns of competitors: two others at the country house party are also inhabiting foreign souls, each racing to solve the murder to escape the time loop. As if this was not enough peril, a relentless psychopath is also pursuing him, threatening each of his hosts.

Author Turton masterfully orchestrates a narrative replete with diverse, enigmatic characters, while scattering random clues throughout. The 'rules' of the story rules evolve as Bishop navigates his way through each day. I'm doubting that many readers will solve the mystery before the final plot twist.

It's Agatha Christie, Cluedo, and Groundhog Day, with a twist of time loop chaos. It takes a while to orientate yourself within the story but it's well worth the effort. Turton's debut novel is inventive, chaotic, and brilliantly bonkers. Buckle up and hold on tight.

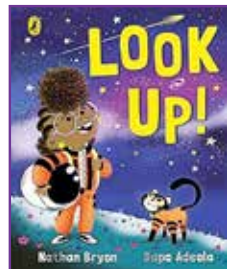


## Look Up!

by Nathan Bryon and illustrated by Dapo Adeola

Rocket dreams of becoming the most brilliant star-catcher, and space explorer in the world, like her idol Mae Jemison, the first African-American woman in space. Fizzing with excitement about an imminent meteor shower, Rocket makes an announcement about it over the supermarket loudspeaker while the cashier is distracted. She makes and distributes flyers to all the shoppers, despite her older brother Jamal's disapproval and embarrassment. Jamal is usually engrossed in his phone and video games and finds Rocket annoying. When he's too absorbed in gaming to take Rocket to the park to see the meteor shower, Rocket faces a dilemma. But an unexpected visitor at their door turns out to be a delightful could save the day in the most delightful manner.

Bryon and Adeola's captivating picture book introduces us to chatty, Rocket, a character whose passion for space is all-consuming. Adeola's characterful illustrations capture Jamal's angsty teenage moodiness and Rocket's excitement about stargazing. Packed with space facts and insights into meteors, this book also beautifully depicts family dynamics, sibling bonds, and a young girl's contagious zeal for the cosmos.



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# April Fool – A history of practical jokes

History is littered with wars, revolutions, and the rise and fall of civilizations. Yet, amidst the chaos and drama, a less chronicled but equally important thread weaves through the fabric of our past: the history of practical jokes. This noble tradition has been the unsung hero of human interaction, providing levity in the face of adversity and reminding rulers and peasants alike that nobody is above a good pie in the face.

The 18th century brought us the infamous Joseph Pujol, better known by his stage

name Le Pétomane. This French entertainer turned flatulence into an art form, astonishing audiences by playing musical instruments and performing various feats through the power of his own gas. Pujol's performances at the Moulin Rouge were nothing short of a sensational prank on high society, making him a legend in the annals (half pun totally intended) of practical joke history.

In the more recent past, the 20th century gave us Alan Abel, a professional prankster who founded the Society

for Indecency to Naked Animals (SINA), advocating for the clothing of all animals for the sake of decency. This long-running hoax fooled many, including some media outlets, into believing there was a genuine movement to put pants on horses and dresses on chickens!

As we approach April 1st this year, let's remember the lessons taught by history's greatest pranksters: to approach life with a sense of humour, a dash of creativity, and, when necessary, a well-timed whoopee cushion.

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# Saqib Bhatti MP

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*Get in touch*



*As we enter Spring I wanted to update you on my work within the constituency. I feel so privileged to be the member of Parliament for Meriden and I will continue to advocate for our wonderful community.*

*In light of recent events, I have written to His Majesty, King Charles III and HRH the Princess of Wales on behalf of my constituents to convey our best wishes and hope for their speedy recovery.*

*I was extremely pleased to have held my first Pensioner's Fair in Knowle earlier this year. Within the Solihull borough, there are a host of opportunities for pensioners to receive support, and through this event, I aimed to highlight these services and bring people together. The Fair had a wide range of exhibitors, including care home providers, energy companies, assisted living providers and numerous local charities. I was thrilled that the Fair was so well attended by people from across the constituency and I greatly enjoyed the chance to speak to so many of you.*

*Finally, I want to take this opportunity to wish you and your loved ones well. As ever, my office remains open and we are conducting surgery appointments, so do not hesitate to book a slot. My contact details can be found below.*

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# Gut Feeling

## Why IBS can be a pain...literally

Unglamorous they may be, but our guts are complex and clever. The gut is an hydraulic engineering system with its own brain and nervous system; its own immune system and its own hormone-producing system. It deals with digestion and absorption and defends us against infection.

Gut contents are squeezed along by muscular action. The various parts are separated by sphincters, little muscular trapdoors, which regulate speed and direction of travel. Food takes about 24 hours to travel through a healthy gut.

Because the gut is so complex perhaps it's unsurprising that it malfunctions quite easily.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) is the most common problem experienced and up to 1 in 5 of us may suffer it at some point. Sufferers can experience constipation, diarrhoea, bloating, nausea, and colic. But why?

Gut muscles mix and move the contents, but the gut has to know what it's dealing with, so it knows which digestive hormones

to release, when to release them and in what quantities (it doesn't want to digest itself!)

Amazingly, it can detect different molecular structures which make up the foods we eat. It knows which ones require the release of bile for instance and which ones don't. The enteric nervous system, which governs all this, functions like a second brain and is very finely attuned. It



has to be bombarded with food, drink, and air, it's a constant challenge for the gut to maintain constancy.

Our brain pays close attention to the 'gut brain' and researchers have found that if the enteric nervous system is stimulated it can help depression, epilepsy and even memory. In fact, 90% of gut nerves take information to the brain and only 10%

receive information from it.

IBS has historically been thought of as a psychological or neurotic problem but in fact scientists are now discovering that the close communication between brain and gut means that stress can cause very real problems, impairing the nerve function and causing marked sensory pain. If we know that a sufferer experiences more pain when they are stressed we can use

neurochemicals to block the response. Tri-cyclics are particularly helpful agents.

There is also a relationship with serotonin (often connected with depression). In fact, 95% of the body's serotonin is found in the gut. Detector cells in the lining of the gut squirt serotonin which excites the nerve fibres.

Some people cannot turn this process off again though which can either cause diarrhoea, or, if the nerves are stimulated to the point of exhaustion, constipation.

People with IBS often give up hope of relieving their discomfort, but there is now good quality medical help available, so consult your GP. You don't have to suffer.



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# Banana and Walnut Loaf



**Preparation time:** 20 minutes

**Cooking time:** 60-70 minutes

## Ingredients

225g plain flour  
 2 level tsp baking powder  
 80g softened or spreadable butter  
 1 large egg (beaten)  
 110g caster sugar  
 4 medium bananas (peeled)  
 50g walnuts (chopped)  
 Zest 1 lemon  
 Demerara sugar for sprinkling

## Method

Preheat oven to 180C / gas 4.  
 Grease and line a 2lb loaf tin.

Mash three bananas to a pulp and chop the fourth.

Sift the flour and baking powder together into a separate bowl. Add the butter, egg and caster sugar.

Using a mixer mix everything together for a minute or two. Add the mashed and chopped bananas and briefly whisk them into the mixture. Fold in the chopped walnuts and lemon zest.

Spoon the cake mixture into

the prepared tin. Sprinkle with Demerara sugar. Place in the pre-heated oven so that the top of the tin is in the centre.

Bake for 60-70 minutes until a skewer inserted into the cake comes out clean.

Let the cake cool for 10-15 minutes then turn out on to a cooling rack.

This cake is good served warm with crème fraiche, cold, or even toasted.

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**Redecorate** - A fresh coat of paint in neutral tones can revitalize your home at a minimal cost, making it more attractive to potential buyers.

**Declutter** - A tidy, spacious environment, especially in key areas like the kitchen and bathroom, makes the property appear larger and more inviting.

**Heating and Lighting** - Ensure the heating is on for viewings to create a warm atmosphere and use lamps effectively to

brighten up dark corners and enhance the home's ambiance.

**Garden Appeal** - A neat front garden and a well-maintained back garden, especially if there is an eating area, decking or a summerhouse, can significantly boost your home's kerb appeal, making it more inviting and potentially adding value.

**Kitchen Makeover** - Without the need for a full renovation, updating cabinet doors, handles, and ensuring a clutter-free, well-lit space can make the kitchen more appealing to buyers.

**Refresh the Bathroom** - Simple updates like re-grouting,



replacing taps, and ensuring the space is clean and neutral can make bathrooms more attractive. A recent survey revealed that a nice bathroom was a key selling point for over 25% of buyers. Implementing some or all of these strategies can make your home more appealing to potential buyers, possibly speeding up the sale process and increasing the sale price.

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# An annual pleasure

Every year since I began to garden, come spring, I grabbed my spade and in a fit of enthusiasm I dug over the soil. Then I filled any empty spaces with annuals. These might be carefully nurtured in my greenhouse, sprinkled direct from the packet, or purchased in packs at my local garden centre.

Several years ago, due to an injury, I was unable to get out and begin this frenzy of activity. I resigned myself to the fact that my garden simply wouldn't be as colourful that year. Nature however had other plans.

As I waited for my perennials to surface something wonderful happened. Hundreds of self-sown annuals from the previous year also began to surface. They'd been there all along,

just waiting for the warm spring sun to bring them to life.

It occurred to me that my habit of stopping deadheading towards the end of the season (to leave some interesting seed heads which feed the birds and look so pretty covered in frost) had benefitted me in more ways than the one I'd intended.

Calendula, Candytuft, Cosmos, Larkspur, Nicotiana, Poppies, Sweet Alyssum and Love-in-a-Mist were popping up everywhere I looked. I've never been so delighted.

I waited until they were a couple of inches tall then on a slightly drizzly day I eased some out and transferred them to barer soil.

My reward was a display of annuals every bit as lovely as if I'd spent hours with my spade and trowel.

So last year I experimented.

Throughout the flowering season I noted where I might need an extra patch or two of colour and then, when I stopped deadheading, I simply grabbed a few seed heads and dropped them in the appropriate spot.

That spring and summer I had another beautiful display of annuals. Why hadn't I discovered this lazy way to garden before?

Of course, there are some teeny disadvantages. The main one is that annuals grown from seed flower later than those bought as plugs or plants from garden centres. Don't let this put you off though. If you have a good range of perennials the annuals can take their time, taking over when the others begin to fade. Also, no-one says it has to be all or nothing. I have a passion for cosmos, so I bring in a few plants early on every year. That way I can savour their pretty blooms right through the season.

So, if you're planting annuals this spring, plan ahead a little. Look at your garden as an evolving piece of work and let at least some of them self-seed. Then next year don't be so quick to brandish a spade... you'll gain two commodities gardeners always need more of...time and money.





# Mindbenders

Can you find the hidden phrases?

100% **STORM**

**APPOD**

**CODE** 

answers on page 34

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**mindbenders**  
from page 33

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

**Sudoku Solution**  
from page 12

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

**Crossword Solution**  
from page 12

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