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Summer holiday

Welcome to the August edition

For those of you that aren't jetting off overseas this Summer, there's lots of great things happening locally, including fun runs, tribute acts and beer festivals.

Check out the local event guide on page 6 to see what takes your fancy. Whether you're staying locally or exploring Europe or further afield, this Summer, have a great month and make the most of the weather and the Summer holidays, while they last!

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25 August, The lake at Barston

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The 3 Lions Beer & Cider Festival

8th & 9th September, Shirley British Legion.

A charity Beer & Cider Festival with 20 real ales and 10 ciders organised jointly by Acocks Green, Shirley and Solihull Lions Clubs. Live music on both days provided by Ray's Open Mic Night. Entrance £10 includes a souvenir glass, £5 worth of drinks tokens and an event booklet with full tasting notes. Advance tickets from Shirley British Legion or pay on the door.

Balsall Common Fun Run

17th September

This local community fundraising event, now in its ninth year, is organised by local charity The Lily Mae Foundation, to enable participants to run in support of local and national charities and good causes. There are Mini Runs for nursery and primary aged children, 5K runs for Juniors and Families, and 5K and 10K Runs for Adults. To book your place please visit: www.stuweb.co.uk/event/4258

Elvis Tribute Show with Kevin Paul

15 September, Nailcote Hall

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A close-up of a shower door handle. The handle is a long, horizontal, black bar with a circular end. It is mounted on a glass door. The background is a wall of light-colored, rectangular tiles.

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Ice Ice Baby

Ice cream and ice lollies have long been cherished treats, especially during the warm summer months in the United Kingdom.

The origins of ice cream can be traced back to ancient China, where it is believed that the Chinese were the first to create a frozen dessert made from milk and rice. From there, the art of making ice cream spread throughout the world. In the UK though, ice cream gained popularity during the 18th century when it became fashionable among the upper classes. Initially, it was a luxury treat reserved for the elite, as the process of making ice

cream required access to both ice and expensive ingredients.

With the advent of industrialization, ice cream became more accessible to the masses. In the mid-19th century, the development of artificial refrigeration techniques made it easier to produce and store ice cream. This led to the establishment of ice cream parlours and vendors across the UK, where people could indulge in this delightful frozen dessert. Street vendors and carts became a common sight and in 1958 Mr. Whippy ice cream vans began to appear in Birmingham, founded by Dominic Facchino. Vendors

A brief history of ice cream

found that by playing a catchy jingle, they could attract more customers. Jingles were often folk songs and to this day Greensleeves is the most-used jingle for ice cream vans.

Whether you prefer a scoop or a tub, there's no denying the charm of cold ice cream on a hot summer's day. Enjoy!



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Mouthwatering Marinades

It's BBQ season. Whether you prefer steak, chicken, haloumi or tofu, marinating infuses them with incredible flavours and enhances their tenderness. Here are our five faves.

Classic Teriyaki Marinade

To create the rich sweet and savoury flavours of this marinade, mix together soy sauce, honey, minced garlic, grated ginger, and a splash of sesame oil. Marinate your meat or veggie alternative for at least 30 minutes, or preferably overnight. The resulting caramelized glaze adds an irresistible sweetness to your grilled fare.

Spicy Chipotle Marinade

A spicy chipotle marinade will tantalize your taste buds. Blend together chipotle paste, lime juice, minced



garlic, cumin, paprika, salt, and a touch of brown sugar for balance. Allow your meat or tofu to soak for a minimum of two hours before grilling. The smoky, spicy kick will add depth and complexity to your barbecued dishes.

Tangy Balsamic Soy Marinade

Mix balsamic vinegar, soy sauce, Dijon mustard, minced garlic, honey, and a drizzle of olive oil. Marinate for at least one hour, allowing the flavours to meld. The combination of balsamic and soy adds a delightful umami taste to your grilled creations.

Smooth Transition

Easing kids back into school

Returning to school routine after the long summer break can be a challenge for kids.

After weeks of relaxation and freedom, there may be some resistance or anxiety about returning to normal routines. Try these tips to make for a smoother start to term.

Gradual Transition - Start preparing for the school routine a week or two before term begins. Gradually adjust bedtimes and wake-up times to align with the school schedule. This will help children readjust their internal clocks and establish a consistent sleep routine.

Implement structure - Establish a daily routine that includes dedicated time for homework, extracurricular activities, relaxation, and socialization. A predictable routine helps children feel a sense of security and control, making the transition smoother.

Open Communication - Create an open and supportive environment for your child to express any concerns about returning to school. Encourage them to share their feelings and listen attentively without judgment. Validate their emotions and offer reassurance to alleviate their anxiety and build confidence.

Visit the School - Arrange a visit to the school before the term starts, especially if your child is transitioning to a new school. The school doesn't have to be open. Familiarize them with the journey and the surroundings. This can help alleviate anxiety by creating a sense of familiarity. If you can find a floorplan of the school look for key areas, like the reception, dinner hall and playground.



Connect with Friends - Encourage your child to reconnect with school friends before the term begins. Arrange a playdate or an outing to help them reestablish connection as well as boost their excitement about returning to school.

Positive Reinforcement - Talk about the positive aspects of school, such as reuniting with friends, engaging in favourite subjects, school trips and extracurricular activities. Remind your child of past enjoyable experiences.

Address Anxiety - If your child is very anxious, it's essential to provide additional support.

Teach them relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing or mindfulness exercises, to manage anxiety symptoms. Consider seeking professional help from your GP or a therapist who specializes in working with children.

Problem-Solving - If your child refuses to return to school, try to identify the underlying reasons. It could be related to academic struggles, social difficulties, or bullying. Address the specific concerns by working collaboratively with the school, teachers, or other professionals to find appropriate solutions and support.

Stay Positive - As a parent, maintaining a positive attitude and expressing confidence in your child's ability to navigate the school routine is crucial. Show excitement for the new school year, emphasize the learning opportunities, and highlight their strengths and abilities.

Remember, each child's needs are unique, and the transition process may take time. Be patient, flexible, and supportive throughout the adjustment period. By implementing these strategies and offering unwavering support, you can help ease your child back into the school routine and set the stage for a successful academic year.



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Summer Skills to Get Kids Outside

Summer is the perfect time to encourage kids to step away from their screens and engage in outdoor activities that are both fun and educational. Here are some of our favourites.

Juggling - This is a fantastic skill that promotes hand-eye coordination, concentration, and perseverance. Start with basic juggling techniques using soft balls or beanbags. As they progress, they can try juggling with more objects or learn tricks. Juggling a great physical activity, which boosts cognitive skills and focus.

Flower Pressing - Pressing

flowers is a wonderful way for kids to engage with nature and their creativity. Encourage them to explore their surroundings, identify different flowers and plants, and collect specimens for pressing. Pressed flowers can be used for various



crafts such as making greeting cards, or artwork.

Identifying Insects -

Encourage your mini entomologist by teaching kids how to identify common insects. Provide them with a guidebook or use online resources to help them recognize different species. Kids can go on nature walks or explore their gardens to spot insects, learn about their habitats, and observe their behaviours. This activity is great for promoting curiosity, environmental awareness, and an understanding of the vital role insects play in our ecosystem.

Why you need a divorce financial order to cut all ties with you ex

The landmark case of **Wyatt v Vince**, where the multimillionaire windfarm tycoon's ex-wife made a successful financial claim 20 years after the divorce, should act as a cautionary tale for anyone thinking of a DIY divorce, **Dipika Mistry**, Legal Director at Solihull-based law firm, **Shakespeare Martineau**, explains...

Final Order Is Not Enough

A lot of couples who undertake DIY divorces fall into the trap of thinking that the divorce date – or final order – is the end. A divorce final order is NOT a clean break financial order. In reality, without proper protection, financial claims can be made many years later.

Consent Orders

A Consent Order is a document that records the financial agreement on divorce. Essentially, it records how couples have decided to split their financial assets, and is usually prepared by a solicitor and signed off by the court.

Obtaining an Order

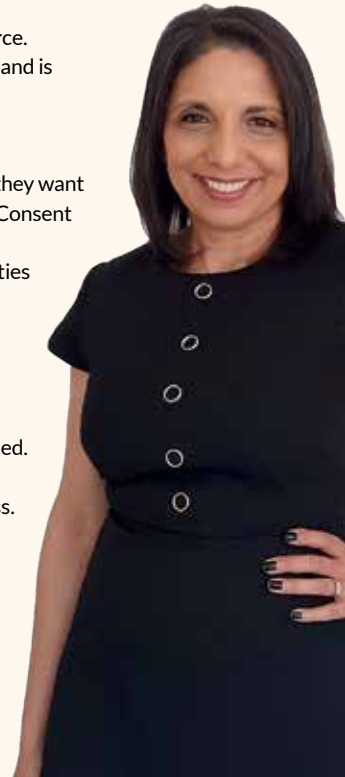
The more straightforward method involves the parting couple agreeing how they want to split their financial assets and then informing a solicitor, who will draft the Consent Order. Without agreement, divorcing couples may need to undergo financial disclosure via solicitors or attend mediation to reach a settlement that all parties are happy with. If no agreement can be reached, it is open to either party to issue a financial application at court. Whatever decision the court makes in terms of how assets are to be divided, is binding.

How long does it take?

The length of the process depends on how quickly an agreement can be reached. If both parties are in agreement, it can be relatively quick. Instigating court proceedings will obviously cause delay and can mean a much lengthier process.

Cost

The cost of having a solicitor draft a Consent Order very much depends on the complexity of the case. The most straightforward cases could cost between £500 to £2,000, depending on which firm and solicitor is chosen. If financial disclosure and specific legal advice is required, this will see the cost rise. While anyone can technically draft a Consent Order, it is highly recommended that it is done by a solicitor or barrister, to ensure it's legally sound.



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Embracing Boredom

The Importance of Unstructured Time for Kids

Do you find yourself stressed about keeping the kids entertained

during the school holidays? Everything is so expensive or takes so much planning. So, you might be relieved to know that there is growing evidence to suggest that a little boredom can be highly beneficial for children.

Boredom has long been regarded as a negative experience, but recent research suggests otherwise, particularly when it comes to children. Allowing kids to experience moments of boredom can actually foster their creativity. When children are left to their own devices without structured activities, they are compelled to invent their own entertainment. This unstructured time encourages them to tap into their imagination, problem-solving skills, and resourcefulness, thus fostering creativity and independent thinking.

Boredom also acts as a catalyst for curiosity. When children have idle time, they are more likely to explore their surroundings, ask questions, and seek out new experiences. By allowing moments of boredom, we create an environment that stimulates this curiosity



and encourages children to discover new interests and pursue self-directed learning. It is during these unstructured moments that children may stumble upon hidden talents or develop hobbies that can shape their future.

On the other hand, overscheduling kids' free time can have negative consequences. In today's fast-paced society, children's schedules are often packed with extracurricular activities, playdates, and organized outings. While these activities can offer valuable learning opportunities and social interactions, they can also lead to stress and burnout. Overscheduling also robs children (and their parents) of the chance to unwind, reflect, and engage in activities of their own choosing. It restricts their ability to make decisions and develop a sense of autonomy. Without downtime, children may feel overwhelmed and experience a lack of balance in their lives.

'That's all very well,' you might say, 'But if I didn't schedule all the activities and visits my child would spend six straight weeks playing Mario Kart.' As a parent you do have the option of restricting video and computer time, which would undoubtedly provoke cries of 'I'm bored!' and encourage other forms of play, but then you could just surrender and allow them to unwind in the way they choose. We tend to demonise video games, but they do encourage teamwork, strategy, and problem-solving. Plus, as adults we choose what to do with our downtime, and sometimes we only have the emotional energy to binge-watch Netflix! Why should we deny our kids the same luxury? If you are concerned about sedentary screen time, maybe insist that for every two hours they play video games they spend two hours doing something active outside instead.

Embracing a bit of boredom during the school holidays can have a positive impact on children's creativity and curiosity. By striking a balance and embracing the power of boredom, parents can provide their children with a well-rounded and enriching holiday experience, as well as reducing their own stress levels.

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a good read

By Natasha Donovan

A Long Way from Home

by Peter Carey

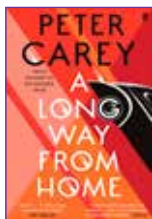
This compelling novel set in 1950s Australia, follows the lives of three central characters who embark on an eventful journey together.

Irene Bobs, a strong-willed and determined woman, dreams of winning the legendary Redex Trial, a gruelling endurance race that circumnavigates Australia. Her husband, Titch Bobs, is a car salesman with a passion for racing and an unresolved past. Willie Bachhuber is their troubled and brilliant navigator with an intimate knowledge of maps and an unconventional perspective on life.

As the trio sets off on their ambitious endeavour, they encounter all manner of challenges which brings them into direct contact with the racial tensions of the time. Australia's indigenous population faces discrimination and marginalization, and each character is forced to confront their own biases and prejudices during their voyage.

Relationships gradually become strained and alliances shift, as long-hidden secrets and insecurities bubble to the surface.

As the race progresses, the characters' personal journeys intertwine with the larger narrative of a nation struggling to find its identity. Carey uses The Redex Trial as a metaphorical representation of Australia's cultural and social landscape, mirroring the country's quest for a unified identity in the face of its diverse heritage. He weaves together themes of identity, belonging and the legacy of colonialism in a thought-provoking novel from which all three characters emerge changed forever.



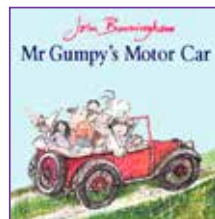
Mr. Gumpy's Motor Car

by John Burningham

Our children's book this month also centres around a car journey. Mr. Gumpy's Motor Car is an old book, though I'd never heard of it until my son was given a copy on his first birthday. It's one of those timeless,

charming works that is destined to be loved forever. Mr. Gumpy decides to take a ride in his car. As he sets out on his journey he comes across different animals who all ask to join him. They are the Rabbit, the Cat, the Dog, the Pig, the Sheep, the Chickens, the Calf, the Goat, and the Children. Mr. Gumpy greets them all patiently and cheerfully, though they prove to be quite a rowdy bunch of passengers. When they reach a tricky hill Mr. Gumpy asks for a volunteer to help push the car, but everyone has an excuse as to why they can't do it, then it starts to rain, and the car becomes stuck. The passengers eventually realise that if they don't pull together (or rather push together) they will never get home.

The story is deceptively simple and satisfying, which adds to its appeal. Burningham was known for his illustrations, and they are absolutely beautiful. The combination of earthy colours and whimsical characters make the images warm and inviting, and his use of crosshatching adds movement and life to the story. You can see the animals and children jostling for position in the car. The book's message about the importance of staying calm and working together to overcome adversity is a positive one, endearingly told.



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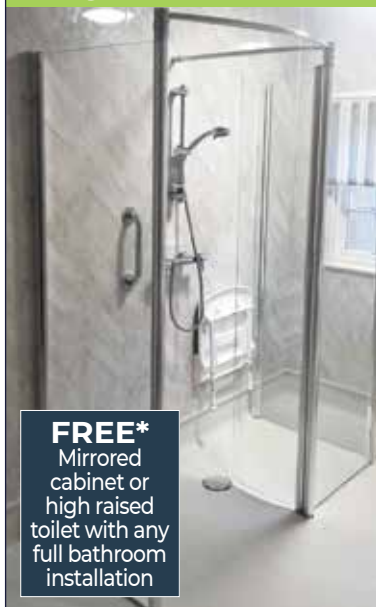


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Sun Safety Essentials

Choosing the right suntan lotion and applying it correctly are key to sun safety. Sunscreen helps prevent painful sunburns and protects against long-term damage caused by harmful UV rays. Look for a broad-spectrum sunscreen that protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Opt for a minimum sun protection factor (SPF) of 30. Additionally, consider sunscreens that are water-resistant, especially if you plan to swim or engage in water activities. Sunscreens with physical blockers like zinc oxide or titanium dioxide provide an added layer of protection.

Apply sunscreen generously to all exposed areas of skin, including the face, neck, ears, arms, and legs. Don't forget often-missed areas like the back of the neck, tops of the feet, and ears. Pay attention to the lips and use a lip balm with SPF. Apply sunscreen at least 15-30 minutes before going outside to allow it to fully absorb into the skin. For an average sized body aim to use the equivalent of a full shot glass of lotion. Consider using UV protective clothing for added sun safety. These garments are specifically designed to block harmful UV rays and provide an extra layer of defence. Look for



clothing with a UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) rating. The higher the UPF rating, the better the protection. Wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses with UV protection, and UV-blocking swimwear are also excellent additions to your sun safety arsenal. Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water. Prioritizing sun safety ensures that you can enjoy the outdoors while keeping your skin healthy and protected.

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