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A fresh start!

Welcome to the April edition...

This month should see a fresh start for many of us – a burst of warm weather, the easing of lockdown... fingers crossed it really is a fresh start for the whole country.

Having been stuck in our homes for months on end, it's a good time to re-assess what you want from your home and garden - maybe you need to update your flooring, fancy an inspired garden design, or want a new drive. Or perhaps you want to try something new like learning a language or trying an art class. There's lots of useful ideas in here from local organisations and people who are all ready and willing to help out.

Until next month,



Zoe Reece

Tel: 07557 220585

Email: zoe@dorridgedirectory.com

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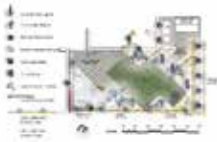
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By sharing information about our lives, we offer potential criminals the opportunity to gather useful information about us. Even information which seems harmless may be a useful to criminals looking to perpetrate a scam.

Remember these five tips:

Friendships - When accepting friend

requests be cautious. Do you know whether their profile is real, or could it be fake?

Manage your privacy settings – Only share information with people in your network. Check the settings regularly in case there are any changes.

Never divulge personal information - Be suspicious of anyone who asks you for your information that may be used to identify you, such as a social security number.

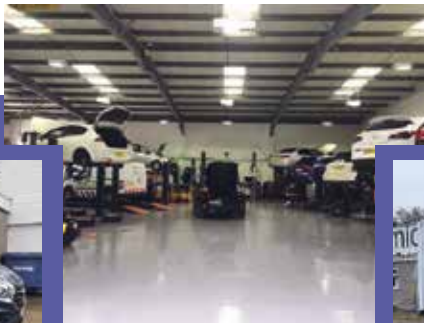
Change your passwords frequently

- Choose a combination of letters, numbers, and symbols. It's best to use different passwords for each account.

Close old accounts - Don't risk leaving personal data in an old account. Close accounts that you don't use and delete as much personal information from them as possible.



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Tips for Toes

What is an ingrown toenail?

An ingrown toenail occurs when the toenail grows into the skin next to the nail. It's a condition which primarily affects the big toe.

Ingrown toenails are common and mostly affect adolescents and young adults, who tend to experience increased perspiration. This can lead to the nail fold becoming soft. This age group are also more likely to participate in sport, and females in particular are more likely to wear 'fashion' footwear which puts pressure on the toes. The pressure from sporting activity or caused by wearing ill-fitting footwear can lead to a small piece of the nail embedding itself in the skin.

Senior citizens may also be more likely to develop ingrown toenails, especially if they have impaired vision or reduced mobility, which makes it more difficult to care for their toenails, which also tend to become thicker and more challenging with age.

The most common causes of an ingrown toenail include:

Poorly fitting shoes - Too-tight footwear or an overly narrow shoe forces the big toe and the second toe together, putting pressure on the nail wall.

Poor toenail trimming technique - toenails should be cut straight across, above the level of the nail bed. If trimmed too short, inflammation can occur.

Excessive sweating - perspiration causes the nail bed to soften, so the nail penetrates the skin easily.

Injury - Stubbing the toe or dropping something on it can cause swelling and distort the natural nail architecture.

Sport - Repetitive sports such as running, or dancing, or activities that involve kicking a ball, may damage the toenails.

Infection - Fungal infections in particular can be a problem.



Genetics - Some people inherit a predisposition for ingrown toenails. These people need to be particularly careful about choosing suitable footwear.

The symptoms of an ingrown toenail are:

- Redness around the toenail
- Tenderness or pain along the sides of the nail
- Swelling or harden skin around the nail.
- Fluid build-up in the toe area
- Pain when putting pressure on the toe
- Pus discharge
- Bleeding

If you think you have an ingrown toenail:

- Soak the foot in warm salty water 3 or 4 times a day
- Keep the foot clean and dry at all other times
- Wear comfortable shoes that have enough room for the toes to move freely
- Take ibuprofen if there is pain.
- If there is no improvement after 2-3 days, consult a doctor.

IMPORTANT: People with and underlying medical conditions, such as diabetes, nerve damage in the feet, or poor circulation, should see a doctor as soon as they notice an ingrown toenail.

Medical treatment may involve antibiotics if there is an infection, or even a minor surgical procedure, usually performed under local anaesthetic.



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De-Clutter

Live with less

If you can't lay your hands on items quickly because they're buried under piles of junk; if you're constantly 'stuff-shifting' - moving things from one pile to a new 'temporary' pile; if you find yourself thinking, "I can't throw this away, it might come in useful one day," you're probably a clutter victim.

One of the side-effects of the events of 2020 was that many of us had more time and less money. We embraced a simpler, slower, less covetous lifestyle and many of us feel we'd like to keep something of that as we move towards a post-pandemic world. There was a collective realisation that possessions are less important than the people we missed.

A decade ago, Californian blogger Dave Bruno set himself the year-long experimental task of reducing his belongings to just 100 items. When his experiment concluded he found he wanted to keep living by his new rules, preferring simplicity to consumerism. His book is worth seeking out.

Since then, whole movement has developed around the aim of a simpler, more minimalistic lifestyle. There are some great blogs and podcasts available: The Practical Minimalists, and The Minimalists are two worth listening to. Listen to them for inspiration while you declutter. I'm not recommending a sparse monastic lifestyle, but most of us put far too much time, effort, and money into acquiring, keeping, and storing possessions. Sometimes it's good to let go.

If you're ready to de-clutter, then we have a few simple tips. If you feel you need help, there are experts in de-cluttering who will guide you through the process of letting go.

De-cluttering Tips

Deal with one room at a time The task will seem less daunting. Stick with that room until it's finished.

Choose a nice day Take the room contents



outside. Psychologically it's easier to sort and let go if you're one step removed. It's also less likely that the clutter will make it back inside.

Sort everything into three piles Label them dump, donate, and keep. Be realistic: if the item in question hasn't been used for over a year it is unlikely you will ever use it.

Deal with the dump and donate piles Do this before anything comes back into the house. It's much harder to mess up your good work if the stuff is physically gone.

Sort and label Place the remaining items in clearly labelled boxes. Make sure there is one temporary box to house items which really belong in another room. As each room is sorted those items can be replaced, and other misplaced items can be housed there while the de-cluttering process continues.

Replace everything that remains The maxim 'A place for everything and everything in its place' is a good one. House small items in clear plastic boxes and store them in cupboards or wardrobes.

Now you're done instigate a one thing in: one thing out rule. It will make you think twice about acquiring something if you know something else has to go.

Finally, once a week, take two bags and go through your home. One bag is for rubbish, the other for items in the wrong place. When you've finished throw the rubbish away and replace the misplaced items.

Follow these small steps and you too can de-clutter your life.

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Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 25 minutes

Serves: 2

Spanish Baked Eggs

Ingredients

2 tbsp olive oil
1 onion, finely sliced
120g Chorizo, sliced
1 yellow pepper, finely sliced
1 orange or red pepper, finely sliced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
½ tsp sweet smoked paprika
400g can chopped tomatoes
1 tbsp capers (optional)
2 large eggs (4 if you're really hungry!)
2 tbsp fresh chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 thick slices of bread

Method

Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6. Use a frying pan with an ovenproof handle. Heat the olive oil, then add the onion and chopped

chorizo. Soften for 5 minutes. Add the peppers and cook for a further 2-3 minutes until they soften too. Stir in the crushed garlic and sweet smoked paprika, cook for another 1 minute. Pour in the tomatoes and add the capers, lower the heat and simmer for 10 minutes, until the tomatoes reduce and thicken a little. Make two or four wells in the thick sauce and gently crack an egg into each. Place the pan into the preheated oven for 10 minutes, or until the whites are set but the yolks are still runny. Towards the end of the cooking time, toast the bread.

Removes the eggs from the oven, scatter with the parsley and serve with the toasted bread, drizzled with a little olive oil.

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THE UNUSUAL, THE UNIQUE & BOUTIQUE.

Something a little different this summer?

It is a shame that foreign summer holidays may not happen this year but fear not, there are some great things to do in the UK.

There are 3 cruise companies that are all trying to get your attention. There are several cruise options for you to check out which will be circumnavigating the British Isles and all on luxury ships.

Royal Caribbean have their beautiful ship, "Anthem" sailing from Southampton as of the 07.07.21. A quantum class ship which will be sailing 4 to 8 night itineraries. These will be ocean getaways and cruises around the UK for UK guests only.

If you have a family or you just love Disney and believe me when I say that nearly half of Disney guests are adults. Disney at sea UK will be offering 2,3 and 4 night cruises from the UK. Sailing from Tilbury, Newcastle. Liverpool and Southampton, exclusive to UK residents aboard, "Disney Magic".

The third cruise liner to offer UK sailings is MSC and their ship, "Virtuosa". All sailings will be from Southampton offering a 7 night cruise all inclusive and gratuities in an interior cabin starting from £1999 for



a family of 4. Sailing dates are 26.06.21 17.07.21 and the 31.07.21 but for this sailing a family of 4 will start at £2976.

For more information please contact either myself or another travel consultant.

As far as holidays to the sun are concerned there is an update from Easyjet holidays who have recently commenced beach holidays. They are offering new routes from Birmingham airport starting from the 29.06.21 to Majorca, Malaga, Alicante, Faro and Corfu. Easyjet holidays have a similar offering to that of Jet2 Holidays in that they are ATOL protected beach holidays which

include flights, accommodation, a 23kg bag allowance per person and transfers.

Some other news from Jet2 Holidays is they will be flying from Birmingham in 2022 to Sicily and Sardinia.

There are numerous places to stay and different things to do this summer in the UK and if you want to know more contact your local travel consultant.

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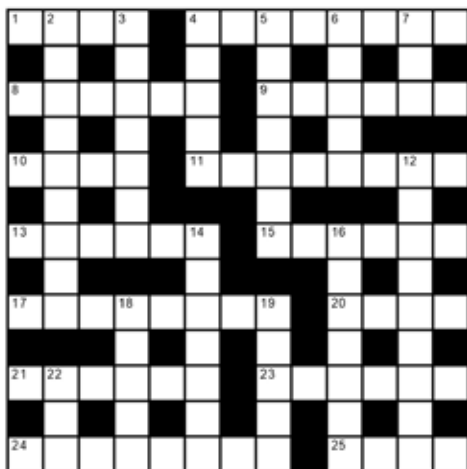


absent absent
leave



crossword

clues

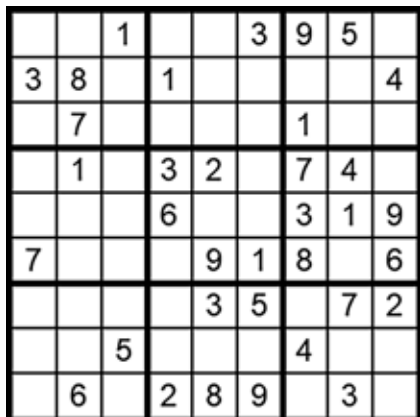


- 1 Agile, lithe (4)
 4 Inferior cut of meat (5-3)
 8 Devour, guzzle (6)
 9 Rough, stormy (6)
 10 ____-detached, a house (4)
 11 Sailing (8)
 13 ____ Loren, Italian actress (6)
 15 ____ Hemmingway, author (6)
 17 Dormer window (8)
 20 Large brass instrument (4)
 21 Poppycock (6)
 23 Cared for, tended (6)
 24 Distress, trouble (8)
 25 Children's board game (4)

Down

- 2 Directory of names and numbers (5,4)
 3 Rude, noisy, aggressive (informal) (7)
 4 Dingy, sleazy (5)
 5 Salvage (7)
 6 Spectre (5)
 7 Brief sleep (3)
 12 Epistaxis (9)
 14 Saintly, virtuous (7)
 16 Instinctive, innate (7)
 18 Even, equal (5)
 19 Forceps-like tool (5)
 22 Branch of the armed services (Abbr) (3)

answer on page 45



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 45

Hoe! Hoe! Hoe!

Following on from last month's list of essential garden tools for beginners I thought I'd explain about the humble hoe. When I first started gardening, I didn't really understand how to use one. There are a couple of varieties of hoe and they are used in different ways, and they really are your friend at this time of year.

The hoe is actually one of the most ancient garden tools and came before the plough. It's mentioned in Egyptian art, the Code of Hammurabi and in the Bible.

The reason spring is a great time to put your hoe to good use is because right now is when the annual weeds (the ones that self-seed freely and pop up all over the place every year) have started to germinate.

The aim when hoeing, aim to sever the top growth from the roots, just below the soil surface, then leave it in the sun to dry out and die. Hoeing is best done when the soil is dry as this creates a 'dust mulch' which inhibits the germination of new weeds.

I prefer a hoe with a long handle because it's better for preventing back pain. I also have a short-handled hoe known as an 'onion hoe' for closely planted areas. A shorted handle gives more control, so you don't damage your prized plants.

It's important to note that hoeing only kills the annual weeds, not the deep-rooted perennial weeds, those need to be dug up by hand.

There is also a tool called a Dutch hoe. This is used by sweeping it smoothly over the soil so that the surface is just 'brushed'. If used correctly it slices the tops from the weeds. It's actually simple to use but you do need to practice your technique. Slice the tops of weeds by bringing the hoe towards you, altering the angle to accommodate slopes. When you



turn over a Dutch hoe you can use it to make a shallow trench called a seed drill to sow larger seeds, like peas into. Larger seeds are better because they need to be covered well.

Your hoes need to be kept sharp and well maintained for maximum effectiveness. I use a metal file to both clean and sharpen, but you can buy sharpening stones reasonably cheaply and they are easy to use.

Happy gardening



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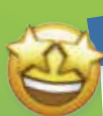
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6	2	1	8	4	3	9	5	7
3	8	9	1	5	7	2	6	4
5	7	4	9	6	2	1	8	3
9	1	6	3	2	8	7	4	5
8	5	2	6	7	4	3	1	9
7	4	3	5	9	1	8	2	6
1	9	8	4	3	5	6	7	2
2	3	5	7	1	6	4	9	8
4	6	7	2	8	9	5	3	1

Sudoku Solution

from page 38

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

crossword Solution

from page 38

a good read

reviews By Willow Coby

Bridgerton

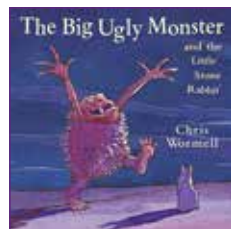
by Julia Quinn



Ah, the Regency Era. The world of Jane Austen, elegant women dressed in the sumptuous fashions of the era, and dashing young men, all navigating a world of parties and courtship. Julia Quinn drops us into this intriguing world in her bestselling novel *Bridgerton: The Duke & I*, the first in the series. Most people will know it through its highly successful adaptation on Netflix, but the original source material is well worth reading. We are introduced to the Bridgerton family with their 8 children (all named alphabetically). Mrs Bridgerton is eager to find a husband for her eldest daughter, Daphne, and it would appear that all of British high society – known as the ton – is lapping up the latest gossip. At one of many balls she attends, Daphne meets the rather irascible Simon Basset, the Duke of Hastings. The two form an unlikely friendship and, since neither of them is interested in marriage, they agree to a fake courtship, in the hope of avoiding advances from prospective husbands and wives. But can it really work? And are they really so averse to marriage? One of the charms of this novel is that you are reminded that no matter what era we are born into, we are all basically navigating the same pitfalls in life. Enjoy the ride!

The Big Ugly Monster and the Little Stone Rabbit

by Chris Wormell



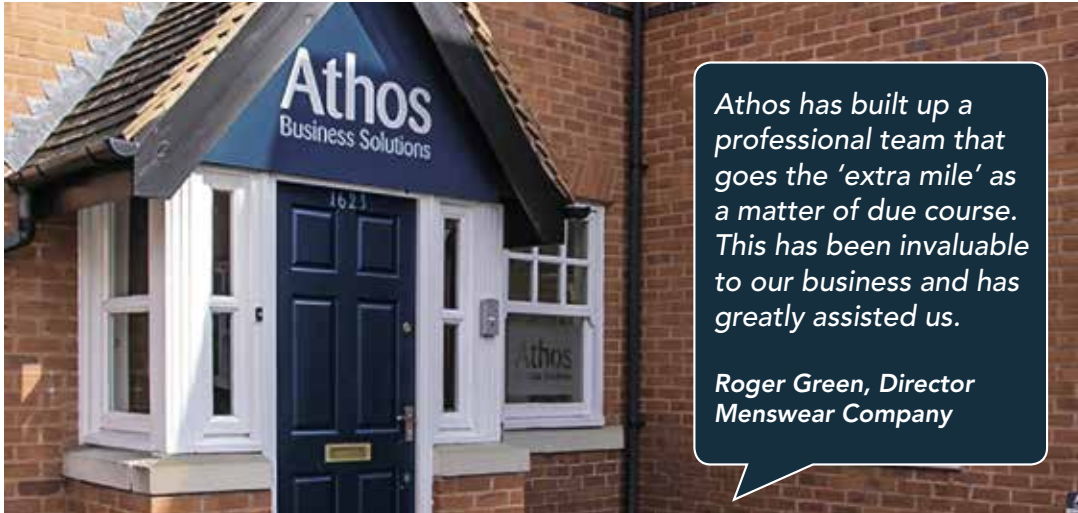
Sometimes we all feel lonely. Sometimes all we want is a friend. The Big Ugly Monster is no different. This wonderful picture book tells the story of a monster who is so ugly that no one will go near him. Lakes, rivers, and puddles hiss and dry up when he steps in them. Animals and birds run away from him. Flowers drop their petals and trees lose their leaves. But one day he decides to make his own friend out of stone, and he carves a little stone rabbit. We learn that he is only ugly on the outside and that he is a faithful, loving friend. A moving story that will stay with you long after the final page.

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Hard Times

A water softener might change your life

You probably know that water can be rated 'hard' or 'soft', but do you know what those terms actually mean.

Water has varying levels of hardness based on calcium carbonate concentration. Water with less than 60 mg/L of calcium carbonate is considered soft, 61-120 mg/L is moderately hard, 121-180 mg/L is hard, and above 180 mg/L is deemed very hard.

The water from your tap is safe to drink whether it's hard or soft. Hard water may even have a few health benefits by fulfilling your dietary needs of essential minerals, such as calcium and magnesium. But while hard water is safe to ingest, the effect of hard water on hair and skin can be a different story. Hard water can leave behind a slight film making skin and hair feel less clean to the touch. It might cause dandruff in your hair and irritate skin problems such as eczema.

Washing clothes with hard water can cause the clothing fabric to break down more quickly over time, leave spots on dishes, and residue on your work surfaces and shower screens. Over time mineral build-up in your pipes may cause them to clog, and you'll likely see build-up on shower heads and taps.

A water softener solves these problems by processing the hard water to turn it into soft water. Water enters the softener and passes into the resin or media tank where it goes through a simple process that removes calcium, magnesium carbonate and manganese, leaving only soft water to exit the softener and be used around your home.

Plumbing a good water softener into your household supply is an investment for your



home. It will eliminate the limescale caused by minerals which build up and leave that white powdery residue which clogs shower heads and pipework, makes surfaces appear dirty and reduces the efficiency of your appliances.

Often, we don't think about our appliances until they break down. The most common reason for early appliance failure is limescale build-up which corrodes the heating elements of your kettle, washing machine, dishwasher, coffee machine and heating system. By removing the limescale, you start to protect your appliances, they work better, live longer, and cost you less money over time.

Another benefit is no stains and marks on dishes, glasses, and pans. Your bathroom remains clean and shiny too with less scrubbing and harsh chemicals. You need less detergent in your washing machine and less salt in your dishwasher. Shampoo, soap, and conditioners will also last longer.

Finally, over a period of time, your softened water will remove scale from the inside of your water pipes, hot water cylinders and shower heads...we all know how expensive an emergency plumber is, so arrange for a non-emergency plumber to fit a water softener instead and start enjoying the benefits.



Kids' Page



Whose Egg?

There are four children (Huw, Ayah, Alec, and Shannon) and each has an Easter egg.

From the clues below can you match each of them with their age and egg?

The kids are aged 5, 6, 7 and 8

The 6-year-old girl has a green egg.

Huw has a red egg and is older than Alec.

Ayah is 5-years-old and her egg isn't yellow.



Huw

Ayah

Alec

Shannon

Child	Age	Egg
Huw	8	Red
Ayah	5	Blue
Alec	7	Yellow
Shannon	6	Green

Whose Egg? Answers

Easter Word-Finder

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

Basket

Eggs

Bonnet

Flowers

Bunny

Hunt

Chicks

Parade

Chocolate

Spring

Decorate

Sunday

Easter

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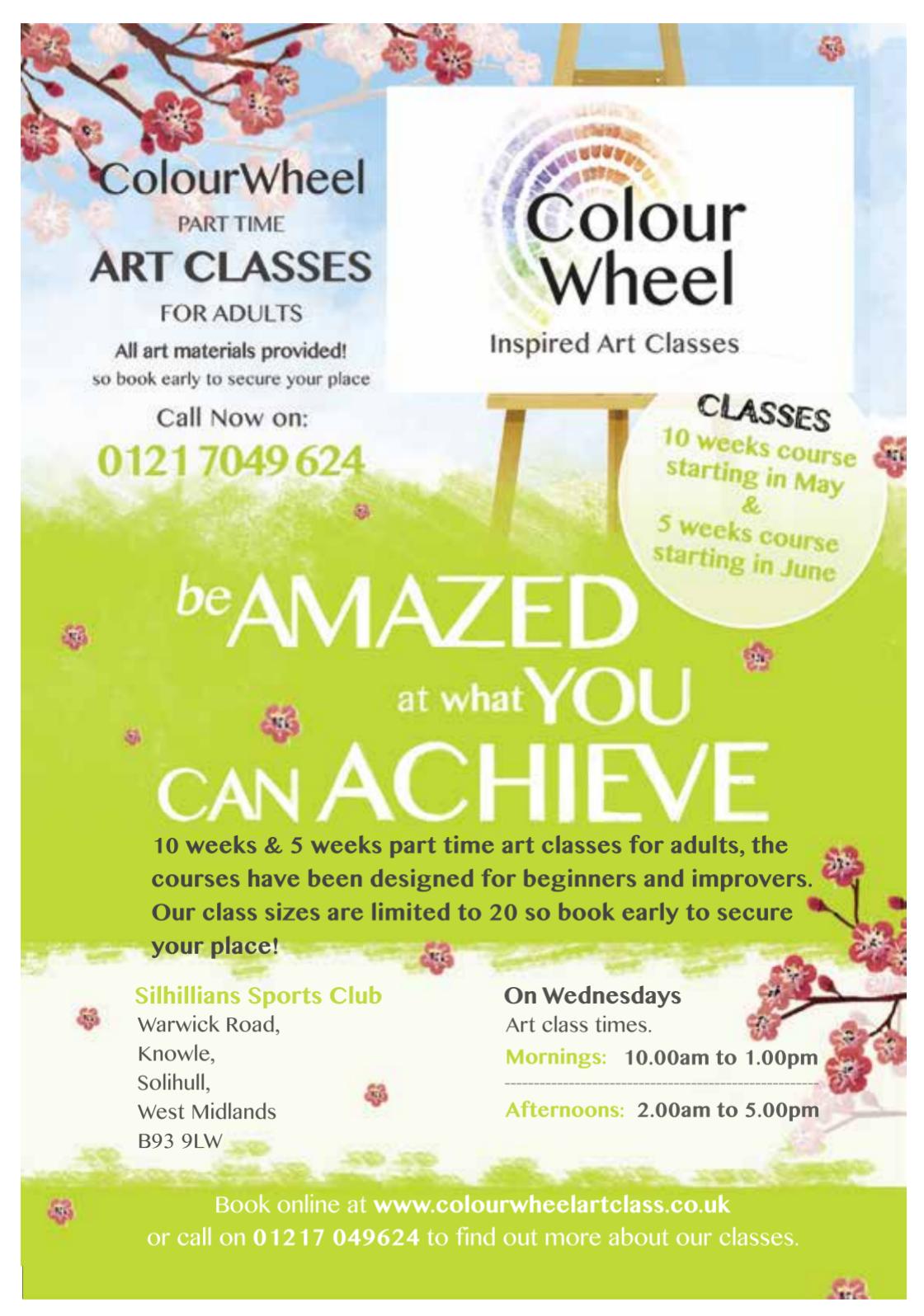
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