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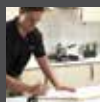
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Happy New Year!

Welcome to the January edition...

So if one of your new year's resolutions is to try new things then check out our local events page to see what's happening in the area, including plays, dances and tribute nights.

Or if you're not feeling quite so active, check out what's coming up at the cinema and the Core Theatre this month (see page 24). There's some great new films and shows out and it's nice to get out the house and beat those Winter blues!

The Solihull Index is also full of local suppliers who can help you with anything from cars and carpets to drives and doors, and many other things in between! They are all based locally and would love your support.

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2019.



Zoe Reece

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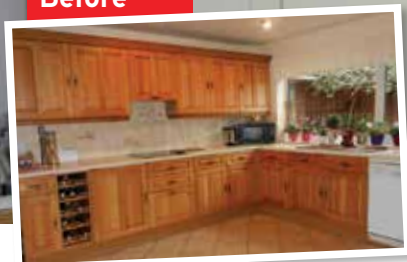
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community events

The Little Mermaid

17th – 19th January

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Lapworth Players Amateur Dramatic Group present "The Little Mermaid" by Ron Hall based on the story by Hans Christian Andersen. Tickets: £5 children / from £8 adults. To book please call 07958 652158.



Social Dance

19th January

Dickens Heath Village Hall

Saturday Night Social Dance for Ballroom Latin and Popular Sequence. Please bring own refreshments as there is no bar. 8pm – 10.30pm. Admission £6. Call 01564 779267 for more information.



UB40 Tribute Night

26th January

Knowle British Legion

A live performance of music from UB40 by Solo Tribute Mitch (Lead Singer of Jonny 2Bad UB40 Band). This Midlands based Tribute is building a good following,

and this promises to be a lively night. Including all the classic hits like Red Red Wine, Kingston Town, One in Ten, I got you babe and many many more. www.tributenightpromotions.co.uk/solihull

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- **Councillor's Surgery** - these are face-to-face meetings held by councillors for local people to raise issues in their area. First and last Saturday of the month, 10.00am-12.00pm
- **Rhyme Time** - Wednesdays 10.15am to 10.30am, term-time only. A short interactive session for 0-2s that includes finger and action rhymes and songs. Come along and meet up with other parents/carers and discover what the library can offer your child.
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- **Homework Club** - Tuesdays 3.45pm to 5.15pm, term time only
- **Silent Reading Cafe** - Held once a month on Thursday evenings, this is a chance to unwind and read in a cosy, informal environment without distractions. It begins with an hour of silent reading from 6pm with a chance to chat (if you want) between 7pm and 7.45pm.

Quilting Exhibition, Shirley, Solihull

23rd February, 10am - 4pm

Warwick Room, Shirley

Institute, Church Road, Shirley, Solihull, B90 2AX

Quilts and Projects by local group, Round the Corner Quilters. There will be something for everyone, young and older. Demonstrations, sale of accessories by local companies, raffles and prizes. Proceeds of the raffle in aid of Alzheimer's Society.

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10 great ways to plan 2019.

Happy New Year! It's a busy time for us coaches with everyone focusing on goals and resolutions. Feel free to call for 1-1 coaching if you are feeling challenged as you face 2019 and in the meantime, here are my top tips for inspiration...

1. Know your values. What would you want your epitaph to be? Write down your values or what you would like on your headstone... "A great way to see in the New Year!" I hear you cry, but in doing this, you can check that your plans fall in line with what is important to you.

2. What is your main objective for Dec 2019? Take a goal and work backwards in chunks or else the goal seems insurmountable. What would almost there look like, halfway there, and what can you start with now? Google David Hyner's HUGG diagram for more on this.

3. Who energises you? Who can support you and add value to your year. Make a list so that you are clear on where to go for encouragement and guidance. You may find it is a beautician, a faith or a therapist... if it works for you then it's an investment!

4. Bucket lists don't need to be big or expensive... Write one that is full of the favourite things you like to do. My clients have things such as reading, drawing, de-cluttering, swimming and cooking a new recipe on their lists. When they are in the need of some energy or a break, a reward or treat they can turn to this for inspiration...

5. And don't wait until you NEED a break... block book time into your diary for YOU! You will need it for your own well-being,

your mind will thank you for it and your year will be far more productive as a result.

6. Work on your math.... Performance + Success does not equal Happiness. Turn it the other way round and you will be onto a winner! Happiness leads to better performance and success. As proof, think of the times you were the happiest and how that linked with your out-put.

7. Let go of unhelpful beliefs by checking where the evidence is that supports this or goes against it. Again, make a list and check that your feelings and beliefs are not clouding reality.

8. Ask for help. Reduce your work load and increase capacity in your brain by reaching out to others. Ask yourself how you would feel if someone came to you with the same problem, would you think they shouldn't? You would probably be honoured and pleased to help, chances are they will too!

9. Switch off once every 6 weeks. Clear your diary and only spend time with your very nearest and dearest. Snow days are the best days for the simple reason we cannot do anything but chill with family. If it works- do more of it!

10. Think about your strengths and use them as much as possible! See our advert for some inspiration and circle the ones that apply to you. Then work out how that strength can be used to help you have a great year ahead. Happy 2019 xxx



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see page 33

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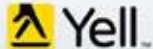
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Be **SMART** in 2019

By Tom Hancock

Most resolutions fail because they are too vague. Make your 2019 resolutions SMART.



Specific - Rather than, 'I will lose weight,' say, 'I will lose 7lbs by the end of January by cutting out deserts, and walking a mile a day.'

Measurable - What does your success look like? Is it a 15lb weight-loss by the end of March? Is it fitting into a size 12 dress? An effective goal is easy to visualise.

Attainable - By all means

be ambitious; aiming to save £2500 during 2019 for your dream holiday in 2020 is fine, but make sure you can break down the goal into attainable steps which can be achieved in a shorter time frame. Can you save £200 per month from your current income? If not can you pick up some bar work or sell some possessions on eBay. Maybe you could save £100 per month over two years and take your dream holiday in 2021. Now your target is attainable.

Realistic - If your goal is to win X Factor but you couldn't hold a tune in a bucket it's time for a reality check. If you

are 100lbs over your ideal weight, you are never going to be a size ten for your beach holiday in July. But realistic doesn't just mean 'able to attain', it means 'willing to attain.' If you want to retrain as a nurse, will you put in the hours of study and take a pay cut while you're doing that?

Time-limited - Set a goal. Research shows that three months is good as it's short enough to see the end-point, and long enough for significant change. Whether it's passing your driving test, or shedding a stone or two before your wedding day; three months is a good time-frame.



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Make the most of the January Sales

By Sarah Davey

We all love a bargain, and sales save us so much money, right? Yes...but you need to shop smart to take proper advantage of the discounts, and to avoid buying things you

don't need. So here is our one-stop shopping guide to the January Sales.



love it when it's on, it's probably a good find! If you can't be bothered to queue then put it back, you don't love it that much.

Set a budget - If you don't start with a limit you're almost guaranteed to blow your budget. Because...new clothes! Also

treat your budget as a limit not a target!

Do your research - Many retailers market their sales beforehand and some even let you fill your shopping cart before sales officially open. This means you can think and plan, and make sure that your purchases are relevant to your needs. Goodbye post-sales regrets!

Shop your wardrobe first - Take stock of what you already own. This is important when you're sales shopping. It's easy to get caught up in the frenzy of snapping up a great deal only to find that you already own three almost identical items to the bargain you just bought. If you go sales shopping armed with the knowledge that you DON'T need brown boots, or another leather jacket, you are more likely to make wise buying choices. Also, if you already know what you do own you can think about what each item you purchase will co-ordinate with, and just like that, you're adding cool-headed calm to the sales-shopping mix!

Don't forget postage costs - If you're shopping online, extra costs like postage, customs and shipping aren't usually included in discounts. Factor this in and keep checking your cart before you hit the 'Pay' button.

Force yourself to try things on - If it's worth queuing for the changing room, and you still

Beware of returns policies - Most retailers won't let you return sale items just because you don't like them once you get them home but...

Know your rights - If a sale item is faulty then your rights as a consumer are exactly the same as if the item was full price.

Plan your route - Planning will keep you focused and avoid you being lured into shops you're better off avoiding.

Take a friend - Make sure they are the rational, honest type of friend who will tell you if something doesn't suit you or doesn't fit you. To keep you from blowing your budget on things you shouldn't.

Wear clothes that are easy to get in and out of - you don't want to have to spend half an hour in the changing room taking off boots with fiddly catches and tops with twenty buttons multiple times. 'Nuff said!

Eat something first - Food is cheaper and healthier at home. Plus, it's scientific fact that clothes shopping on an empty stomach causes us to make impulse buys to satisfy hunger cravings! The human brain is quirky like that.

Happy shopping.

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Do you need a Social Detox?

By Tracey Anderson

January is the traditional time for a detox after the excesses of the festive period, so how about a social detox? If there's someone in your life who drains your emotional energy, you may be better off without them.

Identify – Toxic people are manipulative and selfish, impossible to work with, and rarely apologise for their mistakes. If it's your boss you may want to start looking for another job.

Be determined - The person might be part of your social circle, or your immediate superior, or they might recognise that you are distancing yourself and try to claw back the friendship. You need to create a mental separation, even if you can't create a physical one.

Set boundaries – Don't respond to texts and block their number if you can. If it's a work colleague, only respond to work-related matters. Social media is trickier. Blocking or unfriending can make life awkward if you share mutual friends or work together. I would suggest you unfollow rather than unfriend.

Be less 'nice' - Not to everyone, just to toxic people as they take advantage of kind people. They thrive by draining your good energy. There's no need to be nasty, simply stop being overly accommodating.

Accept you can't save them - Toxic people show up when they need something: attention, money; a shoulder to cry on. They

want a way back into your life. Be determined and maintain your boundaries - solving their problem is not your responsibility.

Family matters - Toxic family members are particularly difficult to deal with as a clean break is often impossible. But you can still establish clear boundaries by limiting interaction, or even if they are in your head. The point is to take control, visualise your boundaries clearly, then stick to them.

Treat it like a relationship break-up

- Be kind to yourself. The more time you spend away from toxic people the more uplifted you will feel. Make time for people who bring you happiness and let go of those who bring you anything less.

Please note that there is a difference between toxic people and those who are negative because they are depressed. If your friend or family member suffers from clinical depression let them know that you support them and don't cut them out of your life.



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a taster of what's on in January...

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Colette

from 11th January

After Colette marries a successful man, she writes a novel but because her husband convinced her to ghostwrite for him, she gets no credit for the phenomenon it becomes. However in the years to come, she defies everyone to get her name on the books she writes.



Mary, Queen of Scots

from 26th January

Mary, Queen of Scots and Elizabeth I of England were cousins, and their hope for two kingdoms united would ultimately collapse into war. When Mary had a child, who would be heir to both kingdoms, Elizabeth went to war to protect her crown.

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www.cineworld.co.uk

THEATRE

The Core Theatre, Solihull
(formerly Solihull Arts Complex)



The Syd Lawrence Orchestra

23rd January

In 1967 Syd Lawrence formed what was to become the UK's most successful Big Band, performing in theatres all over Europe and regularly featuring on many TV shows. And this wonderful Orchestra hasn't slowed down! For the last 20 years the Orchestra has been led by virtuoso trombonist Chris Dean and has continued to fill theatres around the country, making 14 albums under his baton and recording TV shows in England and Germany.

The Billy Fury Years

24th January

One of the best-selling recording

artists of the 1960s, Billy Fury enjoyed a string of hit singles before health problems led to his death in 1983. Hailed as "the best Fury since Fury", Michael King and his fantastic collection of musicians take you on a journey through the musical career of Britain's best loved rock n roll legend.



RESPECT to Aretha

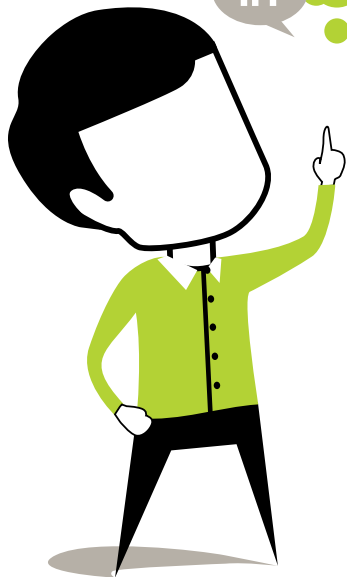
26th January

Life-long Aretha Franklin fan and power-house vocalist Letitia George stars in this heartfelt and uplifting dedication to the Queen of Soul. Aretha's sad passing has inspired Letitia and her outstanding backing band to attempt the seemingly impossible. Very few singers could ever do justice to the Aretha Franklin songbook... but Letitia George manages to capture the very spirit!



To book please visit www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk

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COMPETITION



WIN 2 PAIRS OF TICKETS

to see **The Take That Experience**

Thursday 7th March

The Core Theatre, Solihull (formerly Solihull Arts Complex)

For your chance to win these tickets, worth £45, visit the Core Theatre website page for this event - www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk - to find the answer to this question:

What time does the show start?

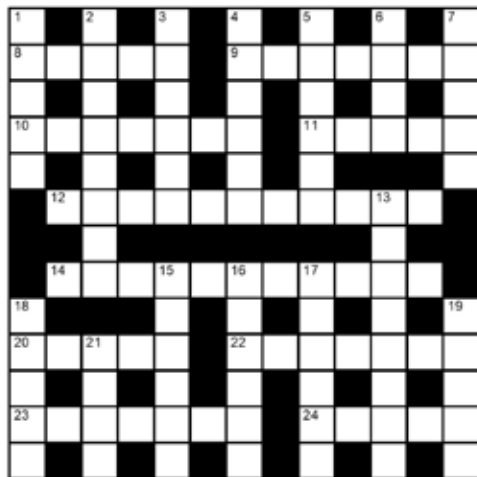
Email your answer to: thecoretheatre@solihull.gov.uk – and please put 'Take That' as the subject line

Closing date for entries is 31st January the winner will be drawn at random and notified by email after this date.

About the Show:

The Take That Experience have toured for over a decade, wowing audiences everywhere with amazing voices, replica costumes and trademark crisp and precise dance routines beloved by fans of Take That. Featuring all the classics from the 90s to the present day including Pray, Patience, Relight My Fire and including some of the best Robbie Williams hits like Angels.

crossword



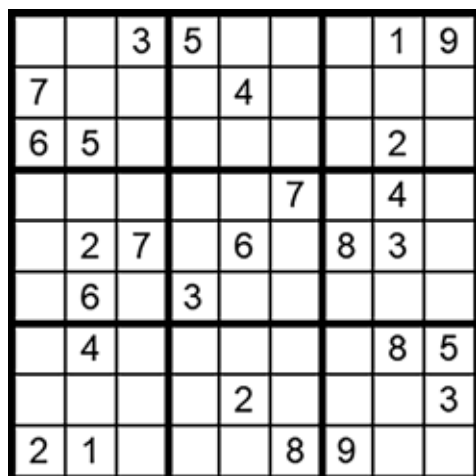
clues

Across

- 8 Angry, enraged (5)
- 9 Surface, layer of earth (7)
- 10 Hangman (7)
- 11 Dissertation, article (5)
- 12 Piece of office equipment (11)
- 14 Founded, set up (11)
- 20 Mean, horrible (5)
- 22 Used to dismiss a football player (3,4)
- 23 Contaminate, taint (7)
- 24 Large string instrument (5)

Down

- 1 Snug (5)
- 2 Flings, pitches (8)
- 3 Protective hat (6)
- 4 Traditional, tribal (6)
- 5 Maintenance (6)
- 6 Flowerless green plant (4)
- 7 Andrew _____ Webber, the composer (5)
- 13 Peepers! (8)
- 15 Sanctuary, refuge (6)
- 16 Pantry, food-cupboard (6)
- 17 Entice, beguile (6)
- 18 Clumsy, incompetent (5)
- 19 Optical disc for storing computer data (abbr) (2-3)
- 21 Huff, brood (4)



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.

answers on page 50

Learn a Language

Want to learn a new language in 2019? It's not as hard as you think! I learned Spanish alongside my son to encourage him while

he was studying for his GCSE. It started as a joke, but I quickly became hooked. Here's what I learned about language learning.

New words? - You may not need to learn as many as you think! In English just 300 words make up 65% of all written material! We use some words a lot, and luckily that's the case in every other language too.

You can buy or make decks of flash cards of these words. There is even a flash card app called Anki which presents words at precisely the right intervals to maximise memorisation.

Cognates - These are words which are spelled almost the same in English and which have the same meaning. In French, lots of 'ion' words are spelled the same even though they are pronounced differently: action, nation, communication etc. In Spanish the same words end in 'ción' and in Italian 'zione'. Simple right? There are also words such as hélicoptère (French) or aeropuerto (Spanish) which are similar enough to the English word that you will recognise them immediately. You can google 'Cognates' for the language you are learning.

Interaction - You need to hear and speak the language consistently. Look up Radio stations, YouTube channels, news websites, and blogs in the language you want to learn. Advertise for someone to practice conversation with. Ask friends on Facebook or in the school playground whether they know a native speaker who would converse with you for half



an hour in exchange for coffee and cake! There are groups dedicated to language exchange on Facebook too. By forcing yourself to converse you will improve very quickly.

Free Resources – I have passable Spanish thanks to the Duo Lingo app. The BBC has introductory courses to around 40 different languages. Omniglot.com is a great open-source resource to all manner of languages, and I found fluently.com brilliant for Spanish.

Embrace mistakes – We learn by making mistakes. As children we speak, we're corrected, and we adapt. Even at aged fifty I still come across new English words and phrases. You can't ever completely learn a language. Just use everything you know with the emphasis on communication rather than perfection. Native speakers will not be offended by your slips...they will most likely be charmed and fall over themselves to help correct you.

Use SMART goals - SMART means Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Timed. A good example is, 'By the end of January I will be able to hold a simple conversation with a waiter, book a table, order food, and ask for the bill. Or you might aim to complete three lessons per day on Duo Lingo for the whole of a month. You might even set yourself the task of passing an online test, a GCSE. The point is, you have a time frame, and the achievements you make are measurable, so you can see how far you've come.

By Tracey Anderson

Once Upon a Time

By Lesley Wade

National Storytelling week runs from January 26th – February 2nd

When did you last tell a story? Probably more recently than you think because as humans we tend to think in images and narrative.

Think about your favourite anecdote; the one you're called upon to recount at every family gathering and which gets embellished a little more each time it's told. That's story telling in action and it's the oldest art form in the world.

Since man first developed the power of speech, stories have been the traditional medium of communication between generations, used to educate and entertain.

There is evidence of storytelling in languages as diverse as Sanskrit, Old German, Latin, Chinese, Greek, Icelandic and Old Slavonic.

One of the earliest surviving records is from Egyptian culture. The sons of Cheops (the pyramid builder) are pictured in hieroglyphics on ancient papyrus entertaining him with stories.

Specialist storytellers evolved, known as bards. They were also poets and musicians and their job was to entertain by creating

and performing poetic oral narrations. These generally chronicled the events of a war or praised the daring deeds and achievements of leaders and their forebears.

Bards were also known as minstrels and jongleurs and often enjoyed a high status within their community.

The bardic community preserved many tales from different cultures which are still enjoyed today, including:

- **The Merry Adventures of Robin Hood (English)**
- **He Iliad and The Odyssey (Greek)**
- **The Tain (Irish)**
- **The Ramayana (Indian)**

Religious leaders also made use of storytelling to guide and teach their followers. This practice is still used, particularly in Hinduism and Buddhism

Ordinary folk also told stories, particularly at festival time and many such folk tales were collected and recorded by writers such as The Brothers Grimm.

The Society for Storytelling organises the National Storytelling Week each year to promote the art, value and practice of storytelling.

Storytelling events will be taking place in schools, libraries, museums, art galleries and residential homes. Check out what's in your area.

Web Address - The Society for Story Telling www.sfs.org.uk



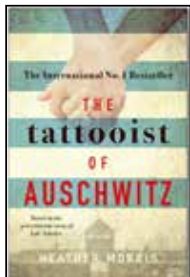
a good read

reviews By Willow Coby

The Tattooist of Auschwitz

by Heather Morris

There are many books about the horrors of the Holocaust, some fictional, others biographical. This 2018 book is one of the later. Heather Morris had a chance encounter with Holocaust survivor Lale Sokolov in 2003, and over the following three years until his death, he told her the story of his life.



Lale was a Slovakian Jew and in 1942, at the age of 25, he was transported to Auschwitz in Poland. Well presented and a bit of a chancer, he managed to get appointed to a job that would allow him to remain alive for the remainder of the war, and give him privileged accommodation and food. He became the Tatowierer whose job it was to scratch indelible numbers into the skin of prisoners.

At first glance this might appear to be a depressing story, but it is ultimately not a story of death but a story of love, survival, and determination in the most horrific place on earth. Here the inmates try to maintain some level of existence despite the fear of death every day. Lale meets Gita, a young Jewish woman assigned to work in the camps and they plan for the seemingly unthinkable: a life beyond the camps. What Morris gives us is a story that you won't be able to put down. A story of hope that will uplift you and reveal the very best of humanity.

The Girl in the Blue Coat

by Monica Hesse

Adult fiction is not the only genre to venture into Holocaust literature, and age appropriate novels are available for children and young people. One such novel is *The Girl in the Blue Coat*, aimed at the young adult market. This remarkable novel is fictional, but rooted in an impeccably researched Amsterdam under Nazi occupation.



Hanneke is 19 years old and works for an undertaker. However, she also works on the black market, obtaining items otherwise rationed or banned under Nazi occupation. She hates the new regime and the sight of soldiers in her city, but gives very little thought to the treatment of the thousands of Jews living in the Netherlands. That is until one of her clients presents her with a rather unusual request. She wants her to find Mirjam – a 15 year old Jewish girl whose family have been killed and who was in hiding until she vanished. This request takes Hanneke into a world of resistance that she never knew existed, and the true horror of the treatment of Jews becomes apparent.

Hesse brings 1940s Amsterdam vividly to life and incorporates real stories of individual heroism (such as the resistance workers who saved up to 600 babies by smuggling them out of Amsterdam) among the fictional characters she has created. Inspired by a trip to Holocaust-related sites in and around Amsterdam she draws on the real life accounts of resistance writers during the war and Jews in hiding, to present a story of how simple acts and unwitting betrayal can change lives.

Tray-baked Chicken with Root Vegetables

Preparation time: 20 mins

Cooking time: 60 mins

Serves: 4 people

Ingredients

- 1 small celeriac, peeled and cut into 2½ cm/1in chunks
- 1 small swede, peeled and cut into 2½ cm/1in chunks
- 2 large sweet potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 2½ cm/1in chunks
- 2 medium parsnips, scrubbed and quartered lengthways
- 2 large garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- olive oil
- ½ tsp cumin seeds
- a few sprigs of sage
- 8 chicken thighs or drumsticks (skin on)

Method

Preheat the oven to 200C / gas 6 / fan 180C. Put the chunks of celeriac, swede, sweet potato, parsnips and garlic in a large roasting tin. Sprinkle liberally with the olive oil and cumin, and season well with salt and pepper. Toss the vegetables together so they are lightly coated in oil. Put in the oven towards the top and roast for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, lightly oil then season the chicken skins, and lay a couple of sage leaves over each thigh or drumstick. Remove the roasting pan from the oven and turn the vegetables over. Lay the chicken pieces on top. Roast for 30- 35 minutes more, until the vegetables are tender, and the chicken skin is nice and crispy. Serve with creamy mash and lightly cooked Savoy cabbage.



Serves: 4 people
Preparation and cooking
time: 80 minutes

useful numbers

Health

NHS non-emergency	111
Grove Surgery	0121 705 1105
Northbrook Group Practice	0121 746 5000
Hobs Moat Medical Centre	0121 742 5211
Solihull Hospital	0121 424 2000
Spire Parkway Hospital	0845 850 1451

Council

Solihull Council	0121 704 6000
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Utilities

Electricity power cut	0800 6783 105
Gas leak	0800 111 9999
Severn Trent Water	024 7771 5000
Severn Trent Water (emergencies)	0800 783 4444

Travel

National Rail Enquiries	03457 48 49 50
Network West Midlands (buses)	0345 303 6760

LOCAL COUNCILLORS

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Kate Wild

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kawild@solihull.gov.uk

Councillor surgeries these are face-to-face meetings held by councillors for local people to raise issues in their area. Held at The Core Library, Solihull on the first and last Saturday of the month, 10am – 12 noon.

local police contact for Solihull

Solihull police station

Telephone: 0845 113 5000



Bathrooms

17 EH Smith 0121 713 7100

Car Services

12 Crossroads Service Station 0156 4703 225
 11 Johnsons Cars 0156 4454 081
 20 AP Alloys 07972 852 758
 21 Easylease 0121 693 0573

Carpets

23 Don Mander 0156 4700 200

Curtains and Blinds

9 Tudor Rose 0121 445 2072

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7 Green Space UK 0800 65 25 157

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16 ACS Interior Doors 07592 303104

Drives

10 Dimension Landscape & Driveways 0121 733 1463
 15 Central Drives & Landscapes 07748 577 687

Events

9 Land Rover Sports & Social Club 0121 742 5490

Fascias & Gutters

19 Proline 0800 956 1315

Estate agents1 **smarthomes** 0121 744 4144**Garden Services**

10 Dimension Landscape & Driveways 0121 733 1463
 35 Oakland Group 01564 758 608

Graphic Design

25 Hotlobster Design Ltd 0121 369 1977

Handyman Services

13 Prestige Multi-Trades 07886 922 280

Health & Beauty & Wellbeing

9 Guru You 07930 147 799
 19 Equanimity 0844 693 1282

Kitchens

3 Granite Transformations 01926 675 230
 5 Dream Doors 0121 314 0956
 17 EH Smith 0121 713 7100

Memorials

14 Yardley Memorials 0121 706 2473

Restaurants

2 The Barn at Berryfelds 01676 522155

Roofing

12 C Stevens Roofing 0121 733 1276
 36 N Bird & Son 0800 195 6946

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

Sudoku Solution
from page 34

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

Crossword Solution
from page 34

**Solution to Mind benders**

1. About turn
2. A drop in the Atlantic
3. Absent without leave

Mindbenders Solution
from page 9

Great gardening books

If you didn't get what you wanted for Christmas now is the perfect time to curl up in front of the fire with a gardening book you've brought for yourself.

We have a few to recommend.



RHS Great British Village Show by Matthew Biggs and Thane Prince - The village show is a quintessential British tradition, and for many gardeners it represents the pinnacle of their sowing and growing

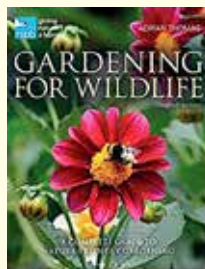
year. This charming and informative book takes you behind the scenes of this very British institution, offering insights into the worlds of judges and contestants. It's beautifully illustrated with photographs, and offers wonderful gems of insider information, including how to stage your produce, and what the judges are really looking for. There are even recipes for prize-worthy jams and preserves. If you've never attended a village show this book will make you yearn for a summer of tents and teas; you might even be tempted to become a competitor.



One Magic Square by Lolo Hubein - Following on from the previous book, have you ever wanted to have a go at growing your own vegetables and fruit but

feel completely clueless? We're always hearing that the best and cheapest food is the food you grow in your own garden, but it all seems rather complicated to a total novice. In One

Magic Square, Lolo Hubein shows how you can start your own productive food garden in ten minutes a day on a single square metre. She provides simple plot designs starting with salads, and gradually expanding to include beans, tomatoes, corn, roots and much more. She also stresses the benefits of companion planting and provides ideas. The bite-sized designs (pun totally intended!) allow you to extend by one square metre each season, or to pick your favourites. The magic of square-metre gardening is in allowing your project to grow in a manageable way, from simple to more complex. There are even designs catering for different tastes and specific diets.



RSPB Gardening for Wildlife by Adrian Thomas - If you long to

have butterflies and bees in your flowerbeds, birds singing in your trees, and hedgehogs bustling about under your bushes then look no further than this

wonderful guide to wildlife gardening. Adrian Thomas explains the intricacies of attracting wildlife to your garden whether you have a small plot or more than an acre. His style is accessible, but rich in detail. He draws on the latest wildlife research to explain the ecological principles, and to dispel some of the myths which have traditionally prevented gardeners from pursuing a wildlife-friendly approach. There are practical projects to help you create entire habitats, and long lists of suitable plants and trees, and it's packed to brim with helpful photographs. If you love wildlife and want to encourage more to visit your garden, this inspirational book will help you sow the seeds and reap the rewards.

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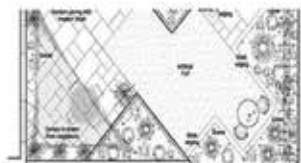
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Lawns & Mowing Services



Landscaping



**Garden
Design**



**Planting
& Irrigation Work**



Groundworks & Land Drainage



Commercial Works



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Emergency Works

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Gillian Cain, Audi Birmingham, 31 July 2017



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