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a community magazine and business directory
for residents of solihull

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marvellous may!

Welcome to the May issue of The Solihull Index.

May's one of the best months of the year - we're firmly in the Spring, and have all the anticipation of a lovely Summer ahead. Fingers crossed!

It's also a great time for getting your garden looking lovely and for selling your home. We've got a great range of local, reliable businesses in here who can help you get your garden ready and update any aspect of your home, from your roof to your kitchen, your bathroom to your décor, whether you're getting it ready to sell or just want to update it for your own benefit.

Wishing you a great month ahead. Until next month,

Zoe

Zoe Reece

Tel: 07557 220585

Email: zoe@dorridgedirectory.com

www.solihullindex.com



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Chartered Architects Gary Winn RIBA and Dean Poulton RIBA are Progression Architects and have been based in Solihull since 1992. They are about to celebrate 25 years in practice.

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As we are also Architects, we tend to think through our solutions creatively, at times from a perspective that is not immediately apparent. As Arboriculturists, we work together where tree issues meet planning issues, such as Tree Preservation Orders.

community events

Robert Wilkinson's Funfair

Thursday 17th – Sunday 20th

May, weekdays 4-8.30pm,

Sat & Sun 1-8.30pm

Meriden Park, B37 5SH

Come and enjoy all the fun of the fair as this popular event returns to Meriden Park for another year. There are thrills, spills and rides suitable for all ages, as well as chances to win prizes and refreshments galore. £1 admission. Call 07956 994199 for more information.

Fine and Local Food Fayre

Mell Square, High Street

and Mill Lane, Solihull

Saturday 19th May, 9am – 5pm

Sample the best of locally sourced food and produce from a range of top quality suppliers at this market, which is held on the third Saturday of

each month. Artworks and craft items by regional artists are also available at this market, which is held on the third Saturday of each month.

Agatha Crusty and the Village Hall Murders

Lapworth Village Hall, Old Warwick

Road, Lapworth, Solihull B94 6LD

Thursday 17th – Saturday 19th May

Come along and enjoy this comedy murder mystery by Derek Webb, performed by the Lapworth Players Amateur Dramatic Society. Call 07736 245052 for more details.

Knowle Fun Run

Sunday 20th May

Entries are open for May's 35th Knowle Fun Run. Now with a choice of 5k or 10k, runners have no excuse not to get fit for Solihull's longest running Fun Run with a great community atmosphere on

traffic-free streets. Help raise funds for Breast Cancer Haven in Solihull, the brain injuries charity Headway, and half of all proceeds being retained for local causes; or run for your own cause. Enter online at www.knowlefunrun.org.uk.

An Evening on Broadway

Knowle Village Hall

Saturday 26th May, 7.30pm

The Strolling Players will be having "An Evening on Broadway" to raise funds for the refurbishment programme at Knowle Village Hall. The programme ranges from the music of Tin Pan Alley right through to musicals of today, such as "Cats", "Les Mis." and "Phantom of the Opera". There is bound to be a song that is someone's favourite! Tickets £8 from David Duggins on 01564 772071.

Triple Treat

St. Mary's Hall, Hobs

Meadow, Solihull B92 8PN

Thursday 14th – Saturday

16th June

The Moat Players proudly present "Triple Treat", an evening of 3 mini musicals. The first act is based on Jeff Wayne's "War of the Worlds", followed by our junior section featuring Disney classics, concluded with a section based on the musical "Chicago". £8 for adults, £6.50 for concessions – to book please call 07760 306605.

Mum2mum market 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
- **Meet and Play** - Fridays 10.15am to 11.15am, age 0 - 2 years (term time only). Our new

Meet and Play session offers the chance for young families to meet up, relax, chat, play, sing or make music together! The session is for families, led by families. Toys and musical instruments are provided. For more information contact 0121 704 6965.

- **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.

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Happiness...the Greatest Gift....



In honour of the amazing Ken Dodd who passed away earlier this year ... I thought I would look at happiness today!

Does achieving our goals in life lead to happiness or does happiness help us achieve our goals?

How often do we tell ourselves..“If I achieve X then I will be successful, if I am successful then I will be happy?

We spend our lives having happiness as the end goal but as soon as we get there we create a new goal which prevents us from being content. Let me give you an example.

A student thinks to herself, if I pass the 11+ I will get into my grammar school, then I will be happy. She does this and then what? Do you see her and her mates revelling in the stunning surroundings or congratulating each other on their success? No you see them looking anxiously around themselves trying to fit in and worrying about passing the tests at the end of term! This continues throughout life, if I pass my GCSEs I will be happy, get to a good uni, get a good job, get a promotion, get married blah blah blah!

And so, the ‘next’ goal is always in the way our way of happiness.

Shawn Achor, a happiness expert (!) tells us then to turn the equation on its head. Let us then aim to be happy first. Just think of a time in your life when you were so happy you could burst...how was your performance then?



If we are happy a chemical known as Dopamine is released and not only does this give us a sense of well-being, but it turns on all the learning centres of our brain which will enhance our performance, which in turn increases our chances of success and the achievement of our goals!

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Why We Love A Royal Wedding

Unless you have been living on a desert island with no Wi-Fi for the past 12 months it cannot have escaped your notice that a wedding is scheduled for this month.

Now whether you are a flag-waving Royalist or consider them to be a bunch of elitist parasites, you can't avoid the discussions over the dress, the guest list and the entertainment booked for the reception.

It was when I heard a colleague (who I know is anti-Royal) gleefully speculating over the dress-designer Meghan may or may not have chosen that it occurred to me to wonder why even the least sympathetic among us somehow get sucked into the celebrations.

The fairy tale: Children's stories where the handsome prince marries the beautiful princess are perennially popular, and the big white wedding is still the way many women imagine their big day. In this instance the prince in question is a real-life action hero too! A Royal wedding is the chance for us to live it vicariously, or conversely marvel at the spectacle of it all while muttering darkly about the cost to the public purse.

Being part of something bigger: There is a strong drive among humans to want to feel part of something important or monumental. We want to weave historic events into our own personal history. It's why we bought tickets to The London Olympics, fly out to World Cup Finals, and lay flowers at the sites of tragic events.

Shared History: The celebrations surrounding the Silver Jubilee, or the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana may have been part of our childhood. Maybe we attended



a street party or received a commemorative coin. The desire to recreate and share these memories with our own children is strong.

We love a party: Go on...who doesn't love an excuse for a party? I have friends who throw Eurovision parties, and Strictly Come Dancing parties and X Factor parties, so why not a Royal Wedding party, complete with champagne and Union Jack cupcakes?

They are not like us...or are they? We feel we know the Royals. We're there for the births, the engagements, the weddings, the divorces. We know lots about them, but there's always more we don't know. It's human nature to be hungry for more information or gossip about the rich, famous and (preferably) scandalous. A Royal wedding feeds into this, from the venue – the smaller St George's Chapel rather than Westminster Abbey – to the guest list – who made the cut and who was snubbed. It's like our own family but lived large...on our TV screens.

And just as if they were members of our own family...we wish them well.

May 14th – 20th

Start with good bread. It should be delicious enough to eat on its own. Make your own or buy a high-quality artisan loaf. If you only have supermarket bread, try charring it on a griddle. Aim for a good balance of texture. A soft roll complements crisp lettuce or crunchy coleslaw while toasted bread is great with pulled pork or roasted veg. Soggy sandwiches divide people. Consider the deliciousness of a sloppy stewed steak and onion filling where the gravy soaks into the bread. Yum! Meanwhile, a dry sandwich is just unacceptable! Lack of butter, or filling, is a

A nutritionally well-balanced sandwich will have protein, whether it's ham or eggs or anything else. It should be well flavoured and thinly sliced, diced or mashed. You could also think about the positioning the elements too – meat in the centre or at the bottom? Cold on top of hot? My personal bugbear is thick slices of tomato in the middle, so when you bite into it a slice slips out into your lap! We take the humble sandwich for granted yet we all know when we've had a great one. So, let's hear it for National Sandwich Week. Smell the bread, admire the layers, season the filling and take a big bite.

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Tee Time!

By Tom Hancock

...and a game of golf bingo!

Like many amateur golfers I'll be glued to The BMW PGA Golf Championship at Wentworth this month. I'm a spectacularly mediocre player who occasionally plays a good round, and the hope of repeating that is what keeps me returning to the course. Golf is addictive like that...it's crack cocaine with clubs

Almost as addictive is 'golf bingo'. Never heard of it? Next time you play, tick off as many types of golfer as you can during a round. Bonus points if you're playing alongside them. Minus points if you're one of them.

The Wagglers - Budget speeches don't last as his pre-shot routine, and worse it makes no difference. Five full practice swings will be followed by a slice into neighbouring woodland...every time.



Mr. Mobile - His phone rings in the middle of your first backswing, it's an urgent call. He then puts it vibrate where it does just that repeatedly, sounding like an angry hornet trapped in his back pocket. Amusingly, the number of phone calls is usually inversely related to the importance of his (it's nearly always a bloke) job. Seriously, if Obama could play an uninterrupted round there's no excuse!

The Croucher - He reads every putt from every angle...then misses anyway. I may be this man!

The Guru - Offering unsolicited advice on everything from your swing to the choice of caddy. It would be so much easier to take if he hadn't already lost six balls before the third hole.

The Sulker - Every golfer has a bad round or three, but he (nearly always a bloke again...sorry guys) can't laugh it off, and refuses to drink it off, so storms off instead.

The Traditionalist - He dresses like he's playing in the Ryder Cup circa 1929. I secretly admire his dapper style...but my daughter would kill me if I dressed like that.

The Chatterbox - She (sorry ladies but this one is nearly always a woman) talks over every putt, and all the time you're setting up for a drive. And you're never sure if it's accidental or whether it's part of some diabolical masterplan to mess with your game!

Mr. Angry - He can throw a toddler-worthy tantrum over a missed six-foot putt. It's both amusing and cringeworthy and you can't take your eyes off it.

The Blamer - It was the sun, the wind, a passing pigeon, a buzzing bee, celebrations from the next hole, a bad back, a gippy tummy, a fight with a spouse...anything in fact except their lousy swing.

Anyone call 'House' yet? Now if you'll excuse me I'm off to practice my waggles!



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Don't confuse these hardy geraniums with the tender bedding plants with the horseshoe leaf-markings. They may be commonly called geraniums but they are in fact pelargoniums and not hardy so would perish in a hard frost. True geraniums are as tough as old boots. There are loads to choose from offering a wide range of colours and habits.

If you want a carpet of tiny pale pink saucer flowers try *Geranium sanguineum striatum*. It's great for growing in the crevices of a garden path, or even in a shallow tub or sink where its finely cut leaves show off the flowers to their best advantage.



Geranium macrorrhizum is probably the most reliable ground cover of them all. It creates a low dense mass of aromatic hairy leaves about 30cm / 12 inches high. The flowers open in late spring and there are varieties in white, pale pink or magenta. These are followed by bright red seedheads providing interest well into the autumn.

Propagation is ridiculously easy. Simply rip up a clump of the thick creeping stems and push them into the ground where you want them to establish. Make sure they don't dry out and you can be assured of success.

If you'd like a plant with a bit of height go for *Geranium psilostemon*. This grows to about 1.5m / 5 feet. It has deep magenta flowers with a black eye, and is a great self-seeder.

If you struggle with a patch of denser shade I can recommend the blue-flowered *Geranium himalayense*, and also 'Johnson's Blue'. Both will form clumps about 30cm / 12 inches high.

Whether you have a new garden which needs to be filled with colour, or an established garden with a few bald patches, plant hardy geraniums and you won't be disappointed.

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For front entrance and back entrance, there are three main types of products used in homes today – wooden, UPVC and composite doors.

UPVC Doors

UPVC doors are available in a wide range of colours and finishes and their comparative lower cost to alternative materials has made them popular in recent years. They also have other benefits, such as a higher resistance to weathering and generally require less maintenance



Bifold doors

Bifold doors are built to stack neatly to one or both sides of an aperture when open. This allows people to move freely from inside to outside or from one room to another. These can be used as room dividers or to open onto a balcony or terrace.

Composite Doors

As their name suggests, they are made up from several different materials to produce a robust, secure and attractive-looking to protect your home. The combination of materials, such as PVC, wood, insulating foam and GRP (glass reinforced plastic) results in a product that is very strong and requires no painting or varnishing to keep it looking good over its long lifetime. An occasional wipe with a damp cloth is all that is needed to keep it clean and retain its smart appearance.

Porches



a taster of what's on in may & june ...

CINEMA

Tully

from 4th May

Marlo is a mother of three, including a newborn baby, who's struggling to look after everything. But then, her brother hires a night nanny named 'Tully' for her. At first, Marlo struggles to get used to the idea but she begins to form a unique bond with Tully, who is constantly surprising and sometimes rather challenging.



Sherlock Gnomes

from 11th May

Gnomeo and Juliet have moved to a new garden, where they hope to live happily ever after. But when the other gnomes disappear, they recruit 'Sherlock Gnomes' to help. He's the only one who might be able to solve this mystery. And so begins a whole new adventure into the great unknown, to rescue the gnomes and bring them home safe.



Solo: A Star Wars Story

from 25th May

Board the Millennium Falcon and journey to a galaxy far, far away in this all-new adventure. Through a series of daring escapades deep within a dark and



dangerous criminal underworld, Han Solo meets his mighty future co-pilot Chewbacca and encounters the notorious gambler Lando Calrissian.

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www.cineworld.co.uk

THEATRE

The Core Theatre, Solihull
(formerly Solihull Arts Complex)



Michael Jackson History Show

Saturday 26th May

This world-class production showcases all of Michael Jackson's greatest hits live on stage, complemented by the famous dance moves that fans all know, love and aspire to do. Star of the show, Dantanio, will be accompanied by a lively six-piece band, four groovy backup dancers and a phenomenal lighting team.

GaGa Queen Tribute 2018

Friday 8th June

Performed by a multi award-winning band who have headlined the 'International Guitar Festival' on several occasions, this is a Queen show like no other. From numerous Queen Conventions to TV appearances, GaGa have consistently proved why they are so highly rated by critics and audiences alike. There are no



wigs, no make-up and definitely no false moustaches but instead a host of massive Queen songs played like they were meant to be.



Sister Act

12th – 16th June

Sister Act is the feel-amazing musical comedy smash based on the hit 1992 film that has audiences jumping to their feet! Featuring original music by Tony and 8-time Oscar winner Alan Menken (Newsies, Beauty And The Beast, Little Shop Of Horrors), this uplifting musical was nominated for 5 Tony Awards including Best Musical.

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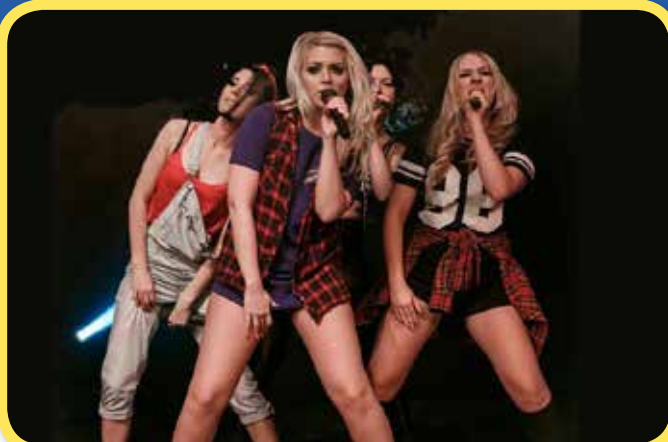


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COMPETITION



WIN 2 tickets
to see **The Little Mix Experience**

Thursday 26th July

The Core Theatre, Solihull (formerly Solihull Arts Complex)

For your chance to win these tickets, worth £30, visit the Core Theatre website page for this event - www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk - to find the answer to this question:

With which TV show did Little Mix spring to fame on?

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

Closing date for entries is 15th June and the winner will be drawn at random and notified by email after this date.

About the Show:

Four hugely talented girls pay tribute to one of the UK's finest Girl-Bands.

With breathtaking dance moves, replica costumes and some of the finest vocals in the UK, this is a high-energy show from beginning to end, packed with all of Little Mix's greatest hits and suitable for all ages! Featuring songs such as DNA, Wings, Salute, Black Magic, Love Me Like You, Secret Love Song and many, many more. They look like Little Mix, They Sound like Little Mix, they are "The Little Mix Experience".

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a good read

reviews By Willow Coby

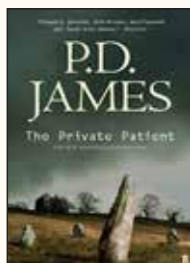
The Private Patient

by PD James

At a private clinic in Dorset, Rhoda Gradwyn has booked an operation to remove a serious facial scar – one which she has borne for many years, but 'no longer has need of.' The operation is a success, but by morning Rhoda Gradwyn is dead, and suspicion falls on the staff of Cheverell

Manor. Commander Adam Dalgliesh, poet and policeman, is summoned from London to investigate, and before long finds himself dealing with not one, but two unexplained deaths and a whole host of dark secrets.

This is the latest in James' Dalgliesh series, and it bears all the familiar hallmarks of the earlier novels – a death in a closed community, a complicated back story and a steady move to the conclusion. As ever, the supporting characters are just as important as Dalgliesh himself – both those on his team and those who inhabit Cheverell Manor – and they are deftly drawn, with real and believable traits. For the reader, the experience is more about contemplation than guesswork – the identity of the killer is revealed three quarters of the way through, and the rest of the novel is concerned with motivation and moral dilemmas. There is also a significant amount of tying up of loose ends from the ongoing stories of Dalgliesh and his colleagues, and the ending is rich and reflective. Some would argue that James' novels are an acquired taste, being so far from the run of the mill 'whodunnit' – I would say they are a taste well worth the acquiring.



The Foggy, Foggy Forest

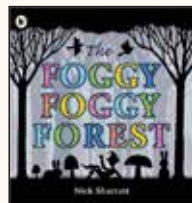
by Nick Sharratt

This delightful picture book may take some tracking down, but the effort is well- rewarded. Each page takes the reader on a journey through the 'foggy, foggy forest' of the title, asking 'What can this be?' The beauty is that

each page is printed on acetate, and shows a mysterious silhouette, encouraging us to guess at what lies beyond. The answer, of course, is never straightforward!

The book works on a number of levels – younger children will love the repetition and the rhyme as each shadow is revealed, whilst older readers will appreciate the fine details of Sharratt's colour illustrations and the humour which finds 'Cinderella and Snow White in a water pistol fight'.

Like the best fiction for very young children, the book stands up to reading and re-reading (and re-reading, and re-reading....). It deserves to become a children's classic.



Roast cod with a lemon, garlic and parsley crust



Preparation time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 10 to 30 mins
Serves: 4

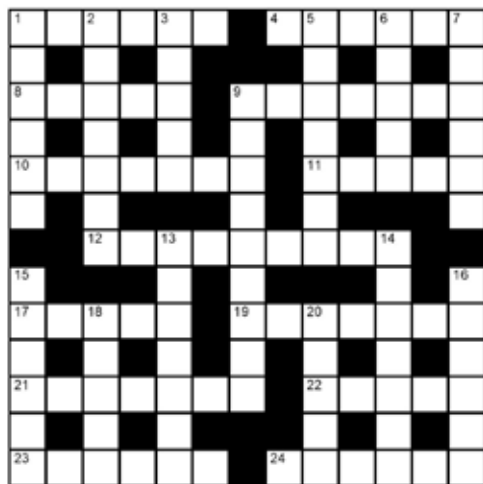
Ingredients

675g/1lb 8oz cod fillet, 3cm/1 1/4in thick
 85g/3oz white breadcrumbs, soft or slightly stale
 3 tbsp parsley, finely chopped
 2 cloves garlic, crushed
 Finely grated zest 1/2 lemon
 60g/2 1/4oz butter, melted
 Squeeze of lemon juice
 Salt and pepper
 Lemon wedges, to serve

Method

Season the cod well with salt and pepper to taste. Mix the breadcrumbs with the parsley, garlic, lemon zest, salt and pepper, then add butter and lemon juice. Mix thoroughly with your fingers. Place the cod in a shallow, ovenproof dish and press the buttered crumbs firmly onto the cod to make an even crust. Bake at 220C/425F/Gas 7 for 20-25 minutes until the crust is browned and the fish just cooked through. Serve immediately with lemon wedges and green salad or steamed asparagus.

crossword

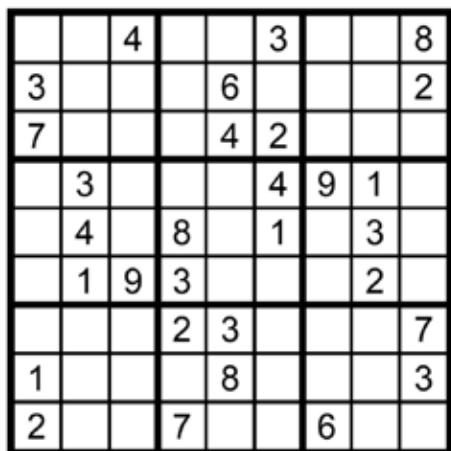


clues

- 1 Attractiveness (6)
- 4 Surgeon's protective clothing (6)
- 8 Paperwork (abbr) (5)
- 9 Afghan militia (7)
- 10 North African country (7)
- 11 Bamboo-loving bear (5)
- 12 Defamatory (9)
- 17 44th President of the United States (5)
- 19 Serving dish (7)
- 21 Adult (5,2)
- 22 Financial resources, income (5)
- 23 Beer and lemonade mix (6)
- 24 Fastened, supported (6)

Down

- 1 German Romantic composer (6)
- 2 Most senior commander in the Navy (7)
- 3 Loose fitting long top (5)
- 5 Syncopated West Indian music (7)
- 6 Metropolitan (5)
- 7 Strappy summer shoe (6)
- 9 Jocular British way of saying goodbye (6,3)
- 13 Hit hard on the head (slang) (7)
- 14 Misfortune, hindrance (7)
- 15 Evades, eludes (6)
- 16 Levered (6)
- 18 Hawaiian greeting (5)
- 20 Confess (5)



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 37

Want to Hear Some Juicy Gossip?

By Tracey Anderson

How to deal with being the target of a malicious rumour.

Last year I became the target of malicious gossip. I'm ordinary, in my forties with a husband, children and a small group of friends I've known for several years, so to be a target of an unsubstantiated character assassination blindsided me. No smoke without fire the saying goes, but there was no fire I could think of. *Jen was a newcomer to our social group and was the instigator of wild allegations about me almost immediately. 'She's nuts,' a close friend said, 'Ignore her.' Easy to say but when long-standing friends turned their backs on me it hurt.

Usually if someone dislikes us we rationalise it: they are loud, and we are quiet; they have different core values; we represent a minority group they have a visceral reaction to. None of these applied. I had no idea what had caused this or how to react.



I stopped going for drinks and left the yoga group we both belonged to. I felt sad and isolated. In desperation I emailed a friend who is a clinical psychologist. Her advice changed everything, and I offer it to you here.

Ignore: My first friend was right about ignoring the gossip. Rumours often have a

short lifespan if they are deprived of oxygen.

Don't deny too hard: If anyone questions you say, 'That's not true,' then change the subject.

Laugh it off: A roll of the eyes and a smile can give the impression that only an idiot would believe the gossip. People don't want to be idiots, so this approach may make them question the rumour.

Don't react: Like ignoring. Don't shout or cry. Gossips love to create drama. If you don't react, there's no drama... move along, nothing to see here.

Keep your real friends close: Gossip at least reveals who you can trust. Those who stand by you are true friends. Let them know how much you appreciate them, but never bitch about the gossip. Keep yourself above all that. It's hard to do but worth it...believe me!

Don't seek revenge: It's tempting, it really is, but don't. The best revenge is to live the best life you can.

Acceptance: If someone decides to go full character assassination on you there is little you can do. The best policy is to carry on being the person you are. Stay true to you and wait it out.

I had to accept that because of the actions of one woman, my friendship group changed. Some friends stood by me, others turned their backs. But things settled to a new normal. I joined a new yoga group, which turned out to be better, started a ballroom dancing class and made some new friends along the way. I may never know why Jen tried to ruin my life, but I've moved on and can honestly say it no longer matters.

**Not her real name*

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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

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

Sudoku Solution
from page 34

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

Crossword Solution
from page 34

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