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# Boo!

Welcome to the October edition.

**As soon as October hits we all start thinking about Christmas. But there's Halloween and Bonfire Night to enjoy first. Check out page 6 to see what you can do to get into the seasonal spirit and make the most of your time now that the nights are longer and colder.**

With Christmas approaching, it's a time of year many of us set deadlines – we want the extension finished by then, the carpets professionally cleaned, the gutters cleared... whatever you need help with there are a range of local professionals who advertise in this magazine who are ready and willing to help.

*Zoe*

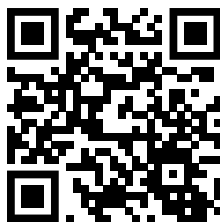
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# community events

## Hatton Pumpkin Spooktacular

**22-30 October, Hatton Adventure World**

October half term is set to be a scream when the Hatton Pumpkin Spooktacular returns. The popular Warwickshire family attraction will once again be awash with ghosts, ghouls, cobwebs, and pumpkins! Tickets from [adventure.hattonworld.com](http://adventure.hattonworld.com)



## Elf The Musical

**1-5 November, The Core Theatre Solihull**

Based on the beloved holiday film, this hilarious fish-out-of-water comedy follows Buddy the Elf in his quest to find his true identity. This modern-day holiday classic is sure to make everyone embrace their inner elf. After all, the best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear. Tickets available at [thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk](http://thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk)

## Solihull Round Table Fireworks

**5 November, 4.30-9pm, Tudor Grange Park**



With tickets starting from just £2 where else can you find such a value for money, professional fireworks display? Tickets are available from [ww2.theticketsellers.co.uk/](http://ww2.theticketsellers.co.uk/)

## Simply Red Tribute Night

**26 November, Shirley British Legion**

Featuring Red Mick, the only Simply Red tribute used by Butlins, Grosvenor Casinos and P&O Cruises. The amazing sound a like Red Mick is a superb tribute artiste who's visual and vocal likeness to Mick Hucknall is really quite extraordinary. Tickets from [ticketsource.co.uk](http://ticketsource.co.uk)

## BBC Good Food Show Winter

**24-27 November, NEC**

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## Disney On Ice presents Dream Big

**26 - 27 November; 30 November - 4 December, Resorts World Arena**

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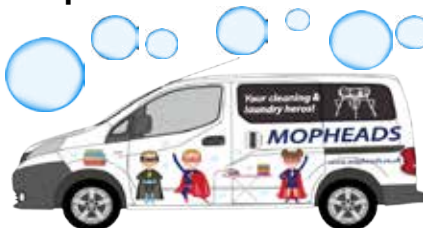
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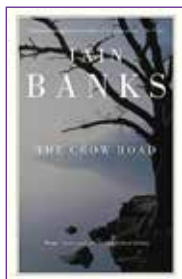
# a good read

By Natasha Donovan

## The Crow Road

Iain Banks

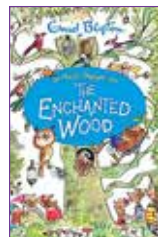
'He's away the crow road.'  
So says Prentice McHoan's grandmother before she too takes that path. I'm not sure why I'd never read Iain Banks before. If I'm brutally honest, I think I was put off by the monotone covers. It's not a great reason and it did drive home the point that you really can't judge a book this way! I picked up *The Crow Road* to read on a short break and I've been steadily devouring Banks' work since. If the cover didn't attract me then the opening line did: 'It was the day my grandmother exploded.' In the aforementioned Prentice, it has an engaging, honest, and endearing hero, and in his family it has a complex, disturbing and fascinating cast of characters. There is drama, humour, mystery, and philosophy in equal measure. What's not to love? The central strand of the story is the disappearance of Prentice's Uncle Rory – presumed dead by many, but presumed alive by Prentice's father, Kenneth. Rory's unfinished papers include the idea of 'Crow Road' – a novel? a factual account? Nothing is clear. As Prentice attempts to unravel the thread, Banks moves his own story backwards and forwards in time, switching perspectives and retelling events from different angles. For a novel which is frequently about death, there is an awful lot of humour too – often dark, but equally hilarious. Banks is also known for his science fiction, written as Iain M Banks, and he wrote a whisky-logue 'Raw Spirit,' which is both well written, and responsible for introducing me to this spirit. It was certainly a summer of firsts for me! *The Crow Road* will always have a special place in my heart though, because it was the novel that first introduced me to Banks.



## The Enchanted Wood

by Enid Blyton

For those of us of a certain age Enid Blyton was a childhood favourite. Through the eyes of an adult there is no doubt that she was a deeply flawed human being, though arguably she was simply a product of her upbringing. Her books drifted out of favour for many years, but many have recently been modernised for today's children...after all, a good story is still a good story several decades on. *The Enchanted Wood* is the first in the Faraway Tree series, in which three children find themselves living close to the most amazing tree you have ever seen. It grows different fruits at different points, depending on how it is feeling. It is inhabited by all manner of strange folk – Silky the fairy, the old Saucepan Man, Dame Washalot, and the Angry Pixie. At the top lives Moonface, in a perfectly round little house with a slide that runs right to the bottom of the tree. And best of all, there is a small ladder through the clouds which leads to a different magical land every time... Joe, Beth, and Frannie (the names have been updated from Blyton's originals) have all manner of adventures there. Sometimes the lands are full of fun – *The Land of Birthdays*, for example – while others are slightly more threatening – *Dame Snap* may no longer be *Dame Slap*, but her school is still somewhere no-one would like to visit! *The Enchanted Wood* was a favourite of mine as a child and this slightly tweaked version is a perfect chapter book for independent reading.







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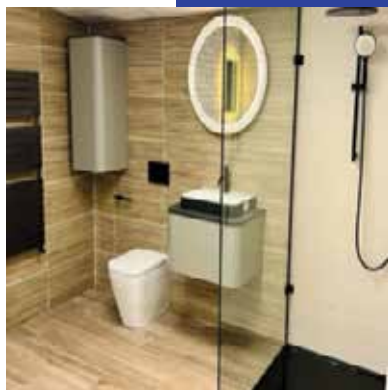
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## **DIVORCE TIPS:** **how to avoid going to court**

**If you're going through a divorce and want to keep the process out of contested court proceedings, then a Collaborative Law approach could be the best route for you and your family.**

### **What is Collaborative Law?**

This is where both parties each instruct a collaboratively trained lawyer and work together to find a suitable divorce settlement, including financial and child matters.

### **How is it different to mediation?**

While both approaches are based on the principle of negotiation and co-operation, in mediation an independent third party mediator facilitates discussions between the couple, usually without the presence of lawyers. Often the parties will have their own lawyers advising separately to the mediation process, a Collaborative Law approach includes lawyers in all meetings, which can speed up the process and remove potential miscommunication.

### **What are the benefits of staying out of court?**

Keeping your divorce out of contested court proceedings gives a higher level of certainty for both parties – as decisions are made jointly, rather than determined by a judge.

Taking a less confrontational approach also provides the best chance of an amicable relationship during and after the process.

Collaborative Law can also be quicker and cheaper – as you are no longer dependent on court timetables or paying court fees.

### **Is my divorce still legal without going to court?**

Absolutely. You will still get the legal separation, divorce and final court agreements and orders you need without using the contested court system.

### **Are there any circumstances where I shouldn't use Collaborative Law?**

While this approach is suitable for a lot of relationship breakdowns, there are some instances it would not be appropriate, such as cases with a history of domestic violence.



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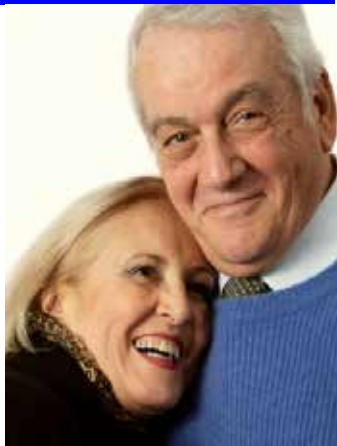
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## Christmas is a Coming

**S**orry to mention this but Christmas is right around the corner. Get ahead of the game with our pre-Christmas-season checklist.

**Clear out the food cupboards** Make room for festive goodies. Throw out all out-of-date items and things you know will never be eaten, even in a zombie apocalypse.

**Clear out the toy cupboards** Encourage your children to sort out toys they no longer play with and donate them to charity. It not only makes space for Christmas gifts, but it will also hopefully teach them compassion.

**Order meat early** Farmers' markets and shops are always packed out by the first week in December.

**Puddings and cakes** These need to be made early to give them time to

mature. Stir up Sunday is traditionally the time when Christmas puddings are made. It's the last Sunday before advent and this year it's on November 20th.

**Write any cards and annual letters** It's less of a chore than it used to be as more people eschew cards in favour of e-cards or texting, but for many people a card with a brief personal message is a welcome arrival in the post. If you get a few written every week in November then come December you can relax and feel virtuous.

**Check guest lists** It's worth checking who might be planning to spend Christmas with you well in advance so you can be prepared. Don't forget to ask whether anyone is vegetarian, vegan or has any allergies or intolerances. Forewarned is forearmed!



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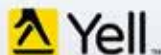
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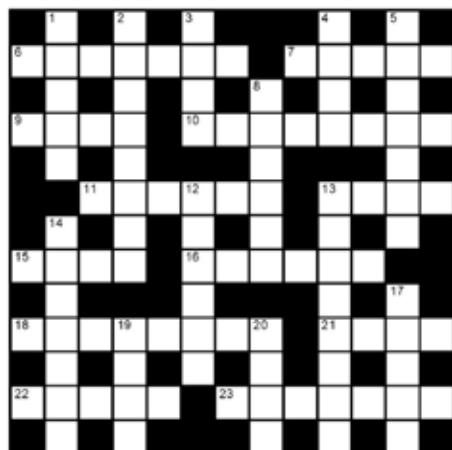
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# crossword



Down

- 1 Last, ultimate (5)
- 2 Ill health (8)
- 3 Water, air or oil \_\_\_\_ (4)
- 4 Flat circular object (4)
- 5 Wrap around (7)

- 8 One of the seven dwarves (6)
- 12 Successful or dominant person [informal] (3,3)
- 13 Building material (8)

- 14 Brought back to health (7)
- 17 Mass gathering to support a cause (5)
- 19 Every one (4)
- 20 Bound, printed work (4)

# clues

Across

- 6 Small multi passenger vehicle (7)
- 7 Musical instrument with 88 keys (5)
- 9 Ground dwelling songbird (4)
- 10 Sudden uncontrolled fear (8)
- 11 Be quietly furious (6)
- 13 Effortlessly charismatic (4)
- 15 Short pins used to secure a tent (4)
- 16 Furtive enquiring (6)
- 18 Attack by swooping down toward a target. (4-4)
- 21 Street (4)
- 22 Burp (5)
- 23 Cold and unfriendly (7)

answer on page 30




# 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 30



**Rayner House Care** is a private, not-for-profit residential care home in Solihull that also offers independent living apartments for rent, and an adult day centre.

**We're one of the most affordable residential care homes in the area, yet without any compromise on the quality of care offered.**

### Residential Care Home

Our facility is perfect for those who aren't safe to live alone, who need support with mobility or personal care, or who may have mild medical conditions such as Parkinson's. Prices start from just £770 per week, making us one of the most affordable residential care homes in Solihull.

### Independent Living Apartments

We have 21 flats, each with their own kitchen and bathroom, which are suitable for people who value their independence but would like some company, and the reassurance of knowing someone is there for help if needed 24/7. Rental prices start from just £154 per week.

### Adult Day Centre

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[heritagedrivesltd@gmail.com](mailto:heritagedrivesltd@gmail.com)

## Car Services

10	Crossroads Service Station	01564 703225
14	AP Alloys	07972 852758

## Care services

24	Dovehouse Court	0121 709 2339
28	Rayner House	0121 705 9293

## Cleaning Services

2	Sol Clean	0121 369 0070
7	Mopheads	0121 605 2322
20	Adchem	0798 544 6260

## Doors & Windows

7	Cloudy 2 Clear	0800 61 21 118
25	Garolla	0121 369 0933

## Electricians

9	Midland Electrical Group	0121 238 5949
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## Flooring

13	Number 1 Flooring	0121 745 9352
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## Gardens and Drives

12	Solihull Tree Care	0121 604 6809
18	Dimension Landscape & Driveways	0121 733 1463
22	Drives 4 U	07773 911552
26	Central Drives & Landscapes	0121 702 1456
29	Heritage Drives & Landscapes	0121 690 5581

## Graphic and Website Design

19	Hot Lobster Design Ltd	0121 369 1977
----	------------------------	---------------

## HR & Employment Law

31	Schofield & Associates	01564 739 103
----	------------------------	---------------

## local police contact for solihull

Solihull Police Station:  
0845 113 5000 or 101



**Sudoku Solution**  
from page 27



**crossword Solution**  
from page 27

## Kitchens and Bathrooms

3	Dream Doors	0121 744 8974
15	Gas Centre	0121 674 4211

## Plumbing Supplies

15	Gas Centre	0121 674 4211
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## Restaurants

5	Monsoon	01564 829200
---	---------	--------------

## Roofing

1	N. Bird & Son	0121 743 6324
10	Deluxe Roofing	0800 747 1461
11	Revive Roofing	07854 623592
20	C Stevens Roofing	0121 733 1276
22	React Roofing	07922 230477

## Security

16-17	Damar Security Systems	0121 706 8666
-------	------------------------	---------------

## Solicitors

21	Shakespeare Martineau	0121 705 8151
----	-----------------------	---------------

## Taxi Services

32	A2B	0121 733 3000
----	-----	---------------

## Tuition

4	Explore Learning	0121 647 4395
---	------------------	---------------

### Solution to Mind benders

1. Up against the clock
2. Double Dutch
3. Fair play

## mindbenders

from page 22

## LOCAL COUNCILLORS SOLIHULL / SILHILL

### Mike Gough

Tel: 07480 253181

Michael.gough@solihull.gov.uk

### Peter Hogarth MBE

Tel: 0121 705 5455

phogarth@solihull.gov.uk

### Wazma Qais

Tel: 0121 709 3404

wazma.qais@solihull.gov.uk

## ST ALPHEGE

### Joe Tildesley

Tel: 0121 705 3086

joetildesley@solihull.gov.uk

### Angela Sandison

Tel: 07500 557427

angela.sandison@solihull.gov.uk

### Samantha Gethen

samantha.gethen@solihull.gov.uk

## Shirley Lions Club

0345 833 9547

## 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	0121 704 1451
Daleswood Health, Solihull	01675 489489

## Council

Solihull Council	0121 704 6000
------------------	---------------

## 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

**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.

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# A2B

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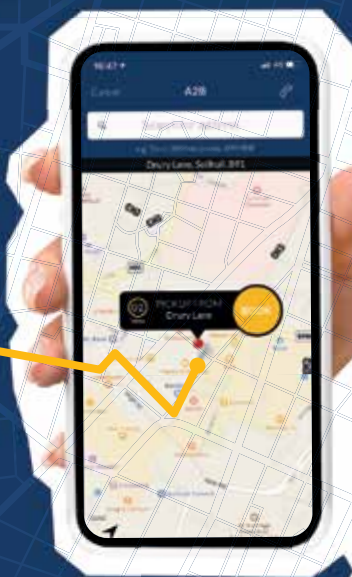
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