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Have an Eggsellent Easter!!

Welcome to the April edition...

I hope you enjoy your lovely long Bank Holiday weekend - whether you're planning on relaxing at home, jetting off on a long-awaited break, or are just going to use the time to catch up on all those jobs that never seem to get done.

And if you need help sorting out that never-ending list, why not see if some of the people and businesses who advertise in here can help you. Whether you need your roof fixed, the kitchen updated, your washing machine repaired, the house decorated, or a new carpet, there's lots of lovely local and helpful people in here who can help.

Zoe Reece

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Zoe



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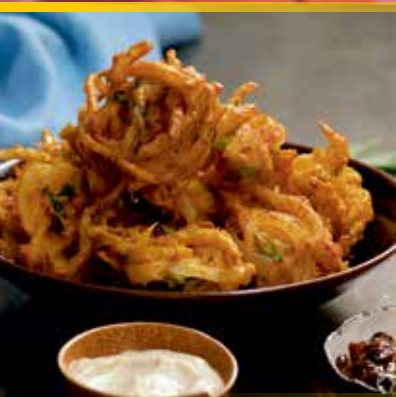
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community events

The Importance of being Earnest

15 May

The Core Theatre

Having finished its sold-out run at the National Theatre in January, this spectacular adaptation of Oscar Wilde's most celebrated comedy comes to the big screen at The Core Theatre. Call 0121 704 6962 to book.

Olly Murs

16 and 24 May

BP Pulse Live, NEC

Fresh from his nationwide tour as special guest to Take That last year, Olly Murs has announced a massive UK Arena tour! Get ready to party with a set that features all the hits and more! Blue will be special guests on this must-see Arena tour which comes to bp pulse LIVE in May 2025! Tickets from www.bppulselive.co.uk



Nature Craft for Adults

19 May, 10.30am - 12.30

Parkridge Café, Brueton Park

Spend two hours at the beautiful Parkridge Nature Reserve in Solihull creating nature inspired arts and crafts. No experience needed as all crafts are aimed at

beginners. All resources supplied and session price (£10) includes bottomless tea and coffee. Tickets from www.warwickshirewildlifetrust.org.uk

Bon Jovi / Bryan Adams Tribute Night

28 June

Royal British Legion Shirley

Get ready to rock out to the iconic hits of Bon Jovi and Bryan Adams at this Tribute Night! Whether you're coming alone or with friends, you're in for an unforgettable evening filled with great music and good vibes. Tickets from www.ticketsource.co.uk

Knowle VE80 Celebrations

10 May

Knowle High Street

Once again Knowle High Street is going to be the hub of a great community event, joining other towns and villages coming together to unite to celebrate 80 years of peace since the end of World War II in Europe. Enjoy an artisan market, community stalls, street food, and a mix of performances from local dance schools, musicians and tribute acts to the 1940's.





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The best cafes and coffee shops In Solihull

Top rated cafes in Solihull

We're in an era of customer reviews, and so finding top-rated establishments has never been easier. Some of the best cafes locally, according to Google reviews, include:

- **Black Orange café** in Solihull town centre gets 4.9 out of 5 on Google reviews. They offer a wide selection of hot and cold drinks, including a range of fruit teas, as well as a selection of savoury snacks and desserts.
- **The Bloom Cafes** on Hobs Moat Road in Solihull (4.8 on Google) offer a wide range of savoury brunches including full English breakfasts, chicken waffles, avocado on toast, loaded porridge, and yoghurt bowls.
- **Swan Yard Coffee & Kitchen** in Knowle gets 4.7 on Google and offers full English breakfasts and eggs on toast, as well as delicious treats such as cinnamon rolls and rocky road – all displayed in a glass cabinet right in front of your eyes to really tempt you!
- **Hallie's Café** in Monkspath also gets 4.7 out of 5 stars on Google reviews and offers sweet treats, milkshakes, ice cream, Biscoff pancakes, sausage rolls, bagels,



sandwiches and breakfasts. Is your mouth watering yet?!

And there's more...

Trip Advisor is another good source of top-rated venues, and the following coffee shops in Solihull are all featured in their top 5:

- If you're after breakfast but it's 3pm, don't worry, **Boston Tea Party** in Solihull town centre offers an all-day brekky. They also serve lighter breakfasts, brunch, lunch, toasties, cakes and freshly baked pastries.
- **The Two Mugs** is an independent café in Shirley where you can take your pick from a breakfast and brunch menu, their sandwich and toastie menu, a kid's menu, and even a dog's menu!
- **Elderberry Blacks** is an

independent café serving breakfast, brunch, and lunch on Knowle High Street. Take your pick from full English breakfasts, pancakes, sandwiches and, of course, coffee and cake!

- **Bora Coffee** is an independent, family run, coffee shop, located in Shirley High Street. Turkish poached eggs, breakfast sandwiches, granola bowls and French toast feature on the menu, as do smoothies, frappes and milkshakes.
- **Swan Yard Coffee & Kitchen** in Knowle, as mentioned above

To see a full listing of all the cafes and restaurants in Solihull please visit:
<https://hellosolihull.co.uk/eating-out-in-solihull/>

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Book Review **All Systems Red** by Martha Wells

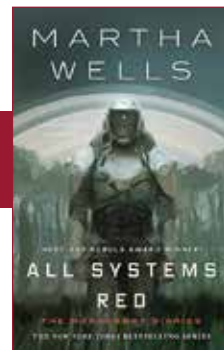
This is the first novella in the Murderbot Diaries series. It's a riveting and witty exploration of identity, autonomy, and humanity through the perspective of a self-aware security bot. The protagonist, a rogue SecUnit that refers to itself as "Murderbot," has hacked its governor module, gaining freedom from its programming. Despite this, Murderbot prefers to spend its time consuming media rather than engaging with humans or exploring its newfound independence.

The story follows Murderbot as it reluctantly protects a

group of scientists on a survey mission to an uncharted planet. When their mission is jeopardized by a rival corporation's sabotage, Murderbot must confront its fear of human interaction in order to save its clients. Through its interactions, Murderbot reveals a deep internal struggle with its purpose, autonomy, and desire to remain emotionally distant, even as it inadvertently forms bonds with the humans it protects.

Although officially Sci-fi, sceptics of the genre shouldn't be put off. This is at

its heart, character-driven storytelling with added sharp commentary on technology and human relationships. The blend of humour, and high-stakes adventure makes it a winner for all readers.





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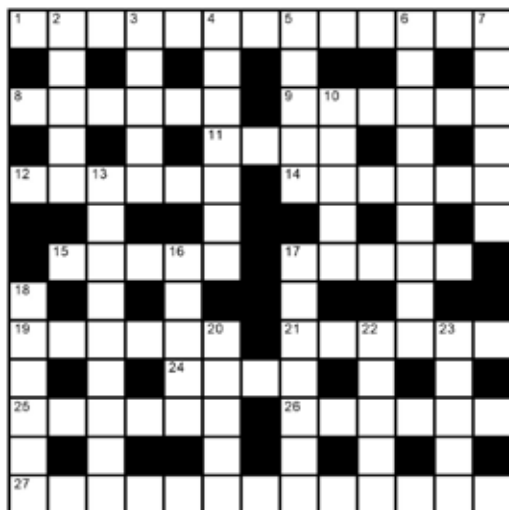


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crossword



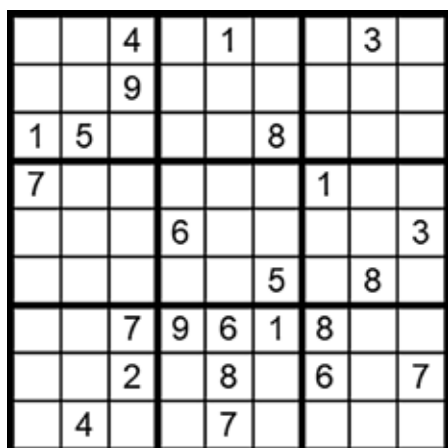
clues

- 1 Useful kitchen gadget (4,9)
- 8 Panama, Suez, Caledonian _____ (6)
- 9 Friendly, united (6)
- 11 Large American wild cat (4)
- 12 Breakout, flee (6)
- 14 Communal, mutual (6)
- 15 Surface, side (5)
- 17 Series of linked metal rings (5)
- 19 Prejudiced, wrongful (6)
- 21 Glum (6)
- 24 Automobiles (4)
- 25 Flip, overturn (6)
- 26 Offer recommendation (6)
- 27 Tolerant, empathetic (13)

Down

- 2 Ellipses (5)
- 3 Play, production (5)
- 4 Admire, value (7)
- 5 Muscle spasm (5)
- 6 Genre of painting (5,4)
- 7 Curtail, dwindle (6)
- 10 Chuckle, guffaw (5)
- 13 Rich in underground seams of fuel (9)
- 16 Throw out, dislodge (5)
- 17 Starchy tuberous root (7)
- 18 Agency, office (6)
- 20 Grinds, rubs (5)
- 22 Extremely angry (5)
- 23 Builder (5)

answer on page 18



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 18



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Grow your own herb garden

Growing a herb garden is a rewarding and practical way to

add fresh flavours to your cooking while enhancing an outdoor or indoor space with greenery and fragrance. It's easy to create a beautiful and productive herb garden in almost any space, indoor or outdoor.

Herbs are pretty forgiving and can be grown in a variety of pots, planters, and raised beds, depending on your available space and aesthetic preferences.

Clay or Terracotta Pots provide excellent drainage and a rustic look but dry out quickly, so frequent watering is required.

Wooden Planters are a good option for a natural aesthetic, but they need to be constructed from untreated or food-safe wood to avoid chemical leaching.

Window Boxes are perfect for growing kitchen herbs close to where you cook, ensuring easy access to fresh ingredients.

Hanging Baskets are ideal for small spaces, they also allow trailing herbs like thyme and oregano to cascade beautifully,



Recycled containers

such as tin cans, mason jars, grocers' wooden crates and old sinks all make excellent and free containers to create a quirky, unique herb garden.

Whatever container you choose, ensure it has drainage holes to prevent root rot.

For a functional and attractive herb garden, select a combination of herbs that thrive well together and are useful in the kitchen. Obviously think about the herbs you use a lot, and plant these, but also consider unusual variations on your favourites such as lemon mint, lemon thyme and purple sage.

Ideas for group plantings:

Mediterranean Herbs -

Rosemary, Thyme, Oregano, and Sage – These herbs prefer

drier soil and full sun, making them perfect companions in the same container.

Soft-Leafed Herbs - Basil, Parsley, and Coriander – These require more moisture and partial sun, making them a great trio in a different planter.

Aromatics - Mint, Lemon Balm, and Chives – These herbs are fast-growing and versatile. Mint in particular should be planted separately to prevent it from smothering all the other plants.

Tea Garden Herbs -

Chamomile, Lavender, and Lemon Verbena – These are great for herbal tea-lovers like me and grow well together.

Once planted, most herbs thrive on a bare minimum of attention. Mediterranean herbs thrive best in full sun and require less water.

Others are happy in partial sun and their soil should be moist but not soggy.

If you use the herbs regularly in cooking, the constant trimming naturally encourages bushier growth and prevent them from flowering too early.

If you have a bit of a glut I recommend freezing sprigs or bunches of leaves in water, packed in ice cube trays. You can throw a few cubes into a casserole or soup or teapot whenever you like.



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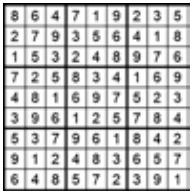
Councillor surgeries

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 Saturday of every month, 10am – 12 noon, excluding bank holidays, for both Silhill and St Alphege residents.



Crossword Solution
from page 14



Sudoku Solution
from page 14

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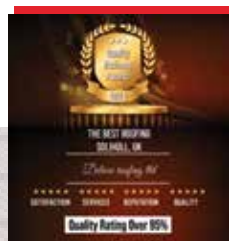
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