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# Summertime!

Welcome to the July edition...

**At the time of writing this the sky is distinctly overcast but here's hoping by the time this reaches you we are firmly in Summertime!**

After all, there's loads of great places to visit in the local area, which are so much more enjoyable if the sun's shining. If you want some inspiration on what's on in the area, then head to page 6 where you can find out about al fresco theatre and afternoon tea. Wishing you a great month ahead. Until next month,

Zoe

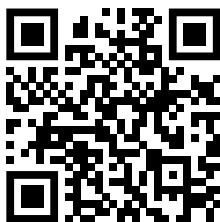
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# community events

## Awful Auntie

**3 August, 7pm. Brueton Park.**

Awful Auntie by David Walliams, adapted for the outdoor stage by Heartbreak Productions, is a heartfelt but hilarious hoot of an adventure. Make sure you bring a blanket or chair to sit on, weather-appropriate gear, and a picnic. Call the Core Theatre Box Office to book on 0121 704 6962.

## Solihull Producers' Market

**6 August, 9am – 5pm.**

**Solihull High Street.**

Discover foodie, creative, quirky, and artistic traders. This event brings together the finest food, drink, and art and craft producers from across the region.



## Afternoon Tea at Jacques Restaurant

**26 August. Knowle High Street.**

Luxurious Afternoon Tea on Jacques' sun-soaked terrace. Gorgeous cakes, finely cut sandwiches & freshly baked scones. The perfect way to celebrate with friends and family. From £34.95. Call 01564 39333 to book.

## Singing Together

**10 September, 7.30pm,**

**Knowle Village Hall.**

The Knowle Village Hall Association is proud to present the Birmingham Canoldir Male Choir and the Birmingham Icknield Male Voice Choir "Singing Together", under the baton of Steve Roche. Tickets £15 from Stephen Yeomans on 01564 778163, Carolyn Abbott on 01564 779898, or from the Friday Coffee Morning at the Hall from 10am – Noon. The concert is being held in aid of the Knowle Village Hall Refurbishment Fund.

## Comedy Night

**10 September, Knowle**

**Royal British Legion.**

Featuring some fantastic talent with headline act Danny Deegan. Danny is a comedian, writer and actor who has become a regular at most of the major comedy clubs in the UK since he began performing in 2003. Visit [ticketsource.co.uk](http://ticketsource.co.uk) for tickets.

## Take That Tribute

**17 September, Shirley**

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## Robbie Williams

**15-16 October. Resorts**

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You need to hurry if you want to get tickets to see Robbie in Birmingham as the 15th has already sold out, so they've added in the 16th as an extra show! This is something you won't want to miss as it celebrates 25 years of hits. Book your tickets at [www.resortsworldarena.co.uk](http://www.resortsworldarena.co.uk)



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Summer driving can be hard on your car. Before hooking up your caravan or heading off to Cornwall make sure you check for potential problems.

**The battery** - Increased stop-start activity in summer traffic is hard on a battery. Add in a family's worth of mobile entertainment devices and the sat nav and the car's electrical juice can drain very quickly.

If your battery is old, consider replacing it before your holiday.

**The tyres** - Most people use cars for short trips only, then suddenly expect it to travel a couple of hundred miles to their holiday destination. Driving a long distance will exacerbate hidden tyre issues such as cracked or ageing rubber.

**Check your spare** - Some cars don't have one. If yours doesn't it will have a repair kit. Its best to familiarise yourself with it before the journey.

Also know that if your tyre is very damaged you will have to call out a tyre replacement service. This is where being a member of a breakdown service comes in very handy!

**The Clutch** - That slow-moving summer traffic is also hard on clutches. A failing clutch will have been noticeable for a while. It will slip or have a high 'bite'. Don't ignore these warning signs. Get it checked before travelling.

**The Alternator** - If your car's battery light keeps flickering it might be a sign of your alternator struggling. Just like the battery this can be tipped into failure by slow-moving traffic coupled with extra devices being charged. You do NOT want your alternator to fail on your holiday because it isn't an instant fix, so check it before you travel.

If your car is fully serviced and running well you have minimised the risk of spoiling your holiday.

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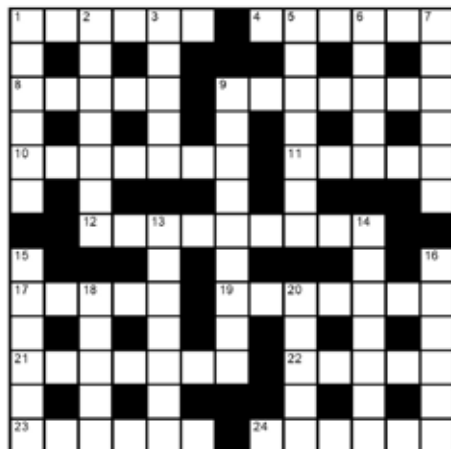
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## crossword



## clues

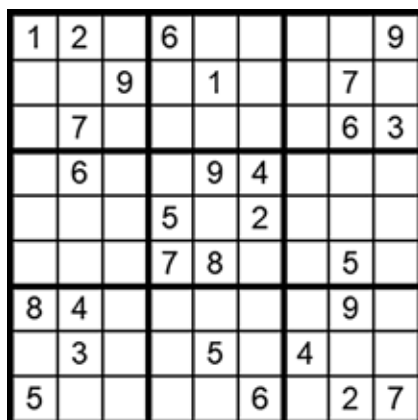
### Across

- 1 Pierced, punctured (medical) (6)
- 4 Atones (6)
- 8 Squander (5)
- 9 Disciple (7)
- 10 Extend (7)
- 11 Divide in two (5)
- 12 Maze (9)
- 17 Regulations (5)
- 19 Authorise, enable (7)
- 21 Aid, assist (7)
- 22 Bestowed (5)
- 23 Plundered goods (6)
- 24 Catches, traps (6)

### Down

- 1 Furthest down (6)
- 2 Nasal hole (7)
- 3 Occurence (5)
- 5 Black water bird (7)
- 6 Pre-\_\_\_\_, before birth (5)
- 7 Brochette, spit (6)
- 9 Despicable (9)
- 13 Coy, reticent (7)
- 14 Nevertheless (7)
- 15 Blackmails (6)
- 16 Sips, gulps (6)
- 18 Slow tempo (musical term) (5)
- 20 Follower of ancient religion (5)

answer on page 26



## 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 26

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# Ratatouille

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Cooking time - 30 mins to 1 hour  
Serves - 4



## Ingredients

2 aubergines  
4 small courgettes  
2 red peppers  
4 large tomatoes  
4 tbsp olive oil  
2 onions, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, crushed  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp sugar  
salt and freshly ground  
black pepper  
small bunch basil, torn

## Method

Chop the aubergines into chunks about 2.5cm square.

Cut the courgettes into 2.5cm thick slices. De-seed the peppers and cut these into bite-sized chunks. Peel the tomatoes - score a cross in the base of each tomato and place them in a heatproof bowl. Pour over enough boiling water to cover and set aside for one minute. Drain and, when cool enough to handle, peel away the skins. Roughly chop the flesh. Heat the oil in a flameproof casserole dish and add the chopped onions. Cook

gently for 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden-brown and tender. Add the aubergines and courgettes and cook for 2-3 minutes. Stir in the peppers, garlic, sugar, some salt and pepper and half the basil and mix well. Cover and cook over a very gentle heat for 20 minutes. Add the tomatoes to the pan and cook for a further 10 minutes. Scatter the ratatouille with the remaining basil and serve with crusty garlic bread or Focaccia.



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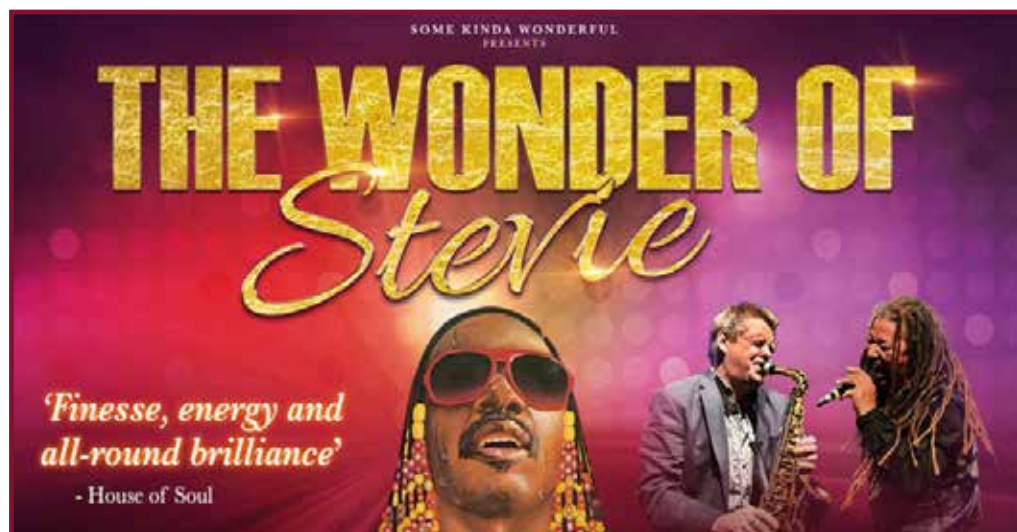
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# a good read

## Hamnet

by Maggie O'Farrell

This novel is the fictional retelling of the life of Anne Hathaway, who was married to William Shakespeare. The bard is never actually named in the book, which forces us to concentrate on Anne. Shakespeare left no documentation about his personal life: if he wrote diaries, they are lost. This leaves O'Farrell free to use her imagination within an historical context. Agnes - pronounced 'Anyis,' also known as Anne, is a farmer's daughter, who is married for love to a younger man with few obvious prospects. She is a gifted herbalist with psychic abilities, whose confidence and self-assuredness marks her out among women of her time. He is the son of a bully, with a love of the intricacies of language and a penchant for wordy puns. They certainly make an unusual couple. O'Farrell's novel comprises of a series of interwoven short stories, centring on each of the characters. Some of the earlier stories involve Anne's extended family of in-laws, which whom the couple live following her first pregnancy, and her arrangements for her husband to seek his fortunes in London, while she's pregnant with twins. In spite of their separation, the couple remain close until one of the twins, Hamnet, dies aged 11. The stories then centre on their shared grief and the strain this puts on their relationship, which culminates in him publishing his most famous tragedy, 'Hamlet'. O'Farrell writes beautifully and if you like attention to historical detail coupled with elegant storytelling then you'll love this book. If you prefer a spare, more fluid style of writing then you might find the going a little slow. O'Farrell also adopts the trend of writing women from history as possessing contemporary traits. I didn't find this an issue, but I can imagine purists wondering if Anne really would have been quite as liberated as she's written here. A wonderful read for history-lovers with a satisfying ending.



## Through the Mirror Door

by Sarah Baker

Books like 'The Lion, the Witch & the Wardrobe', 'The Secret Garden' and 'The Ghosts of Motley Hall' are timeless children's novels which immerse the reader in another world. This was Sarah Baker's entry into this particular genre of children's literature, and it doesn't disappoint.



Angela is orphaned and living in foster care when she's invited on a family holiday with a distant aunt. Whisked away to crumbling manor house in France, she's bullied by her cousins, Kitty and Fliss. Angela feels isolated and lonely in the spooky house until she discovers Julien who becomes her only friend. But Julien is in danger, and she has to keep him a secret. His life is at stake, and Angela is the only person who can save him. As Angela races against time to save her friend, she also has to cope with the nefarious plans of her aunt and cousins. This delightful, spookily dark story is ultimately an uplifting tale about the power of friendship. And it has a nice twist at the end too.

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**LOCAL COUNCILLORS**

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

**Sudoku Solution**  
from page 17

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

**Crossword Solution**  
from page 17

**All aspects of arboriculture work undertaken.**

**Pruning, thinning, reshaping, crown lift, reductions, removals and stump removal.**

- All hedge work
- All waste removed
- All work guaranteed to the highest industry standards
- Fully insured
- Free advice and quotations
- NTPC Qualified Workforce



### **COVID-19 UPDATE:**

We are still working – safely and in line with Government guidelines regarding social distancing

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