

# the solihull index

[www.solihullindex.com](http://www.solihullindex.com)

Delivered FREE to 5700 homes

## N.BIRD & SON ROOFING SERVICES

*SAME QUALITY TODAY AS IT WAS IN 1987*



### FREE QUOTES

EST 1987 SOLIHULL BASED

### 0121 743 6324

LOCAL FAMILY RUN BUSINESS

- Small Repairs
- Flat Roofs
- New Roofs
- Ridge Tiles
- Chimney Work
- Lead Work
- UPVC Fascia & Soffits
- Full Gutter Replacements
- Small brickwork jobs



249 Lyndon Road, Solihull B92 7QP



Visit [www.hellosolihull.co.uk](http://www.hellosolihull.co.uk) to discover local events, restaurants and businesses

**Built on trust and reliability, we have been in the roofing business for over 30 years**



### **Our services include:**

- New slate and tiled roofs
- Flat roofs
- Chimneys
- Velux roof windows
- Repointing
- Roof timberwork
- Solar panel installation
- And more!

**Our highly qualified roofing experts will complete your roofing tasks, quickly and efficiently.**



### **Promise To Our Customers**

We guarantee to offer you a dependable service, offering outstanding quality at realistic prices, with your complete satisfaction being our number one priority.

**Please call John: 07854 623 592 or Office: 0330 043 6806 to arrange your free inspection and quotation.**

[john@reviveroofingandbuildingsolutions.co.uk](mailto:john@reviveroofingandbuildingsolutions.co.uk)  
[www.reviveroofingandbuildingsolutions.co.uk](http://www.reviveroofingandbuildingsolutions.co.uk)

# CHRISTMAS TREECYCLING

By Birmingham Hospice  
— 11 and 12 January 2025 —

Take the hassle out of disposing of your Christmas tree. Book to have it collected and recycled by your local hospice.



Scan to book

Book today at [birminghamhospice.org.uk/treecycling](http://birminghamhospice.org.uk/treecycling) or call 0121 465 2009

In partnership with:



Operating partners:



Hello  
Solihull



## GET THE MOST OUT OF SOLIHULL

Looking for ideas on where to eat?

Want to know where to shop for menswear / jewellery / furniture...?

In search of a plumber / accountant / builder / solicitor...?

Visit [www.hellosolihull.co.uk](http://www.hellosolihull.co.uk) for

a comprehensive list of shops,  
restaurants, hotels and  
businesses in Solihull.

[www.hellosolihull.co.uk](http://www.hellosolihull.co.uk)  
[hello@hellosolihull.co.uk](mailto:hello@hellosolihull.co.uk)  
07557 220585

# Merry Christmas

Welcome to the December edition

**Wishing you all a very merry Christmas.**

**Christmas will be just around the corner by the time this reaches you. So here's hoping you're all stocked up with goodies and gifts to see you through the festive season.**

It can be the most wonderful time of the year, but it can also be the loneliest. If you have time why not try reaching out to any local people who live on their own to see if they'd like a cup of tea and a chat. However you spend your Christmas, here's hoping you have a lovely time and wishing you all a happy and healthy 2025.



Zoe Reece

Tel: 07557 220585

Email: [zoe@dorridgedirectory.com](mailto:zoe@dorridgedirectory.com)

[www.solihullindex.com](http://www.solihullindex.com)



**ADVERTISE  
HERE**

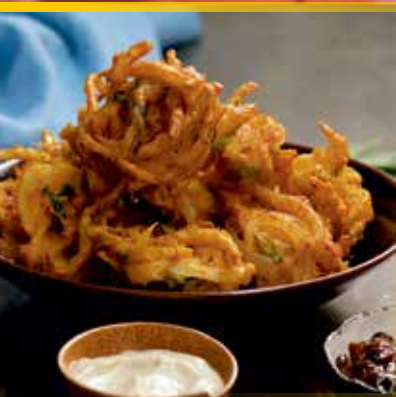
**Contact Zoe Reece on 07557 220585 /  
[zoe@dorridgedirectory.com](mailto:zoe@dorridgedirectory.com)**

**Locally designed by:** hotlobster design ltd **Printed by:** Norwood Press

**PLEASE RECYCLE THIS MAGAZINE**



MONSOON  
**20**  
YEARS  
2003-2023



**OFFER:  
MONDAY &  
TUESDAY**

**ANY STARTER  
ANY MAIN DISH\*  
ANY NAN OR RICE  
& COFFEE\*\***

**£16.00<sup>PP</sup>**

\*(Fish, Lamb Shank  
& King Prawns  
£4 extra per dish)  
\*\* (Plain Coffee)



# community events



## Santa's Christmas Cracker

**20-24 December, The Core Theatre Solihull**

Father Christmas is busy making toys, Dotty the Elf is decorating the Christmas tree and Dasher the Reindeer is getting presents onto his sleigh - but then they meet a lost penguin who has never even heard of Christmas... This 45-minute family show is particularly suitable for 2-7 year olds and afterwards each child gets to meet Father Christmas and receive a specially wrapped present. For tickets please visit [www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk](http://www.thecoretheatresolihull.co.uk)



## Back to the '60's Party Night

**10 January, Nailcote Hall**

Join in for a night of fun, flair, and funky beats as they transport you back to the

fabulous 1960s with DJ Franco. Dust off your bell-bottom and put on your platform shoes for an evening filled with dancing, laughter, and nostalgia. Their Party Nights include a three-course dinner and DJ. For tickets visit [www.nailcotehall.co.uk](http://www.nailcotehall.co.uk)

## Young Voices

**13 - 17 and 29-31 January and more, bp pulse LIVE (formerly Resorts World Arena)**

For over 29 years, Young Voices has been at the forefront in delivering an extraordinary concert experience for primary school children and this is why it isn't just any children's choir concert; it's the largest children's choir concerts in the world! More info: [www.bppulselive.co.uk/whats-on/young-voices](http://www.bppulselive.co.uk/whats-on/young-voices)

## Bee Gees Tribute Night

**15 February, Shirley British Legion**

Prepare for a night of nostalgia and timeless tunes as they pay homage to the iconic Bee Gees with their Bee Gees Tribute Night. Join in the fun at Shirley British Legion for an unforgettable evening celebrating the music and legacy of one of the greatest bands in history. Tickets from [www.ticketsource.co.uk](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk)



EVERY HEALTHCARE

# A Warm Welcome Awaits

Introducing Birchmere House, Birchmere Mews and Knowle Gate Care Homes. Experience exceptional residential, nursing, dementia and respite care in our warm and welcoming communities. Join us in setting a new standard of care.

Birchmere House

☎ 01564 621933

Birchmere Mews

☎ 01564 621505

Knowle Gate

☎ 01564 621645

[averyhealthcare.co.uk](http://averyhealthcare.co.uk)

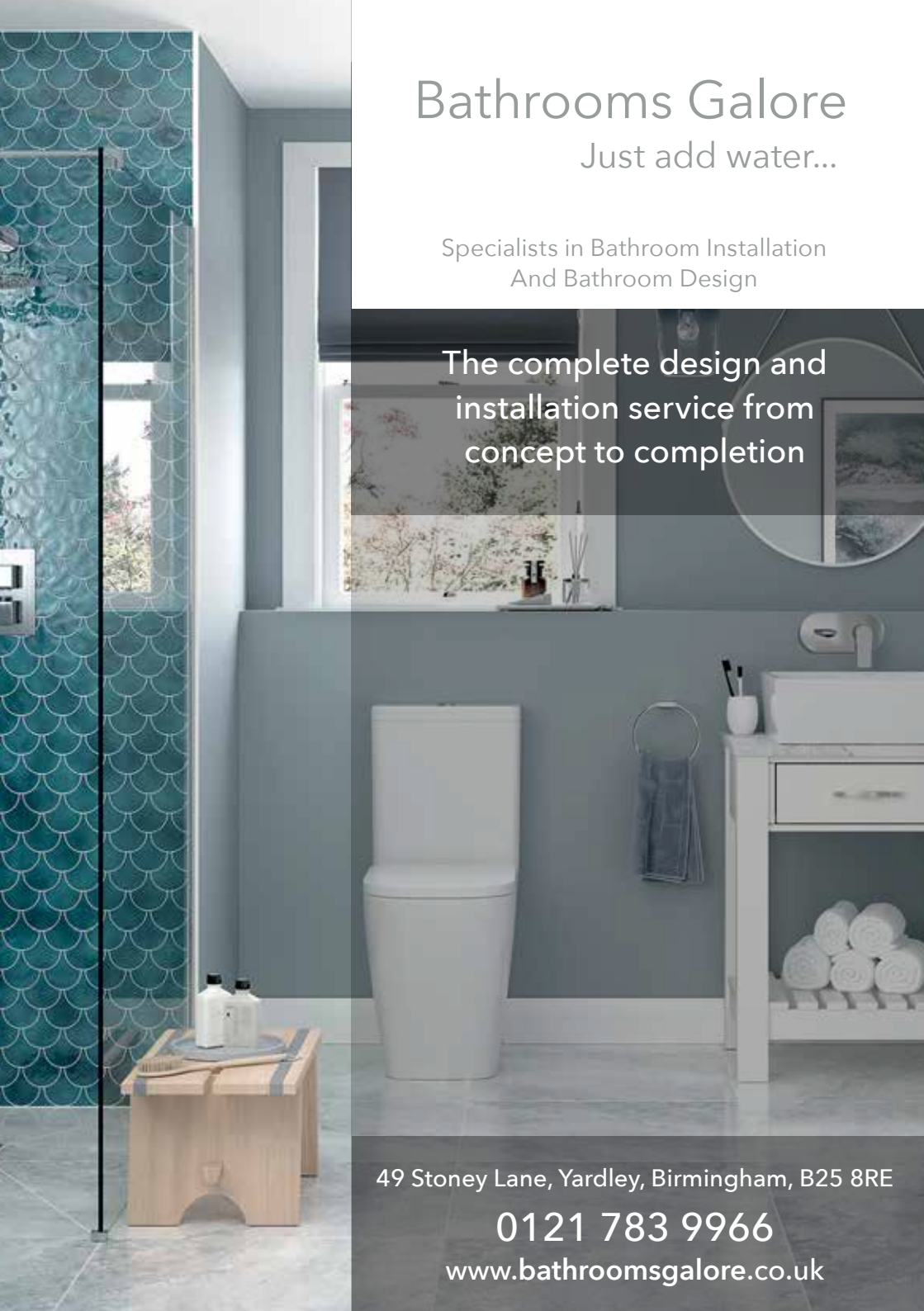


# Bathrooms Galore

Just add water...

Specialists in Bathroom Installation  
And Bathroom Design

The complete design and  
installation service from  
concept to completion



49 Stoney Lane, Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RE

0121 783 9966

[www.bathroomsgalore.co.uk](http://www.bathroomsgalore.co.uk)



# Are you ready for Labour's major employment law changes this month?



HR Advice & Guidance



HR Compliant Documents



HR Consultancy



Coaching for Managers



HR Training for Managers



For a free, information and completely confidential chat please get in touch.

0121 750 0382

[www.synergisehr.co.uk](http://www.synergisehr.co.uk)

# C. STEVENS ROOFING

## EST FAMILY BUSINESS

NEW TILED ROOFS • GUTTERS  
FLAT ROOFS • BRICK WORK  
LEADWORK • SMALL REPAIRS  
UPVC FASCIAS • CHIMNEYS



KNOWLE

SOLIHULL

01564 790008 0121 733 1276



[WWW.CSTEVENSROOFING.CO.UK](http://WWW.CSTEVENSROOFING.CO.UK)



### Our Services

Delivered by a team of highly qualified and registered healthcare professionals, our services include:

- Psychological Assessment
- Psychological Therapy
- Autism Assessments
- Occupational Therapy
- Sensory Assessment

## Mental Health & Neurodiversity Services

At the Purple House Clinic we understand that psychological health is as important as physical health. We believe that everybody deserves to be happy and fulfilled in life, and we are committed to helping people overcome, or adapt to, life's challenges.



0121 820 7851



[birmingham@purplehouseclinic.co.uk](mailto:birmingham@purplehouseclinic.co.uk)



Coleshill - with easy access from the M42

## YOUR LOCAL EXTERNAL CLEANING SPECIALISTS

# AUTUMN & WINTER

an ideal time to clean outside spaces  
ready for you to enjoy in Spring & Summer

### Our Cleaning Services:

- ✓ ROOFS
- ✓ PATIOS
- ✓ CUTTERS INSIDE & OUT
- ✓ MOSS REMOVAL
- ✓ FASCIAS & SOFFITS
- ✓ STONEMWORK
- ✓ DRIVEWAYS
- ✓ RENDER & CLADDING

**CALL NOW FOR A FREE QUOTE**



0121 369 0070   
07546 264164

[enquiries@solclean.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@solclean.co.uk) [www.solclean.co.uk](http://www.solclean.co.uk)

VIEW SOLCLEAN ONLINE



# AND SO TO BED

LONDON

**EXCLUSIVE OFFER**  
**TWO FREE LUXURY PILLOWS WITH**  
**ANY MATTRESS PURCHASE IN STORE\***

## SOLIHULL SHOWROOM

**BOOK YOUR SLEEP  
EXPERT CONSULTATION:**



**VISIT US AT:**

441 STRATFORD ROAD SHIRLEY  
SOLIHULL WARWICKSHIRE B90 4AA

Free parking at the front  
of the showroom.

**OPENING HOURS:**

MON-SAT 9.30-17.30  
SUN 10.30-16.30

**EMAIL:**

[solihull@andsotobed.com](mailto:solihull@andsotobed.com)

**AIRELOOM.**  
CALIFORNIA DESIGN - HANNOVER

**VISPRING**  
Luxury Beds - London 1901

  
**TEMPUR**

**ANDSOTOBED.CO.UK | 0121 392 2505**

\*PLEASE MENTION THIS ADVERTISEMENT IN STORE TO REDEEM

# Christmas Gifts with a twist

With Christmas approaching, finding the perfect gift can be a challenge, especially when you want to avoid the ubiquitous bubble bath and socks. Here are some unusual but meaningful Christmas gift ideas that are sure to delight and surprise your loved ones this holiday season.

## Personalized Star Maps -

These maps show the exact alignment of the stars on a significant date in the recipient's life, whether it's their birthday, an anniversary, or another special occasion. Star maps make for stunning wall art but also carry deep sentimental value. They serve as a reminder of a cherished moment, making them both thoughtful and unique.

**Experience Gifts** - Experience-based gifts have become increasingly popular as most of us concede we own too much 'stuff.' They can be tailored to the recipient's interests, whether they're adventure seekers or food lovers. For someone who values experiences over material possessions, this type of gift shows that you've thought carefully about what would make them happiest, whether that's a cooking class, hot air balloon ride, or a wine tasting tour.

**Subscription Boxes** - For a gift that keeps giving beyond



Christmas Day these curated boxes can cater to all kinds of hobbies and tastes. Whether your recipient enjoys gourmet snacks, skincare products, books, or gardening, there's a subscription service for them. Subscription boxes add an element of surprise, as the recipient gets to enjoy their gift over time, reminding them of you with each delivery.

**Charity Donations in Their Name** - For those who value giving back, consider making a charitable donation in their name. This gift is both thoughtful and impactful, as it helps a cause that's meaningful to them. Many organizations offer the option to send a personalized card or certificate, informing the recipient of the donation. Whether it's supporting animal welfare, environmental initiatives, or community projects, this is a great way to make a difference while honouring someone's values.

**Customized Art Pieces** - This could be anything from a hand-drawn portrait of their pet, a

family illustration, or a map of their favourite city. With many artists offering bespoke services online, you can find a style that perfectly suits the recipient's taste. This kind of art is not only beautiful but also deeply personal, ensuring it will be a cherished keepsake for years to come.

**DIY Gift Kits** - These allow the recipient to make something themselves. These kits come in a variety of options, from making candles or soap to brewing their own beer or planting a mini herb garden. DIY kits are interactive, engaging, and give the recipient a sense of accomplishment. Plus, they can enjoy the finished product long after the holidays have passed.

Finding a gift that's both unusual and thoughtful doesn't have to be difficult. The key is to select something that reflects the recipient's personality and interests. These gift ideas go beyond the ordinary, offering a unique way to show your loved ones how much you care this Christmas.

Working **together**  
to find a solution  
**RAYDEN**SOLICITORS



### There might be challenging times in your life when a family law solicitor can help:

- Have you decided your marriage or relationship is over, are you unsure about your family's future?
- Do you need to protect your children, or understand the options to resolve arrangements for your children?
- Do you need a pre nuptial or post nuptial agreement to protect assets?
- Are you moving in with your partner and need a cohabitation agreement?

Choosing the right family lawyer for your circumstances is crucial. Rayden Solicitors are family law specialists with many years' experience; we provide tailored and practical solutions in all areas of family law - divorce, relationship breakdown, child arrangements and financial settlements.

Bespoke advice from Rayden Solicitors in Birmingham.

Contact us, [enquiries@raydensolicitors.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@raydensolicitors.co.uk)

3rd Floor  
2 Edmund Gardens  
121 Edmund Street  
Birmingham  
B3 2HJ

Tel: 0121 314 8170.

**Specialist** family lawyers.  
**RAYDEN**SOLICITORS

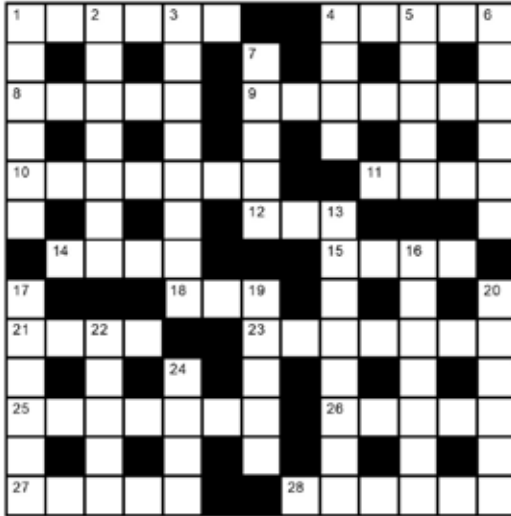


**RAYDEN**SOLICITORS  
[www.raydensolicitors.co.uk](http://www.raydensolicitors.co.uk)

We are available on



## crossword



## clues

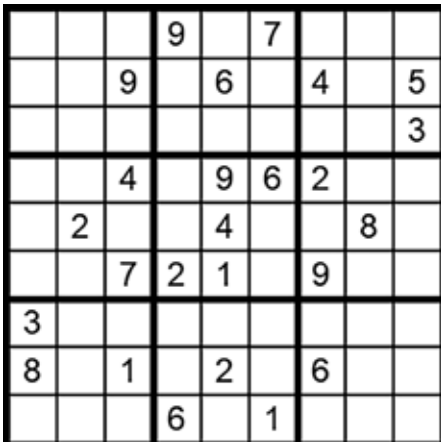
### Across

- 1 Contribute, give (6)
- 4 Demise, end (5)
- 8 Jeopardy (5)
- 9 Sank the Titanic (7)
- 10 Distinctly (7)
- 11 Indian dress (4)
- 12 Deceive (3)
- 14 Sung in church (4)
- 15 Reveal, display (4)
- 18 Fasten, attach (3)
- 21 Idol, venerated image (4)
- 23 Wander aimlessly (7)
- 25 Gift (7)
- 26 Modify (5)
- 27 Appoint, nominate (5)
- 28 Affluence, riches (6)

### Down

- 1 Portray, illustrate (6)
- 2 Baby's room (7)
- 3 Forgiving, lenient (8)
- 4 Means of losing weight (4)
- 5 Stadium, amphitheatre (5)
- 6 Scottish meat pudding (6)
- 7 Resin used to make gramophone records (5)
- 13 Heighten, intensify (8)
- 16 Weirdo, eccentric (7)
- 17 Small alcoholic drink (6)
- 19 Barren, deserted (5)
- 20 Walking aid (6)
- 22 Very overweight (5)
- 24 Loaned (4)

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



# Rightio Plumbing & Heating

0121 206 3761

We work in  
**Solihull, Elmdon,  
Bickenhill, Cathrine-  
de-Barnes and all  
surrounding areas.**

## COMPETITIVE RATES

- ✓ Fast Response
- ✓ All Work Guaranteed
- ✓ Flexible Appointment Times

### 12 Month

Guarantee  
on labour!

Excludes blockages

### OAP

**Discount**

Speak to  
us today!

### 1-2 Hour

Emergency  
Response  
time!



650921

## OUR SERVICES

- ✓ Boiler Breakdowns
- ✓ Boiler Servicing
- ✓ Radiators & Pipes
- ✓ Tanks & Cylinders
- ✓ Toilets & Taps
- ✓ Leaks & Bursts
- ✓ Showers
- ✓ Clearing Blockages
- ✓ Pipework Replacement
- ✓ Gas Safe Certified

Hello  
Solihull



## FREE LISTING TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS

All Solihull businesses, or those who work in the area, can claim a free online listing

Visit [www.hellosolihull.co.uk/add-a-listing/](http://www.hellosolihull.co.uk/add-a-listing/)

Add your details, choose an upgrade option if you wish, and we'll publish your details.

**It's that simple!**

[www.hellosolihull.co.uk](http://www.hellosolihull.co.uk)  
[hello@hellosolihull.co.uk](mailto:hello@hellosolihull.co.uk)  
07557 220585

Does your website  
look old, dated and you're  
not sure what to do?



hotlobster design offers you up-to-date  
websites to replace your tired ones.

Bespoke content managed websites are cheaper than you think.  
Call now for a chat about your website, social media & marketing needs.

hotlobster   
design • marketing • web • print

0121 369 1977

[www.hotlobster.uk.com](http://www.hotlobster.uk.com)



# He's Behind You!

## The hybrid history of British pantomime

**N**othing screams "Christmas" like a man in a dress, a villain with a twirly moustache, buckets of glitter and two hundred primary school kids yelling, "He's behind you!" at the top of their lungs. But how did this strange blend of slapstick comedy, fairytales, and audience participation come to be such a beloved British institution?

The story begins with a touch of Italian flair. Back in the 16th century, traveling Italian performers introduced *commedia dell'arte* to Britain - a form of street theatre featuring exaggerated characters, physical comedy, and chaotic plots. These Italian performers laid the groundwork for what would later become the pantomime.

Fast-forward to the 18th century, when British pantomime took a lively turn with the introduction of the *harlequinade*. This French tradition starred the mischievous Harlequin, along with a host of other quirky characters, like Columbine, and a clumsy clown. This genre was all about the absurd, which naturally appealed to our British sense



of humour and soon, a cross-dressing, slapstick holiday extravaganza was born.

It didn't take long before British pantomime became inseparable from the festive season. Classic tales like *Cinderella*, *Aladdin*, and *Jack and the Beanstalk* were given the pantomime treatment, which usually meant taking a folk tale and lacing it with terrible puns, some highly questionable costumes, and a lot of shouting. Oh, and the pantomime Dame - a role famously played by a man in full makeup and flamboyant frock - became a comic staple. In fact, if you attend a panto and don't see a man dressed as an outrageously bejewelled matron, were you even at a pantomime?

Audience participation is, of course, the heartbeat of any panto. British pantomimes invite everyone to get involved. Is the villain skulking on stage? Everyone shout, "Boooooo!" Has the hero lost something? Cue the audience yelling, "It's behind you!" And if

there's a "ghost scene," all the cast and audience members have to collectively attempt to rid the stage of the spooky intruder, usually by screaming and laughing.

Add to this the tradition of peppering shows with minor celebs, contemporary jokes, local shout-outs, political quips, and a dollop of satire, and you have a show that feels both timeless and wonderfully ridiculous. Every British child will remember their first panto, an event that's equal parts festive cheer and complete mayhem.

So there you have it! Pantomime is part dash of Italian influence, with a soupçon of Gallic panache, a splash of British slapstick, and a whole lot of nonsense - a tradition where laughter, cross-dressing, and heckling from the audience are actively encouraged. No wonder it's become such a hit; it's everything British culture loves, rolled into one chaotic, uproarious holiday spectacle.

Have you bought your panto tickets yet?

# ADVERTISE HERE

Advertise

Contact Zoe Reece on 07557 220585 /  
zoe@dorridgedirectory.com

## 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

Sardul Marwa MBE

Tel: 07940 775122

sardul.marwa@solihull.gov.uk

Bob Grinsell

Tel: 07515 527345

bob.grinsell@solihull.gov.uk

Samantha Gethen

Tel: 07360 648047

samantha.gethen@solihull.gov.uk

## local police contact for solihull

Solihull Police Station: 0845 113 5000 or 101

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

(supply & 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.



Crossword Solution  
from page 14



Suduko Solution  
from page 14

# Have Your Windows Steamed Up?

Finance  
Options  
Available

Replace just the failed glass unit!

All glazing backed by our

**25**  
**YEAR**  
GUARANTEE

Looking to upgrade your existing  
windows and doors? UPVC,  
composite or aluminium.

Contact us NOW!



TRUSTMARK  
Government Endorsed Quality

Checka  
trade

FENSA  
APPROVED  
MEMBER OF THE FENSA GROUP



Get a FREE Quote

Social distancing in operation

Faulty locks, handles or hinges?



REPLACING YOUR FAILED DOUBLE GLAZING

Priority freephone

**0800 61 21 118**

[www.cloudy2clear.co.uk](http://www.cloudy2clear.co.uk)

Love Your Home - Protect Your Windows - Save Money



A fully insured and highly skilled roofing company based in Solihull, West Midlands with many years experience. Deluxe Roofing Ltd is a professional, reliable roofing company with unrivalled expertise in the industry.

- New Roofs • Flat Roofs • Minor Repairs • Fascias and Guttering
- Insurance Work • Moss Removal • Rebedding of Ridge Tiles • Chimneys
- Valleys • All Guttering Cleaned and Repaired **from £49.99**

**OFFICE: 0121 314 99 53 FREEPHONE: 0800 747 14 61**

MIDLANDS BRANCH

UNIT 70, 123 STRATFORD ROAD, SHIRLEY. B90 3ND

[WWW.DELUXEROOFINGLTD.CO.UK](http://WWW.DELUXEROOFINGLTD.CO.UK)



**Belmont@Home**  
provide bespoke  
home care service  
designed to fit  
perfectly around  
each individual.

If you wish to stay in your own  
home with your own front door,  
safe in the knowledge that  
someone is there to care for you  
- we can help!

Get in touch today

**0121 295 8905**

[homecare@belmonthhealthcare.co.uk](mailto:homecare@belmonthhealthcare.co.uk)



Inspected and rated

Good



**Belmont@Home** care services flex to each  
individual because every day is different

