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Love is in the air!

Welcome to the February edition

Hopefully you had a Valentine's Day full of love, whether it was love from a partner, a family member, a friend, or a pet!

But if Valentine's Day just passed you by, why not show your home some love instead? There's a wide range of local businesses and tradespeople in here who can help you improve your home, whether you need doors, driveways, or decorating...

Until next month,



Zoe Reece
Tel: 07557 220585
Email: zoe@dorridgedirectory.com
www.solihullindex.com

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a bright yellow knitted sweater, shouting enthusiastically into a white and yellow megaphone. The background is a solid light pink color.

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TO SHOUT ABOUT?**

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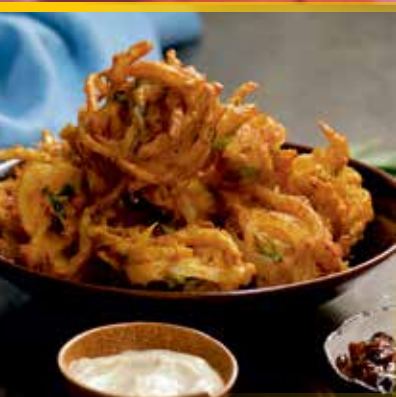
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community events

Community Support Coffee Mornings

**Last Tuesday of every month,
11.15am-12.45pm**

Drum & Monkey, Dorridge

Each coffee morning, organised by Bright Dawn Home Care, will feature a different guest speaker, focusing on topics such as dementia, MS, stroke recovery, and motor neurone disease. For the February meeting a representative from Parkinson's UK will be attending to give a talk and answer any questions. More info: 01564 784598.



decade of big hair and even bigger tunes. Dust off your leg warmers and shoulder pads, as fancy dress is encouraged, and embrace the era in style! Their DJ will be spinning the best 80's tracks, so grab your friends and family and get ready to rewind to the 80's in style! Tickets from www.limescountrylodge.co.uk

80's Party Night

28 February The Limes Country Lodge, Earlswood

Get ready to disco back in time and join in for an evening of neon, nostalgia, and non-stop hits from the



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**6-9 March
NEC, Birmingham**

Get your tickets to the world's greatest dog show, brought to you by The Kennel Club, and get ready to experience the ultimate day out for dog lovers of all ages. To book please visit www.thenec.co.uk/whats-on/crufts/

West End Nights

**14-15 March
Core Theatre Solihull**

Come on a journey through shows from a history of over 60 years. Knowle Musical Society have performed everything from Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, Rodgers and Hammerstein classics to the premiere of the more unusual Tale of Two Cities musical and everything in between. In this show they will celebrate some of their favourite musicals. Call 0121 704 6962 to book.

ABBA Tribute Night

**15 March
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Ideas for February half term

In Solihull

For those on a budget this half term

- Enjoy a stay-at-home games day. Have some board games at the ready or if they're all 'boring' head to your local charity shop who should have a collection of jigsaw puzzles and board games.
- Set up your own treasure hunt, where they have to find the treasure (chocolate bar?!) by finding clues and following the trail.
- Kids love a challenge! Task them with reading a page a day or a book over the week, depending on their ability. Or try a drawing competition – there's some great videos on YouTube.
- Don't forget about simple card games like Uno, snap, Go Fish, and Rummy – the rules are simple and it brings out everyone's competitive side! Or paper games like hangman, creating your own word searches and mazes, and noughts and crosses. With any leftover paper just Google origami ideas and see if you can create origami animals or hats.
- For those feeling more creative you could get your kids to build a fort – all you need are chairs,



towels, sheets, maybe a clothes airer – as well as the promise they'll tidy it all up at the end of the day!

Ideas on where to go if it's raining

It's always handy to have some ideas at the ready for those rainy days this half term in Solihull when no-one quite knows what to do with themselves.

- If you fancy mini golf or bowling you could try Spinners in Touchwood.
- Wrap up warm and head to Planet Ice in Solihull – just turn up for a skate or maybe book some lessons and stop your kids from looking like Bambi on ice!
- For those feeling active head to Flash Climbing

Centre in Solihull. They offer a range of classes to suit all ages and abilities.

- Cineworld in Touchwood is another good option – it always feels such a treat to watch the latest movie on a big screen with a bag of popcorn.
- Burn off some energy at Tudor Grange Leisure Centre – go swimming, try their roller disco on Friday and Saturday evenings, or book a tennis or badminton court.

To discover how to get the most out of Solihull please see our other articles, from ideas on eating out, to the best local businesses in the area: www.hellosolihull.co.uk/articles



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Autism and Sensory Processing: The Importance of Assessment

Autism is characterized by differences in social communication, behaviour, and sensory processing. Sensory processing refers to the way individuals perceive, interpret, and respond to sensory input, such as sound, light, textures, or movement. For individuals with autism, sensory processing challenges are common and can significantly impact daily life.

Sensory processing assessments provide a framework to identify hypersensitivity (over-responsiveness) or

hyposensitivity (under-responsiveness) to sensory stimuli. For example, a child may feel overwhelmed in noisy environments or seek excessive tactile input by constantly touching objects. These assessments often involve parent interviews, direct observation, and standardized tools like the Sensory Profile or the Sensory Processing Measure.

A thorough sensory assessment helps uncover the root causes of behaviours that might otherwise be misunderstood, such as avoiding certain activities,

struggling with transitions, or exhibiting repetitive movements. Understanding sensory preferences and challenges enables professionals to design tailored interventions that promote self-regulation, comfort, and engagement.

Here at the Purple House Clinic our sensory processing assessments are a valuable tool for enhancing the quality of life for individuals with autism. By recognizing and respecting sensory needs, we can create more inclusive spaces where everyone can thrive.



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.

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Mushroom Stroganoff

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Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 20 minutes

Serves: 2

Ingredients

2 tsp olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped.
1 tbsp sweet paprika
2 garlic cloves, crushed.
300g mixed mushrooms
150ml vegetable stock
1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
3 tbsp sour cream
Small bunch of parsley,
roughly chopped.

Method

Heat the olive oil in a large non-stick frying pan. Add the onions and soften for about 5 mins. Add the paprika and garlic, then cook for 1 minute more. Roughly chop and add the mushrooms, then cook over a high heat, stirring often, for about 5 mins. Pour in the stock and Worcestershire sauce.

Bring to the boil and allow to simmer until the sauce thickens (5-10 minutes). Remove from the heat and stir through the soured cream and most of the parsley. Serve with rice (it goes particularly well with brown or wild rice) stirring through the remaining chopped parsley just before plating the dish.

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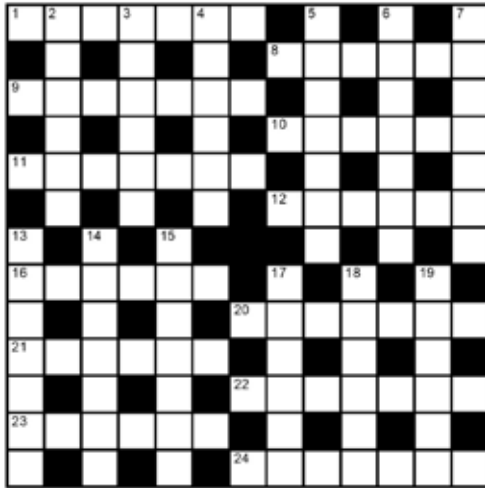


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We are available on



crossword



clues

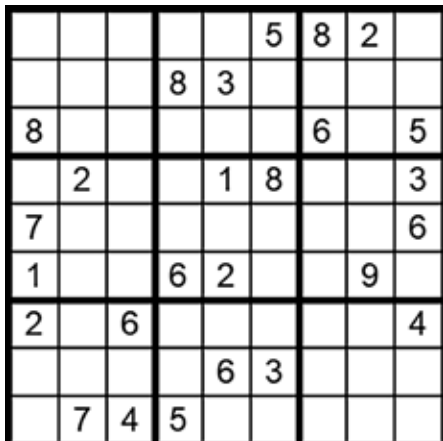
Across

- 1 Herbaceous perennial with edible stalks (7)
- 8 Itsy bitsy, teeny weeny, yellow polka dot _____ (6)
- 9 The Moor of Venice, Shakespeare play (7)
- 10 Type of biscuit (6)
- 11 About-face (7)
- 12 Picked, selected (6)
- 16 Composer of Fantaisie-Improptu (6)
- 20 Sang A Perfect Day and Walk on the Wild Side (3,4)
- 21 Tropical lizard (6)
- 22 Andalusian town (7)
- 23 Pollen-producing part of a flower (6)
- 24 Aerial, signal receiver (7)

Down

- 2 Enmity, contempt (6)
- 3 Infused, fermented (6)
- 4 Appreciate, enjoy (6)
- 5 _____ West, Dalton and Spall (7)
- 6 Bystander, spectator (7)
- 7 Explanation of how the universe began (7)
- 13 Astronomical event, can be solar or lunar (7)
- 14 Beloved, favoured (7)
- 15 Innovator (7)
- 17 Anne _____, second wife of Henry VIII (6)
- 18 Contusion, blemish caused by injury (6)
- 19 UK's smallest bird of prey (6)

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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Naturalistic Garden Planning

My gardening resolution for 2025 is to further embrace naturalistic gardening. Over the past decade I've found that I'm leaning increasingly towards supporting rather than fighting nature in my own garden and I encourage others to do the same. Naturalistic gardening is a great way to foster biodiversity.

Planning - Think of this as a long-term venture, which will grow and develop over years not months. Start by observing the natural environment. Consider the soil type, light conditions, and moisture levels. Is your plot sunny, shaded, or prone to dampness? These factors will guide your plant selection.

Next, think about the style and feel you want. Naturalistic gardens are informal and mimic wild habitats, such as meadows, woodland glades, or coastal dunes. Choose one of these as your inspiration and design your layout accordingly.

A key principle of naturalistic design is to create a tapestry of plants that blend harmoniously. Avoid rigid rows or overly manicured shapes. Instead, plant in drifts or clusters to mimic the way plants grow in the wild. Paths made of natural materials like gravel, bark,



or stepping stones can help guide visitors while maintaining a soft, organic feel.

Planting - Select native and wildlife-friendly plants to support pollinators and other beneficial species. For a sunny spot try wildflowers like ox-eye daisies (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), cowslips (*Primula veris*), and field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*).

For shadier areas, consider ferns such as hart's tongue (*Asplenium scolopendrium*) or woodland flowers like bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*). Grasses, including tufted hairgrass (*Deschampsia cespitosa*) and meadow foxtail (*Alopecurus pratensis*), will add movement and texture.

Shrubs and small trees, such as hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) or silver birch (*Betula pendula*) will add

structure and provide shelter for birds and insects. About twenty years ago I planted a wild hedgerow. It was the best gardening decision I ever made. It's full of birds and other wildlife all year round.

When planting, mimic natural patterns by mixing species and varying heights to create layers. Avoid bare soil; densely planted areas help suppress weeds and retain moisture.

Once planted, a naturalistic garden requires less maintenance than traditional gardens. Allow plants to self-seed and spread naturally. Mulch with organic matter to enrich the soil and suppress weeds. Resist the urge to tidy too much - leaving seed heads and fallen leaves to provide food and habitat for wildlife during winter.



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zoe@dorridgedirectory.com**

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local police contact for solihull

Solihull Police Station: 0845 113 5000 or 101

Misc

Solihull Council 0121 704 8001

Health

NHS non-emergency 111
 Solihull Hospital 0121 424 2000
 Spire Parkway Hospital 0121 704 1451
 Grove Surgery 0121 705 1105
 Northbrook Group Practice 0121 746 5000
 Hobs Moat Medical Centre 0121 742 5211
 Daleswood Health 01675 489489

Utilities

Electricity power cut 105
 Gas leak 0800 111 999
 Severn Trent Water 0300 034 2222
 Severn Trent Water (emergencies) 0800 783 4444

Travel

National Rail Enquiries 03457 484950
 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 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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