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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  
Tel: 07557 220585  
Email: [zoe@dorridgedirectory.com](mailto:zoe@dorridgedirectory.com)  
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## GOT SOMETHING TO SHOUT ABOUT?

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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](http://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.warwickshirewilllifetrust.org.uk](http://www.warwickshirewilllifetrust.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](http://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.





Join us for  
our next  
events

## Blossomfield Grange care home, Solihull

### VE Day street party celebration

**Thursday 8th May, 2pm - 4pm**

Join us to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day. Enjoy an afternoon of delicious food, entertainment, and dancing as we celebrate the spirit of the 1940s..

---

### Friendship café

**Last Monday of every month, 11am - 12 noon**

Join us for our monthly friendship café where you can meet like-minded people in the community for a chat, over a complimentary hot drink and freshly baked treats, prepared by our talented Head Chef.

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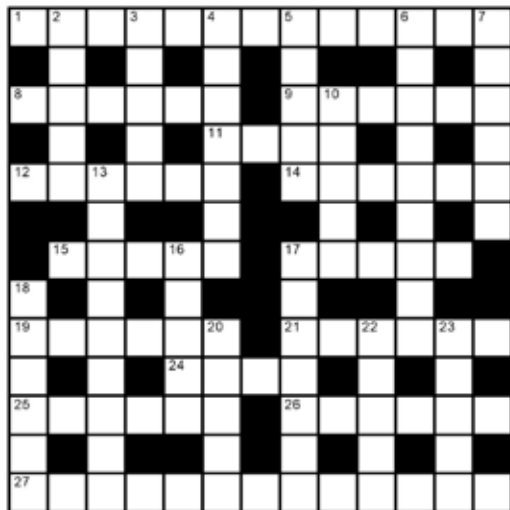


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## crossword



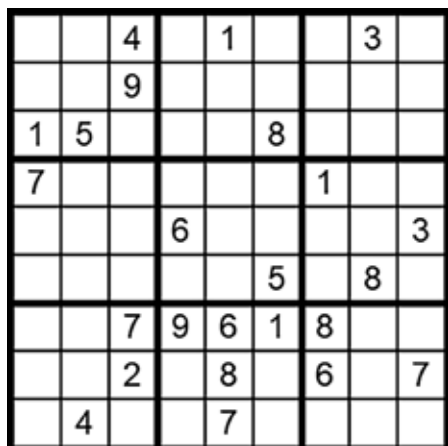
## clues

- 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 14



## 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 14





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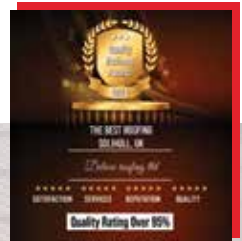
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# Grow your own herb garden

**G**rowing 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.

# Rhubarb Crumble Cake

Use in-season Rhubarb to make this New-York style crumble cake.



## Ingredients

### Crumble top

260g plain flour  
1 tsp baking powder  
300g soft light brown sugar  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg  
1/2 tsp salt  
170g unsalted butter,

### Cake

260g plain flour  
70g wholewheat flour  
2 tsp baking powder  
1 1/2 tsps. ground ginger  
1/2 tsp salt  
300g light soft brown sugar  
170g unsalted butter, softened.  
2 tsps. vanilla paste  
4 eggs at room temperature  
225ml buttermilk or natural yoghurt  
400g Rhubarb, cut into 1.5-2cm chunks.

## Method

### Crumble Topping

Melt the butter in a saucepan.

In a bowl sift together the flour, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking powder and salt. Stir through the sugar then add the melted butter and mix together with a spoon until it clumps together and becomes crumbly. Set aside.

### Cake

Preheat the oven to 180C / 160 fan Gas mark 4. Line a 13x9-inch pan with greaseproof paper so the paper overhangs the sides of the pan. Sift together the flours, salt, baking powder and ground ginger, adding the bran from the wholewheat flour. Place the brown sugar, softened butter, and vanilla in the bowl of a stand mixer and beat on medium speed until fluffy and pale. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition until well combined.

Fold in one third of the flour mixture gently. Add half of the buttermilk and mix until just combined. Add the next third of the flour mixture and fold in. Add the remaining buttermilk, mix it in then add the remaining third of the flour and fold until just combined. Finally mix everything together gently for another 30 seconds to make a smooth batter. Place the batter in the pan and spread evenly. Sprinkle half the rhubarb over the top of the batter, then spread two thirds of the crumb mixture, then the remaining rhubarb followed by the rest of the crumb mixture.

Place the pan so that the top is level with the centre of the oven and bake for 40-45 minutes. You don't need a thermometer to check if it's done but it does make things easier. The temperature of the cake in the centre should be about 95C when it's cooked. Remove from the oven and cool in the pan for 30 minutes. Use the excess greaseproof paper to remove the cake from the pan.

Allow the cake to cool completely. Sprinkle with icing sugar, cut into squares, and serve with thick yogurt or creme fraiche.



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

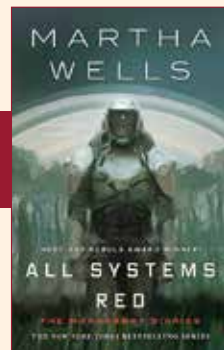
This is the first novella in the Murderbot Diaries series. It's a riveting and witty exploration of identity, autonomy, and humanity through the perspective of a self-aware security bot. The protagonist, a rogue SecUnit that refers to itself as "Murderbot," has hacked its governor module, gaining freedom 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.





## local police contact for Shirley

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### LOCAL COUNCILLORS

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## useful numbers

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

### Sudoku Solution

from page 8

F	O	O	D	P	R	O	C	E	S	S	O	R
V	R	E	R	T	E							
C	A	N	A	L	S	A	L	L	I	E		
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U	N	D	E	R	S	T	A	N	D	I	N	G

### Crossword Solution

from page 8



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