

# the shirley index

a community magazine and business directory  
for residents of shirley

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At Blossomfield Grange, we love to wave at passers-by on our many trips out in our minibus. Recently, residents have loved our trips to The Lickey Hills and Becketts Farm sunflower field.

On quieter days, residents are always welcome to enjoy afternoon tea in our café with friends and family or relax in our peaceful gardens with a chilled smoothie and a favourite book. Our hair and beauty salon is popular for those who love a pamper.

We recognise the importance of staying connected to local life. We're often visited by local schools, societies, and faith groups, who love to join in with our busy activities schedule.

## Wish upon a star

Is there a wish or goal you've always wanted to achieve? Hang your wish on our wishing tree, big or small, and our team will do our best to make it happen. Recently, residents have experienced football stadium tours, enjoyed private ballet performances and have even pulled a pint at their favourite pub!

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# Boo!

Welcome to the October edition

**As soon as October hits we all start thinking about Christmas. But there's Halloween and Bonfire Night to enjoy first.**

Check out page 6 to see what you can do to get into the seasonal spirit and make the most of your time now that the nights are longer and colder. With Christmas approaching, it's a time of year many of us set deadlines - we want the extension finished by then, the carpets professionally cleaned, the gutters cleared... whatever you need help with there are a range of local professionals who advertise in this magazine who are ready and willing to help.

Zoe Reece

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# community events



## Solihull Halloween Festival

**25 and 26 October 10-6, 27 October 10-4, Solihull High Street and Mell Square**

Visit the town centre for a wide range of food, drink, and shopping stalls where you can take your pick from tasty foods and beautiful crafts from around the world. And the kids haven't been forgotten,



as there will be plenty of entertainment to keep them amused.

## Little Ravers – Solihull Halloween Bumpkin Special

**30 October 1-3pm, PopworldSolihull**

This is Popworld for kids aged 2 to 12. They can have fun with a live DJ, UV lighting, free kid's face painting, and free pumpkin painting. There's also a licensed bar for the grown-ups. Book tickets at: [www.popworldparty.co.uk/solihull](http://www.popworldparty.co.uk/solihull)

## Wythall Bonfire & 2 Fireworks Displays

**2 November 6pm, Wythall Park**

Early bird tickets available for best value entry. 10 yrs & under FREE when accompanied. All proceeds to Wythall Park. Visit [www.wythallfireworks.eventbrite.com](http://www.wythallfireworks.eventbrite.com) for tickets.

## Fireworks Display

**3 November, gates open 4.30pm, Moseley Rugby Club**

Join the hospital charities for Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham, Heartlands, Good Hope and Solihull Hospital for their spectacular fireworks display. The event includes charity stalls, tombola, hot food, and a licensed bar available. Scan the QR Code to book or visit: [www.hospitalcharity.org/events/charity-fireworks-moseley](http://www.hospitalcharity.org/events/charity-fireworks-moseley)

## Pub Quiz Night

**12 November 8pm, The Greville Arms, Solihull**

Support Solihull Hospital Charity by joining in this quiz night – prizes include a meal voucher and cash. £3 per person, max 6 per team. To book please visit [www.hospitalcharity.org/events](http://www.hospitalcharity.org/events)

## Christmas Fair

**30 November 10am - 1pm, Knowle Village Hall**

Come and browse amongst a lovely selection of Christmas gifts and cards, Christmas wreaths for the door, books, Bric -a Brac, competitions and lots more, including the Grand Christmas Raffle! Refreshments will be available. All proceeds to the Hall refurbishment fund.

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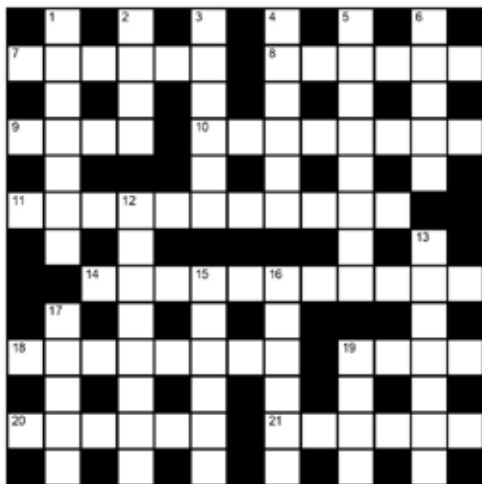
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## crossword



## clues

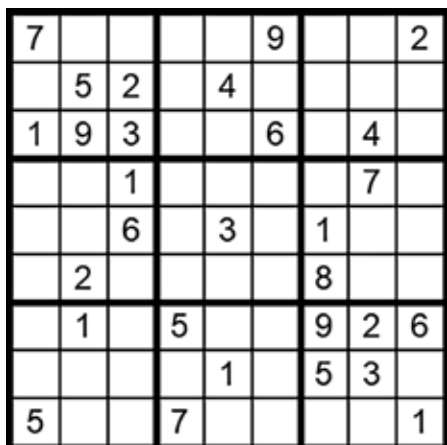
### Across

- 7 Graceful, drooping tree (6)
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_ Wisdom (actor) (6)
- 9 Giant, usually evil (4)
- 10 They pull Santa's sleigh! (8)
- 11 British seaside town (11)
- 14 Used to disguise or conceal (5,6)
- 18 Broadcast, relay (8)
- 19 Ruler of Mt. Olympus. (4)
- 20 Apparition, hallucination (6)
- 21 Finally (6)

### Down

- 1 Royal realm or province (7)
- 2 Abscond, scarper (4)
- 3 Deviate, sidestep (6)
- 4 Intense blue-purple (6)
- 5 Animal that catches and eats others (8)
- 6 Blanched, washed-out (5)
- 12 Fanciful, impractical (8)
- 13 Mexican alcoholic drink (7)
- 15 Japanese garment (6)
- 16 Appease, sooth (6)
- 17 Plait, weave (5)
- 19 Vivacity, zeal (4)

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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# Flu Jabs

While very few people now qualify for a free COVID vaccine, many groups of people qualify for a free flu jab, including those over 65, diabetics, asthmatics, people with chronic heart, liver or kidney disease, people with BMI over 40, carers and frontline health workers.

Why should an otherwise healthy person need a flu vaccine? Well, seasonal flu is a substantial and unpleasant illness, far worse than the common cold, with which it's sometimes confused. Flu generally requires a week or so off work to recover and can

trigger other conditions like bronchitis or pneumonia.

The average person with flu infects one or two other people through sneezing, coughing and touch. If you work with the general public, in a shop or hair salon for example, you are more at risk of being exposed to the virus so you might consider a flu jab a worthwhile investment.

A business owner may consider the impact a week off sick would have on their business and opt to protect themselves for that reason.

Children are much more likely to pick up and pass on bugs as



they are in such close proximity to each other all day. For this reason, teachers and parents might think it wise to have a jab.

Flu jabs are generally safe unless you have an allergy to eggs or have had a previous allergic reaction to a shot. So, discuss protecting yourself with your pharmacist today.

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answers on page 14

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# a good read

By Natasha Donovan

## If It Bleeds

by Stephen King

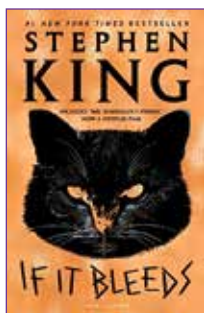
This is a collection of four compelling novellas that showcase King's mastery of storytelling. Mr. Harrigan's Phone: Craig, a young boy in a small town, befriends the reclusive and wealthy Mr. Harrigan.

After Mr. Harrigan's death, Craig continues to text his old phone, which was buried with him, and astonishingly, receives responses. The story explores themes of friendship, technology, and the supernatural consequences of the digital age.

The Life of Chuck: This novella is told in three acts, beginning with the end. It chronicles the life of Chuck Krantz in reverse, starting with the apocalypse and moving backward to his childhood. The story is a meditation on the significance of individual lives and the marks they leave on the world, blending reality with magical realism.

If It Bleeds: A sequel to another story, "The Outsider," this novella follows Holly Gibney of the Finders Keepers detective agency as she investigates a school bombing. Holly discovers that the reporter on the scene, Chet Ondowsky, is not who he seems. As she digs deeper, she uncovers a shape-shifting entity that feeds on human suffering, leading to a tense confrontation. This story highlights themes of resilience and the battle between good and evil.

Rat: Drew Larson, a struggling writer, retreats to a remote cabin to finish his novel. Stricken with writer's block and a series of unfortunate events, he makes a Faustian bargain with a rat, trading his success for a friend's life. The story examines the dark side of ambition, the cost of creativity, and the moral dilemmas faced by individuals in pursuit of their dreams. Stephen King's ability to weave intricate tales that delve deep into the human psyche is



legendary. And these four unconnected novellas are perfect for a bit of spooky-yet-easily digestible Halloween reading.

## The Haunting of Aveline Jones

by Phi Hickey

This enchanting and eerie tale tells the story of Aveline Jones, a young girl who is sent to stay with her Aunt Lilian in the seaside town of Malmouth during her autumn break. While exploring the town, Aveline stumbles upon a dusty old book of ghost stories in a second-hand bookstore. Intrigued by the tales within, she discovers that one of the stories involves a girl named Primrose Penberthy who mysteriously disappeared thirty years ago. As Aveline delves deeper into the book, she starts experiencing strange occurrences and eerie sightings, leading her to believe that Primrose's ghost is trying to communicate with her. Determined to uncover the truth, Aveline investigates Primrose's disappearance, despite her aunt's warnings and the townspeople's reluctance to discuss the past. Aveline's curiosity leads her to uncover dark secrets about Malmouth and its history. She learns that Primrose's disappearance is tied to a chilling legend and that the ghostly encounters she experiences are linked to a malevolent presence in the town. Will Aveline and her new friend Will, be brave enough to confront the supernatural forces at play, and bring peace to Primrose's restless spirit? "The Haunting of Aveline Jones" is a suspenseful and atmospheric tale of courage, mystery, and the supernatural. Perfect for an October fireside read.



## Mind Your Manners **When Trick or Treating!**

**H**alloween, once primarily an American tradition, has firmly taken root in the UK. Love it or loathe it, October 31st will bring with it groups of spookily clad youngsters, going door to door shouting 'Trick or treat!' As they venture out into the night, it's important for both trick-or-treaters and homeowners to observe some etiquette to ensure a fun and respectful evening for all.

### **TRICK-OR-TREATERS:**

#### **Costumes and Manners:**

Dress up in your best costumes and be sure to say "please" and "thank you" when collecting treats. Politeness



goes a long way in making a positive impression.

**Stay Safe:** Say in a group and have an adult accompany young children. Carry a torch or wear reflective clothing to stay visible. Householders

**Signal Participation:** If you're happy to welcome trick-or-treaters, make it clear with decorations, a lit pumpkin, or leaving the porch light on.

**Treats Only:** Provide wrapped sweets and chocolates for hygiene and safety.

**Respectful Refusals:** If you prefer not to participate, it's perfectly acceptable. Simply leave your exterior lights off and consider putting up a polite sign indicating you're not taking part.

**Be Inclusive:** Consider offering non-food treats as well for children with allergies or dietary restrictions, such as stickers or small toys. By following these simple guidelines, both trick-or-treaters and homeowners can enjoy a spooky, safe, and happy Halloween.

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## Fall for Autumn

**Forget Christmas, this is the most wonderful time of the year!**

Autumn in the UK is a season rich with charm and tradition. Here are five reasons to fall in love with this time of year:

### **Spectacular Autumn Foliage:**

The UK is home to some of the most breathtaking autumnal landscapes. From the woodlands in the Lake District to the golden hues of the Cotswolds, the countryside is ablaze with colour at this time of year.

Even city parks, like London's Hyde Park or Edinburgh's Royal Botanic Garden, offer stunning autumn displays.

**Bonfire Night:** A uniquely British tradition, Bonfire Night on November 5th is a highlight of the autumn season. It's a night filled with fireworks, bonfires, and the smell of roasting marshmallows. The historical significance of Guy Fawkes' failed Gunpowder Plot adds an element of intrigue to the festivities.

**Cozy Pub Culture:** As the weather cools, there's nothing quite like the warmth of a traditional British pub. Autumn is the perfect time to enjoy a hearty meal by the fire, sample seasonal ales, or simply relax with a hot drink in the snug atmosphere of a country inn.



**Seasonal Produce:** Autumn brings a bounty of fresh, local produce to the UK. From apples and pears to root vegetables and game meats, the season offers the perfect ingredients for comforting dishes like roast dinners, stews, and pies. Farmers' markets across the country brim with these autumnal delights. October is a wonderful time of year so pull on your jeans and boots and head out for some autumn fun.

## local police contact for Shirley

Email: [shirley@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk](mailto:shirley@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk)

### LOCAL COUNCILLORS

#### SHIRLEY WEST

**Dr Rosemary Sexton**  
0121 285 3883  
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**Crossword Solution**  
from page 8

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

**Sudoku Solution**  
from page 8

#### Solution to Mind benders

1. Growing older
2. Skate on thin ice
3. Jump all over the place

**midbenders**  
from page 10

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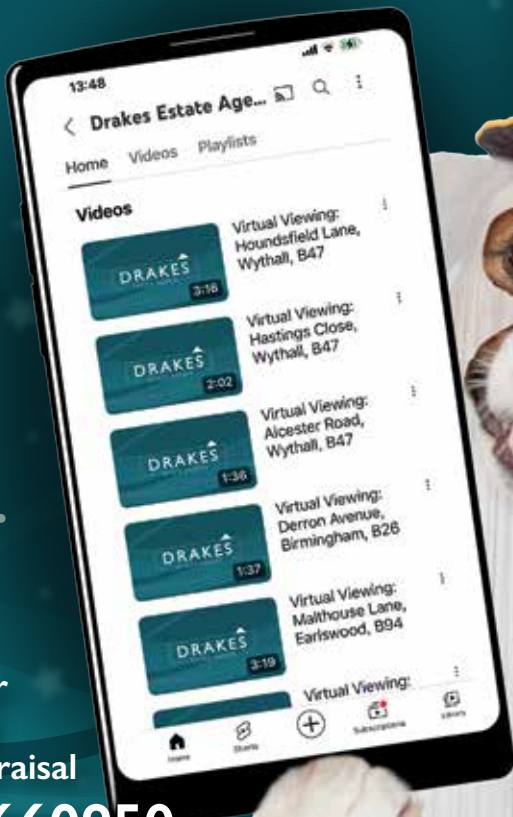
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