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# Saqib Bhatti MP


Working for Meriden and Solihull East

*Contact Me*



## Constituency office:

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 0121 711 7029

 [saqibbhatti.org.uk](http://saqibbhatti.org.uk)

 [saqib.bhatti@parliament.uk](mailto:saqib.bhatti@parliament.uk)

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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  
Tel: 07557 220585  
Email: [zoe@dorridgedirectory.com](mailto:zoe@dorridgedirectory.com)  
[www.knowleanddorridgedirectory.com](http://www.knowleanddorridgedirectory.com)

A close-up photograph of a hand pressing a large, pink button labeled 'Advertise' on a white computer keyboard. The text 'ADVERTISE HERE' is overlaid in large, bold, pink letters in the upper left corner of the image.

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# community events



## 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)

## 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)

## 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)



## 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.

## 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.

## How to protect your business if you become unwell.

If you were in an accident that impacted your mental capacity, you'd want your business to continue to run smoothly, but how can you ensure that the right person is making decisions on your behalf, or that they even have the legal power to do so? Hannah Tait, partner at Shakespeare Martineau in Solihull explains how having a business lasting power of attorney in place can prevent your business going bust if you're incapacitated.

### What is a lasting power of attorney?

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document to give those you trust legal authority to make decisions about your financial affairs or health care, if you are unable to do so, should your mental capacity deteriorate due to accident or illness. As soon as you are well again, the responsibility returns to you.

### Why do I need a business lasting power of attorney?

If you are unable to make business decisions due to accident or illness, you can rely on your business lasting power of attorney (BLPA) to do this. People often assume that a spouse or those involved with the business will be able to make decisions for you, however this is not automatically the case. Without a registered specific BLPA it can be extremely difficult for your loved ones or those you trust to make decisions where you're not able.

### What are the risks to my business?

Without a BLPA your business could be vulnerable with issues such as bank account freezing, contracts becoming invalid or void, regulatory breaches and possible impacts on insurance. A BLPA can prevent these risks, protect your business interests and ensure things run as normal.

### How do I choose a BLPA?

Many people prefer to keep their business and personal finances lasting powers of attorney separate, as BLPAs must be business-focussed. Thought should be given to appointing someone you have full trust in to look after your business interests.

### How can I put in place a business lasting power of attorney?

You must register a BLPA with the Office of the Public Guardian and it is recommended that you use a solicitor to prepare and register the important document.



**For more information call 0330 024 0333**  
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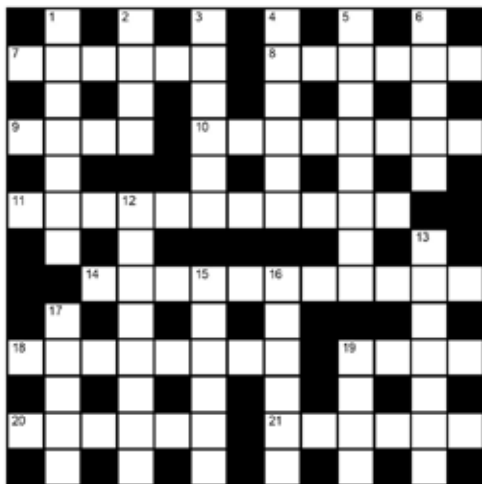


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## crossword



## clues

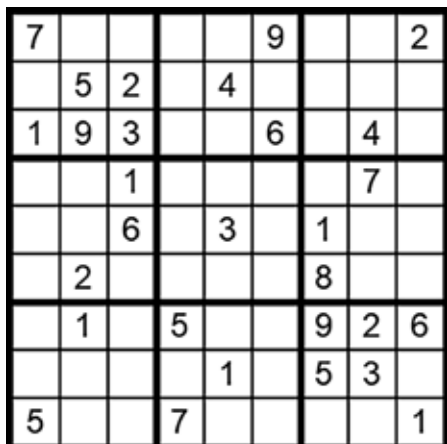
### Across

- 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, scarp (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 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.

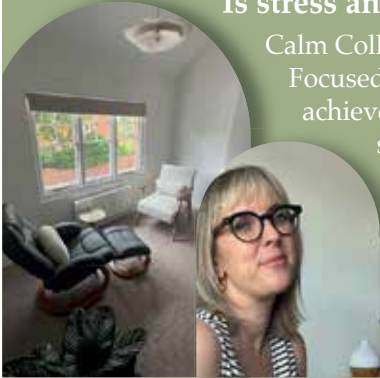
answer on page 26

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# Growing Up Digital

## What parents need to know about screen time

**A**rguments about screen time rage in households around the UK, and

with kids using phones and tablets at ever younger ages, should we be concerned?

Recent research has found a correlation between the age at which a child receives their first smartphone or tablet and the severity of mental health issues they report as young adults, particularly in girls. 74% of females who received their first device at age 6 experienced mental health challenges, compared with 46% for those who received it at age 18. In addition, it was found that toddlers who used tablets for 75 minutes or more daily at age 3-4 were more prone to angry outbursts a year later, suggesting excessive screen time may interfere with emotional regulation skills. Device ownership among children is high in the UK, with 91% of children owning a smartphone by age 11 (including mine). As parents it seems we employ various strategies to manage screen time:

**Time limits** – Many of us use apps like Google’s Family Link to restrict screen time.

### **Content monitoring**

– Most of us at least try to monitor the content our children consume online.

### **Delayed ownership**

– Some families choose to delay giving children their own devices. We held out until ours started senior school, as did most of our friends. I’d have preferred to wait longer but peer pressure was strong (their peers and ours!)

**Educational use** – Some parents (including one of my friends) only allow screens for educational purposes. This requires boss-level parental monitoring, and we are not those parents, but all credit to her for trying.

There’s no universal consensus on the ideal age for device ownership, or optimal screen time. However, most experts agree that delaying device ownership is a good idea. The longer the delay, the better for our kids’ long-term mental health. They also agree that parents should use monitoring services to keep tabs on their offspring’s online activities. Child development experts (and most parents I know) feel strongly that device use should not detract from



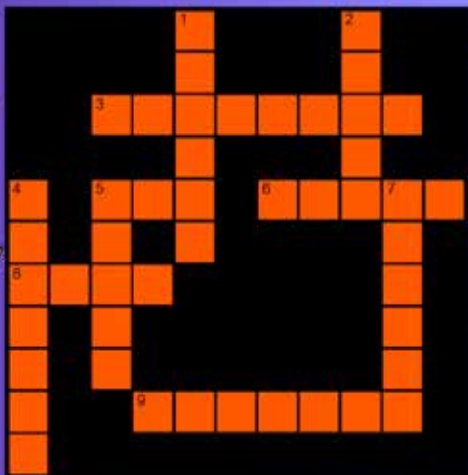
other crucial developmental activities, such as playing, sport, and socialising, and that parents should actively teach digital literacy skills. As technology continues to evolve, so will our understanding of its impact on child development. Ofcom, the UK’s communications regulator has plans to develop proposals on using AI to detect illegal content which might cause harm to children online. Smartphones and tablets are wonderful tools, which offer many benefits, but perhaps we should be more aware of the dangers and acknowledge that as parents we should be managing this: delaying device ownership; setting clear boundaries, and actively engaging with our kids’ digital experiences. As research in this field progresses, guidelines will likely become more refined, and hopefully help us navigate the complex landscape of childhood in the digital age.

# Kids' Page

Across

Can you solve our picture crossword?

Down



Can you find all 15 differences between the two haunted houses?



A clumsy witch clutching a potion,  
Spilled some and caused a commotion.  
Her cat turned bright blue,  
Her broom split in two,  
and she fell splish splash into the ocean.



Crossword solution

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**Speech and Language Therapy:** We support children with attention and listening, comprehension and expression, swallowing, communication and social communication and identify skills and strategies to support everyday communication.

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**Autism Assessment:** We offer children and adult assessment that provides an insight into an individual's strength, difficulties and practical life skills. We recognise that a diagnostic assessment is often the first step, and offer neuroaffirmative therapeutic support.



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# a good read

By Natasha Donovan

## If It Bleeds

by Stephen King

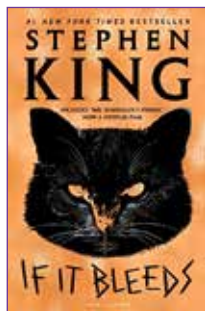
This is a collection of four compelling novellas that showcase King's mastery of storytelling. Mr. Harrigan's Phone: Craig, a young boy in a small town, befriends the reclusive and wealthy Mr. Harrigan.

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 Lillian 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.



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# Cheesy Onion Soup

As the clocks go back and the nights draw in take comfort in our onion soup, topped with crunchy bread and bubbling cheese



**Preparation time:** 15 mins

**Cooking time:** 1 hour

**Serves:** 2

## Ingredients

12oz / 350g onions (can use a mixture of brown, red and white or all the same variety)  
Butter for frying  
1 1/2 tsp Demerara sugar  
2 tsp dark soy sauce  
1 pint stock (chicken stock is lighter, beef stock heartier)  
2 thick slices lightly toasted bread  
2oz / 50g cheddar or Gruyere cheese

## Method

Peel and thinly slice the onions.  
Heat the butter in a

medium-sized saucepan. Add the onions and sugar and fry gently over a low heat for 10-20 minutes, stirring frequently. The sugar will caramelize to a nice golden brown coating on the onions. Be careful not to let it stick and burn though, especially towards the end. Add the stock and soy sauce, and season to taste with salt and black pepper. Put a lid on the pan and simmer for approximately 30 minutes until the onions are soft and

starting to disintegrate. Grate or thinly slice the cheese. Divide the soup between two heatproof bowls. Float a slice of toasted bread on top of each bowl of soup, and top with the sliced or grated cheese. Grill for 2-3 minutes until the cheese is melted and bubbling (which is why you have to use heatproof soup bowls!) Serve with more crusty fresh bread.



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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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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 12

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

**Crossword Solution**  
from page 12

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