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that smart?



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## Editor's Note

I'm excited about a couple of articles this month! The first is the recipe for Marry Me Chicken. Intrigued by the name, I decided to look it up. According to multiple sources, the most accepted origin traces it back to US food editor Lindsay Funston, who created the dish for Delish (a food media brand) in 2016.

After cooking the dish, her video producer took a bite and exclaimed, "I'd marry you for that chicken!" The name stuck, and a culinary phenomenon was born. I cooked Marry Me Chicken for the first time last month when we had dinner guests. I got no marriage proposals, but I did receive lots of compliments! It truly is delish!

The other article to capture my attention and heart is the one about Queen performing at Wembley. I have long been a fan of this trail blazing band. How I wish I had gone to see them perform when Freddie was alive! I watched the film *Bohemian Rhapsody* a few years ago, and shed a few tears. Heartwarming and heartbreaking at the same time. I'd highly recommend it if you're a fan and haven't yet seen it.

The last thing to excite me this month is feedback I've had from a couple of new advertisers. Both are utterly thrilled at the response they've had to their adverts. I'm so grateful to have a job that not only earns me a living, but helps others to earn one too! Please continue to spread the word!

Until next time...

Debbie Singh-Bhatti

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Nearly two-thirds of UK households now have smart meters, with the government aiming for 75% adoption soon. As installation expands, many still question whether they genuinely reduce costs or simply reflect effective marketing.

Smart meters replace traditional gas and electricity meters by automatically recording usage and sending readings to suppliers. For most households, they are an unobtrusive addition, often displayed as a small screen in the kitchen.

Their main advantage is visibility. Users can track energy consumption in real time, sometimes down to hourly use, alongside estimated costs. This offers far greater clarity than estimated or quarterly bills, helping households connect daily habits - like heating use or leaving appliances on - to spending. This awareness can encourage more conscious energy use.

Automation is another benefit. With readings sent digitally, manual submissions and estimated bills are largely eliminated, reducing billing errors and unexpected charges. Additionally, unusual spikes in energy use can signal faulty appliances or wiring issues, allowing earlier intervention.

Evidence suggests that this combination of insight and convenience can lead to modest savings, typically between 5% and 20%, as households adjust their behaviour.

However, smart meters are not without limitations. They depend on mobile networks, and in areas with weak signal—particularly rural locations—data transmission can be unreliable. This undermines their effectiveness and may result in continued billing issues.

Switching energy suppliers can also pose challenges. While the market allows easy switching, not all smart meters function seamlessly across providers, which can restrict access to competitive tariffs.

For some users, the detailed data can feel overwhelming. While basic cost information is clear, more technical readings may cause confusion or anxiety, especially for vulnerable individuals who might reduce essential energy use unnecessarily.

Renters face further obstacles, as installation often requires landlord approval, limiting access for many tenants.

Smart meters offer clear potential to improve energy awareness and reduce costs, but their effectiveness depends on reliable connectivity, user understanding and a flexible energy market.

## Really Smart?



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Private healthcare in the UK often sparks debate, but it's becoming an increasingly attractive option for people who want more control over their medical care. While the NHS remains one of the country's greatest strengths - offering free treatment to everyone - there's no ignoring the growing pressure it faces. Long waiting lists, staff shortages, and rising demand mean that many patients are now seriously considering private alternatives.

One of the biggest draws of private healthcare is speed. Instead of waiting weeks or even months for appointments, scans, or surgery, patients can often be seen much sooner. This quicker access can make a huge difference, especially for conditions that, while not life-threatening, still affect daily life. In many cases, early diagnosis and treatment can also prevent

problems from getting worse, which is a major advantage.

Another key benefit is choice. Private healthcare gives patients more say in their treatment journey. You can often choose your consultant, pick a hospital that suits you, and arrange appointments around your schedule. This level of flexibility is something the NHS, due to its size and demand, can't always provide. On top of that, private facilities tend to offer a more comfortable experience,



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It's also worth noting the role of private health insurance. Many people in the UK access private care through workplace schemes or personal policies, which can make treatment more affordable. Services often include faster diagnostics, specialist referrals, and even access to treatments that may not be widely available on the NHS.

Of course, cost remains the biggest downside. Private healthcare isn't accessible to everyone, and that raises important questions about fairness. However, it can also support the wider system. By easing demand on NHS services, private care can indirectly benefit those who rely solely on public healthcare.

In the end, private healthcare isn't about replacing the NHS—it's about expanding choice. And in today's healthcare climate, having that option can make all the difference.

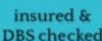


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# May Entertainment

## TV HIGHLIGHTS

### Doctor Who - May 25, 2026, BBC1

In this episode "The Reality War," the Doctor (Billie Piper) and her companions face challenges in a reality which is being manipulated by the Rani, a long time Dr Who baddie originally played by Kate O'Mara and now Archie Panjabi. In this story the Doctor navigates a world where doubts about existence are against the law, and promises to deliver a thrilling conclusion to "Wish World" from May 2025.

### Unforgotten Series 7 - May 2026, ITV

Chris Lang's eagerly awaited, consistently brilliant cold case masterpiece returns for a seventh series. Building a solid working relationship, DCI Jess James and DI Sunny Khan's investigation begins with the discovery of human remains in the crawl space of a house in Ladbroke Grove, London. Initial forensic analysis suggests the remains belong to a murdered child and have been concealed for several years. Watch out for an appearance from award winning actress Sophie Rundle playing social worker, Mary Brock.

### 145th FA Cup Final 16th May 2026, ITV & BBC

Nine months and 747 teams later (655 from the qualifying rounds and 124 in the main competition) only two are remaining. Very few sporting competitions encapsulate the passion and drama of the FA cup and the ability for non-league teams or minnows to slay the mighty Premiership dragons. For non-partisan viewers, today is a chance to enjoy British football at its very best on the hallowed Wembley Stadium turf.



## LARGE SCREEN HIGHLIGHTS

### The Devil Wears Prada 2 - 1st May 2026 – Comedy/Drama

In this eagerly awaited sequel to the 2013 classic, Miranda Priestly (cinema legend Meryl Streep) faces some inevitable challenges as she navigates a changing media landscape, notably the decline of print media, while nearing the unthinkable, retirement. Meanwhile Andrea 'Andy' Sachs (played by Anne Hathaway) returns to Runway magazine and reconnects with Emily (award winning British actress Emily Blunt), who has become a rival executive at a luxury brand.

### Star Wars: The Mandalorian and Grogu - 22nd May – Fantasy/Action/Adventure

Starring Hollywood actor Pedro Pascal as The Mandalorian, this movie continues the popular Mandalorian series. For those unfamiliar with this Star Wars spin-off, this story takes place after the fall of the Galactic Empire, with the New Republic enlisting Din Djarin (The Mandalorian) and Grogu to combat the remaining Imperial warlords threatening the galaxy.

### Hoppers- 29th May 2026 – Animation/Adventure

New from Pixar Animation Studios, Hoppers features the voices of Jon Hamm and Meryl Streep and is the story of Mabel Tanaka (Piper Curda) who is a 19-year-old animal lover. Scientists create a new technology that allows human minds to "hop" into lifelike robotic animals. Mabel uses this technology to embody a robotic beaver with the aim of saving a local habitat from destruction.

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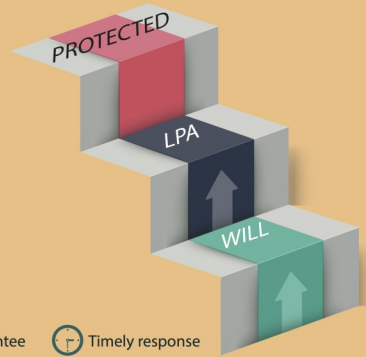
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# Driven to Distraction

Since 2008, the AA has been asking its members to share their views on the most annoying behaviours on UK roads. More than 150,000 drivers have taken part, revealing a clear hierarchy of motoring pet hates.

Consistently topping the list is tailgating. Over a quarter of respondents cite drivers who follow too closely as their biggest annoyance. It's easy to see why. Not only does it feel intimidating, but it also undermines the unspoken rules of distance and fairness that British drivers hold dear.

Close behind is the persistent problem of drivers using mobile phones. Despite being illegal, talking or texting at the wheel remains a common sight and a major source of irritation. Many drivers view it as both selfish

Most car journeys begin with the best of intentions. You climb into the car, shut out the day, and set off hoping for a smooth run home. Then it happens. A car pulls in too close. Someone brakes sharply. Another driver drifts into your lane without warning. In an instant, frustration bubbles over.

Road rage isn't always about dramatic confrontations or shouting matches. More often, it's the quiet simmer of irritation caused by small, repeated acts of poor driving etiquette. And according to British motorists, some habits are far more aggravating than others.



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and dangerous, particularly when it leads to drifting lanes or slow reactions at junctions.

Middle-lane hogging also features high on the list. Few things frustrate motorists more than an empty left lane and a driver stubbornly cruising down the centre of the motorway, forcing others to overtake unnecessarily. Last-minute lane-cutting at motorway exits, undertaking, and erratic speeds complete the catalogue of complaints.

Interestingly, extremes at both ends of the speed scale attract criticism. Some drivers bristle at those who crawl along well below the limit, while others are equally irritated by aggressive speeding. Even littering from car windows makes the list, a reminder that poor road manners extend beyond driving technique alone.

The message is clear. British motorists value courtesy, predictability and respect on the road.

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# Photo Finish: Queen at Wembley

Few live performances in rock history have achieved quite the same legendary status as Queen's Wembley Stadium concerts in July 1986. Now, four decades on, the image of Freddie Mercury striding across the vast stage in his famous yellow military jacket remains one of the defining pictures of stadium rock.

The shows formed part of the band's Magic Tour, their final tour with Mercury, and represented the moment when Queen's immense popularity translated into a spectacle of truly historic proportions. Across two nights at the iconic Wembley Stadium, more than 140,000 fans packed into the venue to witness a performance that many still regard as one of the greatest live rock concerts ever staged.

Formed in London in 1970, Queen had spent the previous decade-and-a-half building a catalogue of anthems that blended operatic ambition with stadium-sized hooks. The likes of Bohemian Rhapsody, We Will Rock You and Radio Ga Ga and countless others had cemented their reputation for theatricality and musical daring, yet it was their live performances, driven by the magnetic



presence of their legendary talisman, that truly elevated them into a league of their own.

The Wembley shows captured the band at what many fans regard as the peak of their powers, with Freddie Mercury's famous call-and-response exchanges with the audience becoming moments of shared electricity, transforming a football stadium into something resembling a communal choir.

Behind him, the band were equally formidable. Brian May's soaring guitar lines, Roger Taylor's thunderous drumming and John Deacon's understated bass provided the powerful musical backbone that allowed Mercury's showmanship to flourish.

And yet, just over five years later Mercury had passed away, succumbing to bronchial pneumonia resulting from AIDS. However, the music, and the legacy of both the band and that iconic summer, live on..

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# BLOCKED DRAINS

## What to watch for



Here are signs to look out for and easy ways to deal with the problem.

### Cause of blockages

Most drain blockages come from what has gone down them, and are preventable. In the kitchen the biggest culprits are fats, oil and scraps of food that solidify and block up pipes. In the bathroom, wet wipes and sanitary products should never be flushed - even so called "flushable" items can cause blocked drains.

### Signs of a blockage

The signs can be quite subtle: your sink might empty more slowly than usual, the water level in your toilet might noticeably rise and fall or it might make strange gurgling sounds from trapped pockets of air. A blockage can also be quite dramatic: a toilet backing up, overflowing and flooding, pungent smells or no drainage at all. Overflowing water from toilets, sinks or baths can lead to significant damage and considerable repair expenses if not addressed quickly.

### Unblocking!

Some quick and effective methods include using a mixture of baking soda and vinegar or using an old-fashioned plunger - making sure there is enough water in the sink to completely cover the plunger's rubber cup and create a tight seal before you plunge vigorously. A chemical drain

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unblocker would be your next port of call for more stubborn problems although it is advisable to read the label very carefully and wear protective gloves, clothing and glasses. Chemicals in unblockers could cause serious problems if they come in contact with your skin or eyes.

If these suggestions fail, a spot of DIY plumbing on your sink's U-bend may be required. Place a bowl or bucket under the U-bend to catch whatever is in the pipes, wear protective gloves and have towels and cloths ready for spillages. Locate the trap directly below the sink and carefully unscrew the connectors on either side of the trap. Empty the trap, clean out the pipes using a small brush and clean, warm soapy water. Reattach carefully and tighten sufficiently to make sure there are no leaks.

If the blockage is in your toilet and chemical unblockers do not work then this is probably a job for a professional, who should be called as quickly as possible. But, most blockages are completely avoidable by being careful about what goes down your drains in the first place!

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# Gardening in May

## General gardening jobs

In the vegetable garden earth up potatoes, covering the shoots with soil as they appear. Start sowing runner, dwarf and climbing French beans outdoors and harvest your delicious rhubarb whilst feeding the plants regularly. In the flower garden plant dahlia tubers after the risk of frost has passed. Sow annuals such as cosmos, marigolds and sunflowers directly into borders. Open

greenhouse windows wide on warm days and water plants regularly. Mow your lawn regularly and begin to apply nitrogen-rich summer lawn feed. Consider varnishing, treating or painting any outside furniture to spruce it up for use.

## Hanging baskets

With so much choice available, the type of hanging basket you choose will depend on several factors, including cost, amount of maintenance required and your personal tastes.

Lined hanging baskets are very popular and traditional. They consist of a simple cage of metal or woven natural material which will require a lining of moss, coir, plastic or a mixture of materials. They look great and can be used year after year, although they tend to dry out quickly so will require more maintenance, an irrigation system or perhaps water storing granules.

Simple plastic hanging baskets are cheap to buy and easy to plant, often coming ready-planted, and they retain water well. They

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generally don't last as long as lined baskets but could easily last a few years with careful use. They are also very strong.

Bloom around baskets also tend to be plastic, so retain water well but they have special holes or 'gates' in the sides to allow you to plant at the sides and top for a stunning look.

Wall baskets, or hay racks, attach directly to a wall. They are strong and enduring and tend to be large enough for a magnificent display. They are a good choice for exposed spots.

Stone-effect hanging baskets are contemporary, sleek and stylish and make the basket a real part of the feature. They do tend to cost more, but can last for years.

Once you have selected your hanging basket, place a few pebbles in the bottom to aid drainage. Fill with a peat-free compost and plant up. Begonias look stunning and are low maintenance and last well and the trailing varieties work well. Fuchsias, petunias, geraniums and lobelia offer a good choice of colour. Water thoroughly before hanging!



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## Marry Me Chicken

**Servings:** 4

**Preparation time:** 5 mins

**Cooking time:** 40 minutes

black pepper. Coat the chicken breasts in the flour.

Heat 2 tbsp of the sundried tomato oil in a large, lidded frying pan over a medium heat. Fry the chicken for 5 minutes, flip and cook for a further 5 minutes until golden all over, but not cooked through. Set the chicken aside on a plate.

Drizzle the remaining 1 tbsp sundried tomato oil into the pan and reduce the heat to low. Fry the onion for 8-10 mins until softened but not golden. Stir in the garlic and cook for another minute, then add the sundried tomatoes, oregano and paprika, stirring well.

Add the cream, stock, parmesan and plenty of salt and pepper and give everything a good stir.

Sit the chicken back in the sauce. Put the lid on the pan and cook for about 20 minutes. Turning the chicken halfway through until it is cooked and the sauce has thickened a little.

Remove the pan from the heat, sprinkle over the basil leaves and the squeeze of half a lemon.

Serve with rice or roast potatoes and vegetables.

### Ingredients

4 chicken breasts  
30g plain flour  
1 red onion, finely chopped  
3 garlic cloves, crushed  
150g sundried tomatoes, drained and roughly chopped, 3 tbsp oil reserved  
1 tsp dried oregano  
2 tsp paprika  
150ml double cream  
200ml chicken stock  
50g parmesan, grated  
8-10 basil leaves torn, to serve  
1/2 lemon, juice only  
sea salt and freshly ground pepper

### Method

Season the flour with salt and freshly ground

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*Swallownest Miners welcomes new members*

## Thank You for the flowers!

The flowers in Swallowed are lovely. It's a pleasure to live here. Thank you to whoever is responsible.

Mrs Bradley

## How about joining us at Worksop Probus Club?

Probus Club provides retired professional and business men with an annual programme of visits, lunches and informal get-togethers for a chat and a coffee, with presentations by speakers on alternate Fridays from 10am to 12pm at St John's Parish Centre, Carlton in Lindrick – visit <https://www.probusclubofworksop.co.uk>.

Visitors are welcome to come along and try us out for free at any time without obligation. Contact Chris Stanton on 01709 818927 or [cdstanton@hotmail.com](mailto:cdstanton@hotmail.com).

Upcoming Meetings

10 April - Paul Dawson - Brunton Shaws, Moving Heavy Loads

1 May - David Gilbert - The Making of a Memorial

15 May - James Ince - The Night Sky

## Anston Arts and Crafts

With numerous projects yet to start, 2026 is proving to be both exciting and educational. We are looking into our trip to Dewsbury, where we hope to both see the town and market areas and also visit the Mill. We are also considering a trip to London to see the Bayeux tapestry.

Please come and join us any Wednesday at Anston Parish Hall and experience a joyful afternoon with other crafters – make new friends who like the things you do. Refreshments provided and your first week is free.

Sue our Membership Secretary will be on hand to welcome you, but if you'd like further information before visiting, contact Sue on 01909 564891 or email [roysayles123@btinternet.com](mailto:roysayles123@btinternet.com). She will be happy to answer your queries.

We meet Wednesdays from 12-3pm at Anston Parish Hall. We look forward to meeting you..

## Todwick Historical Society

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 12 May at 7.30pm in Todwick Village Hall. Our guest speaker, Peter Machon, will be talking about 'The Little Mesters.' This talk is a chronicle of the self employed men and women who were still working in Sheffield's traditional trades into the 1970s and 80s. The talk covers the people, premises, products and processes that made their trades unique.

Admission is Members £3, Guests £4, refreshments included.

## Aston-cum-Aughton History Group

On Monday 18 May, John Taylor will give a talk on 'Curiosities and Connections on the Derbyshire and South Yorkshire Border'. Join us on a serendipitous journey around both counties exploring the strange, happy and tragic coincidences of history and circumstances. This is a talk meant to stir the imagination and provides a unique look at some of the locations we simply take for granted. Underlying themes to link places, names, events and historical fact have been researched in a manner that you will find uniquely different.

The talk will be held in the William Layne Reading Room, Aughton Lane, Aston, S26 2AN, starting at 7 pm. Visitors are welcome, £4 including refreshments.

## The Cardiac Support Group

On Good Friday we enjoyed the welcome return of Ann Featherstone, subject: Sweeney Todd. Gruesome, entertaining and very funny. Word of caution - check the contents of any meat pies eaten!!.

Our next meeting, to which new members are always welcome is on Friday 1 May. Our speaker is Rachel Barowcliffe, subject - The Butterfly House. 2pm The Cricket Club, Worksop. Refreshments, free parking. £2 pp.

## Voglia d'Italia

*Sandro Botticelli*. Dr Elena Kashina, University of York, gives an overview of the life and work of one of the leading painters of the Florentine Renaissance, whose "The Birth of Venus" and "Primavera" are among the most recognisable artworks today, but which, remarkably, fell into oblivion immediately after his death. Dr Kashina also examines what made Botticelli a favourite of Lorenzo de' Medici (the Magnificent).

Friday 1 May 2026, 7.30 pm, Tickhill Parish Room, Northgate, Tickhill, DN11 9HZ. Non-members are welcome, admission £5. Further information: 01709 370895.

## Bassetlaw Branch Parkinson's UK

At our meeting on 5 May, Barry Harper will relay the drama of his dangerous crossing of the Slave Lake. This takes place at Worksop Cricket Club, Central Avenue S80 1EN at 2pm.

Weekly activities include Singing for Well-being, indoor bowling, Pilates and ballroom dancing lessons. The lunch club remains very popular (40 members dining together at a local pub speaks for itself) and the cinema club.

All are welcome. If interested, please contact Chris Coldwell 01909 730629 for an informal chat and more information.

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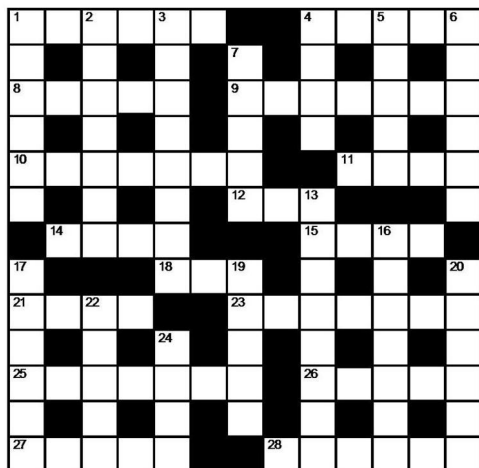
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## Crossword



### Across

- 1 persecute (6)
- 4 leader (5)
- 8 afterward (5)
- 9 clap (7)
- 10 remove hair (7)
- 11 glade (4)
- 12 allow (3)
- 14 monster (4)
- 15 bee house (4)
- 18 blob (3)
- 21 mature (4)
- 23 flight personnel (7)
- 25 degree (7)
- 26 world-class (5)
- 27 claw (5)
- 28 nap (6)

### Down

- 1 protective head gear (6)
- 2 decomposing (7)
- 3 shrieked (8)
- 4 immitate (4)
- 5 angry (5)
- 6 violin (6)
- 7 bread ring (5)
- 13 baker's dozen (8)
- 16 dizziness (7)
- 17 deferred payment (6)
- 19 trivial (5)
- 20 pluck (6)
- 22 student (5)
- 24 robe (4)

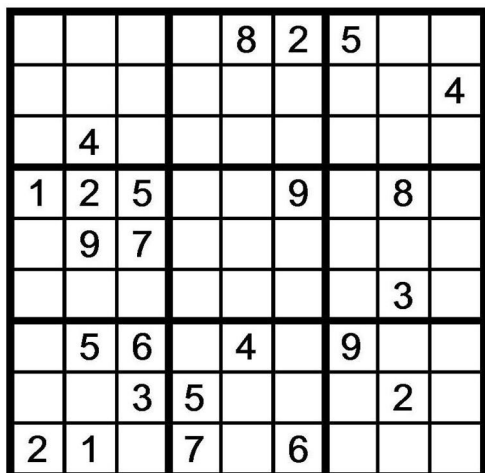
## Sudoku

### How to play Sudoku

It's simple! Fill in the grid so that each row, column and 3 x 3 box contains the numbers 1 through 9 with no repetition.

You don't need to be a genius. These puzzles use logic alone. Watch out!

Sudoku is highly addictive!



Solutions on Page 38

## Word Search

Can you find the Premier League football teams hidden in the grid?

Arsenal  
Aston Villa  
Bournemouth  
Chelsea  
Crystal Palace  
Everton  
Leicester City  
Liverpool  
Manchester City  
Manchester United

Newcastle United  
Norwich City  
Southampton  
Stoke City  
Sunderland  
Swansea City  
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**RIGGER BOOTS** tan, steel toecap, lined, size 12, as new, £15.  
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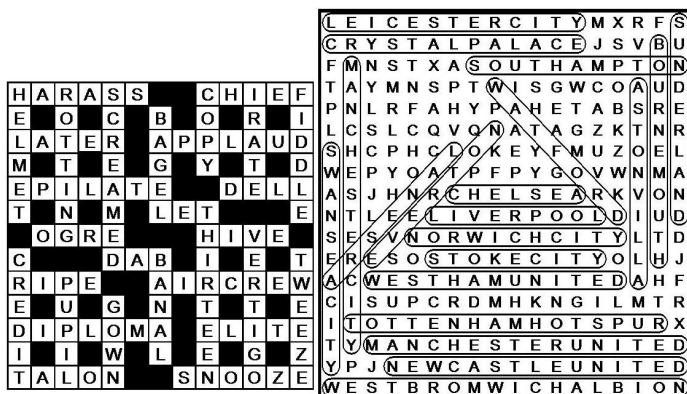
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# DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE 13 MAY

## PUZZLE SOLUTIONS



Solution to May Crossword

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

Solution to May Sudoku





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