

STONESTHROW DIRECTORY



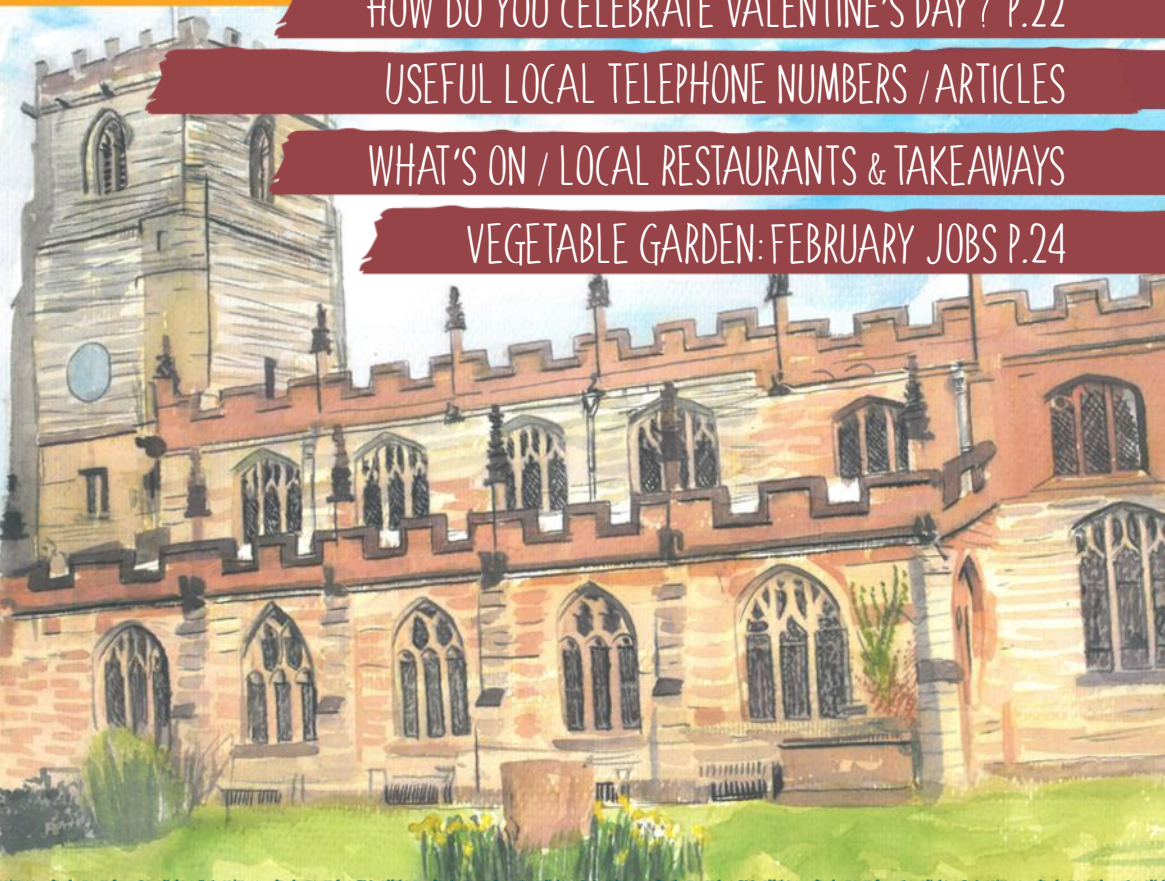
FREE BEE-FRIENDLY FLOWER SEEDS P.18

HOW DO YOU CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY? P.22

USEFUL LOCAL TELEPHONE NUMBERS / ARTICLES

WHAT'S ON / LOCAL RESTAURANTS & TAKEAWAYS

VEGETABLE GARDEN: FEBRUARY JOBS P.24



KNOWLE DORRIDGE BENTLEY HEATH COPT HEATH
FEBRUARY / MARCH 2024

JAMIESON CHRISTIE
WEALTH MANAGEMENT



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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to our February/March Edition!

February is a day longer in 2024, and the 29th is traditionally the day that women can propose. The custom began in 5th century Ireland when St Patrick decreed that the extra day in a leap year would be the ideal opportunity for a woman to ask for a man's hand in marriage. Nowadays, anyone can propose at any time, but around 6 million people worldwide get engaged on the 14th of February.

If you are still deciding how to celebrate the day of love and romance, head to page 22 for some ideas.

Shrove Tuesday occurs on the 13th of February this year when we traditionally eat sweet or savoury pancakes. You don't have to be religious to enjoy this custom, it dates back to the 15th century when people would race and have competitions tossing pancakes.

Schools, libraries, and bookshops will celebrate World Book Day on the 7th of March. This year's theme is The Great Big Footy and Booky Quiz. It's always a fun celebration usually marked with fancy dress competitions and activities based around storytelling. Children can obtain a £1 book token and choose a free book. (worldbookday.com)

Mother's Day falls on the 10th of March this year, so be sure to celebrate your Mum and make her feel special. Many local retailers are happy to work with you and create a bespoke gift for the special mother in your life.

The first day of Spring is officially the 20th of March 2024, so look out for all the daffodils and tree blossoms in your local neighbourhood. Easter celebrations occur at the end of March. Then the clocks will go forward in the early hours of Sunday the 31st of March, essentially giving you an hour less to consume all of those Easter eggs!

A few of dates for your calendar:

14th February - Valentine's Day; 10th March - Mother's Day; 17th March - St. Patrick's Day; 29th March - Good Friday (Bank Holiday); 31st March - Daylight Saving Time starts; 1st April - Easter (Bank Holiday)

However you decide to spend next couple of months - keep your heart and your business local.

Yours, Stonesthrow Publications.

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A LUXURIOUS LAWN BEGINNING IN MARCH

The grass is greening up and as the days grow longer and warmer March is the perfect month to plan that perfect luxurious lawn.

Because the days are still quite short and the weather a little changeable it might not be immediately obvious, but the month of March is a pivotal one for your lawn and the work you do now, the care you take and the plans you make can ensure you have a luxurious lawn in 2024.

MAKE A START IN MARCH

The cold weather, excess rain and lack of sunlight during the winter months can cause a myriad of lawn diseases and this causes dieback of grass, so you may be left with patchy unhealthy lawns filled with moss. However, with the right care and attention beginning now it's possible to get your lawn back to its best condition for the upcoming season.

WHAT SHOULD I BE DOING WITH MY LAWN IN MARCH?

In March, as the winter begins to fade away, it's time to start thinking about preparing your lawn for the upcoming spring and summer seasons.

ADDRESS LAWN ISSUES

In March you can address any lawn issues such as damage from winter weather, moss, disease, or pests.

ON FROST FREE DAYS

Start fertilising the lawn

Mow the lawn

Overseeding or sowing new grass

Control moss and weeds

Scarify and aerate

IS IT OK TO FEED YOUR LAWN IN MARCH?

It is. March is the perfect time to apply a high nitrogen fertiliser, as the grass starts to grow and requires more nutrients to strengthen its roots and thicken up after winter.

By feeding your lawn in March, you will help it recover from any winter damage and promote healthy growth going forward.

IS MARCH TOO EARLY TO CUT GRASS?

No. It is not too early to cut your grass in March, in fact, regular mowing is the key to a healthy lawn and if your grass is growing.... then you can mow it!

FIVE EASY MOWING TIPS FOR MARCH

Make sure your lawnmower blade is sharp, replace it if needed or have it professionally sharpened.

Try not to cut your grass too short.

Make sure you choose a dry day and avoid boggy conditions.

Take extra care when turning your lawnmower to avoid damaging the grass.

Mow little and often to control the height.

CAN YOU PUT GRASS SEED DOWN IN MARCH?

March and April are the busiest months of the year for growing grass seed and an ideal time to overseed your lawn or sow a new lawn from scratch!

Some grass seeds can grow in cold weather down to 5 degrees whilst others need 10-12 degrees Celsius to germinate so it's important to check the weather and pick the right grass seed for your lawn.

By following these easy tips and hints you will lay a good foundation in March for a luxurious lawn that will look fantastic all year.

Rob Bullock <https://robbullockauthor.blogspot.com>

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Rapport is a, non profit making, social group for unattached adults age 50+ on their own and would like to meet new friends. We have a varied monthly programme of hosted events, including coffee mornings, lunches and evening meals, cinema, theatre and National Trust visits, day trips, walks and pub nights. For more information contact Jenny Brown on 07725 094123

Free Digital Training for older Solihull residents

Various times and Age UK Solihull are offering free digital training for older Solihull residents who would like to improve their digital skills. Group courses and one-to-one support is available, for both beginners and those who already have basic digital skills. The training can help with online shopping, video calling, searching for information, accessing online learning, downloading and using apps, and more. For more information, contact Ashlee on 07397 718 455 or visit www.ageuk.org.uk/solihull/digital-champions

Dorridge Striders and Strollers

Date: Thursdays fortnightly / Venue: St George & St Teresa Church Centre, Station Road, Dorridge
We meet for a sociable local walk. New members welcome. Contact Anne on 01564 776711.

Knowle Probus Club

Date: 3rd Tuesday of the month / Venue: The Solihull Masonic Centre, Warwick Road, Knowle
The Knowle Probus club is a luncheon Club for retired and semi-retired Professional or Businessmen living in or around Knowle. We meet for an excellent three course lunch followed by interesting and informative talks. If you would like to know more go to www.knowleprobus.org.uk or Phone Paul on 07713 94228.

Age UK Solihull Weekly Thursday Friends Lunch Club for Over 65s

Date: every Thursday / Time: 12pm- 2.30pm / Venue: Red Lion Pub, High Street, Knowle
Run by Age UK Solihull staff and their volunteers. Come along for a hot meal, tea/coffee, social activities and great company. Cost is £8 (£6 for hot lunch and refreshments, £2 for raffle, bingo/entertainment). For more information please call 0121 704 7846 (Mon-Thurs) or email befriending@ageuksolihull.org.uk.

Drinking cans collection

Venue: Ale rooms, Knowle
Please support Ryan's work by dropping off your empty aluminium cans in the blue bin situated right outside the Ale Rooms, Knowle High Street. Ryan from "We Can" collects aluminium drinking cans, crushes them and trades them for money to help buy food to address food poverty locally.

Welcome Wednesdays

Date: last Wednesday of every month / Time: 20-02.30pm / Venue: Eascote Park Care Home and Retirement Village, Knowle Road, Barston B92 0JA
This is a chance meet new people, enjoy a hot drink and a slice of cake, and help raise funds for Age UK Solihull. Everyone is welcome, including carers, older people, and anyone who wants to break up the week and enjoy some company. We ask for a suggested donation of £3 per person to attend, which includes a hot drink and cake. The proceeds will come to Age UK Solihull to help us to provide our services for

older and vulnerable Solihull residents who need us. Please let us know if you are planning on coming by calling us on 0121 704 7842 (leave a message) or emailing events@ageuksolihull.org.uk.

Ladies Circle

Date: Wednesdays / Time: 11am / Venue: Dorridge Methodist Church, Mill Lane, Dorridge B93 8NY
Ladies living locally meet for a coffee & a chat. Every fourth week there will be singing, speakers or games.

Knit & Natter

Date: 3rd Monday of the month / Time: 2-4pm / Venue: Bentley Heath Community Centre, Widney Road B93 9BN
Bring your own project. Just turn up no charge. Contact Dennise on 07899 914 228

St Phillips & St James Friendship Group

Date: 2nd Saturday of each month / Time: 2.30pm / Venue: St Philips Church Centre Dorridge B93 8NY
Social group with afternoon tea. Regular speakers & good company. Contact office on 01564 775 652
For more information.

While we do our best to ensure the accuracy of our listings, events may be postponed or cancelled without notice. Please confirm with the organiser before making any plans for attending events.

For your news, events and group meetings to be featured free of charge on our What's On Page please email Ksenia: info@stonethrowpublications.co.uk

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HOW DO YOU CELEBRATE

VALENTINE'S DAY?

If you're stuck for ideas on how to celebrate your love this Valentine's Day, here are a few ways you can celebrate and show you care.

Valentine's cards can be shop-bought or homemade, simple or extravagant, as long as they show a bit of thoughtfulness and affection.

Chocolates and flowers are the most popular gifts for Valentine's Day. Florists will be happy to help you choose a more personalised bouquet or plant for your sweetheart. A box of chocolates or treats can mean so much more if it's bespoke and most confectioners, bakers, or sweet shops can help you put together something truly special for Valentine's Day.

It's very traditional to show your love with a good meal. Booking a table for two in their favourite restaurant is always a winner. Make sure to book well in advance, you could even pre-order the meal if you know their favourite dishes. If your sweetheart is a more adventurous diner, try somewhere new and make the occasion exciting for both of you.

Cooking a meal can be a great alternative. If you are proficient in the kitchen, take charge and cook something you know they will enjoy. If you're not a confident cook, you could buy some provisions from a local market or delicatessen. Keeping things simple is the key to success; pre-prepared starters and desserts will give you time to concentrate on the main course. Alternatively, organising and cooking a meal together can be a lot of fun, and sharing the preparation will reduce stress.

A surprise date or getaway takes a lot of planning and thought, but it needn't cost a fortune. You could organise an outdoor adventure, hiking, biking, or exploring somewhere new. Find a natural landscape, a park, or a stretch of coastline to discover. If the weather is warm enough, you could pack a picnic and enjoy some romantic time in the great outdoors. If your loved one prefers more urban getaways with cultural activities, you could spend some quality time in an unfamiliar city or town and investigate it together. Most places have museums and art galleries, shows, and events that you can research and book online. Make sure you take photos to capture all those new memories.

You could create a photo book of a special time together, this romantic memento makes a really thoughtful Valentine's gift. Most local photographic shops can help you put together an album or choose an image to frame for your loved one.

Try something you've never done before. Book a spa day for two, or a class for both of you, it could be something creative or physical, mentally stimulating, or relaxing. You could learn how to dance, attend a pottery workshop, learn a new language, or paint portraits, the possibilities are endless. Check your local listings and events pages to explore your options.

Whatever you decide to do this Valentine's Day, if you put some thought into it you can show your loved one how much you really care.

By Emma Russell

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VEGETABLE GARDEN

FEBRUARY JOBS

February can be a busy time in the vegetable garden with jobs including sowing seeds, cropping winter veg, garden organization, and projects to plan.

The days might still be short, frosts heavy and snow lying on the ground, but February is a busy month in the vegetable garden and gardeners can get a head start on a busy spring. Here are some jobs to do in February.

SEEDS TO SOW IN FEBRUARY

Some seeds have a long germination time, and you can sow many seeds both undercover and outdoors.

OUTSIDE SOWING if the ground isn't frozen, now is the time to plant shallot sets, broad beans, and garlic directly in the soil.

COLD SOW INDOORS seeds that you can sow now undercover include winter salad leaves, sprouting broccoli, leeks, spinach, kohlrabi, peas, and onions. Undercover can mean in an unheated greenhouse, but also on a bright windowsill in the house.

HEAT LOVING SEEDS TO SOW IN FEBRUARY propagators and grow lights can help get your seeds started early by providing extra warmth and light when both are in short supply. Seeds you can sow in February undercover with heat include tomatoes, peppers, aubergine, globe artichokes, and chillis.

ORDER AND CHIT POTATOES

February is a great time to order and chit seed potatoes. There are hundreds of potato varieties, but the ones we tend to grow fall into categories of cooking type and how long they take to harvest. First earlies generally take around 55-70 days from planting to harvest and should be chitted first.

ORGANIZE SEEDS AND SEED PACKETS

February is a perfect time to organize your seeds. Why not look through your stock and check the use-by dates, then buy new ones. Most seeds will have a good percentage that will germinate after being kept for some time, but generally the longer the time that has elapsed, the fewer seeds will sprout.

GENERAL FEBRUARY GARDEN JOBS

February is a great time to start with a clean slate. Why not reorganize and deep clean the greenhouse, pots, cloches, and labels. Check your tool kit and repair, service, and replace broken tools. Why not sit down and draw up your garden plan for this year. It will help you use your space more efficiently and decide what you want to grow where.

FEBRUARY GARDEN JOBS CHECKLIST

Organize seeds and place orders.

Seeds to sow in February: tomatoes, aubergine, chillis, kale, winter salad leaves, peas, sprouting broccoli, leeks, spinach, kohlrabi and globe artichokes.

- Plant shallots and garlic.
- Order and chit potatoes.
- Plant bare-root fruit trees and bushes.
- Prune fruit trees and bushes.
- Mulch perennial vegetables.
- Harvest brussels sprouts, parsnips, cabbages, cauliflower, kale, and leeks.
- Build raised beds, install a greenhouse, create garden paths, weave raspberry cane edging, build a raspberry trellis.
- Remove weeds, create a seedbed, turn the compost heap.

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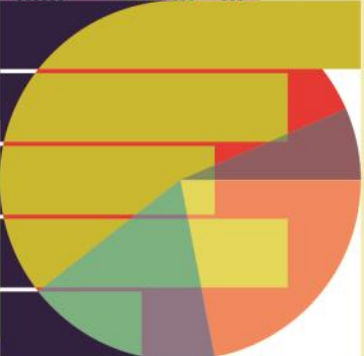
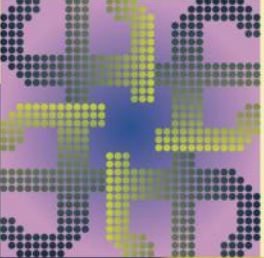
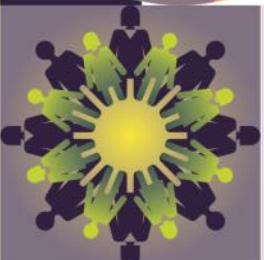


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