



Stories and news from  
and for Owners at our Courts

WINTER 2021

FREE owners' magazine

# COURT CIRCULAR



Retirement  
SECURITY

Independence within a  
supportive community

## Winter Wonderland

# CHAIRMAN'S LETTER



Without any doubt, the headline news for this edition of Court Circular is the arrival of Melanie Gowers as Chief Executive of RSL.

Formerly a senior member of the staff of ANCHOR HANOVER, one of the largest Housing Associations in the country, we are looking forward to the contribution she can bring to RSL.

Melanie is currently meeting up with the RSL Board of Directors and the Service Managers and the other members of the Office team. She will meet everyone both individually and collectively on a regular basis and it is through the team of Service Managers that she will have her most regular on-going contact with the Courts, both Owners and staff.

Melanie will also make it a high priority to visit all of the Courts as soon as possible, when it is intended for her to meet both the Boards of Directors and the Owners, who will have an opportunity to ask her views and let her know their opinions both of what they value in the present arrangements and the changes they would recommend. The one thing of which we can be sure is that she will not have a lot of time on her hands before Christmas and even then, having thoroughly assimilated the existing arrangements, we can look forward to hearing her vision of the future for the Company.



Melanie Gowers  
*Chief Executive*

For my part, I would like to stay on as Chairman, provided that is acceptable to the Board of Directors after the forthcoming AGM, but to play much less of a part in the day to day workings of the Company and also give careful thought to the future of the Company.

I may even be able to improve my piano-playing and my Bridge, provided in both cases that I can find a sympathetic partner.

Bob Bessell  
*Chairman*



## WELCOME

What a summer it has been! Life has been starting to get back to some sort of “normal”, which is a great relief. And we’ve even had some good weather, which has enabled some outdoor celebrations of “freedom” around the Courts such as a weekly BBQ at Emmbrook Court and a Scarecrow Festival at Carrs Court.

I hope you have all managed to celebrate, at least in some way, by meeting up with loved ones again and enjoying the outdoors more. Included in this issue we have inspiring stories of our Owners pulling together whilst apart to support charities and themselves in the process, a personal account about coping with sight loss and passing on the knowledge of available support and an interesting and poignant D-Day memoir. I hope you enjoy hearing and learning about the lives of our Owners’ as much as we did.

### NEXT EDITION

Would you like to be featured in our next edition of Court Circular?  
Or on the front cover, do you have a special story you want to share.

If so send details to:  
[info@retirementsecurity.co.uk](mailto:info@retirementsecurity.co.uk)

### Photography/Art Competition

**This editions winner is Mrs Mr Barnes of Blake Court, featured on page 6/7 who will receive a £25 book token.**

**p6/7**



## BLAKE COURT

### Tell your story... *Eileen Nicholls, Blake Court.*

"Originally born in Yorkshire, I married and have lived in Bedford, Edinburgh and London. As a primary school teacher for 37 years, I taught the older junior age group and was responsible for music, organising school concerts and casual staff.

I have three children; my son works in county management, my daughter is a head teacher and my eldest son lives locally - he has autism and epilepsy. When he was younger, I worked with MENCAP and along with five other parents, we wrote a 'Parent's Charter' to give advice to new parents of disabled children. I am still involved in his care and organising his carers.

Everyone has a story to tell, I moved to Blake Court in 2019 after my husband, Roy, passed away and I wrote my autobiography during lockdown - 90 Glorious Years and More! - I am proud to say, it is now a published book. I also joined the Board of Directors at the Court this year and I am finding it very interesting being involved in Court matters."

For many years Eileen was a Trustee at the local Methodist Church and she has previously organised professional concerts for them. As a musician, Eileen performed at a high level and she has an enduring passion for music, often playing the piano in the Court lounge.



Eileen Nicholls



## PRIORY COURT

### "Whiling away the hours" knitting and sewing.

Some of our lady Owners' Mrs Jean Cunningham, Mrs Rena O'Regan and Mrs Eileen Boyce are all keen knitters and sewers and they have continued to enjoy their passions during the recent trying times. They have all said that it helps them to "while away the hours" by keeping them busy. They are always looking for new things to create with their skills including an array of dolls, blankets and cushions. Mrs O'Regan, for instance, knits colourful squares that are sewn together to make blankets, which are then generously donated to raise money for charity.



Mrs Eileen Boyce



Mrs Jean Cunningham



Mrs Rena O'Regan



## BLAKE COURT

# D-DAY

## MEMORIES

I was 19 and had just left school - I also had my first boyfriend Peter, a Royal Artillery soldier, who had been training locally with many others for the invasion of France which was expected very soon.

On the 6th of June, which was also my sister's birthday, I came downstairs to hear on the wireless that the beaches of Normandy had been invaded. That was all I could think of then, as I knew that my boyfriend would be one of those young men there. Which explained why he had been given 72 hours leave to visit me just a day or two before!

It was days before I got a letter from him, which was very heavily censored, and practically told me nothing except that he had survived and to let his family know. They lived in Greenwich near the docks, and I had already been phoning them daily. He had a twin brother who was also in the Army and two older sisters both already married. After his brother died his mother was in fragile health and they had a live-in Nanny who was the one I always talked to. A month or so later I went to stay with them and the Nanny was the most friendly towards me, she even brought me breakfast in bed - tea, toast and a boiled egg which was a real treat!

Then we heard that Peter had been injured and sent back to a hospital in Hereford here in the UK. I immediately asked for three days leave from the Ministry of

Aircraft Production, where I was working at the time, so that I could go to see him. He was able to walk but was obviously very traumatised by his experiences and I found it very difficult to help him. A few months later, after writing constantly to him and getting very little in response, he wrote to say he had become engaged to be married to a nurse he had met while in hospital!

I recovered and continued to work at the M.A.P until the war was almost over. I then volunteered with the Control Commission for Germany being organised by the Foreign Office as soon as the war was over, but it wasn't until March 1946 before I eventually got out to Germany as I had to be 21 to have a passport to work abroad. I loved it. It was a real adventure for me, especially as I had never been abroad before or even on a ship.

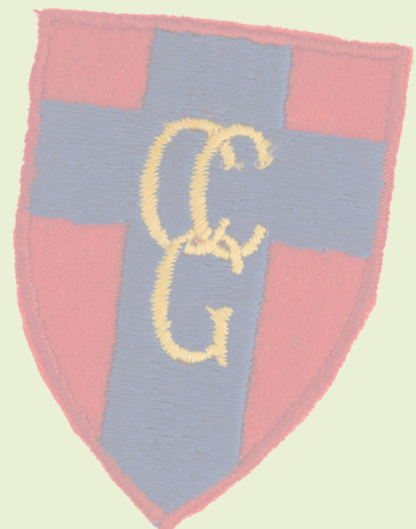
At first, I found it hard to cope with seeing so much devastation and then encountering the local Germans who were understandably hostile towards us at the time. But later, when I was able to meet them individually, I got on well with them and started an English language teaching group with them.

Initially I was in Minden near Hamburg and was then transferred to Dusseldorf where I met my future husband at his Demob. party. He missed his transport home the next day so we could spend a couple of days together. We then met up in London when I came home on leave a month later and we got engaged.

I later found out that he also had been at the Normandy landings, travelling on a flat-bottomed boat from London with an armoured vehicle, which was like a small tank, all the way to Normandy. It was in the middle of the night when they landed, and they were told just to follow a pair of lights. He was lucky to survive, although he was briefly declared missing! He in fact fought his way all through France, Holland, Belgium and Germany. He also witnessed the sight of Belsen, the Nazi concentration camp in Bergen, when they arrived, but he never talked much about it. He did, however, have nightmares about it when we first were married in 1948.



Copyright of National Army Museum





## BLAKE COURT

*Covid may have stopped our art class but it didn't stop us from painting.*

At Blake Court some of our Owners joined the monthly Art Class that was run by one of our Owners Mr. Kenneth Blakemore.

Mr. Blakemore was very passionate about his work and would spend days researching and typing up notes in preparation for our next class.

When some of us first started we didn't know the first thing about "Art" however Ken was always very patient and was always happy to point out where we were going wrong.

Unfortunately, Mr. Blakemore has now moved away from the Court, but we have continued with our work.

We hope that when we can get back to some kind of normal that we will be able to resume these classes, but in the meantime, we have continued painting in the comfort of our own homes and would like to show off some of our work.





## BLAKE COURT

*Winner of This Editions Art Competition*

*Congratulations  
To winner Mr Barnes  
of Blake Court,  
£25 book token  
on its way!*



## Pleasures *Wildlife* Brings



There really is something special about the presence of robins in a garden, perhaps because they are deemed to be spirits sent to comfort us. For me, they are friends who I have welcomed with open arms, when I provided a watering can for them to nest in. They went on to raise two broods in there, but have now relocated to an abandoned dovecote, down my side return, and may even be on their fourth brood by now.

They have been my constant companions since early spring, comforting me with their acceptance and allowing me to slow down as I've postponed landscaping to allow them space and time to grow their family. My instinct tells me this is the female who, along with her mate, makes regular stops at this perch.

*Photograph and story by Darren Kench  
Garden Maker & Writer*



## BLUNDELLSANDS CLASSIC

Mrs Angela Dunn has lived at The Classic for the last 8 years. Her family live in Keswick, so when a bungalow came on the market near her daughter Louise, Angela decided to go for it. She had a farewell get together with her fellow Owners and received a plant and a bird bath from the staff.

Angela said "living at The Classic have been some of the happiest years of her life and she will miss everyone."

## Angela's Farewell



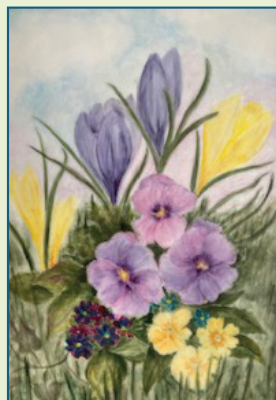
## BURCOT COURT

### Painting on China

Prior to the pandemic, I was a member of a china painting club which met weekly. The China painting society has a magazine which contains drawings, photographs etc for members to copy onto the china object they are decorating.



This was a large drawing which I had to reduce in size to fit the tile I was painting. The photograph is the result.



Joyce Lucan.

## CARRS COURT

### Scarecrow Festival

Owners at Carrs Court have been busy again getting involved with the annual Scarecrow Festival organised by Wilmslow Rotary Club held between 9th - 17th July.

Owners cleverly created the Scarecrows by recycling old mop heads, using their sewing skills and clothing from charity shops. Owners have sponsored the scarecrows which will go towards local charities and organisations to help improve mental health in the community.

Carrs Court is well known for its crazy creations - 2018 were 'The Twits' and 2019 were 'Aliens in underpants' and is enjoyed by the local community especially the children.





## CARRS COURT

## Wilmslow Bliss

My wife Iris and I moved into Carrs Court, Wilmslow, in February 2012 and it was the best decision we have ever made.

We lived in a bungalow locally but thought that it would be sensible to move here in order to get the assistance available. I have been totally blind with no perception of light and dark since 1985 and have had my fifth Guide Dog, Ginny, for five years. She gives me the independence to go anywhere at anytime and gets much fuss from our fellow Owners here.

I have always said that there are three important things in my life, my wife, my Guide Dog and my computer which all have their uses!

We all know that over the last few years technology has changed our lives and I am lucky that there is now a lot of specialised and adapted equipment to make life easier and enjoyable for people with sight problems; my computer has a screen reader which speaks everything on the screen giving me the facility of writing letters, using email and browsing the Web etc.

My latest acquisition is Alexa which enables me to listen to and change radio programmes without having to feel for the usually small buttons on a radio and gives me much information, such as the weather, time and countless other items of information.

I have a device called "In your pocket" which is a mobile telephone with speech input – no screen needed. It is a normal telephone with text facilities and provides me with newspapers, magazines, pod casts and talking books from many providers in addition to GPS and help from volunteers throughout the country.

I would be pleased to help anyone with sight problems, letting them have the contact details of organisations and suppliers of the equipment I use. Please contact:

Court managers: Karen Cattell:  
managericarrscourt@gmail.com  
tel: 01625522988



## Courtyard Garden

Finally the Courtyard garden at Carrs Court is looking 'bloomin marvellous' with special thanks to Mrs Armstrong, an Owner who has passionately managed the renovation of this garden which previously was full of ivy, rotting wood and generally looking quite dreary. Many plants have been sponsored by fellow Owners making it bright, colourful and cheerful. After the last awful year due to covid restrictions, Owners can now sit and socialise in this beautiful garden surrounded by stunning scented flowers including the climbing honeysuckle, clematis, rose and potted hydrangea and fuchsia plants.





CATHEDRAL GREEN COURT

## Behind Closed Doors

What Cathedral Green Court did during Lockdown.

Even before the pandemic, Cathedral Green Court was actively supporting local charities by holding coffee mornings, taking collections and a national charity by making premature baby items. But during the pandemic, not only did this support continue, but it happily increased. By collecting small change they raised over £100 for the local hospice, their MacMillan Coffee Morning raised £600, and the knitters and crocheters created over 600 items for premature babies - all done whilst being Covid-19 compliant.

The support for the premature and stillborn baby charity, Bonnie Babies, in particular grew with comments like, "It gives me purpose and makes me feel useful supporting others" and "I can't knit or crochet but here are some donations of wool and cash to cover the costs of sending the parcels" (there are no concessions on postage for charities). The numbers of knitters and crocheters grew as the word spread and friends outside the Court also joined us in our endeavours. We received a huge gift of wool from the Estate of a kind lady who died, plus Owners who were able to go out shopping and spotted wool, would buy some and donate it. Sometimes my study looked like a wool shop and children's knitwear store!

Even when not in lockdown it is quite common for all of us to ask each other about patterns, wools, ribbon and buttons as we passed in the corridors or even call each other. Sharing our skills, knowledge and other little "gems" of advice about "what do I do about...?" or "where can I get...?" Our telephone lines were buzzing, our collective needles were clacking, and it all kept us going as the impact of the pandemic hit.

Bonnie Babies is a small charity which supports hospitals, SCBUs, ambulance services, funeral directors and families all over the UK. We work to requests that we receive from the charity, so we are always busy knitting and crocheting blankets, shawls, cardigans, hats in abundance in all sizes from tiny to up to 3 months and usually using patterns very familiar to the families they had knitted for their own children. And, of course, sadly, small burial gowns. This is a great comfort to many families and supports them as they cope looking after their "preemies" and helps bring dignity to the little ones who unfortunately did not survive.

We have sent between 500 and 600 items from the small group of Owners, Duty Managers and other members of staff here at Cathedral Green Court. And Bonnie Babies have commented on how beautifully made these

items are and we are renowned for our larger cardigans for premature babies and the crochet blankets used in incubators and ambulances.

We have also started creating small teddy bears, which we passed onto the Police Service in Scotland for traumatised children. The letters of thanks have been very moving and reflect the way we have felt while being able to support families in what are very difficult times, especially with the added burden of the pandemic. Everything sent was laundered to Covid-19 compliance and the charity itself sent out 75,000 items last year, which was unfortunately down on the usual 125,000 items.

The comment which sums up our work the best for me is "the kindness of strangers". We do not know where our items go, but we do know that they will give help, support and comfort to many families at their time of need.

Anne Edis  
Cathedral Green Court





## Emmbrook Court

## BBQ Celebrations

The Court having a weekly summer bbq to celebrate the end of lockdown.

Alzheimer's  
coffee  
morning

## Emmbrook Court

*Congratulations to Emmbrook Court who have raised in excess of £750 by holding an Alzheimer's coffee morning.*



## Duty Managers Rewarded

## FULLERTON COURT

Following Freedom Day, ending Stage 4 of lockdown release, a progressive and careful return to social activity was re-introduced to Fullerton Court.

On Thursday 29th July, a tea-party was held to recognise the long service of two of the Duty Managers. Dawn Llewellyn, who first came to the Court twenty years ago as an HKA, before being promoted to Duty manager, whilst Paul Daly has been at the Court for ten years and in recent years has doubled his responsibilities by performing as the Handyman. The presentations were made by David Pegler, the Chairman of the Board and Lin Sutcliffe, the Court Manager. Dawn received an engraved glass vase and Paul an engraved beer mug.



Paul Daly



Dawn Llewellyn





## MELTON COURT

### Music to the Ears

Smiles and joyous hearts all round as Owners enjoyed the wonderful music provided by Mark Bussell, our local talented Pianist. After all the restrictions of the previous year, it was a pleasure to have that little bit of normality resumed, and I know Mark was very happy to be back to what he enjoys doing the most! A much-needed day for all.

*Nicki Wheeler  
Court Manager*



### 39 Minster Court

My Father and Mother moved to Minster Court in 2011. They had found it increasingly difficult living on their own and when they first visited, they immediately saw the advantages.

They chose number 39 for several reasons. The balcony was sunny and from it on a clear day they could see the Lincolnshire Wolds which they loved. Dad loved getting his fix of sunshine and fresh air sitting in the doorway whenever possible. From the lounge they saw various wildlife and the passing seasons were reflected in the trees. Recently I have seen two partridges running around the building site. Dad was endlessly amused by the workmen moving piles of soil around but also enjoyed the multitude of wildflowers that grew on them. He enjoyed seeing the sun going down over the listed building out of the lounge

window. Being on an upper floor meant they were always behind locked doors which was good for them as well as me, I no longer had to worry whether they were safe.

From a practical perspective, the staff have been wonderful, never intrusive but always there and always friendly. Not having to worry about finding someone to do small jobs was great as the handyman could do most of them. I always knew there was someone there to look out for them. Mum particularly enjoyed the social side, going down for coffee in the morning. Although, at first, they didn't have lunch in the dining room, this became more important as they got older. Also, the extra care provided as their needs changed was a Godsend, they started without anything except the weekly service clean but were able to ask for more as needed.

When unfortunately, Dad was left on his own he always said he had everything there he needed. The scooter store, the green house, the workshop, the lifts and the parking were all used by them over the years to enhance their lives. The nearness of the shops, doctors, chemist and bus stop into Lincoln all made life easier.

Number 39 has just been fully re-decorated and the carpets are new. The washing machine is virtually unused, it was replaced just before Dad had to leave.

I would recommend Minster Court for anyone wanting an easier life as they get older and less able. During the pandemic, the staff have done everything they can for the wellbeing of the residents and hopefully soon everything will get back to 'normal'. Pam,

*Owner's daughter.*



## MARGARET COURT

Commander Ian Spicer Walker, appeared in the Stratford Herald having had his big beard and mop of hair shaved for charity.



## BRAVING THE SHAVE FOR THE HOSPICE



■ Job done – Ian Walker-Spicer's hair and beard was cut by hairdresser Mindy Yorke. Photo: Mark Williamson T19/7/21/2254

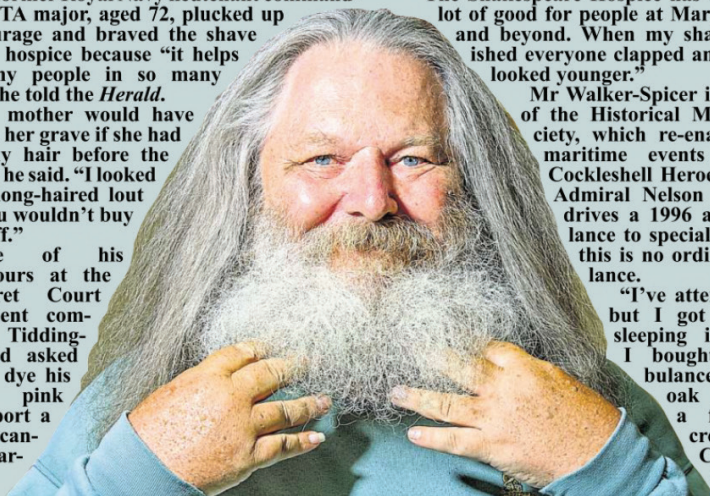
IAN Walker-Spicer admits that his former look – long hair and beard – would not have met the approval of his mother.

But that was not why last week he had his locks shaved off – the real incentive was to raise £1,000 for the Shakespeare Hospice (and to avoid having his beard dyed pink).

The former Royal Navy lieutenant commander and TA major, aged 72, plucked up the courage and braved the shave for the hospice because “it helps so many people in so many ways,” he told the *Herald*.

“My mother would have spun in her grave if she had seen my hair before the shave,” he said. “I looked like a long-haired lout that you wouldn't buy a car off.”

Some of his neighbours at the Margaret Court retirement complex in Tiddington had asked him to dye his beard pink to support a breast cancer charity.



“I wasn't sure,” said Mr Walker-Spicer, “so they persuaded me to shave my hair and do a before and after photograph.”

He added: “Nothing was left. Everything went from my neck upwards, and I said to the person who shaved my hair, Mindy Yorke, and everyone else, just don't call me ‘baldy’.”

“The Shakespeare Hospice has done such a lot of good for people at Margaret Court and beyond. When my shave was finished everyone clapped and thought I looked younger.”

Mr Walker-Spicer is a member of the Historical Maritime Society, which re-enacts famous maritime events like the Cockleshell Heroes and Lord Admiral Nelson battles. He drives a 1996 army ambulance to special events, but this is no ordinary ambulance.

“I've attended events but I got fed up of sleeping in tents so I bought the ambulance. It's got oak panelling, a fridge, microwave and Chesterfields.”

## MARGARET COURT

## Folk Night

FleetwoodCave performed at Margaret Court. The two members of the Folk/Rock group were well enjoyed with RSL's very own Services Manager Gregg Cave singing and performing on the guitar. The Owners thoroughly enjoyed a different genre of music.





## TIDDINGTON COURT

# Summer Party

## AT TIDDINGTON COURT

The owners of Tiddington Court enjoyed their long awaited Summer Party. Jessie put together an amazing lunch consisting of Salmon, Roast Beef and Desserts as far as the eye could see. The winner of the best hat design went to Mrs Collins and lots of raffle prizes won along the way. Tiddington Court Chairman Mr Harrison gave flowers to the staff on behalf of the owners as thanks for their efforts.

Special thanks from the owners to Hayley Sheldon (Court Manager) and her team at Tiddington Court for such an amazing day.



## TIDDINGTON COURT

The reality of sourcing food to ensure everyone had a meal was exceedingly difficult at the beginning of this pandemic.

Tiddington Court were extremely fortunate as they welcomed Mark from the "Lovely Pub" group to their team to support during this time.

"Every day feels like we are going to a restaurant to dine" say the Owners. Mark will continue his role at Tiddington Court when 'normal' life resumes.

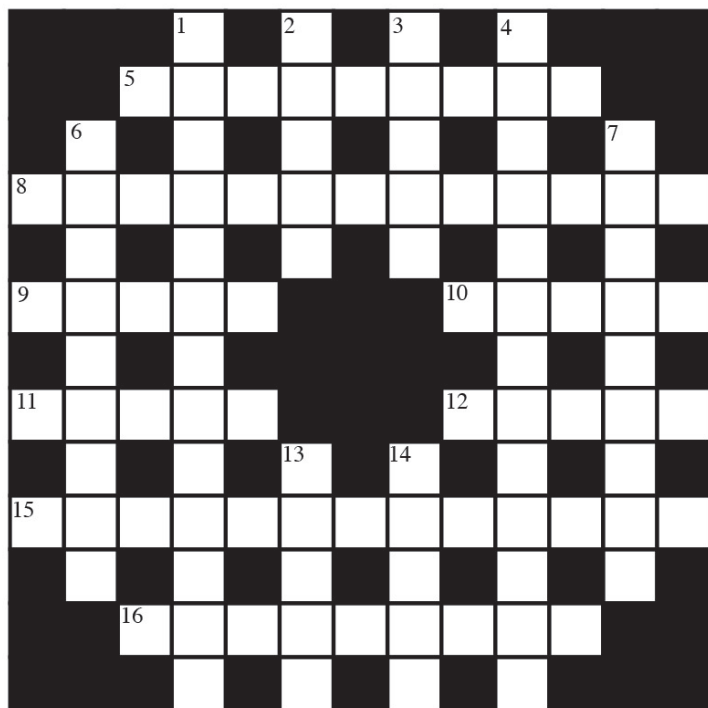
Court Owners are most welcome to book a table for lunch here and experience the delights Mark produces for themselves.

Tiddington Court, Knights Lane,  
Tiddington, Stratford Upon Avon,  
Warwickshire CV37 7BP  
t: 01789 204200

Tiddington.Manager@btconnect.com  
Court Manager: Hayley Sheldon.







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## ACROSS

- 1 Sailing vessel with two parallel hulls (9)
- 8 Mountaineous principality of central Europe between Switzerland and Austria (13)
- 9 In Scandinavian folklore, a dwarflike cave or mountain dweller (5)
- 10 In confectionery, something which is candied or coated with a sugary glaze (5)
- 11 Book for holding photographs, stamps etc (5)
- 12 Showy, flowering plants of the genus Papaver (5)
- 15 Optical toy whose angled mirrors and multiple pieces of glass or plastic produce regular patterns (13)
- 16 State of a plant when it has become yellow through lack of sunlight (9)

## DOWN

- 1 International diploma, similar in standard to British 'A' levels (13)
- 2 Italian poet, author of 'The Divine Comedy' (5)
- 3 Term applied to a female goat (5)
- 4 One of a series of fortifications built along coastal areas of S. Britain and Ireland during the Napoleonic wars (8,5)
- 6 Peninsula at the southern tip of Spain, a British crown colony since the early eighteenth century (9)
- 7 Those who follow the teachings or philosophy of another (9)
- 13 'The ....' novel by Dostoevski (5)
- 14 State of North Eastern India whose major industry is tea (5)

# SUDOKU

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

Medium

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| 7 |   | 8 |   |   | 3 |   |   |   |
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|   |   |   | 8 | 5 |   |   |   | 6 |
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## ANSWERS

- 14 Assam  
13 Idiot  
7 Disciples  
6 Gibraltar  
4 Martello tower  
3 Nanny  
2 Dante  
1 Baccalaureate
- 16 Eriolated  
15 Kaleidoscopes  
12 Poppy  
11 Album  
10 Glacé  
9 Troll  
8 Liechtenstein  
5 Catamaran

DOWN

ACROSS

CROSSWORD

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

SUDOKU

## Location of Developments



There are 32 courts developed by Retirement Security Limited across England and Wales. The management of every court is overseen by the owners who live there, ensuring that their home is run for them, not for profit. To find out more please visit the Retirement Security website [www.retirementsecurity.co.uk](http://www.retirementsecurity.co.uk) or call direct on **0800 389 9384**.

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