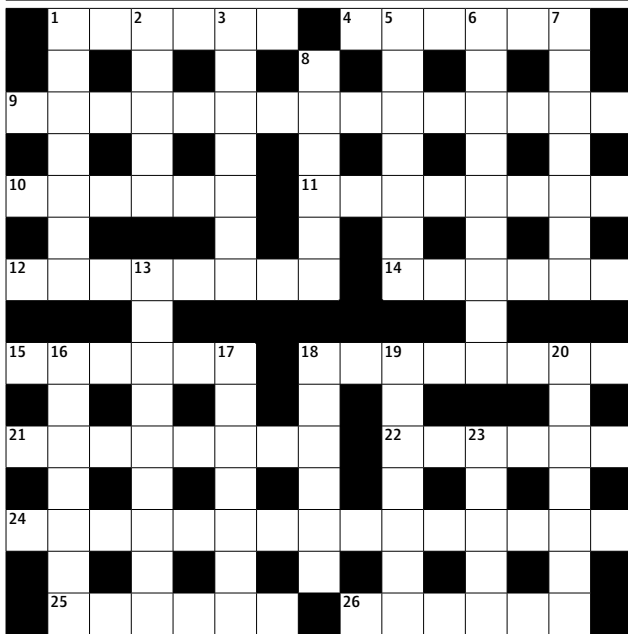


# Guardian cryptic crossword



No 26,273 set by Arachne

## Across

- 1 Am I, Shapps, not a vacuous, pompous minor calamity? (6)
- 4 Alternative to opera (6)
- 9 Reserve Chelsea captain overshadowing the other men, I fear (11,4)
- 10 Sisters bathing naked (6)
- 11 Means to spy on people he betrayed (8)
- 12 Three-minute warning before breakfast? (8)
- 14 Stupid wombats periodically take stuff (6)
- 15 Saggy neck of mate we had briefly found revolting (6)
- 18 Takes knickers off (and asks questions afterwards) (8)
- 21 Working men graft and become shattered (8)
- 22 Luxury vehicle obstructing A6 (6)
- 24 Emulating Thatcher in breaking Anglo-Indian ties (15)
- 25 Singular, painful emotion bruited round (6)
- 26 Illegible writing, first sign of sunstroke (6)

## Down

- 1 Encountering men, I get excited (7)
- 2 S. Coe's rival beat it (5)
- 3 Time to interrupt unnamed person opposite (7)

- 5 Cable screwed Post Office over, which may humour some deluded people (7)
- 6 Scoff uproariously at the pigs (9)
- 7 Tries upsetting Anglo-Saxon politician with support of the French (7)
- 8 Right to become rich, ignoring society (6)
- 13 Wiretap her (Special Branch involved) (9)
- 16 Unable to hear a female peer? (7)
- 17 Nick Bottom to make first appearance as prime minister (7)
- 18 Catch detective arresting 10 (6)
- 19 Country starts to brave uncommonly violent wind (7)
- 20 Facecloth and soft soap (7)
- 23 Panorama which appeared before 7? (5)

Solution No. 26,272

