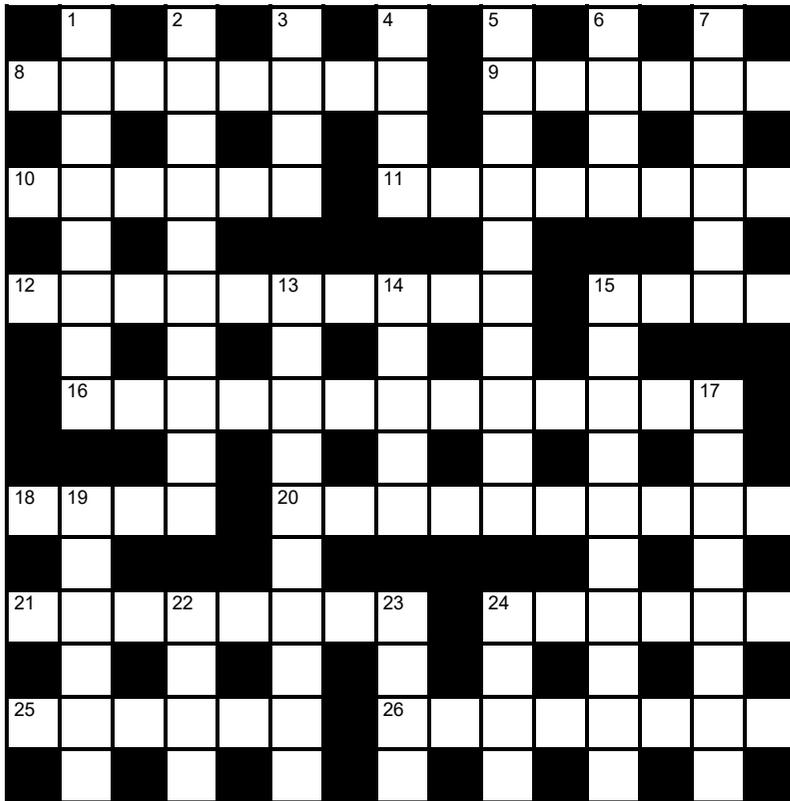


### The Fab Five

*The five asterisked clues lack definitions, which must be deduced from the solution to 16 across.*



**Across**

- 8 Clumsy tradesmen dropping new shed (8)
- 9 Two ways a knight could get shortened jacket (6)
- 10 \*Local tense, eating absolutely nothing (6)
- 11 \*Tip bins over in upstairs room (8)
- 12 State spending cut, at the expense of communication (10)
- 15 Encourage doctors getting son's cast off (4)
- 16 Their singles (number released) 'vacuous claptrap'? Possibly (3,5,5)

- 18 Nicola Sturgeon perhaps drunk when embracing Conservative (4)
- 20 One's played in goal as cover for crowd-pleaser (injured) (3,7)
- 21 Remains fed up about America taking lead from Trump (8)
- 24 \*Pale blue skirts (6)
- 25 \*Tears held back by child singled out from the others (6)
- 26 Filled with love, initially Scully and partner repress strong feelings (8)

**Down**

- 1 What could make strong dark beer something exceptional (8)
- 2 Detective keeping a lot of corrupt fellows in custody (10)
- 3 Put out - in fact I'm extremely upset (4)
- 4 Assistant has a last suggestion (4)
- 5 One rapidly fires staff smuggling cocaine in huge pants (7-3)
- 6 Spring crop beginning to emerge (4)
- 7 Friend occupying Government post (6)

- 13 Make competent head set about work involving one teaching assistant originally (10)
- 14 Sustain rapid attacks, scoring five in second half (5)
- 15 Flaky pastry lacking breadth, rolling error primarily to blame (10)
- 17 Puzzle supporting conclusion of this pedant (8)
- 19 \*A fit of weeping has water rising inside (6)
- 22 Few regularly wear hair up (4)
- 23 Soprano has malfunctioning girdle (4)

24 Dim friend of Pooh's?  
The reverse! (4)