

The Kidderminster  
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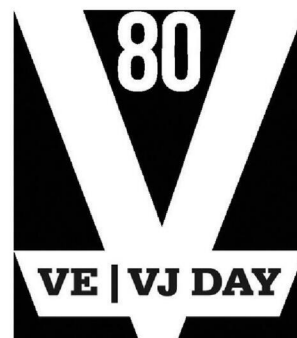


Friday, May 2nd 2025 Week 18

# Standard

VE Day 80th Anniversary Supplement

1945-2025



## MARKING 80 YEARS SINCE VE DAY: A Time to Remember, Reflect and Honour

**E**ighty years ago, on 8 May 1945, the streets of Britain erupted with joy and relief as Victory in Europe was declared and the Second World War in Europe officially came to an end.

For those who lived through it, VE Day was more than a moment in history—it was the day the darkness began to lift after nearly six long years of conflict.

Today, we honour the courage and sacrifice of those who served on the frontlines and those who kept the home fires burning. This 80th anniversary is a time not only for celebration but for remembrance. Across our town and villages, families gather with memories—some joyful, some bittersweet—of a generation that gave so much and asked for so little in return.

As part of this special edition, we're proud to feature personal stories from local veterans and the families who carry their legacy forward. Their accounts are a powerful reminder that history is not just something we read in books—it lives in the memories, photographs,



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and whispered stories passed down through generations.

From the factory workers and Land Girls to the soldiers who fought in Europe, North Africa and beyond, the people of Britain came together in a show of unity and resilience that continues to inspire. And when the war finally ended, they didn't just rejoice—they rebuilt. Streets that once echoed with the sound of air raid sirens became places of peace and progress once again.

In 1945, communities gathered around radios, danced in village halls and filled town squares with laughter

and song. This year, we remember in a different way—perhaps with street parties, church services, or quiet moments of reflection. However we mark it, the message is the same: we will never forget.

We would also like to thank the local businesses whose support has made this commemorative issue possible. Their contributions ensure these stories of bravery and endurance continue to be told, and that new generations can learn from the past.

To those who served, we say thank you. To those who lived through those uncertain years, we offer our deepest respect. And to those who keep their memories alive—through stories, photos, medals in dusty drawers, or names in family trees—we stand with you in remembrance.

Eighty years on, VE Day reminds us that peace is something worth fighting for, and freedom is never free. Let us honour the past not just with words, but with a renewed commitment to the values that victory defended: unity, courage, and hope.



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COMMEMORATING 80 YEARS SINCE VE DAY





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# COMMEMORATING VE Day 80 IN THE WYRE FOREST



A VARIETY of activities and events are taking place across Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley for VE Day 80.

## KIDDERMINSTER

An Evening of Remembrance, Tribute and Community Spirit will take place at St Mary and All Saints Church, Churchfields, Kidderminster, from 6.30pm to 9.30pm on Thursday, May 8.

A number of events will take place during the three-hour commemoration, including bell-ringing by St Mary's Society of Changeringers and Friends, a performance by St Catherine's CE Primary School Choir, Wartime tunes from The Jukebox Jems, Bagpipes by Craig Swarbrick - The Celtic Piper and readings by the Deputy Lieutenant Mr West, The Venerable Hayward Osborne and the WFDC Armed Forces Champion, Coun Kevin Gale.

Other events will include a parade featuring ex-service groups and cadets, a Town Crier proclamation from Stephen Day and a tribute reading and beacon lighting by the Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun George Connolly. Bugle by Heidi Worth.

## STOURPORT

Stourport Town Council has organised commemorations from 9am on Thursday, May 8.

It will begin at 9am with the Town Crier reading a proclamation for peace at the War Memorial Gardens on Vale Road. As the proclamation is read out the Mayor of Stourport will raise the 'Flag of Peace' - both will be streamed live on the Stourport Town Council Facebook page.

From 3.30pm, Eat Street Repeat will bring a food court to War Memorial Park on Lickhill Road with a host of vendors.

Among the entertainment will be DJ Stretch who will be joined in the lead up to the beacon lighting ceremony by The Swingettes and more. There will also be a number of military vehicles on display.

From 4pm to 4.45pm, people can join local historian and expert Geoff Shaw, in Stourport Community Centre, for a free talk on Stourport's contribution to VE Day and its role in the Second World War.

And from 6.30pm to 8.30pm, the bell ringers of the Parish Church of St Bartholomew (Areley Kings) will be joining in with 'Together We Chime - Let the Nation's Bells Ring Loud'. Part of this will also be broadcast by Stourport Town Council for those gathered in War Memorial Park.

The Beacon Lighting Ceremony will take place from 9.15pm to 9.30pm and it will start with a welcome by Rev Carey Saleh. It will culminate with the Stourport Carnival Queen lighting the 'Lamp of Peace' at 9.30pm.

## BEWDLEY

Bewdley's VE Day 80 commemorations run from 8.45pm to 9.30pm.

A short outdoor service outside St Anne's Church on Load Street will commemorate Victory in Europe.

The event will conclude with a beacon lighting.





## Bat house is hit by vandals

by **Tristan Harris**  
[tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com](mailto:tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com)

**HEARTLESS vandals have damaged a bat house at Hurcott Pools and Wood.**

The site in between Kidderminster and Blakedown is a site of specific scientific interest for its wetland habitats, in particular, the wet woodland.

The bat house was constructed during 2019 with the help of the Worcestershire Bat Group, using materials from a disused boathouse.

During the attack on the habitat, the bat house had its tiles from all sides of its roof ripped off and smashed.

Repairs to the house are planned for next week to make the building safe again for the bats.

Doors were sealed, special bat entrances were added, and roosting spots were built inside.

A spokesperson for Wyre Forest District Council which revealed the news on Wednesday said: "It's an important place for bats, especially as their natural homes are becoming harder to find.

"Vandalism like this damages wildlife habitats and wastes time and money."

They urged anyone who saw any anti-social behaviour at the area's nature reserves to call police on 101 or by reporting it via the [westmercia.police.uk](http://westmercia.police.uk) website.



The bat house at Hurcott Pools and Wood was damaged by vandals who ripped the tiles off the roof and smashed them.

And they concluded by saying: "Let's respect and protect our local nature together."

### Bat conservation

Figures from the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and Bat Conservation Trust show the county is home to 14 of the 18 bat species found in the UK.

Among the most popular are

the common pipistrelle, soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared bat. The county also has records of several other species, including some that are rare or uncommon, such as Bechstein's bat.

Daubenton's, Leisler's, Natterer's, and Whiskered bats are considered rare in Worcestershire although sightings have been recorded in the county.

Worcestershire is working to

protect and conserve bat populations, including converting structures into bat hotels like the one at Hurcott Pools and Wood, and conducting surveys to assess the impact of development on bat roosts.

Earlier this year, Wyre Forest District Council received funding from the Natural Networks to install 20 nest and bat boxes around the woodland.



Wolverley Community Cafe staff - Liz, Kate and Lisa - are ready to celebrate VE Day 80. s

THE COMMUNITY Cafe at Wolverley Memorial Hall is offering a special menu next week to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day.

The cafe will be decked out in red, white and blue and there will be a display of Second World War memorabilia showing how civilians contributed to the war effort.

Local historian Mike Webster has loaned part of his collection to display at the cafe during the week.

Cafe manager, Kate Mellor, said: "We have copies of many of the original posters produced at the time, for instance those promoting the women's land army, how to keep yourself safe and how to eat healthily during the massive food shortages.

"Everyone is welcome to pop in and have a look.

"There will be home made Victory sponge cake based on a recipe used during the war years and a range of traditional finger sandwiches including cucumber ones of course."

Wolverley Memorial Community Cafe is open from 10.30am to 3.30pm from Tuesdays to Fridays. The special menu will be available from May 6 to 9.



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**LIVE THEATRE:** THERE will be a treat for all Agatha Christie fans when 'Murder, Margaret and Me' by Philip Meeks comes to Kidderminster's Rose Theatre.

The plays inception began in the early 1960s when two national treasures were the creative force behind one of British cinema's most successful franchises.

But the Miss Marple movies were almost never made - Queen of Crime, Agatha Christie, did not want Margaret Rutherford to bring her fabled spinster to life.

And Rutherford was mortified at the prospect of sullying her reputation with something as sordid as murder.

This play explores the real reason why the

acting legend and 'the funniest woman alive' did not want to take on the role that made her celebrated across the world.

Margaret and Agatha form an unlikely friendship fueled by tea and gossip.

Meanwhile, Agatha turns detective and is determined to unearth Rutherford's tragic and shocking secret.

The play runs from May 12 to 17.

For tickets, visit the Rose Theatre website: [rosetheatre.co.uk](http://rosetheatre.co.uk) or call the Box Office on 01562 743745 which is open between 10.30am and 12.30pm each weekday.

**Laura Pearson, Joan Wakeman and Katy Ball** enjoying rehearsals. Picture courtesy of Colin Hill. s

A TEENAGE boy was assaulted by a group of youths on a canal towpath in Kidderminster.

The vicious attack happened around 5pm on Sunday on a stretch of canal behind Carters Furniture Centre.

The youths who attacked the victim, a 15-year-old boy, also damaged his phone.

Kidderminster Police said they were

aware of a video of the vicious attack circulating on social media.

And officers confirmed they were investigating and have urged witnesses or anyone with information that can help officers to email Broadwaters Police Safer Neighbourhood Team at: [broadwaters.snt@westmercia.police.uk](mailto:broadwaters.snt@westmercia.police.uk) to pass on the details.

# Brewing up for a bank holiday

by **Tristan Harris**  
[tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com](mailto:tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com)

**A FREE community coffee morning is set to take place at Jelleymans Mill in Kidderminster between 10am and 2pm on bank holiday Monday, May 5.**

Brew Monday, organised for the Puxton Lane venue, offers a fantastic opportunity for members of the community to come together, connect with friends old and new and learn more about the vital work of Jelleymans Heritage Arts Charity.

Guests can enjoy freshly brewed coffee and a delicious selection of home-baked cakes, generously donated by members of the community.

The event provides the perfect chance to relax, socialise, and support a local cause.

Samuel Davies, the CEO of the Jelleymans Heritage Arts Charity, said: "We're excited to host Brew Monday and welcome everyone to this friendly gathering."

"It's a wonderful way to bring people together, share some treats, and raise awareness about our charity and the programs we run."

Jelleymans Heritage Arts Charity works to provide a community base for people from all walks of life to be able to participate in creative, educational and therapeutic activities.

The event will provide information about the charity's ongoing projects, volunteer opportunities, and how individuals can get involved.

## The charity

Jelleymans Heritage Arts Charity is dedicated to preserving and promoting Kidderminster's rich heritage through a variety of arts and cultural events and activities.

Mr Davies added: "We aim to engage the community, support local artists, and provide educational opportunities for all ages."

Visit the website at: [jhac.co.uk](http://jhac.co.uk) or search for: 'JHAC - Jelleymans Heritage Arts Charity' on Facebook for more.

**The 'Brew Monday' community coffee morning offers people the chance to come together, socialise and find out more about the Jelleymans Heritage Arts Charity. s**



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# Flying the flag for VE Day 80 celebrations



Deputy Mayor, Coun Doug Hine, and Mayor Coun George Connolly get the VE80 Day flag ready for the Victory in Europe commemorations. Picture by Marcus Mingins 192506MMR

**THE CHAIRMAN** of Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC), Coun John Byng, will raise the special VE Day 80 flag at the authority's headquarters at 9.45am on Thursday, May 8.

Residents are invited to attend the flag-raising and proclamation event outside Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, which will also feature an official welcome from the council chairman.

It will kick off a number of events and activities across Kidderminster, Stourport and

Bewdley to mark VE80 Day, a celebration of the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE).

The end of the Second World War was on May 8, 1945 and events will offer a chance to pay tribute to the millions of people across the UK and Commonwealth who served in the conflict.

Refreshments will be available in reception.

Coun Byng said: "It is a great honour to be raising the flag for the 80th anniversary of VE Day. Everyone is welcome to join us in commemorating this incredibly important date in our history."

There will be a host of events taking place at St Mary and All Saints Church, Churchfields, Kidderminster from 6.30pm to 9.30pm.

The Evening of Remembrance, Tribute and Community Spirit will feature bell ringing by St Mary's Society of Changeringers and Friends, a performance by St Catherine's CE Primary School, wartime tunes from The Jukebox Jems and bagpipes by The Celtic Piper, Craig Swarbrick.

Readings will be given by the Deputy Lieutenant, Paul West, the Venerable Hayward Osborne and the WFDC Armed

Forces Champion, Coun Kevin Gale.

A parade and line-up will feature veterans associations, ex-service groups, cadets and local organisations and there will be a town crier proclamation from Stephen Day.

A tribute reading and beacon lighting will be undertaken by the Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun George Connolly with

the bugle being played by Heidi Worth.

Celebrations and commemorations will also be held in Stourport and Bewdley - some of these details are available on page two of our commemorative VE80 Day wrap in this week's paper.

Alternatively, visit wyreforestdc.gov.uk/whatson and the VE Day stories on our web-

site - kidderminsterstandard.co.uk - for more information.

The public can also get involved with the Government's 'Tip Top Towns' campaign on social media, using the #VE80 hashtag.

Visit the VE Day website ve-vjday80.gov.uk/tiptoptowns for more information and how to put local events in Wyre Forest on the VE80 Day map.

Young people are being urged to consider joining the Kidderminster Royal Marine Cadets. s



## Royal Marine Cadets seek new recruits

**YOUNG** people aged 13 to 18 are being urged to consider the Kidderminster Royal Marine Cadets which is looking for new members to join its ranks.

Organisers say the group is perfect for those wanting adventure, teamwork and the chance to learn new skills.

The cadets meet between

6.45pm and 9.15pm on Mondays and Thursdays at the Army Reserve Centre, Birmingham Road, Kidderminster.

Among the many activities are fieldcraft, first aid, water-based pursuits and leadership training.

A spokesperson for the group said: "Come down,

meet the team, and see what it's all about.

"Start your journey with the Royal Marines Cadets today."

Anyone considering joining can send a message via the Kidderminster Sea and Royal Marine Cadets or email Kidderminster@acoy.co.uk for more information.

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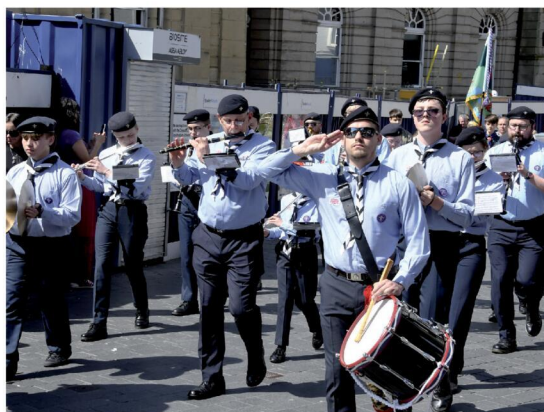
Rainbows join in the reaffirmation of the Scout and Guide promise at Aggborough Stadium. s



As well as the celebration service, those gathered held a reaffirmation of the Scout and Guide promise. s



Brownies and Rainbows were among those in the parade. s



The parade journeyed from New Road to Kidderminster Harriers' Aggborough Stadium. s

## Youngsters on Parade

**THE CROWDS** turned out to watch Wyre Forest Scouts' annual St George's Day parade on Sunday.

The popular event was bathed in bright sunshine as hundreds of people lined the streets to watch the procession go by.

Almost 700 Scouts, Beavers, Cubs, Guides, Brownies, Rainbows and more were part of the mass gathering.

They met in New Road before parading to Kidderminster Harriers' Aggborough Stadium.

There - with everyone sitting on the fittingly red and white seats - a celebration service was held and there

was a reaffirmation of the Scout and Guide promise.

Groups from across the Midlands had joined for the extravaganza.

Among them was Kings Norton Youth Marching Band from south Birmingham which was taking part in its first-ever Kidderminster St George's Day Parade.

After the service, the parade made its way back through the town centre where the Deputy Mayor of Kidderminster Coun Doug Hine took the salute.

These pictures taken by Kidderminster photographer Colin Hill perfectly capture the celebratory atmosphere of the day as the town came together to commemorate England's patron saint.



There was a lively atmosphere inside the stadium. s

Pictures by Colin Hill

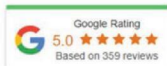
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# Students' once-in-a-lifetime trip

by **Tristan Harris**  
tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

**A GROUP of Kidderminster students has returned from an unforgettable and life-changing trip to India where international relations were forged.**

The group of 12 Baxter College year ten students spent time working with homeless children and attending a school in New Delhi, as well as grabbing the chance to visit iconic sites, including the Taj Mahal and the Red Fort.

The group had raised more than £1,000 last term for the Salaam Baalak Trust with various fundraising events before setting off on their epic Easter journey.

After presenting their donation, they worked with 30 street orphans at the trust's shelter presenting sessions they had devised about the planets, national flags, understanding the countries of the world, bracelet-making and colouring.

They also spent three days working alongside students at the Mira Model School with joint activities including maths and science, sculpting, collage-making and a thought-provoking discussion on the similarities between India and the UK.

Deputy headteacher, Tim Waites, said: "The time in the



The students took in many sights, including India Gate. s

children's home was incredibly humbling and, despite the language barrier, they worked together brilliantly to communicate and connect.

"It was truly beautiful to see their creativity and compassion shine through.

"During the three days at the school, our students experienced a new educational environment, learning from Indian teachers, while my two colleagues and I delivered our own lessons, sharing ideas, building connections and celebrating the joy of learning across cultures."

The students spoke of the huge impact of the once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Iris Webb said: "We've made new friendships, gained a deeper understanding of

India, including being able to visit amazing heritage sites, and created memories that will last a lifetime."

Jake Owen added: "Going into the children's home gave us an experience that showed us how lucky we are and highlighted the opportunities we have.

"Hopefully, with the help of the trust, these children will also get better life chances."

And Tyler Care said: "Mira Model School was an amazing place where we made many friends and shared cultural experiences."

For Maisie Williams, the sights and sounds of India also made a lasting impression. She said: "Visiting the Taj Mahal was so special, but also very hot, and the noise and the traffic in India



The group visited The Red Fort. s

standout as an experience we have never had, everyone used their vehicle horn all the time."

Teacher and organiser Kate Kendall praised the students for their 'incredible enthusiasm, adaptability, and warmth' throughout the 10-day trip.

She said: "It was a wholesome and inspiring experience for everyone involved, highlighting the power of empathy, education and global friendship."

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# Shocked by theft of defibrillator

by **Tristan Harris**  
tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

**AN APPEAL** has been launched by Jelleyman's Heritage Arts Charity after the suspected theft of a vital life-saving defibrillator from its premises on April 19.

The device, donated by the British Heart Foundation, was a much-needed community asset and was stored in a heated external box to ensure it was accessible to the public at all times.

The theft has shocked and saddened members of the charity and the local community who could rely on the availability of this life-saving equipment.

Liz Gardiner, CEO of Severn Valley Training, which led the campaign to get the defibrillator installed at Jelleyman's Mill, said, "We are devastated by this selfish act."

"This defibrillator was not just for Jelleyman's - it was for the entire community."

"It was there to save lives. "Stealing it puts people's lives at risk, and I urge anyone with information to come forward."



ward." The defibrillator was installed to provide immediate assistance to anyone in the area experiencing a cardiac arrest. Quick access to a defibrillator can significantly increase a person's chances of survival.

Jelleyman's Heritage Arts Charity is urging anyone with information about the theft to contact Kidderminster Police by calling 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## The charity

Jelleyman's Heritage Arts

Charity is a creative community based at Jelleyman's Mill, a Victorian industrial site once at the heart of the Kidderminster carpet industry.

It aims to create a community hub providing creative, educational and therapeutic activities for the local community, with the long term goal of saving and restoring the site.

**The charity and community has been shocked by the theft of the defibrillator on April 19.**



Police want the public's help to track down Jake Harbourne. s

**WANTED:** POLICE have released this picture of Jake Harbourne who is wanted on recall to prison.

The 42-year-old has links to Kidderminster, Stourbridge, Malvern and Worcester. Anyone who knows where he is or has

any information to help find him should call police on 01905 331030

Alternatively, call 0800 555 111 or by visit: [crimestoppers-uk.org](https://crimestoppers-uk.org) to submit information to Crimestoppers.

**THEFT APPEAL:** THIEVES smashed the window of a car to steal a handbag at a Kidderminster nature reserve.

They struck at the car park at Hurcott Woods, off Hurcott Lane, between mid-day and 1pm on Tuesday.

The navy blue handbag which was stolen contained cash and cards.

A white van was seen in the area at the time and police have appealed for the driver to get in touch.

Officers have been examining dash cam and CCTV footage. And they are

keen for witnesses, anyone in the area at the time who saw or heard anything suspicious and those who have information relating to the theft to call them on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 1111.

Police have also urged people to report any suspicious behaviour around vehicles by calling 101 or 999 if a crime is in progress.

And they have reiterated the message to drivers that valuables should be removed from vehicles and cars and vans should be locked when being left unattended.

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Kidderminster Harriers Women celebrate after winning the trophy at Claines Lane following a 6-0 success against Worcester City Reserves.

All pictures courtesy of clivejonespr.com



# Harriers' Sunday best seals cup



**KIDDERMINSTER Harriers Women lifted the Worcestershire FA Women's Sunday Cup after storming to a 6-0 victory against Worcester City Reserves in the final.**

A brace from Millie Rogers and further goals from Amber Lawrence, Phoebe Hill, Alex Nicklin and Mia Badland saw Harriers claim the trophy at Claines Lane.

Harriers had thrashed Bromsgrove Sporting 6-0 in their first tie in the competition before then beating

by Aaron Sutcliffe  
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

Worcester City's first team 2-1 in the semi-final.

Kidderminster went close early on in the final as Lawrence chipped the ball inches over the crossbar before Rogers saw her effort go just past the angle of bar and post.

However, Rogers broke the deadlock moments later on 13 minutes as she held off two defenders before finding the bottom corner.

Harriers doubled their lead on 36 minutes as Rogers

scored her second of the game after rounding the Worcester goalkeeper before finishing into an empty net.

Kidderminster made it 3-0 five minutes before half-time when captain Lawrence drew out the keeper before finding the net from Izzie Whittick's first-time pass.

And Harriers had one hand on the trophy five minutes after the break as substitute Hill touched home Whittick's cross from a free-kick.

Harriers made it five on the hour mark when Nicklin curled a fine effort into the corner from distance.

Badland completed the scoring on 75 minutes when she headed in Chiara Stokes' cross from the left at the near post.

Harriers are chasing a league and cup double this season, with the club currently second in the West Midlands Regional League Premier Division table. However, Kidderminster have two games in hand on leaders Lye Town who they trail by four points.

Harriers Women are next in action away to Burton Albion on Sunday, May 4, with kick-off at 2pm at the Pirelli Stadium.



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TWO MEN were treated for potentially serious injuries and taken to hospital after a serious crash in Kidderminster on Tuesday morning.

The collision, which involved a car and a van, happened around 6.45am on the A450 in Torton, Hartlebury.

West Mercia Police, West Midlands Ambulance Service and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service were all called to the scene.

The car driver managed to get himself out of the vehicle before the fire service's arrival but the van driver was physically trapped.

Firefighters - one crew each from Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest Fire Stations - freed the man so he could be treated by paramedics.

After being treated at the scene, the pair were taken to the Worcestershire Royal Hospital.

RESIDENTS across Wyre Forest and the rest of the county headed to the polls yesterday for the Worcestershire County Council elections.

Polling stations were open from 7am to 10pm before the ballot boxes were collected for counting.

There will be 10 seats contested across the district, including Bewdley, Chaddesley, Cookley, Wolverley and Wribbenhall, St Barnabas, St Chad's, St George's, St John's, St Peter's, Stourport - Arley Kings and Riverside and Stourport - Mitton.

Our reporters will be at the counts across the county.

Visit: [kidderminsterstandard.co.uk](http://kidderminsterstandard.co.uk) from 10am for our live coverage.

# Environmental award for 600-home development

by Tristan Harris  
[tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com](mailto:tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com)

**A HOUSING development in Lea Castle in Kidderminster has been awarded full 'Building with Nature' accreditation after demonstrating the protection of wildlife and ecology is at its core.**

The 600-home site places emphasis on green infrastructure, promotes health and wellbeing for residents and enhances wildlife habitats.

It is framed by a boundary of woodland which is home to a diverse range of plant and animal species and its stormwater storage area has become home to a number of rare dragonflies.

Andy Peters, Vistry South West Midlands' managing director, said: "The Vistry team worked exceptionally hard at Park Gate to incorporate sustainable practices into this beautiful development, prioritising accessible green infrastructure.

"It gives me real pleasure to see this development achieve such a prestigious accreditation, which can be summed up in the words of a resident who cited that the natural, woodland setting and the intention to protect and enhance nature were deciding factors in their decision to move to this site.



"I hope our success at Lea Castle will inspire more initiatives to prioritise both environmental conservation and functional infrastructure."

## Green features

The development features a variety of green infrastructure measures.

Among them are accessible green spaces for nature trails to encourage active living and connect resi-

dents to nature and wildlife habitats, such as bat barns and dormice nesting areas. These ensure ongoing monitoring and management of local eco systems.

The development, with its environmental priorities and its green infrastructure, has been created to high standards to fit in with the landscape and urban character.

The scheme was also built with a view of avoiding, mitigating, and compensating for impacts on exist-

ing biodiversity.

And it includes a Landscape and Woodland Management Plan to identify habitats and species within the site boundary and ensure the protection and enhancement of the natural environment.

**There is a wealth of wildlife at Lea Castle which has just been given full 'Building with Nature' accreditation. s**

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# Fundraiser to scale the heights in sunrise trek

PEOPLE are being urged to sign up to take on the 'Scafell Pike at Sunrise' charity trek to raise funds for the KEMP Hospice.

Participants can climb the famous mountain under the moonlight and reach the summit as the sun rises on Sunday, June 15.

The event will start at 1.30am when those taking part meet with the Sky Blue Adventure team at Wasdale Head Village Green in the Lake District.

The conference climb, which will be six miles in total and 3,244ft, will start at 2am.

The trek will be led by an expert mountain guide from Sky Blue

by **Tristan Harris**  
tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

Adventure and walkers should arrive at the summit at 5am.

A spokesperson for the hospice said: "After reaching the summit of this epic walking challenge, you will be able to take a moment to admire the breathtaking sunrise over the stunning Lake District, having conquered the highest mountain in England."

The descent back to Wasdale Head will then start at 5.30am, arriving back at the village green at 8am for a breakfast sandwich with tea or coffee. People can offer a donation for the



A group took on 'Snowdon at Sunrise' last year to raise funds for the KEMP Hospice. s

food, which the charity would appreciate, to cover expenses.

A return coach transport will be provided from KEMP Hospice. More information on this will be released.

Last year, there was a charity sunrise trek to Snowdon but this is the first time the KEMP Hospice has put together one for Scafell Pike.

After starting at the National Trust Car Park at Westwater, the route sets along and across Lingmell Beck, a steep but short ascent to Brown Tongue. The path then steadies to Lingmell Col.

The final ascent has a clear path which zig zags its way up the final 200m of ascent. The summit plateau will then be finally reached offering extensive views of the lakeland fells from England's highest point.

The entry fee is £90 per person which covers a wide range of support and resources.

Visit the website at kemphospice.org.uk/support-us/fundraising/events-challenges/scafell-pike-sunrise-challenge/ for more information and to book places.

## Firefighters extinguish skip blaze

A FIRE which started in a skip in Kidderminster was in danger of spreading to a house and needed two Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service crews to put it out.

Firefighters from Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest Fire Stations were called at 7.57pm on Sunday night to the blaze in Nursery Close, Kidderminster.

The skip fire was extinguished using water jets and crews used thermal imaging camera and a triple extension ladder to ensure the flames had not spread to the cladding on the property.

There were no casualties and no other emergency services were needed.

The incident was dealt with by 8.46pm.

## Hospice will have first-ever charity places for London Marathon

THE KEMP Hospice is excited to announce that, for the very first time, it has four charity places for the 2026 TCS London Marathon.

This year's event, which took place on Sunday, broke the record for having the most ever finish-

ers in a marathon anywhere in the world.

A total of 56,640 crossed the line, which beat the 55,646 set by the TCS New York City marathon in November 2024.

Next year's London Marathon

will provide a great opportunity for KEMP supporters to do something amazing by taking on the most popular and famous marathon in the world whilst raising vital funds for the cause.

Anyone interested in running

the London Marathon for KEMP Hospice should visit kemphospice.org.uk/support-us/fundraising/events-challenges/tcs-london-marathon/ and fill out the form. Staff will then be in touch soon with further application details.

**Send us your stories: Email editor@kidderminsterstandard.co.uk**

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# Extra funding to boost police

by **Sonny Rackham**  
sonny.rackham@bullivantmedia.com

## A MULTI-MILLION pound funding boost will allow West Mercia Police to hire dozens of new officers into neighbourhood roles over the next year.

Government funding of £3million will cover the hiring of 31 neighbourhood police officers as well as 20 PCSOs and 15 specials across West Mercia.

Earlier this month, Home Secretary Yvette Cooper announced details of funding for 2025/26 as the start of a four-year Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee programme to bring in 13,000 extra officers by the end of Labour's Parliament.

Each force in England and Wales has been allocated a budget based on the Police Funding Formula with West Mercia Police receiving £3,108,283, in line with neighbouring Staffordshire's allocation of £3,014,459.

Speaking on behalf of West Mercia Police Federation, Steve Butler, said: "We welcome the Government's plans to boost neighbourhood policing, an area that was severely hit by the budget cuts introduced from 2010, with the links into our communities being hard hit and public confidence in policing being dented.

"It is vital we rebuild neighbourhood policing and this investment should help get us back on track by putting officers back into the hearts of our communities."

As part of the Government's plans, it wants every neigh-

bourhood in England and Wales to have dedicated teams spending their time on the beat, with guaranteed police patrols in town centres and other hotspot areas at peak times such as Friday and Saturday nights.

In announcing the funding, Ms Cooper said: "The heartbeat of our Great British policing tradition is seeing Bobbies on the beat, but for too long, too many communities have been feeling abandoned as crime soared and neighbourhood police disappeared.

"That's why this Government is determined to get police back on the beat and into our town centres.

"It should not matter where you live – everyone deserves local, visible policing they can trust."

**A FIRE** broke out in an electrical substation in The Patios, Kidderminster, at 3.26pm on Tuesday.

Two Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service crews – one each from Wyre Forest and Droitwich Fire Stations – were sent to the scene.

They used a CO2 extinguisher and,

once the blaze was out, a thermal imaging camera was used to check for hotspots.

The area was cordoned off and the substation was isolated by National Grid.

There were no casualties and no other emergency services were needed.

The incident was dealt with by 4.48pm.



BHF Kidderminster representative Zoe Roberts, Wyre Forest District Council Chairman, Coun John Byng, and Barbara Byng with the cheque for the British Heart Foundation. s

THE CHAIRMAN of Wyre Forest District Council has raised more than £3,000 for the British Heart Foundation (BHF) during his term of office which ran from last May to this month.

Coun John Byng presented the funds to Zoe Roberts, a representative of the BHF, following a host of fundraising activities during the past 12 months.

The main ones included The Chairman's Quiz held at St George's Hall in Bewdley and the Chairman's Ball which was held in conjunction with the Chairman of Worcestershire County Council, Coun Tracey Onslow.

Coun Byng said: "I'm really pleased to be handing over a cheque for £3,173 as I know how important donations are to the foundation."

Zoe, from The British Heart Foundation Kidderminster branch, said: "It is only through donations and fundraising like this that the BHF can fund advances in research that will

get us closer than ever to a world free from the fear of heart and circulatory diseases."

Coun Byng represents the Wribbenhall and Arley Ward on Wyre Forest District Council.

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# Rowbottom roars to podium in BTCC opener at Donington Park

KIDDERMINSTER'S Dan Rowbottom started the 2025 British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) season with a podium finish.

Rowbottom finished third in the first race of the season at Donington Park.

The Kidderminster driver then finished fifth in race two and sixth in race three driving for NAPA Racing UK.

Rowbottom sits fifth in the drivers' standings with NAPA Racing second in the teams standings by virtue of the finishing positions in the final race of the weekend.

The NAPA Racing driver underwent major heart surgery over the winter before signing a new two-year deal to remain with the team.

And Rowbottom believes he has addressed his weaknesses in the off season and hopes to find more balance on the track.

Rowbottom said: "It was a good start, it's always a dynamic Championship, you've got to learn to love it."

"It was a long winter and I had a lot of time where I could do nothing."

"I was able to look inwardly and realise the bits that I wasn't doing very well and the bits I was doing well."

"I've had to balance it out a little bit and hopefully it's all good."

The BTCC season continues at Brands Hatch on the weekend of May 10 and 11.



Dan Rowbottom (furthest right) achieved a podium finish at Donington Park. Picture by Darren Price.

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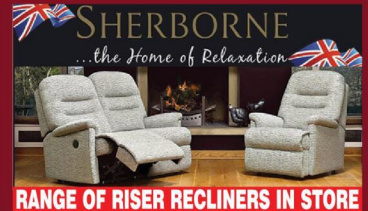
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# Calls for more to be done to combat ambulance staff abuse

by Andy Morris  
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

**AMBULANCE staff across the Midlands are subjected to around nine incidents of physical abuse, verbal abuse or aggression every day - prompting a new awareness campaign.**

West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) has launched the 'How We Treat Each Other Matters' campaign to encourage members of the public to be respectful to ambulance staff.

Staff from WMAS' frontline, control rooms and Patient Transport Services are coming together on social media to encourage respect and safety for all staff.

The campaign launches as the number of violent incidents against UK ambulance staff reached an all-time high in the last 12 months.

## A nationwide issue

Across the UK's 14 ambulance services, 22,536 cases were recorded - up 15 per cent on the previous year - 3,370 of which were in the West Midlands.

The WMAS Trust said it did not tolerate abuse and violence directed towards its workforce, with legal action always being pursued.

Chief Executive Officer Anthony Marsh said: "For many staff, this



sort of abuse can have a profound impact on their lives with some staff never recovering and actually leaving the service altogether.

"While it is a minority of people who commit these offences, we need the public to support us to make such abuse something that is unacceptable."

WMAS Head of Security and Safety Dan Knight added: "Everyone deserves to come to work without fear of abuse, aggression or vio-

lence from the public - whether that be our staff on the frontline, Patient Transport Services staff or those who work in our control rooms.

"The message is simple, abuse will not be tolerated and appropriate actions will be taken when these incidents occur - 3,370 incidents of abuse and violence is 3,370 too many."

"We hope with the launch of this campaign, it will be an important reminder to the public that showing

respect to our staff, who are ultimately only trying to help people, should be a given."

## 'Shocking figures'

Following the release of the new figures, Chair of the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE), Jason Killens, has written to ministers responsible for ambulance services in the UK to explore what further national policy

interventions can be developed to help combat the growing number of violent assaults against ambulance workers in the UK.

He said: "These figures are truly shocking and reflect a pattern of increased violence, aggression and abuse directed at hard-working ambulance people who are there to help people in their times of greatest need."

"Frontline staff as well as call handlers are affected by this horrendous abuse and this unacceptable behaviour has a major long-term impact on the health and wellbeing of ambulance people who are simply trying to do their jobs and help save lives."

"This situation is now so serious that we are seeking to engage with UK health ministers at the highest level to explore new interventions that could help deter potential perpetrators of these attacks."

"We would also underline again that it is vital that the judiciary uses all available legislation to ensure appropriate sentences are handed out consistently to those found guilty of committing these horrific crimes against our workforce."

**West Midlands Ambulance Service has launched the 'How We Treat Each Other Matters' campaign to encourage members of the public to be respectful to ambulance staff.**



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LEFT: Alex Wolswijk, Luke Greenwood and Aran Sullivan from the BrumVik Vikings.  
RIGHT: Sufragette Ellen Davison, First World War civilian Willow Pinchin, Connor McGrath from the First World War and James Homer from the 1911 Railway Riots.  
FAR RIGHT: Cpl Ian Cowling with the Vicker's Machine Gun, part of the Great War Society.  
Pictures by Tristan Harris. © Bullivant Media Group Ltd.



# History comes to life

**AVONCROFT Museum was packed and buzzing during the two-day International Living History Festival.**

More than 400 re-enactors showcased 700 years of the past – all spread out over the 19 acres of the site and its 30 historical buildings.

Medieval groups and vikings demonstrated combat, soldiers from numerous eras were marching on site and others were speaking to the visitors – more than 800 in total – about what they were watching and experiencing.

Among the scenes created were some from the First and Second

by **Tristan Harris**  
tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

World War, American revolutionaries, Romans, and Victorians.

The re-enactors – spread across 40 camps – used the historic buildings as part of their amazing reconstructions.

As well as combat, they illustrated what daily lives were like from work and crafts to cooking and general living conditions.

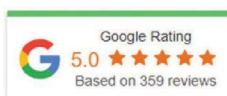
Among the copious highlights were Vikings battling it out with Napoleonic troops, medieval weavers and sail-makers teaming up with stone age settlers, storytellers sharing tales with

dancers and musicians. Billed as a 'true family event, packed with education and entertainment', it was a truly incredible experience.

There were also trader stalls, selling historically inspired artefacts from jewellery and hats to handmade tools, costumes and cloth to historic pottery.

A medieval kitchen display and multiple mead-makers were among the traders.

A 'Meet the Authors area' with talks and presentations were also held across the weekend in the Historic Long Room (upstairs), with music and dance in the Guesten Hall.



## Hickton Family Funeral Directors

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First established in Cradley Heath in the Black Country 1909, the Hickton family have been serving the community through four generations.

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With our family ownership we feel in a position to give a much more caring service when called upon, compared to large corporate companies. We feel we can be much more cost effective in comparison to corporate funeral homes.

We feel that as someone arranging a funeral, you should consider more than just the cost element when choosing a funeral director to care for you, and your loved ones. Consider the value for money, over a low cost.



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### The Traditional Attended Clent Funeral Package £2900.00 (Plus Cremation & Celebrant Fee)

Including - Professional services, transfer of your loved one from place of death within working hours, preparation and viewing of loved one in a Wrenlock coffin, care of loved one, hearse, one limousine, funeral director & bearers, 4ft floral coffin spray, 50 order of service booklets, ashes scatter tube, donations box, six bereavement support sessions and online obituary notice. - Cremation Fees range between £800.00-£1300.00 + Celebrant Fees £200-£220.

### The Simple Inclusive Attended Package £2995.00

Including - Professional services, transfer of your loved one from place of death within working hours, a Simplistic coffin, hearse, funeral director, bearers, 3ft floral coffin spray, 40 order of service booklets, donations box and six bereavement support sessions. Cremation Fee (Up to £1000.00) and Minister/Celebrant Fee (£220.00). - This option does not include preparation, dressing or viewing of deceased.

### Unattended Direct Cremation £1700.00

As seen on TV, this is a cremation only service, no funeral service and no one attends the cremation. We will transfer your loved one from the hospital, care for them in our funeral home in Kidderminster, place them in to a simple coffin and transport to the crematorium.

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Edwin Elmhurst from the Tudor Lypett Household.



Inga from the Svartland (Black Country) Vikings.



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Mark Page and Tom Jones from the Les Poilu d'Angleterre.



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# Thanking water supplier for constant flow of cash

**HEARTFELT** thanks have gone out to an independent panel which has helped to change the lives of millions of people through Severn Trent's Community Fund.

Back in 2020, the water company committed to donating £10million to projects in the region over a five-year period.

An additional £1.6m was given in further support to help our communities deal with the impact of Coronavirus.

A total of 57 community organisations in Worcestershire have been supported since the creation of the fund with a total of £716,032.66 awarded over the past five years.

The fund was initially set up to support new projects with a link to one or more of our three elements of community wellbeing – People, Place and Environment.

These help oversee the fund and review applications for funding and an independent panel was set up so customers decide where the money goes.

Lee Fletcher, Community Fund Panel member, said: "I have loved working with Severn Trent's Community Fund.

"They are doing such fantastic work within the community, and it has been a pleasure to be part of the panel for three years."

The company has since committed to donating another £10million



of profits up to 2030. A new panel will now be welcomed in as the Community Fund transitions to the next five year period.

Ian Jelley, Chair of the Community Fund Panel, said: "I have been really impressed with what the Community Fund has done over the past five years, seeing all the organisations that have submitted applications has been very humbling, but it also shows the need for funds like this."

The Community Fund team has sent out its thanks to every panel member who has helped the fund have a huge impact over the past

five years.

Paul Evans, Community and Education Lead for Severn Trent, said: "The Community Fund was set up to benefit our customers, so it made complete sense to have our customers helping to make the decisions about where this money was awarded and all the panel members have been absolutely fantastic."

"We want to say a huge thank you to every member of the panel who has supported the fund over the past five years."

"Their passion for helping our customers, these projects and insight has been a huge value for making

sure we are funding projects that have a huge benefit for our customers."

"Now we look to the next five years, and we look forward to working with the new panel and any future members we welcome."

Visit [stwater.co.uk/community-fund](http://stwater.co.uk/community-fund) for more information.

**Severn Trent's Community Fund panel have worked to distribute £10 million to community projects across the UK including 57 organisations in Worcestershire.**

## 'We must build on crime drop'

WEST Mercia has bucked the national trend as the Office for National Statistics recorded a six per cent fall in overall crime and reductions in key crime types.

From December 2023 to December 2024 there have been decreases in shoplifting by five per cent, residential burglary by 22 per cent, serious violence offences by 10 per cent, theft from the person by four per cent and vehicle offences six per cent.

Whilst rape offences have fallen by two per cent, other sexual offences have risen by 10 per cent.

PCC John Campion said: "As PCC, I am focused on ensuring the public are not only safe but feel safe too."

"This significant drop in crime, going against the national picture, demonstrates the proactive work West Mercia Police is doing to tackle the bread-and-butter issues that communities care about."

"There is no room for complacency, and I remain concerned about the prevalence of violence against women and girls in our society."

"That's why I am committed to working with the Chief Constable to build on these foundations by delivering more for the communities of West Mercia."

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# Get an insight into working with RSPCA

**THE RSPCA hopes to inspire young people to consider a career with the animal welfare charity and is offering an exclusive insight into its vital work across a three-day virtual work experience programme.**

The RSPCA, in collaboration with the UK's leading social mobility charity, Speakers for Schools, is offering a free Virtual Work Experience (VWEX) event for young people aged 14-19.

Taking place between June 23 until 25, the three-day online programme will provide an exciting 'whistle stop tour' of the diverse career opportunities within the RSPCA to spark young people's imaginations and offer an insight into the vital work the charity under-

by **Ashleigh Osborne**  
ashleigh.osborne@bullivanmedia.com

takes which often goes unseen.

Lee Harrison, apprenticeships and early careers manager at the RSPCA, said: "We are thrilled to partner with Speakers for Schools this year to offer this exciting Virtual Work Experience.

"It's a fantastic opportunity to showcase the breadth of roles available at the RSPCA and to inspire young people who may not have considered a career in animal welfare before.

"We're particularly eager to connect with students in key regions and demonstrate that a rewarding and impactful career at the RSPCA is within their reach."

The VWEX aims to inspire and

educate the next generation about potential careers at the RSPCA, positioning the organisation as an employer of choice for students as they consider their future.

Speakers for Schools has already helped more than 1.6million young people by teaming up with educators, speakers, and employers.

Hannah Ottewill, delivery partner at Speakers for Schools, said: "We are delighted to be working with the RSPCA to provide this invaluable virtual work experience.

"Access to inspiring employers like the RSPCA is crucial in levelling the playing field for young people, helping them to explore different career paths and make informed decisions about their future."

The agenda features speakers from across the society, delivering informative and interactive work-



The RSPCA and Speakers for Schools event takes place in June. s

shops on a range of topics, including the role of an RSPCA inspector, preventing animal cruelty and the role of an RSPCA vet.

This programme is designed to align with national careers guidance framework, making it a valuable resource for schools looking to enhance their careers guidance provision.

While the event is open to all young people aged 14 to 19, the RSPCA and Speakers for Schools are particularly keen to reach students in the West Midlands.

Visit [speakersforschools.org](http://speakersforschools.org) for more information.

The deadline for registration is June 2.

## Severn Trent want to tap into customers' varied views on panel

SEVERN Trent customers are being given the chance to share their views on the company, its services, and its future plans.

The water and waste company is on the lookout for people who would like to join its online customer research panel, TapChat.

There are already more than 9,000 Severn Trent customers on the panel – but even more

people are needed to sign up and express their views.

People on the TapChat panel are regularly invited to share their concerns and opinions through surveys on all sorts of topics, such as bills, rivers, tap water quality, fatbergs and Severn Trent's future plans.

There's no obligation to complete every survey, and they only

take a few minutes. Each time a customer completes a survey they're entered into a monthly prize draw to win up to £100 in vouchers. Members also get regular feedback, summarising what customers have said in surveys, and how Severn Trent is using those findings.

Susie Price, customer insight lead at Severn Trent, said: "Our

TapChat panel has been a hugely successful way for us to find out the views of our customers and give them a chance to express their views and help to shape the business.

"Anyone who's a Severn Trent customer can join and it's really important for us to gain the insights of a broad cross section of our region. However, people

aged 35 and below are under-represented at the moment, so would be lovely to see more sign up.

"We want to make sure we try and get things right and listening to customers' views through TapChat is one way that we can improve things."

Visit [severntrent-tapchat.co.uk](http://severntrent-tapchat.co.uk) to sign up.



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This event is run by The Worcester Birmingham & Droitwich Canals Society with support from Wychavon District Council and Droitwich Town Council



# Bringing scent and butterflies

MAY sees the start of the garden show season – RHS Chelsea gets the ball rolling with its fabulous show gardens that not only inspire but can also create green fingered envy at the same time.

Your garden or outside space may not be up for a gold medal, but that doesn't mean that it's not a 'show stopper' in its own right. Just think of the time you spend feeling good in the space you have created – and that can be as simple as a single pot of lavender on a patio to bring fragrance, beauty and butterflies to your special place.

Lavender loves container life (and being in borders as well) and is also often planted as an edging plant with roses or grown as an informal hedge.

It's a favourite with gardeners not just for its beautiful form and fragrance but also because it attracts essential pollinators.

It's also considered a romantic flower that most gardeners get the urge to plant in their garden sooner or later and can add real value with its scent and shades of purple flowers and silver leaf backdrop.

To successfully grow lavender, it needs to be planted from March to May in a warm, well-drained soil with full sun. It's a tough plant though and once established only requires regular pruning after flowering has finished in the Autumn.

English lavender, *Lavandula angustifolia*, is hardier and lives longer than French and Spanish lavender. Two of the most popular varieties of English lavender



are 'Munstead', an old-fashioned standard height plant with blue-purple flowers and 'Hidcote,' much loved for its dark purple flowers.

Part of the same plant family as lavender is the sun-loving Mediterranean herb oregano. Easy to grow, compact and drought tolerant, it thrives in pots or in the ground and forms a low clump of small aromatic leaves that has attractive small pink or white flowers in summer. It's a perennial, living for many years, and is usually hardy enough to survive the British winter if grown in a warm sunny spot, in a container or in free-draining soil. It is used mainly as a culinary herb, but also makes a great herbal tea – just pick a spring of fresh oregano, let it infuse in boiling water for a few minutes and sweeten with some honey if the taste is too bitter for you. Oregano tea is often enjoyed for its potential health benefits, including its antimicrobial and antioxidant properties. It is believed to support digestion, boost the immune system, and provide relief from respiratory issues.

Herbs are always a good addition to any garden or patio, but for anyone with a lawn, don't forget that it's No Mow May ... so time to let the lawn grow long and let pollinators feed on the flowers.

Which gives you time to tackle some of the other jobs in the garden ...and top tips for the month from the RHS include:

- Watch out for late frosts and protect tender plants
- Earth up potatoes and plant any still remaining
- After all risk of frost has passed, plant out tomatoes, courgettes and pumpkins
- Plant out summer bedding plants at the end of the month, weather permitting
- Water early and late to get the most out of your water, recycle water if possible
- Hoe off weeds in vegetable patches
- Open greenhouse vents and doors on warm days
- Mow lawns but consider leaving some areas uncut for wildlife, or mow less often so flowers can bloom
- Check carefully for nesting birds before clipping hedges
- Lift and divide overcrowded clumps of daffodils and other spring bulbs
- Watch out for viburnum beetle and lily beetle grubs and remove by hand if causing damage.

Sara Milne  
The Gardening PR

Lavender is a favourite with gardeners not just for its beautiful form and fragrance but also because it attracts essential pollinators.

## Re@d @ll @bout it!



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SUDOKU

Complete the grid so that every row, every column and every 3 x 3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9.

EASY

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

HARD

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

PATHFINDER

Beginning with the top highlighted letter, follow a continuous path of words associated with the given subject. The trail goes through each letter once, twisting up, down and sideways, but never diagonally.

The Simpsons characters

K	Y	T	C	L	O	W	A	G	G	C	R	A	M	I
R	T	H	E	E	V	N	M	T	I	E	Y	Z	S	L
U	S	I	S	J	O	H	O	R	A	A	C	R	N	H
S	E	D	Y	O	L	E	M	A	B	T	L	U	U	O
H	B	O	B	N	D	R	M	S	I	L	A	B	S	E
O	W	M	S	E	V	E	A	R	G	E	D	R	E	N
O	B	I	T	R	E	R	E	B	H	R	Y	M	D	F
O	C	E	H	C	L	R	B	I	D	E	I	L	L	
K	I	R	S	C	U	R	A	R	E	P	W	I	L	A
G	M	O	C	M	Y	E	B	N	E	E	R	E	D	N
U	Y	P	A	L	O	R	T	E	K	S	D	R	O	E
R	P	I	K	S	E	R	M	Y	G	U	N	S	M	E
I	N	C	I	N	N	A	U	G	R	O	A	B	A	D
A	M	O	R	N	E	P	I	G	I	H	P	P	R	N
N	K	C	B	T	K	U	W	F	E	C	L	E	K	A

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7		
8								
				9				
10								
12				13				
	16		17	18		19		
20								
22								
24								

ACROSS

4. Particular (7)
8. Filament (6)
9. Startled (7)
10. Rotten (6)
11. Illness (6)
12. String of beads (8)
18. Apportion (8)
20. Run aground (6)
21. Din (6)
22. Lofty (7)
23. Relax (6)
24. Balcony (7)

DOWN

1. Salary (7)
2. Defend (7)
3. Of the lips (6)
5. Helter-skelter (4-4)
6. Ring (6)
7. Items of business (6)
13. Scholarly (8)
14. Sickly-sentimental (7)
15. Fate (7)
16. Arrange fitly (6)
17. Higher (6)
19. Speaker (6)

Scribble pad

LADDER

Using the clues provided, fill in each step of the ladder with a new word, changing one letter at a time.

- Hole
- Ash
- Categorise
- Painful
- Exclusive

PLOT

HOLE

NINER

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

- 9531 gives a heavenly body;
- 71678 gives a constellation;
- 438421 gives a star sign.

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

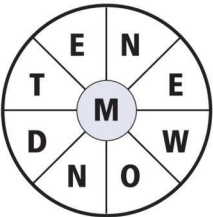
CODEWORD

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter. For example, if 8 turns out to be a V, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.

A	6	19	24	1		26	7	19	24	15	12	16	11
B													
C	7					16			7			14	
D													
E	11		12	R	O	19	21	13	24	5		17	4
F	9	16	5					14			3	7	11
G													2
H	16		11			7	6	19	2			15	24
I													
J		14	23	7	17		12		8	19	14	19	14
K						16		10		19			
L	20	12	7	11	1		4		7	3	12	5	
M													
N	12		6				4	2	19	15		14	18
O	10	24	24	4				10			22	10	7
P													
Q	21		7			20	19	26	13	4	10	7	22
R	13		25			14			10			17	14
S													
T	2	3	14	14	25	14	12	4		16	18	19	4
U													
V													
W													
X													
Y													
Z													

WORDWHEEL

You have 10 mins to find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the hub letter and at least 3 others. Letters may be used only once. You cannot use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one 9-letter word to be found.

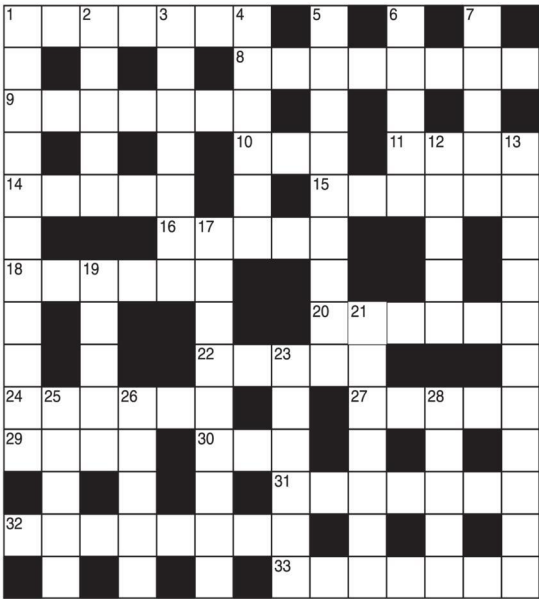


- How you rate
- 8 words: average
- 12 words: good
- 16 words: very good
- 20 or more: excellent.



# GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Dark red cherry, for cherry brandy and for cooking (7)  
8 Small dagger with a narrow blade (8)  
9 Outwork or fieldwork, usually square or polygonal, without flanking defences (7)  
10 Tract of open ground under grass or pasture (3)  
11 Another name for Woden, the chief god of the ancient Germanic peoples (4)  
14 'I know the kings of England, and I --- the fights historical,' says Major-General Stanley in *The Pirates of Penzance* (5)  
15 Town and resort on the eastern coast of Italy ruled by the Malatesta family from 1237 to 1509 (6)  
16 Insect from the time of leaving the egg till transformation into a pupa (5)  
18 Theory of self-interest as the foundation of morality (6)  
20 Island five miles long and two miles wide, off the west coast of Brittany (6)  
22 Conspicuous success, general applause (5)  
24 Wild ass with a black stripe down the centre of its back, found on the steppes of western and central Asia (6)  
27 Surname of the dramatist famous for *A Doll's House*, *Ghosts*, *When We Dead Awaken*, etc. (5)  
29 Upland area of waste, pasture, or moorland (4)  
30 A military officer's belt with a shoulder strap is known as a '--- Browne' (3)  
31 Arbour formed of growing plants trained over trelliswork (7)  
32 & 13 Down British hospital reformer who was the first woman to be awarded the Order of Merit (8,11)  
33 Quick return thrust in fencing (7)



- DOWN**
- 1 & 28 Down Sovereign who, in turn, married Francis, the Dauphin of France in 1558, her cousin Lord Darnley in 1565 and, two years later, the Earl of Bothwell (4,5,2,5)  
2 A round-up of cattle, or a place where cattle are assembled (5)  
3 Honours gained in victory, etc. (7)  
4 One who attended to horses at an inn (6)  
5 State of Central America, capital Managua (9)  
6 Poisonous fluid secreted by scorpions, snakes, etc. (5)  
7 A dye or colouring matter, for wood, etc. (5)  
12 The daughter of Jupiter and twin sister of Apollo (5)  
13 See 32 Across  
17 The character & (9)  
19 Liver, kidneys, or other edible organs of a beast (5)

- 21 Metal loop or ring suspended from a strap as a horseman's footrest (7)  
23 Labourer employed in the loading or unloading of ships (6)  
25 Surname of the founder of the Cambridge Camden Society and author of many well-known hymns, including *Jerusalem the Golden* (5)  
26 Praise or honour accorded by general consent (5)  
28 See 1 Down

# SOLUTIONS

**General Knowledge Crossword**

ACROSS: 1 Morello; 8 Stiletto; 9 Redoubt; 10 Lea; 11 Odin; 14 Quote; 15 Rimini; 16 Larva; 18 Egoism; 20 Ushant; 22 Eclair; 24 Onager; 27 Ibsen; 29 Fell; 30 Sam; 31 Pergola; 32 Florence; 33 Riposte. DOWN: 1 Mary Queen of Scots; 2 Rodeo; 3 Laurels; 4 Ostler; 5 Nicaragua; 6 Circle; 7 Stain; 8 Diana; 9 Nightingale; 10 Offal; 11 Stirrup; 12 Lumper; 13 Neale; 14 Glory; 15 Amersand; 16 Attune; 17 Teller; 19 Orator.

**Crossword**

ACROSS: 4 special; 8 Thread; 9 Alarmed; 10 Putrid; 11 Malady; 12 Necklace; 18 Allocate; 20 Strand; 21 Racket; 22 Sublime; 23 Loosen; 24 Terrace; Down: 1 Strip; 2 Protect; 3 Labial; 5 Pell-mell; 6 Circle; 7 Agenda; 13 Academic; 14 Mawkish; 15 Destiny.

**Wordwheel Pathfinder**

Krusty the Clown, Homer, Marge, Lisa, Bart, Maggie, Crazy Cat Lady, Mr Burns, Milhouse, Ned Flanders, Moe, Edna Krabappel, Chief Wiggum, Troy McClure, Barney, Groundskeeper Willie, Dr Hibbert, Reverend Lovejoy, Sideshow Bob, Smithers, Comic Book Guy, Principal Skinner, Apu, Kent Brockman.

**Niner**

REACTIONS

**Ladder**

Hole.  
Plot, Slot, Soot, Sort, Sore, Sole,  
1 K, 2 T, 3 W, 4 S, 5 Y, 6 B, 7 A, 8 O, 9 J,  
10 L, 11 N, 12 R, 13 H, 14 E, 15 D, 16 O,  
17 M, 18 P, 19 U, 20 F, 21 G, 22 V, 23 X,  
24 L, 25 Z, 26 C.

**Codeword**

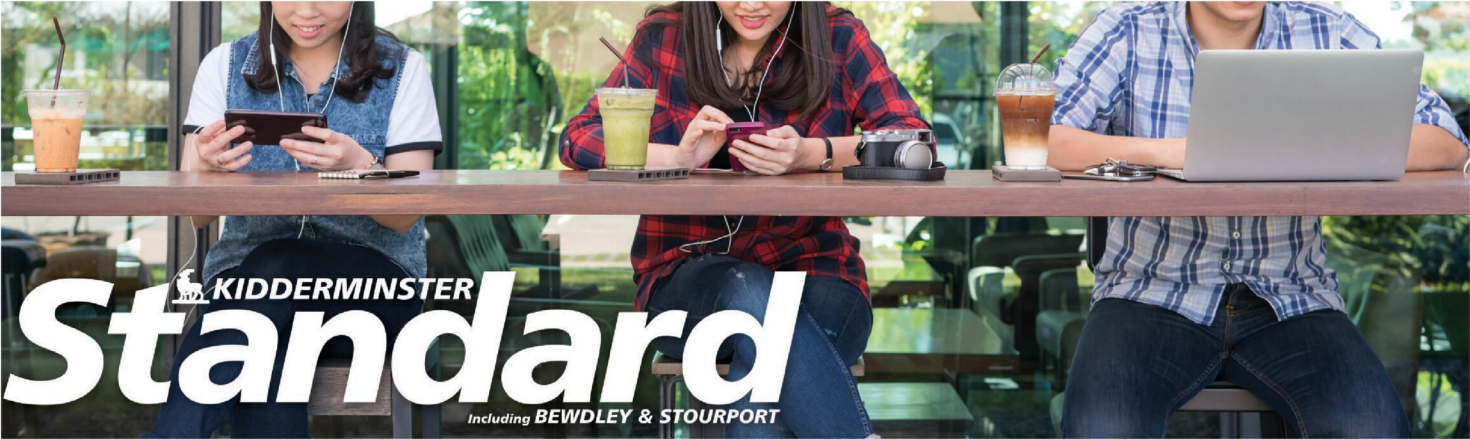
3	6	9	8	1	4	5	7	2
4	1	8	7	2	5	9	6	3
4	1	8	7	2	5	9	6	3
2	7	5	6	3	3	9	8	4
6	3	8	2	6	3	5	7	4
8	2	6	3	5	7	4	1	9
5	4	7	1	9	6	2	3	8
7	8	3	9	4	1	6	2	5
6	9	2	5	7	3	1	8	4
1	5	4	2	6	8	3	9	7

**Hard**

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

**Easy**

**Sudoku**



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## Aston Martin launches new DBX

**Aston Martin has announced a new DBX flagship, DBX S.**

With the dynamic appeal of DBX707 and an engine enhanced by technology transferred directly from the forthcoming Valhalla supercar, DBX S offers one of the most engaging and responsive driving experiences delivering

even more power, reduced weight and more assertive design. With a suite of exterior and interior enhancements to match, the DBX S certainly has its own undeniable identity.

Aston Martin CEO, Adrian Hallmark, said: "The introduction of DBX S not only reaffirms our commitment to producing the most

exciting, rewarding and beautiful cars, it also sends a powerful statement of intent about our ambitions not just for DBX, but for the Aston Martin brand."

At the heart of the new DBX S lies an upgraded version of the acclaimed Aston Martin 4.0-Litre Twin-Turbo V8 powerhouse. By using turbo technology transferred directly from the upcoming Valhalla supercar including its larger compressor wheel diameters and other internal improvements, power is raised by a further 20PS to 727PS and provides even greater urgency at the very top of the rev range, making DBX S's performance even more memorable. The result is a 0-62mph time of just 3.3 seconds and reduction in acceleration time from 0-124mph (200km/h) of 0.3 seconds. Top speed remains unchanged at an impressive 193mph.

Further enhancing both performance and its perception is a modified exhaust system amplifying even more character to the natural voice of the thunderous V8 engine and exploiting the full the opportunity presented by the engine's turbo enhancements.


As with its DBX707 stablemate, DBX S distributes its power between the front and rear wheels in variable proportion – including an ability to send 50 per cent of its torque to the front and up to 100 per cent of its torque

to the rear wheels alone - through an innovative 9-speed 'wet clutch' transmission, which removes the need for a conventional torque converter, delivering extreme performance on launch from standstill. However, the DBX S gearbox has been further modified to provide an even more memorable driving experience. Change up points are adjusted to reflect the car's extended rev range, while downshifts in Sport and Sport + modes when the car is in automatic are even more aggressive.

In addition to the power upgrade, a number of measures have been taken not only to significantly reduce the kerb weight of DBX S, but to do so in an intelligent and highly selective fashion that ensures that mere weight loss is just one of attributes resulting from these actions. A prime example is the new optional carbon fibre roof presented in a glorious single weave pattern which, at almost three metres square, is by far the largest such carbon element ever fitted to an Aston Martin. Specification of the carbon roof sees the removal of the roof rails, and as a combination not only saves 18kg of mass, but does so from the very highest point of the car, reducing its centre of gravity and therefore enhancing both stability and agility further.

DBX S is available to order now, with deliveries expected in Q4 2025.

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## Harriers to go through play-offs after missing out on title following shock Southport loss

by **Aaron Sutcliffe**  
[aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com](mailto:aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com)

**FOOTBALL:** PHIL Brown insists Kidderminster Harriers promotion dream is not over after his side threw away the National League North title on the final day of the season.

Harriers knew a final day victory at Southport would all but secure the National League North title for the Aggborough club.

However, Kidderminster slipped to a shock 2-1 defeat at the Big Help Stadium.

And Brackley Town took full advantage of Kidderminster's slip up to clinch the title and promotion with a 5-0 victory against bottom club Farsley Celtic.

Harriers dropped to third in the table after Scunthorpe United won 1-0 at Hereford with Kidderminster now forced to go through the play-offs.

And Brown's side will play Chester in the play-off semi-finals after the latter side won 2-1 against Buxton after extra time in midweek in an eliminator.

The other semi-final sees Scunthorpe

entertain Chorley.

Harriers will have home advantage in the play-off clash by virtue of finishing higher than Chester in the league table.

And Brown admits he must now galvanise his players following the disappointment of missing out on the title.

Brown said: "We're feeling devastated for the right reasons, the fact that we lost the game and the game had a lot hanging on it.

"Winning the game would have got us promoted, I think everybody has attached too much to that, you attach the whole season to one game of football and then don't step up to the plate.

"I think I prepared the team wrong, we looked like we had lead in our boots, there was no energy in the team, I didn't see it coming.

"I've got to apologise to every punter who came fully expecting a performance worthy of saying the words pride and hope.

"I can't really berate the players, I can only think I haven't prepared them in the right way for one game which is probably the biggest game in Kidderminster's history for a long time.

"It's beyond me, I've been in the game a long time, that performance

was so uncharacteristic of us, I didn't see it coming in the slightest.

"On the biggest day of the season we just didn't turn up, we've thrown this opportunity away.

"If it's my fault, it's my fault but it's not over yet.

"The bottom line is we've got to win two games of football now to get promoted.

"It's not the end of the world by any stretch of the imagination but I've got to do something to galvanise the group."

Harriers fell behind on 33 minutes when the visitors failed to deal with a corner from the left and Tom Moore finished from close range following a scramble in the box.

And Southport doubled their lead one minute after half time as Danny Philliskirk fired a shot into the bottom left corner from 25-yards out.

Kidderminster reduced the deficit on 59 minutes when Reiss McNally finished at the back post after Chris Renshaw could only push a near-post flick into the scorer's path.

However, Harriers failed to find the two goals needed to win the title as Brackley pounced to take top spot.

Kidderminster host Chester on Sunday, May 4 with kick-off at 3pm at Aggborough.

A hat-trick of awards went to Ashley Hemmings. Picture by Adrian Hoskins.



## Hemmings scoops hat-trick of awards

KIDDERMINSTER Harriers goal-scoring machine Ashley Hemmings collected another hat-trick during the club's end of season awards ceremony, writes Neil Gordon.

The Reds leading marksman walked away with no fewer than three awards during the ceremony held pitchside at Aggborough following the club's 5-1 victory against Hereford on Easter Monday.

Hemmings' treble includes the supporters' player of the season, players' player of the season and away supporters player of

the season awards.

Manager Phil Brown selected 21-year-old Kam Kandola as the young player of the season.

Other awards included the academy player of the season which went to Samuel Austin and the women's player of the season award to Ellie McGovern.

And matchday steward Paul Ashcroft received a watch in respect of 25 years service, while the club presented Mark Roelink with the Helen Macdonald Trophy in respect of his 25 years outstanding service to Harriers.

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## The nationwide events programme



### MONDAY 5 MAY - BANK HOLIDAY

- The Cenotaph will be dressed in Union Flags for the duration of the four day VE commemorations.
- A Military procession will start from Whitehall, ending at Buckingham Palace in London. Followed by a flypast, including Red Arrows military aircraft.
- HMS Belfast will host a street party onboard the ship.
- The Together Coalition and The Big Lunch will encourage communities to hold street parties and barbecues across the country.

### TUESDAY 6 MAY

- A ceramic poppy installation of 25,000 poppies will be on display at the Tower of London.
- Historic landmarks across the UK will be lit up in the evening.

### WEDNESDAY 7 MAY

- A Victory in Europe Day parliament choir event will be held at Westminster Hall at the Palace of Westminster
- Letters to Loved Ones live at IWM North with the National Theatre

### THURSDAY 8 MAY

- Remembrance service will take place at Westminster Abbey.
- National Theatre film 'The Next Morning' released online to the public.
- VE Day 80 concert in Horseguards Parade.

### FRIDAY 15 AUGUST

- The Royal British Legion will host a remembrance service at the National Memorial Arboretum.



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# The Royal Family took part in the celebrations

The British Royal Family also played a central role in London's victory celebrations.

Huge numbers of people surged down The Mall to Buckingham Palace, where King George VI, Queen Elizabeth and their daughters, Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret, soon appeared on the balcony to wave to the cheering crowds. In total, the King and Queen made eight appearances on the balcony, and at one point were joined by Winston Churchill. While the King and Queen were waving to the crowds for the last time that evening, their daughters were secretly mingling with the jubilant crowds below them. The future monarch, Princess Elizabeth, and her sister Margaret had been allowed to leave the palace and take

part – anonymously – in the party-like atmosphere. Princess Elizabeth later recalled, 'We stood outside and shouted, "We want the King"... I think it was one of the most memorable nights of my life.' King George VI, like Churchill, also gave a radio address. In it, he praised his subjects' endurance and called for a lasting peace. He also paid tribute to those who could not join in the celebrations, saying: 'Let us remember those who will not come back... let us remember the men in all the services, and the women in all the services, who have laid down their lives. We have come to the end of our tribulation and they are not with us at the moment of our rejoicing.'



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