

Bridge set to light the way with new lanterns

by **Tristan Harris**
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THE LIGHTS on the historic and iconic Stourport Bridge will shine once again, now that a full set of heritage lanterns have been beautifully crafted.

The lights are set to be installed next month, restoring the historic character of this much-loved local landmark.

A total of 18 new lanterns will be fitted by Worcestershire County Council.

2024 because they were in such poor condition. Temporary lighting has been in place since then, while the new units were carefully manufactured.

Coun Karl Perks, Worcestershire County Council's Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport, welcomed the news.

He said: "Stourport Bridge is not only a vital transport link but a cherished historic structure.

"These new lanterns respect its heritage while bringing it up to modern standards.

"I'm delighted we've been able to retain the traditional character of the bridge while improving safety and sustainability for the future."

The new lanterns have been crafted by the original manufacturer, ensuring authenticity and attention to detail.

Each lantern now includes modern LED optics, frosted rear panels to comply with local ecology guidelines and a more robust spigot - the part that joins the lantern to the column - for enhanced durability.

Listed Building Consent for the works was granted by Wyre Forest District Council and the final deliveries of the lanterns are expected by the end of July.

Installation is set to begin in August, subject to traffic management permissions. All existing lamp columns will also be repainted, giving the area a fresh, heritage-inspired look.

The restoration is a key part of the council's ongoing efforts to preserve the district's historic infrastructure while embracing modern standards of lighting, safety, and energy efficiency.



A total of 18 new lanterns will be fitted by Worcestershire County Council. Six of the lanterns will be installed on the bridge itself and six on either side along the approach roads. 3025008MMR1



Stourport Bridge, which was built in 1870, provides the only river crossing at Stourport-on-Severn.

It was constructed by Thomas Vale Construction, with the metalwork provided by The Patent Shaft Co. The bridge is a Grade II listed structure.

The bridge is actually the third one built on that site. The first bridge was constructed in 1775, but it was destroyed by floods in 1795.

A second bridge was built in 1806, but it was demolished in 1870 to make way for the current structure.



This includes six on the bridge itself and six on either side along the approach roads.

The lanterns replace the original Grade II listed fittings, which were removed in

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There were plenty of mouthwatering meals on offer. s



The Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun Doug Hine, paid the popular event a visit. s



A Queen tribute was among the acts taking centre stage. s

The live music pulled in the crowds.

Pictures courtesy of Kidderminster BID. s



Food festival has the recipe to be a success

by **Tristan Harris**
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THIS YEAR'S Kidderminster Canal and Food Festival has been hailed a great success after thousands of people turned out for the event.

The extravaganza, which took place on Saturday and Sunday boasted a multitude of street food, sweet treats, cocktails and craft ales.

There was also an artisan market, family funfair rides, face-painting an arts and crafts bus, roaming characters and a butterfly still walker blowing bubbles.

Live music ranged from top tribute acts to Queen, Michael Jackson, Bruno Mars and reggae and motown performers to local legends RetsecroWs and Kev Donaldson.

The event was hosted by FAB Food Fest with Kidderminster BID and was free to attend as people of all ages descended on the town.

James Barker, from Kidderminster BID, told the Standard: "We were worried beforehand because of the weather warnings but that did not put people off."

"We had a fair few thousand throughout the weekend. By 11am on the Saturday, the place was packed, the crowds were heaving and we had a steady flow throughout the day."

"Even on the Sunday, when the weather wasn't as good, we feared people might be deterred from coming down."

"But that was not the case the people of Kidderminster



Walking characters and street performers added to the bubbly atmosphere. s



The Kidderminster BID team was delighted with how the event went. s

stood their ground and came out in their droves to support the event on both days.

"We could not have asked for anything more."

"We'd like to say a massive thank you to Mark Cookson from FAB Food Fest who was phenomenal – the event would not have been such a success without him."

Coun Doug Hine, the

Mayor of Kidderminster, came out in their droves to support the event on both days.

He said: "The food and entertainment was excellent and enjoyed by a good crowd."

"Well done to FAB Festivals and Kidderminster BID for organising the event."

"The town can look forward to several more outdoor events this year."



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'Avoidable death was caused by doctor's CT scan error' - report

by Tristan Harris
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A REPORT has recommended doctors employed by the Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust receive training relating to CT scan reports after a woman died because of an undiagnosed pulmonary embolism.

An inquest into the death of Jordanne Roberts found a locum doctor discharged her home as only one part of a two-part CT scan had been read.

On August 10 last year, Jordanne was assessed at the Emergency Department at the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch after falling down stairs at her Kidderminster home.

The locum doctor who discharged her had not waited to read a full CT scan report which identified she had a pulmonary embolism.

On the morning of August 12, Jordanne collapsed and died a short time later. A post mortem examina-



tion confirmed the cause of death to be a pulmonary embolism.

The report stated her death 'would probably have been prevented if the pulmonary embolism had been identified and treated in hospital'.

The coroner expressed concerns and said there was a risk future

deaths would occur unless action was taken.

The report stated: "Jordanne's death arose because a locum doctor, said to be the most senior doctor on duty in the Emergency Department on August 10, did not know that her CT scan taken that day would be reported in two parts.

"The initial report did not mention the presence of a pulmonary embolism, but did make clear that a second and final report was to follow.

"The doctor proceeded to make the decision to discharge Jordanne without reading the second and final report, which highlighted the pulmonary embolism."

It was recommended that all of the trust's own employed doctors receive training so they ensure both parts of any CT scan report are read.

It also recommended all new locum doctors working for the trust be provided with an induction pack, which highlighted the requirement to read both parts of any CT scan report.

It was unconfirmed that steps had been taken to ensure all locum doctors already working at the trust had received the equivalent training.

It was indicated they had been invited to attend education sessions in which this topic has been covered, but no record was kept of whether those doctors did attend.

The coroner wrote: "I am therefore concerned that unless and until the Trust is able to ensure that all locum doctors working at its hospitals have received training about the need to read both parts of a CT scan report, there remains a risk that (as in this case) life-threatening conditions may go undiagnosed and consequently patients' lives may be put at risk."

The trust was told it must respond to the report within 56 days of the report - by August 21.

Dr Jules Walton, Chief Medical Officer for Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "On behalf of our trust I would like to repeat our sincere and unreserved apologies to Jordanne's family for the failures in the care she received from us.

"We have carried out a thorough review of what went wrong in Jordanne's case, and we have taken a series of actions as a result.

"Those actions include measures to make sure that all medical staff, including temporary staff, are aware of our processes for reporting scan results."

Teeing off, dressing down, baking cakes and more help law firm raise £4k



Staff held a charity golf day to raise funds. s

A WYRE Forest law firm has raised nearly £4,000 for a children's charity, through a range of fundraising activities.

The charity Mentor Link, based in Stourport-on-Severn, provides long-term one-to-one emotional support and mentoring to vulnerable young people.

Partners and staff at Kidderminster law firm, mfg Solicitors, held a charity golf day held at Stourbridge Golf Club, as well as dress down days, office cake sales, selling seasonal hampers and a range of donation opportunities throughout the year.

Lucy Harrold, an associate and CSR Committee member at mfg, said: "Over the past 12 months our colleagues in Kidderminster have joined together and made a fantastic effort to raise funds for Mentor Link.

"The charity and its volunteers work round the clock to support hundreds of young people every week who are going through difficult times, so our donation will hopefully help them to guide and mentor as many young people as possible, but also to form

and build on more partnerships with local schools.

"Through our CSR Committee and our Foundation, it's wonderful to support such a well-loved and respected charity here in the Wyre Forest."

Andrea Maddocks MBE, founder and CEO of Mentor Link, said: "It was extremely humbling when mfg Solicitors chose us last year as its Kidderminster office charity. Since then, Lucy and the team have kept us updated on the huge range of fantastic events staff have been holding throughout the year.

"To be presented with a cheque for almost £4,000 really is amazing and I can't thank Lucy and everyone at mfg enough for their passion and support.

"Like all charities, we rely on donations so the funding from them will help us to continue our activities, partnerships and most important, support more young people in and around the Wyre Forest."

Visit: mentorlink.org.uk for more information.



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Events allowed us to concentrate on issues of climate change

THIS JUNE I was pleased to support SustFest Wyre Forest.

This was a month-long festival of events around the theme of Climate Change and protection of nature.

atists talked about Climate Change. Now, the changes are obvious. Glaciers are retreating, and extreme weather events – heatwaves, flooding, storms, etc – are taking place more frequently.

People across the World are affected and the challenge for every nation and every community is to act – or else future impacts will be worse. Some people say that we are insignificant on a World scale, but 'every little helps'. And the changes we make bring local benefits, too.

Kidderminster Town Council, other councils, businesses and other organisations have objectives to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

They can do this by reusing and recycling materials, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, and becoming more energy efficient with the installation of solar panels, domestic batteries, heat pumps and improved insulation. Individual households and housing providers can make these changes, too – there are loans



Mayor's Diary

Kidderminster Mayor Doug Hines writes for The Standard

available for many of these measures and they will reduce your household bills.

We should also cherish, protect, and extend nature. Trees, meadows and lakes are well-known moderators of heat, for example. Plus, 'getting into' nature provides physical and mental health benefits.

Government is supporting improved public transport and, in conjunction with decent local walking and wheeling routes, we can reduce vehicle pollution and improve health in this area, too.

There will always be extreme weather events, but by taking action – locally and globally – the frequency can be reduced.

Also important is that local authorities and government are prepared, with plans, for possible emergencies, to ensure people, property and nature are protected.

Coun Doug Hine,
Mayor of Kidderminster

Vintage travel is heading this way

THE VINTAGE Transport Extravaganza will return to the Severn Valley Railway (SVR) on Saturday and Sunday, August 8 and 9.

Across the weekend, visitors can travel behind beautifully restored steam and diesel locomotives and hop on and off at different stations to explore a remarkable collection of vintage vehicles, from timeless motorcars and motorcycles to gleaming buses, tractors, lorries and more.

Lewis Maddox, the SVR's visitor engagement manager, said: "This event is a real celebration of everything we love about summer at the Severn Valley Railway."

"There's something truly magical about the mix of heritage trains, classic vehicles, and the buzz of families enjoying a day out together."

"It's the perfect way to experience the sights, sounds and spirit of a bygone era."

The showcase will be open from 10am to 4pm each day (subject to availability) with station cafes open for refreshments and picnic spots along the line to enjoy.

Normal fares apply, with Freedom of the Line and Short Journey tickets available to purchase in advance or on the day.

Visitors are encouraged to plan their trip using the dedicated timetables for the weekend.



The Severn Valley Railway is due to reopen its full 16.5-mile route from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth today (Friday) after repairs following the landslip at Mor Brook bridge in late January.

The Vintage Transport Extravaganza promises to be a spectacular celebration of vehicles throughout the ages.

Visit: svr.co.uk for details, timetables, tickets and more information.

Road and rail power, side-by-side at the Vintage Transport Extravaganza. Picture by Charlie Magee. s

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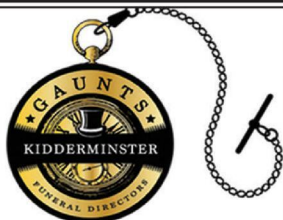
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Fun day will mark VJ Day 80

A VJ DAY 80 Family Fun Day will take place at the St George's Club in Kidderminster from mid-day on Saturday, August 16.

The event will feature live music, a tombola, stalls, a barbecue, a bar and games.

Tickets for the event will be £5 per person, payable on the door.

People wanting stalls at the event should email kidderminster.secretary@rbl.community

All pitches will be for a donation to Kidderminster Royal British Legion's branch funds and are also payable on the day.

A service to commemorate the 80th anniversary of Victory in Japan will take place at St Mary's Church on Friday, August 15 at 6.30pm.

The event will remember those from the 7th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment who lost their lives.

It has been organised by the Mercian Volunteer Regiment and Kidderminster Royal British Legion.

Police get calf on the moo-ve

OFFICERS in Kidderminster were tasked with a tricky bovine mission when a cow was found wandering along a road near the town's police station.

The Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) posted pictures and a video on the Wyre Forest Police Facebook page, along with some creative comical commentary, which included them telling the animal to 'Moo-ve along'.

They said they had 'herd'

by Tristan Harris
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about the stray calf being on the loose on Cedar Drive after it was spotted trotting along the main road.

They added: "So we hoofed it to the scene to make sure it was safe and not posing a hazard to road users."

"We were quickly on the tail of our bovine buddy, but there was no need to take her into custody or answer 'bale'."

"Instead, SNT officers rang around local farmers to safely

reunite her with her owners in a cow-ordinated effort between police and the public.

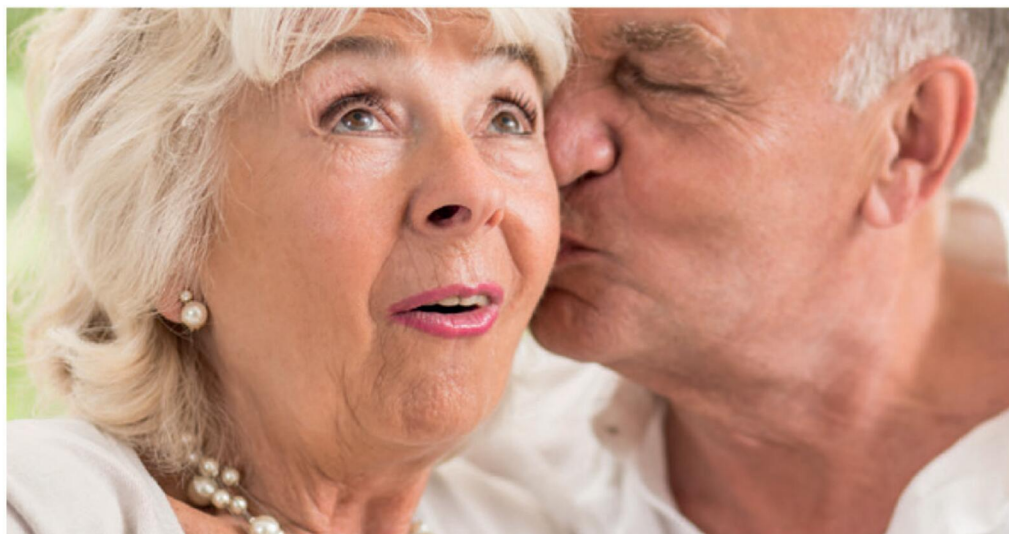
"We are udder-ly delighted the situation was resolved without any injuries to calf or members of the public and she was moo-ved on to pastures new."

Visit this story online at kidderminsterstandard.co.uk to click through to watch the video of the two PCSOs, members of the public, a wildlife officer and some off-duty officers helping Norman and Andrew Penny get the cow safely aboard her transport home.



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WHEN the sun is shining and temperatures soar, it is easy to forget about the colder months ahead, but summer is actually the perfect time to prepare your home for winter, especially when it comes to your heating system.

Regular maintenance now can help avoid unexpected breakdowns when you need heating the most.

Getting your boiler or heating system serviced during the warmer months can mean shorter waiting times for appointments and can also reduce the risk of being left without heat in the depths of winter. It can also improve efficiency, saving you money on your energy bills when the time comes to switch the heating back on.

We understand people may be concerned about the cost of servicing or upgrading their heating systems, but there is help available. The Government's Energy Company Obligation (ECO) scheme is designed to support low-income and vulnerable households in improving their home's energy efficiency. Under ECO, energy companies



Now is the time to ensure your boiler and heating system are working efficiently before the cold weather comes. s

could help fund improvements, such as insulation, boiler repairs, boiler replacements or other upgrades to your heating system.

You may qualify for the ECO scheme if you are on certain benefits, have a low income and live in a home with a poor energy efficiency rating. It is worth checking if you or someone you know might be eligible, so any work can be completed before the cold weather sets in.

Please visit the Government website gov.uk/energy-company-obligation to find out more information on the scheme and if you could be eligible.

Citizens Advice can help you understand what support is available and guide you through applying for schemes like ECO. We can also advise on what could help with energy bills over winter.

Don't wait until it's freezing to think about heating.

A little planning now can make a big difference later.

Contact Citizens Advice to find out more about how we can help you stay warm and well this winter.

Call 0808 278 7891, via our website at wyreforestcab.org.uk or by emailing: info@wyreforestcab.org.uk to get in touch.

Go-ahead for new parish councils to have big role

NEW PARISH councils will be established in three areas of Kidderminster next year.

by **Tristan Harris**

tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

The recommendation to form the authorities for Cookley, Wolverley and Lea Castle was considered by Wyre Forest District Council at its meeting last Wednesday.

A community governance review was carried out in Wolverley and Cookley, following a request by the parish council, which was prompted by housing growth at Lea Castle.

From August to November 2024, a public consultation was held, followed by a local advisory poll for electors in the parish in May 2025.

The poll showed clear support for establishing separate parish councils in each of the three polling districts.

Coun Marcus Hart, leader of Wyre Forest District Council, thanked everyone who took part in the consultation or gave their view in the local poll.

At the meeting he pointed out that more than 80 per cent of the electorate in all three of the polls voted in favour.

"There was strong support in all areas for the establishment of three parish councils," said Coun Hart.

"Parish councils are the first level of local government and give communities a democratic voice and structure for taking community action."

"As the reorganisation of local government takes place in the county, they are likely to have an even bigger role to play."

The new parish councils are set to be created with effect from September 2026.

The full council also considered recommendations on several proposed minor boundary changes which were also subjects of community governance reviews.

A consultation will take place on the draft reorganisation orders.

Details of all the recommendations and consultation results can be found in the council report.

Visit this story on our website to click through to the report.



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Vandals damage roof for second time in months

VANDALS have struck again at Hurcott Pools and Wood by damaging the roof of the bat house – less than a month after it was repaired following another attack.

The site, 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.

by Tristan Harris
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The previous attack at the bat house was in April. That was repaired on June 23 but now it has fallen victim to vandals again.

The Wyre Forest Rangers posted a picture of the damage on its Facebook page and has confirmed it has reported the incident to police. The rangers reiterated their commitment to protecting the area's wildlife and slammed the vandals for their antics.

"While we remain committed to maintaining this important habitat, repeated repairs come at a cost, both financially and for the wildlife we're working hard to protect," they said.

"Thank you to everyone who continues to support our conservation efforts."

"Let's work together to keep Hurcott Pools and Wood safe for nature and for future generations."

Witnesses or anyone with information on the vandalism should call police on 101 or independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



Power tools stolen after vans broken into

TWO VANS were broken into in Mill Lane, Kidderminster, overnight between last Wednesday and Thursday.

Power tools, including three DeWalt drills, were taken in the raids.

Police have urged witnesses or anyone with information to call officers on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Alternatively, visit the 'Tell us About it' section at westmercia.police.uk and

report information there.

Following the thefts, police have reiterated their message for drivers to remove all valuable items from their vehicles when they are being left unattended.

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Would-be car thieves disturbed

TWO MEN attempted to steal a car in Stourport around 11.45pm on Sunday.

Police said the pair, who were both dressed in black and wearing balaclavas, got into the vehicle parked in Oakhampton Road. They took the handbrake off and rolled the car off the drive.

It was at this point the owners disturbed them and they ran off.

Residents living in Oakhampton Road and the surrounding area are being urged to check their CCTV or doorbell footage to see

if they have captured anything that could help the police investigation.

A PROPERTY in Mostyn Road, Stourport, was broken into around 3.40am on Tuesday morning.

The raiders smashed a back patio window to gain access to the home.

It is not yet known what has been taken but it is thought they were trying to take the vehicles.

Police have appealed for information and CCTV or doorbell footage.

A WHITE five-door

Peugeot 2008 was stolen from Birmingham Road in Kidderminster.

Thieves struck while the vehicle was parked near Husum Way around 2.05am last Friday.

The suspect was quite tall and was wearing a tracksuit and trainers. They were carrying a bag. A second possible suspect was seen but there is no description available.

Anyone with information for any of the incidents should call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



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School praised for helping its pupils flourish

STAFF at Hartlebury CE Primary School have been praised by a church inspector for the impact of their Christian commitment to 'walk beside' pupils daily.

Inspired by the biblical verse 'I am always with you', the inspector reported how leaders place the 'unique child' at the heart of their work.

She said: "Leaders and staff live out their Christian vision daily by valuing the uniqueness of individuals."

"They describe how they

'scoop up' those who need extra care to ensure that no one is left behind.

"Staff place a protective arm around those who need it and deliver high-quality pastoral provision so that pupils can flourish."

The Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools (SIAMS) report, found pupils were nurtured academically, morally and spiritually, with interventions for those with special needs ensuring learning was fully accessible and there were a 'wealth of enrichments opportunities'.

The report stated collective

worship at the school fostered belonging and spiritual growth, justice and responsibility were emphasised and RE lessons encouraged critical thinking and prepared pupils for life in a diverse world.

Sophie Bartlett, head of school, welcomed the report which, she said, highlighted their commitment to their Christian vision, ensuring pupils and staff flourished through care, inclusivity and spiritual development.

"The inspector also noted the positive impact on our children through our strong partnership with St James Church and how much par-



Executive headteacher Shelley Reeves-Walters, head of school, Sophie Bartlett and assistant headteacher Toni Branagh celebrate the SIAMS report with pupils.

ents and carers valued our monthly pupil-led church services," she added.

There was further praise for the Severn Academies Educational Trust, to which the school belongs, for the

impact of its 'high-quality professional development'.

Shelley Reeves-Walters, executive headteacher of the trust's six primary schools, said: "Hartlebury's vision aligns closely with that of

the trust and it was heart-warming that the inspector acknowledged our impact in further enhancing staff well-being, contributing to a supportive climate where everyone can thrive."

PCC urges residents to have their say in Community Conversation

WEST MERCIA Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion is hosting a 'Community Conversation' in Stourport where residents can air their views on issues affecting their community.

The evening will focus on ensuring the voices of the Stourport collective are at the

by Rafi Khan

heart of positive change for the area.

The event will be held at Areley Kings Village Hall from 6pm on August 13.

It will provide an opportunity for residents to hear from

Mr Campion and officers from the Stourport Police Safer Neighbourhood Team.

Attendees will be able to ask questions and raise any issues in their area which disturb or concern them.

Attendees should visit west-mercia-pcc.gov.uk/community

conversation to register their attendance.

Mr Campion said: "I have received correspondence from local communities about concerns in relation to crime and antisocial behaviour in Stourport."

"I am reassured that West Mercia Police is taking those

reports seriously, but I want to give the whole community a platform to have their say so we can ensure all concerns are being acted on. Previous Community Conversations have highlighted the real difference communities can make, so I would encourage you to come along."

Re@d @ll @bout it!



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Council 'proud' to see schemes up for awards

A COMMUNITY litter-picking scheme and the Wyre Forest Rangers have been shortlisted in the 2025 Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) Service Awards.

by Jeanna Karcoz

enhancing 654 acres of the district's landscape.

The small team oversees three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and 14 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and enhances the experience of those who visit them.

They also provide an environmental education service and look for opportunities to enhance the district's natural environment.

The APSE Service Awards are open to all local authorities and their public sector partners across the country, rewarding excellent frontline services and special schemes.

Coun Tracey Onslow, Wyre Forest District Council Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Arts and Community Safety, said: "We are extremely proud to

be shortlisted in two categories for this year's APSE Service Awards.

"It is great recognition for both our offices and volunteers who work tirelessly on our Adopt a Street scheme, which makes a real difference in the district.

"It is also a testament to the hard work and dedication of our fantastic team of rangers, who make sure our sites are maintained for biodiversity, community enjoyment and future generations."

The winners of the APSE Service Awards will be announced in September.

Visit wyreforestdc.gov.uk/adoptastreet for more information on the Adopt a Street scheme or ways to get involved.

Go to wyreforestdc.gov.uk/rangers for more information on the ranger service.

A blackcap bird feeding in a tree. Photo by Lesley Betts. s



Feather in the blackcap for photographer

AN IMAGE captured by a Stourport-based photographer has been selected to feature in a local wildlife charity's upcoming calendar.

The photographer's image will feature in Worcestershire Wildlife Trust's 2026 calendar after coming out on top in the charity's annual photo competition.

Lesley Betts snapped a blackcap bird whilst it was feeding on spindle berries in a sorbus tree. Her image will feature for the month of November within the calendar.

She said: "We are privi-

leged to support a male and female blackcap during the winter months, attracted to our spindle berries and sorbus tree.

"I love how he is gazing at the delights that await him. Armed with camera and long lens, I was able to catch the intensity of his gaze."

The popular annual competition aims to encourage people to take a closer look at the wonders of the county's natural world.

Wendy Carter, organiser of the competition, said: "A big thanks to everyone who entered."

"It is always a pleasure

to see the natural beauty of the county captured so well and the standard of images was truly exceptional.

"Congratulations to all winners and runners-up."

Winners receive a copy of the charity's fundraising calendar, which features a different winning image each month along with a selection from runners-up.

The calendars cost £8.

All proceeds directly benefit the trust's work to protect Worcestershire's wildlife and to create habitats on our nature reserves.

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Putting on a show to raise funds

A MAN from Stourport who lives with motor neurone disease is hoping to raise as much cash as possible for the charity which is battling the condition and is trying to find a cure.

Graham Sumner is a singer and, before his voice goes, he and some friends in the industry are planning to put on an amazing show in aid of the Motor Neurone Disease Association (MNDA) and to raise awareness of the condition.

As well as the show itself, at Allen's Sports Bar in Tipton on September 5, he and his wife Eileen are looking for any local business which can donate raffle prizes or any sort of donation for this event.

Graham and Eileen met in Tenerife 20 years ago in a bar that he was running over there.

The pair got together and, soon after, settled in Stourport where the couple have many family and friends.

The couple married on October 2, 2015, at Stourport Manor Hotel and had 250 guests.

Graham, being a singer, has performed all over Worcestershire and Birmingham.

Then, on November 15 last year, a neurologist at Kidderminster Hospital said Graham could have MND.

In March this year - after many tests and visits to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham - Graham was confirmed as having the condition.

The terminal diagnosis suggested he could have up to three years to

live but it could be anything from six months onwards.

After Graham and Eileen got their heads around the news, they began



Singer Graham will be performing along with four other acts on September 5. s

raising awareness and funds for the MND charity.

They set up a JustGiving page which has inspired family members to undertake a swimathon.

Then Graham and his good friend, who is also a singer, held a charity evening in Blackburn, where Graham is originally from.

So far, the drive has raised more than \$6,000 for the cause.

Eileen has just retired from Marks and Spencer in Kidderminster after working there for 19 years to spend more precious time with her husband.

The M&S in Weaver's Wharf, where Eileen worked, has also made the MNDA its chosen charity for the year.

Eileen said: "The diagnosis was devastating but Graham is so positive - we have our fingers crossed we will have as much time as possible together."

"Graham will have to bank his voice as MND takes this away so before this happens we are holding a big singing event at Allen's."

"It has been organised by our lovely friends and neighbours Terry and Pat Roper - there will be five acts on the evening of September 5."

"But to raise as much as possible we are hoping to hold a raffle to boost the funds."

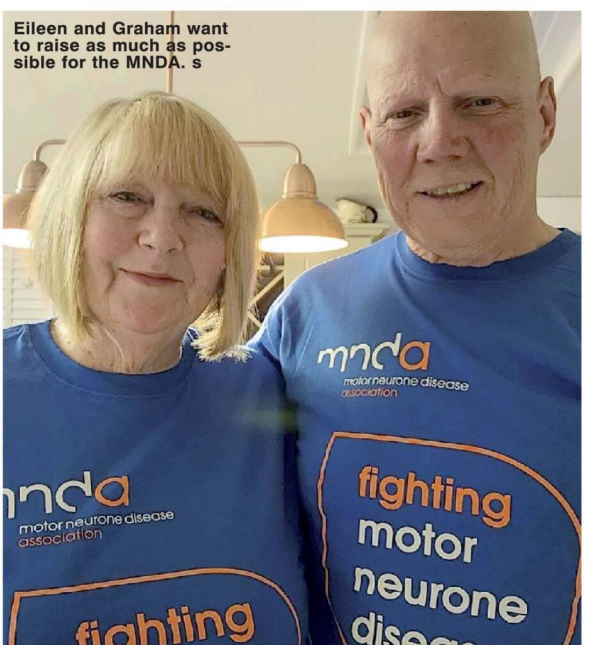
"Any help people can give - no matter how large or small - will be greatly appreciated."

The event will feature Graham Gold, Lacey Louise, Terry Dee, David Laine and Spangles Galore.

All the acts will be giving their time for free.

Several Stourport businesses have already donated raffle prizes, including Furrytales dog grooming salon, American Nails, Stourport Nails, Ashley's Bakery, Manton's

Eileen and Graham want to raise as much as possible for the MNDA. s



Goldsmiths jewellers, Kam's Barber Shop, Serendipity, Naughty Little Chef at the Swan, Esthe Couture Cakes and Worcestershire Caravan Park.

Any other people or businesses

who could donate a raffle prize should email Eileen at: eileenhughes321@hotmail.com - they can also message to buy tickets for the evening.

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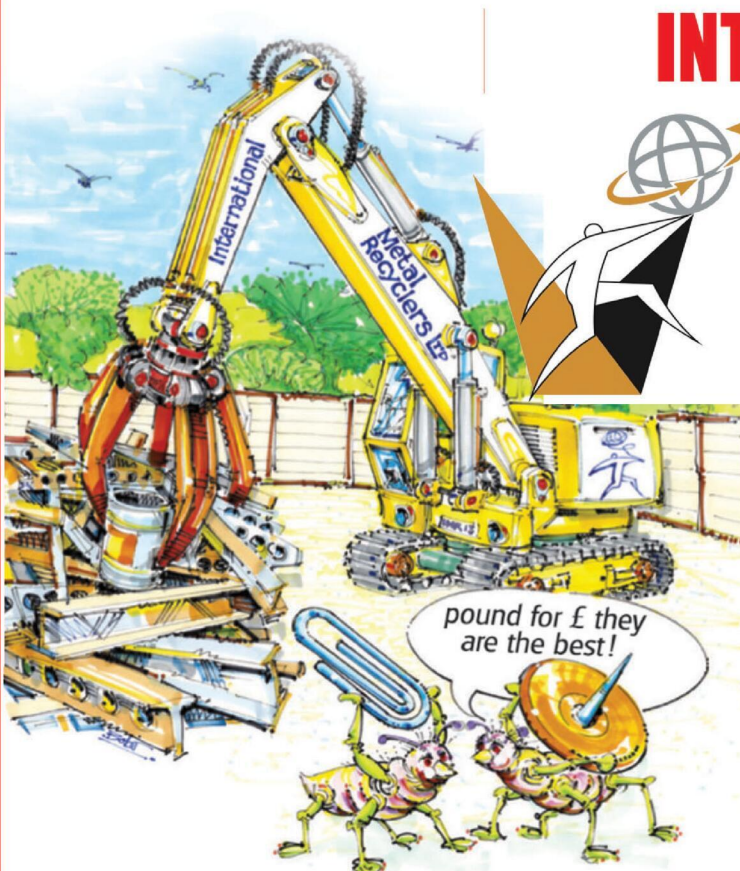
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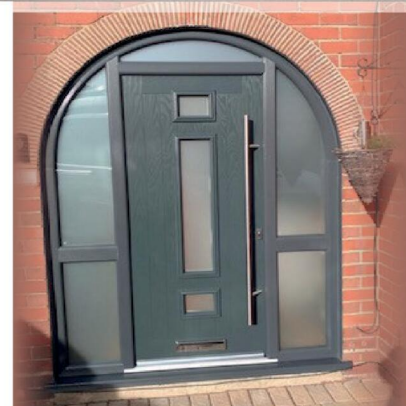
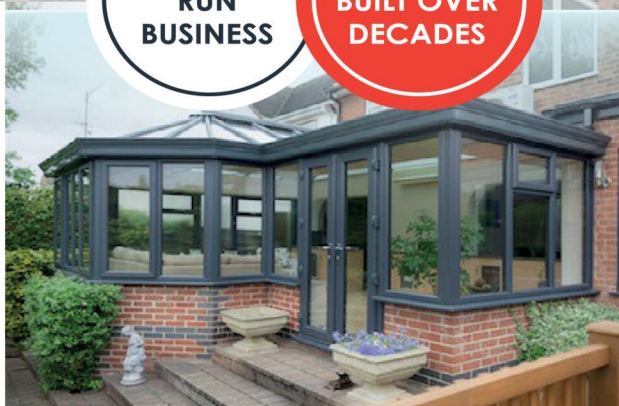


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'Youth Cabinet will build on its already great work' - Cameron

A TEENAGER from Bewdley has been appointed as the new chair of Worcestershire Youth County Council Cabinet.

Cameron Henry, who is 15, took over from Anusha who stepped down after four years in the role.

She is preparing to study history at the University of Cambridge in September.

The cabinet is a team aged between 11 and 18 who aim to provide young people within the county a voice on key issues they feel matter most and share them with local, regional, and national

governing authorities, including local MPs.

Last year's Cabinet manifesto mainly focused on health and well-being, crime and safety and education and learning. They were chosen from the votes of the youth across Worcestershire as part of the National Make Your Mark Campaign.

Cameron said: "First and foremost, Anusha has been an inspirational chair who has tried hard to make a difference where it matters.

"She has left a tremendous legacy and I'm looking forward to working with the cabinet, building on the work we have started, but also introducing a range of new initia-

tives which are outlined in the cabinet's manifesto."

Coun Justin Bowen, Worcestershire County Council Cabinet Member, with Responsibility for Children and Families said: "The Worcestershire Youth Cabinet plays a vital role in ensuring young people across the county have a voice and are actively involved in shaping the services that matter most to them.

"It's incredibly important that we listen to their views, understand their priorities, and work alongside them to create real change.

"I'm delighted to welcome Cameron into his new role as Chair and look forward to seeing the



Cabinet continue to thrive under his leadership."

Any young person between the ages of 11 and 18 can attend one of the cabinet meetings.

Full meetings are held once a month, where a wide range of issues that are important to young people are discussed.

People who are interested in attending or find out more about the cabinet, should visit: worcestershire.gov.uk/youthcabinet or email Youthvoiceteam@worcestershire.gov.uk for more information.

Cameron Henry has taken over as chair from Anusha who held the post for four years. s

Government funding boosted 20 schemes across Wyre Forest District

WYRE FOREST received over £3million investment through UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) in the last three years for projects across the district.

A total of 20 schemes received funding between 2022 and 2025, including the upgrade of community facilities and nearly £200,000 awarded in grants to community groups and businesses.

Projects have improved public spaces, strengthened local businesses and created new opportunities for residents.

UKSPF was launched by the former Government in 2022 to improve regional prosperity and tackle local inequalities.

The council delivered projects under three key themes - Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business, and People and Skills.

Over the three-year programme, the council worked with local delivery partners to maximise impact and ensure benefits were felt across the district.

Investment was made in key

community assets, such as Stourport Community Centre, Spennells changing rooms, The Weaving Sheds, The Old Court, and St Anne's Church.

Local green spaces and events have also been supported.

Local businesses benefited from free advice, start-up events, mentoring, innovation grants, skills workshops, tourism marketing, carbon reduction funding and business incubation programmes.

Residents received support and guidance to secure employment

and develop their skills.

Employers have benefited from workforce upskilling grants.

Coun Dan Morehead, Wyre Forest District Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and the Green Agenda, said "Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, we've been able to deliver targeted support where it matters most by improving our community facilities, helping businesses grow and giving residents the tools to succeed.

"These investments have cre-

ated real momentum across Wyre Forest and we're proud of what's been achieved."

A full report on the outputs and outcomes of the UKSPF 2022-25 programme in Wyre Forest is available at: wyreforestdc.gov.uk - the council's website:

Further UKSPF funding of just over £1million has been secured for the 2025-26 financial year, which will continue to provide support for Wyre Forest communities, businesses and residents.

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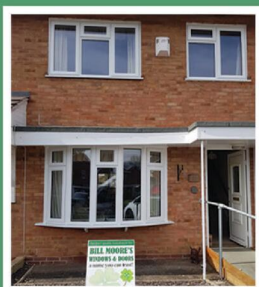


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FUN FOR ALL: THERE will be plenty of things to do for all ages this weekend when the Love Kidderminster fun day comes to the town centre.

Organised by the Kidderminster BID and the Fab Food Fest, there will be plenty of live entertainment and activities between 11am and 4pm tomorrow (Saturday, July 26).

At the Swan Centre, Boogie Storm will perform at 11.45am and 1.45pm. The group of Star Wars Storm Troopers appeared on a previous series of Britain's Got Talent. Also at that venue will be Chaos Magic at 1pm and 2.45pm, Chloe May's Dance Academy at 2.15pm and the Shanty Crew and Drumbeatables at 3.20pm.

Other activities at the Swan Centre will include hair braiding, arts and crafts and playzone.

At Weaver's Wharf, there will be funfair rides, a mini farm, free face painting and free popcorn.

The Baby Dino Walkabout will be every hour, on the half-hour from 10.30am to 2.30pm, while the Large Dino Walkabout will be on the hour, every hour, from 11am to 2pm.

And in the High Street, there will be walkabout acts at 11.30am, 2pm and 2.45pm and firebreathers at 12.30pm, 1.30pm and 2.30pm.

Visit: facebook.com/KiddiBID - the Kidderminster BID Facebook page - for more information.

GET INVOLVED: BEWDLEY's first Dementia Awareness Day will take place on Sunday, August 10.

From 10am to 11pm, there will be a dedicated service at St Anne's Church.

From 11.30am to 3pm, there will be chess and games for all ages in the foyer of Bewdley Museum. That has been organised by Bewdley Chess Club.

From midday in the Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Gardens, there will be information stalls, a raffle, therapy dogs, face painting and the Garden Kitchen will be putting on a barbecue.

And from 1.30pm to 3.30pm, there will be free live music with The Severn Wonderers, a unique group playing music from across the decades.

A host of Bewdley businesses, along with the rowing club, tennis club, cricket club and Bewdley Brewery will be supporting the day.

People are urged to 'pick up a map of events' - available from the Green Cobbler and Bewdley Museum - and get involved.

'Bridge reopening is weather dependent'

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

THE BEALES Corner Flood Risk Management Scheme in Bewdley is progressing well and contractors are now in the final stages of completing the construction work.

A lot of hard work has gone into enabling the Kidderminster Road and Bewdley Bridge to open as soon as possible.

Provided the contractors can lay some specialist coloured tarmac next week, Bewdley Bridge will reopen again to two-

way traffic next Friday, August 1.

This specialist tarmac requires dry conditions and cannot be laid in the rain, so everyone is hoping for good weather next week.

The Stourport Road will remain closed into September, with the formal opening of the flood scheme currently being planned for early September.

Another update and further details will be given by the contractors at the start of next week.

James Turner, Senior User of the Beales Corner Flood Risk Management Scheme, issued an update via Bewdley Town Council.

He said: "Like many people in Bewdley

and the surrounding areas, the project team would also like the bridge to open two-way as soon as possible.

"We are now into the final weeks and would therefore like to thank you for your ongoing patience and support."

The amount being spent on the flood defences at Beales Corner totals around \$2million as part of the Government's \$2.65billion nationwide flood defence investment.

Tens of thousands of homes and businesses will be better protected from flooding as by the record package which, as well as building new flood defences, will also see those already in place repaired and maintained.

Bewdley Bridge is set to reopen next Friday, provided the weather stays dry enough for the specialist tarmac to be laid. Picture by Bewdley Town Council.



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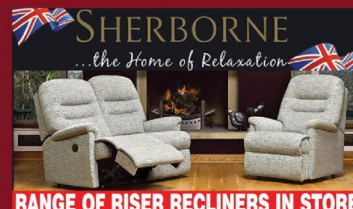


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Contest provides students with a STEM-sational year of activities

by Ashleigh Osborne
ashleigh.osborne@bullivantmedia.com

MORE than 80 schools from across the county took part in the 2025 Worcestershire Primary STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) finals.

Hosted at Yamazaki Mazak UK in Worcester and at Kidderminster College, the competition engages primary school students in a STEM challenge and gets them to embrace and develop their STEM skills to create an innovative solution to the set challenge.

Created by Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, the contest aims to get young people to develop and enjoy STEM based skills to help inspire and encourage them to pursue STEM careers in the future.

Across the whole competition in 2025 over 3,500 students took part from 83 schools.

The actual STEM challenge students have to complete is also set by Worcestershire companies and this year it was set by Titan Steel Wheels, which manufactures large scale wheels for construction and heavy machinery vehicles.

The company sets the challenge for students to design and build a hauler or loader system for moving materials from one location to

another. As well as taking part in the competition, students were also treated to tours of the Yamazaki Mazak building and Kidderminster College centre, to showcase to them how the skills they had been using could be expanded upon in the future.

Westacre Middle School and Pendock Primary School won the Worcester final, with Crophrone with Charlton CofE First School and Abberley Parochial VC Primary School coming as runners up.

Aston Fields Middle School won the Kidderminster final with Stoke Prior First School the runners up.

Judy Gibbs, Director of Skills for the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, and head of service for Skills and Employability at Worcestershire County Council, said: "It was fantastic to deliver the Worcestershire Primary STEM challenge for another year.

"To see the growing interest from schools and our business community is brilliant.

"By delivering this competition, we are helping to inspire the next generation to enjoy STEM skills and pursue STEM-based careers which, as a result, will help our local economy to grow.

"I'd like to say a massive thank you to STEMworks, Yamazaki Mazak and Kidderminster College, and all of our judges for making this competition and finals possible."

Cat Lewis, Principal of



Kidderminster College, said: "It was a real pleasure to welcome the Worcestershire Primary STEM Challenge final to Kidderminster College this year.

"Seeing so many young people engaged in hands-on problem solving and creative thinking was incredibly uplifting.

"Events like this show just how

powerful STEM education can be in sparking curiosity and confidence.

"We hope by opening our doors and showcasing what technical education looks like, we've planted a few seeds for the future.

"Whether it's construction, engineering, digital technologies, or science, there's a world of opportunity waiting, and we'd love to see these

bright young minds back here in a few years, exploring those paths with us."

Visit stemworks.co.uk for more information.

More than 80 schools from across the county took part in the 2025 Worcestershire Primary STEM finals.



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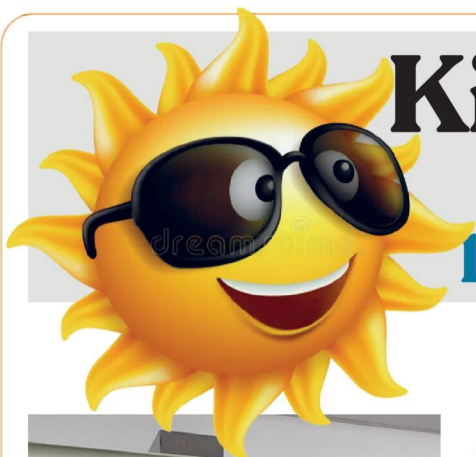
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Police recruit 50 new officers to boost teams

WEST Mercia Police is set for a boost in officer numbers following its latest recruitment drive.

The force will gain more than 50 new officers working across Herefordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire in various roles.

A total of 29 police constables have been hired (five of which will be dedicated rural crime officers), as well as two sergeants and 20 PCSOs (police community support officers).

In West Mercia, police officer numbers reached record levels in 2023. As part of the budget for 23/24, officer numbers were boosted by a further 40, with ten dedicated town centre policing teams launching in 2024.

Chief constable Richard Cooper said: "These extra officers will be a welcome addition to our neighbourhood policing teams. They are being posted to roles where data and intelligence shows they are needed most."

"This includes rural crime

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

officers, safer neighbourhood teams and our town centre teams, all of which will help increase our presence in local communities and ensure we are tackling crime for the people we serve."

This latest investment supports the delivery of local priorities set out in the police and crime commissioner's West Mercia Safer Communities Plan while contributing to the national Neighbourhood Policing Guarantee.

Police and crime commissioner John Campion said: "Neighbourhood policing is a key pillar in efforts to tackle crime and build relationships with local communities."

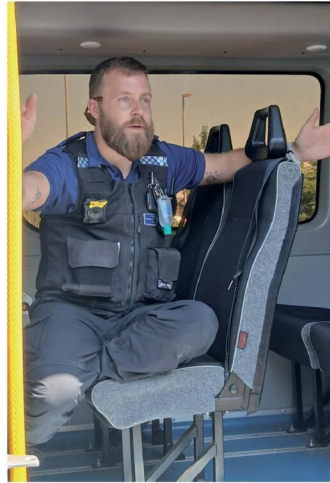
"I know this year-round work is valued by the public, and that's why recruiting these extra officers is another example of my continued focus on keeping communities safe. As your voice in policing, I will work with the chief constable to ensure

you feel and see the benefits of this increase by continuing to focus on boosting the visibility and accessibility of officers by embedding them in the heart of your community."

The recruitment drive in upping officer numbers come in the wake of staff cuts across the force for non-policing roles.

The chief constable and PCC jointly announced the roll-out of two schemes offering staff voluntary resignation with a lump sum payment or a voluntary reduction in hours. The schemes were announced to combat financial shortfalls within the force.

West Mercia Police also said they have made deliberate efforts to protect neighbourhood officers from being pulled from their roles into emergency response, so they can remain embedded in their communities. They referred to this as a 'balanced approach' to 'prioritise community safety and protect the most vulnerable from crime.'



LEFT: PCSO Dave Clew from Worcester SNT were among the officers giving advice out to young people. RIGHT: Isaac P meets some creatures with Animal Mania. s

Sport & Sensory brings lots of fun

FOSTER families and looked-after children enjoyed the county's annual Fun Day, organised by Worcestershire County Council's Youth Voice team.

This year's theme was, as decided by the children, 'Sport and Sensory'.

A barefoot sensory walk was one of the many exciting activities on offer, as well as bouncy castles provided by BBC Inflatables, face painting by Funky Faces, animal

encounters with Animal Mania, and creative activities by Green Fingers and Museums Worcestershire.

To keep the children active, sporty games were led by the Freedom Leisure team.

West Mercia Police were also in attendance, chatting to the young people throughout the day, answering questions and debunking myths.

The team's outgoing and friendly demeanour helped convey the message that

the purpose of the police is 'to keep people safe'.

Coun Justin Bowen, cabinet member for children and families at Worcestershire County Council, said: "This event is an important opportunity for our looked-after children and young people to come together and enjoy a fun, welcoming day of activities."

Each child returned home with a goodie bag filled with things they had made, decorated or won.

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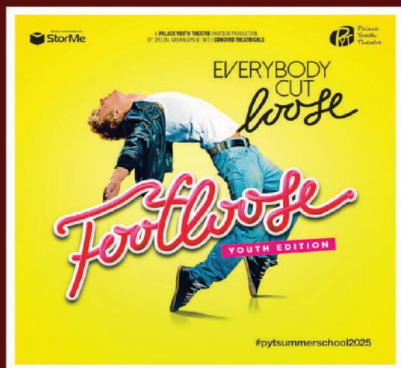
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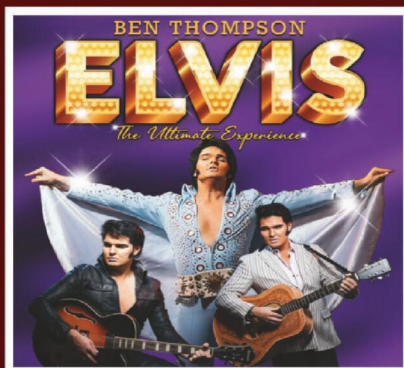


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Simple tips to help bring wildlife into your garden

A NEW campaign is urging those with a love for gardening to create a much-needed natural space for native hedgehogs.

As part of 'Go WILD for Hedgehogs', gardeners and householders are being encouraged to create an area for much-needed natural insect prey and nesting materials for the prickly creatures.

The drive, which begins this month, is being led by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) and The British Hedgehog Preservation Society (BHPS).

The two prominent charities are determined to protect hedgehogs due to their population declining and them being listed as 'near threatened' on the The International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List.

Leaving a wild, undisturbed patch in a garden and recording its location online not only creates much needed food and shelter, it also tells conservationists at PTES and BHPS where hedgehog havens are and where more are needed.

On top of creating wild patches, Hedgehog Street suggests that - to go the extra mile - people should plant wildflower seeds in autumn (September to November) to further attract pollinators and other insects the following year.

This heavily benefits the near threatened mammals as it provides a crucial food source and habitat by creating a thriving ecosystem.

Hedgehog Street would like to share updates and helpful top tips, such as how to maximise the nutritional wild patches, what to look out for and ways to help Hedgehogs within season changes.

Grace Johnson, an officer of the wild for Hedgehog Street said: "Wild patches are a brilliant way to help hedgehogs, they're minimal effort and cost."

"By simply allowing an area to grow a little wild and undisturbed, you can help to create a diverse habitat that's perfect for hedgehogs and other garden wildlife in the heart of our villages, towns and cities."

"Instead of weeding and mowing, sit back, relax and watch nature

thrive in your garden."

Hedgehogs face many threats and are in widespread decline.

According to the State of Britain's Hedgehogs 2022 report, published by BHPS and PTES, rural populations have plummeted by between 30 to 75 per cent since 2000.

But, encouragingly, the report also showed that populations in urban areas may be starting to recover, likely thanks to Hedgehog Street's 130,000 volunteer Hedgehog Champions.

The new 'Go WILD for Hedgehogs' campaign builds on this as gardens, and especially wild patches, can offer important refuges for hedgehogs and can help reverse the decline that this much-loved nocturnal species is facing.

Extra ways to turn any garden into a hedgehog haven include providing compost heaps and log and leaf piles

People are being urged to 'Go WILD for hedgehogs' by creating natural spaces in their gardens. Picture by Christopher Morgan. Wild patches (INSET) will provide places for insects hedgehogs can use as food and habitats. Picture by Grace Johnson. s



food, shelter and mates.

Those without a garden can still help hedgehogs too - by contacting local councils and developers to highlight the importance of managing parks and public green spaces for hedgehogs, call for new-build sites to be hedgehog friendly and raise awareness of the urgent need to help hedgehogs by sharing PTES and BHPS' social media posts and talking with friends, family, neighbours and colleagues about ways they can help hedgehogs.

And people can become a volunteer 'spotter' for PTES and BHPS' National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme, which can be done from people's own homes, is a great way to help too.

Visit: hedgehogstreet.org/go-wild-for-hedgehogs for more on the campaign and to register a wild patch.

to further encourage natural insect prey and offer places to nest, leaving out shallow dishes of water, and/or creating a wildlife pond with sloping sides or an escape ramp.

'Hedgehog highways' are also encouraged - this sees people cut a 13cm x 13cm square hole into fences on each side of their garden to enable hedgehogs to roam between green spaces in search of

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How to give your bank balance a holiday too...



WE all know holidays are not cheap, with travel, accommodation, excursions and more all adding up.

That's why Marc Porcar, CEO of QR Code Generator PRO SL - qrify.com - has compiled some top tips on how to save money on your trip.

He said: "A trip abroad doesn't have to be as expensive as you think. Planning smartly and choosing options that are suitable for your budget will help you keep costs down while booking and enjoying your holiday."

Travel at less busy, off-peak times - Holidays will be cheaper if booked during the school term. Try to remain flexible and open-minded regarding dates, flight times and accommodation types. If you have to travel in the school holidays, choosing which day to travel can make a difference. Flights leaving in the earlier days of the week tend to be cheaper.

Make the most of coupons and discounts - Many booking sites will have discounts or coupons available to help customers save cash. Utilise these when possible, as by opting for a slightly more expensive holiday, you may end up saving more if there's a discount or coupon that will reduce the price significantly.

Take advantage of comparison websites - These websites are great tools to ensure you're getting the best deals. Comparison websites are also extremely useful when it comes to purchasing travel insurance.

Consider an all-inclusive package holiday - An all-inclusive package can be a fantastic way to save money. Half-board packages can be ideal, as you can eat out for lunch in the day and have dinner at your hotel. Package holidays often work out cheaper and are fuss-free if your priority is having the most restful and relaxing time possible.

Pack light and avoid paying for luggage - If you're taking heavy cases, weigh them before leaving your house to avoid extra charges. Try to pack light by compiling a packing list in advance and only pack what you need. Pick clothing that is light and be sure to include some items you can re-wear or mix and match with other pieces.

Opt for free and low-cost activities - Sightseeing is a great way to fully experience the country you are visiting and spend quality time with loved ones on holiday, whereas going to the beach or pool is the perfect way to unwind. Museums, galleries, and

other cultural landmarks also tend to be free or have low-cost entry. Your holiday resort or travel agent might provide affordable or inclusive excursions and activities.

Choose walking over driving - Walking comes with a full range of benefits - it is easier, cheaper, great exercise and saves potentially having to learn the driving customs of a foreign country. If you are planning to travel a little further from your accommodation, public transport might be the way to go. It's a good idea to research in advance any distant cities or towns you want to visit and what the public transport options are.

Cook some of your meals - Consider cooking some of your holiday meals instead of eating out every night. If opting for an all-inclusive vacation, all meals will be covered, but regardless of your holiday board, it is likely you will want to try out local restaurants at least once or twice. To select more affordable options, try using a website like Tripadvisor to view the price ranges.

Provide your own entertainment - You might want to bring your own entertainment to keep you occupied on lazy evenings. You could bring a portable DVD player and some movies, or bring a laptop and use the streaming services you

already have. Have a look into the free entertainment options provided by hotels. Family-friendly hotels will also likely provide entertainment for children on some nights. A good book is also always a winner.

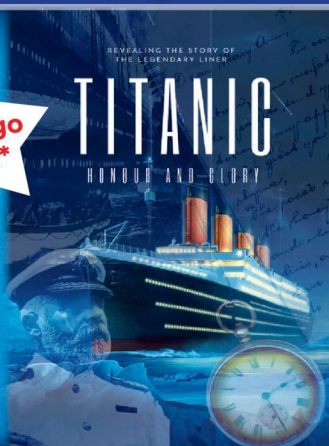
Ensure you are fully covered to avoid incurring extra charges and you need travel insurance when going abroad. It is also worth checking for extra healthcare you may be able to access. A GHIC card lets you access state healthcare in some countries on the same basis as residents. Do your research to ensure you have taken full advantage of every option available to you.

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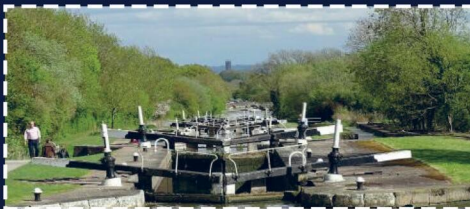
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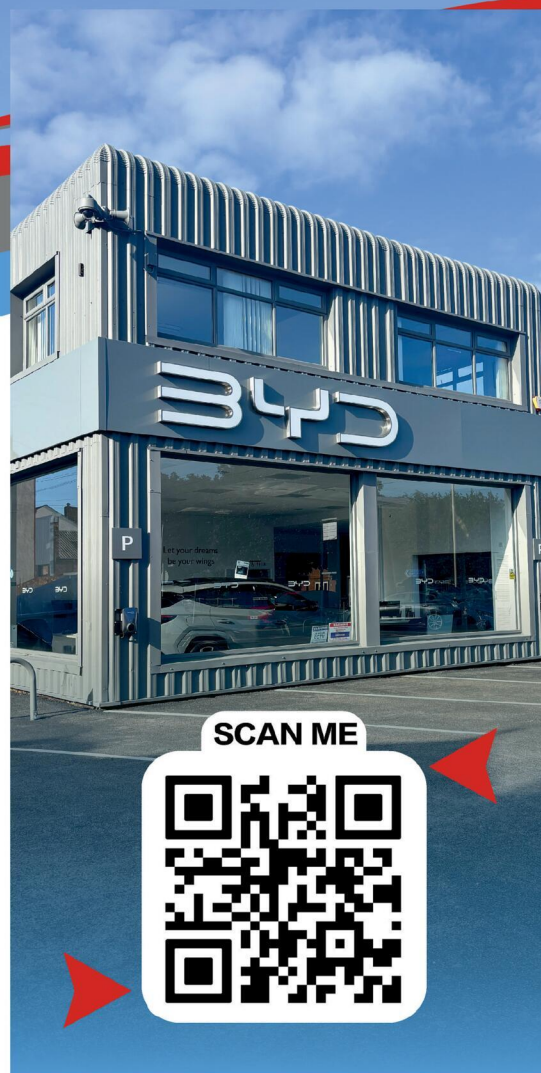
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RIGHT: The volunteers and others with Mike Field. Pictures by Hannah Taylor. s

LEFT: The windmill was sailing again after six years of inactivity. s

FAR RIGHT: Jo Slade, from the Bromsgrove Court Leet, with district council chairman, Coun Sam Evans, with Zoe Willems, Avoncroft Museum director, at the ribbon-cutting. s



Old mill has wind in its sails again

AVONCROFT Museum's Danzey Green windmill was sailing again on Saturday after six years of inactivity.

The much-loved attraction was given an official relaunch, complete with ribbon-cutting, following tireless work by a team of volunteers.

The ceremony began with some words from members of the team, including lead volunteer Graham Macro, museum director Zoe Williams, and collections and interpretations manager Steven Hearn.

Mr Hearn said: "Restored once again as a working exhibit, the

by Hannah Taylor

windmill embodies the museum's ethos of bringing history to life, delivering informative and engaging experiences for audiences of all ages.

"And as the sails turn once again, they do more than reconnect people with the past.

"They also encourage reflection and debate on the challenges we face today, including in relation to climate change and sustainability, helping to ensure our collections remain deeply relevant to our audiences."

Volunteers and supporters were thanked with gifts of wine and

flowers, acknowledging their invaluable effort and dedication.

Original restorer Mike Field, who is also a millwright and miller, was in attendance, marking a full-circle moment in the mill's history.

Following the ceremonial ribbon cutting, the team prepared to complete the sailing.

Despite the stubborn wind, the sailing was remarkable to watch.

It was a commemoration of the constant journey to restore and maintain the oldest working post mill in Britain.

Then, guests were offered a chance to go inside and explore the mill, learning about its histo-

ry and mechanics. While the mill has been restored to a condition where it can safely operate, work is not yet finished on this incredible structure.

Ms Williams said: "It's a continuous process but you have to keep rescuing it."

The repairs to the windmill were made possible thanks to the generous financial support from Bromsgrove Court Leet, Bromsgrove Rotary Club, Droitwich Preservation Trust and the Midlands Mills Group plus, donations from the public.

To ensure the windmill continues to operate long into the future, the milling team has reformed

and together with new volunteers is being trained to safely sail the mill, preserving the centuries-old skills required to harness wind power and grind grain.

Under Mike Field's expert supervision, these volunteers will soon be demonstrating the windmill in action to the public, continuing the living heritage approach that makes Avoncroft Museum so distinctive.

Danzey Green Windmill will be sailing every Saturday until the end of August at Avoncroft Museum.

Visit avoncroft.org.uk for more information on the museum and its events.

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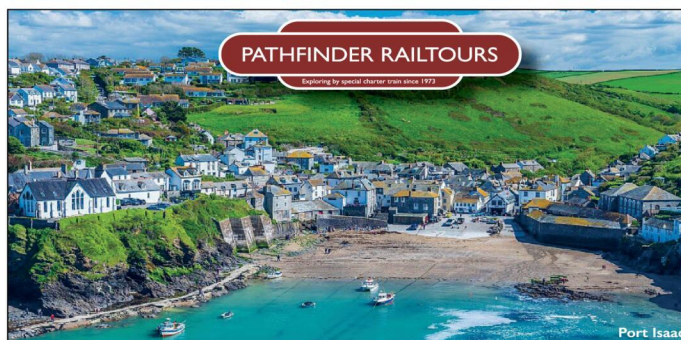


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Top tips for making sure your garden is a paradise for pets

HAVING a pet is one of life's simple joys, and our country is a nation of pet lovers. Think about making your garden a safe and happy place for them to enjoy.

British Garden Centres has put together some tips and advice on how to have a pet friendly garden.

Amy Stubbs, Project and Development Manager at British Garden Centres said: "With a little thought and care, your garden can be a wonderful, safe place for your pets to enjoy alongside you. By choosing the right plants, adding sensory touches, creating play areas, using natural pest control, and securing your space, you'll make sure your outdoor area is a happy haven for all members of your family."

Pet friendly plants - Some of our well-loved plants can be harmful if your pet decides to nibble on them. Common favourites like bluebells, daffodils, crocuses, tulips, amaryllis, azaleas, lilies, lily of the valley, begonias, hydrangeas, and ivy all carry risks if eaten.

If you love these plants, it's best to keep them out of reach or create barriers so your pets can't get to them. Thorny plants are also best avoided if your pet is the curious, adventurous type.

There are plenty of plants that won't harm your pets. Lavender, honeysuckle, calendula, nasturtiums, sunflowers, roses, fuchsias, rosemary, dill, and fennel are all safe choices that will keep your garden colourful and fragrant.

Plant herbs and greens your pets can safely nibble on, such as catnip, lemon-

grass, valerian for cats, and some fruits and vegetables for dogs.

Using pots and planters is a smart way to keep plants safe from playful paws and curious noses as they lift the plants off the ground.

Pest free for pets - Many pesticides are toxic to animals, so it's better to try natural alternatives. Crushed eggshells can keep slugs and snails off your plants, citrus peels can help trap ants, and a gentle spray of soapy water can take care of aphids. Look for pet friendly garden care products in store if you need to use anything stronger than organic methods.

Plant repelling herbs like lavender, sage, and peppermint which not only help keep the creepy crawlies away but also add lovely scents to your garden. Encourage helpful wildlife like birds and hedgehogs with houses and food that naturally keep pests in check.

Create sensory experiences in your garden - Think about adding different textures and scents to your garden.

Mix things up by combining soft grass, smooth paving stones, rough cobbles, and mulch - but be aware that cocoa mulch contains the same ingredient that makes chocolate toxic to your dog. Instead, choose natural wood chips or gravel when mulching.

Herbs and scented plants are a real treat for their noses, while ornamental grasses and bamboo can create gentle sounds to soothe as the wind moves through them.

A small water feature can be a lovely addition, too. The sound of trickling



water is therapeutic for both pets and their humans.

Playgrounds for pets - To protect your plants and lawn, create a special play area for your pets.

This could be a corner where they can dig, chase toys, climb, or just have fun without causing damage. For cats, sturdy shrubs and bushes like ceanothus, choysa, dwarf lilac, and ferns can offer exciting places to climb and hide, turning your garden into their own little adventure playground.

Don't forget to provide some shade for hot days and a bowl of fresh water to keep your pets cool and hydrated.

Boundaries for pets - Establish clear boundaries for your pet. Use short fences, borders, or raised beds to mark off-limits areas. Creating pathways with pet friendly materials like flagstones or smooth gravel helps guide pets and protects delicate plants. Leave a border between fences and planting beds if your pet likes to patrol its patch.

Security for pets - Make sure fences have no gaps or holes, especially if you have smaller animals like puppies, rabbits, tortoises or guinea pigs. Pets who like to dig can be deterred by reinforcing fence bases or laying down stone or paving strips along the edges.

Dogs can be great jumpers, so a fence at least six feet tall is a good idea if you want to keep them inside.

Always lock gates, garages and shed doors every time you come and go to prevent any sneaky escapes.



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SO MUCH INCLUDED...

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 - ✓ 4 nights at the Grand Burstin Hotel, Folkestone (JG2 rating) with dinner & breakfast (includes traditional 'Christmas' dinner)
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SO MUCH INCLUDED...

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

EASY

5			8		9	4		
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HARD

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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.

Actors who appeared in 'Extras'

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

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

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

ACROSS

4. Allure (7)
8. Required (6)
9. Projectile (7)
10. Look at (6)
11. Really (6)
12. Stimulating (8)
18. Left to choice (8)
20. Drive forward (6)
21. Wrench (6)
22. Broadcast (7)
23. Accent (6)
24. Relies (7)

DOWN

1. Disrobe (7)
2. Marine bird (7)
3. Dread (6)
5. Dusk (8)
6. Dwell (6)
7. Visitor (6)
13. Solitary (8)
14. Increase (7)
15. Slim (7)
16. Decorated (6)
17. Elf (6)
19. Communicate (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.

- Ripped
Tender
Organise
Smoke residue
Opening

TORN

SLIT

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.

- 4386 gives a fruit;
837162576 gives a second fruit;
679686 gives an Ethiopian root vegetable.

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

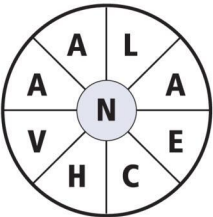
CODEWORD

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.

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

WORDWHEEL

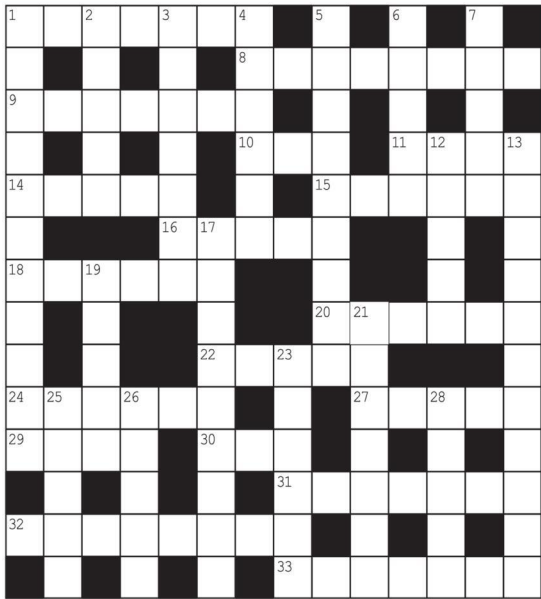
You have 10 mins to find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the hub letter and at least 3 others. Letters may be used only once. You cannot use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one 9-letter word to be found.



How you rate
6 words: average
9 words: good
12 words: very good
15 or more: excellent.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 See 11 Across
8 Citizen of the West African republic with capital Accra (8)
9 Mounted bullfighter with a lance (7)
10 Historical period (3)
11 & 1 Across Author whose books include Smiley's People (4,2,5)
14 Philosopher of a school founded by Zeno (5)
15 A heathcock or moorfowl (6)
16 "...both...are subdued, And neither party ---" (Henry IV, Pt. 2) (5)
18 & 7 Down Fawcett Towers actor (6,5)
20 Surname of the dramatist famous for Trelawny of the Wells (6)
22 From sunset to sunrise (5)
24 Migratory winged insect (6)
27 Prefix meaning English (5)
29 Widely used metal (4)
30 Miss Thurman, actress who starred in the film Pulp Fiction (3)
31 Red or white wine of Tuscany (7)
32 One of the nine Muses (8)
33 Mack ---, producer and director associated with the Keystone Pictures Studio (7)



- DOWN**
- 1 Beautiful stone of calcite and other minerals (5,6)
2 Cocoa and chocolate are made from this tree's seeds (5)
3 A little root (7)
4 Herons of several species (6)
5 Short separate item of news or comment in a newspaper (9)
6 Musical instrument (5)
7 See 18 Across
12 The snow leopard (5)
13 A student of the nervous system (11)
17 Second husband of Catherine of France, widow of Henry V (4,5)
19 Athenian archon, establisher of a severe code of laws (5)
21 Name of a symphony by Mendelssohn (7)
23 In Greek myth, the three goddesses of beauty and charm (6)
25 Mountain nymph in Greek legend (5)
26 Colloquially, a pawnbroker (5)
28 Sprite or goblin of Arabian tales (5)

SOLUTIONS

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Le Carre; 8 Ghazal; 9 Picador; 10 Era; 11 John; 14 Stole; 15 Grouse; 16 Loser; 18 Andrew; 20 Pinero; 22 Night; 24 Locust; 27 Anglo; 29 Iron; 30 Uma; 31 Chianti; 32 Calliope; 33 Seneca. DOWN: 1 Lapis lazuli; 2 Cacao; 3 Radicle; 4 Egrets; 5 Paraph; 6 Banjo; 7 Sachs; 8 Grace; 9 Dreads; 10 Owen Tudor; 11 Draco; 12 Italian; 13 Graces; 14 Dreads; 15 Dreads; 16 Under; 17 Dreads; 18 Grace.

Crossword

ACROSS: 4 Atract; 8 Needed; 9 Missile; 10 Regard; 11 Indeed; 12 Stirling; 13 Optional; 20 Propel; 21 Sprain; 22 Radiate; 23 Brogue; 24 Depends. DOWN: 1 Undress; 2 Penguin; 3 Terror; 5 Twilight; 6 Reside; 7 Caller; 13 Isolated; 14 Enlarge; 15 Slender; 16 Ornate; 17 Sprite; 19 Impact.

Wordwheel Pathfinder

Les Dennis, Samuel L Jackson, Patrick Stewart, Shaun Williamson, Stephen Merchant, Orlando Bloom, David Bowie, Daniel Radcliffe, Chris Martin, Ian McKellen, Jonathan Ross, Clive Owen, Karl Pilkington, Ashley Jensen.

Niner

GRADIENTS

Ladder

Tom, Tore, Score, Sort, Soot, Slot, Silt.

Codeword

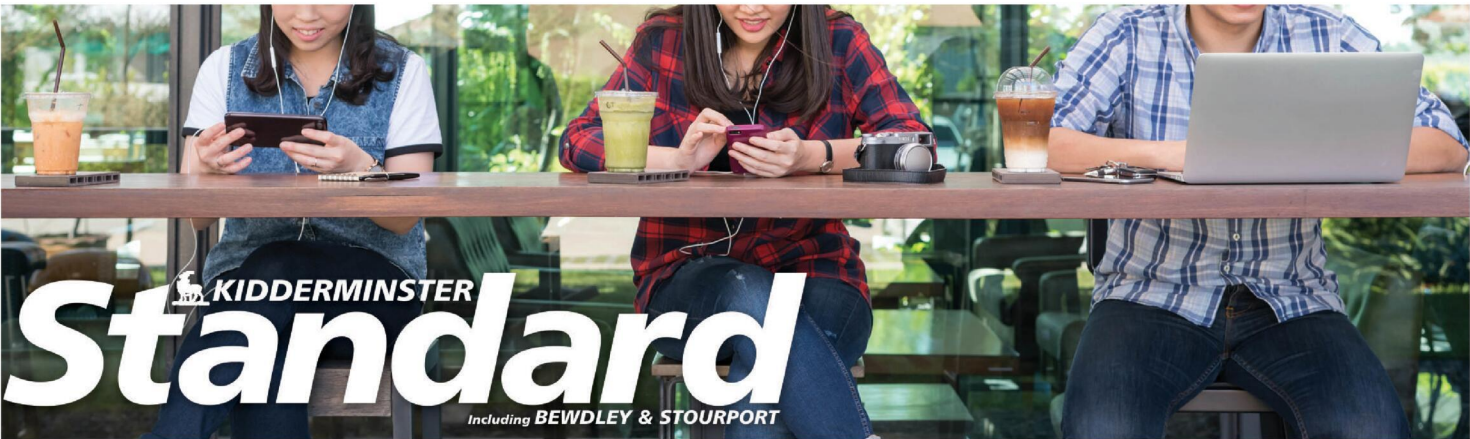
1=Z, 2=Q, 3=J, 4=X, 5=E, 6=Y, 7=Y, 8=A, 9=L, 10=T, 11=G, 12=F, 13=U, 14=D, 15=Z, 16=K, 17=O, 18=W, 19=H, 20=M, 21=P, 22=C, 23=B, 24=R, 25=N, 26=S.

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

Hard

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

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Sudoku



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New Jaecoo readies for launch

JAECOO UK has confirmed pricing and specifications for the all-new Jaecoo 5, which will be on sale later this summer.

The Jaecoo 5 will be priced from £24,505 OTR. The smaller Jaecoo 5 builds on the success of the Jaecoo 7, bringing the same design language and outdoor-focused approach to a new corner of the SUV segment.

While its appearance is rugged, its intent is refined: this is a compact SUV designed to support busy, style-conscious drivers looking for versatility, capability, and everyday comfort.

Inside, the cabin focuses on space, function, and calm. Five adults can travel comfortably, with two rear ISOFIX points, while a portrait-format touchscreen and double layered silent glass reinforce the premium feel.

As standard in Pure trim, it features Automatic Halogen headlights, a six-speaker SONY audio system, level 2 ADAS, six-way manually adjustable front seats, and wireless Apple CarPlay® and Android Auto™.

The Luxury trim further elevates the experience, adding an eight-speaker SONY audio system, cooled wireless phone charging, six-way power-adjustable heated and ventilated front seats, and enhanced interior finishes.

Additional premium features in the Luxury trim model include ambient lighting, a tilt and slide sunroof measuring 1.45m², a cooled front storage box, dual-zone climate control. With over 35 storage spaces and up to 1,180 litres of boot space (with the rear seats down) in both variants, the Jaecoo 5 is ready for everything – from the school run to weekend escapes and everyday commuting needs.

Power comes from the Chery International-manufactured 1.6-litre turbocharged direct injection engine and 147 PS and 275 Nm of torque, paired with a responsive 7-speed dual-clutch automatic transmission. Designed to offer a dynamic yet composed drive, the Jaecoo 5 is equally suited to urban commuting and longer-distance travel, with Eco, Normal and Sport driving modes to adapt to different driving styles. The front-wheel drive platform delivers reassuring performance, supported by chassis geometry specifically tuned for UK roads by Chery International's European R&D centre.

Victor Zhang, UK Country Director Jaecoo UK commented: "Following on from the success of the Jaecoo 7, of which we've now sold more than 8,000 cars since its launch in January [2025], the Jaecoo 5 is a key addition to our growing UK range – a compact SUV that's spacious, capable and ready for real life. As we recently demonstrated at the Goodwood Festival of Speed,

this is a model that stands out in any setting. Debuting in the First Glance paddock and confidently making its way up the Hill, the Jaecoo 5 proved it's a car for all occasions.

"Whether you're travelling solo, with family, or four-legged passengers in tow, it really has been engineered with thoughtful features for every journey, alongside the best in safety and driver-assistance technologies. It delivers the premium SUV experience, without the bulk."

With Jaecoo's 'Enjoy Each Moment Outdoors' ethos, the Jaecoo 5 provides customers with peace of mind and reassurance thanks to a global five-star safety rating, Level 2 autonomous driving and 19 ADAS safety functions. The safety suite available is designed to reduce driver fatigue and enhance focus on the road, using the latest technologies available to support drivers when needed. From its adventure-ready practicality to its refined finish and distinctive styling, the Jaecoo 5 reflects the brand's growing momentum in the UK and commitment to premium design, technology and safety.

The Jaecoo 5 is available to order now at £24,505 OTR in Pure specification, and £28,000 OTR for the Luxury option, through OMODA&Jaecoo UK's expansive nationwide dealer network, which currently sits at 75+ dealers. Additional Jaecoo-approved pet accessories for the Jaecoo 5 are also available to purchase directly from these retailers, too. Deliveries are expected from October 2025. All models come with a 7-year/100,000-mile warranty, whichever comes first, with no mileage limit for the first 3 years alongside RAC Home Start as standard.

Jaecoo UK will also offer a pure EV powertrain for the Jaecoo 5. Further details on the Jaecoo 5 EV will be announced in the coming weeks.

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NIKE Air MX-720-818 Trainers, 'White Indigo Fog' UK Size 4, Hardly worn. £30. Tel. no.0121 742-2513

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Dwarshuis departs Rapids to play for Australia in T20's



by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

CRICKET: WORCESTERSHIRE CCC have confirmed fast-bowler Ben Dwarshuis has left the club after he received an international call-up to the Australia squad.

Dwarshuis will form part of Australia's white-ball squad for T20 fixtures against the West Indies.

The 31-year-old returned to the Rapids for a second spell with the club ahead of the 2025 T20 Blast competition.

He picked up 18 wickets which included best-figures of 3-30 against rivals Birmingham Bears in what proved his penultimate outing for the Rapids.

Dwarshuis also showed his prowess with the bat lower down the order and his performances caught the eye of the Australian selectors.

Dwarshuis said: "I remember chatting to Hosey [Adam Hose] over the winter about it and as soon as the chance came up, I was really keen to come back and be part of the club again.

"This time around I have enjoyed just as much as my first spell and playing with the boys and helping out with the push for the quarter-finals has been so enjoyable.

"Hopefully, the lads can put in one more big shift and see if they can qualify, everyone has worked really hard over the group stage so it would be a nice reward to perhaps sneak through.

"Of course, I am very grateful for the opportunity I have had here, but to play for Australia and represent my country is always a privilege, so that opportunity is very exciting.

"I wish the boys every success for the last game and the rest of the season and owe a massive thanks to all the players, staff and fans for making the last few-months so memorable."

Ben Dwarshuis has departed Worcestershire after receiving an international call-up. Picture courtesy of Worcestershire CCC/YouTube.



Jack Clarke in action for Harriers against Droitwich Spa. Picture courtesy of KHIST.

KHIST to sponsor new Harriers signing Clarke

FOOTBALL: THE Kidderminster Harriers Independent Supporters Trust (KHIST) will sponsor the home shirt of new signing Jack Clarke for the 2025/26 season.

Clarke featured in a Harriers shirt for the first time as Kidderminster beat Droitwich Spa in their opening pre-season friendly under new boss Adam Murray.

Clarke followed Murray to Aggborough after both player and manager helped Eastbourne Borough to the National League South play-offs last term.

The 26-year-old creative midfielder made more than 50 appearances for Borough in the National League South.

Clarke spent time in Aston Villa's youth system before later joining Chesterfield following an initial loan spell with the Spireites.

He helped Chesterfield secure back-to-back play-off finishes before moving to Eastbourne in June 2023.

Speaking to KHIST following his arrival earlier this summer, Clarke said: "I'm absolutely delighted to be joining the Harriers, a great club with all the things in place to be operating at a much higher level, it's our job now on the pitch to make it happen this season.

"I can't wait to get started and to meet all the fans down at Aggborough."



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