

Joy as rare rhino is born at safari park

by **Tristan Harris**
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A RARE rhinoceros calf has been born at the West Midlands Safari Park in Bewdley.

The female baby is only the second successful Indian rhino birth at the park in its 52-year history, following the calf's half-brother who arrived in 2020.

The birth to first time mum Sunanda took place last week under

the watchful eye of the keepers who said mum and baby were both doing really well.

The labour did not initially go to plan and staff had to step in to lend a helping hand.

Veterinary nurse, Sarah Smith, said, "The wildlife and veterinary teams are well-rehearsed with rhino births, but each birth presents its own journey."

"Sunanda didn't follow all of the usual steps during the weeks leading up to the birth, but our experienced team were able to spot the initial signs of labour during the night."

A long, restless night monitoring CCTV and morning checks confirmed labour was progressing but then, closer inspection showed back feet visible, meaning it would be an 'abnormal delivery'.

Breech births present many difficulties - research shows a large number require intervention and usually end in calf mortality. They can also endanger the mum's life so staff knew they only had a short time window to act.

"We were able to apply calving ropes to the calf's hind legs and assist Sunny with her contractions and help birth the calf."

Expecting the worst outcome, staff were busy fighting to save Sunanda and were delighted to see the calf was alive and moving.

"Sunanda is showing the initial signs of being a perfect new mum, despite the difficulty she had just faced, and is continuing to raise her first calf in textbook fashion."

"We're so proud of her and the team."

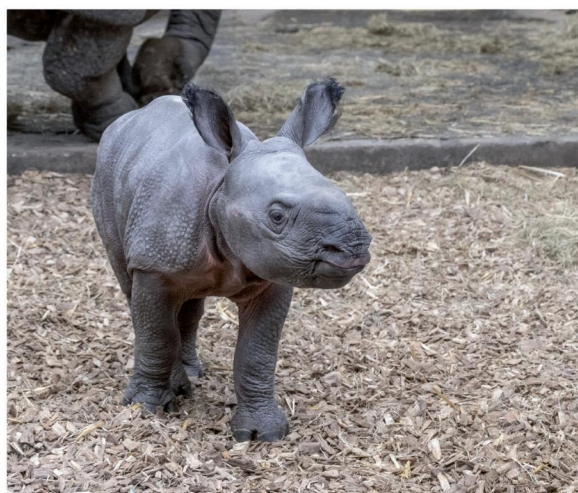
Moving forward

After such a traumatic entrance into the world, staff said they were taking each day as it comes.

Both mum and calf may have access to the outside paddock when the weather is suitable so visitors over the next few weeks could catch a glimpse of them.

The plan is to mix them both with Seto - the other female rhino - in the near future.

The baby girl is yet to be named, but keepers will pick a name begin-



ning with the letter 'N', as all babies born at the park in 2025 all have names with that letter.

The calf brings the number of Indian rhinos at the Park up to four, which includes mum, Sunanda, female Seto and male, 17-year-old Rap, who is father to the youngster.

Indian rhino, aka the greater one-horned rhino, are classed as 'vulnerable' to extinction by the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature), so every birth is a boost to the species' conservation and survival.

The Indian rhinos are part of an EEP (EZA Ex-situ Programme), a collaboration of European wildlife parks to work together to help preserve endangered species.

West Midlands Safari Park supports and donates annually to Save the Rhino International which work to protect all five types of rhinos in the wild.

Visit: wmssp.co.uk for more information.

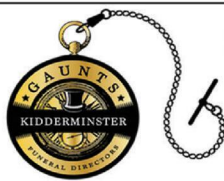
The baby girl rhino is still yet to be named. Picture by Matthew Lissimore. s



Mum Sunanda with the new baby rhino. Picture by Matthew Lissimore. s

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Kate raises a glass as tropical garden is choice of the people

KIDDERMINSTER garden designer Kate Mason 'is both exhausted and elated' after achieving her long-held dream of creating her first show garden at this year's RHS Malvern Spring Festival.

And the green-fingered creator was awarded a silver-gilt medal.

Her tropical-style show garden, The Hierarchy of Plants, was inspired by psychologist Abraham Maslow's 'hierarchy of needs' theory which categorises human desires into five levels. It won the People's Choice Award out of the eight exhibits.

Kate said: "I'm still over the moon with the outcome, it's just incredible, but I am so tired I can barely stand up and walk because it has been such a mad, mad month."

"There's a huge sense of achievement, it's the culmination of eight months' worth of work and a dream that has been in my head since I went to college."

"I've always aspired to do something like it, and to have not just achieved it but loved every second of it, has just been the most incredible experience ever."

Plant praise

A festival spokesperson described the garden as 'unique and thought-provoking' as it explored the relationship between plants and people. And they added it 'featuring a visually striking layout with structured planting and playful symbolism'.

Kate's mostly self-funded inspiration was clearly a big hit with visitors.

She said: "It means more to me than any gold medal, because to have people's choice means that the people love it - the people who are going to buy my gardens and work with me, follow me and support me."

"Those are the most important people because they're the ones who have made it happen for me."

"Without all their support, I wouldn't have been there."

It was a diagnosis of post-natal depression ten years ago that got Kate into gardening after it was suggested she do something that brought her joy.

She confessed that, when she first started, the only plants she knew the names of were petunia and a geranium.



A developing love of growing and plants inspired her to take an entry-level RHS qualification at Pershore College and from there she has not looked back.

Wins at BBC Gardeners World Live events came quickly and became the launch pad for a new

garden design career.

She confessed the blues were not entirely banished but added gardening was a great grounding force that steadied her on the down days.

"It's an escapism, it's creating an alternate reality that you can stabilise your emotions in because when

you're in the garden and you're focused on planting a plant or growing a seed, you're really in the moment."

"You have to concentrate because if you don't sow the seed right, it won't grow, if you don't cut the right bit of the plant, it won't grow properly."

"As you go through that whole process of growing a garden, you're also growing yourself at the same time."

Her advice to anyone struggling with their mental health: "Take each day as it comes and on the good days just appreciate and literally go out and smell the roses."

Her next ambition is to return to Malvern and strike gold.

Kidderminster's Kate Mason toasts her success at the RHS Malvern Spring Festival. Picture by Marcus Miggins 2125003MMR10



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The gardening club's award-winning garden 'Nuestro sabor de Espana'.

TOP TALENT: STOURPORT students scooped a top gardening award at the prestigious RHS Malvern Spring Festival.

The 'Nuestro sabor de Espana' - Our Flavour of Spain garden put together by Stourport High School's gardening club members, caught the attention of judges who presented them with the Best Use of Colour accolade in the School Garden Challenge.

The team was also awarded a Highly Commended certificate - the highest accolade given by the Royal Horticultural Society in the schools' section.

Students Ellie-Jade Malinowski, Toby Simmons, Isla Phillips, Archie Grimshaw, Jazmin Carter-Smith, Tommy Price and Logan Wilkes spent three days creating the garden at Malvern, which featured around 300 plants.

Gaudi inspired tiles and 'Sergio' the bull were created by the school's art club, 'Don

Quixote's Windmill' bug house was designed and made by the science club and the 'Al Fresco' seating and trellis were built by the DT department.

Cover supervisor and gardening club lead, Lucy Cooper, who organised and supported the team, said: "We are so incredibly proud of their hard work, creativity and passion for gardening."

"Their vibrant and imaginative display truly stood out."

"This award is a testament to their dedication and teamwork."

This was the third year of success for the school's gardening club at the festival, having been highly commended for their Secret Garden in 2023 and for their English Country Garden in 2024.

Lucy Cooper with team members Ellie-Jade Malinowski, Toby Simmons, Isla Phillips, Archie Grimshaw, Jazmin Carter-Smith and Tommy Price.

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The matt black pick-up with Bewdley Mayor, Coun Ian Latimer, John Charuk, Gus Dunster, Dr Brian Smith and Rod Stanczyzyn. Picture by Gary Essex. s

From SVR to Ukraine

THE SEVERN Valley Railway's paint shop at Bridgnorth had an unusual visitor recently, in the form of a Mitsubishi 4x4 pick-up.

The SVR assisted the Wyre Forest 2 Ukraine charity with its efforts in sending humanitarian aid to Ukraine.

The charity recently purchased a second-hand Mitsubishi 4x4 pick-up truck.

Volunteers converted it into a frontline ambulance and needed repainting in matt black to camouflage it when in service.

SVR stepped in to help and vol-

by **Tristan Harris**
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unteer staff prepared and painted it, ready for its new role in Ukraine.

SVR managing director, Jonathan 'Gus' Dunster, said: "We are very pleased to be able to assist Wyre Forest 2 Ukraine, a locally-based volunteer organisation doing great work for a humanitarian cause, which we fully support."

"Another link between us is that our long-standing volunteer Ian Latimer is also the current Mayor of Bewdley, and he has been close-

ly involved with Wyre Forest 2 Ukraine."

Bewdley-based Wyre Forest 2 Ukraine has been supporting the Ukrainian people with deliveries of humanitarian aid since the Russian invasion in 2022. Several of its members have also hosted Ukrainian refugees in their homes.

They have so far raised more than £10,000 for aid items, including generators, battery-powered lamps and medical items. Among these have been handheld scanners to help frontline medics to locate shrapnel in casualties.

Wyre Forest 2 Ukraine chair Dr Brian Smith said: "We're very

grateful to the Severn Valley for their assistance with the ambulance. The camouflage colouring is invaluable, as even ambulances and medical staff are being targeted by the Russians in this brutal war."

The charity will be equipping the ambulance with stretchers, lights and other equipment for its new role, saving lives in the northeast of Ukraine.

In the coming weeks, volunteers from the charity will load the finished vehicle with essential aid items and drive it to Ukraine.

Anyone wanting to help can visit: facebook.com/WyreForest2Ukraine for a list of urgently needed items.

Fire crews called to hospital explosion

EMERGENCY services were called to Kidderminster Community Hospital last Friday after an explosion.

The incident happened around 9.30am and the explosion was in a piece of hospital equipment.

Police attended to cord off the area around an MRI centre while three crews from Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service – two from Wyre Forest and one from Droitwich – dealt with the incident.

A fire service spokesperson said: "There was a small explosion involving hospital equipment."

"The hospital was unaffected by the incident but people were asked to access the building by the Sutton Road entrance."

Luckily, no-one was injured in the explosion.

In an update at 2.30pm, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust said: "We are pleased to confirm that this morning's incident at Kidderminster Hospital has now been stood down."

"All patients with community mental health appointments scheduled today at the Robertson Centre will have been contacted by our teams to make alternative arrangements."

"We do not anticipate any further disruption to services following today's events, and we apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused."

"Thank you for your patience and understanding."

West Midlands Ambulance Service was alerted to the situation but as there were no casualties or injuries, a response was not merited.

Police want to speak to victims after Post House assaults

POLICE are trying to track down two women who were assaulted at the Post House on Blackwell Street, Kidderminster.

Police said it is believed the pair were punched during the altercation around 10.15pm on

April 5. A 31-year-old man has been arrested in conjunction with the incidents and has been released on bail whilst enquiries are ongoing.

PC Anas Majeed, from West Mercia Police, said: "Whilst

we have identified a suspect in this case, we have been unable to identify the two victims. We are keen to speak with them to check on their welfare and to assist with our enquiries."

The women are urged to

contact PC Majeed via email at: anas.majeed@westmercia.police.uk or by calling 01905 716475.

Alternatively, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Could you be a volunteer?

AN APPEAL has been launched to find volunteers for Jelleymans Mill in Kidderminster.

And the venue, run by Jelleymans Mill Heritage Arts Charity (JHAC), is holding a volunteer open morning from 10am to 12pm next Wednesday, May 28, where people can find out more.

Located in the heart of Kidderminster on a stunning Victorian industrial site, offering a unique and picturesque setting right on the edge of the River Stour.

The inspiring Grade II listed Jelleymans Mill is surrounded by greenery.

JHAC has a wide range of exciting volunteer opportunities available, catering to many different interests and skills.

Volunteers are needed to serve customers in the soon-to-launch community cafe, get their hands dirty in a new community garden, share their expertise through workshops, leading tours as a guide, welcoming visitors as a receptionist or meet and greeter or even cleaning, designing, sound engineering, graffiti art or music.

Visitors to the open morning will be able to find out about the different roles and how they can contribute, meet the friendly team and learn more about JHAC.

They can chat with volunteers over a free coffee and pick up a

comprehensive information pack.

As well making a contribution, studies show volunteering can significantly boost mental wellbeing, provide a sense of purpose, reduce stress and increase feelings of happiness and fulfillment.

Dedicating time will support JHAC and help people with their own personal growth and happiness.

One current volunteer said it had been a very rewarding experience.

"From helping out in the early stages of the community forming to meeting so many lovely people, I always leave feeling like I've made a real difference.

"The team is incredibly welcoming, and there's a real sense of community here."

Attending the open-morning does not commit people to anything, even if they sign up as a volunteer.

JHAC operates on a flexible basis, with volunteers contributing as little or as much time as they can and want to.

There will be no pressure.

JHAC CEO Samuel Davies said: "Don't miss this chance to explore how you can make a real difference in your community at a truly special place.

"We look forward to welcoming you."

Visit: jhac.co.uk or search for 'JHAC - Jelleymans Mill Heritage Arts Charity' for more on the mill and charity.



Liz Gardiner, who runs her business Severn Valley Training from JHAC and also volunteers with the charity and CEO, Samuel Davies. s

Coming together to toast Blue Monday

THERE was lots of laughter, great company, cake and new connections made when the free 'Brew Monday' community coffee morning was held on the May Day bank holiday at Jelleymans Mill.

The event provided an opportunity for the community to come together, connect with old friends, make new ones and learn more about the vital work of Jelleymans Mill Heritage Arts Charity.

Samuel Davies, the CEO of the charity, said: "What a brilliant Brew Monday event.

"We had the pleasure of meeting some of the board members from Kidderminster Horticultural Society and showing them around and The Crafty Jelly was abuzz with coffee and conversation - it was a terrific morning!

Huge thanks to Liz for organising the event, Margaret and Ray's Bakehouse for the fabulous cake and bake donations, Focus Photography for taking the pictures on the day and Trish and Mark for hosting the Crafty Jelly.

"Thanks as well to all you wonderful folk who attended - you are stars one and all."

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

Visit the website at: jhac.co.uk or search for: 'JHAC - Jelleymans Mill Heritage Arts Charity' on Facebook for more.

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RSPCA issue appeal after death of 'dumped' dog

THE RSPCA has launched an appeal after a cocker spaniel, which was found emaciated in Stourport, had to be put to sleep by a vet on welfare grounds.

The black/tan female was discovered in a poor condition on May 7 in Hartlebury Common and was taken to a vets in Kidderminster.

There the dog was euthanised and the RSPCA were notified.

RSPCA Inspector Emily Cheeseman, who has been making enquiries, said: "This poor dog was emaciated, dehydrated and was having seizures.

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

"She also had terrible matted fur. The vet suspected she had been unable to get up for a while - so although we don't know what has happened we have concerns she could have been dumped.

"Unfortunately, even though she was microchipped, the details were not up to date so we have not been able to find out where she came from."

Ms Cheeseman said she was quite a distinctive dog, so the charity was appealing to anyone

who may have first-hand information to help with enquiries.

Anyone who can help should call the RSPCA on 0300 123 0018.

The RSPCA would like to thank those who have been involved in this incident.

"We'd of course like to thank the vets, but also to the member of the public who found this dog and took her straight to a vets," said Ms Cheeseman.

The charity said whenever an animal was in need, the quicker they received the help they required, the better.

"By helping small sick and injured animals yourself, it frees

up our teams to focus their specialist skills on investigating cruelty and neglect and reaching more victims who urgently need our help," she added.

"If it's safe to do so, please take any sick or injured small animals directly to a local vet who can help.

"We have lots of advice on our website to help the public to safely handle and transport a small animal in need."

The emaciated dog was found in Hartlebury Common and, sadly, had to be put to sleep. s



Vandals slash car tyre

A VEHICLE was vandalised in Stourport overnight between last Monday and Tuesday.

Police said a tyre on the car was slashed while it was parked in William Coley Place.

Police are investigating and have urged witnesses or anyone with information or video footage to get in touch.

A BLACK Renault Clio was stolen from Stourport between 1am and 8.35am on Tuesday.

The thieves struck in Worth Crescent and took the vehicle without the keys.

Police are appealing for residents living in that road and the surrounding ones to check their CCTV or doorbell footage to see if they have captured any suspicious behaviour.

Witnesses or anyone with information on either of these incidents should call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.



An appeal has been launched to find the owner of this goat which was stolen from Bewdley. s

Search to find stolen goat

POLICE have launched an appeal after a goat was stolen from the Ribbesford area of Bewdley.

The two-year-old Toggenburg cross was taken between 4pm on Saturday and 8am on Sunday.

The goat no longer has the purple dye on its coat.

The goat is a sociable family pet which is greatly missed by its owners. Anyone who sees a goat, like the one in the picture, wandering in Bewdley should call police on 101.



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VE Day 80



LEFT: The crowds gathered for the service. Picture courtesy of Stourport Town Council. s

RIGHT: A service was held in War Memorial Park. s

FAR RIGHT: A wreath was laid at the memorial by the Mayor. s

Pictures by Colin Hill.



Mayor raises flag of peace

A HOST of events and activities took place across Stourport last Thursday to mark VE Day 80.

'A shared moment of celebration' was held to celebrate the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe. The events not only paid tribute to those who fought for freedom but also offered a powerful reminder of the resilience and unity which has defined the country since then.

The day began with the raising of the 'Flag of Peace' and the reading of the proclamation for peace at the

by Tristan Harris
tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

War Memorial Gardens. Then in the afternoon, there was food and drink from a number of vendors on offer in the park.

People joined local historian and expert Geoff Shaw in Stourport Community Centre, for a free talk on the town's contribution to VE Day and its role in the Second World War.

In the evening, the bell-ringers of the Parish Church of St Bartholomew (Areley Kings) joined in

with 'Together We Chime - Let the Nation's Bells Ring Loud'. Entertainment included performances by The Swingettes and DJ Stretch which led up to the lighting of a VE Day 80 beacon.

The day concluded with the Stourport Carnival Queen lighting the 'Lamp of Peace'.

A spokesperson for Stourport Town Council said: "It was great to see the local community come together to mark this historic occasion and celebrate the 80th anniversary of victory in Europe."



Mayor of Stourport, Coun John Thomas, with the special VE Day 80 flag.



The Swingettes performed in War Memorial Park. Picture courtesy of Stourport Town Council. s

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LEFT: The standards were lowered as part of the moving proceedings. Pictures by Miriam Cunliffe. MIDDLE: Craig Swarbrick 'The Celtic Piper' performed at the poignant service. RIGHT: Hazel Depper, the oldest member of Kidderminster Royal British Legion, with her grandson Anthony Depper. s



Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun George Connolly, gave a reading. s

Sharing VE Day memories

THE KIDDERMINSTER community came together to celebrate the 80th anniversary of VE Day last Thursday.

The celebration, held outside St Mary and All Saints Church, was described by Kidderminster Town Council as 'a truly special and uplifting occasion'.

"The event was very well-attended and the atmosphere was filled with pride, reflection, and genuine community spirit."

"Attendees enjoyed a thoughtful and engaging evening that brought together music, tributes, and moments of remembrance."

The heartfelt tribute to those who served and made the ultimate sacrifice included live performances and readings, a moving parade and line-up featuring veterans' associations, ex-service groups, cadets,

and local youth organisations and a beacon lighting.

Other highlights included bellringing by St Mary's, Kidderminster Bell Ringers, St Catherine's CE School Choir performance, wartime music from The Jukebox Jems Duo, bagpipes by Craig Swarbrick 'The Celtic piper', readings from the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Worcestershire Paul West, Priest of St Mary and All Saint's Church – Hayward Osborne.

Wyre Forest District Council's Armed Forces Champion – Coun Kevin Gale – also attended and there was a proclamation by the Kidderminster Town Crier and a bugle tribute and tribute reading the Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun George Connolly.

The church grounds provided the per-

fect backdrop as the evening served as a powerful reminder of shared history and the importance of coming together as a community to honour it.

The spokesperson added: "We would like to thank everyone who took part and those who came along to show their support - your presence helped make the event a fitting and memorable celebration of VE Day."

"Thank you to Carrigan Events for providing sound and lighting and to Miriam Cunliffe Photography for providing images of the evening."

Wyre Forest District Council and Morrisons Kidderminster's community champion were also thanked for their support and sponsorship of the event.



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VE Day 80



A victory singalong was held at Hartlebury CE Primary School. s



Pupils wore red, white and blue at Wilden All Saints CE Primary School. s



The VE Day 80 picnic at Far Forest Lea Memorial CE Primary Academy. s



Pupils at Stourport Primary Academy remembered the fallen by tying red ribbons on the school's railings.

Schools join the party

AS STREET parties and other events commemorated the 80th anniversary of VE Day last Thursday, schools across Kidderminster and Stourport held their own celebrations to mark the occasion.

Students of all ages – from the lower years to sixth-formers – learned about the importance of the historic day when people paused to reflect sacrifices made by soldiers and civilians during the Second

by Phoebe Mitchell

World War and toasted Victory in Europe.

At Stourport Primary Academy, the children tied red ribbons onto the school railings and fences to remember the lives lost for everyone's freedom.

They also played 1940s games including hula hoop, and enjoyed a picnic in the sunshine.

Pupils at Stourport High School's newly-formed choir, named VOX, performed at the town's VE

Day celebration in War Memorial Park.

Youngsters at Hartlebury CE Primary School dressed for the period, and staged a victory singalong to entertain their families with a series of classic wartime tunes.

Children at Far Forest Lea Memorial CE Primary Academy in Kidderminster also tucked into a picnic for lunch. Thanks to the support of the Parents' and Teachers' Association (PTA), the tables were creatively set out in the

school grounds to spell 'VE'.

Children at Wilden All Saints CE Primary School in Stourport wore red, white and blue and had fun dancing on the playground.

And youngsters at St Bartholomew's CE Primary School, Areley Kings, had special lessons and activities which included decorating jars as tea-light holders. They also learned about the day and thought about those who died in the Second World War.

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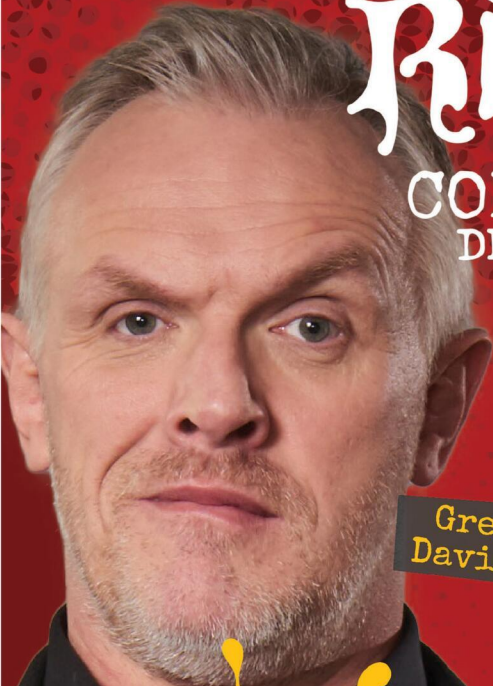


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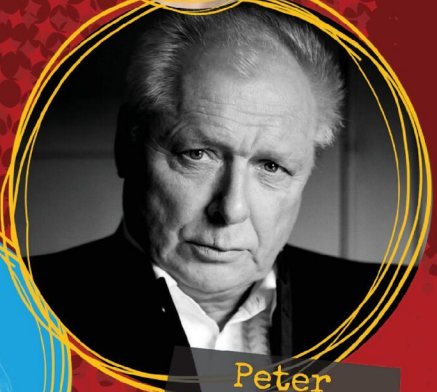


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The standard was lowered during the minute's silence in the moving service. s



LEFT: The Mayor of Bewdley, Coun Ian Latimer JP, lit the beacon. Pictures by Sara Jennings. s
RIGHT: The VE Day 80 flag flew proudly above the town hall. s



Coming together to mark anniversary of VE Day

BEWDLEY marked VE Day 80 with a special service outside the town's St Anne's Church last Thursday.

The event - organised by Bewdley Town Council - was well attended and featured the lighting of a special beacon to mark the occasion.

During the service, the Royal British Legion Standard was low-

ered and there was a two-minute silence to remember all those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Earlier in the day, a special VE Day 80 flag was raised above Bewdley Town Hall to mark the special occasion.

A Bewdley Town Council spokesperson said: "It was lovely to see so many of people supporting their local community."

Other events also took place in the town to mark the occasion.

Last Thursday, the town's branch of the Royal British Legion (RBL) hosted a free VE Day 80 coffee morning in Bewdley Guild Hall.

And, on Sunday, Bewdley Concert Band performed in Jubilee Gardens, at the back of the museum.

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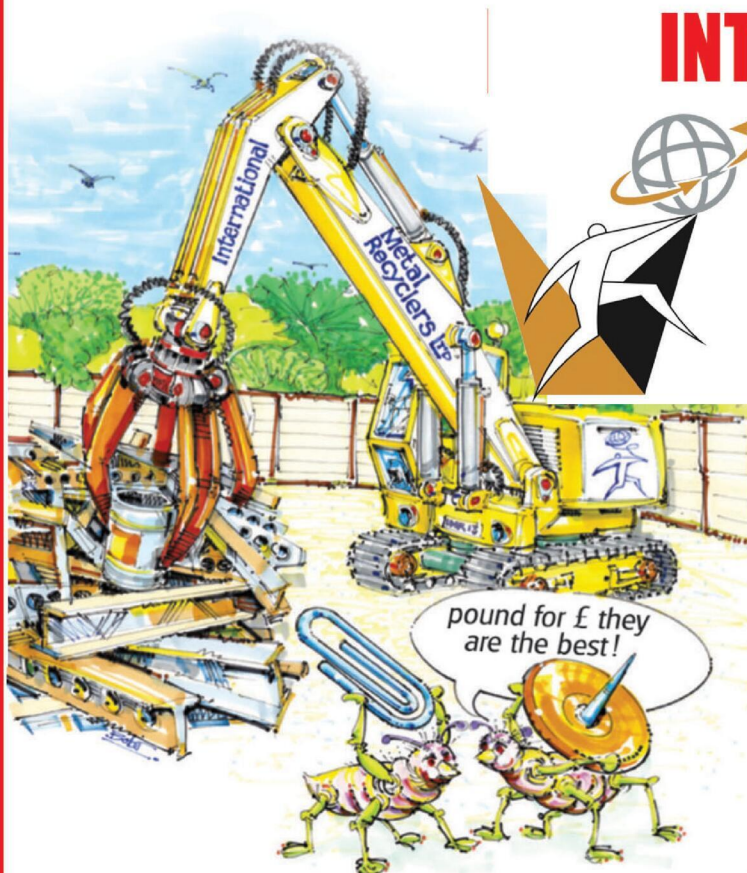
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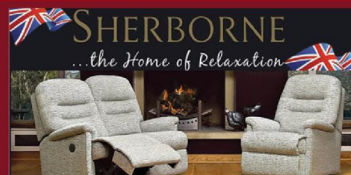


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Mental Health Awareness Week will place focus on 'community'

CHILDREN and young people across the Midlands have been receiving targeted mental health support.

The move came ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week which began on Monday and runs until Sunday (May 12 to 18).

Mental Health Support Teams (MHST), which operate in schools and colleges across the region, are specially trained NHS staff that offer help and treatment for children and young people with their mental health, anxiety and depression.

The theme of Mental Health Awareness Week this year – as set by the Mental Health Foundation – is 'community'.

The Midlands now has 121 Mental Health Support Teams in schools and colleges.

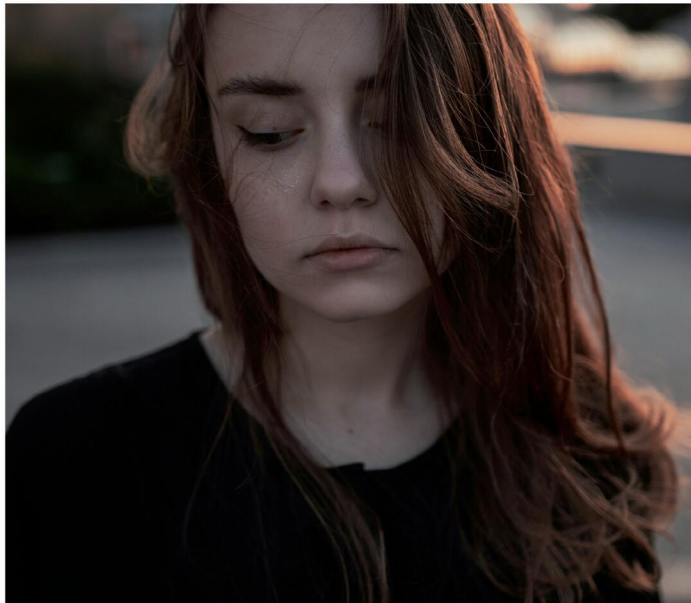
The Midlands has an average number of 216 children and young people who have contacted a MHST (with at least one attended appointment) for support from December 2023 to November last year.

This is above the national average of 214 contacts per team.

'Support is vital'

Giles Tinsley, programme director for Mental Health at NHS England in the Midlands, said: "During Mental Health Awareness Week and beyond, it is vital children and young people in the Midlands receive the help and support they need at school and college."

"By having support, students will gain confidence which so impor-



tant for their education, relationships and home life.

"As well as helping them to thrive in the next steps of their education."

Parents and carers can help to look after a child or young person's mental health.

Tips for mental wellbeing

On the theme of the awareness week, the Mental Health Foundation is calling on people, groups, and organisations across the UK to celebrate the communities which support good mental health and wellbeing.

And it has issued a series of tips for people to help them improve

their mental health.

Among them are for people to undertake activities they enjoy and maybe join a club or group focusing on their interests, such as sport, music, reading or gaming. Residents can meet others with similar interests to themselves.

It is suggested people spend more time outdoors – nature is well documented as a mental health improver and it can also lead to social interactions. People are advised to go for walks, runs or bike rides – all proven to boost mental wellbeing.

People can meet other like-minded individuals who share the same interests, beliefs, faith or values and showing kindness to others – this gives a sense of belonging, as well as boosting the recipient of the kind act.

It could be as simple as starting a conversation or forging a friendship.

People often think about others' kind acts but never say – expressing appreciation can boost the mental wellbeing of both people in these situations.

Caring for the local community

and environment, such as participating in litter-picks, community gardening or organising local events can make people happier.

And welcoming new members to communities can also help. It could be as simple as people saying hello to a new neighbour, introducing themselves to a new colleague, inviting someone to a community event or recommending positive activities in the local area.

Other tips include becoming part of an online community – for those who cannot get out or have mobility issues and volunteering or giving to charity. Helping others improves the sense of community and assisting at charity shops, foodbanks or rescue centres can lower stress and make people feel happier.

And for people who do find themselves struggling, there are support groups out there – help from peers can help when going through a difficult time.

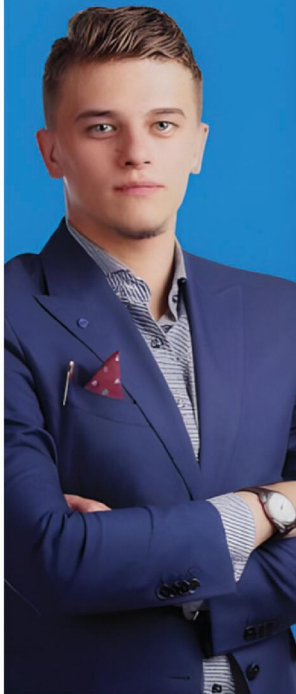
Go to: mentalhealth.org.uk/mhaw for more on Mental Health Awareness Week.

People can visit the 'Every Mind Matters' website at: nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/supporting-others/childrens-mental-health/ for more information.

Further plans for the development of children and young people's mental health care have been outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan. Visit: longtermplan.nhs.uk for more details.

Advice has been offered ahead of Mental Health Awareness Week. s

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Men urged to stand united to support their mental health

A NEW peer support group to help men with their mental health will be starting in Kidderminster on Tuesday, May 20.

The regular sessions, from 1pm to 3pm, are being run by We Are Men United.

They will take place at the Holy Innocents Community Hall, Stourport Road, Foley Park, between 1pm and 3pm every second Tuesday for 12 months.

The group, which has been funded by Community Housing and Travis Perkins, will support any man aged 18 and over who is struggling for their mental wellbeing and looking for support.

The service is free, discreet and respectful and, like the other groups operating in the Wyre Forest, strives to break the stigma of men seeking support, including them not being labelled or judged.

Matthew White, one of the founders of We Are Men United, said: "We look forward to welcoming men to our sessions. We're there to help, support, guide and mentor and will be delivered by our vastly experienced mental wellbeing facilitator Tosh, supported by myself."

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

He thanked the funding partners – Community Housing and Travis Perkins.

There is a peer support group for dads and male carers which take place from 1pm to 3pm every second Tuesday at Brookside Family Hub, Borlinton Road, Kidderminster. The next one is this Tuesday, May 20.

And there is an evening support group in Bewdley from 7.30pm to 9pm every second Thursday at Wribbenhall Community Centre, Shaw Hedge Road.

And, in Stourport, in conjunction with Wyre Forest Food Share and Community Cafe, there is a 'Breakfast for the Boys' at Linden Avenue, The Walshes. This features a free breakfast, tea and coffee and good conversation.

It takes place every two weeks with the next one from 10am to 12pm on Tuesday, May 20.

Matthew's journey began in the early 2000s when, with a very successful career in hospitality and owning a pub/restaurant with rooms in the Lake District, he began to

have his own issues. He said, while everything on the surface was perfect, the reality was very different. He was on a steady decline with his mental fitness and became severely clinically depressed and needed a lot of support to survive and then get better and understand a way to carry on.

"Surviving to live beyond these problems has taken more than 20 years, and I have managed to survive them, and as I say, I am now 'qualified through living' to support others," he said.

Matthew has now made it his mission to support men with their mental fitness and wellness to be able to do the same – survive for now and look forward again with hope and aspiration.

This week is Mental Health Awareness Week (MHAW) which began on Monday and runs until Sunday, May 12 to 18.

Shocking figures, from the Office of National Statistics (ONS), show 12.5 per cent of men in England have a mental health disorder and men are three times more likely to take their own life than women. People often turn to alcohol when they struggle to cope and double the amount of men die from



Matthew White and Bry Craven from Men United. s

alcohol-specific causes. The theme of this year's MHAW is celebrating 'community' and highlighting the importance of it.

This fits in with We Are Men United's ethos of men being there to

help others who find themselves struggling and in similar situation.

Visit men-united.co.uk or [facebook.com/we.are.men.united](https://www.facebook.com/we.are.men.united) for more information on the groups and the support available.

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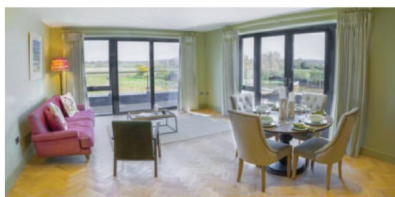
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Programme offers way to boost skills

PEOPLE in Worcestershire can now take the next step towards a better career as the county council launches a new wave of its successful Skills Bootcamps programme.

Managed Worcestershire County Council and delivered in partnership with a wide range of expert training providers, Skills Bootcamps are free, sector-focused short courses designed to help adults aged 19 and over gain practical skills and progress in work.

The new, Wave 6 Skills Bootcamps being offered include those in construction, welding, marketing, digital and cyber skills, leadership, management, plumbing, health and social care, green skills, hairdressing and many more.

Abigail Jones, Skills Bootcamps programme manager said: "We are proud to bring another wave of Skills Bootcamps to Worcestershire, building on the clear success of previous years."

"With a contract worth £2.4 million, the next wave of Skills Bootcamps rolls out across the county from May and will build on the success of previous years."

"Wave 6 also sees us working with new employers such as Kanes Foods, Spellar Metcalfe, Hoople, Sainsbury's Distribution, and Amazon, ensuring training continues to align with real industry needs."

"With construction being a key growth area, it's also fantastic to offer a wide range of building work-focused Bootcamps, delivered in partnership with nationally recognised construction companies and training providers. Skills Bootcamps continue to prove their value, delivering tangible benefits to both residents and local businesses, improving employability, and ultimately contributing to Worcestershire's future workforce and economy."

Skills Bootcamps are part of the Government's Skills for Life initiative and can help an individual up-skill, re-skill, or gain new skills in a wide range of areas, as well as being used by businesses looking to upskill their workforce.

Bootcamps can be completed in as little as six weeks, and they provide a clear route to employment, with many offering guaranteed interviews upon completion with local employers.

Visit www.careersworcs.co.uk/skills-bootcamps for more information.

Abigail Jones, Skills Bootcamp Programme Manager and Peter Hutchinson, Skills Bootcamp Coordinator celebrate the launch of the new scheme.



Former Tory chosen to lead Reform group



Coun Joanne Monk has been elected as leader of Worcestershire Reform UK group.

COUNCILLOR for Redditch East, Joanne Monk has been elected as leader of the Worcestershire Reform UK Group.

Coun Monk has been a county councillor for the Conservatives for the last four years, but crossed the floor in the last year to stand for Reform.

Joanne previously worked in the NHS, construction and real estate and large-scale organisations at a senior level, as well as owning several successful businesses.

Reform UK won 27 out of 57 seats on Worcestershire County

Council in the recent local election, becoming the largest group on the council.

Group leader of Reform UK on Worcestershire County Council Joanne Monk said: "It's an honour and a privilege to have been elected leader of the Reform UK group on Worcestershire County Council."

"What we have achieved here is incredible. From a standing start we are now the largest party on the council. The people of Worcestershire have given us a clear mandate for serious change and we fully intend to deliver that."



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Real drama in Miss Marple tale

REVIEW

MURDER, Margaret and Me, currently being performed by The Nonentities at Kidderminster's Rose Theatre, tells the story of Agatha Christie and Margaret Rutherford – the actor who played the crime author's most famous character 'Miss Marple' on the big screen.

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.

This is a primarily about the collision of two worlds and clash of two characters – both with strong beliefs about their lives, art and how things should be done.

And, after twists, turns tension between them seemingly around every corner, the pair form an unlikely but lasting friendship.

With this being a two-hour, three hander, a lot fell on the actors' shoulders – all were seldom off stage.

Laura Pearson perfectly portrayed genteel English author Christie with her prim and proper persona and clear passion for writing murder mysteries. She cleverly conveyed the character who lovingly switches between seriousness and wandering off in her creative head, coming up with elaborate murderous plots.

Likewise, Katy Ball was excellent as the exuberant – sometimes even child-like – Rutherford, strutting

Laura Pearson as Agatha Christie, Joan Wakeman as The Spinster, and Katy Ball as Margaret Rutherford, brought this true story to life. Picture by Colin Hill. s



her stuff across the stage and telling tales from her celebrity past.

The way Pearson and Ball interacted with each other – from aggression and intense dislike to their warm, almost fuzzy, friendship at the end – was wonderful to watch. They bounced off each other brilliantly throughout this entire emotional roller-coaster.

And, in between the warring pair, and equally effective in her

exchanges with the other two, was Joan Wakeman as The Spinster. You could tell she enjoyed every moment on the stage as the endearing, sometimes cheeky, go-between and 'almost narrator', keeping the audience up-to-speed. She also provided 'the light among the shade' with copious humorous observations – crucial to a piece with so much tension.

All three characters persist-

ently 'broke the fourth wall' as they alternated between relaying their thoughts and feelings to those watching before interacting with each other and then back again.

The first half of the play – pretty much scene-setting for what was to come – was, I feel, more for Agatha Christie fans and a tad slow.

But, the second half was a much quicker-paced tour de force. It began with all three characters

making humorous (almost stand-up in parts) observations about marriage.

At the beginning of act two, Wakeman received some of the biggest laughs of the evening with these utterances, firmly cementing The Spinster's place in the audience's hearts.

And you could not take your eyes off Pearson and Ball as they delivered some impressive monologues which gripped us all as the play reached its climax.

Such was the writing, combined with the actors' portrayals of their roles, you could hear a pin drop for the whole of the last 15 to 20 minutes as tragic times and shocking secrets were revealed and Christie's and Rutherford's stories were concluded.

In more than two decades of reviewing shows and longer watching them, I have never heard a theatre so silent for such a prolonged period of time.

Most probably headed home with mobile phones in hand to Wikipedia the factual elements of Margaret, Murder and Me (that's exactly what I did). And if you do, it will confirm this was a real enthralling true tale that just had to be told – an incredible story you probably never knew and, having watched this show, wish you had been told it sooner.

The remaining performances take place at 7.30pm tonight (Friday) and tomorrow (Saturday).

For tickets and more information, visit the Rose Theatre website: rosetheatre.co.uk or call the Box Office on 01562 743745.

Tristan Harris

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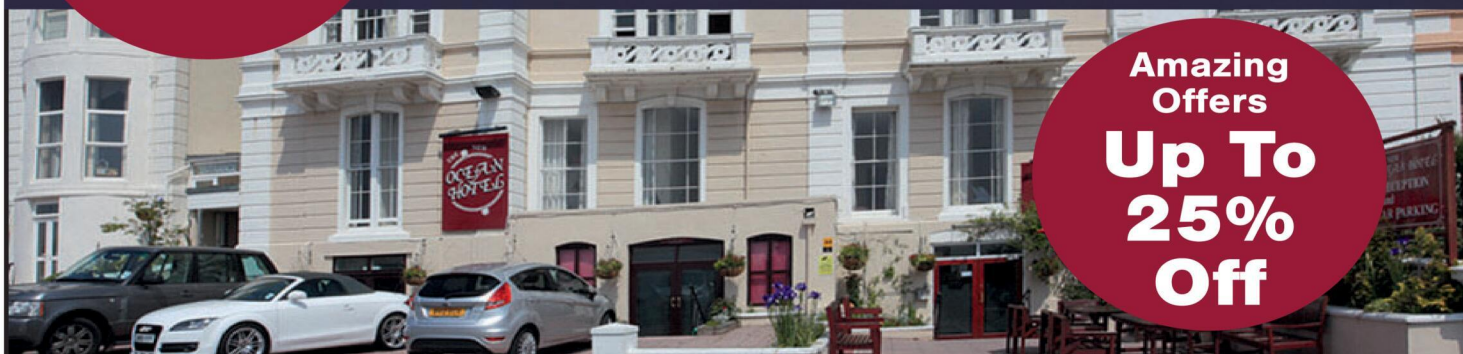
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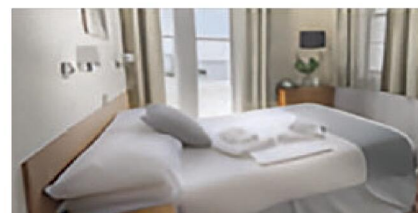


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While the town doesn't have a standing castle, it more than makes up for it with historical landmarks like St. Mary's and All Saints' Church, the preserved Town Hall, and characterful Victorian architecture that hints at its prosperous past. Walking through Kidderminster is a journey through the ages — with plenty of modern flair.

A Town Centre Full of Character

Kidderminster's town centre is a lively mix of tradition and innovation. At its

heart is Weavers Wharf, home to popular high street names alongside unique independent stores. Whether it's fashion, books, electronics, or a bite to eat, you'll find a warm welcome and great variety. Venture beyond the Wharf, and Kidderminster's high streets — including Vicar Street and High Street — are full of local businesses that bring real character to the town. Independent cafés, gift shops, and specialist retailers show that this is a town that values creativity and community.



Our popular street markets and seasonal events bring even more colour and variety, supporting local traders and offering shoppers everything from street food to handmade crafts.

Greenspaces on Your Doorstep

Kidderminster is surrounded by nature — one of the many reasons people love to live and visit here. In town, Brinton Park provides a peaceful green retreat, perfect for picnics, weekend strolls, or family fun. Its beautiful gardens and wide open spaces are ideal for relaxing or exercising.

Just outside the town, you'll find the stunning Habberley Valley Nature Reserve, loved by walkers and nature enthusiasts for its dramatic sandstone outcrops and far-reaching views. And just beyond that, the Wyre Forest, one of England's largest ancient woodlands, offers endless opportunities for hiking, cycling, and wildlife spotting. The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal also runs through Kidderminster, offering tranquil towpath walks and a glimpse into the town's working waterway heritage.



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Sport, Fitness and Team Spirit

Kidderminster is a town that gets moving. Our proud football club, the Kidderminster Harriers, is the oldest in Worcestershire and a key part of the town's identity. Matchdays at Aggborough Stadium bring the community together — from lifelong fans to new supporters, all united by passion and pride. There's something for everyone when it comes to sport and fitness. The Wyre Forest Leisure Centre is a modern, fully equipped facility with a swimming pool, gym, fitness classes, and sports courts. It's a real hub for families, individuals, and teams looking to stay active. From cricket and rugby to martial arts, golf, and tennis, Kidderminster offers



excellent facilities and clubs that welcome beginners and seasoned pros alike.

Culture and Entertainment with Local Heart

Our cultural scene is alive and well, with events and activities throughout the year that reflect the town's creative spirit. The Kidderminster Town Hall remains a landmark venue for live music, theatre, talks, and community events. Its grand interior and central location make it the go-to spot for all things arts and culture. One of the most beloved attractions in the region — the Severn Valley Railway — begins right here in Kidderminster. This heritage steam railway offers a nostalgic journey through beautiful countryside, with vintage locomotives, historic stations, and themed events that delight both locals and tourists alike.

Local live music, open mic nights, art exhibitions, and creative workshops bring even more vibrancy to Kidderminster. The cultural community is growing, inclusive, and always ready to welcome new talent.

Family Friendly and Forward Looking

Kidderminster is a fantastic place to raise a family. With a strong choice of local schools — including King Charles I School, Holy Trinity School, and well-regarded primaries — parents can be confident their children are receiving

a quality education in a supportive environment.

Families have plenty to do, too. West Midland Safari Park, just a short drive away, offers a world-class wildlife experience with safari tours, rides, and conservation exhibits. Add to that local playgrounds, soft-play centres, skate parks, and youth clubs, and you've got a place where children can thrive and enjoy every season.

Healthcare is supported by Kidderminster Hospital, and public transport links — including the Kidderminster railway station with direct trains to Birmingham, Worcester, and London (via Worcester or Birmingham) — make travel and commuting easy and efficient.

A Town with Ambition

Kidderminster isn't standing still. With ongoing town centre regeneration projects — supported by government investment like the Future High Streets Fund — exciting improvements are underway. These include revitalising historic buildings, improving public spaces, and attracting new business to the town. Local enterprise is thriving, thanks to a proactive business community and support from regional networks. From tech startups to traditional trades, this is a place where entrepreneurs can flourish.




Affordable property, a skilled workforce, and a welcoming environment make Kidderminster a smart choice for investment and expansion. It's a town that respects its heritage while looking boldly to the future.

Why We Recommend Kidderminster

At the Kidderminster Standard, we don't just write about the town — we live and breathe it. We raise our families here, support our local shops, cheer at matches, walk the canal, and chat over coffee in town.

That's why we can say with confidence: Kidderminster is one of the finest places in the country to live, work, and explore. It's a town with a strong backbone, a kind heart, and a bright future.






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LEFT: A Narnia-themed festive trail was created in a shopping parade. s



RIGHT: Learners in Warndon made blankets for patients in the Worcestershire Royal Hospital.

New projects at heart of community

NEW community projects have been launched by Worcestershire County Council's Adult Learning Team to support people's mental health.

Neighbourhood Learning, part of Worcestershire County Council's Adult Learning service, is launching new community projects during Mental Health Awareness Week, which began on Monday and runs until Sunday (May 12 to 18).

The projects will place wellbeing and community connection at the heart of learning.

The new projects, based at St Wulstan's Church in Warndon, Worcester, and The REDI Centre in Redditch town centre, will offer

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

local people the opportunity to design and deliver projects which bring real benefits to their neighbourhoods.

They are also aimed at building confidence, skills, and social connections in a supportive environment.

Community projects are free learning opportunities delivered in communities experiencing social or economic disadvantage.

By giving adult learners, aged 19 and over a voice in shaping the community project activities that matter to their communities, the programme fosters belonging,

purpose, and improved mental wellbeing.

Nikki Foster, neighbourhood learning manager for Worcestershire County Council's Learning Services, said: "Our community projects aren't just about learning new skills, they're about reconnecting people to their communities, giving them ownership of positive change, and supporting mental health and wellbeing at a grassroots level."

Evidence suggests more than 70 per cent of adults taking part in community learning activities report improved wellbeing as a result of them.

Ms Foster added: "The two new community projects mark a commitment to addressing the impact of loneliness and isolation, by bring-

ing learning opportunities directly into communities where they are needed most.

"We embed the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' into all of our courses and it's always encouraging to hear from people who were hesitant about joining our community projects because they were feeling isolated or anxious, and then to see them, by the end of the project, feeling more confident, connected, and positive about what they can achieve."

Previous community projects have been held in Birchen Coppice in Kidderminster, Winyates and Woodrow in Redditch, Sherrard's Green in Malvern, Warndon in Worcester, Pershore and Evesham town centre.

They have ranged from decorating shop windows with recycled artwork, designing a Narnia-themed 'festive trail' in a shopping parade, well-dressing in Malvern, creating a community Easter egg hunt, designing Christmas gifts for people dealing with isolation, crafting memory blankets for Worcestershire Royal Hospital's dementia unit and creating post box toppers to brighten up a housing estate.

Visit worcestershire.gov.uk/learningservices for more information about adult learning from Worcestershire County Council and to browse all available courses go to worcestershire.gov.uk/courses

Alternatively, call 01905 728537 for more on projects past and present.





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Madlug project to help county's kids

A NEW partnership is providing Worcestershire's looked-after children with travel bags to help transport their belongings when moving house.

Worcestershire County Council is proud to announce a meaningful collaboration with Madlug Foundation, a UK-based charity dedicated to supporting children in care.

Through the efforts of the council's Youth Voice team, Madlug has generously donated 120 pack-away travel bags to looked-after children.

These bags have already been distributed to numerous looked after children, including those who attend looked after children groups such as Who Cares We Care.

One young person said: "This is

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

incredible. I was so used to using plastic bags to take my belongings, and now I can fit everything in here."

Madlug, short for 'Make a Difference Luggage', was founded in 2015 by youth worker Dave Linton after he discovered many children in care were moving their belongings in black bin bags.

Determined to restore dignity to these children, Madlug operates on a 'buy one, give one' scheme. For every bag purchased, a pack-away travel bag is donated to a child in care.

To date, more than 110,000 bags have been provided to children across the UK and Ireland.

The donated bags are thoughtfully designed in collaboration with care-experienced young people, featuring a 35-litre capacity, water-resistant material and a discreet, unbranded appearance to avoid stigma.

Each bag carries the empowering message 'you are incredible', reinforcing the child's value and worth.

Abbie, representing Worcestershire County Council's Youth Voice team, expressed her gratitude and said: "As a new apprentice to the team, I was tasked with doing some research around Madlug.

"When I reached out, I was moved by their immediate willingness to support our young people. "Their mission aligns perfectly with our commitment to ensuring every looked after child feels valued and



Children in care with their Madlug bags, made possible through the scheme. s

respected. We're incredibly thankful for their generosity."

Ruth Hill, assistant director for child protection and through care at Worcestershire County Council, said: "Every child deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, especially during times of transition.

"We're grateful to our Youth Voice team for initiating this collaboration and grateful to Madlug for their generous and heartfelt contribution."

Anyone wishing to support the cause can a bag from Madlug.

Go to madlug.com for more details.

Businesses urged to become more enterprising with support scheme

BUDDING entrepreneurs and growing businesses across Worcestershire are being given a major boost, thanks to a fully-funded package of expert support and grant funding.

The Enterprising Worcestershire programme is backed by the county council and is designed to help start-ups get off the ground and support ambitious enterprises ready to scale.

From practical workshops to one-to-one coaching, Enterprising Worcestershire offers a tailored approach to business success.

Gary Woodman, the authority's assistant director for economy and skills, said: "We know starting and growing a business can be both exciting and challenging.

"That's why we're proud to support programmes like Enterprising Worcestershire,

which provide practical tools, tailored advice, and funding to help local entrepreneurs take the next step with confidence.

"Investing in early-stage businesses is investing in the future of our local economy."

In addition to business support, a range of grant funding opportunities are also available, including support for elevating your business, research and development, and reducing

energy costs through the British Energy Advice Service Grant.

The Enterprising Worcestershire programmes are open to businesses and residents in the districts of Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Wychavon, and Wyre Forest.

Businesses based in Worcester city should contact the Worcester City Economic Development team directly by emailing economy@worcester.gov.uk

gov.uk or calling 01905 722106 for more. Alternatively, support is also available through the Worcestershire Growth Hub.

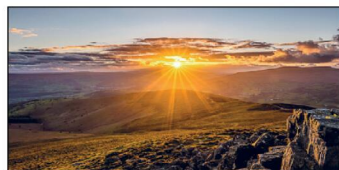
Entrepreneurs and small businesses are being urged not to miss this opportunity to accelerate their business journey with expert guidance and funding.

Visit worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/business/business-support-and-grants for full details and to apply.

THE HEART OF WALES RAMBLER SATURDAY 9 AUGUST 2025

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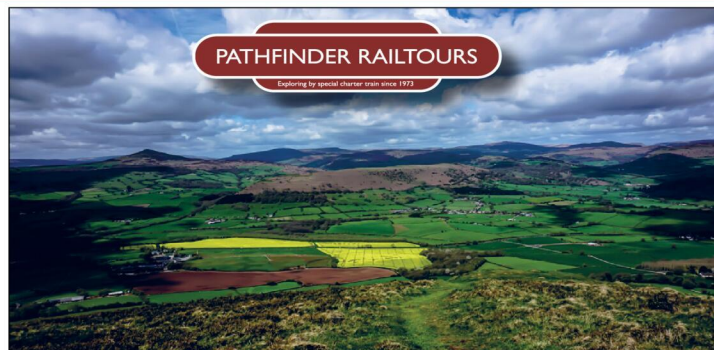
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Our destination for the day will be the county market town of Shrewsbury. Here there will be around 90 minutes* to enjoy the town set in the loop of the River Severn.

A pair of English Electric Class 37 locomotives, courtesy of West Coast Railway Company, are expected to haul this train throughout.

*Subject to change once confirmed timings are received

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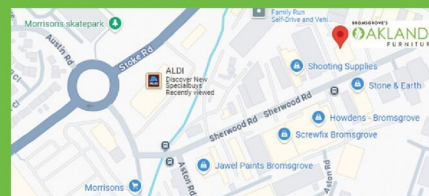
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Gardening

Flowers not mowers this month will help encourage the wildlife

THIS MONTH, botanical charity Plantlife is championing 'No Mow May'.

The simple but powerful campaign encourages gardeners to pause their lawnmowers and let wildflowers flourish.

With nearly 7.5million acres of meadows lost since the 1930s, the UK's pollinators and insect-eating birds are in decline as their habitats are lost.

British Garden Centres has put together some hints on how people can participate in No Mow May and transform their gardens into vital refuges for bees, butterflies, and other wildlife.

Five simple tips

Leave the lawn – A perfectly mown, striped lawn is like a green desert for bees. Leave the lawnmower in the shed, and the garden becomes more wildlife-friendly. Flowers and plants can grow through the grass, such as daisies, dandelions, creeping buttercups, and common mouse-ear flowers. The sweet flower heads will attract beneficial insects. These are great for pollinating insects, whilst taller grass and wild plants will also provide food and shelter for animals



Longer grass and the blooms which come with them attract a variety of wildlife, including bees and other pollinators. s

like mice, hedgehogs, frogs, toads, and newts.

Plant wildflowers – Mixes and seed bombs can be sown with results visible in less than eight weeks. These concoctions contain nectar-rich species such as paper daisies, cornflowers, poppies, camomile, corn marigold, and forget-me-nots. Once grown, they create an environment for garden wildlife, providing habitats and food sources.

Small steps – Rewilding does not mean leaving the whole lawn overgrown all month long. People

can participate in No Mow May by mowing a path to the shed and a patio to make everything in the outdoor space accessible. Those not wanting to dedicate the whole garden to No Mow May can leave just a small patch – it all makes a positive difference.

Go organic – Avoid using chemical weedkillers which can harm both wildflowers and plants in the lawn. They can also damage the soil. Instead of spraying weeds to get rid of them, pull them out by hand – this natural approach promotes a healthier garden ecosystem.



Gardeners are being urged to refrain from mowing their lawns in May to let the flowers flourish. s

Change the mowing routine

No Mow May is not just for this month, it can be done all-year-round and will benefit wildlife more if undertaken in this way. A Plantlife survey revealed the people with the most flowers in their lawns were those who mowed once every four weeks. Keep lawns to 2ins to 3ins – this encourages low-growing flowering plants, such as clovers and daisies. Allowing the grass to grow longer also leads to deeper roots, meaning your lawn needs less water and will be healthier.

Amy Stubbs, project and develop-

ment manager at British Garden Centres, said: "By simply pausing our mowers this May, we can transform our gardens into thriving havens for wildflowers and wildlife, making a powerful difference for pollinators, biodiversity, and our planet. No Mow May is a small act with a mighty impact. Letting your lawn go wild is the first step to restoring the balance we've lost and attracting beneficial insects back to our gardens."

Visit plantlife.org.uk/campaigns/nomowmay/ for more on No Mow May.

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Support cash extended for another year

PEOPLE across Worcestershire who would otherwise struggle with bills and paying for essentials such as food will be able to apply for financial support now that the Household Support Fund will continue to next year.

Funded by the UK government, the assistance will run until March, 2026 through a range of different schemes.

In Worcestershire, £6.95million of funding has been used to extend energy support delivered by Act on Energy. This provides assistance with the cost of household energy, energy bill debt and new heating systems for eligible households.

Food voucher support during school holidays will continue until the end of the summer holidays, to help those families in receipt of free school meals.

One-off funding is available in cash vouchers for new pension credit recipients. Other pensioners, carers or people with a disability on a low income will be able to access cash vouchers and support through the Worcestershire Advice Network, led by Age UK Wyvern. Also available will be an additional one-off voucher

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

er for low-income households with high-energy-use medical devices.

And there will also be additional activity focused on longer-term preventative advice and support to make more lasting change for residents.

District councils have been allocated around a quarter of the overall funding and are being supporting a range of other measures in local communities.

Hannah Perrott, assistant director for communities and provider services at Worcestershire County Council, said: "We welcome the government announcement of the extension of the Household Support Fund and the move towards a more preventative approach.

"We will continue to work closely with our district councils and voluntary sector partners to provide support to those most in need."

Visit: worcestershire.gov.uk/householdsupportfund for more information on the support available across Worcestershire and how to apply.

And go to worcestershire.gov.uk/cost-living-support for wider cost-of-living information.



Platform Housing Group employees with Elizabeth Froude, chief executive officer at the housing association, and Lucy Byrne, Dementia UK's philanthropy and partnerships executive. s

Housing group raises £46k for dementia

A WORCESTERSHIRE social landlord has collected more than £46,000 for its 2024 corporate charity.

Platform Housing Group raised £46,005.67 for Dementia UK, thanks to the passion and dedication of employees and match-funding by the group's board.

Throughout the year, teams and individuals went above and beyond to fundraise for the specialist dementia nursing charity – events included a 200-mile cycling challenge, multiple skydives, coffee mornings, bake sales, craft fairs, sponsored runs and more.

Clare Durnin, chief people and excellence officer at Platform Housing Group, said everyone was so proud of their achievements. "Dementia UK is a cause that resonates with so many of us and the effort people have put in – whether taking on a physical challenge or organising local events – has been amazing to see," she added.

Daisy Wilson, corporate partnership lead for Dementia UK, said they were grateful to everyone at Platform for their fundraising efforts.

"It's been great to see people take on a host of challenging activities, each of which will

help us reach more families affected by dementia through our specialist Admiral Nurses, offering life changing practical and emotional support."

The cash raised will directly support Dementia UK's mission to ensure no family faces dementia alone.

One in two people will be affected by dementia in their lifetime, either by caring for someone with the condition, developing it, or both.

Platform's Charity of the Year for 2025/26 is the NSPCC. It continues to support causes which make a lasting impact on lives across the UK.



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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.

Footwear

C	B	O	O	A	L	A	K	E	H	I	R	D	S	
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Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

1. Mend (6)
4. Mission (6)
9. In order of time (13)
10. Ruler (7)
11. Extremity (5)
12. Range (5)
14. Brush (5)
18. Suffer (5)
19. Glowing (7)
21. Articulation (13)
22. Hark! (6)
23. Drive home (6)

DOWN

1. Affluence (6)
2. Clear-sighted (13)
3. Interior (5)
5. Normal (7)
6. Lodgings (13)
7. Water down (6)
8. Kudos (5)
13. Scent (7)
15. Scatter (6)
16. Pamphlet (5)
17. Offensive odour (6)
20. Slow speech (5)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

- Unit of length
- Nourishment
- Tree material
- Term
- Well-used

TOOT

HORN

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.

- 74765423 gives an element;
- 2165423 gives a second element;
- 84597845423 gives a third element.

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

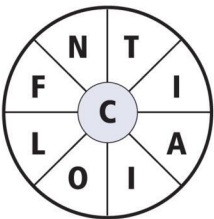
CODEWORD

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

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
15 words: average
20 words: good
25 words: very good
30 or more: excellent.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1

Historical town in Rhineland-Palatinate, 13 miles north of Ludwigshafen (5)

5

Small surface, as of a crystal (5)

8

Surname of the knighted playwright whose works include The Second Mrs Tanqueray and Trelawny of the Wells (6)

9

In botany, a fruit that splits into dehiscent parts (5)

10 & 7 Down

Fairy play by Clifford Mills and John Ramsey, with music by Roger Quilter (5,3,7,4)

11

Any time when a great part of the earth's surface has been covered with frozen water (3,3)

13

See 25 Down

15

The Greek goddess of health (6)

18

Discrete, self-luminous, celestial body (4)

19

A small mountain lake (4)

20

See 23 Down

24

Joint between the forearm and the upper arm (5)

26

Birds of the crow family capable of imitating human speech, and often considered of ill omen (6)

27

The dried kernel of the coconut (5)

28

Surname of the American golfer who won the Open Golf Championship in 1922, 1924, 1928 and 1929 (5)

29

Nullify, imply non-existence of (6)

30

62-mile-long river of north-western France, flowing into the Channel between Dinard and St Malo (5)

31

Frills, usually starched, worn round the neck, particularly during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I (5)

1

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31

DOWN

1

The highest non-commissioned rank in the RAF (7,7)

2

A first-magnitude star in the foot of Orion (5)

3

Country of south-western Europe occupying most of the Iberian peninsula (5)

4

Another name for the barracouta (5)

5

Small seaport in Cornwall, about 22 miles west of Plymouth (5)

6

Rubber rolled in thin crinkly sheets (5)

7

See 10 Across

12

A quarter, especially poor, inhabited by any racial group (6)

14

A terminus of the old LMS railway (6)

16

Small desert-dwelling rodent which can be kept as a pet (6)

17

Archimede's cry when he had thought of a method of detecting the adulteration of the gold for Hiero's crown (6)

21

The trembling poplar tree (5)

22

Large wading bird with long legs, neck and bill (5)

23 & 20 Across

Composer best known for his Symphonic Variations for piano and orchestra (5,6)

24

District in north-eastern Surrey which includes Sandown Park racecourse (5)

25 & 13 Across

Morasses east of the Shannon, comprising about 370 square miles of Offaly, Meath, Laois and Kildare (3,2,5)

SOLUTIONS

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Worms; 5 Facet; 8 Pinero; 9 Regma; 10 Where; 11 Ice Age; 13 Allen; 15 Hygeia; 18 Star; 19 Tam; 19 Tarn; 20 Franck; 24 Elbow; 26 Ravens; 27 Copra; 28 Hagen; 29 Negate; 30 Rance; 31 Ruffs. DOWN: 1 Warrant Officer; 2 Rigel; 3 Spain; 4 Snock; 5 Fowey; 6 Crepe; 7 The Rainbow Ends; 12 Ghetto; 14 Euston; 16 Gerbil; 17 Eureka; 21 Aspen; 22 Crane; 23 Cesar; 24 Escher; 25 Bog of.

Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Hepair; 4 Errand; 9 Chronological; 10 Emperor; 11 Limit; 12 Scope; 14 Broom; 18 Incut; 19 Radiant; 21 Pronunciation; 22 Listen; 23 Clinch; Down: 1 Riches; 2 Perspicacious; 3 Inner; 5 Regular; 6 Accommodation; 7 Dilute; 8 Glory; 13 Perfume; 15 Dispel; 16 Tract; 17 Stench; 20 Drawl.

Wordwheel Pathfinder

Cowboy, Peep-toe, Pimsoil, Football, Mules, Chelsea, Moccasins, Espadrilles, Slippers, Platforms, Winklepickers, Sandals, Stilettos, Hiking, Deck, Loafers, Mary Janes, Clogs, Kitten heels, Brogues, Riding, Ballet pumps, Trainers, Wellingtons, Flip Flops, Sneakers, High tops, Oxfords.

Niner

RUMINATES

Ladder

Worm, Horn, Toot, Foot, Food, Wood, Word.

Codeword

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

Hard

Easy

Sudoku



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Audi to launch new electric GT

AUDI is launching an additional version of the e-tron GT that offers an attractive new

entry point to the range.

The e-tron GT quattro can call on up to 584PS to deliver impressive performance, while also covering up to 384 miles when its battery is fully charged. The new entry level Grand Tourer is available to order in the UK from June 24 priced from £88,555 (OTR), and deliveries are due to begin in August.

Audi UK Director Jose Miguel Aparicio said: "Just by looking at the car, it's easy to see why it strikes a chord with our customers, and when you also factor in the versatility it offers in terms of range and charging capability, and its exceptional blend of performance, practicality and comfort, the sheer depth of its appeal really becomes clear."

"This new version carries all those strengths through to a new price point that is sure to make

this beautiful Grand Tourer an even more attractive proposition."

The Audi e-tron GT family, which comprises the S e-tron GT, RS e-tron GT and RS e-tron GT performance. It has a system output of 503PS (584PS with Launch Control). Thanks to a gross battery capacity of 105kWh (net 97kWh) and a range of up to 384 miles, it can very capably fulfil the Grand Tourer role but is equally at home in city traffic.

The newcomer also features an impressive charging capacity of up to 320kW. This means that only short charging stops are needed, as around 177 miles of range can be regained in just 10 minutes.

The Audi Gran Turismo features large wheels, a sleek coupe-like silhouette, and an extended wheelbase contribute to the vehicle's

sporty proportions. At the front, a black mask accentuates the inverted body-colour Singleframe, while at the rear, an elegantly designed diffuser with vertical fins makes for a powerful finish. Characteristics such as the low drag coefficient of 0.25 and the controllable air intakes help to deliver impressive efficiency and interior acoustics.

Located in the underbody, the high-voltage battery features strategically placed recesses in the battery pack that serve as footwells and provide generous seating comfort for all passengers. The driver and front passenger travel in luxury on eight-way adjustable sport seats with integrated headrests. The rear seat backrest can be partially or completely folded down so that sporting equipment can be stowed in the 405 litre luggage compartment. There is also a front compart-

ment with a volume of 77 litres.

Working with the standard adaptive air suspension, the intelligent quattro system distributes the drive torque between the front and rear axles rapidly and fully variably, ensuring optimum traction in a wide range of driving conditions. To perform that task, the system analyses the driving situation and adjusts the power distribution accordingly in just a few milliseconds. The Audi e-tron GT quattro weighs around 30kg less than the S model, benefiting dynamics and efficiency in equal measure.

In the UK it is available as the e-tron GT quattro or the e-tron GT quattro Vorsprung, which adds features such as all-wheel steering, a head-up display, Fine Nappa Leather upholstery and Bang & Olufsen audio to the already extensive equipment list.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE – LICENSING ACT 2003

APPLICATION TO VARY A PREMISES LICENCE OR CLUB PREMISES CERTIFICATE UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

Name of applicant/club: David Edward Carr / Bewdley Brewery Ltd

Postal address of premises/club premises or description: Lax Lane, Bewdley, Worcestershire, DY12 2IDZ

The applicant proposes to vary the following licensable activities or qualifying club activities on or from the above premises/club premises as follows: To re-site the brewery shop from a passage in the brewery to the retail unit within the same building.

Representations by interested parties or responsible authorities should be made in writing to Licensing, Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF or wresenquiries@worsregservices.gov.uk

By 10th June 2023

The record of the application is available for inspection by appointment.

Please call us on 01905 822799 for an appointment.

IT IS AN OFFENCE, LIABLE ON CONVICTION TO A FINE UP TO LEVEL 5 ON THE STANDARD SCALE (£5,000), UNDER SECTION 158 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 TO KNOWINGLY OR RECKLESSLY MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT IN OR IN CONNECTION WITH AN APPLICATION

SALES & WANTS

MISCELLANEOUS

L / H Golf Putter brand new name Ozolif club £7 01527 546431

HALFORDS car cover only used for one day, £20 (cost £60) 01527 526098

HOSTESS Tray (table top) perfect condition hardly used with 3 glass dishes and keep warm shelf £35 (cost £75) 01527 526098

MOTO Caddy Electric Golf Trolley. Very Good Condition £150. Tel: 07884 434566

RUNNER BEAN, £1.75 a tray of 12 plants 01905 778926

HEAVY duty pipe bender 15mm x 22mm £30 ono. Tel 07528485727

INDOOR water feature with cherub & light £35 0121 624 3694

MISCELLANEOUS

CRYSTAL drinks decanter and 2 whisky glasses. Glasses have never been used, excellent condition £12. Tel 01527 500217

TYRES 3x 175 / 65x14 good condition 5mm tread on Clio 2 rims £15 each 07940406991

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SALES & WANTS

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Harriers Women edge closer to promotion with Shifnal victory

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: BETH Gallagher scored a brace as Kidderminster Harriers Women beat Shifnal Town Ladies 3-0 to move one win away from promotion and the league title.

Gallagher netted twice to put Harriers in command before substitute Eloise Harris sealed the points at Stourport High School.

The result means Kidderminster sit second in the West Midlands Regional Women's League Premier Division table.

Harriers trail leaders Lye Town by a single point but crucially have a game in-hand on the table toppers.

Leaders Lye have played all of their fixtures which means Kidderminster will secure promotion if they win their final game of the season.

Harriers will also secure promotion with a point due to having a better goal difference than Lye.

Kidderminster spurned an early chance to break the deadlock as Amber Lawrence squared the ball to Gallagher who saw her effort saved by the Shifnal goalkeeper.

However, Harriers broke the deadlock on six minutes as Gallagher's left-footed strike found the net.

Shifnal somehow failed to draw level moments later as Kidderminster goal-



keeper Ellie-Mae Locke produced a stunning triple save to keep Harriers in front.

And Gallagher doubled the home side's lead on 13 minutes with another cool finish from inside the penalty area.

Harriers had chances to extend their lead before the break as Chiara Stokes saw a goal ruled out for offside while Millie Rogers powered a shot over the crossbar.

The hosts made sure of the points two minutes from time when substitute Harris fired a superb strike into the top left corner from outside the box.

Kidderminster finish their season against bottom-of-the-table Knowle Ladies on Sunday, May 18 with kick-off at 2pm at the club's Centre of Sporting Excellence.

Harriers women celebrate. Picture courtesy of clivejonespr.com



Ashley Hemmings won the Kidderminster Harriers Independent Supporters Trust (KHIST) player of the season award. Picture courtesy of KHIST.

Hemmings wins another award

ASHLEY Hemmings has won the Kidderminster Harriers Independent Supporters Trust (KHIST) player of the season award.

Hemmings earned 44 per cent of the votes from KHIST members to win the award.

The striker scored 30 league goals as Harriers just missed out on promotion and an immediate return to the National League.

He also provided 12 assists as Kidderminster's season came to an end against Chester in the play-off semi-finals.

Defender Reiss McNally finished second with 16 per cent of the votes while

Caleb Richards finished third with 11 per cent.

And eight players shared the remaining 29 per cent of the votes.

KHIST head of communications, Tim Gibbons said: "Ashley was a truly deserving winner of the award."

"His incredible goal-scoring ability and outstanding form, particularly from January onward, were key in the team's unbeaten run towards the end of the season."

"While it's disappointing that his efforts weren't rewarded with promotion, we hope that he, along with his teammates, will come back even stronger next season."

ALARM AND FIRE PROTECTION EXPERTS COVERING THE WEST MIDLANDS

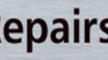
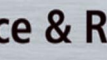
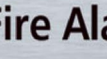
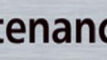
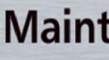
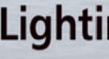
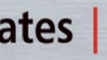


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