

KIDDERMINSTER Standard

Including BEWDLEY & STOURPORT

Friday, May 30th 2025 Week 22

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Help the veterans and you will be a hero too

Former Army medic rallies call for more volunteers for charity



Tim Seeley served for 10 years as an army medic and a first aid instructor.

AN ARMY veteran from Kidderminster is appealing for people in the county to volunteer to help provide vital support for the men and women who have served their country.

Veterans' charity Help for Heroes wants to get more people on board as volunteers as it expands its reach in local communities.

Tim Seeley, 59, served for 10 years as an army medic and a first aid instructor, including in Northern Ireland. During this time, he experienced a back injury and, as a result, lives with chronic pain. He also manages severe PTSD.

Tim has been supported by the

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

Help for Heroes mental health team, its welfare service, and has taken part in sports and social activities organised by the charity.

He said: "Help for Heroes was there for me when I most needed it.

"It's really been a lifeline for me and thousands of other veterans, but it needs to recruit more volunteers so it can support more men and women who have served.

"As well as providing clinical, mental health, and welfare support services through a team of dedicated advisors, the charity works

with groups to support veterans and their families, to connect with each other and their communities through sports and social activities.

"These activities can be an important part of recovery and the charity wants to expand this activity in the Worcestershire area but, to do this, it's going to need volunteers."

Help for Heroes is currently supporting 26 veterans across Worcestershire.

The charity aims to work with volunteers, national and local organisations to offer activities for veterans and their families, such as wheelchair basketball, archery, and rowing, as well as other activities,

including photography and creative writing.

And it is also hoping to expand its regular drop-in cafe social sessions.

On average, five people are medically discharged from the UK military every day. Some veterans must find new ways to live with a physical disability. Others face complex mental trauma. Many feel cut off from society, friends and even family.

Tim added: "I know personally what a valuable job Help for Heroes does.

"There are more than 21,200 veterans living in Worcestershire area and if we can recruit people who

are able to give a couple of hours a week, the charity can do more for local people.

"We also need people who are happy to help us with fundraising events.

"Last year our volunteer fundraisers helped us out with bucket collections at supermarkets and other locations."

Tim urged anyone interested in finding out more about volunteering and those with a passion for a sport, creative or social activity they think they could share with veterans to get in touch.

Visit helpforheroes.org.uk/give-support/volunteer for more information.

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Archbishop set to visit church to celebrate 200th anniversary



How the church would have looked in 1910.

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

A CHURCH in Harvington will celebrate its 200th anniversary this Sunday, June 1, with a special visitor and mass.

The Archbishop of Birmingham, Bernard Longley, will celebrate mass and consecrate the new graveyard as part of the bicentennial commemorations at St Mary's Catholic Church.

Fr John Moran and Fr Richard Sharples will also be part of the service.

This is a very special event for the church which was built in 1825, four years before Catholic emancipation.

The church also has close connections with Harvington Hall.

The mass on this day will be at 11am and the congregation are invited to have a picnic in the priest's garden during the afternoon.

As the church has limited space, the service will be broadcast through loud speakers into the garden of the Priest's House, so parishioners sitting there will be able to hear and take part in the service.

Following Mass, His Grace will bless a commemorative plaque inside church and consecrate the 'new' graveyard field.

He will also plant a mulberry tree symbolis-

ing resilience and faith - qualities which have defined St Mary's journey through history.

Then, there will be the chance for picnics and traditional games similar to those enjoyed 200 years ago when the church first opened.

Special booklet

A full colour, illustrated booklet commemorating the history of the parish, including the order of the Bicentennial Mass will be available on the day.

Donations to help cover its cost would be welcomed.

People are urged to take along chairs for the picnic and the garden.

Everyone is hoping for some fine weather for what promises to be a unique and historical parish event.

For the latest news and sport visit Kidderminster-standard.co.uk

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The church, as it is today. Picture by Mike Jones. s

Pair were assaulted outside store

TWO people were arrested after an assault outside the Lidl supermarket in Vale Road, Stourport on Wednesday.

The area was cordoned off after reports of a 65-year-old man and a 71-year-old woman being attacked outside the store.

The incident happened between 4pm and 8pm and it is believed four people in total were involved in the altercation.

After the disagreement, all four left the area.

A 62-year-old woman and a 67-year-old man were later arrested by police on suspicion of grievous bodily harm and remain in police custody.

The Standard was contacted on Wednesday morning by readers con-

cerned about the store being cordoned off and a large police presence there.

Following the incident, officers are now appealing to the public for information.

Det Insp Warren Matthews, from north Worcestershire CID, said: "Enquiries are on-going to establish the full circumstances surrounding the incident and we are keen to hear from any witnesses or anyone who may have dash cam footage from Lidl car park."

He urged witnesses or anyone with information to call officers on 01562 826105 or email warren.matthews@westmercia.police.uk to pass on the details.

PUBLIC NOTICES

For all the latest information on Planning Proposals, Traffic Notices, Goods Vehicle Operator Licences, Licences To Sell Alcohol and Probate Notices check out our Classified Section

Park revamp set to get under way

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

A MUCH-LOVED park in Kidderminster is set to have its £3million improvement project progressed, with £2.4million funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).

Although the project for Brinton Park has faced a series of unforeseen delays - including the several badgers' sets being discovered - work to enhance facilities, protect local wildlife and celebrate the park's rich heritage is now scheduled to begin this summer.

A key part of the improvements includes replacing the aging Sons of Rest Pavilion, which has sadly been found to be in much worse condition than first expected. An independent inspection by contractors confirmed serious structural problems and, for safety reasons, the council has been advised by structural engineers the building will need to be demolished and rebuilt. The proposal will be discussed at a forthcoming planning application.

The plans for the new building will reflect the historic character of the original pavilion while offering improved community facilities including a new cafe space, terrace, ornamental pond and landscaping.

'Welcome news'

Councillor Tracey Onslow
Wyre Forest District Council's



Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure, Arts and Community Safety, said: "It's great that we will see work starting on site within a few weeks.

"We recognise Brinton Park is one of our district's most popular green spaces and local people are looking forward to enjoying the upcoming improvements. "Thanks to the NLHF, this exciting project will not only protect and improve the park's natural beauty and heritage, it will also create welcoming new spaces for everyone to enjoy for generations to come, including the much sought after cafe."

The council will be contacting local groups directly but anyone wanting further information on the plans or proposed works to the Sons of Rest building can email the council at: BrintonParkHLF@wyreforestdc.gov.uk or contact Coun Onslow directly.

The council's cabinet is being asked at its meeting on June 10 to release £460,000 extra funding from its Evergreen Fund to ensure the project remains on track.

Work in the park will start with the construction of a new artificial badger sett to protect local wildlife.

Demolition of the current pavilion will follow shortly afterwards.

Plans for the new pavilion are scheduled to be considered at the next available planning committee meeting.

There will be a new cafe within the pavilion, looking out onto a new terrace which, in turn, overlooks a new ornamental pond.

Other improvements for attracting more wildlife include management of the woodland, installing bat boxes and landscaping with new flower beds and shrub planting.

Visit the Wyre Forest District Council social media pages and: brintonpark.com for updates on Brinton Park.

The Sons of Rest Pavilion at Brinton Park which will be replaced as part of the upcoming improvements. Picture by Wyre Forest District Council. s



A CGI image of how the area will look, once the work has been carried out. Picture by Wyre Forest District Council. s

Regeneration hit by drainage delays

THE REGENERATION project to connect Worcester Street with Bromsgrove Street in Kidderminster town centre is facing delays due to additional drainage requirements on the site.

Coun Dan Morehead, Wyre Forest District Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Regeneration, Planning and the Green Agenda said: "It looks like completion being the end of this year if the weather conditions are kind to us, rather than this summer.

"It's disappointing there are delays, but we are looking forward to the end result which will see the replacement of the step entry with a new green community space with winding graduated steps which connect to Bromsgrove Street car park.

"Every major regeneration project has its

challenges and this site is no exception.

"We are continuing to progress the work at pace and look forward to delivering a high quality and attractive space for everyone to enjoy."

The regeneration of this area of town is being made possible through the government's Future High Streets Fund (FHSF).

This 'connectivity project' is key part of the council's 'Kidderminster 2040' adopted vision for the town.

The FHSF is a government funding scheme to transform struggling high streets into places where people want to work, visit and interact with each other.

Visit: wyreforestdc.gov.uk/edr for more on the regeneration projects in Wyre Forest.

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This aerial shot shows the fire engines and ambulances in the roads around the tower block. Picture by Kidderminster Drone. s

TOWER BLOCK FIRE: MORE THAN 30 firefighters have battled a blaze on the seventh floor of a tower block in Kidderminster this afternoon.

Six Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service crews - two from Wyre Forest, two from Bromsgrove and one each from Droitwich and Redditch Fire Stations - were sent to the scene in St Cecilia Close.

Also in attendance was the aerial ladder platform from Worcester to enable firefighters to reach the flat.

Water jets were used to extinguish the fire which was contained within one flat.

One ambulance, three paramedic doctors, the Trauma team and heart paramedics also attended but, fortunately, no-one needed medical treatment.

Emergency services were called out around 1.20pm. Police attended, as well as the fire and ambulance services.

The incident was later scaled down but two fire crews remained, checking for hot spots to ensure the blaze did not reignite.

News in brief

BURGLARY APPEAL: POLICE are trying to track down the suspect involved in a burglary in Cookley.

The incident happened around 5.25pm on May 20 in Bridge Road when the burglar was spotted hunched over in the kitchen.

They entered through the back door and stole items from the fridge. The suspect then fled the property.

Witnesses or anyone with information should call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

PYLON BLAZE: A PYLON in Chaddesley Corbett caught fire and the blaze spread to tree tops.

The incident happened around 10pm on Sunday with the cables arcing onto Hemming Way.

Firefighters from Bromsgrove attended the scene and called in engineers from National Grid who isolated the cables remotely. The incident was dealt with by 11.21pm.

STORE IN TUNE: MUSIC will fill the air at Morrisons in Kidderminster on Thursday, June 5, to raise funds for the Alzheimer's Society.

Magic Moments will bring its Wheely Different on Tour, in association with the supermarket, to perform songs between 1.30pm and 3.30pm.

People are urged to go along, sing, tap their toes or clap along to make some musical memories.

Anyone wanting more information should email Elaine Kirby at elainekirby21@yahoo.com

Author Les relives his experiences in new tome

A BEWDLEY author who specialises in creating unusual titles for his books has launched his second one – 'How to Strangle a Jelly'.

Les King has penned his memoir about a lifetime of experiences spent in talking and communicating with people from all walks of life, in a variety of situations across several careers.

In his lifetime, Les has been a police officer, probation officer, university lecturer and a union representative.

The book portrays, examples of raw and unadulterated communications at the sharp end of some difficult and volatile situations.

These situations have mostly been to find things out – to cross-examine, to console, to teach, to persuade, to explain, to counsel, to entertain, to prevent people doing something really dramatic like killing themselves and even to save his own skin in volatile incidents.

The book is billed as being 'funny, sad, but it is never boring'.

by Tristan Harris
tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

Les published his first book, 'Cornflakes with Whisky' as an autobiography of 30 years of policing across the West Mercia areas of Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire.

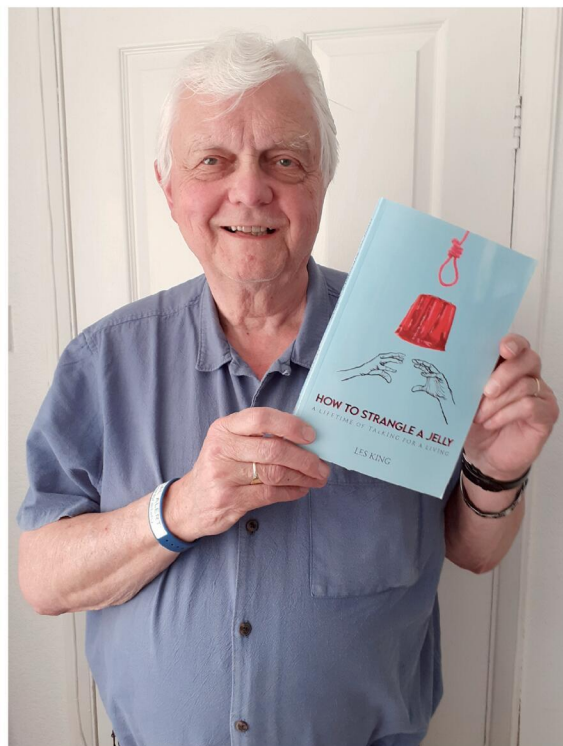
Similarly to 'Strangle a Jelly', it has a creative title – the chosen names for Les' books are explained and become apparent when the subjects and scenarios unfold.

Les is also working on a third book about his second career as a probation officer and the transition from a lifetime of 'nicking to nurturing'.

He said: "I started writing when I took semi-retirement, mainly to get out of gardening and DIY at home."

"I knew everyone has one book in them about their life and career but I didn't anticipate I could produce three."

"I find writing very cathartic and I can recall my experiences as if they happened yesterday."



Bewdley author Les King with his book 'How to Strangle a Jelly' which is out now. s

"I am particularly proud of my latest book 'How to Strangle a Jelly' because it is about communicating with people, sometimes in difficult situations which everyone

can relate to."

Visit amazon.co.uk and search for 'How to Strangle a Jelly - A lifetime of talking for a living' to buy the book.

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Teen banned from town shopping sites

A TEENAGER has been banned from two shopping areas in Stourport unless he is with a responsible adult due to anti-social behaviour.

Barrie Smith, aged 14, of Broomly Close, Stourport, was given a Criminal Behaviour Order (CBO) at Worcester Youth Court in a bid to curb his anti-social antics.

Under the CBO, which runs for 12 months, he is banned from entering any shop on Lombard Street and Queen Street, Stourport, unless he is with a responsible adult.

He is also unable to be in a pub-

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

lic place with four named individuals - their names are unable to be used because of legal reasons.

The CBO was applied for by West Mercia Police following Smith's involvement in anti-social behaviour in the town which was having a detrimental impact on residents, businesses and the community.

Anyone who sees Smith breaching the order should report it to police as soon as possible - online here or by calling officers on 101.

West Mercia Police's Safer

Neighbourhood Inspector for Wyre Forest Daniel Poucher said: "This is a positive step towards tackling ongoing antisocial behaviour in Stourport-on-Severn."

"The local Safer Neighbourhood Team is continuing to work hard to support the community and address the issue by stopping those responsible."

"This behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated."

Barrie Smith has been banned from Stourport shopping areas, unless with a responsible adult, due to anti-social behaviour. s



Deadline looms for community groups to apply for grants

COMMUNITY voluntary organisations and groups in Bewdley have just weeks to apply for the latest grants being offered by the town council.

The Community Grants Programme for 2025/2026 is dedicated to supporting projects and there will be £10,000 up for grabs in total for this financial year.

The primary objective of the programme is to foster a diverse

array of community activities within Bewdley, encompassing sporting, cultural, welfare, and charitable endeavours.

Organisations eligible for grants must demonstrate a clear need for assistance and align with the council's mission of promoting community welfare.

The grants are open to voluntary groups or charitable organisations meeting within Bewdley's town boundary or within a five-

mile radius, with a significant number of parish residents in membership or benefiting from their services.

As part of its commitment to fostering community growth, the council extends special consideration to new organisations facing funding challenges.

In addition to the general grant fund, Bewdley Town Council has dedicated £1,000 of its budget to support sustainable

environmental projects.

Grant applications are invited to fund a range of activities, including equipment purchases, transportation costs, training sessions, town profiling events, financial assistance for struggling groups and special events or celebrations.

However, grants will not be considered for individual activities, general fundraising appeals, or routine operational expenses.

The deadline for applications is June 19 and requests will be considered by Bewdley Town Council's Finance and Facilities Committee meeting on Monday June 30.

The decisions on the funding will be ratified at the council meeting on July 14.

Visit the website at bewdleytowncouncil.gov.uk/council-services/grant-application/ for more information and to apply.

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Age UK Wyvern's activity co-ordinator Vicky Tramontana and dementia services manager Kelly Reeves are hoping more people will come down to the Dementia Cafe. s

Dementia cafe moves to new home

A DEMENTIA cafe is taking place on the third Friday of every month at Hartlebury Parish Hall.

The group had a fantastic time in its new location - on Waresley Court Road - for its May event.

The next session will be on June 20.

People who are living with dementia and their carers are being urged to just turn up for fun, new experiences and the chance to meet new friends. There is no need to book

in advance.

Sessions are being run by Age UK Wyvern.

The venue offers beautiful views and plenty of free parking.

The organisers said: "We'd love to see you there."

Visit: ageukwyvern.org.uk for more on the dementia cafe and other services offered by Age UK Wyvern.

Can you help out injured Chester?

AN APPEAL has been launched to raise funds to save a dog's leg after he was shot and then had a freak accident at Hartlebury Common.

Chester has had a rough ride over the years, recently undergoing surgery after he was shot.

The injury took up all of his insurance and he then had a freak accident, falling down a concealed hole on Hartlebury Common.

The fundraiser has been set up by Rosa Terry on behalf of her friend, and Chester's owner, Rachel.

On the designated fundraising page, Rosa said: "Please know that this is not a 'pay my bills for me' but a family who have had a considerable run of awful luck and are absolutely mortified to be having to ask for help - but they would do anything for their boy."

Freak accident

When Chester fell down the hole, he severed his cruciate ligament in his hind leg and needs surgery to reattach it with supporting plates.

If he does not have surgery soon, he will lose the use of



his back leg and faces living out his golden years in pain and discomfort, leaving the family with the most unimaginable decision to make.

Rosa added: "Chester's mum is absolutely devastated for him and can't bear to see the pain he is in."

"With the insurance having recently paid out for the removal of the bullet, she just has no option but to ask for help."

"Please spare all you can, every penny will help."

She asked for those unable to donate to share the story and fundraising page 'far and wide'.

"Chester is so loved by all of his family, including his mini humans and his elderly human granadad whose care

home he regularly visits.

"Chester has been a part of this family since he was 12 weeks old - he is due to turn 10 soon."

"Let's do everything we can to get this beautiful boy the care and treatment he so desperately needs and deserves. He has spent his life giving all his love and loyalty to humans, let's do all we possibly can for him now."

A \$4,000 target has been set for the fundraising page to pay for the operation.

At the time the Standard went to press yesterday (Thursday), the total was up to \$2,825.

Visit: gofundme.com/t/donate-to-save-chesters-leg for more information and to donate.



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Leap into action in KEMP skydive

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

PEOPLE from Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport are being urged to take on an exhilarating skydive to raise funds for the KEMP Hospice.

The event is scheduled for August 17 when participants will be able to take part in a tandem skydive, jumping with others to help raise vital funds for the charity.

The incredible opportunity will be able to give jumpers the chance to see the world from a new perspective. They will feel the adrenaline rush as they free fall, then take in the peace and tranquility as they float back down to earth, all while raising vital funds for KEMP Hospice through sponsorship.



For those who cannot make August 17, they can organise their own day to undertake the jump. Organisers of the event from the KEMP Hospice are happy to meet with people to help them find a time to suit them.

A KEMP Hospice spokesperson said: "Perhaps you've got a special occasion like a big birthday coming up, fancy a Christmas cracker of a challenge and want to do a Santa Skydive or maybe

Could you undertake a daring skydive for the KEMP Hospice? Picture © rosst400 via Canva. s

make the leap in memory of someone special."

There are two options available. The first involves pledging a minimum amount in sponsorship for at least two weeks before the jump date and the charity will cover the skydive cost.

Or, alternatively, pay for the skydive and then raise as much as possible in sponsorship to support the care and support KEMP offers throughout the Wyre Forest.

People can get in touch with the KEMP Hospice fundraising team by calling 01562 756066, emailing fundraising@kemphospice.org.uk or visiting kemphospice.org.uk/support-us/fundraising/events-challenges/ for more information.



Lucas Kwong and Freddie Meddows, both four, are among the children who are thrilled with their growing caterpillars. s

Butterflies leave tots in wonder

THE ENTHUSIASM of youngsters at Kidderminster's Little Trinity Nursery is flying high after they witnessed first-hand the incredible life cycle journey of their baby butterflies.

As part of their summer term activities, the children are closely observing each stage of the butterflies' development, sparking wonder and curiosity at every turn.

Nursery manager

Gaynor Carter said: "The butterfly's life cycle is a captivating process which starts as tiny eggs before hatching into hungry caterpillars, which spend their days munching away and growing rapidly, so it's highly entertaining for the children to watch."

After shedding their skin several times, the caterpillars form a chrysalis, where a remarkable transformation takes place before

they finally become adults.

Gaynor added: "It's truly heartwarming to see the children's joy and excitement as they watch these tiny creatures grow and change as they prepare to become adult butterflies ready for their release into the wild."

"This hands-on experience brings the magic of nature to life, making learning both delightful and memorable for the children."

More volunteers needed for community cafe

AN APPEAL has been launched by Wolverley Memorial Community Cafe for more volunteers to help it meet increasing demand.

The cafe is open at Wolverley Memorial Hall from 10.30am to 3.30pm

every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday and between 9am and 12pm on selected Saturdays.

The group said: "We have a fabulous team of volunteers but due to our increasing popularity we are get-

ting busier each week. Have you got just a few hours to spare to join us?"

Anyone interested in finding out more can call the cafe on 01902 327713 or pop in during the cafe's opening hours for a chat.



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Getting the band back together

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

THERE was plenty of long-awaited laughter and recalling cherished memories when former friends and partners of Stourport School and the brass band got together for reunions.

The first event was last Friday when school friends met up and, a day later, the first members of Stourport Secondary Modern School brass band got together at The Black Star in the town.

On the Saturday, 20 former original band members journeyed to meet up from across the world, including Australia, USA, Germany, Denmark, Cheshire, Cirencester, Lichfield, Kidderminster and, of course, Stourport, to catch up and reminisce.

The school brass band was started in 1962 by Dennis Taylor who led and developed the band for



three years before moving away. It was then George Jackson took over the leadership.

In 1968 it became the Stourport Youth Band and then group grew and changed to become what is now known as Stourport-on-Severn

Brass Band.

Acknowledging this, Dennis was a special guest of honour at the first band reunion in 2016 and was again invited to the 2019 reunion to celebrate Stourport Brass Band's 50th anniversary.

Band members Rob Chell and Valda Parkinson (Townsend) were instrumental in making the event possible, enabling everyone to remain close and connected.

Visit: facebook.com/StourportonSevernBrassBand for

more on the renowned Stourport-on-Severn Brass Band, its events and its reunions.

Former original band members - both living locally and from across the world - met up for the reunion. s



Mayor to open new play area

THE NEW and improved play area at Broadwaters Mill Park is set to officially open at 11am today (Friday).

The area, which is now called 'Broadwaters Dingle', is ready to welcome young adventurers.

Fittingly coinciding with the half-term holidays, the Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun Doug Hine

will conduct the

A Kidderminster Town Council spokesperson said the space would be available for everyone to enjoy.

"With fantastic new equipment and a fresh design, Broadwaters Dingle is set to be a wonderful community spot for fun, play, and making memories.

"We hope to see you there."

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The village is located near to the historic Malvern Hills, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, as well as the excellent Three Counties Show Ground. Nearby is also the delightful riverside

town of Upton-Upon-Severn with the M5 close at hand.



The apartments provide well-appointed homes rooted in the surrounding countryside with spacious balconies, a kitchen garden, and easily accessible walks in the grounds. The design of the new homes has practical living at the heart, with easily controllable underfloor heating throughout, level access wet rooms, a separate utility and ample storage space. All that modern retirement living requires. There is also an owner's lounge, hairdressers, restaurant, formal gardens and gym on site for you to enjoy.



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New panels installed in next stage of flood scheme

BEWDLEY Town Council has shared the latest update on the construction of a flood risk management scheme.

It says work on the Bewdley Left Bank Flood Risk Management Scheme is progressing well.

The major milestone for last week was the arrival of the glass panel components on site and these are starting to be installed along the flood wall.

The glass panels will bring the flood wall up to full height when completed.

The necessary tests have already been completed for the glass panels at an off-site testing centre.

Among them were a 'static leakage test' - this is where water is held against the panels to a required level to test for leakage of the seals - and a 'dynamic impact test' when a heavy object is released and hits into the panels to test their durability with water next to them.

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

A 'current leakage test' has also been carried out. This is where a turbulent flow of water is forced past the screen.

This technique is also used to test the seals and ensure they are water tight.

Over the bank holiday weekend, Severn Trent Water made improvements to the current drainage system.

A one-way traffic measure was put in place while this work was carried out.

The Bewdley Left Bank Flood Risk Management Scheme is being undertaken by the Environment Agency, along with its construction partners Jackson Civil Engineering and Arup.

Visit this story online at kidderminsterstandard.co.uk to watch a video of the flood prevention scheme's panel testing process.



ABOVE: The glass panels are being installed as part of the Bewdley Left Bank Flood Risk Management Scheme.



LEFT: Work is progressing well on the flood prevention scheme. s

Pictures by the Environment Agency. s

Festival ready for royal date

A PORTRAYAL of HM Queen Elizabeth I will be given at Bewdley Baptist Church at 2pm tomorrow (Saturday, May 31).

Lesley Smith will offer an encyclopaedic knowledge and true-life personification of the monarch as part of Bewdley Festival.

The event will take viewers back to the time of Drake, Raleigh and Shakespeare and recount the dramatic details of Elizabeth I's unprecedented impact on English and European politics.

A Bewdley Festival spokesperson said: "Do come along and join us on this fascinating journey."

Visit Bewdley Festival Box Office online at boxoffice.bewdleyfestival.org.uk for more information and to book tickets.

Get thinking to join charity quiz

TRIVIA whizzes can put their knowledge to the test at a charity quiz night in Blakedown.

The event, at 7.45pm next Saturday, June 7, at the Blakedown Parish Rooms, will raise funds for The Friends of Churchill Church. Doors open at 7pm.

Teams can contain up to six people. First prize is £60 and other prizes are available.

Admission is £12 per person which includes a ploughman's lunch and cake.

Call Viv on 07530 228850 or Jenny on 07947 694185 for more information and to book places.



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LEFT - Sea Cadets from Worcester and Sandwell. Picture by D Spencer. s



RIGHT - Commander Ben Dando of 824 Squadron, Royal Navy, addresses the ceremony. Picture by D Spencer. s

A Glorious day



The 'Glorious' nameplate on locomotive 50033 after the rededication ceremony. Picture by Neil Gordon Media. s

A POINGANT CEREMONY took place to rededicate a locomotive named after a Royal Navy aircraft carrier which sank with the tragic loss of over 1,200 lives.

Class 50 diesel locomotive, number 50033 named Glorious, after HMS Glorious, was rededicated at the Severn Valley Railway's Kidderminster station earlier this month in a ceremony to commemorate next week's 85th anniversary of the ship's sinking.

Representatives from the Severn Valley Railway, the Class 50 Alliance and the Royal Navy attended, along with relatives of some of those who died on the ship, while Sea Cadets from Worcester and Sandwell provided an honour guard.

by Neil Gordon
news@bullivantmedia.com

The railway's managing director, Gus Dunster, opened the ceremony with poignant words on the history of the relationship between the names the Class 50 locomotives bear and their Naval counterparts, before Commanding Officer Ben Dando, 825 Naval Air Squadron, paid a heartfelt tribute to the legacy of HMS Glorious' sinking and the bravery of the crew and her escorts.

The locomotive's nameplate was re-unveiled during the ceremony and the Last Post was played by Bugler, Squadron Leader (Retired), Jason Davenhill. The serv-

ice ended with the Rev Paul Roberts giving a Blessing.

HMS Glorious and her escorts, HMS Ardent and HMS Acasta, were all sunk by German battleships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in the North Sea on June 8, 1940, with the loss of 1,531 lives.

And 1,207 of those who died were men and boys on HMS Glorious in what was the Royal Navy's worst loss of the Second World War, resulting in the tragedy being subject to a 100-year secrecy order by the Board of Inquiry.

Locomotive 50033 entered British Rail service in 1968 and was named 'Glorious' in 1977. It is now preserved and based at the Severn Valley Railway.



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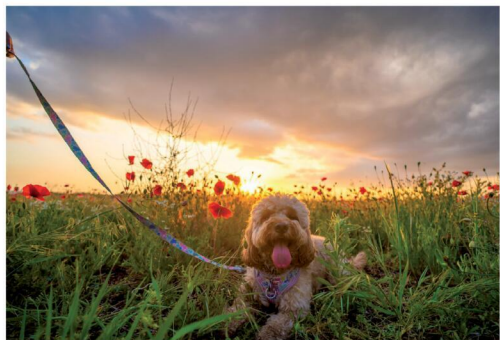
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A dog enjoys a ramble out among the poppies in Cookley. Pictures courtesy of Wyre Forest District Council. s



The Cookley fields have been providing an ideal backdrop for a stroll during National Walking Month. s



Poppies became synonymous with peace and Remembrance after they grew on the Ypres battlefields. s

Poppies produce fields of colour

THESE poppy fields in Cookley look absolutely stunning as the red flowers came into bloom.

While red poppies usually flower in the UK in May or June, they are more commonly known with Remembrance in November.

The flowers' association with conflict and loss came about because of the connections to the First World War and the iconic poem 'In Flanders Fields' by John McCrae. Poppies thrived and grew on the battlefields of Ypres and led to them being synonymous with as a peaceful future following war.

The fields in Cookley, off the A449 between Kidderminster and Stourton, have grown poppies for years, leading to it becoming a magnet for photographers and nature enthusiasts from across the region.

People who visit the Cookley's



The poppies look stunning under the sunny spring sky. s

poppy fields are urged to stay on the paths and not pick the flowers so they can remain there for everyone to enjoy them.

These pictures were posted by Wyre Forest District Council to coincide with May being National Walking Month.

This month was chosen as, along with two bank holidays, the days

get longer and it is a great time to get out, exercise and take in some fresh air.

Walking is proven to improve cardiovascular fitness and boost mental health, reducing stress and providing an opportunity for mindfulness.

And, with so much beautiful countryside, parks and other green areas in the Wyre Forest, people do not have to travel far to indulge in this free form of exercise.

As well as posting its own images, the council wants to see residents' pictures of their walks in the district. Visit the poppy post on the council's Facebook page facebook.com/WyreForest to submit pictures.

Go to wyreforestdc.gov.uk/things-to-see-do-and-visit/visit-wyre-forest/walking-in-wyre-forest/ for a number of waymarked walking routes in the area.



There are poppies as far as the eye can see. s

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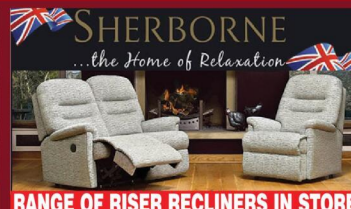


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Alex Thompson and Lydia Peters who play 'Seymour' and 'Audrey' from Little Shop of Horrors, along with the plant 'baby pod Audrey 2'. s

CULT classic 'Little Shop of Horrors' will be staged at Blakedown Parish Rooms from June 25 to 28.

The show will be Theatre 282's first ever musical production.

The show follows a down-on-his-luck florist who stumbles upon a mysterious plant with a growing appetite for fame, fortune and fresh blood, that just might change his life. But what will be the cost?

A Theatre 282 spokesperson said: "Our talented cast and amazing crew are hard at work to create an incredible show that you really don't want to miss."

Tickets are £14 (£13 concessions) with shows at 7.30pm each evening and there will be tea, coffee, a bar, sweets and snacks available to buy.

Visit: www.theatre282.com for more and to buy tickets.

Meadows set to host free music

A SUMMER of music at Riverside Meadows kicks off this Sunday, June 1, with ultimate Bon Jovi tribute Bad Medicine UK.

The show - which runs from 2pm to 4pm - is free to watch and will offer an unforgettable afternoon of classic rock with a high-energy, hit-packed and family-friendly performance.

The Bon Jovi classics, including 'Livin' on a Prayer', 'Always' and, of course 'Bad Medicine' will be belted out at the bandstand.

The event has been organ-

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

ised by Wyre Forest District Council.

A spokesperson said: "With powerhouse vocals and electrifying guitar work, it's the full Bon Jovi experience in a beautiful riverside setting.

"Bring your picnic chairs, blankets, and your best singing voices for a fun, relaxed afternoon in the park.

"Whether you're a die-hard Bon Jovi fan or just love live music, this is one you won't

want to miss."

The event will kickstart a number of free concerts as part of Riverside Park's 'Music in the Park'.

They all take place on Sundays from 2pm to 4pm.

Other artists and bands on the way next month include Anne Duggan and Rob Hines (June 8), Black Country Brass (June 15) and the Barcodes (June 29).

And there will be further performances throughout July and August.

Visit: wyreforestdc.gov.uk/whatson for more information.

Chance to have a chat with Mayor

THE MAYOR of Stourport will host the latest in his regular open-door surgery series between 10am and 12pm this Wednesday, June 4.

The consultation with Coun John Thomas will take place in the Mayor's Parlour at the Civic Centre, Stourport.

There are six appointment slots available for both Stourport residents and business owners.

Each slot is 20 minutes long and will give

individuals the opportunity to have an informal chat with Coun Thomas about their ideas and concerns regarding the town.

Anyone wanting to book a slot should email: enquiries@stourporttowncouncil.gov.uk along with their name, contact number and a brief description of what they would like to talk about.

This will enable the Mayor to gather any information that might be needed ahead of the get-together.

For all the latest news log onto www.kidderminsterstandard.co.uk

Where Explorers Find Their Path

When choosing a school, many parents naturally think about curriculum, class sizes and pastoral care – but just as important is the question of opportunity.

What kind of experiences will my child encounter? How will they be encouraged to explore, test their limits and develop the skills and mindset to shape their own future?

At The Downs Malvern, we see education as a journey shaped by curiosity and challenge. Our pupils aren't just learners; they are young explorers, navigating a world of ideas and experiences that help them grow into confident, thoughtful individuals.

Our size allows us to remain personal and agile, but it's the richness of our environment that truly sets us apart. Pupils here don't simply follow a timetable; they follow a path shaped by

discovery.

From subject-specialist teaching and dedicated music and science spaces to a working smallholding, excellent sports facilities and 55 acres of open space, we offer an education built on breadth as well as depth. Whether they're performing on stage, exploring robotics in DT or experimenting in the labs, our pupils develop a love of learning that goes far beyond the classroom.

We also offer comprehensive wraparound care to support busy family life, including a wide range of engaging extracurricular activities and our much-loved Saturday morning Hobbies programme. This balance of structure and flexibility gives families confidence — and children the freedom to thrive.

There's a reason we were awarded Small Independent School of the Year 2024. We offer more than just a great education; we offer the kind of start that helps young people find their direction.



If you're considering options for your child's next step, we warmly invite you to join us on **Saturday 14th June for our Open Day.**

Andy Nuttall, Headmaster
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Library at home service offers essential lifeline

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

WORCESTERSHIRE'S Library Service at Home is providing a lifeline by bringing books directly to the doors of people who need assistance.

The service is run by passionate volunteers from Worcestershire County Council and helps those who cannot visit their local library due to health or mobility issues or caring responsibilities.

Nina, one user, said: "Having books delivered is truly a blessing. I rely on them to help manage my health."

"My vision struggles make it difficult to read, so I receive six large print books and six audiobooks each month."

"When I have an asthma attack at night, I listen to an audiobook, the soothing voice helps me relax and drift back to sleep. These books aren't just an escape – they help me cope with pain, ease my stress, and bring me comfort when I need it most."



Nina with library service at home volunteer Glenis. s

Nina also valued the personal connection the service brought with it.

"I look forward to their visit every month," she added.

"But I know there must be others, even more isolated than I am, who look forward to it even more."

"For those of us with mobility issues, it's a connection to the outside world, something that feels so precious. The service is an essential part of my pain management and relaxation routine."

"It helps me cope with my long-term condition, enabling me to do more and enjoy life again."

Hannah Perrott, Wor-

cestershire County Council's assistant director for communities, added: "It's incredibly rewarding to see how much this service means to people."

"Knowing that a simple visit and the right book can improve someone's mental and physical health is what makes this service so special."

Last year, 269 library volunteers generously gifted over 800 hours of their combined time to make more than 1,800 Library Service at Home visits and deliveries to 178 customers across the county.

The stories of Nina and countless others highlight how libraries help people build resilience, find purpose, fulfill their potential and connect with others, whether through the Mobile Library Service, volunteering, parent and baby groups, NHS partnerships or through schemes, such as the Young Poet Laureate competition.

Visit worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/worcestershire-libraries/ for more on the Library at Home service.



The Family Learning Team from Adult Learning Worcestershire – Sally Lindley, Lisa Brooker, Penny Kelly, Lisa Tye and Jessica Harris. s

Learning team on award shortlist

THE ADULT Learning Service at Worcestershire County Council has been shortlisted as a finalist in this year's national Family Learning Awards.

The accolades, organised by the lifelong learning scheme Campaign for Learning and the National Centre for Family Learning, celebrate imaginative, innovative and engaging projects across the UK which make a real difference to families and their communities.

The STEM Learning Award recognises organisations which best demonstrate imaginative, engaging and innovative approaches to deliver family learning.

Adult Learning Worcestershire's Family

Learning team have been shortlisted for the 2025 STEM Learning Award, which recognises their 'Solar System and Beyond' course.

The course, carried out in Worcestershire primary schools with parents and carers joining their child, weaves science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) into a friendly, inclusive, and fun learning experience.

Jessica Harris, Adult Learning Worcestershire's family learning manager, said everyone was so proud to be shortlisted.

"They single out those making a difference in inspiring engagement, and I am over the moon our Solar System and Beyond course has helped spark

enthusiasm for STEM subjects and careers across schools in Worcestershire."

"I am incredibly proud and humbled to see our work recognised on a national learning stage, and it would not be possible without our dedicated team - but most importantly, I want to thank our amazing learners, who are at the heart of everything we do."

The Family Learning Awards highlight organisations that have used new approaches and collaborations in the past year to create inclusive learning opportunities for families.

Family Learning Award winners will be announced on June 12.

Visit nationalcentreforfamilylearning.org/family-learning-awards for more.

Quarter Jewellery and Malvern Goldsmiths



Quarter Jewellery (The most reasonable jewellers in Worcester) has now been open for 18 years, I have always endeavoured to run the shop as jewellers were run when I started in the jewellery trade 59 years ago. Five years ago we were lucky enough to acquire the lease of 28, Belle Vue Terrace, Great Malvern a beautifully fitted Victorian pharmacy, now reborn as Malvern Goldsmiths

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**Malvern Goldsmiths, 28-30
Belle Vue Terrace, Malvern, WR14 4PZ**

**Quarter Jewellery, 27 The Shambles,
Worcester, WR1 2RA**

Youngsters plot moves at chess event

by Aine McLean

YOUNG chess players across Worcestershire can put their skills to the test at an event taking place on June 28 at the University of Worcester.

The event is being held as part of the UK School's Chess Challenge, which provides a brilliant opportunity for young players to compete against one other and hone their abilities.

It is open to all born after August 31, 2006 (under-18s) with an entry fee of £25.

The event begins at 9.30am on June 28, ending around 5pm.

The ECF (English Chess Federation) rating system and a time control of 15mins plus 10secs is being used at the event, meaning players can expand their experience and knowledge of chess.

Entrants can possibly qualify for the Gigafinals in July and September.

The organisers say it is a perfect opportunity for any young chess players who wish to demonstrate their skills and potentially win big prizes in the Terafinal.

Visit delanceyuschoolschesschallenge.com/product/2025-worcester-megafinal/ for more information and to apply.

The deadline for entries is June 26.



The new-look Worcestershire County Council met for the first time to decide a number of cabinet roles and the new chairman and vice-chairman.

Inset, county council leader, Coun Jo Monk, and deputy leader, Coun David Taylor.

Council cabinet confirmed

by Alexander Shingler

THE NEW cabinet for Worcestershire County Council, following the election, has been formally appointed.

A new Chairman and Vice Chair, who ensure meetings stay fair and neutral, were also appointed in the first full meeting since the elections on May 1.

Reform UK became the biggest party on the council.

The elected council leader, as reported last week, is Coun Joanne Monk, Reform UK representative for Redditch East.

The positions of Deputy Council Leader and Cabinet Member with Responsibility for One Worcestershire have been handed to Coun Monk's Redditch East co-representative Coun David Taylor.

The Cabinet Member with



Responsibility for Adult Social Care is Coun Susan Eacock and Coun Justin Bowen will have the responsibility for Children and Families.

The Member with Responsibility for Environment and Communities is Coun Ian Cresswell and Coun Dr Stephen Foster will be the Cabinet

Member with Responsibility for Education and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Health and Community Support is Coun Dr Satinder Bell and Coun Robert Wharton has the responsibility for Finance and Efficiency.

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Highways and Transport is Coun Karl Perks and Coun Alan Amos has landed the role of Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Business and Training.

Coun Louis Stephen and Coun Paul Bennett were appointed Chairman and Vice-Chairman as respectively.

Coun Monk said: "It is a privilege to serve the people of Worcestershire."

"They have spoken and given us a mandate to bring about the

changes they want to see. We are excited and bring a new energy to the council.

"We pledge to listen to what people are telling us and will be straight on to the issues that matter."

"Reform UK councillors stand for common sense values that make England and our country strong: family, community and country, and yes – we want to sort out the potholes too."

"To all those who feel let down by previous administrations, know that we will be protecting people and ensuring all the services that they expect and deserve, are there for them."

Visit worcestershire.gov.uk/webcasts for the full webcast of the cabinet appointment meeting and to access recordings of previous and upcoming council meetings.

The next full council meeting is scheduled for July 10.



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Pippa Sanderson from Malvern Bitters, an award-winning, small batch UK cocktail bitters company based on the Malvern Hills. s



Sarah Starkey, owner of Commonwood Farm, a sixth generation family farm in Knighton-on-Teme, Tenbury Wells, specialising in vintage perry and cider. s



There were plenty of stalls to peruse from a variety of producers at Sixways Stadium. s



Cofion Greens was among the businesses at the event – it supplies microgreens to independent restaurants. s
Pictures by Helen Yandell Photography.

Taste for success

by Aine McLean

SIXWAYS Stadium in Worcester held the first-ever Taste Worcestershire Producer and Buyer Event.

The get-together showcased more than 25 of the county's independent food and drink producers from across hospitality, retail and tourism.

The event, held on May 20, was created to strengthen local supply chains and give producers the opportunity to advertise their goods to Worcestershire.

More than 65 buyers attended, representing numerous hotels, farm shops, restaurants, supermarkets and visitor attractions.

It shone a spotlight on the incredible produce available in Worcestershire and has given a platform to many deserving producers.

The occasion was certainly a commendable celebration of quality, creativity and collaboration.

Lorna Robinson, visitor economy and destination manager at Visit Worcestershire, said: "It was absolutely fabulous to see so many meaningful connections being made – the energy in the room was fantastic."

She also added her excitement

for a further event in October – Taste Worcestershire – which will highlight the county's food and drink. The event will showcase what is on offer in the county and to motivate more people to dine out during this unmistakably quiet hospitality period.

Producers or businesses interested in getting involved can email visitworcestershire@worcestershire.gov.uk to request a business pack.

October 2025 plans and details for Taste Worcestershire will be announced soon.

Go to visitworcestershire.org – the Visit Worcestershire website – for the latest updates.

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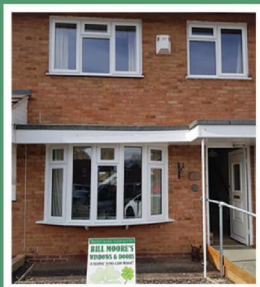


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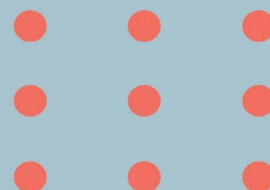
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Business help proves Essential to Karen

A REDDITCH-BASED entrepreneur has transformed almost two decades of bid management and writing experience into a thriving consultancy, thanks to bespoke business support provided by Enterprising Worcestershire.

Bid Essentials was launched in January 2023 by Karen Nolan following her departure from her long-standing corporate career in the construction sector.

The help has enabled her to successfully transition into a freelancer to offering stra-

by Aine McLean

tegic support to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

When Karen first contacted Worcestershire Growth Hub, she was seeking advice on a digital platform idea.

This led to her receiving tailored coaching, marketing support and a place on Betaden Incubate (the county's technology accelerator), giving her the clarity to begin developing her new platform.

Pursuing long-term success for growing businesses across Worcestershire,

the programme provides up to 10 hours of fully-funded, one-to-one support with a dedicated business coach.

Karen credits a great amount of her success to the support she received from the Worcestershire Growth Hub.

She said: "One conversation with the Growth Hub really changed everything."

Gary Woodman, assistant director for economy at Worcestershire County Council, added: "Karen's story is a great example of how Worcestershire's business support network helps

people turn expertise into opportunity."

Ms Nolan's new business model now focuses on one-to-one coaching, bid training and tender readiness assessments to help SMEs build the skills and confidence to win public sector contracts.

And since finding success, she has become a SkillsBoost provider and has been nominated for a Chamber of Commerce award in June 2023.

Worcestershire County Council offers a wide range of support to any Worcestershire business owner looking to grow, diversify or innovate



Karen Nolan, from Bid Essentials, has praised the Worcestershire Growth Hub for the help it offered.

through providing expert advice, funding access and innovation programmes.

Business owners can visit:

worcestershiregrowthhub.co.uk for more on what the Growth Hub can do for their companies.



A Worcester Growth Hub employee offering business support during a recent event.

Free Growth Hub sessions will boost county businesses

THE WORCESTERSHIRE Growth Hub has launched a series of free HR workshops for local employers.

The Growth Hub is the county council's business support service, offering advice, resources and connections to help local firms thrive.

The new workshop sessions, in partnership with Herefordshire and Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce, are open to all county businesses and aim to address key challenges around recruit-

ment, retention, and workforce development.

The sessions have been shaped by feedback from Worcestershire businesses, with each of the seven workshops offering practical advice on tailored topics including action planning, inclusive practices and closing skills gaps. Sessions, starting in June, are designed to be practical, localised, and easy to implement, and will also provide networking opportunities with other Worcestershire employers.

Judy Gibbs, Worcestershire County Council's head of skills and employability, said businesses would have the opportunity to access free advice and support in the areas they had told the authority they needed.

"Anyone attending should leave with practical guidance they can apply immediately in their own workplace, and the sessions will greatly aid them in terms of future workforce planning."

"It's important to us businesses which call Worcestershire 'home' have the support they need to continue growing and succeeding, especially in a changing business landscape, which is why services like Worcestershire Growth Hub are essential."

Free sessions begin on Thursday, June 5, but those interested need to visit eventbrite.com/cc/4240723 as places need to be booked in advance.

Email info@worcestershiregrowthhub.co.uk or call 01905 677888 for more on Worcestershire Growth Hub.



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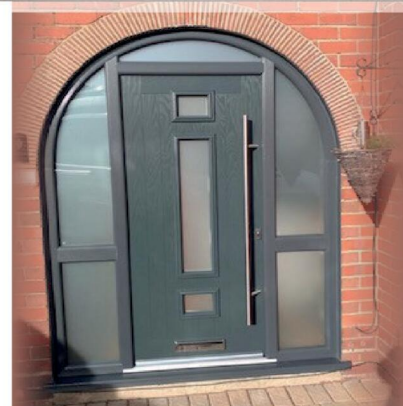
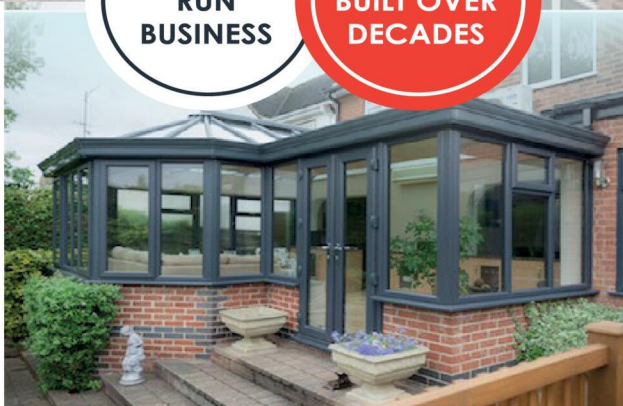


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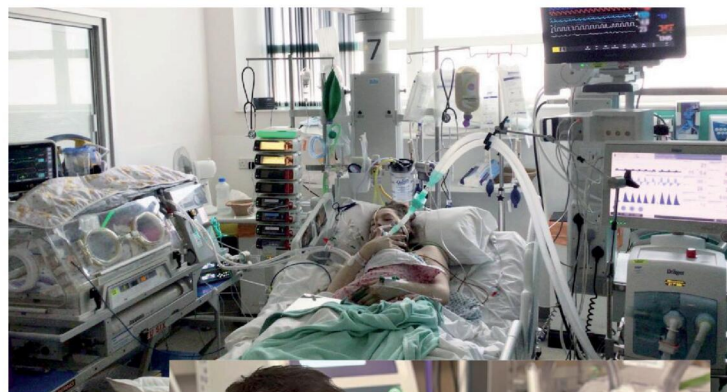
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ABOVE: Helen and Maeve both on ventilation in the Intensive Care Unit.

RIGHT: Helen holding Maeve with her son Lorcan and husband Justin.



Mum and baby enjoy a very special moment

A MOTHER and her newborn baby who both needed life support at the same time were able to have their first physical contact, thanks to caring staff at Worcestershire Royal Hospital.

This extremely rare event where both mother, Helen and her newborn daughter, Maeve needed the help of ventilators to breathe, led to a touching moment where clinical staff brought them together for Helen to have her first skin-to-skin contact with her newborn daughter despite both still requiring intensive care.

Helen has a rare condition called Myasthenia Gravis which can cause muscle weakness and shortness of breath.

In this case some of Helen's antibodies appear to have crossed to Maeve who had to be admitted to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit at Worcestershire Royal Hospital very shortly after birth with weakness and breathing difficulties.

At first Maeve required

some basic breathing support, but her condition worsened and she needed intubation and ventilation - procedures where a tube is inserted to open the airway and then a machine is used to help the patient breathe.

Shortly after delivering Maeve, Helen's condition also deteriorated and doctors had to admit her to the Intensive Care Unit for intubation and ventilation to help her breathe as well. Due to her condition, Helen couldn't visit Maeve in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and so hadn't been able to hold her newborn daughter.

As Helen and Maeve both remained stable on their ventilators, the neonatal team at Worcestershire Royal Hospital worked out a plan to transport Maeve using a Neonatal Transport Incubator with a ventilator to the adult Intensive Care Unit to be by her mother's side.

When Maeve arrived in the unit, staff were able to place her on her mother's chest for their first skin-to-skin contact, with husband and father Justin

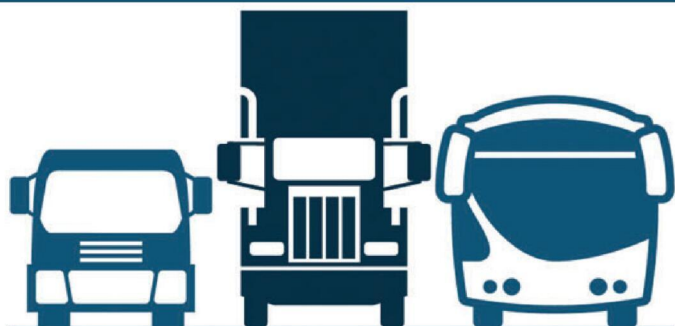
watching on alongside Helen's parents. A couple of days later, thanks to great teamwork and flexibility from both departments, staff were also able to bring Helen to visit Maeve in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit while both were still on ventilators.

In between this time, staff took photos of Maeve and placed them around Helen's bed for her to see and even used iPads to give Helen a FaceTime video call with her newborn baby.

Justin said: "From day one, the doctors, nurses, and entire team made us feel supported and cared for - not just Maeve, but us as her parents too."

"Whether it was explaining every little detail or just offering a reassuring smile when we needed it most, they turned a scary time into something filled with compassion and strength. We'll always be grateful."

Helen has now been discharged as medically fit and is doing well. She is able to visit Maeve in the Neonatal Unit while Maeve continues to be monitored.



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A week full of laughter in store at Rik Mayall Comedy Festival

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

THE MUCH-anticipated inaugural Rik Mayall Comedy Festival gets under way in Droitwich with an official opening at 10.30am in Victoria Square tomorrow (Saturday, May 31).

Among those attending will be comedian and musical satirist Mitch Benn, cricketing legend and proud 'honorary citizen of Droitwich' Ashley Giles who will give the opening speech and committee members, including the Festival Directors and Coun Richard Morris.

Others present will include ITV Central News presenter, and Droitwich resident, Steve Clamp who will be the host for the day, the Mayor of Droitwich Spa, Town Crier, Edgar Harwood, Chair of Norbury Theatre, Anne Lane, and more.

During the event, there will be comedy performances, live music, entertainers, children's shows, street performers, community volunteers and organisers in full festival gear, market stalls and more.

Full of laughter

The biggest celebration of comedy and community ever held in Droitwich will be an eight-day

bonanza, full of laughter, chaos and community spirit.

The week-long festival promises to be an event by the community for the community with more than 200 events across 30 venues in Droitwich from tomorrow until next Saturday, June 7.

From pubs and salons to shopping centres and unexpected corners of the town, more than half the shows are free or 'pay what you want', making it one of the most accessible festivals of its kind.

It is the only festival in the UK to honour the comedic legacy Rik Mayall. With the blessing of Rik's family, a dedicated all-volunteer team worked tirelessly with local businesses, and creative partners for 14 months to create this unique event of comedy, creativity and community pride.

Comedian and musical satirist Mitch Benn, whose work is significantly influenced by Rik Mayall's fearless comedic style, said: "In my teenage years I was obsessed with the Young Ones and the Comic Strip crew.

"There couldn't be a more fitting tribute to Rik than this joyous festival packed with big names and new talent.

"He'd have loved it – and I'm thrilled to be part of it."

Mitch Benn will be performing at the festival's launch event on Saturday morning, before returning to the stage that evening at the



Droitwich Working Men's Club with his solo show *Wild Eyed Loner at the Gates of Oblivion* – a deeply personal and hilarious exploration of how Rik, Ade Edmondson, and their contemporaries shaped his comedic worldview.

Festival director Stuart Panrucker said: "We're proud to be launching the biggest cultural event the town has seen in decades.

"Droitwich Spa is about to take centre stage and we want everyone to be part of it."

New short film

A new short film exploring the legacy of Rik Mayall in his former hometown of Droitwich Spa will be premiered at The Old Cock Inn.

"Rik Mayall, he was one of ours you know!", will be screened free of charge at the pub tomorrow (Saturday) – the opening day of the inaugural Rik Mayall Comedy Festival.

Opposite the pub on Friar Street is The Norbury Theatre, hosting many of the showcase festival events and

the theatre where Rik's family were heavily involved for many years. Rik first trod the boards at The Norbury and enjoyed a pint at The Old Cock Inn.

The new film features thoughts and images of local people, including old school friends and those who, although never met him, were touched or inspired by his work. It was put together by the music and storytelling collective Harp and a Monkey in collaboration with Droitwich Arts Network and local arts provider Live and Local.

Advance tickets do not need booking for the premieres, which run at 1.30pm and 5.30pm at The Old Cock.

Prior to the showings of the ten-minute long film 'Rik Mayall, he was one of ours you know!', there will be screenings at 1pm and 5pm of another short film, 'This Side of the Afterlife', narrated by Rik.

Entry is FREE for all of the screenings.

Following the premiere, the Droitwich-based film will be shown on a loop in the window of the town's library and be available on social media platforms and YouTube.

Visit: rikmayallcomedyfestival.com for more information and tickets.

The Rik Mayall Comedy Festival will officially open tomorrow.
Picture by Marcus Mingsins
2325008MMR

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Time is running out for cut-price entry to event

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

RUNNERS thinking of entering the Wythall and Hollywood Fun Run have just days left to get a 10 per cent discount on the entry fee.

The deadline for claiming the discount for the 5K or 10K race is on Monday, June 2.

All people have to do is log onto the website and use the code 'BANKHOLIDAY10' for the 10 per cent.

The fun run takes place on Sunday June 22 and runners of all ages and abilities are welcome to take part – from seasoned runners to Couch to 5K graduates and those wanting to simply soak up the atmosphere.

The event starts at 10am from Wythall Park, offering a friendly, inclusive atmosphere and a flat course ideal for both experienced runners and first-timers.

Whether aiming for a personal best or just looking



Will you be lining up in this year's Wythall and Hollywood Fun Run? s

for a fun, the fun run offers a healthy way to spend a Sunday.

The event is the perfect opportunity to get involved in a great community occasion. Lisa McNally, Director of Public Health for Worcestershire, said: "This is going to be a brilliant event in June – definitely one to add to your running calendar or your social calendar."

"It's more than just a race – it's a fun day out for all the family. We're proud to support events like this which bring people together and inspire healthier lifestyles across Worcestershire."

The run is billed as 'one of the Midlands' friendliest running events' and promotes fitness, fun and community spirit.

The Wythall and Hollywood Fun Run is proudly supported by Worcestershire County Council's Public Health Team, as part of its commitment to promoting health, wellbeing and community togetherness. And the Standard is the official media partner.

Visit the website at wythallhollywoodfunrun.org.uk to book places, for more information and to watch highlights from last year's event.



Iain Gillett, advanced public health practitioner at Worcestershire County Council, Gary Wickett, personal trainer at David Lloyd Clubs, Alisha Byrne, general manager at David Lloyd Clubs and Steve Cram. s

David Lloyd backing fun run

THE DAVID Lloyd Clubs in Solihull Cranmore and Bromsgrove have been named as the official sponsor for this year's Wythall and Hollywood Fun Run on June 22.

The clubs, renowned for their premium health and wellness fitness offerings, are dedicated to promoting positive physical and mental wellbeing and supporting local communities.

Alisha Byrne, general manager at David Lloyd Clubs, said the clubs were proud to be supporting the event, adding it fitted in well with the company's ethos of the power of community and the importance of staying active.

"This event is designed

to be accessible to everyone, regardless of age or fitness level.

"It's a fantastic opportunity for families and individuals to come together, enjoy a day of fitness, and support a truly worthy cause like Acorns Children's Hospice."

"We look forward to seeing everyone at the starting line and cheering on all the participants."

In the lead-up to the event, both David Lloyd Clubs in Solihull Cranmore and Bromsgrove have been offering bespoke running-focused training sessions within its clubs to help members of all fitness levels kick-start their running journey and prepare

with confidence.

On race day, their expert personal trainers will be leading the official warm-up to get everyone moving and motivated and also hosting a dedicated physio and recovery zone in the event village.

Participants will have the chance to win fantastic prizes, including free David Lloyd Club memberships for one, two or three months.

Olympic medalist, Steve Cram, who is endorsing the Fun Run, met up with the David Lloyd Clubs sponsors recently to discuss the upcoming event.

Visit this story on our website to watch the video of Steve meeting the David Lloyd staff.



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Departing Sun 10 Aug '25

The Whitby Regatta is recognised as one of the oldest maritime festivals on the northeast coast of England. Enjoy yacht racing, rowing races and everything related to sailing on this two-day adventure which also includes a visit to York!

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- ✓ Return coach travel **from Kidderminster, Stourport**
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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.

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

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|--|----|
| 1 | 2 | | 3 | | 4 | | 5 | | 6 | | 7 |
| | | | 8 | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | | | | | | 10 | | 11 |
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| 12 | | | 13 | | | | 14 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 | | | | | 16 | | 17 | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | | | | | 19 | | | | 20 | | |
| | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 21 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | 22 | | |

ACROSS

1. Blackleg (4)
8. Power of command (10)
9. Contour line of equal temperature (8)
10. Uniform (4)
12. Climb (6)
14. To moderate (6)
15. Let (6)
17. Strangeness (6)
18. Sore on the eyelid (4)
19. Middling (8)
21. Merge (10)
22. Require (4)

DOWN

2. Compatible (10)
3. Blemish (4)
4. Obvious (6)
5. Allow (6)
6. Respected (8)
7. Twirl (4)
11. Voters (10)
13. Coming from the east (8)
16. Lower (6)
17. Severe trial (6)
18. Break suddenly (4)
20. Begin (4)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

- Precious metal
- Welsh town
- Blend
- Alcoholic drink
- Not alive

GOOD

DEED

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.

- 845215 gives a road;
- 9825 gives a second road;
- 634567 gives waterways.

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

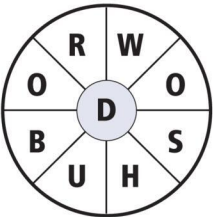
CODEWORD

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

WORDWHEEL

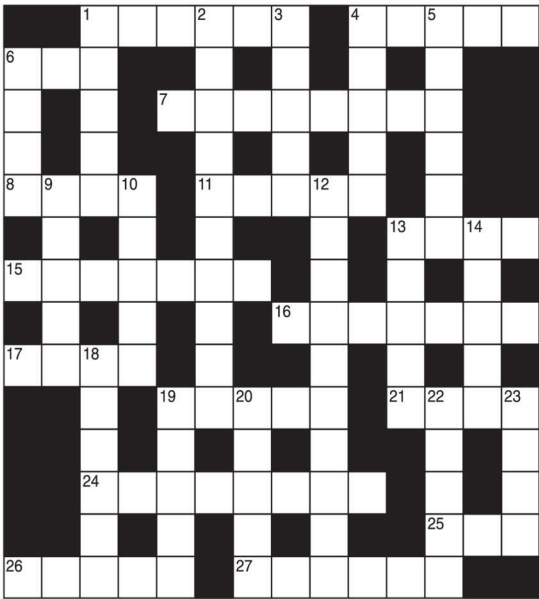
You have 10 mins to find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the hub letter and at least 3 others. Letters may be used only once. You cannot use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one 9-letter word to be found.



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

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 Beetle which feeds on vegetable matter (6)
- 4 & 4 Down Writer famous for Ulysses (5,5)
- 6 Action on Smoking and Health, in short (3)
- 7 Verse drama by Ibsen (4,4)
- 8 The NT book following Gospels (4)
- 11 Olivia's clown in Twelfth Night (5)
- 13 Refuse of grain (4)
- 15 Town of Kansas, on the Smoky Hill river (7)
- 16 Saint whose "day" is July 15th (7)
- 17 One of the seven deadly sins (4)
- 19 Superior officer of a religious house (5)
- 21 Hard fat used in cooking (4)
- 24 Edmund ---, son of Ethelred the Unready (8)
- 25 & 26 Across Well-known gambling city (3,5)
- 26 See 25 Across
- 27 Fly carrying disease to men and animals (6)



- DOWN**
- 1 Card game (5)
- 2 A camera attachment (10)
- 3 Seaside resort and port in Strathclyde, Scotland (5)
- 4 See 4 Across
- 5 A shooting star (6)
- 6 Extent of a surface (4)
- 9 See 22 Down
- 10 Two-wheeled carriage used in trotting races (5)
- 12 Town in Wilts, administrative HQ of the county (10)
- 13 Surname of the author of The Purple Plain (5)
- 14 Character in a story by Lewis Carroll (5)
- 18 A Danish or Norwegian sea pirate (6)
- 19 In short, the concerts founded by Sir Henry Wood (5)
- 20 Extra page(s) inserted in a book (5)
- 22, 23 Down & 9 Down Novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe (5,4,5)
- 23 See 22 Down

SOLUTIONS

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Weevil; 4 James; 6 ASH; 7 Peer Gynt; 8 Acts; 11 Feste; 13 Bran; 15 Abilene; 16 Swithin; 17 Envy; 19 Prior; 21 Suet; 24 Ironside; 25 Las; 26 Vegas; 27 Tsetse.
DOWN: 1 Whist; 2 Viewfinder; 3 Largs; 4 Joyce; 5 Meteor; 6 Area; 9 Cabin; 10 Sulky; 12 Trowbridge; 13 Bates; 14 Alice; 18 Viking; 19 Proms; 20 Inset; 22 Uncle; 23 Tom's.

Wordwheel Pathfinder

BRUSHWOOD: Gary Lineker, Martin, Thomas Muller, Ronaldo, Celia Sasic, Eusebio, Salvatore Schillaci, Hristo Stochkov, Birgit Prinz, Davor Suker, Sun Wen, James Rodriguez, Sissi, Garrincha, Paolo Rossi, Michelle Akers, Miroslav Klose, Arn-Kristin Aarones, Oleg Salenko, Homare Sawa, Mario Kempes.

Niner

UNIVERSAL

Ladder

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

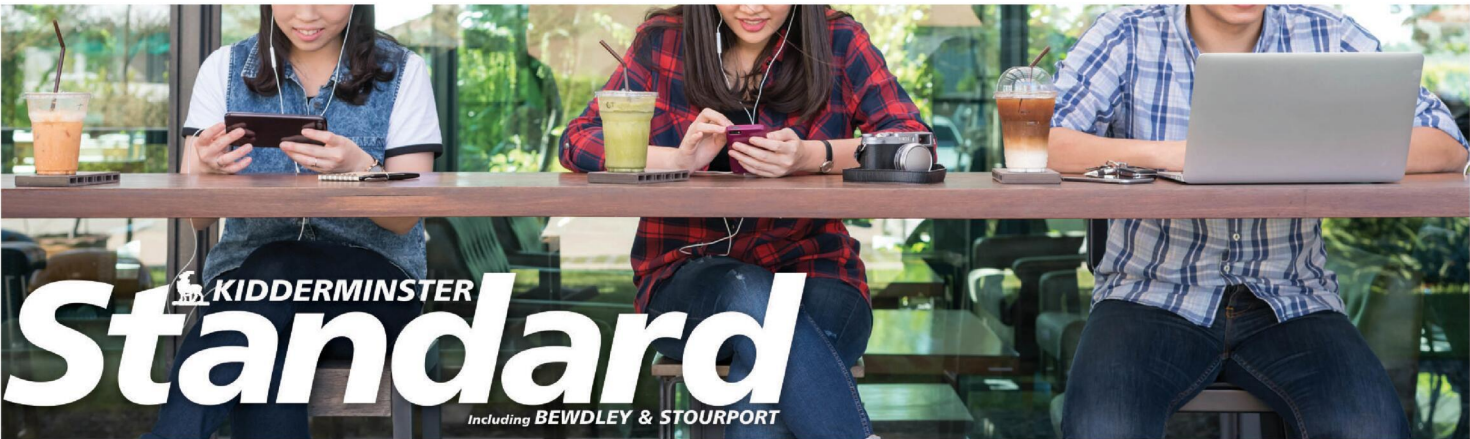
Codeword

Hard

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

Easy

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



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MISCELLANEOUS

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3-BIKE rear carrier rack (Auto Care) Still in wrapper, £20. Phone after 6pm 0121 742-4250

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MISCELLANEOUS

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Renault goes green with E-Tech

THE Renault 4 E-Tech electric will be priced from £26,995 OTR when order books open in July.

Available in three trim levels from launch – evolution, techno, and iconic – the Renault 4 E-Tech electric continues the original Renault 4's sense of go-anywhere practicality, with its increased ground clearance and suspension optimised for a smoother, more comfortable ride.

In the first of many nods to the original Renault 4's design, the front grille is made from a single 1.45m-long piece and illuminated with a continuous surround (available from techno trim). Likewise, the original's iconic three-part rear lights are given a new lease of life, with modern lines and a distinctive signature.

Other retro-inspired touches include the bonnet lines that continue to the bottom of the grille, the rear quarter window, the three lines sculpted into the doors that bring to mind the plastic protectors of the original, and the distinctive

forms in the roof, now adorned with roof bars.

Larger than the Renault 5, the Renault 4 E-Tech electric offers impressive interior space thanks to its 2.62m wheelbase. At 4.14m in length, rear seat occupants benefit from 16.4cm of knee room, while headroom of 85.3cm is particularly generous for a B-segment vehicle.

Exceptional boot space of 420 litres (revealed by a hands-free power tailgate on iconic models) is made easily accessible by the wide, high opening and low load sill. Various touches such as the four lashing hooks, two bag hooks, rubber bands to hold objects in place, and clever storage compartments – including a 55-litre underfloor area perfect for the charging cable – make everyday life a breeze for busy families. With the rear seat folded down, this versatile space grows to 1,405 litres.

Renault's award-winning OpenR Link system is standard across the range, with wireless Android Auto and Apple CarPlay connectivity,

accessed via a 10.1-inch central touchscreen. Techno and iconic models go further with Google services built-in, including Google Maps with charging-optimised route planning and a variety of apps from the Google Play store. On these models, the central screen is joined by a 10-inch digital driver information display.

The 52 kWh battery powers a 110 kW (150 hp, 245 Nm) electric motor that accelerates the Renault 4 E-Tech electric from 0-62mph in 8.2 seconds, with a driving range of up to 247 miles.

The new One Pedal function (available from techno) optimises regenerative braking, decelerating smoothly when the driver releases the accelerator pedal and coming to a stop without the driver having to apply the brake. Equipped with a 100 kW DC charger, the battery can be replenished from 15 to 80 per cent in 30 minutes, or an 11 kW AC 0-100 per cent charge in four hours 51 minutes.

Up to 26 advanced driver assist-


ance systems are available, including rear occupant safe exit alert, active driver assist combining adaptive cruise control with Stop & Go and lane centring assist, as well as blind spot monitoring and hands-free parking. Renault 4 E-Tech electric includes My Safety Shield, which allows drivers to activate their preferred settings at the touch of a button.

Six body colours are available from launch, including an exclusive new shade – Hauts-de-France Green – that pays tribute to the Île-de-France Blue of the 1960s. It joins Glacier White, Urban Grey, Diamond Black, Carmin Red, and Cumulus Blue, while the option of a contrasting Diamond Black roof – with or without a matching Diamond Black bonnet – is available on techno and iconic models. All models in the range wear 18-inch diamond cut alloy wheels as standard.

Already the recipient of the highly coveted Electric Car of the Year award in the TopGear.com Electric

Car Awards 2025, the Renault 4 E-Tech electric will be available to order from July 1 for R-Pass customers with prices starting from £26,995 OTR.

Visit <https://www.renault.co.uk/electric-vehicles/r4-e-tech-electric.html> for more information.



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Harriers Women seal title and promotion with Knowle victory

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: KIDDERMINSTER Harriers Women clinched the league title and promotion with a 3-0 victory against Knowle Ladies in their final game of the season.

After Ellie McGovern put Harriers ahead, substitute Mia Badland struck twice to seal the points and the title at Stourport High School.

The victory saw Kidderminster leapfrog Lye Town at the top of the West Midlands Regional Women's League Premier Division table.

And the win means Harriers can celebrate a league and cup double after lifting the WFA Sunday Cup last month.

Kidderminster will play in the Women's National League at Step Four next season.

Harriers saw their original game against Knowle postponed last weekend with the visitors unable to field a side.

Despite forfeiting the fixture, the league confirmed the game would take place the following midweek instead.

Kidderminster spurned a golden chance to take the lead on 13 minutes as Amber Lawrence saw her penalty saved by the foot of the Knowle goalkeeper.

And Lawrence hit the crossbar later in the half as Harriers pushed for the opening goal.

The home side went close again on



the half-hour mark as Millie Rogers shot inches past the post on the half-volley from inside the box.

However, Harriers eventually broke the deadlock on the stroke of half time when McGovern fired a trademark effort into the net from outside the penalty area.

Kidderminster introduced Badland from the bench on the hour mark.

And Badland took just five minutes to make an impact when she tapped home Sophie Levick's free-kick.

Badland doubled her tally for the

game eight minutes from time as she powered home following a driving run from Lizzie Whittick.

Harriers comfortably saw out the remaining minutes to confirm promotion and the title with victory against the league's bottom club.

Kidderminster have since confirmed the retirement of vice-captain Lili-Beth Bown and Alex Nicklin.

Kidderminster Harriers Women celebrate their success. Picture courtesy of clivejonespr.com

Richards to leave club at end of deal

KIDDERMINSTER Harriers have confirmed defender Caleb Richards will leave the club at the end of his contract.

The club had been locked in negotiations with the full-back but the 26-year-old has now decided to depart Aggborough.

Richards made more than 200 appearances for Kidderminster since his arrival in 2020.

The club recently revealed their retained and released list of players following the conclusion of the 2024/25 season.

Some 11 players will remain with the club next season including experienced forward pair Ashley Hemmings and Amari Morgan-Smith.

Goalkeepers Christian Dibble, Tom Palmer and Josh Bishop are also staying at Aggborough along with defenders Alex Penny, Reece Devine and Joe Foulkes.

And experienced midfielder David Davis along with youngsters Seb Thompson and Samson Hewett also

remain contracted to the club for the 2025/26 season.

The club are currently negotiating with four players regarding new contracts.

Harriers are attempting to tie down Kyle Morrison, Reiss McNally, Kam Kandola and Zak Brown to new deals.

All four players are out of contract and will leave the club if they fail to agree fresh terms.

Kidderminster's director of football, Dean Holdsworth, is overseeing contract negotiations.

The club have also invited Luke Summerfield back for pre-season.

Defenders Paul Downing and Christian Oxlade-Chamberlain, veteran forward Tope Obadeyi and youngsters Kobe Hall and Noah Rubio will all leave the club.

Loan players David Worrall, Maz Kouhyar, Ben Beresford, Ryley Reynolds, Charlie Lutz and Jim Kellermann have returned to their parent clubs.

New boss for Swifts

STOURPORT Swifts have appointed Craig Gregg as the club's new manager ahead of the start of the 2025/26 season.

Gregg replaces Benjevons as Stourport boss after the latter resigned as Swifts manager following the conclusion of the current campaign.

He previously managed AFC Wulfrunians and has vast experience as a player at Step Five and above.

Coach James Hill and goalkeeping coach Dave Haywood will join Gregg in the dugout at Walshes Meadow.

Stourport finished 10th in the MFL Premier last term.

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