

Race against time to save Maypole Piece

by **Tristan Harris**
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A RALLYING call has been issued by a community group set up to safeguard the long-term future of much-loved land in Bewdley.

Maypole Piece in Wribbenhall is an historic green space which has been at the centre of the community for generations but is now up for sale and there are fears it could be developed for housing.

People of all ages have fond memories of the area - from the bonfire to celebrate the end of the Second World War and Major Webb riding his horse there on a Sunday to fetes and football matches on the hill. It also provides habitats for a wealth of local wildlife.

The campaign

The Friends of the Maypole group wants to buy the land and place it in public trust ownership so it can be enjoyed by generations of people in Wribbenhall, Bewdley and the wider area for many years to come.

But, the deadline for bids on Monday, June 9, means the group is in a race against time to raise the funds needed for the purchase.

The group wants to raise as much as possible before then so it can show on Tuesday its intention to acquire the land.

It estimates it would need between £175,000 and £225,000 to show the group as a serious bidder.

The campaign has got off to a successful start with a website and



Facebook page being set up and other local community groups and residents flocking to getting involved.

The group has delivered leaflets in the local area and a drop-in session for the less tech-savvy and those with no Internet access is being held

between 3pm and 5pm tomorrow (Saturday, June 7) at Wribbenhall Parish Rooms. There, people can find out more, speak to the group and pledge what they can.

Anyone unable to make it to the venue can call the Wagon and Horses

on 01299 403170 and a lift there and back can be arranged during the event.

As well as donations, Friends of the Maypole need help in other ways - from people experienced in land purchasing to the community spread-

ing word of the campaign in a bid to get as many people as possible to get involved and support the cause.

Natural beauty

Committee member Denise Eaton was born in Springhill Rise and is 'Bewdley through and through'.

She said: "We need to hold onto Maypole Piece - it's so calm and peaceful and arguably the best natural area in Bewdley."

"People go there to relax from the stresses and strains of everyday life and the views are incredible."

"From up there you can see right across Bewdley, Stourport, Kidderminster and Trimmerley, along with the Safari Park."

"In the last 12 months there have been three estates either built or being constructed and they all look up to Maypole Piece."

"Building on there will completely destroy the skyline for thousands of residents and we will lose this much-loved asset."

She added it was used by walkers, dog walkers and, as it is near two schools, would be ideal for forest schools for the children.

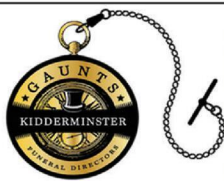
"Whatever you can do to help us protect Maypole Piece will be welcome - please come and join us."

Visit: friendsofthemaypole.co.uk or search for 'Friends of the Maypole' at facebook.com for more information and the latest updates.

The group is hoping to acquire Maypole Piece so it can be enjoyed by generations to come. Pictures courtesy of Friends of Maypole Piece. s

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Appeal for volunteers to help district's adults learn to read

by **Tristan Harris**
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A GROUP which helps adults across Wyre Forest and Bridgnorth who struggle with reading is looking for volunteers to join its team.

Read Easy Wyre Forest and Bridgnorth has put out an appeal for more people to help with its quest.

It coincides with National Volunteers Week, which began on Monday and runs until Sunday (June 2 to 8).

Statistics show around seven per cent of adults living in the UK can barely read at all and more struggle with reading which has a significant impact on their lives.

Read Easy Wyre Forest and Bridgnorth is in its eighth year of operation and is affiliated to Read Easy UK.

The group's aim is to recruit and train reading coaches who are then paired up with adults who want to learn to read.

The organisation provides free, confidential, one-to-one reading

sessions which really do change the lives of new readers.

The current team leader/chairman is due to step down shortly after seven years in the role.

The Team Leader is responsible for the proper and effective direction of the group, which currently consists of 18 reading coaches, three scheme coordinators and eight management team members. Everyone involved volunteers.

A Read Easy Wyre Forest and Bridgnorth spokesperson said: "We are looking for people who have energy, enthusiasm and a passion for literacy and be able to give approximately four to eight hours-a-week to the role. Sometimes it's a bit less, sometimes a bit more."

"Some work will be desk-based at home, but there will also be team meetings to chair and sometimes other meetings to attend."

"On that basis, it would make sense to live in or within 10 miles or so of our main area of benefit, the Wyre Forest District Council area."

Management roles

The group is also looking to recruit two people to join the man-



agement team.

The first role is a 'Volunteer Recruiter' who will oversee the volunteer recruitment processes.

And the second is a 'Venues Organiser' - they will ensure the group has the right venues available for reading coaches and new readers to use.

Full role descriptions are available and anyone interested can have an informal chat about any of the roles.

Call current team leader, Steve, on 07867 745621 or email: wfleader@readeasy.org.uk for more information.

Visit: readeasy.org.uk for more information about Read Easy.

Could you help adults in Wyre Forest and Bridgnorth learn to read? s

Do you have a story? Get in touch by emailing editor@kidderminsterstandard.co.uk

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Shout-outs and how you could help

THIS WEEK is National Volunteers Week - it began on Monday and runs until Sunday (June 2 to 8).

There are plenty of opportunities for volunteers across Kidderminster, Stourport and Bewdley.

Here are some 'shout-outs' to volunteers doing great things in the Wyre Forest and some organisations which could do with your help.

Severn Valley Railway

The SVR says it would not be able to successfully do what it does without its volunteers.

It added: "Thank you to each and every one of you."

Anyone wanting to volunteer on the railway should visit: svr-vlo.org.uk for more.

Bewdley Museum

The museum's volunteers dedicated over 1,200 hours of time to the venue in 2024.

A spokesperson said: "You may see volunteers when you come to visit - be it in the air raid shelter, making clay pipes, supporting with children's activities, gardening or stewarding events."

"But not all of our volunteering is front of house - such as archiving photos linked to our Floods Project."

"Volunteer support such as this enables us to achieve more than we could alone."

"Thank you to all our volunteers."

Anyone wanting to volunteer at Bewdley Museum can email volunteer co-ordinator Anna Pavard at: anna.pavard@wyreforestdc.gov.uk for more information.

KEMP Hospice

The charity thanked its volunteers for their work.

Caroline Beech, KEMP Hospice's chief executive, said: "Volunteering with KEMP

is a truly meaningful way to support your local hospice."

"The care we provide to patients and families across our community is only possible because of the incredible individuals who give their time so generously."

"Their compassion, commitment and selfless support ensure we can be there when it matters most."

Anyone interested in volunteering at the KEMP Hospice should email: volunteering@kemphospice.org.uk for more information.

Age UK BRWF

Volunteers also make a vital contribution to the lives of older people in the area via the hours they contribute to Age UK Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest.

Age UK BRWF CEO, Amanda Allen, said: "Our volunteers are the foundation which allows us to build and grow as a charity and to continue supporting our local community."

"I am continually inspired by all those that volunteer - I understand that time is precious and to choose to give some of those treasured hours to help charities like ourselves/ your community is something very special indeed - I celebrate you all."

The charity added it particularly needed volunteer Befrienders in Wyre Forest and volunteers for its Walter Nash Road and Lickhill Shops.

Volunteer Befrienders talk, listen and share information with older people who feel they can trust and rely upon them. As part of the free service, Befrienders regularly visit an older person in their home or call them for a chat, providing a listening ear and links to other local support and services.

Anyone interested should email: enquiries@ageuknorthworcesters.org.uk or visit: ageuk.org.uk/northworcesters/get-involved/volunteer/ for more information.

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



Drivers warned after spate of car thefts in the past few days

POLICE in Kidderminster, Blakedown and Cookley are warning motorists to be on their guard after a number of vehicle thefts in the areas in the past few days.

Around midnight on Monday, a blue Ford Ranger Raptor was stolen from Habberley Lane, Kidderminster.

The suspects were seen arriving and leaving the area in an Audi.

Between 11pm on Sunday and 8am on Monday, a black Nissan Juke was stolen from Borington Road in Kidderminster.

A white Smart Car convertible with a red roof - a very distinctive vehicle - was taken from Lionfields Road in Cookley between 4pm on Monday and 6.30am on Tuesday.

And, in another incident, Kidderminster Police Safer Neighbourhood Team received

reports of a person acting suspiciously in Forge Lane, Blakedown.

A blue Ford Kuga with two men in the car was seen approaching the property and a person had a device in their hand, holding it up towards the property.

A resident was concerned the people in the car may have been looking to target keyless vehicles by attempting to capture keyless car fob signals.

Following the incidents, officers have urged people to remain vigilant - ensuring cars are always locked when being left unattended for any amount of time.

It is also suggested drivers use steering locks and, if they have keyless entry cars, keep the fobs in a Faraday pouch or metal tin so the signal cannot be captured by opportunist thieves.

Officers from Kidderminster

Police Safer Neighbourhood Team have also urged witnesses or anyone with information or doorbell footage to call them on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Residents are also asked to report any suspicious behaviour in their area by calling 101 or 999 if a crime is in progress.

'You shall go to the ball' - Age UK helps prom-goers



Suits suitable for school and college proms are also available. s

STUDENTS looking for prom outfits which 'don't cost the Earth' in more ways than one can pick up their attire at a Kidderminster charity shop.

The Age UK Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest (BRWF) store in Walter Nash Road has a number of dresses in a range of sizes.

Some are new with tags while others are pre-loved with names including Coast, Lipsy, and Little Mistress, Boutique. Anyone who buys their outfit from the store will be helping Age UK BRWF provide its range of services to older people living in north Worcestershire.

As well as helping prom-goers to look amazing, the purchase will be affordable and sustainable.

Visit: ageuk.org.uk/brwf/shops for more information.



Age UK BRWF's Kidderminster shop manager Lisa Howard with one of the many prom dresses people can buy in-store. s

News in brief

AN APPEAL has been launched by Stourport Police for the public's help on tracking down illegal riders of electric/scrambler bikes which have been blighting the town.

Stourport Police Safer Neighbourhood Team have received numerous reports of anti-social riding and those on the bikes have no helmets or registration plates which means they are breaking the law.

The flowerbeds at Lickhill Memorial Park were destroyed by an unknown person riding illegal electric bikes over them on Saturday (May 31).

FIREFIGHTERS put out two blazes in the open in Kidderminster, just hours apart.

In the first at 12.14pm on Monday, a crew from Wyre Forest Fire Station were called to an area off Jubilee Drive.

The fire involved 10m of trees and undergrowth. It was extinguished using a water jets before a thermal imaging camera was used to check for any hot spots and ensure the fire did not reignite.

There were no casualties and no other emergency services were required. The

And this afternoon, attendants were there repairing the damage and replacing the flowers.

They were approached by a youth on an electric bike who threatened to return later and cause further damage.

A spokesperson said: "We are reaching out to members of the public for help on tracing where these bikes are being kept and who is riding them."

People can report incidents to 101 or call 999 if a crime is in progress.

incident was dealt with by 12.44pm.

And a crew from Wyre Forest Fire Station was called around 6pm, also on Monday, to a blaze at the recreation ground in Heronswood Park.

The small fire involved a quantity of wood, which was extinguished using backpacks and buckets of water.

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

The incident was dealt with at 6.45pm.

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30 YEARS SERVING THE WYRE FOREST



Present year two pupils at Wilden All Saints CE Primary School enjoying reading books from the school library. s



Keen walker Brenda Jones in later life. s



Children at the school, including Brenda, during a royal visit in the area. s

Inspiring school remembered in will

A STOURPORT school which inspired a pupil to enjoy a lifelong love of books has received a heart-felt £1,000 bequest in her will.

Brenda Jones, who died aged 78, still remembered Wilden All Saints CE Primary School, which she attended in the 1950s. In her will, she detailed how 'fortunate' she was to attend a 'wonderful' school.

She added: "The school inspired my lifelong love of books and reading and in recognition of that, I would like a gift to be made to the school to purchase books for the present pupils to read and enjoy."

by **Tristan Harris**
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Her daughter, Lisa Jones, said the years at Wilden had been a 'transformational experience' for her mum, who lived in the village until moving to Lancaster with her late husband Trevor about 25 years ago to be nearer their son Simon.

Lisa said: "The school offered mum access to books which she didn't have at home and it was an exciting place to be."

"She remembered so fondly the days out and traditions like the annual Thomas Jones Day."

"There was one particular teacher who really believed in

her and gave the confidence to sit the 11-plus and earn a place at Kidderminster Grammar School, with the help of a charity paying for her uniform."

Brenda had to get a job rather than stay on at school to take her A-Levels, but undeterred, she finally took them when she was in her 40s.

She also passed on her love of learning to her two children - both of them went to university and Lisa is now the headteacher of a secondary school in Hertfordshire.

Charlotte McDonald, head of Wilden All Saints CR Primary School, said: "It's wonderful to hear how our lovely school had

such an impact on Brenda's life and I'm sure she'd be thrilled to know how that tradition lives on at Wilden."

"Only recently, Ofsted inspectors highlighted that reading is at the heart of our learning, in rating us 'outstanding' in all areas."

"We are in the process of refurbishing our library, so this generous donation will be put to good use and I'm sure Brenda's story will inspire our current pupils."

Brenda also left a gift in her will to All Saints Church, Wilden, where her grandparents Martin and Violet Taylor are buried.



Brenda Jones at Wilden All Saints CE Primary School. s

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Campaigners issue rallying call to keep 'dying' river healthy

A PROCESSION and service will take place in Bewdley next Sunday, June 15, to recognise the current condition of the river and to celebrate what it could be in the future.

The 'Remember Our River' event is being held as part of the Wyre Forest's SustFest 25 and will feature members of the local WI and Bewdley Rowing Club, along with local anglers.

They have issued a rallying call to everyone who cares about the river to meet at 1pm on the riverside near Dog Lane car park.

Those gathered will progress along the river to Jubilee Gardens where there will be a service, led by the Rector of St Annes, followed by the opportunity to have a picnic. People can bring their own food or buy it from the Garden Kitchen Café and visit stalls. Attendees are also urged to dress



in river-themed outfits or take along handmade fish on poles.

Dee Edwards, chair of CARP, said: "This event is a rallying cry for all local concerned people to show our MP, Severn Trent, local farmers and the Environment Agency that we want to work together to restore our river to good ecological health."

"It's no good standing on the sidelines watching the rapid death and decline of our beautiful river. It's time now to act together - there is strength in unity."

At a recent meeting in Bewdley, CARP, Communities Against River

Pollution, asked the 63 attendees to say what they thought about the state of the River Severn in their area. Responses were varied but invariably negative.

One said: "I fear there's a health risk and it prevents people using the river to improve their health, for example water sports."

Another added: "Pollution from intensive farming is affecting the whole eco system."

And another added: "I am very concerned about the fast-growing effect of pollution on wildlife and human life."

"Indeed the whole 'circle of life' is being affected and made toxic. The Severn should be a healthy river again for future generations."

A rower who would love to be able to swim in the Severn highlighted the 'lack of biodiversity' and the 'hazard to everyone's health'.

CARP has been working over the past 18 months by testing the waters for high

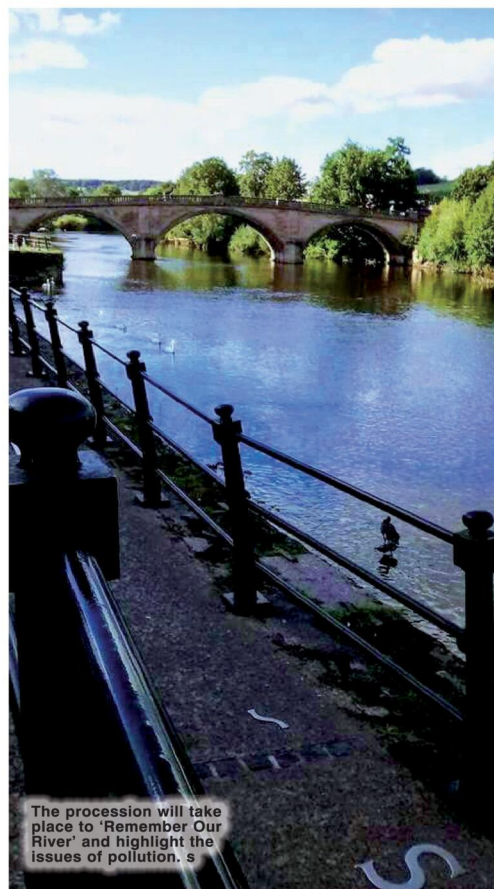
levels of harmful chemicals. With the resources it had, it was hard to tell if these were from sewage spills or agricultural run off, adding: "Possibly it's a combination of the two."

From testing for chemicals and observing and assessing the shocking lack of water weed, the group is now moving onto identifying the invertebrate life in the water which will also indicate the health of the river.

The next step is to create a group of river stewards who will monitor the river by looking for visual signs which show that there has been a sewage spill.

CARP added: "From evidence around the world it is clear that nature has a way of healing the damage that mankind inflicts upon it and working together our river can recover from the sad, dying state it is currently in."

Visit [events.sustfest.wyreforest.org/](https://www.wyreforest.org/) for more on SustFest and the 'Remember Our River' event.



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Dress in river-theme or bring handmade fish on poles!

Picnic in the gardens. Refreshments at Garden Kitchen Café.





LEFT: Coun Doug Hine officially opened the Broadwaters Dingle Play Park last Friday. Pictures by Adam Carrigan. RIGHT: How the park looks from above. s

New play area officially opened

A NEW play area at Broadwaters Mills Park was officially opened by Mayor of Kidderminster, Coun Doug Hine, last Friday.

The Broadwaters Dingle Play Park's unveiling fittingly coincided with the May half-term and will now provide an exciting environment for children and families to enjoy.

The area boasts new equipment and a fresh design, providing a wonderful community spot for fun, play and making memories.

A Kidderminster Town Council spokesperson said: "The stunning floral arrangements are lovingly main-

tained by the Friends of Broadwaters Mill Park – a huge thank you once again for all your hard work and dedication in keeping the park looking its best all year round.

"Your efforts are truly appreciated by the whole community."

"A special thank you to Adam Cardigan for kindly providing the wonderful photos from the day."

"It was a fantastic community occasion – thank you to everyone who came along to show their support."

And they urged families to head down to the area to see the new equipment and look for themselves.

Coun Hine said he was delighted to have been given the chance to open the play area.

"We've called it Broadwaters Dingle, which means a a deep wooded valley or dell."

"It has been creatively put together by our parks and services team and I hope the children of the area enjoy it for many years to come."

"I am particularly happy to see some inclusive play equipment installed so people of all abilities can use them."

What do you think of the new play area? Email: editor@kidderminster-standard.co.uk with your views.

Warning after vehicle stolen

A GREY Toyota Hilux Invincible was stolen from Bewdley overnight between 5.45pm last Wednesday and 6.40am last Thursday.

The vehicle, which has the partial registration 'SL66' was parked up secure in the Kidderminster Road, Bewdley area and taken by thieves without keys.

Following the incident, police have issued a warning to drivers of key-less cars to

consider placing the fob in a Faraday pouch or metal tin so the signal cannot be captured.

Officers also suggest fitting a quality steering lock to the vehicle at all times when its not in use, even for a short time.

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



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LEFT: Alastair's son Harry (left), chairman Martin Tucker (middle) and Alastair's widow Karen (right) unveil the bench. ABOVE AND RIGHT: Action from the Alastair McIntyre memorial match. Pictures by Sara Jennings.



Club remembers stalwart Ali

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

STOURPORT Hockey Club have unveiled a memorial bench dedicated to former club chairman Alastair McIntyre.

Alastair passed away at the age of 61 in December following a short illness.

He served as chairman of Stourport between 1997 and 2000, overseeing the club's move from its old Tan Lane site to its current home as part of Stourport Sports Club.

Alastair's son Harry and widow Karen joined current Stourport chairman, Martin Tucker, to



unveil the bench, which overlooks the pitches at Stourport's Kingsway home.

Mr Tucker delivered a short

Karen starts the match by passing the ball back to her son Harry.

speech upon unveiling the bench which also contains a personalised plaque featuring a tribute to Alastair.

It was followed by a match between an Ali McIntyre Memorial XI against a Stourport men's 6th XI.

The game began with Karen passing the ball back to Harry while both teams included many current and former Stourport players.

The match ended in a 4-4 draw with friends and family retiring to the bar afterwards to reminisce about Alastair's contribution to the club.

Karen said: "The memorial match was a happy and very special day.

"Seeing so many people, both players and spectators, remembering Mac was heart-warming. Thank you all.

"The memorial bench, crafted by Wyre Forest Community Land Trust, is a beautiful tribute where we can all sit a little while and remember a wonderful husband and father and dedicated and loved member of Stourport Hockey Club.

"Many thanks to Steve Taylor and all involved in organising the day."

Mr Tucker added: "It was a fabulous day to see so many people turn out to remember Ali - both

on and off the pitch. Ali was a tremendous servant of the club over many years. Not only did he take the responsibility as chairman for a period of time, he found time to contribute to the club in all sorts of different ways from helping to organise events and tours to captaining teams and chairing selection committees.

"He was one of those people who gave his time freely and to put it simply, he got the sort of stuff done that benefited others.

"It was a shock to us all that he left us way too soon, but the game on the pitch and the socialising in the bar after was a fitting tribute to a man who gave more than most to Stourport Hockey Club."

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News in brief

KIDDERMINSTER'S headline event for this year's SustFest Wyre Forest takes place tomorrow (Saturday, June 7) at The Old Court, Worcester Street.

Entry is free to the family-friendly fun day which runs from 11am to 2pm, and entry is free.

This event will be packed with eco-themed activities, including arts and crafts, upcycling stalls, and delicious home-baked treats.

People will be able to meet local animal charities, pick up useful tips on how to live a greener lifestyle and enjoy food and live entertainment.

The activities are guaranteed to keep visitors of all ages engaged and provide a fun way to learn more about sustainability and supporting the local community.

Visit: events.sustfest-wyreforest.org for more on SustFest.

A CHILDREN'S table top sale will take place at the Wolverley Memorial Community Cafe between 10am and 2pm this Sunday, June 8.

Admission to the event is free and donations are welcome.

The cafe will be open for everyone and there will be breakfast sandwiches available (whilst stocks last).

Pictures sought as part of Glorious anniversary

AN APPEAL for photographs of crew members who died in the Royal Navy's biggest loss of life has been made ahead of the 85th anniversary of the tragedy, writes Neil Gordon.

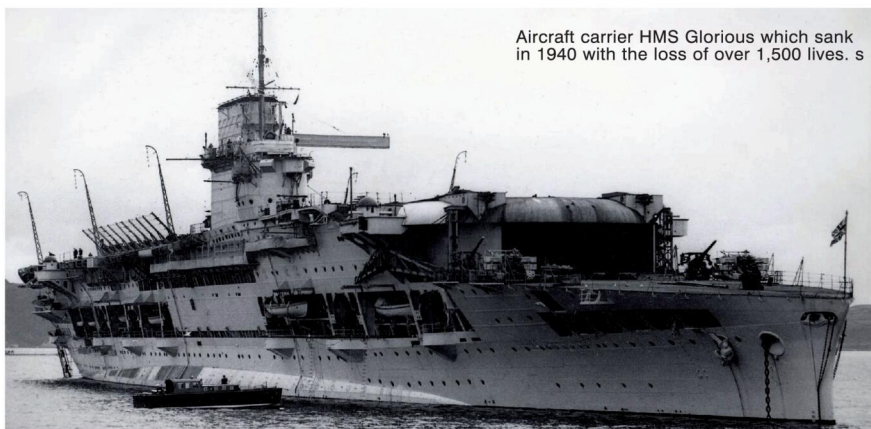
The appeal comes from the GLARAC Association which safeguards the honour and memory of the 1,531 officers and men of HMS Glorious and her two escorts, HMS Ardent and HMS Acasta, who lost their lives when sunk by German battleships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau in the Norwegian Sea on June 8, 1940.

Relatives of crew members are also encouraged to come forward.

The appeal comes just weeks after Class 50 diesel locomotive, number 50033 named Glorious, after HMS Glorious, was rededicated at the Severn Valley Railway's Kidderminster Station in a ceremony to commemorate 85th anniversary of the ship's sinking.

Aircraft carrier HMS Glorious was returning home after collecting planes and personnel from Norway when it sank in the Royal Navy's worst Second World War loss.

A total of 1,207 of the 1,531 casualties were on Glorious, with the sinking shrouded in controversy and questions still unanswered about why the ship travelled alone, with Ardent and Acasta for protection, rather than sail with the main



Aircraft carrier HMS Glorious which sank in 1940 with the loss of over 1,500 lives. s

convoy.

The Admiralty stated HMS Glorious was low on fuel and had completed its mission.

But questions also remain about why Glorious had not posted any lookouts and did not have any of its planes readied for action.

Only 41 of the personnel on Glorious survived the sinking, with men and boys from the three ships waiting over 24 hours to be rescued, which only came after the Admiralty learned of the sinking on German radio.

A GLARAC (GLorious, ARdent, ACasta) spokesperson said: "This episode was so embarrassing for the Royal Navy, the 1946 Board of Inquiry issued a 100-year secrecy order."

"And while the secrecy order has since been lifted and the files have become available, they do not explain why the secrecy order was issued."

"Only recently hardly anyone had heard of HMS Glorious due to the secrecy order."

Anyone who thinks they had a

relation involved in the tragedy can visit: glarac.co.uk for a full crew list.

People can email: garmartin717@btinternet.com to submit photographs or for more information.

The spokesperson added: "Every new photograph found is a bonus."

The GLARAC Association is holding memorial events this weekend in Plymouth to mark Sunday's 85th anniversary of the tragedy.

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Have your say on shake-up to local councils

RESIDENTS, businesses and community groups across Wyre Forest and Worcestershire are being urged to have their say on local government reorganisation.

Government proposals for local government reorganisation will affect all seven councils in Worcestershire, including Wyre Forest District Council, and everyone is being urged to get involved in the public engagement consultation.

A four-week public engagement exercise is running until June 28 to gain feedback to help councillors decide proposals for what should replace the existing councils.

Currently services in Worcestershire are split. Worcestershire County Council provides county-wide services, such as highways and adult social care. Borough, city and district councils such as Wyre Forest District Council provide localised services like waste collections, planning, leisure, and housing-related services.

The Government wants

to replace this system with a unitary structure where a unitary council will provide all services for a wider area than Wyre Forest. The aim is to make local government simpler for residents, while improving services and saving money.

There are currently two options proposed for Worcestershire:

* 1. Replace all councils with one unitary council. This would replace the county council and six district/city/borough councils with a single council for the whole of Worcestershire. It would provide all services from collecting waste to school admissions.

* 2. Replace all councils with two unitary councils. This means the county would be split into two new councils, with one for the north of the county (Wyre Forest, Bromsgrove and Redditch) and one for the south of the county (Wychavon, Worcester and Malvern Hills). Each council would be responsible for all services in its part of the county.

Town and parish councils

will remain but may have a greater role in providing some services and representing local communities.

A dedicated website has been created with more information about the proposals and a survey so people can give their views.

Feedback will be used to help decide which of the two options to develop in detail and put to the Government.

Final plans need to be submitted by November 28, 2025.

Coun Marcus Hart, Leader of Wyre Forest District Council, said "Major changes are planned for councils across Worcestershire, and we want our residents to help us piece it together."

"While the district council has already expressed its support for a single unitary council covering the whole of Worcestershire, we are urging the public, businesses, and community groups to learn more about the Government's proposals and to have a say on who should deliver the services we rely on every day."

Visit shapeworcestershire.org to find out more.



The floral display near the War Memorial in Vale Road. Picture courtesy of Stourport Town Council. s

Flowers blossom to mark milestone

THIS STUNNING floral tribute has been created by the Stourport Town Council's Parks Team.

The display, which is located at Stourport-on-Severn's War Memorial on Vale Road, has been put together to commemorate the 80th anniversary of both VE Day and the upcoming VJ Day.

Flowers have been put outside the Anderson air raid shelter - which would have been used in the Second World War - and the display depicts a floral Spitfire flying overhead.

Man facing Class A drugs charges

A MAN will appear at Worcester Crown Court later this month after being charged with possession with intent to supply class A drugs.

The charges follow police stopping a car

in Kidderminster last Wednesday.

Officers pulled over the vehicle in Hussum Way and what was believed to be cocaine was found.

Sharafdin Ahmadzai, aged 24,

of Alum Rock Road, Birmingham, appeared at Kidderminster Magistrates' Court last Thursday.

He was remanded in custody until the hearing on June 26.



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The craft fayre raised £500 for Amyloidosis UK research. s

Crafting a useful donation

A CHARITY craft fayre held in Stourport on bank holiday Monday has raised £500 for Amyloidosis UK research.

The event at the Severns Club featured a variety of wares, including R&R Creations, Ray's Bakehouse, Bewdley Spirits, Dave's Designs, Wooden and Woolen and Felted Frippery.

Among the hand-made items by talented crafters were upcycled wooden toys and trinkets, 3D printing, upcycled lamps, knitted toys, handmade clocks and pens, felted animals, needlecraft, Macrame, artwork and more. Admission to the event was free and there was a tombola to raise funds for Amyloidosis.

Rachel, from Ray's Bakehouse, said: "The event went really well - we had lots of visitors and lots of really lovely feedback."

"Many said they really enjoyed the range

of stalls and how talented and friendly the stallholders were.

"It was a lovely atmosphere at the Severns and with their new menus, visitors got to enjoy a scrummy breakfast or lunch during their visit."

She added a few people asked what Amyloidosis was, as they had never heard of it, so it was good to raise awareness.

Amyloidosis, which is a group of rare conditions where a protein called amyloid builds up in the body. It can affect organs such as your heart, kidneys, liver, nerves or digestive system. It cannot be cured, but there are treatments that may help with symptoms.

Ray's Bakehouse, R&R Creations and others among those at the Eco Family Day from 11am to 2pm tomorrow (Saturday, June 7) at the Old Court House in Kidderminster as part of SustFest.

Wartime spirit in musical show

A THEATRICAL youth group will commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of the Second World War through a performance of Lionel Bart's 'Blitz!'.

Kidderminster Operatic and Dramatic Youth Section (KODYS) for children aged 10 to 18 across Wyre Forest will stage the stirring production.

Performances will run at 7.30pm each evening from June 26 to 28 with a Saturday matinee as well at 2.30pm.

The musical is set during the London blitz and the production celebrates those who lived through one of the most grim periods in British history.

Director Scott Denton said: "Blitz! is not only a celebration of British tenacity, but also a moving reminder of the power of community and compassion."

"Our cast has worked incredibly hard to bring this story to life, and we can't wait to share it with audiences."

This latest show follows on from the group's successful performances of hit musical 'Bugsy Malone' and another musical concert in January of the same year.

The young people will be accompanied on stage by a band of professional musicians, courtesy of musical director Russell Painter, as they bring the stories of two British families - one Cockney, the other Jewish - to audiences as written by famous composer Lionel Bart, the genius behind 'Oliver!'.



Tickets are available from The Rose Theatre box office by visiting rosetheatre.co.uk or by calling 01562 743745.

The Kidderminster Operatic and Dramatic Youth Section cast will put on Lionel Bart's Blitz at the Rose Theatre. Picture by Colin Hill. s



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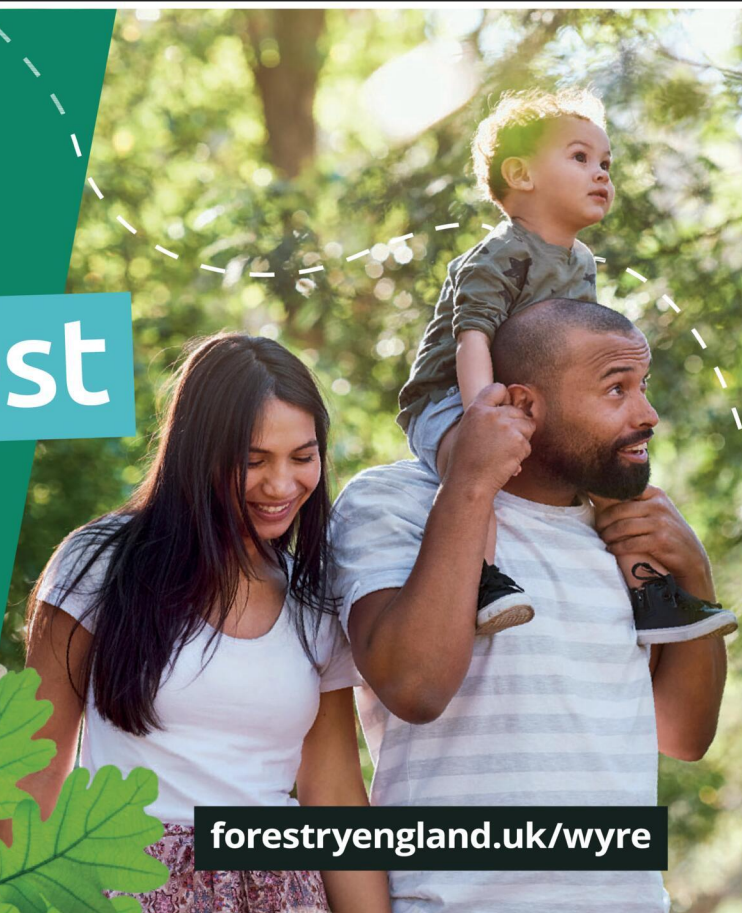
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Rowbottom roars to first BTCC race win of season at Snetterton



by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

DAN Rowbottom claimed his first British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) victory of the season in style at Snetterton.

The Kidderminster driver finished fourth in race one to just miss out on a place on the podium.

However, Rowbottom roared to victory in race two as he held off Adam Morgan to cross the line just 0.355 seconds ahead of the Team Vertu driver.

Rowbottom, who drives for NAPA Racing UK, finished the weekend with a 17th place finish to sit fourth in the drivers' standings on 85 points.

The race win is Rowbottom's third in the BTCC and the Kidderminster driver wants to challenge for the title this season.

Rowbottom said: "It was good, we couldn't really not win, we had a soft tyre and we started in P4, there was a lot of pressure but the guys delivered a fantastic car.

"We worked really hard on a different path for our setup and it's working really well so far.

"All credit to the team, it's more than me, I just point it in the right direction.

"We had to manage [the turbo boost] a little bit at the end, we were really counting down the clock.

"I made the choice with one lap to go to use all of the boost to try and keep the gap, it very nearly didn't work.

"The car has been fantastic all weekend. We want to win races,

and my target is to challenge for the championship at the end of the day.

"I've finally got a car I'm actually enjoying driving, we're getting there now."

The 36-year-old fended off a number of challengers to claim his first win of the season.

Rowbottom engaged in a battle with Daniel Lloyd for the race lead as the two drivers swapped places more than once.

Morgan then went in pursuit of Rowbottom and had more turbo boost available in the final two laps.

However, Rowbottom defended superbly, using every inch of the track, to stay ahead until the chequered flag fell.

Rowbottom's teammate Dan Cammish won the first race of the weekend while NAPA Racing's Ash Sutton also finished on the podium in third.

And Sutton found himself on the podium again in race three as he finished second.

The BTCC season continues at Thruxton on the weekend of June 7 and 8.

LEFT: Daniel Rowbottom on the podium at Snetterton. Pictures by Darren Price.

BELOW: Rowbottom on the track at Snetterton.



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Athletes win glut of medals

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

KIDDERMINSTER and Stourport Athletics Club athletes won 21 gold medals at the Worcestershire County Athletics Championships.

The club won 21 gold, seven silver and three bronze medals at the Alan Moreton Track in Stourport.

Club athlete Adrian James took gold in the 300m hurdles and also topped the podium in the 200m.

James is the number one athlete in the country in the over-60s category in the 300m hurdles.

And his 200m victory also saw James produce the leading time in the event in his age category in the United Kingdom this year.

In the under-20 men's event, Seb Hubbard took 400m gold while Logan Morgan finished second in the 100m to claim silver.

And Harriet Williams won the 100m in the under-20 women's category while Libby Oliver won the 100m in the senior women's race.

Under-17 athlete Ted Freeman won three gold medals after coming out on top in the javelin, hammer and 100m hurdles.

And Will Freeman picked up silver in the 75m hurdles and bronze in the javelin.

Club athlete Emma Ross claimed three gold medals after

triumphing in the 80m hurdles, discus and javelin.

In the under-15 category, Nicole Bevan won the 100m while Hattie Richards won the 1,500m in the under-17 category.

And Amelia Jones took gold in the under-20 3,000m with Will Kennedy second in the under-20 1,500m.

In the under-13 competition, Alicia Chorostowska took high jump and 800m gold.

And Amelie Davis-Beard won three silver medals in the shot put, 800m and 200m.

Young athlete Imogen McCann claimed bronze in the 1,500m while Sophia Llewellyn won gold in the under-15 hurdles and javelin.

And Seren Macdonald celebrated triple gold after winning the shot put, long jump and hurdles.

Further medals went to Tilda Kiernan who came third in the 200m and Pippa Richards who finished second in the 100m.

In the under-11 quad event, Alicia Thompson produced a strong performance in the long jump, howler throw, 75m and 600m.

Club athlete Ava Freeman won gold in the 400m hurdles competing in the Warwickshire County Championships.

RIGHT TOP: Adrian James won double gold. s

RIGHT BOTTOM: Nicole Bevan won 100m gold in the under-15 category. s



Kidderminster and Stourport's under-11 girls celebrate their success at the Worcestershire County Championships. s

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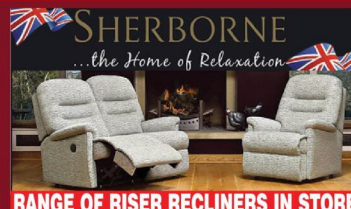


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120 streets join up for county's Big Garage Sale

'THE BIG Worcestershire Garage Sale' which is now in its third year is going from strength-to-strength and already has 120 streets signed up to take part.

The event is the brainchild of estate agency Nicol and Co and this year's event takes place next Saturday, June 14.

The Big Worcestershire Garden Sale gives people who have items they no longer need and use to declutter and offer them for sale. At the same time, people who need items for their home can pick up some bargain items.

Matt Nicol, managing director of Nicol and Co, has also just recorded a new podcast with Kath Holmes from Uncluttered by Kath, giving expert tips on how people can declutter in advance of the garage sale. The popular event, which brings communities together from across the county, was launched by Nicol and Co in 2023, and last year around 500 householders took part from a total of 125 streets.

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

Mr Nicol said: "There was a loud cheer across our offices when we confirmed the latest tally of 100-plus streets taking part on Saturday, June 14.

"There are already hundreds of householders busy decluttering for what will be another great day of bargain hunting, treasure finding and charitable giving – all from the comfort of their own driveways.

"They will be offering everything from antiques and collectibles to clothing, toys homeware and other unwanted goodies.

"Lots of householders are returning for what will be the second or third year running, although plenty of first-timers new to the concept have also signed up.

"It's with first-timers in mind that we've recorded our new podcast with Kath Holmes, a professional organiser who lives and breathes decluttering.

"Whether your loft is bursting or



Matt Nicol, managing director of Nicol and Co, has recorded a podcast with Kath Holmes from Uncluttered by Kath to provide some expert tips. s

your spare room's become a storage unit, Kath's got the tips to help you clear the clutter and turn your unwanted items into cash."

Visit this story on our website and click through the link at the bottom to listen to the new Just Local podcast episode with Matt and Kath.

Mr Nicol added: "The Big Worcestershire Garage Sale is a fun and sustainable way to make space in your homes, meet neighbours and find amazing bargains, and we're hoping for the biggest turnout ever for this year's event."

Everyone taking part in 'The Big Worcestershire Garage Sale' has the option of donating a portion of their sales or making a direct contribution to St Richard's Hospice.

Nicol and Co has a fundraising target of £25,000 towards the £12million St Richard's Hospice needs to raise every year to provide free care.

The estate agency already makes regular donations to St Richard's via its community fund, with the total donations to date already over £23,000.

The £25,000 the company aims to

raise from 'The Big Worcestershire Garage Sale' would be in addition to this.

Also, any quality unsold items can be dropped off at the end of the day at designated collection points from where Warren's Removals, which has kindly donated its vans to help, will deliver to St Richard's charity shops across Worcestershire.

Visit nicolandco.co.uk/the-big-worcestershire-garage-sale/ for more on the event and to see a map showing which streets are taking part.



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Find out more about the chance of being a volunteer

PEOPLE across Worcestershire can find out more about volunteering with the county council by visiting the authority's website.

Volunteering is a great way for people to get involved and make a difference in their area.

Other benefits included gaining new skills, making new friends and creating new opportunities for people to get to know their community and the people who live in it.

A number of the county council's services are supported by volunteers and work with the authority as a vital part of how it supports the local communities.

People can volunteer with the countryside service, at museums and libraries and in archives and archaeology.

Worcestershire Health Champions work with Worcestershire Public Health and the 'Let's Waste Less' volunteers work helping waste prevention.

Visit: worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/communities/volunteering for more information on volunteering and the roles available.

Taking the time to thank those who help hospitals

HOSPITAL staff and patients are saying a huge thank you to the hundreds of volunteers who help keep health services running smoothly this Volunteers' Week.

As well as hosting a series of thank you lunches for the 309 volunteers who give up their time to provide vital support across the Alexandra, Kidderminster and Worcestershire Royal Hospitals, a series of 'appreciation stations' are being set up across the sites to celebrate their huge contribution.

The week is also an opportunity to encourage and invite more people to give their time to make a difference at their local hospital, with two new rewarding volunteering opportunities available at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust.

At Worcestershire Royal Hospital, a new Peony Volunteer Service is being launched, focused on supporting people nearing the end of their life. The service is possible thanks to the support of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Charity.

Rachel Colthurst, Peony volunteer coordinator, said: "We're really proud to be working in partnership with the Anne Robson Trust charity to set up and run a team of specialist volunteers to provide bedside companionship to patients in their final days and hours, and emotional support to the patients' visitors."

"The work these volunteers do



Staff and Volunteers from Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust celebrates Volunteers' Week. s

will be vital in supporting people facing the end of their life and those around them."

Volunteers are also being recruited to a new Discharge Response Volunteer (DRV) service at the Alexandra Hospital, Redditch, following the success of the DRV service which launched at Worcestershire Royal Hospital earlier in the year.

Discharge Response Volunteers provide a vital link between ward staff and pharmacy teams, helping speed up the discharge process for patients who are ready to leave hos-

pital and go home – for example, by helping to ensure medication gets to the patient in a timely manner – and play an essential part in helping to ease pressures and improve patient experience.

Janet Neate, volunteer manager at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust, said: "We're so thankful for the tremendous amount of support our brilliant volunteers provide. In the last year alone this has totalled more than 13,000 hours across many areas of the hospitals, including chaplaincy, patient representatives, wayfinders, therapy

dog volunteers and breastfeeding friends.

"Our new Discharge Response Volunteer service at the Alexandra Hospital and Peony Volunteer Service at Worcestershire Royal promise to provide an incredibly rewarding opportunity, and we would love to hear from anyone interested in these roles."

Call 01905 733159, visit: worsacuthe.nhs.uk/volunteer or email: wah-tr.volunteers@nhs.net for more information on the new roles available or to contact the volunteer team.



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DRINK UP: THE DATES of this year's Bromsgrove Beer Festival have been announced, along with the chosen charity for the event.

The Redditch and Bromsgrove branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) will partner with the Primrose Hospice to raise funds at the event, which runs from July 3 to 5.

The event, at Bromsgrove Rugby Club's Finstall Park HQ will feature 102 real ales, along with a selection of cider, perry and keg beers.

This year's festival commemorates 50 years of Redditch and Bromsgrove CAMRA and a special commemorative glass, kindly sponsored by Fownd Brewery of Kidderminster, has been commissioned for the event.

The festival launches with a members' preview afternoon from 1pm on the Thursday, July 3, alongside brewers and licensees.

It will open to the public at 5pm that day.

On the Friday the doors open at 11am and live entertainment kicks off on that afternoon with a performance from Got2Sing Choir at 4pm. Rock cover band The Kemastree Set will be playing from 7.30pm to entertain the evening visitors.

On the Saturday, the festival opens again at 11am and will showcase Blackwell Concert Band at 1pm for a performance of festival favourites, followed by singer-songwriter Clare Portman who will be playing a mixture of her own music covers inspired by Alanis Morissette and Roy Orbison.

The festival, run by volunteers, enables real ale, perry and cider connoisseurs to try new brews, breweries to gain recognition and support.

Visit bromsgrovebeerfestival.org.uk for more information.

James sets off on his D-Day walk in aid of good causes

by Ashleigh Osborne
ashleigh.osborne@bullivantmedia.com

A WORCESTERSHIRE man has today (June 6) set off on an epic walk across the D-Day beaches to fundraise for The Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust (GKCCT) and SSAFA – The Armed Forces Charity.

James' daughter Emilia went through a diagnosis of Aplastic Anaemia and the family was given help and support by The Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust.

He said: "I couldn't think of two better causes – The Grace Kelly Childhood Cancer Trust made a real difference for us as a family.

"As a veteran with many friends still serving in the Royal Air Force (RAF), I am in awe of the support that SSAFA offers to serving members of our armed forces, veterans and their families."

James, who is from Redditch, will be walking more than 80km as part of a group honouring the sacrifice made 81 years ago on D-Day.

The battlefield expedition is being organised by Challenge The Wild and James will be joined by Ant



Middleton from Channel 4's SAS: Who Dares Wins, Andrew Jenkins from the BBC's The Traitors, Fia Tarrant from Heart Radio and Toby Tarrant from Radio X.

James' daughter Emilia had a stem cell transplant in September 2023 and James and the whole family all had various forms of invaluable support from the GKCCT whilst going through this difficult time. As a family they took the decision early on to share Emilia's story and help

other families by also raising awareness and funds for various charities including the GKCCT.

James added: "I'm looking forward to the challenge and will take with me the pride in supporting such wonderful charities that are so close to our hearts."

Anyone who wants to donate can visit gofund.me/db6ac3b3 and search for 'ChallengeJim' on YouTube.com to follow his progress.

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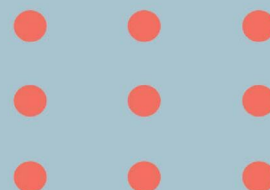
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Ambulance service staff to share inspiring tales in Pride Month

WEST Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) is celebrating Pride Month 2025 with the launch of its 'Proud to Be Here' campaign.

Throughout June, WMAS will share powerful stories that explore what it means to be proud – be that as part of an inclusive workplace, to allow staff to express who they are, proud to stand together as a diverse team and deliver excellent patient care.

It is a celebration of identity, community and belonging, shining a spotlight on LGBTQ+ colleagues from across the trust.

Community

PROUD Network chair, Ash Deakins, said: "Pride Month is about celebrating our community and acknowledging the contributions LGBTQ+ people make to the world around us.

"At a time when for many in our community, simply being able to show up as their authentic selves takes a lot of courage, Pride Month couldn't be more important and serves to remind us how far society has come, but how important it is for us to keep moving forward.

"I am incredibly proud to work for an organisation that not only recognises who I am, but welcomes and embraces diversity within it



WMAS staff are coming together to mark PRIDE month. s

FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERS:

PEOPLE who work and volunteer at West Midlands Ambulance Service (WMAS) are stepping into the spotlight during Volunteers Week.

The trust has over 500 patient-facing volunteers and more than 500 staff who give up their time to support the service and their colleagues in voluntary positions across the Region.

From Community First Responders who are often first on the scene of a 999 call, to BASICS emergency medics who

provide advanced clinical care at the roadside, the front-line volunteers are a vital part of the emergency response team.

As well as emergency patients, there's a dedicated team of Patient Transport Service (PTS) volunteer car drivers who ensure patients get to vital appointments safely and comfortably.

Volunteers Week lasts from Monday to Sunday (June 8) and throughout the week, WMAS will be showcasing the variety of volunteers across their Social Media channels, highlighting the diverse

ways they contribute and the impact they have.

Trust chairman Professor Ian Cumming said: "We have a tremendous number of people who go above and beyond every single day, often quietly and without recognition, to volunteer to help make this the organisation that it is.

"Volunteers' Week is our chance to say thank you – not just for what they do, but for who they are. They are an essential part of our ambulance family. To each and every one of you, thank you."

– and to be able to support our people to be their authentic selves, be visible and make their contribution to making our organisations and communities a more inclusive space is a privilege."

The trust's commitment to inclusion is reflected through its active staff networks, regular training, and a clear stance against any form of discrimination or hate.

Valued

Director of People, Carla Beechey, added: "WMAS is committed to creating a work environment where everyone feels safe, respected and valued.

"Be it through who they are, who they love, a disability, their sex or the colour of their skin, we see the challenges our staff face both in their professional and personal lives.

"We feel as an organisation that we want to be open and honest with them and show that we will support them to deliver excellent patient care.

"Many staff still face challenges due to their background and that is why it is so important that we demonstrate visible support as their employer."

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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Keeping your garden growing and helping wildlife in the 'gap'

IN JUNE, many gardeners across the UK experience a lull in their outdoor space, also known as the 'June gap'. This time of the year can leave garden beds and containers looking a little bare.

British Garden Centres is recommending certain plants to help bridge the June gap, keep your garden vibrant and colourful, and provide pollinator insects with a source of nectar and pollen when wildflowers and spring blooms have faded.

Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres, said: "We know that the June gap can be a tricky time for both new gardeners and our precious bees. That's why we've picked out lots of easy-to-grow plants that flower just when you - and the bees - need them most."

Antirrhinum: Commonly known as snapdragons, these are cheerful, easy-to-grow annuals that provide great colour and attract pollinators to your garden, especially during the June gap after other spring blooms have faded. They thrive in well-drained, fertile soil and full sun, making them ideal for borders, containers, or as cut flowers.

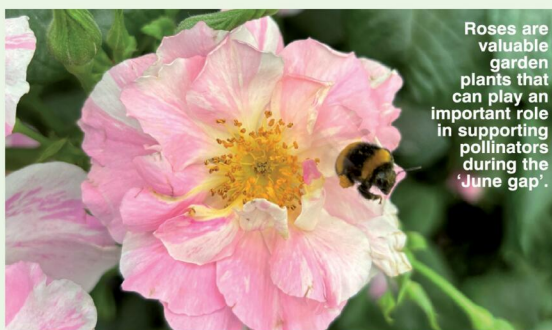
Campanula: commonly known as bellflower, Campanula is a

beautiful plant for the June gap with its bell-shaped, tubular, or star-shaped flowers in shades of blue, purple, and pink. They also provide nectar for pollinators and will bloom throughout June and beyond.

Foxgloves: Foxgloves are easy-to-grow plants that thrive in moist, well-drained soil and prefer dappled shade, though some types do well in full sun or even full shade. They flower in early summer, producing tall spires of bell-shaped blooms that attract bees and other pollinators, making them a great choice for filling the June gap in your garden.

Geraniums: Geraniums are easy to grow in borders, containers or window boxes and are long-flowering plants that attract pollinators to your garden, making them excellent for the June gap. They thrive in full sun to partial shade and require minimal care, all you need to do is deadhead spent blooms to encourage more flowers.

Geum: Perfect for borders, geum is an excellent choice for bridging the June gap because they reliably flower from late spring through summer, providing both colour and nectar when many other spring plants have



Roses are valuable garden plants that can play an important role in supporting pollinators during the 'June gap'.

finished and before summer perennials reach their peak. Its bright, cup-shaped flowers in shades of orange, red, yellow, and occasionally peach or pink are great for supporting garden wildlife during this seasonal lull.

Hebe: Hebe is an excellent plant for bridging the June gap because it begins blooming in early to midsummer, providing nectar-rich flowers before the main flush of summer flowers is in full swing. Its spikes of small, colourful flowers come in pink, purple, blue, or white and are highly attractive to bees and other pollinators. Hebe is also evergreen and offers year-

round structure and visual interest in the garden borders.

Lupins: These beauties are easy-to-grow plants that add height and pops of colour to your garden, with statuesque spikes of flowers in shades of blue, pink, purple, yellow, and white. They bloom from late spring through early summer, perfectly bridging the June gap when many other flowers have finished. Plant them in a sunny spot with well-drained soil, water them regularly, and enjoy their seasonal blooms as a focal point in your plant displays while supporting bees and other pollinators in your garden.

Nemesia: Nemesia is a fragrant, easy-to-grow annual with dainty flowers that are perfect for brightening up garden borders, containers, or hanging baskets. These compact plants thrive in full sun or light shade and prefer moist, well-drained soil, making them ideal for most gardens. Nemesia blooms from late spring through summer and sometimes into autumn, so it is a great plant to invest in for your outdoor space.

Nepeta: Nepeta is a hardy perennial with aromatic, grey and green leaves and small, lavender-blue, white, or purple flowers that bloom from late spring through summer. Its attractive foliage and long flowering period make it an excellent choice for filling the June gap, and it just needs a trim after the first flowers have faded to encourage a second bloom.

Roses: Roses are valuable garden plants that can play an important role in supporting pollinators during the June gap. Look for varieties with open, single or semi-double flowers as these will bloom from late spring into summer. By selecting the right roses and combining them with other nectar-rich plants, you can help bridge the June gap and support a thriving pollinator community in your garden.

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MasterChef champion shares his recipe for the great outdoors

MASTERCHEF champion Gary Maclean teamed up with charity Mary's Meals for National BBQ Week to encourage Brits to back the charity throughout barbecue season.

Gary - who has compiled his top tips to make a stress-free family cookout - is backing the international school meals charity and encouraging people to donate to Mary's Meals as part of barbecue week, which concluded on Sunday.

The charity feeds more than 2.6million children every school day in 16 countries across the world. By offering a daily meal in school, Mary's Meals attracts children from the world's poorest communities into the classroom where they can gain an education, which can be their ladder out of poverty.

Gary said: "It costs only \$19.15 to feed a child with Mary's Meals for a school year, just 10p a meal, which is such incredible value."

"This National BBQ Week, you could ask family and friends for a small donation to come along to your barbecue, and if you use my five top tips, you'll make your guests happy all while giving hope to hungry children."

Marinate ahead - Marinate meat overnight to build flavour and tenderise. A mix of whisky, honey, cracked pepper and thyme works well with pork,

chicken or game.

Bring to room temperature - Take meat or fish out of the fridge 30 minutes before cooking. It'll cook more evenly and will not stick to the grill as much.

Use two heat zones - Set your barbecue with a hot side for searing and a cooler side for finishing. It gives more control and helps avoid flare-ups.

Add a bit of smoke - A handful of soaked oak chips or sprigs of rosemary on the coals adds great flavour. Dried heather works too.

Rest before carving - Let meat rest under foil before serving. It keeps it juicy and gives you better texture.

Grilled veg - Courgettes, mushrooms, and leeks grill beautifully. Season well and finish with a bit of crumbled crowdie.

Quick grill cleaner - Rub a hot grill with half an onion on a fork. It's simple and does the job.

Sauce late - If you're using a sweet glaze or barbecue sauce, brush it on near the end to avoid burning.

Dessert on the grill - Try halved peaches or apples in foil with



Gary Maclean has teamed up with charity Mary's Meals for National BBQ Week.

brown sugar and a splash of whisky.

Scotland's national chef has also served up four delicious Scottish barbecue recipe ideas that are sure to impress.

Haggis-Stuffed Peppers - Fill peppers with traditional or veggie haggis and grill until charred and smoky.

Whisky-Glazed Venison Burgers - Swap beef for venison and brush with a whisky and honey glaze. Serve with pickled onions on a soft roll.

Aberdeen Angus Brisket with Irn-Bru Glaze - Slow-cook brisket with a smoky rub, then glaze with reduced Irn-Bru for a sweet finish.

Seaweed Butter Corn - Grill corn and brush with butter mixed with dried seaweed or samphire. Salty, savoury, and very moreish.

Dan McNally, head of grassroots at Mary's Meals, said: "It costs just 10p to provide one school meal to a hungry child with Mary's Meals."

"With a \$5 donation at your next barbecue, we can reach 50 children with a nutritious meal."

"If you purchase a cooking apron from our online shop ahead of hosting your own summer barbecue, your \$15 donation will feed 150 children in school."

"With the sun out and with Gary's top tips, there's never been a better time to get grilling, all while supporting Mary's Meals."

By making a donation to Mary's Meals, supporters can help children like 11-year-old Melanie from Madagascar enjoy a nutritious meal at school today and work towards a brighter tomorrow.

She added: "Thank you, Mary's Meals."

"We are always full at school and that motivates us to work hard."

"I study because I want to achieve my goals and help my parents when I succeed."

Visit: marysmeals.org.uk for more information on Mary's Meals and to donate.



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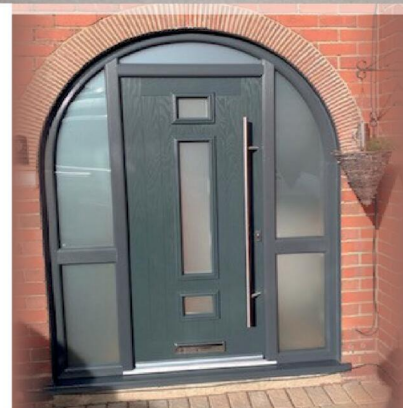
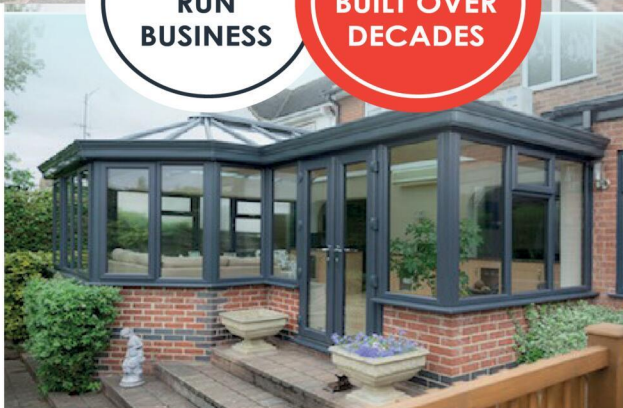


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How you can help to beat the blockages in sewer system

AN UNSUNG Severn Trent Water hero who tackles up to nine blockages a day caused by unflushables - including an iconic Action Man and his Jeep - is urging customers to go into battle against the damaging obstructions.

Severn Trent's John Bingley is urging residents not to flush wet wipes or pour fats, oils and greases (FOG) down the sink as they can cause 'fatbergs' in sewers.

After teams cleared a massive 28,782 blockages last year, frontline workers have been talking about their experiences in their Sewer Stories, encouraging customers to only put the 'three ps' down toilets - poo, pee and toilet paper.

Sewage threat

Dad-of-two John, 36, and crew mate Kristian Cornell are called out to unblock pipes and sewers.

In the worst cases, the blockages can see sewage flooding back into homes and gardens, which can leave households facing a lengthy bill if it is their responsibility to pay for the clean-up.

Van pack operative John said: "I've seen

all kinds of things in the sewers after being wrongly flushed down the toilet, sink or drains.

"Wet wipes are still the most common issue, they can cause huge problems they do not break down, even the ones saying 'flushable' on the packet.

"But the weirdest thing I've seen blocking the sewer was an Action Man - who was still sitting in his Jeep. I have no idea how that ended up down there."

John and Kristian deal mainly with residential customers, but also cover blockages in local businesses - often caused by FOG.

John said: "We are called out to multiple blockages each shift - nine has been the most in a single day.

"The worst part of the job is dealing with FOG clogging up pipes because it can get everywhere, including all over your equipment. It's just gross."

Not all bad

But John, who has worked at Severn Trent for seven years, was quick to name the best part of the job.

He said: "I just love the customer relations part of my role.



John Bingley is urging residents to 'Be a Binner, Not a Blocker'.

"You get to meet all sorts of people and they all have a tale to tell.

"And it's very satisfying when you can help someone who has suffered from flooding especially if it is not even their fault because they share the sewers with neighbours.

"We can often tell who is responsible, so that's when you have to have a difficult conversation - including reminding them what they should not be putting down the toilet, sink and drains.

"Most people seem to listen to what we say, so hopefully the three p's message is getting through."

Away from work former mechanic John is a real-life 'action man' himself as he enjoys the dangerous sport of motorcross in his spare time.

He suffered a serious broken arm five years ago but bounced back to defy doctors by returning to work after just six months, rather than the predicted year-plus.

"I did everything the doctors wanted so I could return early, as I missed my job too much - I just love it."

Grant Mitchell, Severn Trent's sewer blockages lead, said everyone could help by 'being a binner not a blocker'.

"Unflushable items such as wet wipes, sanitary products, nappies and a whole lot more cannot be flushed down the toilet.

"If they do, they can cause blockages which can flood the home - not very nice at all.

"We are asking people to really have a think about their habits and what they are putting down the toilet and sink, to see if there are any small changes that can be made.

"Even small changes can have a huge impact on sewer health."

Visit: stwater.co.uk/avoidblockages for more information.

Go to: stwater.co.uk/in-my-area/check-my-area or call 0800 783 4444 to report slow drains or blocked sewers.



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SUDOKU

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

EASY

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

HARD

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

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.

Sheep breeds

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

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

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

ACROSS

7. Sullen (5)
8. Bowers (7)
9. Rich (7)
10. Entice (5)
12. Loud-voiced (10)
15. Arsonist (10)
18. Artless (5)
19. Suffer (7)
21. Spin (7)
22. Short (5)

DOWN

1. Burden (10)
2. Sham (5)
3. Kind (4)
4. Hurry (6)
5. Slaughterhouse (8)
6. Tumult (7)
11. System of musical notation (5,3-2)
13. Fondly (8)
14. Attain (7)
16. Hardened (6)
17. Coach (5)
20. Liability (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.

- Sack employee
- Cable
- Sported
- Integral
- Arrive

FINE

COMB

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.

- 3755478 gives a bad person;
- 48925 gives a good person;
- 7817371645 gives a person.

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

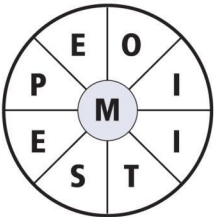
CODEWORD

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.

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

WORDWHEEL

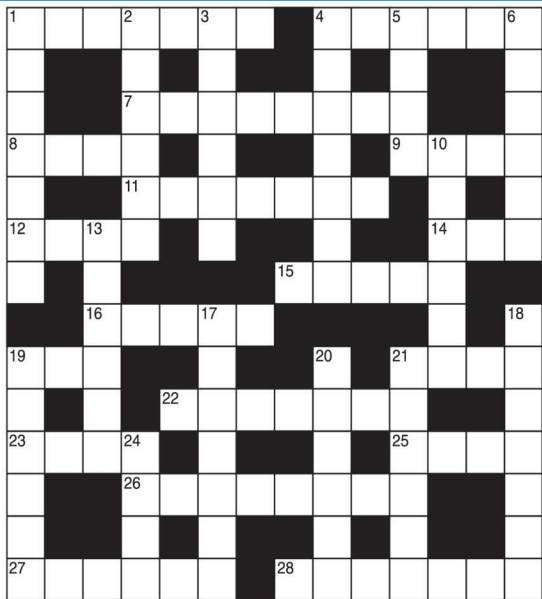
You have 10 mins to find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the hub letter and at least 3 others. Letters may be used only once. You cannot use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one 9-letter word to be found.



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

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

- ACROSS**
- 1 A reed mace (7)
 - 4 & 21 Across Structure situated at the NE corner of Hyde Park (6,4)
 - 7 A clear meat soup (8)
 - 8 Reflection of sound (4)
 - 9 Cinque port on the east Kent coast (4)
 - 11 Plane figure of eight angles and sides (7)
 - 12 & 6 Down Famous diarist and author (4,6)
 - 14 Atom with a positive or negative electric charge (3)
 - 15 Popular perennial or half-hardy annual (5)
 - 16 A seabird, part of the Sulidae family (5)
 - 19 & 22 Across A knight of immaculate purity in Arthurian legend (3,7)
 - 21 See 4 Across
 - 22 See 19 Across
 - 23 US state, capital Des Moines (4)
 - 25 Late-medieval stringed musical instrument (4)
 - 26 In history, a well-known prison-fortress in Paris (8)
 - 27 Inflorescence opening successively from base to apex (6)
 - 28 The first artificial satellite (7)



- DOWN**
- 1 Erect-eared curly tailed African hunting dog (7)
 - 2 Bushy-tailed N American nocturnal carnivore (6)
 - 3 Composition for solo piano (6)
 - 4 Large extinct elephant (7)
 - 5 Slip of cane, etc. producing sound by vibration in a clarinet, etc. (4)
 - 6 See 12 Across
 - 10 Drug of syrupy consistency intended to lubricate the throat in cases of cough and irritation (6)
 - 13 One of a Semitic people traditionally descended from Abraham (6)
 - 17 Kind of golf club (7)
 - 18 Jewish usurer in The Merchant of Venice (7)
 - 19 An arachnid (6)
 - 20 One of the twelve Apostles (6)
 - 21 The four weeks immediately preceding Christmas (6)
 - 24 Courtesy title for a priest (4)

SOLUTIONS

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Bulrush; 4 Marble; 7 Consomme; 8 Echo; 9 Deal; 11 Octagon; 12 John; 14 Ion; 15 Phlox; 16 Booby; 17 Basenji; 18 Shylack; 19 Spider; 20 Philip; 21 Advent; 24 Abbe.

DOWN: 1 Basher; 2 Racoon; 3 Sonata; 4 Marmoth; 5 Reed; 6 Evelyn; 7 Elixir; 8 Hebride; 9 Brasse; 10 Elixir; 11 Elixir; 12 Elixir; 13 Elixir; 14 Elixir; 15 Elixir; 16 Elixir; 17 Elixir; 18 Elixir; 19 Elixir; 20 Elixir; 21 Elixir; 22 Elixir; 23 Elixir; 24 Elixir; 25 Elixir; 26 Elixir; 27 Elixir; 28 Elixir.

Wordwheel Pathfinder

Charollais, Blue-faced Leicester, Chiviot, Wensleydale, Beulah Speckled Face, Swaledale, Jacob, Shetland, Herdwick, Oxford Down, Blue Texel, Vendéen, Cotswold, White Face Dartmoor, Hebridean, Soay, Badger Face Welsh Mountain, Derbyshire Gristone, Dorset Down, Lley, Exmoor Horn

Devil's

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

Codeword

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

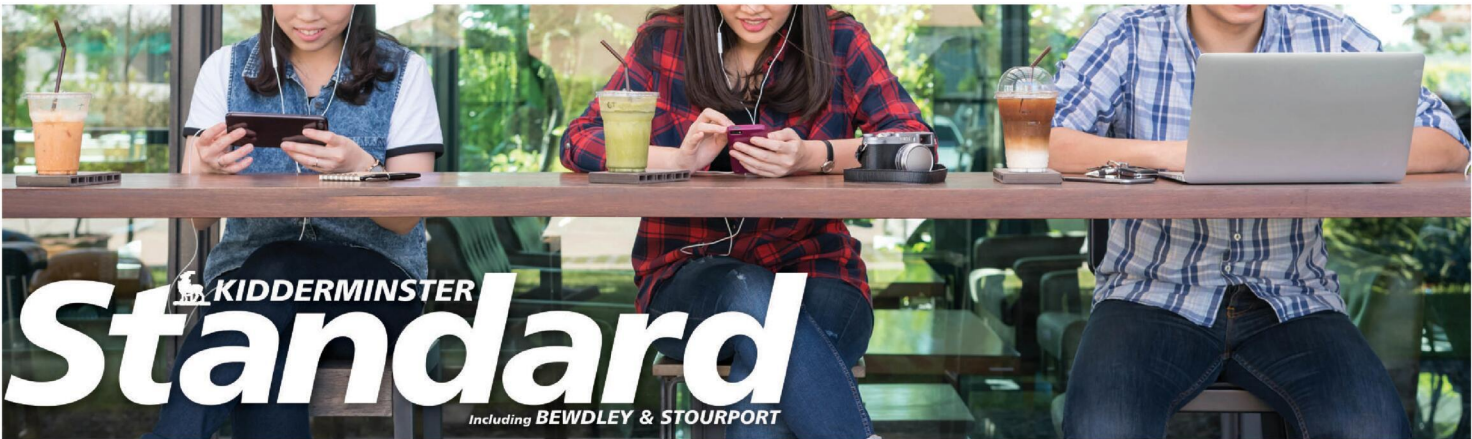
Hard

Ladder

Fine, Fire, Wire, Core, Come, Comb.

Easy

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



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

AWNING Isabella Capri Lux 975 lightweight frame good condition groundsheet photos available £400 Tel: 07530531016

NIKE Air MX-720-818 Trainers, "White Indigo Fog", UK Size 4, Hardly worn, £30. Tel: 0121 742 2513

FENCE posts, mixed sizing £3 / each Tel: Leo 07541 576100

MISCELLANEOUS

YOUNG MAN domestic 3m extending to 5.25m ladder. £40. Tel: 02476 413633

WOODEN step ladder. £20. Tel: 02476413633

YOUNG MAN 530010 domestic duty 3m aluminium ladder. Extends to 5.25m. Tel: 02476 413633

3-BIKE rear carrier rack (Auto Care). Still in wrapper, £21. Tel: after 6pm 0121 742 4250

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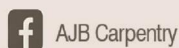
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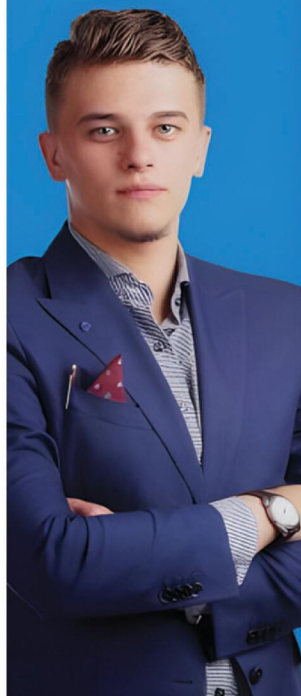
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Aygo named one of nations best

THE TOYOTA Aygo and Suzuki Swift have been ranked as the most reliable used superminis by UK used car warranty provider Warrantywise.

In its latest Reliability Index, which uses data from 2022-25, Warrantywise has named the Toyota Aygo and the Suzuki Swift as the most reliable used superminis, each earning a score of 88.6 out of 100.

In a used car market shaped by rising costs and ageing vehicles, the supermini class is proving to be a haven for sensible buyers. These small cars offer low running costs, accessible pricing, and, in many cases, impressive longevity. From first-time buyers to city dwellers and downsizers, superminis are a go-to option for drivers who want dependable transport without the hefty bills – and this new data proves they're right to feel confident in their choice.

Warrantywise's rankings are based on the frequency of faults, average age and mileage at the time of repair, and how long those repairs typically take to complete. For consistency, Warrantywise has also categorised the super-

minis in line with Euro NCAP classifications (The European New Car Assessment Programme) – a widely recognised standard across Europe that helps ensure comparisons are made between like-for-like vehicles.

The Kia Picanto took third place, followed closely by the Citroën C1 and Peugeot 108. The Renault Clio also secures joint sixth place with the Ford KA. In eighth is the Hyundai i10, followed by the Dacia Sandero in ninth, and in joint tenth are the Hyundai i20 and MINI Cooper.

Antony Diggins, Managing Director of Warrantywise, said: "Our latest data backs up what many drivers already know – superminis are one of the safest bets you can make in the used car market. They're affordable, efficient, and, as our research shows, can be remarkably reliable. At a time when people are being more careful with their money, it's reassuring to know that you don't have to spend big to get a dependable car."

"With a number of these superminis not requiring major repairs until they're nearly a decade old, and many models showing excellent cost-per-mile performance, they are an espe-

cially wise buy in today's market. That said, no vehicle is perfect, and issues can happen, so we always encourage drivers to protect themselves with a comprehensive warranty – especially as labour and parts costs continue to rise."


Over 60 per cent of the vehicles in the top ten don't show any faults until they're at least eight years old. Standouts include the Suzuki Swift and the Ford KA, averaging 8.7 years and nine years, respectively, before their first repair. It's proof that superminis – often seen as entry-level or short-term cars – are more than capable of delivering long-term value.

Of course, no car is immune to problems, and even high performers can hit drivers with an unexpected bill. Warrantywise's data shows that electrical issues account for over half of supermini repairs, with engine faults making up just over 30 per cent. Repair costs can vary widely, with average bills ranging from £420 up to £1,118, and as high as £1,297 to £9,224, depending on the model and nature of the fault.

As fuel prices, environmental considerations, and city living continue to influence car-buying trends, superminis stand out as a smart, future-

proof choice for UK motorists.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/4sb66wpp> for the full list and data insights.



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Harriers sign quintet of players to bolster squad

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: ADAM Murray has begun shaping his Kidderminster Harriers squad for next season after making five new signings.

Harriers swooped to make defender Pierce Bird the club's first summer signing.

The 26-year-old centre-back previously won the National League North title with Murray at AFC Fylde in the 2022/23 season.

And he also played under Murray at Eastbourne Borough in the National League South last term.

Murray said: "Pierce has been with me at my last two clubs and had great success."

"For me he is one of the best ball-playing centre backs at this level and has won the league before."

"He understands the league and will be a strong addition to the team."

Murray returned to his former club again to bring in 26-year-old creative midfielder Jack Clarke.

Clarke made more than 50 appearances for Eastbourne.

Murray said: "Jack is a creative midfielder who will make us tick. He reads the game brilliantly and will add control to our team."

"After coming back from an early injury last season he had an amazing second part of the season which



Adam Murray has made Pierce Bird his first signing as Kidderminster boss. Picture courtesy of Kidderminster Harriers FC.

led to a lot of admiration from other clubs.

"I am very happy he chose to be part of our journey and to showcase what he can do in front of our super fanbase."

The club have also signed versatile 21-year-old defender George Walker.

Walker spent last season with Isthmian League Premier Division side Hastings United where he made 43 appearances.

And Harriers have also added midfielder Luke Spokes to their squad.

The 24-year-old playmaker scored six goals in 45 appearances for Chippenham Town last season.

Murray said: "Luke is an all-round midfielder who, for me, played in one of the best possession-based teams in

National League South last season.

"He's very comfortable with the ball, can play with both feet and tactically he's very good, which is important."

"He's rare in that he is a technical player but brings a lot of physicality, and he has got goals in him."

Kidderminster's latest signing is experienced forward Dan Mooney.

The 25-year-old was part of the Chester side which knocked Harriers out of the play-off semi-finals last season.

He has previously played for the likes of Fleetwood Town and Altrincham.

The club have also confirmed midfielder Zak Brown has left Harriers following three seasons at Aggborough.

Lategan and Jukes score half-centuries in defeat

CRICKET: KIDDERMINSTER CC failed to end their winless start to the season following a four-wicket home defeat against Coventry and North Warwickshire.

The hosts posted 233 all out as Daniel Lategan and Nathan Jukes both hit half-centuries in vain at Chester Road.

The visitors reached the required total with four wickets to spare as Akshaykumar Patel finished unbeaten just seven runs short of a century.

Kidderminster remain bottom of the Birmingham and District Premier League Premier Division Two table having failed to win any of their opening six matches this season.

Coventry won the toss and elected to field and quickly removed Kidderminster opener Lucas Ingram (4) before Sameer Vohra (3-67) trapped Ben Gibbon (20) LBW.

Lategan (78) and Jukes (59) combined for a 118-run third-wicket partnership with Ben Griffin (38) the only other batter to reach double figures.

Coventry's Gursimrat Singh (5-44) did the damage with the ball as he claimed a five-for.

However, Kidderminster took quick wickets at the start of the Coventry innings and had the visitors in trouble on 89-5.

Only Arun Kalsi (40) reached double figures of Coventry's top order batters before Patel came to the crease and led the recovery.

Patel (93 not out) scored at a rate of almost a run-a-ball and put on 143 runs for Coventry's sixth-wicket alongside Danyaal Malik (57).

Kidderminster are next in action against West Bromwich Dartmouth on Saturday, June 7 with the game to begin at 12pm(midday) at Sandwell Park.

Elsewhere, Bewdley CC cruised to a 76-run victory away at Hagley

to remain top of the Worcestershire County League Division One table.

Bewdley closed on 264-4 at the end of their 50 overs before bowling out the home side for 170 at Hagley Park.

Hagley won the toss and elected to field as Bewdley's top order piled on the runs.

Both Tom Odell (44) and Jamie Boyle (49) fell agonisingly short of half-centuries after Mahroof Khan (1-30) bowled opener Austin Ball (14) in the seventh over.

However, Rob Combes (62) and Damon Gariff (64 not out) combined well to put on 97 runs for Bewdley's fourth wicket.

In reply, a middle order partnership between Will Hymer (47) and Mikhail Jain (44) kept the home side in the contest.

However, Bewdley took the final seven wickets for the loss of just 49 runs as Grant Morris (4-49) starred with the ball.

Bewdley are next in action against Droitwich Spa on Saturday, June 7 with the game to start at 12.30pm at Lower Park.

And Stourport-on-Severn CC claimed a six-wicket victory against Astwood Bank to sit joint top of the Worcestershire County League Premier Division table.

The visitors restricted Astwood Bank to 225-7 at the end of their 50 overs at Sambourne Lane.

Spencer White (108) hit a fine century from just 95 balls for the home side while opener Tom Underhill (58) also scored well.

However, Stourport's top order all contributed to a comfortable win as Jamie Brighton (70 not out) top scored.

Stourport are next in action against Ombersley 2nds on Saturday, June 7 with the game to start at 12pm(midday) at Walshes Meadow.

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