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## Fears over new homes

by **Sonny Rackham**  
[sonny.rackham@bullivantmedia.com](mailto:sonny.rackham@bullivantmedia.com)

**MAJOR concerns have been raised by Droitwich residents and councillors regarding the proposed development of dozens more homes.**

Plans have been submitted to Wychavon District Councillor for 40 extra houses on the existing 740-home Copcut Rise.

Developer William Davis is responsible for the application and the majority of the existing estate which was greenlit for development in 2013 before an extension was granted in 2015.

Following the application, Wychavon district councillor Dan Birch, for North Claines and Salwarpe, has called out the developer for not fulfilling obligations and 'riding roughshod' over local residents throughout the estate's development.

He said he understood the new proposed site's viability - a small infill plot surrounded by the existing development. But, he added, the developer had failed to 'finish the roads, open spaces, landscaping and footpaths' in other areas of the existing estate and pointed out 'continued' drainage issues and 'chaos' at traffic lights near the A38 site.

A petition, which already has more than 500 signatures, is calling on Worcestershire County Council Highways to prioritise improvements to Copcut junction to facilitate better traffic flow.

In its application, William Davis said the impact of the development on existing road

networks would be 'imperceptible'.

Coun Birch said: "This is not a developer who has shown any respect to Copcut Rise so far and what we need is reassurance this time it will be different."

"We also want to see infrastructure, we want to see improved playgrounds and somewhere for kids to kick a ball."

He has called on the support of Droitwich and Evesham MP, Nigel Huddleston who has agreed to co-sign a letter asking Highways to carry out a full assessment of the Copcut lights.

The MP will also raise the issue of local authorities having a lack of control over developers able to submit subsequent applications despite not having met obligations on existing developments with relevant ministers.

Lastly, the MP plans to attend a meeting with Wychavon planning chiefs to discuss options for what Coun Birch has described as 'stopping the continued disregard of residents by William Davis'.

A meeting for residents to discuss their concerns before are fed to William Davis will take place from 5pm to 7pm on June 12 in the Elgar Room of Sacred Heart Church.

The application is also open for public consultation until June 13.

The Standard contacted William Davis and was awaiting comment at the time of going to press.

Visit <https://plan.wychavon.gov.uk/Planning/Display/W/25/00991/FUL> for more.



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

## Ready for Rik Festival launch

DROITWICH'S much-anticipated inaugural Rik Mayall Festival gets under way 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 what is billed as an eight-day bonanza, full of laughter, chaos and community spirit, 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.

Turn to page two for more.

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Rik with Ade Edmonson at the Mayall family home in Droitwich. Picture courtesy of the Mayall family. s

**TOWN THANKS:** THE FAMILY of Rik Mayall have spoken of their pride that the comedy festival in his name is taking place.

And, to celebrate the festival starting, they have released pictures of Rik in his hometown.

They said: "We are really touched Droitwich Spa has chosen to honour Rik with a comedy festival.

"His mum and dad would have been so proud and especially pleased the Norbury Theatre features prominently.

"This treasured local theatre gave Rik his first opportunity to act on stage and experience the joy of watching live performances."

They added they were very grateful to the

whole community and volunteers who had given their time and energy to make the festival happen.

"The packed programme of comedy and events looks brilliant.

"It is great to see so many new and emerging acts taking part alongside established artists - we thank all the performers for their support.

"Special thanks to the businesses and venues in Droitwich who have offered performance space.

"Spending a week laughing is the perfect way to remember Rik.

"We hope everyone involved - volunteers, organisers, performers, and audiences has a fantastic festival."

# Plenty for all to remember Rik

**THE RIK Mayall Comedy Festival promises to be an event by the community for the community with more than 200 events across 30 venues 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 perform-

ing 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."

Visit: rikmayallcomedyfestival.com for more information and tickets.

**MAYALL MOVIE:** 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.

Martin Purdy, from Harp and a Monkey, said: "It is a wonderful thing when communities come together to make an honest and creative statement, but it needs people to take a leap of faith to get involved."

Rhys Jones, chairman of Droitwich Arts Network, added: "The film is a thoughtful and impressionistic reflection on Rik's time in Droitwich."

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.

**FUN FOR ALL:** A STALWART of British television comedy and soap acting is bringing his all singing all dancing one man show to Droitwich for this year's inaugural Rik Mayall Comedy Festival.

Tony Howes, star of Emmerdale, Doctors, Midsummer Murders and Casualty will be performing his comedy show - A Shakespearian Music Hall - on two occasions for the festival.

For the show, Tony has developed a unique interpretation of a Midsummer

Night's Dream in which he plays 17 parts including Bottom and Puck and the sings, tap dances, and juggles.

Tony told the Standard: "I'm really excited to be part of the festival. I've always been a big fan of Rik, he was a breath of fresh air."

A Shakespearian Music Hall will be performed by Tony at 7.30pm on June 5 at St Nicholas Church and again on June 7 at The Old Cock Inn.

Tickets, at £6, are available at: rikmayallcomedyfestival.com or on the door.

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Tony Howes is bringing his all singing all dancing one man show to Droitwich for the Rik Mayall Comedy Festival. s

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See page 30

# Waterway to be much healthier

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

**A NEW health corridor along the Droitwich Canal is now under construction as part of a large investment in leisure and wellbeing projects across the town.**

The towpath running along the canal from Vines Park to Ladywood Lock in Salwarpe is being resurfaced. Wheelchair friendly benches and new directional signage will also be installed.

Currently, the towpath is a mixture of uneven sand, silt, and stone, making it inaccessible for many residents, particularly during winter.

It is being completely reconstructed with a new sub-base and edging boards to help maintain the structure. It will be resurfaced with compacted grey limestone to give it a high-quality, natural finish.

Coun Dan Birch,

Wychavon's executive board member for wellbeing, social mobility and transformation, said: "Walking, being outdoors, and connecting with nature can boost both physical and mental wellbeing, and the creation of this accessible health corridor opens up those benefits to everyone."

Initial proposals included suggestions for new mooring, solar lighting and a bike scheme. These are no longer included in the project due to ongoing maintenance issues and constraints caused by the width of the path.

Wychavon District Council added it was continuing to explore with the charity Canal and River Trust, the possibility of installing a kayak launch along the route.

Ian Lane, head of operational partnerships and fundraising at Canal & River Trust, said: "This towpath upgrade project is a fantastic example of how we can work together to make canals welcoming and attractive."

The expected 14-week project is being carried out by contractor R&C Williams.

It is being done in sections, so only some of the towpath will be closed at any one time.

The project was inspired by Droitwich Spa Place Board and is part of a major investment in leisure and wellbeing in the town by Wychavon, including upgrading Droitwich Spa Lido and Droitwich Spa Leisure Centre and creating a new pump track and skate park.

Mat Nicol, chair of Droitwich Spa Place Board, said: "I'm thrilled to see the health corridor project come to life."

Once completed, the new towpath will create an easily accessible route, providing increased access to nature, including the recently improved Coney Meadow wetland and reed bed.

The Canal and River Trust has transformed the 5.5hectare Coney Meadow site with funding from Wychavon's share of the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund.



Ian Edwards, Matt Nicol, Chair of Gemma Ranford, Brad Gutteridge, Sophie Willingale.



**HAPPY CUSTOMERS:** A COMMUNITY cafe in Blackwell is celebrating its first successful first year, thanks to an amazing team of volunteers providing more than 1,000 hours of free work to support the project.

In its first 12 months, Muntjacs Cafe at Blackwell Community Hall has generated £5,000 in profits, allowing the venture to buy new chairs, tables and a top-grade barista coffee machine.

Hall committee chair Terry Pauley said he was delighted the cafe was successfully

achieving its aim of bringing the community together.

"Thank you to all our wonderful customers, we love to see the cafe filled with people and have made so many new friends."

"Thank you also to our fabulous team of over 20 volunteers."

"We're a 'not for profit' organisation and they all work for nothing."

The cafe opens from 10am to 2pm every Saturday, offering freshly ground coffee, tea, assorted chilled drinks, tea cakes, locally made cakes and other occasional specials.

The community hall at the top of Greenhill, is run entirely for the benefit of the residents of Blackwell and neighbouring areas.

There are numerous classes throughout the week as well as the cafe.

It can be hired for regular bookings. Visit: [blackwellcommunityhall.co.uk](http://blackwellcommunityhall.co.uk) or email: [BCBlackwell@gmail.com](mailto:BCBlackwell@gmail.com) for more information.

**Volunteer staff at Muntjacs Cafe celebrate a successful first year.**

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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 their 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 medallist, 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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# Vowing to leave a lasting legacy

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

**WYCHAVON'S** new leader has vowed to put the economy and town centre regeneration at the heart of his administration after being sworn into the role last week.

Coun Richard Morris was elected at a council meeting, taking over from Coun Chris Day who led the authority since October 2023.

Coun Morris said: "Coun Day stands among the great leaders Wychavon has had over the last 50 years and I thank him for everything he has brought to the council and the district during his time in charge."

He thanked councillors for putting their faith in him and vowed to ensure the voices of residents were heard and listened to across all political parties.

"I am humbled and honoured to have this opportunity,

which I hold very close to my heart.

"I want Wychavon to be economic led.

"We've had some great successes but there are also challenges ahead."

"We need to ensure we deliver the visions in our Town Centre Investment Prospectuses and build on the good work being done by the place boards."

Forming a major part of town centre regeneration plans will be fixing ongoing saga's at Evesham's Riverside Shopping Centre and Droitwich Spa's Raven Hotel. Both of which have fell foul of neglectful owners.

The new leader has also made changes to his executive board team to help deliver on his promises. Most notably was tasking Coun Paul Middlebrough with responsibility for local government reorganisation.

Coun Middlebrough's role will focus on a smooth transition for Wychavon in Worcestershire's move towards a unitary authority.

The government enforced

devolution plans will strip away district and borough councils in favour of an all-encompassing council responsible for countywide and local services.

Coun Morris added: "The vast experience I have as both a district and county councillor, including holding senior positions in both authorities, means I am well placed to lead us through the change.

"We must make sure everything Wychavon stands for and the support we provide for our residents doesn't just disappear because of that process.

"Wychavon is recognised as one of the best councils in the country and we must leave a legacy that ensures our residents are best served within the new unitary."

Coun Emma Stokes takes on responsibility for resources, street cleaning and waste and recycling and Coun Emma Kearsley has been named deputy leader and will be in charge of planning.



The new leader of Wychavon District Council will be long-standing councillor, Richard Morris. s

**ON STAGE:** THE STAR Project, a musical theatre training company which has nurtured young talent for the last 20 years, is launching the SP Young Company.

Solely available through auditioning, dedicated and experienced performers aged 12 to 18 are being urged to take advantage of the opening to expand their skills and future opportunities.

Auditions will take place next Friday, June 6, in the Studio Theatre at Artrix and is only open to 15 to 17 of the most elite and hardworking performers..

Candidates need to: prepare a verse and chorus from a musical theatre song, perform a monologue, submit a personal statement and participate in a dance call.

Successful candidates will form a company and rehearse every Friday evening during term time from 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

As a non-profit organisation, all funds raised go directly to supporting the company and continuing the development of

young performers.

The first session for those selected will be on June 20 - the first project being a Bridgestone Style Immersive Theatre Afternoon Tea, where the actors play characters while the live audience will solve the clues presented in the performance.

Jo Payne, The Star Project director, said: "SP Young Company is an exciting new chapter for young performers ready to push creative boundaries and grow into confident, professional artists.

"We are proud to find a place where their passion can truly flourish."

Members chosen will work closely with industry professionals to develop and perform original productions alongside familiar musicals, gaining them indispensable experience in singing, acting and dance.

Visit: [thestarprojecttheatreschool.co.uk](http://thestarprojecttheatreschool.co.uk) or email: [info@thestarprojectinfo](mailto:info@thestarprojectinfo) for more or to register.

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Droitwich Spa Lido has officially opened to the public for 2025. s

**JUMP IN:** DROITWICH Spa Lido welcomed visitors for the first time this year as the historic pool marked its official summer opening over the bank holiday weekend.

The town's historic outdoor swimming pool opened on Saturday and this year marks its 90th anniversary.

Doors first opened at the lido on June 10, 1935 and to mark this year's milestone, community group Friends of Droitwich Spa Lido are bringing a summer packed full of celebrations to the pool.

On June 11, there is a live

music evening at Little Al's cafe, featuring acoustic music from Dan Greenaway - a former Spa Lido lifeguard.

A special birthday party will be held for the lido on June 14 with a barbecue, pizza ovens and family friendly fun.

And, in a nod to the traditional lido entertainment prevalent in years gone by, a synchronised swimming display will keep visitors entertained on July 19.

Go to: [riversfitness.co.uk/droitwichlido](http://riversfitness.co.uk/droitwichlido) for more information on Droitwich Spa Lido - one of the UK's last remaining inland, open-air saltwater lidos.

THE POST Office in Winyates is set to close this weekend for a refurbishment.

The branch shuts its doors tomorrow (Saturday, May 31) and will reopen under new management in July.

In the interim, alternative branches include Matchborough Post Office and Furze Lane Post Office.

# Granddad inspires Matt's marathons

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

**A DETERMINED 19-year-old from Redditch has completed an extraordinary challenge by running seven marathons on seven consecutive days to raise cash for Alzheimer's Research UK.**

Matthew Smith from Hunt End undertook the feat in tribute to his granddad John Smith who is living with dementia.

He kicked off his challenge with the Shakespeare Marathon in Stratford-upon-Avon on April 27, finishing the race - his first ever official marathon - in just over four and a half hours.

He then powered through six more marathon-distance runs around Redditch, with his final 26.2-mile effort completed on May 3 at Arrow Valley Country Park. For the final one, he was cheered on by friends, family, and fellow runners from the local parkrun community.

Matthew, an experienced casual runner, trained for four months - on and off - for the gruelling week-long test of endurance, determination, and heart.

He said: "I'm raising money for Alzheimer's Research UK because my Poppa has been suffering with Alzheimer's for a number of years.

"We've had to watch him lose the identity of the great man he is.

"Running this challenge gave me a way to fight back - to raise awareness and help fund research that could one day lead to a cure."

Each day brought a new route and a fresh set of physical and mental hurdles.

From long runs along the canal towpaths to 106 laps around Abbey Stadium's track, and evening circuits of Morton Stanley Park, Matthew's creative planning meant his friends and family could regularly join in and support him on his journey.

Matthew added: "Some days were incredibly tough, but I tried to stay as positive as possible.

"I just kept telling myself: take it one step at a time.

"The goal has always been to raise as much awareness and money as I can."

Matthew is now urging the local



community and beyond to support his campaign by donating to his JustGiving page. So far, he has already raised more than £3,000 but he wants to generate as much as possible for the cause.

Visit: [justgiving.com/page/matt-smith7in7](http://justgiving.com/page/matt-smith7in7) to pledge cash - every penny raised will go directly to Alzheimer's Research UK.

**Matthew Smith ran seven marathons in seven days for Alzheimer's UK in tribute to his granddad John Smith who is living with dementia. s**

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Charity Number 1163874



# Nurses' insight to war stories

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

**TWO NURSES at The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital (ROH) in Northfield have paid a visit to a retired peer to hear her stories of working at the medical centre during the Second World War.**

Joy McCliskie shared her memories of the ROH during the war with two current nurses – Sophie Gibson and Helen Sargeant – at Mercia Grange care home in Sutton Coldfield where she now lives.

The now 101-year-old retired nurse worked at the ROH from 1940 to 1948, first on the wards and then later in the outpatients department which was located on Broad Street at the time.

Much of her nursing career took place during the Second World War – a very different time to be a nurse. Sophie and Helen heard about Joy's work during those years, from the use of frames for turning spinal patients to warming beds with stone hot water bottles and wearing tin hats when on night duty.

Michael McNelis, home



ROH nurses Sophie Gibson, left, and Helen Sargeant, right, met with Joy to exchange memories. s

manager at Mercia Grange, said: "Giving older people an opportunity to reminisce is at the heart of everything we do, so when the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital team reached out to us, we were excited to invite them in for a chat.

"Joy's time with Sophie and Helen brought back many happy memories for her, and we hope it'll inspire many others to follow in her footsteps."

Alongside the visit, the pair of ROH nurses have reacted to Joy's NHS stories in a

video available to watch now. Visit this story on our website to hear Joy's stories firsthand and the current nurses' reactions.

While the daily roles of nurses may have changed over the decades, nursing remains the lifeblood of the NHS. Nurses work incredibly hard to care for the many patients who are treated at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, delivering compassionate care and helping patients regain their mobility, independence and quality of life.

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LEFT: Stonemason Ben Curry with Paddy Blacker who had a go at some pointing.



RIGHT: Richard Chapman has a go at some banker masonry. Pictures by Tristan Harris. © Bullivant Media Group Ltd.



St John's Church members Ian Reading, Helen Harvey, Sheila Vincent, Hilda Roxborough, Evelyn Reston and Kim Cranb find time for tea and cake.



Ian Ceney with his polystyrene model showing how the spire stands tall.

# Have-a-go insight into project

**THERE** was the chance to find out more about Bromsgrove's St John's Church Spire Project on Saturday, including the opportunity to have a go at some traditional trades.

A Cake and Coffee concert was held at the historic church with The Royal Birmingham Conservatoire and then the church opened its doors for the journey of discovery.

As well as meeting the Spire Project team, people could view a demonstration by Ian Ceney in Engineer's Corner to show why the spire has lasted for 500 years, thanks to counterbalance weights.

There was also the opportunity to have a go at lime pointing which secures the stones in place.

In Stonemason's Corner with Lewis Allard and Michael Curry,

people could learn about the materials and stone used in the project and have a go at carving a piece of sandstone.

Visitors could also engage with architect Stephen Oliver and study the technical drawings to understand what has been happening on the spire and the plans to fully restore it.

And there was the chance to chat with historian Simon Henderson and hunt the vicar's keys, view photos of the church's pair of peregrine falcons taken by a local enthusiast and talk to the team about how the cash was raised and is being spent.

Michael told the Standard: "It's great to see people getting involved and taking a real interest."

"The lime pointing and masonry activities give a real insight into what is happening and what will

be going on in the next five or six weeks."

He said many of the processes being used at St John's had not changed much over the years.

"Stone was always sawn by hand and some of it is done by machine but most of the tasks, including the shaping of the spire will be done as it has been for the past 300 to 400 years," he added.

The Spire Appeal Project is funded and supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, National Churches Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Rotary Club of Bromsgrove, the Bromsgrove Society, the Bromsgrove Institute Trust, Bromsgrove Court Leet and generously supported by many individuals.

Another open day, with a Cake and Coffee Concert is set to be held at St John's Church on July 12.



Jo Slade and Sheila Vincent with some of the lovely homemade cakes on offer.

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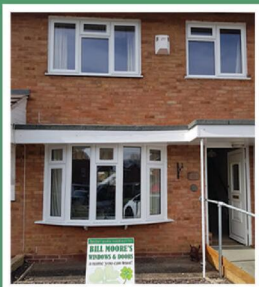


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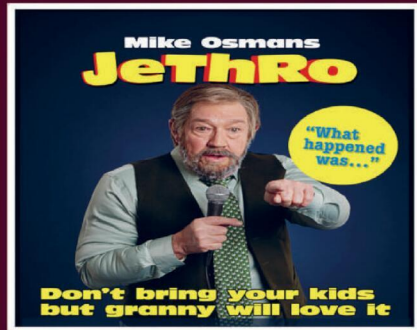
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# Aisle come to you!

## Bride moves wedding to Grandmother's home



Hilda enjoying the wedding reception. s



Hilda and Rachel celebrate the occasion. s

A GRANDAUGHTER had her wedding moved to her grandmother's Alcester care home to ensure the whole family were able to celebrate.

Rachel Scott had originally planned to have her big day in Oxfordshire but, after finding out her grandmother Hilda Watts was unable to travel, decided to move her wedding to Cheery Tree's instead.

The bridal party consisted of Hilda's three daughters Susan, Patricia - the bride's mother - and Sheila.

Rachel's brother John and a couple of close friends were also present at the wedding.

Activities lead Carly Marshall said: "Everyone dressed up in their wedding outfits and Hilda was dressed up in her beautiful grandmother of the bride outfit - and wow she looked the part.

"She was so delighted to have some lovely red lipstick on and a beautiful bow in her hair.

"Rachel had saved and dried some flower petals from her grandmother's garden and Steven was known to buy Rachel frequent bouquets of flowers, so Rachel duly saved

and dried those petals too.

"This gave all the guests the opportunity to throw confetti at the bride and groom as is tradition."

After the photographs, the bridal party relaxed in the cupcake room with tea and coffee and plenty of cake.

Carly added: "It was a magical day and lovely that the family could make so many memories and include Hilda in such a special day.

"The event was filled with love, laughter, and a sense of togetherness, proving family bonds remain strong, no matter the circumstances.

"It was a beautiful reminder of how inclusive and meaningful celebrations can be when we go the extra mile to involve everyone we love.

"By the family bringing Rachel and Steven's wedding celebration into Cherry Trees, it created such a positive impact and a heart-warming idea for Hilda.

"The impact on Hilda has been huge, she is very excited to tell staff about her special day and the joy this celebration has given to Hilda is something you can't buy."

The bridal party after the ceremony. s



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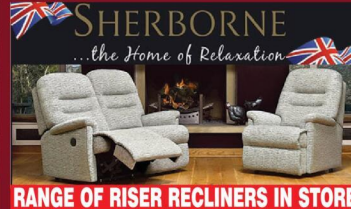
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## There's still time to sign up for the Race for Life

THE COUNTDOWN is on to Cancer Research UK's Race for Life in Redditch, with just two weeks to go until the big day.

Entries are open to all ages and abilities for the much-loved events which return to the town's Arrow Valley Park on Sunday June 8.

Money raised by Race for Life enables scientists to find new ways to prevent, diagnose and treat cancer – to bring about a world where everybody lives longer and has better lives, free from the fear of cancer.

Alanis Morata, Cancer Research UK's spokesperson in Redditch, said: "We're making a final call to people across West Midlands to join us at Race for Life, as their participation and contribution is so important.

"No matter how cancer affects us, life is worth racing for.

"Sadly nearly 1 in 2 of us will get cancer in our lifetime\* but all of us can support the research that will beat it.

"We're proud that Race for Life has had such a positive impact. Every pound raised supports our life-saving work, which has helped double cancer survival in the UK over the last 50 years."

There is also the Birmingham Pretty Muddy 5k and a Birmingham Pretty Muddy Kids at Cofton Park in Rednal on July 12.

Visit: [raceforlife.org](http://raceforlife.org) for more information on the Redditch Race For Life and the Pretty Muddy events.

# Hundreds stay the course to help bring in the cash



The women's 5k was won by Charlotte Asscough with Hollie Hanson second and Martha Blower third (all juniors). s

MORE than £11,000 was raised for Blood Cancer UK at this year's Bromsgrove Fun Run which was held on May 11.

Around 250 runners took on the course which started at Bromsgrove Rugby Club.

They could choose between the 5k and 10k course.

In the 10k men's event, James Marshall was first, Steven Dunsby was second and Ollie Wilson was third. The women's 10k was won by Louise Osbourne with Lucy Roebuck in second and Sian Hughes third.

In the men's 5k, Ted Saxton came home first, Archie Lynch was the runner-up (both juniors) and Tom Salisbury came third.

And the women's 5k was won by Charlotte Asscough with Hollie Hanson second and Martha Blower third (all juniors).

Organiser Nicole Harris from the Bromsgrove Blood Cancer UK branch said: "The weather, as every year, was excellent, but maybe not for the runners but we had made sure there were plenty of water stations.

"MP Bradley Thomas came to the run to support us and we were also delighted to have a support nurse from Blood Cancer UK who could answer any medical inquiries concerning blood cancers.

"It was a great atmosphere and all the runners were so supportive and would like to thank them all, as well as everyone who helped on the day or sponsored anyone for our event."

Many of the runners have been taking on the event for the cause for a very long time and the oldest was 81.

Many youngsters took part in the 5k with many finishing in high positions.

Next year's event will take place on May 10.

Anyone interested in helping out should email Nicole at: [nicoelharris@aol.com](mailto:nicoelharris@aol.com) for more information.



In the men's 5k, Ted Saxton came home first, Archie Lynch was the runner-up (both juniors) and Tom Salisbury came third. s

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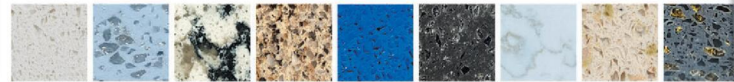
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# Newest hotel books in with more jobs

A NEW Travelodge has opened its doors in Bromsgrove, bringing a number of jobs to the town.

The 43-room hotel, in the building which formerly operated as the Ibis, opened its doors last Monday, boosting local employment.

The discount hotel chain was attracted to the venue's close proximity to Bromsgrove Railway Station and because the town has the M5 and M42 motorways not too far away.



The hotel has been revamped with a new look and, among the areas redeveloped from the previous occupier, are a newly-designed reception and rooms.

The hotel was acquired as part of Travelodge's UK development strategy to expand through rebrand acquisitions of existing hotels that meet its locational and branding criteria.

Steve Bennett, Travelodge's chief property and development officer, said:

"We're thrilled to officially open our new Bromsgrove hotel.

"It's a fantastic spot for both business and leisure travellers and we're excited to welcome guests to the newest addition to our growing UK portfolio."

The new Travelodge in the former Ibis hotel. Picture by Neil Gordon Media. s

# Controversial store wins positive welcome

A NEW Sainsbury's Local has opened in Droitwich's Copcut Rise estate, a couple of years after its somewhat controversial developmental application was approved.

The new supermarket is situated in a new business park within the 740-home Copcut Rise residential development.

The store has officially opened alongside a near 140 space car park which will serve other amenities within the business park including a drive-thru Costa Coffee, which opened earlier this month.

The new Sainsbury's also features eight Smart Charge ultra-rapid EV charging bays within the car park.

Developer, Witton Estates' proposals proved controversial back in 2023 due to a dislike of the store's design which was believed to not be in keeping with local architecture and a perceived over-estimation of how many jobs the supermarket would generate was also a cause for concern.

Fears were also raised by well over 100 residents on issues relating to increased traffic, a lack of infrastructure to support the proposal and fear it would result in more crime, anti-social behaviour, littering and pest infestations.

Despite this, plans were ultimately given the green light by Wychavon District Council in July 2023 with the supermarket and coffee shop now officially open for business.

Patrick Dunne, Sainsbury's chief property and procurement officer and managing director of Smart Charge, said: "All of us at Sainsbury's are passionate about providing good food for all of us



The new Sainsbury's Local store in Droitwich's Copcut Rise business park. s

and we want to bring more of it within easy reach of more customers wherever we can.

"We're delighted to have launched our newest Sainsbury's Local in Copcut Rise today, complete with Smart Charge - Sainsbury's ultra-rapid EV charging service - in the store's spacious customer car park.

"Our investment in Droitwich has cre-

ated jobs and will provide a convenient place for the local community to shop and charge their EVs for years to come."

Residents had their say on our Droitwich Standard Facebook page on the new Sainsbury's - there were many positive comments with one describing it as a 'community asset' and others saying how friendly the staff were.



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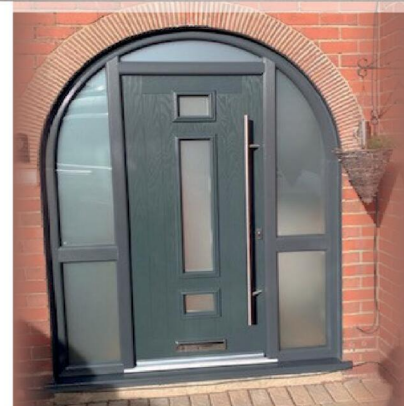
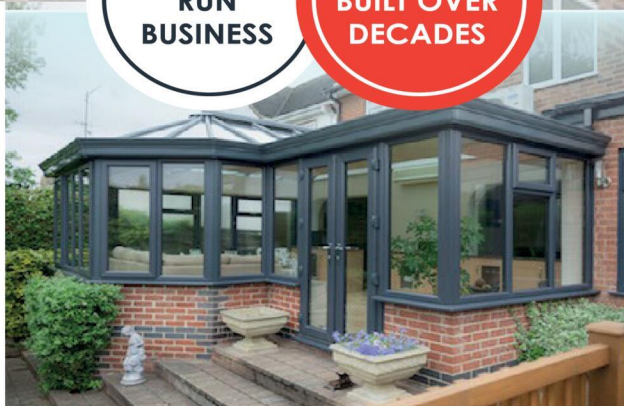


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# New link-up may be career boost

A NEW strategic partnership has been forged between Heart of Worcestershire (HoW) College and Rubicon Leisure to improve people's career pathways in leisure and hospitality.

The collaboration aims to bridge the gap between education and industry - an important aspiration for both organisations.

Rubicon Leisure promotes active, inclusive lifestyles on a daily basis through leisure and wellbeing, cultural experiences, hospitality and community events. Together, the partnership aims to raise awareness of the wide range of opportunities to HoW College students - particularly those studying Sport and Public Services courses. It will also provide valuable Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities for staff and promote Rubicon Leisure's services and to the wider community.

As part of the three-year partnership, both organisations will collaborate to enhance student understanding of soft and transferable skills, support curriculum development, and offer real-world learning experiences.

The agreement includes Rubicon Leisure providing guest lectures, skills sessions, industry placements and participation in curriculum-focused employer forums.

Michelle Dowse, Principal and CEO at HoW College, said everyone was delighted with the launch of the strategic partnership.

"As two anchor institutions in the community, it's great we now have the opportunity to open doors for our students to explore rewarding careers within hospitality and leisure."

"The collaboration will support our students with relevant skills and experiences, whilst also helping to strengthen our curriculum through valuable employer insight."



Ben Clawson-Chan, Rubicon Leisure's managing director, added: "We're incredibly proud to be partnering with Heart of Worcestershire College on this exciting initiative."

"At Rubicon Leisure, we're passionate about inspiring our communities to live happier and healthier lives, and this partnership strengthens that mission."

"By working together, we can help equip young people with the skills, confidence and experience they need to thrive in the leisure industry, while also supporting the wellbeing of the wider community."

Statistics show the UK hospitality industry is facing a persistent shortage of staff, with a significant number of vacancies.

Visit: [howcollege.ac.uk](http://howcollege.ac.uk) for more on HoW college and: [rubiconleisure.co.uk](http://rubiconleisure.co.uk) for more on Rubicon Leisure.

**Heart of Worcestershire College and Rubicon Leisure representatives, including Bridget Robinson, Scott Brinkworth and Mo Horan (back) and Ben Clawson and Michelle Dowse (front). Picture by Heart of Worcestershire College.**



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The former classmates met up for the annual reunion which has been taking place for the past 12 years. s

## Remembering their old school days

FORMER class mates from Rubery Council School - now Colmers - met up for their latest reunion.

The idea for the regular get-togethers came 12 years ago and the participants are now in their late 80s or early 90s.

The then pupils at some interesting school years, which included spending many afternoons in the shelters, during the war.

They still managed to achieve some influential and interesting roles in both interna-

tional and UK activities.

Among them was a nuclear scientist lost to the United States in the early 50s, a radar technician and tank commander during national service, an Olympic judge in the field of gymnastics, teachers and headteachers, plus company directors in the field of engineering.

Organiser Paul Trantor said: "We say to all children at Colmers - we have shown you the way, it is now up to you."

# Chance to shape future of town

by **Ashleigh Osborne**  
ashleigh.osborne@bullivant-media.com

**EVENTS to help people respond to a public consultation on the development of Redditch have been scheduled at nine locations across the town.**

The 'issues and options' consultation began last Thursday, starting the process to make Redditch's next local plan to guide development up to 2043.

### Hitting the road

Now Redditch Borough Council has announced a series of roadshow events where its planners will be on hand to answer questions and help people get to grips with the issues under consultation, which is running until July 3.

Redditch Borough Council Leader and portfolio holder for regeneration and environmental services, Coun Sharon Harvey, said: "It's important people in Redditch can take part in deciding what the next phase of Redditch's development will look like

and this roadshow is part of our work to support residents to participate.

"We need to know what people really think about the issues under consultation, so we want this process to be as open and accessible as possible.

"That's why we're not just providing a new easy-to-use online platform but also more than 50 hours of daytime, evening, and weekend support across nine locations, where the people doing the work will be there to answer your questions."

### Session times

The roadshow begins at the Kingfisher Shopping Centre on Friday June 6, where officers will be on hand between Boots and Nationwide from 9am to 4pm, followed by Redditch Market on Saturday June 7, from 9am to 3pm.

The team will then make themselves available at Feckenham Village Hall from 10am to 6pm on Tuesday, June 10 and move on to Oakenshaw Community Centre between 3pm and 8pm on Wednesday June 11. They will then return to the town centre on Thursday June 12, where they will be

at Redditch Market from 9am until 3pm.

They will round off the week at the Green Fair at Arrow Valley Country Park from 11am to 7pm on Saturday, June 14.

After that they will visit the Windmill Centre in Crabbs Cross from 9am to 2.45pm on Monday, June 16, followed by evening sessions at Winyates Community Centre on Wednesday, June 18, and then Woodrow Meeting Rooms on Thursday June 19 - both these events will run from 4pm to 8pm.

Finally, they will go to Morton Stanley Cafe from 10am to 3pm on June 21.

### Where to read the plan

Reference copies of the consultation document and information to take away will be available at the events, alongside the planning officers.

To find out more and take part, visit: redditchbc.gov.uk/redditchplan or the council's Customer Services at George Walk in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, Redditch Library or Woodrow Library, until the closing date of July 3.



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# 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/](http://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](http://worcestershire.gov.uk/webcasts) for the full webcast of the cabinet appointment meeting and to access recordings of previous and upcoming council meetings.

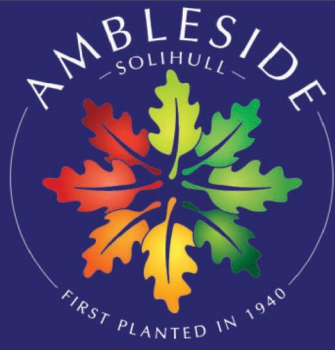
The next full council meeting is scheduled for July 10.

# Check out our E-Editions!



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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

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

## HARD

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

# 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.

## Men's & women's World Cup top scorers

**G I N E R M A D O C I A S T O**  
**A L E K K A R L A E L S A A R**  
**R Y I M E E T A N O C I L V E**  
**S O R S R L H T R R E U A C S**  
**L K L O E L O M E L L S S H I**  
**A V E S H M I A S M U E O L L**  
**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	
12		13			14				
15				16		17			
18				19			20		
21									
							22		

## ACROSS

- Blackleg (4)
- Power of command (10)
- Contour line of equal temperature (8)
- Uniform (4)
- Climb (6)
- To moderate (6)
- Let (6)
- Strangeness (6)
- Sore on the eyelid (4)
- Middling (8)
- Merge (10)
- Require (4)

## DOWN

- Compatible (10)
- Blemish (4)
- Obvious (6)
- Allow (6)
- Respected (8)
- Twirl (4)
- Voters (10)
- Coming from the east (8)
- Lower (6)
- Severe trial (6)
- Break suddenly (4)
- 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



# 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
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

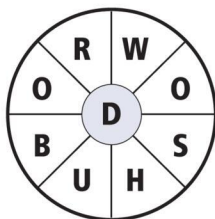
# CODEWORD

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											I			
B	4		2			12			16		2		16	
C											M			
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						16	14	4	16		4		10
Q														
R	4	22	17	18				4			11	8	16	
S														
T	9		16			20	24	8	5	9	6	6		20
U	5											4		9
V														
W	8	21	8	25	5	16	23	8			11	17	4	20
X														
Y	1													
Z		M									I			

# 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.

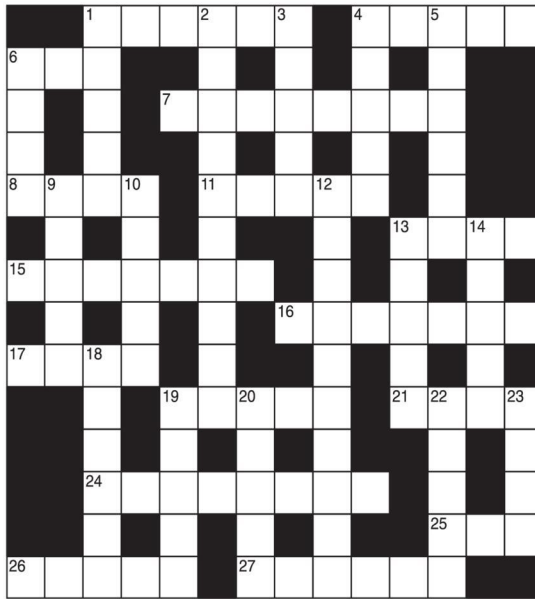


How you rate  
 6 words: average  
 9 words: good  
 12 words: very good  
 15 or more: excellent.

# 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

ACROSS: 1 Weevil; 4 James; 6 Ash; 7 Peep Gynt; 8 Acts; 11 Feste; 13 Bran; 15 Abilene; 16 Swithin; 17 Envy; 19 Pro; 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 Silky; 12 Trowbridge; 13 Bates; 14 Alice; 18 Viking; 19 Proms; 20 Inset; 22 Unde; 23 Tom's.

## General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Scab; 8 Leadership; 9 Isotherm; 10 Even; 12 Ascent; 14 Temper; 15 Leased; 17 Oddly; 18 Style; 19 Mediocore; 21 Need; Down: 2 Consistent; 3 Blot; 4 Patent; 5 Permit; 6 Esteemed; 7 Spin; 11 Electorate; 13 Easterly; 16 Demean; 17 Ordeal; 18 Snap; 20 Open.

## Crossword

BRUSHWOOD: Salvatore Schillaci, Hisiso Storchkov, Birgit Prinz, Davor Suker, Sun Wen, James Rodriguez, Sissi, Garrncha, Paolo Rossi, Michelle Akers, Miroslav Klose, Ann-Kristin Aaronson, Oleg Salenko, Homare Sawo, Mario Kempes  
 UNIVERSAL: Gary Lineker, Marta, Thomas Muller, Ronaldo, Celia Sasic, Eusebio

## Wordwheel Pathfinder

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

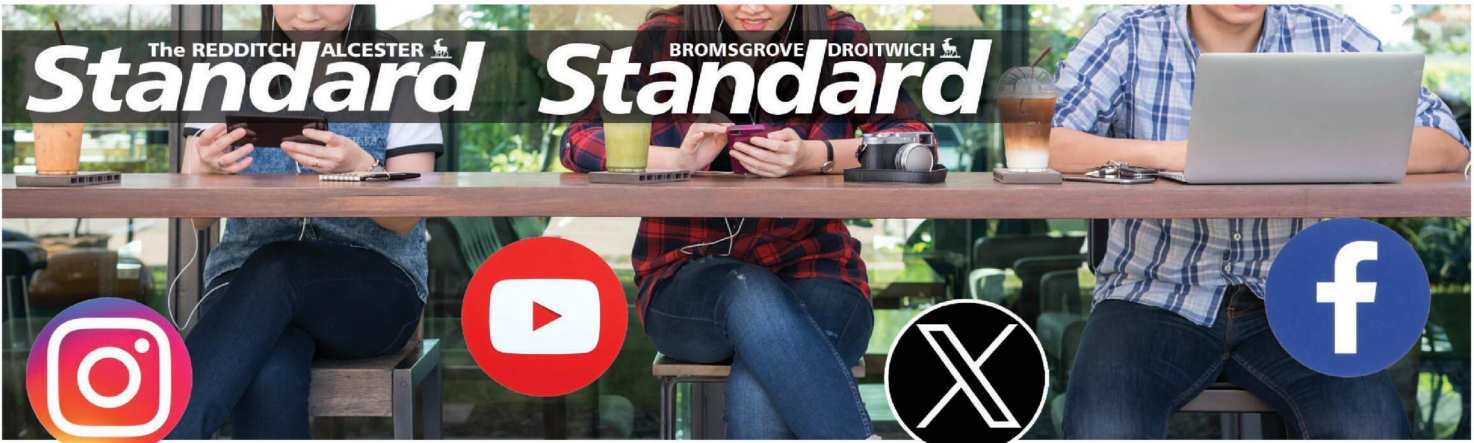
## Ladder Codeword

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

Hard

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

Easy  
Sudoku



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Something for *everyone* to enjoy!



## BORDERS COUNTRY VERA'S NORTHUMBRIA & BARNARD CASTLE

Departing Mon 1 Sep '25

On this five-day break, we journey to some of the filming locations for the TV series Vera along the Tyneside Coast to discover the dramatic beauty and heritage of the North East, from Barnard Castle to the Durham Dales and the rugged Scottish Borders.

**SO MUCH INCLUDED...**

- ✓ Return coach travel **from Redditch**
- ✓ 4 nights at the Leonardo Hotel, Newcastle Quayside (JG3 rating) with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ Blue Badge guided tour of Vera's Northumbria (Amble, Newbiggin, Blyth, Seaton Sluice, St Mary's Island, Tynemouth, Whitley Bay & Newcastle-upon-Tyne)
- ✓ Blue Badge guided Borders Country tour (Ford, Etal, Coldstream, Kelso & Jedburgh)
- ✓ Blue Badge guided tour of the Durham Dales, North Pennines, Barnard Castle & Teesdale

**5 Days by Coach only £429**  
Single Supplement £125



## CALL THE MIDWIFE KENT & CANTERBURY

Departing Mon 28 Jul '25

Pedal back in time for this Call the Midwife backstage tour at Chatham Dockyard, where we're led through the recognisable cobbled streets. We then explore Canterbury, along with the chance to visit Sandwich and Whitstable.

**SO MUCH INCLUDED...**

- ✓ Return coach travel **from Redditch**
- ✓ 4 nights at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham (JG2+ rating) with breakfast & dinner
- ✓ Admission to Chatham Dockyard & Call the Midwife Locations Tour (with a goody bag for each person)
- ✓ Excursion to Canterbury

Optional excursion to Sandwich & Whitstable (£12pp)

**5 Days by Coach only £419**  
Single Supplement £75



## YORK, YORKSHIRE STEAM TRAIN & SETTLE TO CARLISLE RAILWAY

Departing Sun 3 Aug '25

On this break we are treated to nostalgic experiences aboard the preserved Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway and the Settle-Carlisle Railway and explore historic York, home to an array of fascinating sights plus the award-winning National Railway Museum.

**SO MUCH INCLUDED...**

- ✓ Return coach travel **from Redditch**
- ✓ 4 nights at the Leonardo Hotel, Bradford (JG3+ rating) with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ Heritage train journeys on the Embsay & Bolton Abbey Steam Railway & the Settle-Carlisle Railway
- ✓ Excursions to York & Grassington

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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 assistance 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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Enjoy Vicky, you will be greatly missed by us all here at Thomas Brothers!  
**Lots of love always and thank you**  
xxxx

**DEATHS**

**HEATH**

(nee Mulvaney)  
**Mary Elizabeth 'Maura'**

Sadly passed away on Thursday 24th April 2025, aged 71 years Resident in Redditch formerly from Rubery

Much loved by Walter, Beloved Mum to Nicky, Simon, Daniel and Kerry. Maura will be lovingly remembered by all of her family and friends.

A Requiem Mass will take place at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church on Thursday 5th June, 2025 at 10.30 a.m. Donations if desired to The British Heart Foundation may be sent to

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**DEATHS**

**Michael Darby  
Doreen Darby**



It is with deep sadness we announce the sudden passing of Doreen on 13th May and Mick on 17th May.

Loving Parents to Karen and Phil, Proud Grandparents to Ema, Stacey, Mark and Great Grandparents to Nate & Atryu. A funeral service will take place on 11th June at 11am at Waseley Hills Crematorium, New Inns Lane, Rubery B45 9TS.

Family flowers only, donations if desired to Princess of Wales Community Hospital (Bromsgrove District Nurses)

All enquiries to James Giles & Sons Ltd, Bromsgrove (01527 872318) Droitwich (01905 783188) Studley (01527 852213)

**DEATHS**

**TONGUE**

**Betty**

Passed away peacefully on Thursday 8th May 2025, aged 97 years.

A much loved Mom, Nan and Great Grandma.

She will be sadly missed by all of her family and friends.

A service to celebrate Betty's life will take place at Our Lady Of Mount Carmel Church on Monday 16th June 2025 at 12.30pm, followed by burial at the Abbey Cemetery.

Family flowers only please, donations if desired to Dementia UK may be sent to

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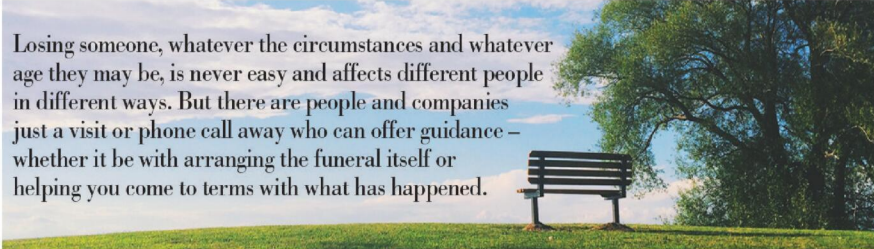
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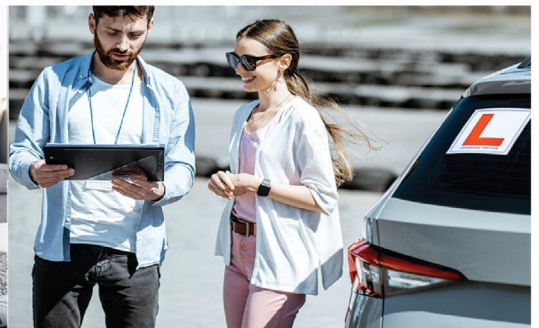


Losing someone, whatever the circumstances and whatever age they may be, is never easy and affects different people in different ways. But there are people and companies just a visit or phone call away who can offer guidance – whether it be with arranging the funeral itself or helping you come to terms with what has happened.



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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### PUBLIC NOTICES

#### Warwickshire County Council

**ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984**  
Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

**MORTON BAGOT ROAD, MORTON BAGOT**  
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from its junction with A4189.

**Reason for Order:** To enable works to replace telegraph pole.

**Order Commences:** 19 June 2025 for up to 18 months.

**Anticipated Completion:** 19 June 2025.

**Access & Diversion:** Morton Bagot Road, Oldberron Road, Redditch Road, Hardwick Lane, Wootton Wawen Road and vice versa.

**Contractor:** MJ Quinn, Tel: 01543 547 118.

For all of the above temporary orders, pedestrian access to and egress from properties and land situated adjacent to the length of road to be closed will be maintained at all times. Vehicular access will be maintained where possible.

To report any problems with these works or for further details of our current & planned roadworks visit our website [warwickshire.gov.uk/roadworksmap](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/roadworksmap) or call us 01926 412515.

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 30 May 2025

### PUBLIC NOTICES

#### JACQUELINE CONNELL Deceased

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 anyone having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the deceased, late of 15 Purshall Close, Redditch, B97 4PD, who died on 17/03/2025, must send written particulars to the address below by 31/07/2025, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests notified.

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# Ingram celebrates 100th podium in BTCC on track at Snetterton

by **Aaron Sutcliffe**  
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

**BTCC:** TEAM Vertu achieved another three podium finishes in the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) at Snetterton.

Title contender Tom Ingram finished second in race one before Adam Morgan and Tom Chilton both stood on the podium in race two.

However, the Droitwich-based team just missed out on a top-three place in the final race as Ingram had to settle for fourth.

Ingram achieved his 100th podium finish in the BTCC with his result in race one and sits second in the drivers' standings on 117 points behind early leader Ash Sutton (132 points).

However, the Coventry driver could not hide his frustration after suffering a potentially costly DNF in race two.

Ingram said: "In the end it's been alright, but I'm kicking myself over race two as that one was down to me.

"Despite that, we've scored decent points from a second and a fourth, and it could certainly have been a lot worse than it was.

"Even though the car wasn't perfect in race one, I really enjoyed the battle with Ash before taking second, and then in the final race, having more hybrid and being able to deploy it at a lower speed made a massive difference.



"It was really enjoyable and it could have been even better if we'd not picked up a bit of damage from the incident with Jelley.

"Hitting 100 podiums this weekend is something I probably didn't expect when I joined the BTCC grid and whilst I want to add more wins and more championships to it, it's a nice number to reach."

Team Vertu headed into the weekend having secured a podium finish in every race of the season so far.

And Ingram's second-place finish in the first race stretched Vertu's podium run to seven races.

Further back, Morgan placed sixth and Chilton seventh while debutant Ryan Bentsley finished 16th.

The team substituted Touring Cars racer Bentsley in for Michael Snetterton for all three races at Snetterton.

And Vertu backed up their opening race podium with another two in the second race.

Both Morgan and Chilton stepped onto the podium with second and third-place finishes respectively although a rare error from Ingram saw him spin and crash out at turn one with Bentsley down in 18th place.

Vertu saw their podium streak come to an end in the third and final race of the weekend.

However, Ingram produced a magnificent drive from the back of grid to finish fourth despite an early scare after he was hit by the spinning car of Stephen Jelley.

Further back, Morgan placed 15th with Chilton 18th and Bentsley 20th.

Vertu remain top of the teams standings on 231 points with Napa Racing UK just behind on 218 points.

Bentsley added: "I'll admit that I was nervous coming in about the potential of being at the back, and I'd prepared myself for the fact that it was possible given how late the deal was and the fact that I'd had no time in the car.

"I just wanted to have fun and see what I could do in this championship, and I feel the only thing I was really lacking was seat time.

"When I look at the data, I can see that I'm losing time in the high-speed sections of the track where it's all about confidence and that comes with time in the car.

"However, I can't thank Team Vertu enough as everyone has been so welcoming and has really helped me learn as much as possible.

"In the final race when it was all kicking off in front of me, I just wanted to get my elbows out and get involved as the racing around me was just bonkers.

"The whole experience has been brilliant."

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

**Tom Ingram achieved his 100th podium finish in the BTCC at Snetterton. Picture by Darren Price.**

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