

DROITWICH Standard

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Friday, November 21st 2025 Week 47

 droitwichstandard

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Urgent action needed on busy 'unsafe' road

by **Ryan Smith**
ryan.smith@bullivantmedia.com

CALLS have been made for a central refuge on an 'unsafe' road in Droitwich.

The bid for a safe crossing near the BP Garage on Worcester Road is being led by Coun Richard Morris, but Worcestershire County Highways has claimed this would be unviable and suggested alternative measures.

Coun Morris, who is also the Wychavon District Council leader, first set up a petition calling for safety measures by the BP Garage back in 2023, which gained 458 signatures.

The document said the measures, including a safe crossing, would be needed to prevent accidents from happening, describing the area as a complex and potentially dangerous situation.

Coun Morris told the Standard: "Many Residents tell me they feel unsafe crossing by the garage, whether they are crossing to shop, catch the bus, school children for School or dog walkers, there is a high number that look to cross here.

"Crossing is not easy due to the turning for Primsland Way, the bus stop and the garage."

Others who have backed the peti-



tion have taken to Facebook to express concerns about the road's safety.

One said: "There needs to be a crossing - I have seen near misses where people cross for the bus stop

and cars are travelling fast down towards the roundabout."

Another resident who backs the need for a central refuge added: "As well as providing a safe spot to cross, it will hopefully see a reduction in

those who come down at speed.

"When I walk down, I sometimes think it's only a matter of time before someone will get hit by a car or there'll be a driver who loses control."

Coun Morris said a member of Worcestershire County Council's highways team had written to him to say the carriageway was only 8.5metres wide at the location, and a minimum width of 9.5metres was needed. Without that extra length, a central refuge could not be installed.

He added the highways team had suggested a controlled crossing or a dropped pedestrian crossing could be among the possibilities.

Dropped crossings, according to Coun Morris's correspondence with highways, cost around £4,500, while a Toucan crossing would cost more than £200,000 to install.

However, Coun Morris said, following Highways' feedback, he would continue to push for the central refuge, understanding the costs and keeping traffic flow and double yellow lines to support visibility.

Worcestershire County Council has been approached for further comment but the Standard had not received a response yesterday at the time of going to press.

Visit this story at: droitwichstandard.co.uk for the latest updates.

Calls have been made for increased safety measures on the Worcester Road. s

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Jail terms for those involved in campaign to steal vehicles

A GANG of car thieves have been sentenced at court for their roles in a campaign that involved stealing vehicles from north Worcestershire.

The four have each been found guilty of one count of conspiracy to commit burglary (home) and one count of conspiracy to steal motor vehicles in November and December 2023, including several in Redditch and Bromsgrove.

Eid Ajam, 20, of Blenheim Road, Solihull, and Sufian Younis, 21 of Sandy Hill Road, Solihull were convicted at Worcester Crown Court last Friday.

Ajam was sentenced to two years and 11 months for conspiracy to steal motor vehicle and two years and eight months to run concurrently for conspiracy to commit burglaries. He will serve two years, 11 months in total.

Younis was sentenced to two years and seven months for conspiracy to steal motor vehicles and two years and four months concurrently for conspiracy to commit burglaries. He will serve two years, seven months in total.

A 16-year-old from Birmingham, who cannot be named for legal



LEFT: Eid Ajam, will serve two years, 11 months in total. s

RIGHT: Sufian Younis was jailed to two years and seven months. s

to complete a rehabilitation requirement and told not contact the others for a period of 12 months.

Flynn was sentenced to one year and three months, suspended for two years, for conspiracy to commit burglaries and one year and ten months concurrently for conspiracy to steal motor vehicles, which was also suspended for two years.

The gang of four were responsible for 11 offences in total - six in Redditch and Bromsgrove, four in Solihull area and one in Leamington. They were arrested from a vehicle that was linked to the offences.

Det Con Jodi Lothian, of north Worcestershire CID, said: "We are pleased to get these custodial sentences and guilty verdicts for this car key burglary gang who targeted the north Worcestershire area in 2023, concluding our investigation.

"West Mercia Police take vehicle crime seriously and will continue to hunt down and prosecute those stealing vehicles from our force area."

reasons, and Alfie Flynn, 18, of Grimshaw Close, Birmingham were both sentenced for the same offences on October 17.

The 16-year-old was placed under a curfew for two months and ordered

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See page **38**

Plea to help Jam after diagnosis



by **Ryan Smith**
ryan.smith@bullivanmedia.com

A DROITWICH pub landlord has issued a desperate plea as he tries to help a family member live with terminal brain cancer as long as he can.

James Davies, known as Jam, has been recently diagnosed with Grade 4 Astrocytoma, an aggressive form of cancer.

The 46-year-old from Worcester has been given just 12 to 18 months to live without chemotherapy and radiotherapy or five years with treatment.

James and partner Kirsty Howard have four children between them, the youngest being just four years old, along with a one-year-old grandson. They are desperate to raise funds for treatment overseas to help him live for as long as he can.

However, the cost of the treatment could be as much as £50,000, meaning they need to raise funds as quick-

ly as possible to secure the space.

To help in this effort, Kirsty's cousin Andy Docherty, landlord at The Red Lion pub in Droitwich, will hold a fundraiser to help raise the cash needed for James.

On Sunday, December 6, The Red Lion will be holding a family day with an auction and raffle.

Andy described James as a much-loved family member.

He said: "Your generosity will help give this wonderful man a fighting chance.

"Thank you so much for your support - it truly means the world to our family."

He has asked for businesses, groups, and kindhearted people who may be able to donate items for the auction and raffle.

James's partner, Kirsty, said: "We are all so heartbroken, having recently been told the worst news a family can hear.

"Jam has his own business, Worcester Tree Surgeon, and he loved his job, but has now had to stop working.

"He'll never get rid of the

cancer - we've got to prolong his life as long as we can and create happy memories.

"We have a young boy, so even if he manages to live another five years, he will only be nine - we need Jams around longer than that.

"Our lives just crashed when we found out the cancer was grade 4 - we were so positive that things weren't going to be too bad and it's heartbreaking when there's nothing you can do.

"We are just looking at all the different options.

"At the moment, Germany is looking like our best bet.

"I'm doing so much research, we're all blind to what we're going into, and we have to get this right.

"I've never felt so desperate in all my life, but we are so grateful from the bottom of our hearts to everyone who's helped in this heart-breaking time."

A GoFundMe page has so far raised over £5,000 for James - visit <https://gofund.me/b2224df45> to donate.

James Davies, better known as Jam, with his family. s

News in brief

A DRIVER had a lucky escape when a car hit a bollard and the car flipped over onto its side just before 9am on Monday in Sanders Road, Bromsgrove.

Police, fire crews and an ambulance attended the incident which left the carriageway blocked.

The driver of the car and one passenger were checked by paramedics but - as neither needed hospital treatment - they were both discharged at the scene.

West Mercia Police confirmed no-one was arrested following the crash.

BROMSGROVE Police Safer Neighbourhood Team seized a car on Monday in Catshill which had no tax, no insurance and was linked to anti-social behaviour.

The force said: "Uninsured and untaxed vehicles aren't just illegal, they often contribute to wider issues like noise, reckless driving, and disruption in our neighbourhoods.

"This kind of behaviour affects everyone's safety and peace of mind."

Officers have appealed to residents aware of cars and vans being driven illegally, parked suspiciously or causing disruption to call them on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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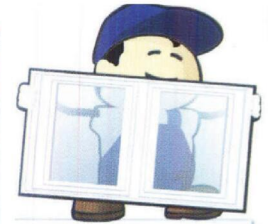
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Market kicks off an array of festivities

THE TWO-DAY Bromsgrove Christmas Market gets under way today (Friday) with a variety of stalls to suit all tastes.

The Friends of St Johns have joined forces with the Bromsgrove Festival to organise the community-focused event at the top end of the High Street by Argos and kick off the town's festive celebrations.

Stalls will be run by independent, local traders selling their much-loved gifts, decorations and produce and the markets will, once again, be supporting local charities.

Items on offer include household and fashion, handmade plush toys, picture frames, decorated vases, sewn items, candles, Christmas decorations, advent calendars, gifts, jewellery, fudge, crystals and more.

Visitors can look forward to entertainment all day on Friday with DJ

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

Phil from Jammersley Entertainment getting everyone in the Christmas mood, along with games and giveaways.

At 11am, St John's School Choir will take centre stage. The students from Chadsgrove Educational Trust Specialist College will be joined by students from Alvechurch Middle and Fairfield First Schools for their much-loved 'Sign and Sing Performance' at 11.30am. The Chadsgrove College students will also be selling their wonderful Christmas decorations and gifts to support their life skills training.

The market also coincides with Bromsgrove's annual Christmas lights switch-on tomorrow (Saturday) when DJ Phil returns to host a busy day of Christmas music and performances.

At 12.30pm, the Rock Choir will be entertaining at the Christmas Market followed by the team from All and Sundry's panto 'Cinderella' at 1.30pm giving visitors a taste of their show.

Regular visitors to the Christmas Market will enjoy the return of Sounds of Steel at 2pm and the students from Stage Coach at 2.30pm.

At 3pm the Got to Sing Choir will showcase their lovely voices and local songbirds Vintage Class (VC) Singers will be performing singalong Christmas favourites from 4.30pm until the countdown to the light switch-on starts with a light and laser show.

The VC Sinfers will be back after the switch-on until the event finishes at 6pm.

Throughout the afternoon street entertainer Steve Kaos will be entertaining visitors with his unicycle jug-



Town Crier Kevin Ward, Jo Slade from the Friends of St John's, Leigh Blakeman from the Vintage Class Singers and Jules Evans will be spreading some seasonal cheer at the Bromsgrove Christmas Market. Picture by Tristan Harris. © Bullivant Media Group Ltd.

ling, street theatre and getting everyone into the Christmas spirit.

And tomorrow there will also be street food – a burger van, desserts and ice-creams, and fairground

rides for children. Visit this story online at bromsgrovestandard.co.uk for a full list of stalls and more on the market and the Christmas lights switch-on.

Santa visiting the Kingfisher Centre. s



Santa pops into town early to spread Christmas cheer

REDDITCH was full of festive smiles this week as Father Christmas made a surprise visit to the town centre, stopping off at shops, cafes, and offices to spread seasonal cheer and create some special content for local businesses.

Organised by Redditch Business Improvement District (BID), the visit formed part of this year's festive activities

leading up to the town's annual Christmas lights switch-on, which takes place from 5pm to 8pm next Saturday, November 29.

Santa will return to help switch on the lights alongside Gareth Gates, marking the official start of Redditch's Christmas celebrations.

During his walkabout, Santa also visited Honeybees

Nursery, where he delivered a bundle of brand new children's books kindly donated by Tesco.

The visit was met with delight by both shoppers and staff and many businesses took the opportunity to capture photos and videos for their own social media channels.

Speaking after the visit, Muj Rahman, BID manager, said:

"Bringing Santa into the town centre is about more than just festive fun – it's about supporting our local businesses, celebrating community spirit, and helping create moments that bring people together."

"It's been a fantastic day, and we can't wait to welcome everyone back for the Christmas Lights Switch-On later this month."

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Celebration of Winslow



The organisers of Edward Winslow Day are looking forward to next weeks event. s

CELEBRATIONS for Edward Winslow Day are under way ahead of the event's return next week.

A new exhibition looking into the history of Edward Winslow is open at Droitwich Spa Library and will remain there until November 30.

Winslow was a separatist and New England political leader who became a key figure among the Mayflower Pilgrims, becoming one of the first English natives to travel to what would become the United States.

Born in Droitwich in 1595 and baptised in St Peter's church in the town, Winslow grew up in a family which was deeply involved in the salt production trade, owning their own salt pit.

His education saw him attend King's School in Worcester, and he later became a printer in London.

In 1617, he travelled to Leiden, Holland, becoming a prominent member of the local English Puritan Church.

Three years later, he boarded the Mayflower, a ship that carried 102 passengers from England to the New World.

He was a founder of the colony at Plymouth, Massachusetts, and served as governor three times there.

In October 1646, he left the

New World and spent nine years in England, where he held minor offices under Oliver Cromwell.

In 1654, Winslow was chief of the three commissioners that Cromwell sent on his expedition against the West Indies.

However, in May 1655, he died of Yellow fever on board his ship between Hispaniola and Jamaica and was buried at sea.

The exhibition will be part of many ways the town will be celebrating the legendary pilgrim following the success of last year's inaugural Edward Winslow Day.

The event will now take place over three days from Thursday, November 27, to Saturday, November 29.

On November 27, there will be an American flag raising ceremony at St Richard's House at 11am, followed by a thanksgiving service at 6pm at St Peter's Church.

The American flag will be lowered at 2pm on Saturday, November 29.

There will also be music and entertainment at St Andrews Shopping Centre between 10am and 4pm on November 29, including line dancers and performances from the Salties Folk Trio, Voices Unlimited and the Worcestershire Folk Players.

And there will be a themed market in Victoria Square at the same time.

baked goods, produced by the team at St Chad's, stalls catering for children, a craft table offering 'make and take' activities and a tombola.

Rev Claire Turner from St Chad's Church said: "We will also be selling our legendary samosas over lunchtime and, last but by no means least, our raffle will feature a brilliant selection of prizes including hampers and vouchers."

All cash raised at the craft fair will go towards supporting the church's ongoing work and helping maintain this much-loved building for future generations.

A FABULOUSLY festive craft fair will take place at St Chad's Church in Rubery from 10am to 2pm next Saturday, November 29.

The event will be full of hand-made goodies with more stalls than ever.

Visitors will be able to pick up unique gifts and special cards for friends, family and loved ones.

Among the items on offer will be a variety of cards, jewellery, cakes, sewn items, wax melts, woodcraft, Christmas decorations, bags, toys and more.

There will also be refreshments throughout the day.

And there will be stalls selling

THERE will be a host of stalls at the Christmas Bazaar at All Saints Church Hall, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove.

The event will run from 2pm to 4pm next Saturday, November 29, with a variety of items on sale,

A TWILIGHT Christmas Market will take place from 4.30pm to 9pm on Thursday, November 27, at The Wellbeing Tree in Bromsgrove.

Admission is free to the event which will feature a variety of

including 'all things Christmas, jigsaws, books and fancy goods.

There will also be the popular white elephant stall, a raffle, tombola, cake sale and refreshments.

Admission is free.

stalls, including boozy hot chocolate, mulled wine, food stalls in the garden, live singing and children's crafts.

Call 01527 570838 for more information.



Michelle Roberts, Tony Maslen and Charley Thompson. Picture by Marcus Mingsins 4622020MMR Copyright Bullivant Media Group Ltd.



THERE will be plenty of festive fun and entertainment at the Rubery Christmas lights switch-on when it returns on Saturday, November 29.

The event runs from 9pm to 5.30pm at the usual venue outside the Co-op on New Road and it promises an afternoon of festive fun for all ages.

Entertainment will include live music from the Snow Sisters and Viva La Diva, alongside carol singers and more.

Visitors can enjoy food, beverage, and Christmas stalls, perfect for picking up seasonal treats and gifts.

Bromsgrove District Council leader, Coun Karen May, said: "Join in with an afternoon of music, magic, and merriment as Rubery lights up for Christmas.

"It is a wonderful tradition that brings our communities together, to bring in the festive season, with something for everyone to enjoy."

Father Christmas will also be making a special

appearance with his sleigh, delighting children and families as the countdown to the switch on, and Christmas, begins.

This event is supported by Bromsgrove District Council in partnership with local communities.

Ward member for Rubery South, Coun Esther Gray, said: "A huge thank you to Tony Maslen from Rubery Festival and everyone in our community who's working hard to make our switch-on possible.

"Your efforts help bring festive cheer to Rubery as we kick off the countdown to Christmas."

Ward member for Rubery North, Coun Peter McDonald, added: "I am delighted to see this event return to the streets of Rubery.

"I know our residents look forward to it each year and I hope as many people as possible turn out to enjoy it once again this year."

For more information, go to www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/events or contact Tony Maslen on 0121 457 9308 or 07505 174044.



The previous years concert. s

Seasonal songs aplenty

A CONCERT by Blackwell Concert Band will take place at St Andrew's Church in Barnt Green to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer Support.

Over the years, the event has helped raise £1,500 for the cause.

This year's concert takes place at 7.30pm on December 6.

A spokesperson for the band said: "This is always a fantastic way to start enjoying feeling more Christmassy, by relaxing and sitting back and enjoying a light variety of great live music."

Tickets cost £10 for adults and £5 for under 16s with all proceeds going to Macmillan.

They are available on the door by paying cash or card. Visit: blackwellconcertband.co.uk/upcoming-events for more on the event.

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A Ukrainian girl with a goodie box funded by the cafe in Bromsgrove. s

A UKRAINIAN cafe in Bromsgrove is bringing Christmas joy to youngsters in the war-torn country by funding thousands of festive goodie boxes.

The cafe at Bromsgrove Methodist Church Centre on the last Friday of every month, has raised more than £1,700 in its first year, with all proceeds sent to a charity in Ukraine to organise and distribute gifts.

As part of the 'Gift from Heaven' project, parents and children from Christian families fill boxes with meaningful gifts they wish to share with another child.

They are then distributed to youngsters in need across the country.

In total, 8,294 empty boxes were bought with the cash the cafe sent to Ukraine.

Boxes can include school supplies, toys and hygiene products, a bible and a letter from another child.

The project is led by cafe co-founder Svitlana Hlovatska's husband, Myroslav, a frontline medic in Ukraine and president of the charity that received the funds.

Svitlana said the children were absolutely delighted by the programme and the gifts they received.

She added: "We are deeply grateful to the people of England for their love, understanding and generosity - especially the visitors of the Ukrainian cafe who enjoy the meals prepared by our community."

"It brings us joy to gather together, to share stories and to build friendships between Ukrainians and English people."

The next cafe is 10am to 1.30pm next Friday, November 28.

Sending help to Jamaican twin

REDDITCH residents have pulled together to help their twin parish of St Elizabeth in Jamaica after Hurricane Melissa tore through the island, leaving homes destroyed and lives shattered.

St Elizabeth, twinned with Redditch Borough since 2006, has been hard hit, with local towns like Black River and Brompton suffering extensive damage and loss after the category 5 storm devastated the island with 185mph winds.

Worst-hit areas include Fyffes Pen, Cambridge, Cotterwood, Speculation, Luana and Front Hill.

Businessman Damian Simpson, of D&D Roofing Supplies, originally from Black River, is leading a grassroots campaign in Redditch to collect and ship essential supplies to affected families.

With infrastructure destroyed and many residents left without shelter, Damian and colleagues headed over to the area on Monday to donate their efforts to rebuilding and have taken aid barrels with them.

Essential items have been collected for the barrels, including rice, sugar, flour,



Damian Simpson, Edwan Rosa Valerio and Sam Player collected the barrels to be shipped.

tinned goods, pasta, toothpaste, batteries, and sanitary products, and the campaign is hoping to collect more.

The first shipments left Redditch this week and more is set to arrive in the coming weeks.

Damian said: "A lot of us in Redditch know people who are affected by this."

"Every contribution helps big or small. Thank you to everyone who has donated or is thinking of donating."

"A lot more is needed and you're very welcome, please just come talk to us."

The campaign, just launched, has seen generous support from local businesses and organisations including Redditch Masonic Lodge, Isaac's Food Bank,

TJ Security Systems, Huws Gray Redditch, and Paul Hodgkins.

Redditch's long-standing community ties to St Elizabeth, where a friendship link was first established in 1990, have seen Redditch Borough Council also join the appeal, with the authority providing additional collection points and promotional support.

The community is also hosting a concert fundraiser at St Stephen's Church next month, hosted by Jacko Melody.

There will be a DJ and Birmingham singer Claire Angel will be performing.

E m a i l : dd.roofingsupplies@gmail.com for more information.

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Family's tribute to 'shining light' Katie after city stabbing

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

TRIBUTES have been paid to a Northfield woman who died after a stabbing in Birmingham.

The family of Katie Fox, who was 34, described her as a 'shining light in their lives'.

Katie was taken to hospital with a serious injury to her neck after she was stabbed on Smallbrook Queensway but sadly died a few days later.

In the tribute, the family said: "Gone too soon Dear Katie, so beautiful and kind."

"A part of us was snatched away on that very fateful night, a part of us also vanished suddenly, when you passed away, leaving us all with such sadness and heartache."

"You were a shining light in our lives, you were so special in every way, you were everything a daughter could be and much more."

"Your loss to us has been so hard to bear and so hard to comprehend,



Katie Fox was described by her family as 'a shining light in their lives'.

The family thanked everyone who showed support during this difficult time and the paramedics, police, and ITU at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for their professionalism and companionship.

"We ask at this most difficult time that we be allowed to grieve the loss of our most precious daughter in peace and in privacy," they added. "God bless Katie, forever in our hearts."

Djeison Rafael aged 21, has been charged with Katie's murder and has been remanded until his next court appearance.

He will appear at Birmingham Crown Court on May 5, 2026.

A plea and trial preparation hearing will take place on January 16.

but we know that you are still with us and giving us the strength in every way. You are, our guardian angel. God bless you Katie, our special and gentle daughter."

Huge £65bn benefit bill is simply unsustainable

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They will pay the price for our failures to control spending and live within our means as a country.

One spending area Government must urgently get a grip on is the welfare bill.

The cost of disability and sickness benefits has increased by 40 per cent in real terms since 2013 and now stands at nearly £65 billion.

The Office for Budget Responsibility forecasts spending on disability and sickness benefits will reach a staggering £100 billion by 2030.

This is clearly unsustainable. In this scenario, £1 in every £4 of income tax will be spent on health and disability benefits, equivalent to almost £1,500 per year per person across the UK and more than the entire defence budget.

And here's another sobering stat from the Office for National

Statistics. More than 50 per cent of households in our country are taking more in welfare than they are paying in.

I do not believe for a second that anyone believes this is right. I certainly do not, which is why I voted to cut welfare spending by £23 billion.

The Conservative Party's plan that I voted for would deliver £23 billion in savings by reforming non-pensioner welfare including restricting welfare to UK citizens (with

exceptions to honour existing international treaties), reforming sickness and disability benefits by ending access for lower-level mental health conditions. It would also make greater use of face-to-face assessment, reform housing benefit, review the rates and exemptions from the Household Benefit Cap, limit the VAT subsidy for motability, reform job-seeking obligations and retain the two-child benefit cap.

Labour, Reform, Liberal Democrats did not support us on this. Why?

Because they're not serious about getting Britain working again.



Westminster Diary

Bradley Thomas MP
writes for The Standard



Bradley Thomas
Bromsgrove MP



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Support for MP's police station bid

A PETITION launched by MP Chris Bloore to get a front desk installed in the newly-redeveloped Redditch Police and Fire Station has amassed over 1,000 signatures.

This comes after politicians from across the political divide called for one last month.

Speaking in the House of Commons, Mr Bloore paid tribute to Redditch's hardworking neighbourhood policing team but said residents were rightly frustrated they now had to travel around 20 miles to speak face-to-face with an officer.

He has been supported by four borough councillors, Conservative leader Coun Matt Dormer, Independent Coun Joe Baker, leader Coun Sharon Harvey and Green Party Coun Claire Davies.

The councillors have written to West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion to address their concerns.

They said: "The initial impression is one of an office block with the service behind closed doors, remote and unapproachable.

"On your website you describe your vision as 'a people-led, tech-enabled, crime fighting service' with 'public first' listed as your primary value.

"For the people of Redditch, this means a police service which is friendly, accessible and easy to contact in times of need.

"Residents often complain filling in an online form is impersonal and they do not feel confident the information will be processed quickly and efficiently."

They have asked Mr Campion to consider how a public-facing service could be reinstated in Redditch and have pledged to work together to achieve this.

Visit christisbloore.co.uk/police-front-desk to sign the petition.

■ WHAT do you think? Would you like to see a front counter at Redditch Police Station? Or maybe you would prefer other methods be set up for community policing. Email editor@redditchstandard.co.uk with your views.

Raffle idea could help butcher's 'meat' costs

A MUCH-loved Bromsgrove butcher's is calling for help to replace their oven after one of their 'hardest years yet.'

Butcher's Block, which has raised thousands for local charities in the past, is putting itself first after finding itself in dire need of replacing its oven.

It is estimated to cost over £2,500 to replace the oven, so the popular butchers in the High Street is holding a raffle competition where entrants can win £400 worth of goodies.

The butchers opened seven years ago and is run by Michelle Holsey-Sheppard and her wife Lillith.

The couple said: "We love what we do, but things haven't always been easy.

"With insane energy costs, rates, rent, fluctuating product costs, and the relentless summer of roadworks all across Bromsgrove, it's made 2025 one of the hardest years in business yet.

"We are very proud of what we've brought to Bromsgrove, but we are at a constant stalemate where budgets for new equipment are concerned."

After raising over £6,000 for local causes over the last seven years, Michelle and Lillith said they felt embarrassed to do a fundraiser for themselves.

They added: "We've opened



Michelle Holsey Sheppard (right) and her wife Lillith have asked for help this Christmas. s

up to regulars about the difficulties in finding money to replace equipment, and many said they'd support us if we crowdfunding for a new oven.

"We've finally decided to put ourselves first and so doing our biggest raffle to date, with a prize pot value of over £400, all to help raise money to go to a new oven."

The raffle will feature prizes, including one of each of their festive hampers, a meal for two

with drinks at Verraco Lounge, and a bowling for five and games bundle from Hollywood Bowl Rubery.

Raffle tickets cost £5 per strip and will be drawn at the end of the day on December 20.

Despite raising cash for their own shop, the Butchers Block team will still be supporting local charities this Christmas, with a goodie bag collection for The Basement Project.

The shop is also having a

memory tree where people can hang a decoration in memory of a loved one with people able to donate to Ladies Fighting Breast Cancer if they wish.



Tickets for their raffle are available in store, or there is a GoFundMe link if people just want to donate.

Visit gofundme.com/f/new-oven-fund/ to donate or visit Butcher's Block Bromsgrove on Facebook for more information.

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- 18:20 - Indigo Arts
- 18:35 - Top Box
- 19:50 - Palace Theatre Pantomime
- 19:00 - Taylor Swift Tribute
- 19:30 - Gareth Gates Performance
- 20:00 - Finish



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Mum uses her experience to help families

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

A REDDITCH woman has grown a community of support for families with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) across the town.

Laura Jordan, founded SEND Support Redditch based at Holly Trees Family Hub, to create a welcoming space where parents and carers of children with SEND can come together, share their experiences, and feel understood.

Laura's journey began five years ago with her own children.

She said: "I was going through a difficult time myself with having three children with SEN, and I was really struggling."

Laura turned to the Pear Tree Family Hub's Understanding Your Child course, where she saw how



Parents at the family hub. s

much parents valued talking to each other about their experiences.

With encouragement from a family support worker, Laura connected with her local family hub, who welcomed the idea of starting a group.

Laura said: "Everyone at the hub have been so supportive and gone above and beyond to support me in what I do."

Today, with the help of a Worcestershire County Council Public Health Community Wellbeing Grant,

SEND Support Redditch has grown into a vital lifeline for families across the area.

The group offers weekly peer support sessions every Tuesday during term time, from 9.45am until 11.45am, a monthly SEND stay-and-play sessions for children and families, special events and a WhatsApp group for parents who can't attend in person.

Coun Satinder Bell, cabinet member with responsibility for health and wellbeing at Worcestershire County Council, said: "The early years of a child's life is a crucial window for development laying the foundations for a healthier life."

"Our family hubs play a vital role in helping families build resilience, find friendship, learn about parenting and access support."

"By investing in projects like SEND Support Redditch, we are helping to improve health outcomes across the county ensuring every child has the best possible start in life."



Natalie Raven Morris, founder and CEO of The Feeding Trust, with Bradley Thomas and a cheque from the National Lottery Awards For All to fund a community engagement officer. s

MP hails trust as 'beacon of hope'

BROMSGROVE MP Bradley Thomas visited The Feeding Trust in Alvechurch to learn more about the vital work supporting children with Paediatric Feeding Disorder (PFD), a complex condition which affects a child's ability to eat, drink, and meet their nutritional needs.

Mr Thomas met the charity's employees and parents, to discuss the challenges families face in accessing specialist support for PFD.

The discussion focused on how greater awareness and recognition of PFD at both a national and local level could improve outcomes for children and reduce pressure on health and education services.

Mr Thomas added he

learnt a lot about how complex PFD was, how poorly understood the issue was and heard first hand from a parent about how challenging it was to navigate the NHS for support.

"They described The Feeding Trust as a 'beacon of hope' - and I understand why having visited."

Michelle James, the parent of a child attending the feeding clinic, said it was an important opportunity to highlight the lack of NHS support and shine a light on the charity's vital role. She added: "The trust provides not only expertise but also a place where individuals and families can truly be heard, understood and supported."

Mr Thomas offered valuable advice on how the charity could raise awareness of PFD in Parliament and with local NHS commissioners.

Natalie Raven Morris, The Feeding Trust founder and CEO, said everyone was delighted to welcome Mr Thomas and appreciated his support in highlighting the urgent need for better understanding and pathways for children with feeding difficulties.

The charity plans to follow these discussions with new awareness schemes throughout next year.

Visit feedingtrust.org or follow [@thefeedingtrust](https://www.facebook.com/thefeedingtrust) on Facebook and Instagram for more on The Feeding Trust and its vital work.



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Monday 9th February - Friday 13th February	Was £249	NOW £204pp

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Friday 30th January - Monday 2nd February	Was £235	NOW £199pp
Friday 6th February - Monday 9th February	Was £249	NOW £204pp
Friday 27th February - Monday 2nd March	Was £259	NOW £219pp



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Your questions answered over council's new bin roll-out



Driver Shaun Hathaway and Coun Peter Whittaker with some of the new bins which are making their way across Bromsgrove district. Picture by Marcus Mingins 3725008MMR

OVER the past few weeks – and until next month – Bromsgrove District Council has been delivering new bins to 30,000 homes.

With the implementation, the Standard held a question and answer session with the authority's Assistant Director for Environmental Services, Simon Parry, to find out all residents need to know about the bins and their collections.

Q: What exactly are the changes being made to the bins?

A: We're replacing all old 'diamond' style bins, identifiable by the large pocket on the outside, starting with grey (residual waste) and green (recycling) bins. Brown garden waste bins will follow before the 2026 service restarts.

All new bins have grey bodies with coloured lids:

* Green lid: recycling (paper, card, cans, jars, bottles, tubs, trays, pots, lids)

* Grey lid: residual waste

* Brown lid: garden waste (for subscribers)

Q: How are the bins being created?

A: We're replacing bins round-by-round. Each round covers a geographical area, for green and grey bin collections two weeks.

New bins are delivered and assembled usually in advance, and old bins are broken down and collected immediately after they're emptied.

In this way we're replacing around 3,000 bins a week for 20 weeks, plus additional 'mop-up' collections for missed or delayed bins.

Q: Do I have to do anything as part of the change?

A: No. When it's your turn, you don't need to do anything very special.

Just put your old bin out on your usual collection day, leave it out, and we'll take care of the rest. We'll aim to collect the old one shortly after it's been emptied.

Ensuring your old bin has been put out for collection and emptied, even if not full, really helps the efficiency of the process and reduces the need for mop up rounds.

Q: Why are the changes being made?

A: The old bin type is obsolete. We were the last council in the UK still using them, which made it impossible to source compatible vehicles and parts.

Switching to UK-standard bins allows us to modernise our fleet and improve service reliability.

Q: What if my bin is all the same colour?

A: Don't worry - it's the shape

that matters. If your bin has the large pocket on the outside, it must be replaced. If not, it's OK.

New bins have coloured lids, but their body is always grey to save costs.

Q: How will this improve Bromsgrove District's bin service?

A: Standardising bins means fewer breakdowns, better reliability, and in a pinch access to shared resources like rented vehicles or those of neighbouring councils.

It also allows us to upgrade our fleet and avoid the rising costs of maintaining outdated equipment. Most importantly, it ensures we can continue collecting bins in future.

The old ones will soon be unserviceable!

Q: Is there anything else residents should know?

A: While the rollout is carefully planned, things don't always go perfectly. Missed bins, access issues, or delays are expected.

That's why we also have dedicated resources doing 'mop-up' bin deliveries and collections throughout the week, including Saturdays, to minimise disruption.

We're advising people to check our special web page – www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/NewBins2025 – to see if their area is up next, and there is a reporting form there for any issues.



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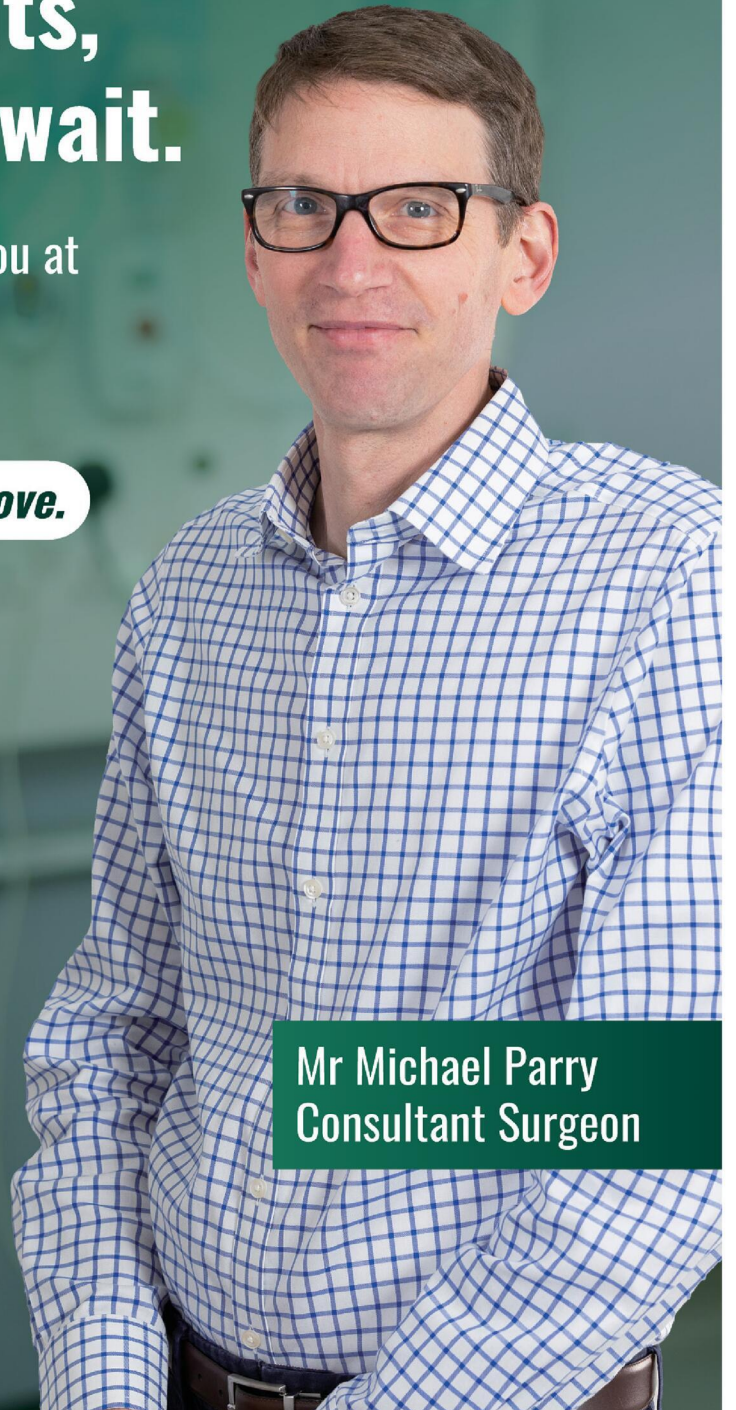


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Mr Michael Parry
Consultant Surgeon



PCC shocked by decision to axe role

THE GOVERNMENT has announced that Police and Crime Commissioners (PCC) across the country will be abolished.

The Home Office have said that removing the role will save the taxpayer at least £100million, and at least £20million will be reinvested into policing every year.

Since 2012, PCCs have been elected to hold forces to account, but figures gathered by the Home Office suggest that turnout at the polls and public knowledge of who their local PCC is has been incredibly low.

Their roles will be absorbed by regional mayors wherever possible, and in areas not covered by a mayor, this role will be taken on by elected council leaders.

The transition to the new model will happen at the end of the next electoral cycle in 2028.

PCC for West Mercia John Campion said the announcement came as surprise.

"As the voice of the public and victims in policing, supporting and challenging our extraordinary police service, I remain deeply committed to ensuring this work continues until 2028 when the term was always due to finish," he added. "If the Government has identified a better way to achieve

these outcomes, I will fully engage in that debate to ensure the public remains at the heart of this function.

"I will continue to focus on delivering for the communities of West Mercia - this has not changed and will not change. As a result of the record number of police officers I have delivered, with crime continuing to fall, my mission remains to ensure our communities receive the full benefit.

"Whilst the discussions will continue around how this important public service is governed - I want to pay tribute to the extraordinary people who make up West Mercia Police and those who support my commissioner's role in my office."

Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, said: "The introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners by the last Government was a failed experiment.

"I will introduce new reforms so police are accountable to their local mayoralities or local councils. The savings will fund more neighbourhood police on the beat across the country, fighting crime and protecting our communities. I would like to recognise the efforts of all current and former Police and Crime Commissioners, and thank them. These individuals served their communities and will continue to do so until they have completed their current terms."



College among sites to install trauma kits

AROUND 100 trauma kits have been installed in community spaces across the county, thanks to funding from the Worcestershire County Council Public Health Team.

The scheme began in November 2024 as part of actions to support the introduction of the Protection of Premises Bill and is designed to ensure that communities are prepared for emergency situations.

A trauma kit can be used by anyone the need for training and is equipped with trauma dressings and tourniquets to allow people to respond quickly and confidently to incidents before the paramedics arrive.

Councillor Satinder Bell,

cabinet member with responsibility for health and wellbeing at Worcestershire County Council, said: "This is about being prepared, not alarmed. Trauma kits are a practical tool that can be used in a variety of situations.

"They're part of our wider commitment to supporting wellbeing, safety, and emergency preparedness."

The Heart of Worcestershire College were among the first to apply for the life-saving kits and have now installed six in campuses across Worcestershire.

A spokesperson said: "As part of our commitment to safety and community wellbeing, Heart of Worcestershire College has installed trauma kits across our

campuses in alignment with Martyn's Law.

"We're proud to lead by example, ensuring our facilities are prepared for emergencies while supporting the wider community. Already, staff and students have told us they feel more secure knowing life-saving equipment is close at hand."

Funding is still available to allow community spaces such as shops, schools, colleges, entertainment venues, tourist attractions, and hotels, to purchase a kit.

Visit worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/communities/community-safety/protect-protection-premises-terrorism-bill for more information or to apply.

Best of British

The Lloyds British Business Excellence Awards 2025



As the UK's largest business awards programme, the Lloyds British Business Excellence Awards champions resilience, innovation, and creativity in the business community.

2025 saw 20 coveted categories to choose from including Small Business of the Year, Scale Up Business of the Year, Sustainable Business of the Year, and The Purpose Before Profit Award.

This year, Redditch was well represented by local independent business Bainbridge Bespoke Opticians, who were finalists for The Customer Loyalty Award.

Nominees had to first submit a lengthy application form, supported with case study examples and testimonials. Finalists were then asked to present to a panel of expert judges at Ten Trinity Square Private Club in London. Networking opportunities for those shortlisted saw visits to the House



of Commons and BAFTA in London's West End.

The grand awards ceremony was held at Grosvenor House, Park Lane, on Tuesday 11th November. Over 1100 guests gathered in one of the largest ballrooms in London for an evening of celebration.

Blind young musician, Lucy the Pianist, opened the show before Chancellor Rachel Reeves' congratulatory video

message appeared on the big screen. TV presenter Ranvir Singh interviewed broadcaster Louis Theroux live on stage, and comedian Josh Berry provided light entertainment. A silent charity auction raised money for Crisis, whose vital work helps people experiencing homelessness across the UK.

UK-wide travel experience experts, Travel Counsellors, walked away as the worthy winner of The Customer Loyalty Award. It's a win for Redditch, as the company has independent representatives in Redditch and the surrounding areas. Local talent was further represented by finalist Ski Astons, who are Worcester-based school ski trips and training specialists.

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Stagecoach Redditch students on stage at The Shaftesbury Theatre. s

HITTING THE WEST END: STUDENTS from Stagecoach Performing Arts in Redditch travelled up to London to perform on the West End stage.

The 14 young performers, aged between 11 and 18 years old all from the town and the surrounding areas, rehearsed tirelessly to perfect their Michael Jackson inspired performance.

The musical medley, curated and directed Stagecoach Redditch teacher Cassie Rivett, featured songs from the West End Smash Hit MJ the Musical.

The performance was part of Stagecoach Live. The event brings together Stagecoach Schools and students from across the country, giving them the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to perform on a West End Stage in

front of a packed house.

Stagecoach Redditch Principal Michelle Westwood said she was impressed with her student's enthusiasm and dedication.

She said: "On the day the students represented Stagecoach Redditch with exemplary performance, behaviour and attitude.

"As their principal I was so proud to see them absolutely smash their performance on stage.

"And it's been a joy to see the new friendships that have been created during the rehearsal process.

"They were a fantastic and supportive team.

"All the students and their families had a wonderful day and we have new memories that will last a lifetime."

Bright idea to help children stay a bit safer

WITH THE nights drawing in, a total of 15,000 reflective stickers are being given to schoolchildren across the country.

The drive is part of Howden insurance's 'Street Wise' safety campaign and aims to boost visibility during darker months and protect young pedestrians on their journeys to and from school.

The move coincides with Road Safety Week 2025 which runs from November 16 to 22.

Every winter, the risk of road accidents increases. Tragically, young pedestrians are among the most vulnerable.

According to the 2024 reported road casualties in Great Britain, 409 pedestrians lost their lives in crashes last year.

More than 19,000 pedestrians were injured, with children aged 16 and under making up 11 per cent of all casualties. Most incidents happen during morning and evening commuting hours.

Visibility is key to safety. To help children stand out, local Howden branches across England, Scotland and Wales are giving away free owl reflector stickers.

These fun, stick-on companions are designed to make youngsters more visible to drivers, especially during the busy school run.

Among the branches taking part are those in Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, Malvern, Evesham, Solihull, Shirley, Stratford-upon-



Avon, Leamington Spa and Birmingham.

Matt Hillier, Howden's Tooting centre manager, said: "We believe no child should be part of these statistics.

"That's why more than 100 UK high street Howden branches will give away Street Wise hi-visibility owls - fun, reflective companions designed to stick onto bags, coats, or bikes.

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School solar panel scheme will help slash energy costs

SCHOOLS across Worcestershire will be able to cut their energy bills after signing up to the Great British Energy solar panels scheme.

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

Six schools across the county are among 250 across England which will benefit from the funding by Great British Energy and the UK Government.

It will lead to millions of pounds worth of savings across the country which will then be able to be reinvested back into education.

Among the schools are three in Worcester - Carnforth School, Honeywell Primary and Hollymount School.

Also included are Moons Moat First in Redditch, St George's C of E School in Kidderminster and Wolverley CE Secondary School and Sixth Form.

Pupils across the country will benefit from more cash for textbooks and teaching, as Great British Energy's solar roll-out continues to help schools cut their energy bills.

It comes as part of an expanded scheme to fund solar panels for NHS sites, military sites and schools.

The schools involved will get a share of up to £100million in funding from Great British Energy and

the Government for the new solar panels and other energy efficiency measures.

A total of 23 schools have now installed Great British Energy solar panels and are cutting their energy bills. This has allowed savings to be reinvested in school services as part of the government's clean energy superpower mission, enabling communities to reap the benefits of homegrown, clean power.

This is part of the Government's drive to make all public buildings more climate resilient.

The Government is building all new schools to be climate-resilient and net-zero in operation as part of the School Rebuilding Programme.

Rocketing energy bills in recent years have eaten into school budgets. This has been driven by the UK's dependency on global fossil fuel markets over which government has no control.

By enabling schools to generate their own electricity, it is estimated schools will save millions, far more than installation costs.

Energy Minister Michael Shanks said: "Across the country, solar

panels are going up on rooftops to power classrooms with clean, homegrown power.

"This is our clean energy superpower mission in action, protecting our public services with lower bills and energy security."

Great British Energy's CEO, Dan McGrail said: "Great British Energy's ongoing solar roll-out delivers tangible benefits to the people that need it most in our hospitals and schools.

"This not only provides clean energy to communities, it also ensures that the public own and benefit from these projects through energy security, good jobs and above all, real tangible local outcomes such as more funds to support teaching and health."

Education Minister Josh MacAlister said: "This is part of our wider work to drive national renewal, rebuilding more than 750 schools in every corner of the country."

The scheme will target schools and colleges with buildings that are able to accommodate solar panels in areas of England most in need.

As part of this, the Government has selected schools that will be primarily clustered in areas of dep-



Energy Minister Michael Shanks at one of his school visits during the launch of the solar panels scheme. s

riation in the North East, West Midlands and North West, as well as at least 10 schools in each region of England.

Each region includes a further education college which will work with the contractors appointed to promote careers in renewables to support growth in the construction and renewables workforce. This could be through work placements, skills boot camps and workshops.

This follows the Government's commitment to curriculum reforms which will strengthen climate and

sustainability education across geography, science, citizenship, and design and technology - from year one through to a new Natural History GCSE. This will help ensure pupils understand the planet, take action on climate change and develop the skills for a greener future.

Nurseries, schools and colleges are also being called upon to put in place a climate action plan, while empowering young voices through Youth Sustainability Champions to help advise, evaluate and champion sustainability in education.

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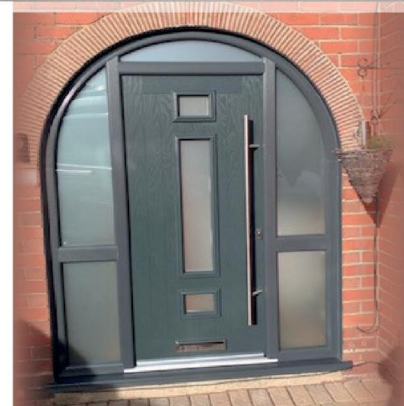
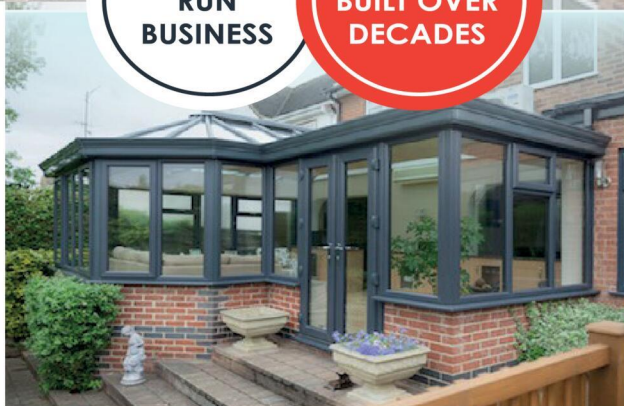


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Councillor salutes work of foster carers

A WORCESTERSHIRE County Councillor has led a review of the council's fostering service to ensure that foster carers are properly valued, supported, and equipped to provide safe, stable homes for children.

Councillor Justin Bowen, cabinet member for children and families, has more than 15 years' experience working with vulnerable children and families, and his own experience of respite foster care as a child.

He understands first-hand the difference a supportive foster family can make.

Earlier this year, he and his partner were also approved as foster carers.

Coun Bowen said: "I know how it feels to be that child who just

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

needs stability – and I also know what it means to be ready to open your home to a young person who needs it.

"Foster carers are at the heart of everything we do in children's services. They make an enormous difference, not just to individual children, but to our whole community."

"That's why our Reform administration is investing in the support they need and deserve."

As part of the review, the council has increased fostering payments by up to 7.25 per cent, they have created specialist support teams to provide practical and emotional help to carers and expanded the recruitment and assessment team

to improve the experience for new applicants.

Coun Bowen added: "When I came into this role, it was clear that our foster carers needed more support."

"We've listened to them, and we're making fostering central to how we care for children in Worcestershire."

"This is about giving every child the chance to grow up in a loving family home – and ensuring our carers have the backing they need to make that possible."

With more children than ever needing safe, stable homes – especially teenagers and sibling groups – Worcestershire Fostering is encouraging more local people to consider becoming foster carers.

Visit www.worcestershire.gov.uk/fostering for more information.



Councillor Justin Bowen has more than 15 years' experience working with vulnerable children and families.

New service will help victims and children through Family Court

A NEW model is being delivered across West Mercia to ensure victims and children going through the Family Court get the support they deserve.

Supported by Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) John Campion, and being delivered by West Mercia Women's Aid, the service will

provide dedicated support for victims and children navigating the Family Court system.

According to the latest research from the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, almost 90 per cent of child arrangement cases feature domestic abuse, yet it is often not treated as an active concern.

And in more than half of

the cases reviewed in the research, children were still allowed unsupervised overnight contact with an abusive parent.

Lisa Peplow, IDVA service manager for West Mercia Women's Aid, said: "When we talk to survivors the message is clear, they often feel re-traumatised and suffer

secondary abuse through their experiences of the family court process, where victims' voices are not heard or understood."

"We're committed to supporting victim/survivors and their children through the court process to ensure they access safe, informed and fair outcomes."

"We want to improve the Family Court experience, by ensuring survivors and their children are well informed and prepared for the legal process, their voices are amplified, and they are able to navigate the court process with greater confidence and clarity - ensuring a joined up, survivor centred response."



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All in harmony to help launch charity fund-raising Messiah

WORCESTERSHIRE music lovers came together for the official launch of a new benefit concert initiative in aid of local young people's charities.

Organisers Worcester Festival Choral Society, the region's classical choir, held the launch event in Worcester Cathedral's Chapter House to herald its first, fund-

raising performance of Handel's Messiah in aid of grant-making charity the Worcestershire Community Foundation.

The event attendees, who included the Lord-Lieutenant of Worcestershire, Mrs Beatrice Grant, heard how Worcester Festival Choral Society's 140 singers will be raising funds, as well as the roof, through its annual, candlelit per-

formances of Handel's choral masterpiece at Worcester Cathedral - starting with its upcoming Messiah concert on Saturday December 6 at 7.30pm.

The evening began with a surprise appearance by 'Handel' himself - Worcester Cathedral's Assistant Director of Music, Nicholas Freestone, in full costume.

A Worcester Festival Choral Society semi-chorus gave a rousing 'flashmob'-style rendition of the Hallelujah chorus.

Speeches from Handel, as well as from Worcester Cathedral, Worcester Festival Choral Society and Worcestershire Community Foundation representatives, also revealed the inspiration behind the initiative, and what it could mean for young people in Worcestershire.

The idea to raise funds through the power of music came from Handel himself.

The composer's own charitable performances of Messiah inspired the building of the world's first purpose-built maternity hospital - still in operation today - and the completion of the Foundling Hospital in London, making a profound impact on 18th century health, well-being and social care.

Similarly, voluntary donations made by the Choral Society's Messiah concert-goers and local business 'Gold Patrons', will be used for grants supporting the education and well-being of local



children and young people, via the Worcestershire Community Foundation.

Anne Renshaw from Worcester Festival Choral Society said: "We were thrilled to welcome so many people to the launch of this exciting new initiative. Handel's Messiah is more than wonderful music, it's been doing good in society for nearly 300 years. We're now seeking to continue that charitable legacy here in Worcestershire."

Chair of the Worcestershire Community Foundation, Jonathan Chenevix-Trench, added: "To be Worcester Festival Choral Society's charity partner for such a wonderful event is a great honour."

"Through this joyous performance and its historical links with fundraising, we hope to raise awareness of our work, and to encourage

public support to make our county more resilient."

Handel's Messiah is one of the world's most popular choral works, packed with well-known choruses and arias.

When King George II attended its premiere in 1742, he is said to have been so moved by the mighty Hallelujah chorus that he rose to his feet - a tradition that audiences continue today.

Visit Foundation at www.worcsecf.org.uk for more information.

WCF Trustee Oliver Carpenter, WCF Director Lucy Wells, Worcester Festival Choral Society Development Officer Anne Renshaw, and WCF Chair Jonathan Chenevix-Trench. Pictures by Michael Whitefoot.



'Handel' celebrates at Worcester Cathedral.



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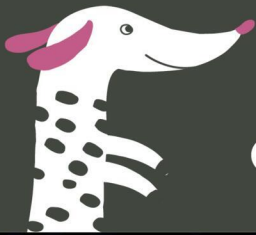
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Event helps bring people together

A MITZVAH Day event was held at the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch on Sunday.

The day was chosen as it was the last one in Interfaith Week and the event was fitting as it brought people together.

More than 30 volunteers offered cakes and biscuits, along with other free refreshments for patients, visitors and staff.

People came from all over Worcestershire and there were representatives from four different faiths - Christians, Jews, Muslims and Baha'is.

Mitzvah Day is a Jewish-led day of social action which brings together thousands of people worldwide - of all faiths and none - to give their time to make a difference to the community around them.

This year marked the 20th anniversary and more than 55,000 volunteers around the world will give their time to help others on and around Mitzvah Day.

This Mitzvah Day event was organised on behalf of the Worcestershire Interfaith Forum (WIFF) by Yvonne

Stollard and Melanie Mann.

They said they could not have done it without the wonderful support of the Hospital Trust and Rev David Ryan and David Chamberlain in particular.

Chair of the Worcestershire Interfaith Forum (WIFF), Rev Catherine Lack, said: "Our Mitzvah Day was, as usual, a super event. - good food, good company and well-attended."

"A big thank you to the hospital staff for making it known throughout the hospital."

"It was great to have staff from all over the hospital, sometimes taking plates of cakes for the rest of their ward staff."

"Useful conversations were had, and there was a great atmosphere."

They also thanked everyone who made tea and coffee and made conversation which led to it being a 'great event'.

This year WIFF welcomed many local dignitaries as volunteers, including Chris Bloore MP and Redditch Mayor, Coun Joanna Kane.

Coun Kane said: "It was an abso-



ABOVE and LEFT: Dignitaries and councillors were among those who attended Mitzvah Day. s

lute pleasure to help Worcestershire Interfaith Forum serve free refreshments to our wonderful NHS staff, plus patients and visitors.

"The key theme for my mayoral year is 'inclusion' and the Mitzvah Day event at the Alex was a great example of this, with volunteers from

different faiths coming together to help the community.

"I would like to thank Yvonne and everyone else who helped make it happen."

Coun Bill Hartnett has been an enthusiastic supporter of our Mitzvah Day events for many years.

He highlighted that 'Mitzvah' meant 'good deed', adding the event was now in its 12th year.

"We gave out teas, coffees, squash and a range of cakes and biscuits to our great NHS staff, patients and visitors, we got lots of smiles it was a heart-warming afternoon."

Nicholas Lechmere, Deputy Lieutenant of Worcestershire, came to support the event again.

He said it was a great pleasure to be involved in the event.

"A body of people from many different religions and walks of life all freely working together for one cause, helping other people, in the name of God."

"It was again, a huge success and many people in, working in or visiting the hospital were hugely appreciative."

Last year, with 40 volunteers from five different faiths, the Worcestershire Interfaith Forum (WIFF) were delighted and proud to be joint winners of Mitzvah Day's 'Outstanding Interfaith Partnership Award'.

There are hopes it could win again this year.



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Looking after greyhounds has opened up a new 'walk' of life

A SPECIAL Olympics gold medalist, who has used his story to address world leaders at the United Nations, has found a new passion in life - greyhounds - thanks to his brother-in-law.

And Harley Jolley, who relocated to Alvechurch last Christmas from Cornwall where he grew up after losing both his parents, has now become a licensed kennel hand.

The 25-year-old moved in with sister Deane and her husband Simon, a professional greyhound trainer attached to Dunstall Park Stadium in Wolverhampton.

After struggling to find employment, Harley - who won gold in the Boccia at the Special Olympics - was offered the opportunity by his brother-in-law at Weatheroak Racing Kennels.

He has since paraded more than a dozen winners and now even owns his own racing greyhound - Polarone Dee - who won his first race at the Wolverhampton track in September.

After stints working with the police and in retail, Harley is now thriving on and off the track and sister Deane could not be prouder.

She said: "Losing our parents was devastating."

"But it was especially tough for Harley as he lost the life he had built for himself in Cornwall."

"He found it difficult to transfer jobs



and socially there are limited opportunities, like anyone else living with a disability.

"Moving to the Midlands was a huge challenge."

"But I can hand on heart say that greyhound racing has helped him source a new direction in life when things could've quite easily gone the other way."

"When he was diagnosed with Down Syndrome, we had no idea if he'd be able to walk or talk."

"But Harley has an incredible zest for life and has always dreamt big when it comes to his career, personal develop-

ment and sport.

"Working with Simon has really helped him thrive."

Data released by the Government this month found only half (52 per cent) of people living with a disability were employed, while 82 per cent of able bodied people work either full or part-time.

Harley's arrival at the Alvechurch kennel prompted a breakthrough year for Simon and his team, as they qualified for their first Category One final - the highest grade of UK greyhound racing - in May when Haka Carlo ran in the Golden Jacket.

Simon said Harley's story was a shining example of why more employers should think ability, and not disability, when recruiting.

"Caring for the greyhounds is a huge responsibility, and Harley adores it."

"Although living with Down's syndrome requires an extra layer of support, Harley is as independent as they come and has already achieved what a group of a dozen or so individuals could wish to accomplish in their lifetime."

"It's been a breakthrough year for us, and Harley has played a key role in making that happen."

"It's testament to his character and determination and to parade more than a dozen winners already is a fantastic achievement."

"Previously, a night at the greyhounds was an innocent trip out for Harley - now it's front and centre of his life."

"What's been created at Dunstall Park is wonderful, and we're so proud of everything Harley is achieving at the track."



Harley with the greyhound Blazeaway George. s

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The Guardian

Rachele Pizzillo. © Johan Persson. Image © Manvri Rai.

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ENGLAND

Simple changes that can help keep those winter colds at bay

Brits are still clinging to old wives' tales when it comes to catching a cold. Picture Pixabay

MILLIONS of Brits are still clinging to old wives' tales when it comes to catching a cold – with many convinced draughty rooms and going outside with wet hair are to blame.

A poll of 2,000 UK adults found more than a quarter (27 per cent) believe you can catch a cold simply by being outside when the temperature drops.

While 28 per cent think stepping out with damp hair is directly linked to falling ill, and 22 per cent reckon sitting in a draughty room will make you unwell.

Yet while 89 per cent think it's important to support their immune system to keep colds at bay – as they feel, on average, under the weather three times each winter – 22 per cent admitted they had no idea improving gut health can play a big part in doing so.

The research was commissioned by Yakult, which has teamed up with registered dietician Lucy Kerrison, to help bust some of the most common winter wellness myths.

She said: "There are so many misconceptions about how our immune system works, often passed down through generations. Cold weather or damp hair don't cause colds – viruses do.

"However, during winter, we tend to spend more time indoors with others, which makes it easier for these viruses to spread. What can make a difference is keeping your immune system well supported – and that's where gut health comes in."

She said to keep the gut and immune system working together effectively, diversity in the diet is key.

Microbes in the gut feed on the fibre found in plant foods, so the more variety you eat, the broader the range of beneficial bacteria.

This includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, seeds, legumes, and, to a lesser extent, herbs and spices.

As well as fermented foods such as live yoghurt, kimchi, and fermented milk drinks also play a role. Look for products which note their strain names and bacterial count as these products are more likely to improve the balance of gut bacteria and therefore your immune system.

It also emerged that 42 per cent of Brits find it harder to maintain a healthy gut during the winter months.

With 41 per cent admitting they crave richer, heavier comfort foods when the weather turns cold, almost four in 10 (39 per cent) confessed to

snacking more simply because they spend longer indoors.

While 22 per cent said their busy social calendar makes it difficult to stay balanced, especially when festive events lead to overindulgence.

In an effort to stay on top of their wellbeing, more than a quarter (27 per cent) have turned to social media for inspiration, with 39 per cent of those looking up gut health hacks and trends.

Science manager for Yakult, Dr Holly Neill, added: "With so much health content online, it's easy to see why people get confused.

"Social media can make wellness trends sound simple or miraculous, but not everything you see is backed by science.

"In fact, blanket case recommendations, such as everyone should avoid gluten, or promises of quick fixes are a red flag.

"Nutrition is nuanced, and there's no such thing as a silver bullet. Always look for advice from sources with recognised expertise and a strong scientific background.

"Supporting gut health doesn't need to be complicated. Simple, everyday choices can have a real, positive impact over time."



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By Coach from Bromsgrove, Redditch

Reader Travel

The Standard



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- ✓ Return coach travel from Redditch, Bromsgrove
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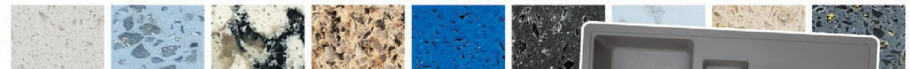


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Join us for our Christmas Bonanza, filled with mulled wine, mince pies, and carols. Expect seasonal cheer and a magical atmosphere for all to enjoy.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 10-11 Antiques & collectables valuations* | 2.00 Gin tasting and mini master class |
| 11.30 Festive Christmas bell ringers | 2.30 Decorations and wreath-making |
| 12.30 Gin tasting and mini master class | 3-4 Antiques & collectables valuations* |
| 1.30 Festive Christmas bell ringers | 3.30 Decorations and wreath-making |

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*Don't miss our free antique and valuables valuations at 10am and 3pm — just bring up to three items or clear photos, and our experts will give you a verbal valuation on the spot. First come, first served.

HUDSON'S

Cold snap prompts advice to prevent frozen pipes

SEVERN Trent has issued fresh advice to customers to help them avoid burst pipes as winter and colder weather approaches.

As we move closer to Christmas, temperatures across the UK will start to fall and soon turn freezing.

Now, Severn Trent has issued tips to customers to 'get winter ready' and protect their pipes from the freezing conditions by lagging them – and knowing where their stop tap is in case the worst happens.

Howard Perry, network operations lead at Severn Trent, said: "Freezing conditions followed by warmer weather can cause bursts."

"In cold weather, the water in your pipes can freeze and expand. It blocks them and can cause bursts including when they unfreeze in warmer conditions, causing damage to your home.

"But you can get prepared by spending a few minutes now going around your home and wrap up any pipes to protect them from the cold. Don't forget pipes in sheds, garages and outbuildings, plus any outside taps.

"Pipe lagging and tap jackets can be found at local hardware stores, they're easy to fit and could save you and your household a lot of hassle this winter.

"Finding where your stop tap is, and knowing how to turn it on and off is also important in case you



Severn Trent has issued tips to customers to get 'winter ready'.

get a leak at home. They're usually found under the kitchen sink, downstairs toilet or utility room."

Top tips for protecting pipes; Wrap all pipework, fittings and storage tanks in unheated areas of your home (such as lofts, roofs, outbuildings and garages) with

insulation. It's best to use good quality waterproof foam lagging which can be found at your local DIY store.

If you have outside taps, either insulate them or drain them down to the pipework that links to the tap.

If you're concerned about your

own DIY abilities, a registered plumber can check your household pipes to make sure they're properly lagged and fill in any gaps. Severn Trent supports watersafe.org.uk – a dedicated online search facility for qualified and approved plumbers, so you can get plumbing help from someone you can trust.

Help is on offer

A MIDLANDS housing association has launched a campaign to help customers and communities prepare for the colder months ahead.

Platform Housing Group's Get Winter Ready campaign highlights a range of services and resources available from the company and its partners.

They include advice on saving energy and keeping homes warm; help with budgeting, energy bills and accessing grants; information on emergency repairs and how to report issues quickly; local community support contacts, including warm hubs and food banks; and guidance on how to stay well over winter.

Marion Duffy, Chief Operations Officer at Platform Housing Group said: "We know that winter can be a challenging time, especially with the ongoing cost of living pressures many people are facing."

"Our Get Winter Ready campaign is about making sure our customers feel supported and informed, whether that's through advice on energy saving, help with bills or knowing who to contact in an emergency."

"It's also a reminder that no one has to face the colder months alone; we're here to help."

The campaign also encourages neighbours to look out for one another and to seek help if they are struggling.

Customers can visit www.platformmhg.com/get-winter-ready to explore the advice, links and support services available.

STOKE PARISH COUNCIL CAROL SERVICE

The Parish Council would like to invite you to their Carol Service being held on
Saturday 13th December 2025 starting at 5.00pm
at The Main Hall, Avoncroft Arts Society, Redditch Road, Bromsgrove.

The Service will be conducted by the Revd Alan Conant and will be followed by free hot drinks and refreshments provided by the Parish Council.





THE FOX INN
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Bookings now being taken for Christmas

Christmas Fayre Menu (excludes Sundays)
Adults: £20 / Children: £15
Single course festive carvery - Adults: £15 / Children: £12

Christmas Day
FULLY BOOKED
Adults: £30 / Children: £50

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Adults: 3 courses, £25 /
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New Years Day Menu
Adults: 3 courses, £25 /
Children: 3 courses, £25



The Fox Inn Lower Chaddesley, Kidderminster DY10 4QN
Tel 01562 777247 | thefoxinnchaddesley.co.uk

SUDOKU

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

EASY

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

HARD

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

Rivers of the world

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

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

- Explorers (11)
- Favourite (3)
- Respectable (9)
- Disagreeable (5)
- Determine (7)
- Carry to excess (6)
- Have ambitions (6)
- Performer (7)
- Ate dinner (5)
- Amuse (9)
- Study (3)
- Unceremonious (4,3,4)

DOWN

- Suitable (3)
- Robust (5)
- Divulge (6)
- Hates (7)
- Uprising (9)
- Dogmatic (11)
- Eternal (5-6)
- Watcher (9)
- Merit (7)
- Keep (6)
- Dullard (5)
- Type of lettuce (3)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

- Network point
- Cipher
- Centre
- Crop
- Valuable token



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.

- 7682365 gives a fire;
- 1932 gives a second fire;
- 7641732 gives fire up.

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

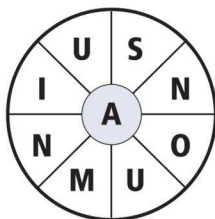
CODEWORD

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.

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

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.

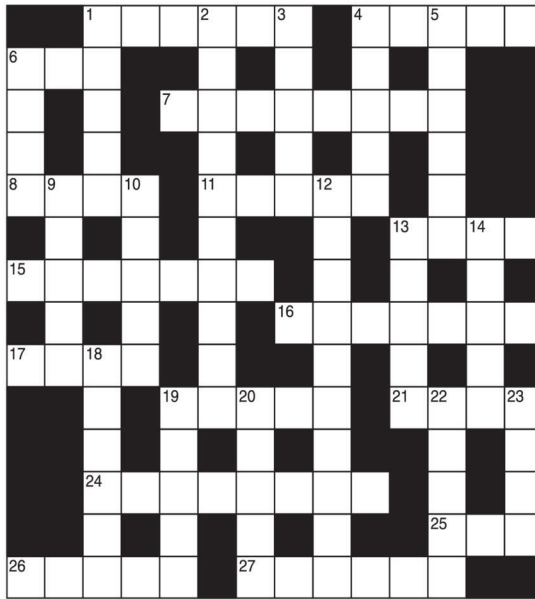


How you rate
 8 words: average
 12 words: good
 16 words: very good
 20 or more: excellent.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Red, brown or yellow variety of quartz (6)
- 4 and 16 Play by GB Shaw, about an officer in the Salvation Army (5,7)
- 6 Monetary unit of Romania (3)
- 7 Early-flowering, bulbous plant (8)
- 8 Celebration of the Eucharist (4)
- 11 Large, spiral univalve shell (5)
- 13 and 24 Novel by Tolstoy, a story of conflict between passion and duty (4,8)
- 15 Whorl of leaves forming the inner envelope of a flower (7)
- 16 See 4 Across
- 17 Native or citizen of Latvia (4)
- 19 Block for hammering metal into shape (5)
- 21 The South American ostrich (4)
- 24 See 13 Across
- 25 Tree, related to the Camelia, whose leaves are used for making a drink (3)
- 26 A bottomless chasm or deep gorge (5)
- 27 Large prawns, usually eaten fried in breadcrumbs (6)



DOWN

- 1 Apostle who betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver (5)
- 2 Antibiotic discovered by Sir Alexander Fleming (10)
- 3 The mountain ash (5)
- 4 Aromatic gum used in perfumes (5)
- 5 See 10
- 6 Soil composed of clay and sand, with vegetable and animal matter (4)
- 9 In electricity, a positive electrode (5)
- 10 and 5 American ragtime king, famous for his Maple Leaf Rag (5,6)
- 12 Port of the Atlantic coast of Morocco, scene of a Second World War conference (10)
- 13 Fossilised gum, usually brown or yellow, used as an ornament (5)
- 14 Language of the ancient Scandinavians (5)
- 18 Large, gallinaceous bird with a naked, wattled head (6)
- 19 A wall hanging, especially of tapestry (5)
- 20 Roman goddess of beauty and love (5)
- 22 Republic in the western part of the island of Hispaniola (5)
- 23 Atmosphere diffused by or attending a person, place, etc. (4)

SOLUTIONS

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Jasper; 4 Major; 6 Lev; 7 Snowdrop; 8 Mass; 11 Conch; 13 Anna; 15 Corolla; 16 Barbara; 17 Lett; 19 Anvil; 21 Rhea; 24 Karenina; 25 Tea; 26 Abyss; 27 Scampi.
 DOWN: 1 Judas; 2 Penicillin; 3 Rowan; 4 Myrrh; 5 Joplin; 6 Loam; 9 Andoe; 10 Scott; 12 Casablanca; 13 Amber; 14 Norse; 18 Turkey; 19 Arras; 20 Venus; 22 Haiti; 23 Aura.

Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Pathfinders; 9 Pet; 10 Reputable; 11 Nasry; 13 Resolve; 14 Overdo; 16 Aspire; 18 Artists; 19 Dime; 20 Entertainment; 21 Con; 22 Free and easy; Down: 2 Apt; 3 Hardy; 4 Impart; 5 Detest; 6 Rebellion; 7 Opinionated; 8 Never-ending; 12 Spectator; 15 Deserve; 17 Retain; 19 Dune; 21 Cos.

Wordwheel Pathfinder

UNANIMOUS Dnepe; Zambezi; Brahmaputra; Mississippi; Amazon; Volga; Danube; Thames; Yangtze; Paraguay; Ayeyarwady; Senegal; Colorado; Rhine; Vistula; Saint Lawrence; Hudson; Mackenzie; Rio de la Plata; Blue Nile; Rio Grande; Severn; Gambia.

Niner

PERSONIFY de la Plata; Blue Nile; Rio Grande; Severn; Gambia.

Ladder

Nose; Node; Code; Core; Com, Coln; Chin.

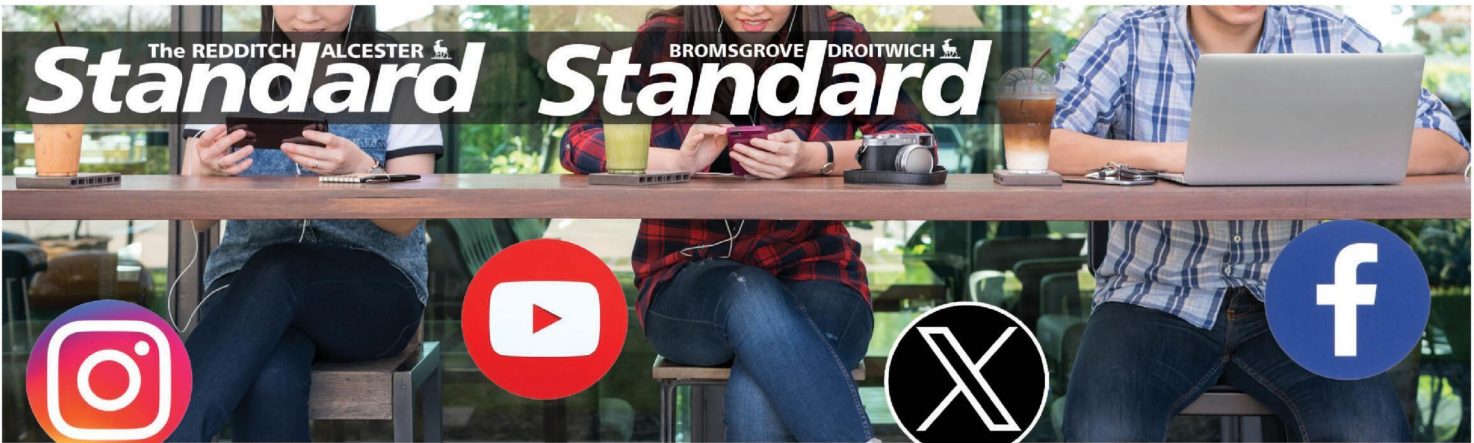
Codeword

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

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

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

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BREAKING NEWS

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Motoring

www.carfinder247.co.uk

TELEPHONE 01527 588688 FACSIMILE 01527 584371



MG Motor UK has confirmed that the all-new MGS6 EV will be available this month.

Powered by a 77 kWh battery and offering drivers both rear and all-wheel drive options, the MGS6 EV is a spacious, refined and generously equipped C-SUV segment car from MG and has already secured a 5-star safety rating from Euro NCAP.

Complementing the recently introduced MG IM6 SUV, the MGS6 EV takes MG into new market segments and will continue the brand's goal to offer customers the latest

technologies.

The MGS6 EV will be available in three distinct variants, each underpinning MG's customer-focussed approach of offering cutting edge, affordable technology to all.

The MGS6 EV SE Long Range features a single motor with a total power output of 180kW and a WLTP combined range of 329 miles.

The MGS6 EV Trophy Long Range offers the same 329 miles capability, power and rear wheel drive configuration but with an even more extensive array of equipment for entertainment and comfort.

The MGS6 EV line-up is completed by the all-wheel drive MGS6 EV Trophy Dual Motor.

Power output is increased to 266kW offering an enticing combination of grip and performance, delivering a 0-62mph time of just 5.1 seconds. This performance-focussed model achieves an impressive WLTP combined range of 301 miles.

All three models are capable of charging from 10 to 80 percent in 38 minutes utilising rapid public chargers.

Five drive modes with five regeneration modes, including One-Pedal, mode also feature.

The all-new MGS6 EV is the third MG model to use the high-

ly acclaimed Modular Scalable Platform – first offered on the MG4 EV – which delivers outstanding dynamic handling combined with an exceptionally spacious and comfortable cabin.

Visit mg.co.uk for more information.



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TERRY

Nita

A Beloved Mum
27-8-22 - 21-11-20

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Forever loved & always in our hearts & thoughts

God Bless Mum

Your loving Daughter Val & Son-in-Law Gordon

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DEATHS

David Terry

Passed away peacefully on the 31st October, aged 90.

A devoted husband to the late Malley.

Beloved father, grandad and great-grandad.

He will be deeply missed by us all.

DEATHS

WASHBOURNE

Patricia

20/10/1939 - 12/11/2025

Passed away peacefully at home with her family

Service to be held at Redditch Crematorium 3/12/2025 at 12.30 pm and afterwards at Studley Conservative Club

Beloved by her family

No flowers

Donations if desired

to Cancer Research or Marie Curie

Funeral Director

James Giles Studley

DEATHS

O'KEEFFE

John David

01/08/1952 - 09/11/2025

John sadly passed away on 9th November 2025, aged 73 years.

He will be dearly missed by his wife Sheila, daughters Dawn and Deborah, his grandson Jamie, all of his family and everyone who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Funeral Service to be held at Waseley Hills Crematorium on Wednesday 3rd December 2025 at 11am.

Flowers are welcome, or if preferred, donations are being collected for Cancer Research UK.

If you have a message for a loved one, call our team on

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Sadly most of us will experience losing a loved one in our lifetime and, at some point, contemplate the time when we leave this earth ourselves. Losing someone, whatever the circumstances and whatever age they may be, is never easy and effects different people in different ways. But here you'll find 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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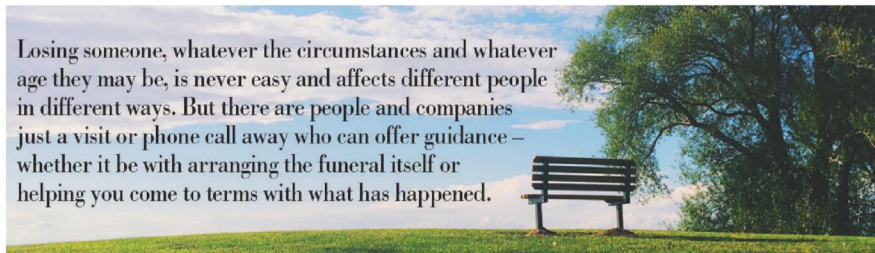
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Whatever the occasion, why not send your loved ones a message....

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Interview Dates: TBC

This vacancy is a rolling vacancy and applications will be reviewed as they are received. Interviews and appointments may take place prior to the closing date shown.

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We are a happy and successful High School with a Sixth Form. We serve the whole community of Droitwich and its surrounding villages, making our intake socio-economically diverse, which our entire staff play up to and thrive upon.

You are strongly encouraged to read our 'Information for Prospective Colleagues.' We expect that it will give you an even deeper feel for the community we serve, our ethos, our culture and what our school is like day to day.

About the Vacancy

Are you someone who loves working with young people and wants to make a difference in their school experience? We are looking for a dedicated individual to join our Cover Team. Whilst experience is preferred, it is not essential as we want to find the right person and will offer training to support development in this role.

As a Cover Supervisor you will supervise the classes of teachers who are unavailable for reasons including meetings, training, trips and short term illness. This is a key role in our school and we seek to appoint someone who is able to communicate, inspire and support our students to achieve their goals. A commitment to working collaboratively with colleagues and to continuous professional development should not be underestimated.

How to Apply

You will find a link to the job description, a person specification, information for prospective colleagues, an application form and further information on how to apply here:

<https://website.droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk/index.php/school/join-us/job-vacancies/>

If you have any queries please don't hesitate to get in touch via jobs@droitwichspahigh.worcs.sch.uk

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PUBLIC NOTICES

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL & REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Advertisement Key: ADVSTD = Wider Publicity, FPS = Footpath Setting.

25/01290/FUL ADVSTD FPS
 Site: Attwell Farm Park, Seafield Farm, Seafield Lane, Portway, Worcestershire B98 9DB.
Proposal: Extensions and change of use of land and cattle barn to rural educational and interpretation visitor centre.

Application forms and plans may be inspected online <https://publicaccess.bromsgrovedredditch.gov.uk/online-applications/>

Comments can be submitted online, via email to newplan@bromsgrovedredditch.gov.uk or in writing Planning Services, Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH.

Comments should be made within 17 days of the date of this publication. The Council does not acknowledge comments but will make these available for inspection online.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

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

D53570 KINGS COUGHTON LANE, ALCESTER
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between the junctions of the A435 and Alcester Heath.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 08.00hrs - 15.00hrs.
Order Commences: 9 December 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 9 December 2025.
Access & Diversion: Alcester Heath, A435 and vice versa.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

WALCOTE ROAD, HASELOR
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable wastewater pipe repairs.
Order Commences: 8 December 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 12 December 2025.
Access & Diversion: Walcote Road, Wood Lane, Pelham Lane and vice versa.
Contractor: CSP, Tel: 0800 783 4444.

D53660 ALAUNA AVENUE, ALCESTER
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between its junctions with Hertford Road.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs.
Order Commences: 9 December 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 9 December 2025.
Access & Diversion: Hertford Road north and south bound. Access to Burton Court may be limited while works are in progress.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

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 or call us 01926 412515.

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance,
 Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 21 Nov 2025

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNE RICHARDS
 Deceased

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 anyone having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the deceased, late of Hollow Court Farm, Earls Common Road, Stock Green, Redditch, Worcestershire, B96 65Y, who died on 10/11/2023, must send written particulars to the address below by 22/01/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests notified.

SME Solicitors
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Keeping you up to date with all the latest information on Planning Proposals, Traffic Notices, Goods Vehicle Operator Licences, Licences To Sell Alcohol, Probate Notices.....

PUBLIC NOTICES

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence
 Greening Transport & Logistics Ltd of 1 Carriers Close, Birmingham, B37 7AX is applying for a licence to use Bransons Cross Truck Stop, Beoley Lane, Beoley, Redditch, B98 9DP as an operating centre for 2 goods vehicles and 2 trailers. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds LS2 7UE stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/guide-to-making-representations-objections-and-complaints-goods-vehicle-operator-licensing

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Micropub to sponsor walking league for remainder of campaign

WALKING FOOTBALL: THE Worcestershire Walking Football League (WWFL) has secured a sponsor for the remainder of the current season.

A micropub in Worcester - the Cocky Anchor - will sponsor the league until its conclusion in June next summer.

The sponsorship deal marks a significant milestone for the WWFL with the league keen to support healthy, active lifestyles among the county's walking football enthusiasts.

Many local teams along with the league's committee frequent the micropub and the Cocky Anchor's support will enable the league to expand its reach.

The sponsorship will help fund events, tournaments, awards and equipment throughout the season.

WWFL chairman, Tim Evans said: "We are thrilled to welcome Cocky Anchor, Worcester as our official sponsor.

"Their commitment to supporting the league perfectly aligns with our profile and player base.

"We look forward to a successful partnership that will bring lasting benefits to both organisations, teams and players."

In addition to the sponsorship deal, the league and committee will involve the Cocky Anchor, Worcester in a range of activities.

This includes matchday events along with a number of schemes in the future.

As part of the deal, the league has been renamed as the Cocky Anchor, Worcester WWFL.

Walking football targets men over the age of 50-years-old and also women over the age of 40-years-old.

WWFL chairman, Tim Evans (left) with Cocky Anchor, Worcester shift supervisor, Zack Leo (right).



And the aim of the WWFL is to promote and encourage walking football throughout the county by providing local clubs with opportunities to compete regularly.

Participating clubs include Worcester City, Worcester Amblers, Evesham United, Hindlip WFC, Sporting Club Inkberrow, Droitwich Vets, Alcester Town, Hartshill Strollers, Solihull Moors, South Birmingham

Galacticos, Bishops Cleeve and many more. The WWFL season runs from September 2025 through to June 2026, with matches scheduled three times a month on Sunday afternoons.

Games take place at Sixways Stadium and Claines Lane in Worcester and also at Evesham United's Spiers and Hartwell Stadium.

Senior Cup draw made for last eight

FOOTBALL: DEFENDING champions Worcester City will host Pershore Town in the quarter-finals of this season's Worcestershire Senior Cup.

City lifted the trophy for a record-breaking 29th time last season following a victory against higher-division Alvechurch in the final.

And Chris Cornes' side begin the defence of their trophy with a home clash against free-scoring Pershore at Sixways Stadium next month.

Worcester play two levels above Pershore although the Plums caused an upset in the previous round of the competition.

Pershore thrashed higher-division Malvern Town 7-2 on their travels to reach the last eight.

The Plums memorably beat Worcester in the final of the Senior Cup in the 2021/22 season to lift the trophy for the first time in the club's history.

Elsewhere, Worcester Raiders will host Bromsgrove Sporting after beating Droitwich Spa 3-0 in the previous round to reach the last eight.

Raiders beat former winners Stourport Swifts in the first round and continued

their progress with an impressive win against the Saltmen.

However, Step Three Bromsgrove, who play two levels above the Hellenic League Premier Division side, will provide Raiders with a stern test.

Another eye-catching tie sees Redditch United host National League North side Kidderminster Harriers.

Harriers have won the competition 28 times and last lifted the trophy in 2016/17.

The Reds are six-time winners and reached the final in 2023/24 when they suffered a surprise defeat against Stourport.

The last quarter-final tie pits Evesham United against Alvechurch in a repeat of the 2023/24 final when the latter side triumphed on penalties.

All four games will take place on Tuesday, December 9 with all four fixtures to kick-off at 7.45pm.

SENIOR CUP DRAW IN FULL

- Evesham United vs Alvechurch
- Redditch United vs Kidderminster Harriers
- Worcester City vs Pershore Town
- Worcester Raiders vs Bromsgrove Sporting

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