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# Chateau plan for 127 new homes

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

**A FULL planning application for Chateau Impney is set to be heard by Wychavon District Council.**

It is hoped the proposal will be considered by the planning committee at a meeting on March 5.

The applicant wants to retain the main, grade II listed building – Impney Hall – as an hotel, plus Pillons Villa as commercial premises.

Much of the estate’s modern, 20th century extensions would be demolished and there would be a 127-home Little Impney development.

After proposals to revive the estate were recommended for approval in 2022, an urban design review was ordered before the application could be given the go-ahead.

Councillor Richard Morris, leader of Wychavon District Council and a Droitwich councillor, wrote on Facebook the application is time-tabled for a planning committee on March 5 (subject to requirements being met).

A consultation exercise held by the site’s owners about the plans included golf buggy tours of the site.

Impney Hall has a history of providing a unique hospitality offering locally and it would be brought back



The full planning application for Chateau Impney is set to go before planners next month.

into use as a hospitality venue, restaurant and hotel, if the application is approved.

The hall would undergo multi-million pound restoration and demolition of modern adjoining buildings would allow for the grounds to be reinstated as parkland.

Standalone buildings and associated infrastructure, would include hard standing within the listed cur-

tilage, and ground works would also be levelled.

Demolition work would also include removal of the vast 45,000-cubic-metre Regent Centre, to make way for the planned new houses.

As part of the estate’s development, four commercial units would be provided, to support the existing business community on the site.

A new walking and cycling route

is proposed, to allow members of the public to travel through the new parkland. A ‘substantial’, seven-figure sum would go towards local facilities, including education provision and affordable housing.

The 2022 proposals indicated 10 per cent of the development would be offered as affordable housing, as per minimum requirements for new sites featuring 10 or more homes.

## Help save food bank

A RALLYING cry has been issued to prompt people to donate to Droitwich Spa Foodbank, after it revealed it was having to spend its own money to help those who need it most.

The foodbank, based in Droitwich Baptist Church, made the plea on Facebook as it tries to cope with feeding more than 200 people in the town every month.

The charity helps to feed 60 people each week but currently does not receive enough donations to meet the demand.

That has led to the foodbank dipping into its own cash so it can provide essential items to people.

The charity thanked everyone who has supported it and added it needs more donations.

“Every contribution makes a real difference to someone in crisis,” the Facebook post read. Thank you for your support.”

People can help the foodbank meet the challenge by donating food, toiletries or cash or can organise street collections.

The organisation is running low on all items, particularly breakfast food such as jam, cereal and long-life milk and juice; and toiletries, including shampoo, shower gel and deodorant.

Snacks, puddings, lunch and dinner items are also needed – tinned foods and pasta sauces are among the best to donate.

Visit [droitwichspa.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/](http://droitwichspa.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-money/) for more information and to donate cash.

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## Changes get a warm welcome

PEOPLE living at a Redditch retirement living scheme now have warmer homes, thanks to energy efficiency improvement works.

The residents, who live at Citizen's Blackthorn Court, have seen improvements such as external wall insulation, new windows, new doors, a new roof and new fans in kitchens and bathrooms.

These were completed thanks to \$6.7million Government funding from Wave Three of the Warm Homes Social Housing Fund.

Housing association, Citizen, worked with contractor Westdale West Midlands to complete the works which were carried out over the last few months.

Director of asset management at Citizen, Bridget Guilfoyle, said: "We're delighted to have completed the works at Blackthorn Court as part of Wave Three of the Warm Homes Social Housing Fund - and it's fantastic to hear how much of a difference this has made to customers."

"These energy efficiency improvements mean homes are warmer and customers don't need to use as much energy to heat them, helping to reduce costs and improve comfort."

"We're committed to working with our partners to make a positive difference for customers and communities and projects like this are a big part of that."

"Wave Three includes homes in Worcester, Gloucester and Herefordshire, and we're looking forward to bringing these benefits to even more customers over the next couple of years."

# Council's 'zero-tolerance' warning over fly-tipping

BROMSGROVE District Council has declared a 'zero-tolerance' approach to fly-tippers as it reveals it issued \$5,930 worth of fines to people last year.

A total of 33 Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) were handed out between December 2024 and November 2025 - the authority's first year of targeted enforcement action which was supported by Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS).

Patrols, intelligence from the community and investigative expertise from WRS led to the fines. Vehicle tracing, evidence analysis and witness liaison all helped the council identify dumpers and enabled it to take action.

Coun Peter Whittaker, Bromsgrove District Council's portfolio holder for environmental services, said residents were rightly fed up with environmental crime, which is why the authority had 'beefed up enforcement including by bringing in WRS'.

"With specialist intelligence and investigative support, we are better placed than ever to hold



unscrupulous people to account. "People need to know that if they dump waste on the public here, they can expect to be found, and face penalties all the way up to prosecution."

Highway saw evidence in dumped mattresses, plywood and bin bags. This led investigators to a homeowner who had paid someone with a van to remove items from their garden without checking for a waste carrier's licence

or getting a receipt. These breaches of their legal duty of care saw them pay an FPN of \$160.

Anyone getting rid of rubbish via a third party should always check a waste carrier is on the Environment Agency's public license register before using them to avoid falling foul of unlicensed 'man with a van' scams.

Anyone not doing this could end up fined if their waste is fly-tipped and they have failed to use a licensed carrier or keep a receipt.

Visit: [bromsgrove.gov.uk/flytip](http://bromsgrove.gov.uk/flytip) to report fly-tipping on public land to the council and to help provide information that can help catch fly-tippers.

People can also visit: [worcestershire.gov.uk/all-services/enviro-crime](http://worcestershire.gov.uk/all-services/enviro-crime) or call 01905 822799 to report information about a suspected environmental crime to WRS investigators.

**Bromsgrove District Council gave out \$5,930 worth of fines last year for fly-tipping incidents, including this one on the Alvechurch Highway. s**



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# Stem cell joy as match is cleared

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

**A TEENAGE boy from Bromsgrove with leukaemia who thought his stem cell match had fallen through has received 'the best news they could have asked for'.**

The loved ones of Leo Sproson, aged 16, thought they had received the best Christmas present ever after a stem cell match was discovered in the UK.

However, this transplant, which was a 10/12 match, was delayed due to the donor needing further tests and, as Leo could not wait, his family were left desperately trying to find a suitable enough match.

But now, his family has received a call from the hos-

pital and Leo's 10/12 unrelated match has been cleared and is ready to go.

Leo will be admitted on Monday, February 9, and the following day, he will start his intense chemotherapy and conditioning course.

He is then set to have his stem cell transplant on February 18.

This news means Leo will not need radiotherapy.

A statement from the family said this latest development was the best news they could have asked for.

At one point, Leo's mum, Jenna, and dad, Warren, both put themselves forward to be his donor, but at most, they can only be a half-match.

Leo is currently in remission, meaning doctors can see significantly less of the leukaemia than they could when he was admitted but he is not currently cancer-free.

Since his diagnosis, Leo's family have been working

with blood cancer charity DKMS to get more people on the stem cell donor register in a bid to improve his chances of finding a match and held a registration day in November.

In total, 718 people signed up to the stem cell register on the day, with many more registering for online kits in response to Leo's story.

The event also raised more than \$4,000 for DKMS, which will help the charity with processing the swab kits.

The family did not stop there and, last weekend, his aunt, Kate Best, attended a DKMS drive at Birmingham's New Street Station.

For patients with blood cancer, a stem cell transplant from a matching donor could be their only opportunity for recovery.

Visit: [dkms.org.uk](http://dkms.org.uk) to find out more or to order a swab kit.



Leo Sproson has received the best news in his cancer fight. s

## Club serves up sessions just for girls

TENNIS sessions designed especially and exclusively for girls are taking place in Bromsgrove.

The classes at Bromsgrove Tennis Club are tailored to three different age groups - eight and under, 10 and under and 12 and under.

The sessions, which start on February 25, are £25 for four group coaching ses-

sions aimed specifically at girls.

Participants can learn new skills, make friends and have fun at the same time.

Those who join the tennis club will also get a free racquet.

To book a place contact James Griffiths from Bromsgrove Tennis Club via the JGTENNIS app, by email:

ing: [jgtennis@gmail.com](mailto:jgtennis@gmail.com) or by calling 07973 666793.

The sessions are sponsored by Mitchel and Co.

For more visit: [bromsgrovetenniscub.com](http://bromsgrovetenniscub.com)

Alternatively, check out Bromsgrove Tennis Club on social media - Facebook and Instagram - for further details.

## Get on your bike for safety advice

CYCLISTS in Droitwich can attend two free events in the town tomorrow (Saturday, February 7), aimed at helping them stay safe and protect their bikes.

From 10am to 11.30am, Droitwich Safer Neighbourhood Team will be at Lido Park, near Little

Al's Cafe. The team will be on hand so people can have their bikes securely marked for free. Wychavon District Council will also be present.

Then from 12.30pm to 2pm, at the Westlands Community Centre, Meadow Walk, PCSO Pat Holland from Droitwich SNT will

be joining Wychavon and Droitwich Cycling, Walking and Wheeling Group at the next Bike Repair Hub.

PCSO Holland will be there to discuss the 'Be Bright, Be Seen' campaign and why it is important for cyclists to be visible so they can stay safe during the darker evenings.

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Volunteers Di and Pete McCallion during the Treecycle collection. Picture by Primrose Hospice volunteer Lee Moody. s

## A tree-mendous response

THE PRIMROSE Hospice Treecycle campaign has raised a record-breaking £17,502.

A total of 1,200 Christmas trees were collected from homes and businesses across Bromsgrove, Redditch and Rubery.

The charity wants to thank the community for its incredible support.

Hannah Isaac, Primrose Hospice fundraiser said: "Last year I said: 'Let's make next year's Treecycle even bigger and better' – and wow, you all certainly delivered."

"This year has been record-breaking, both in the number of trees collected and the funds raised."

"Thank you so much to every-

one who booked a collection, volunteered their time, or supported the campaign in any way – we are so grateful."

The collection was made possible thanks to the generosity of local businesses.

The Primrose Hospice thanked Hills Ford for kindly providing the collection vans, Robinson Tree Surgery for ensuring all trees were chipped and Finch End Farm for its wonderful support with the campaign.

The hospice holds fundraising events throughout the year.

People can visit [primrosehospice.org/support-us/events-calendar/](http://primrosehospice.org/support-us/events-calendar/) for more information on how to get involved.

# Innovation centre brings a £2m boost to regeneration bid

by Ashleigh Osborne  
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**AN ADDITIONAL £2.4million in funding has been awarded to Redditch Borough Council for the Innovation Centre development at the site of a former police station.**

The funding – a total of £2,425,000 – has been secured from the Enterprise Zone Regeneration Investment Fund (EZRF).

The EZRF support will enable the council to progress essential activity required to complete the project.

The cash windfall is part of a wider, £20million commitment made by the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) in 2014, to support the eight local authorities included in its area.

The EZRF programme and related commitments were honoured when the GBSLEP was transferred to Birmingham City Council in 2023.

The EZRF was designed to ensure all local authorities in the GBSLEP region could share in the success of the enterprise zone, contributing to the wider regional economy.

Redditch Borough Council leader, councillor Sharon Harvey, said: "The Innovation Centre is an opportunity for businesses, not only in Redditch but from the surrounding areas."

"With workshops, offices, amenities and business support services, there will be a unique opportunity for local people to springboard their businesses to the next level in a supportive and collaborative environment. To have over £2million in confirmed funding is another exciting step on the path towards opening its doors."

Deputy leader of Birmingham City Council, Coun Sharon Thompson, said: "This is really good news for businesses and residents in Redditch and the surrounding area."

"It demonstrates how Birmingham's growth and the success of the enterprise zone are driving wider economic opportunity."

The project is a central part of Redditch council's wider regeneration programme for the town centre. Work is scheduled to begin in the summer and doors are expected to open to business by the end of 2027.

## Force's Focus on car crime

BROMSGROVE Police recovered a stolen Ford Focus less than 24 hours after it was stolen in the West Midlands.

The car has now been secured and will undergo forensic examination to help identify those responsible for taking the vehicle.

Following the incident, West Mercia Police said it continued to work closely with neighbouring forces to track down criminals

quickly and keep communities safe.

Officers said the information from the public, and its vigilance, played a huge part in helping the force to do that.

They urged anyone concerned about car or home security to contact officers who regularly hold drop-in surgeries across Bromsgrove district.

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# A38 BREP - Plenty of questions as council gives latest updates



How the new-look Oakalls Island will look when work is completed. Picture by Worcestershire County Council. s

by **Tristan Harris**  
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## THE LATEST updates on the A38 Bromsgrove Route Enhancement Programme (BREP) were given at a special webinar last Thursday.

The session, organised by Worcestershire County Council, detailed the schemes within BREP and gave people the chance to have their say on issues surrounding it.

The overall programme is due to be completed by the end of this year.

Scheme A - the Hanbury Road junction - is now complete and Scheme B - Buntsford Drive roundabout and Charford Road - is scheduled to be finished by July.

Scheme C - the A38 and Charford Road and Stoke Road junction - is due to be completed by September and Schemes D and E should be finished by December.

Scheme D focuses on the junction where the A38 meets New Road - an additional southbound lane is being added to increase capacity and an additional lane from New Road is being introduced, along with walking and cycling route improvements.

Scheme E centres on The Oakalls roundabout with additional lanes added, including an extra exit lane on Stratford Road. Pedestrian crossings are being upgraded, carriageways widened and additional signals to increase capacity.

Scheme F - to widen the Birmingham Road near the M42 island and close the School Lane junction, making it a left turn only - should be completed by October.

The rest of the programme is for active travel. Regents Park Road on The Oakalls (scheme 6) is aimed at improving walking and cycling routes to and from the town centre and railway station and should be completed this month.

A similar active travel scheme for Harvington Road, Bant Mill, New Road and Fordhouse Road should be finished by August.

And safety will be improved on the route from the railway station to Bromsgrove town centre by reducing speed limits and improving it for cyclists and pedestrians. That should be finished by November.

## Budget

The A38 BREP is funded by £43.2million from the Department for Transport, £1.3million from the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership and £5.2million from Section 106 agreements from housing developers.

That totals £49.7million worth of funding and spending (up to the end of December) is £25.5million.

Tina McLaughlin, the BREP programme manager for Worcestershire County Council, said the scheme was on budget and spend was where it was expected to be at this stage - the remaining works are set to be the most expensive.

She added the scheme was value for money. According to BCR (Benefit to Cost Ratio) figures, every £1 spent on the scheme was set to generate £2.30 worth of benefits to the area.

## Q&A

More than 180 questions and comments were received from the public.

Some asked why multiple works in different areas were taking place and 'none completed'. It was explained different agencies often had to undertake work at different times, such as Severn Trent and utility companies. There had been delays, caused by a number of issues, including adverse weather and complications when areas had been dug up.

Some people asked why there were low numbers of workers who seemed 'inactive' while roads were closed.

Andy Bond, project manager from contractor Colas Ltd, said there were several reasons for on-site inactivity, such as waiting for utility companies, finding unexpected issues when roads were dug up, adverse weather and waiting for materials to arrive.

People asked how long drivers would save on their journey times once the work was complete. It was anticipated southbound journeys would be two minutes faster during the morning rush hour and one minute in the afternoons and northbound journey time-savings would range from 30 seconds to one minute.

The scheme is aimed at futureproofing Bromsgrove's road network but it is anticipated these time savings would reduce by 2040.

Another question asked how the scheme would prevent residential rat-running and congestion, particularly with HGVs.

Catherine Tipton, from Jacobs, delivering the scheme for the county council, said, once the A38 completely reopened, it would offer the quickest main route both north and south to and from Bromsgrove, meaning it would be less attractive for drivers to use cut-throughs and rat runs.

This would also make the surrounding roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists as the main body of traffic would use the A38.

On active travel, Ms McLaughlin said it was pre-

dicted that, once completed, the new routes for walking and cycling would lead to 2,000 more journeys by foot or bike every day.

Another issue raised was frequent flooding by Morrisons Bromsgrove.

Mr Bond said 600metres of new drainage improvements were due to be installed on that stretch of road, including new gullies. These would not be connected until towards the end of the scheme.

But, he added, when they were, there would be a big improvement, thanks to the extra water capacity

incorporated.

And the county council said it 'took all public feedback on board'.

Ms McLaughlin said one example was Regents Park Road where residents had expressed concerns about the changes and the authority was now looking into those fears and would be publishing a report on it.

Visit: [worcestershire.gov.uk/A38BREP](http://worcestershire.gov.uk/A38BREP) for more on the scheme, to watch the webinar, to see artist's impressions and for the latest updates.

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Children and staff celebrate joining the Central Region Schools Trust. s

**JOINING THE TRUST:** MATCHBOROUGH First School Academy in Redditch has joined Central Region Schools Trust.

Central Region Schools Trust is a family of 14 schools across Worcestershire, Sandwell and Birmingham.

The Trust now supports eight schools serving the Redditch community, making it one of the town's largest education providers.

Matchborough First School joins other trust schools within the well-established 'Arrow Vale Pyramid'.

Principal of Matchborough First School, Lynn Briars, said: "Joining Central Region Schools Trust is a positive and exciting development for Matchborough First School Academy.

"Becoming part of a trust with such a strong track record, particularly within Redditch, gives us access to shared expertise, support and opportunities that will directly benefit our pupils.

"The trust's clear commitment to collaboration, strong pastoral care and high expectations aligns closely with our values as a school.

"We are proud to join a group of schools that work together so effectively to support children throughout their education."

Guy Shears, chief executive officer of Central Region Schools Trust, said: "Welcoming Matchborough First School Academy into Central Region Schools Trust is an important step for the school and for the wider Redditch community.

"As a trust, it further strengthens the all-through journey we have built, ensuring children benefit from a consistent approach to learning and pastoral support from the age of three right through to 18.

"Our vision is rooted in social justice through exceptional schools.

"By working together across the different phases in Redditch, we are able to provide stability, high expectations and strong support for pupils, regardless of their starting point.

"We are proud of the strength of our schools and excited to work alongside Lynn and the Matchborough team to continue delivering high-quality education for local families."

# Learning about council's work

STUDENTS at Chadsgrove Educational Trust Specialist College in Bromsgrove were given an interactive look at local democracy when they visited the district council house at Parkside.

The seven students, along with their learning support assistants, tutors and enterprise advisor Jules Evans, took part in microphone checks and mock debates as they found out more about how the council worked.

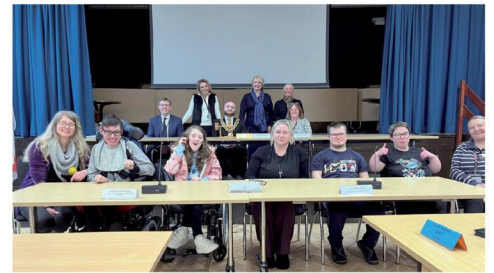
They also learned about the roles of councillors and officers.

Bromsgrove District Council chairman, Coun Sam Evans, said: "It was lovely to see the students so engaged and enthusiastic about learning how local democracy works.

"They asked thoughtful questions, weren't afraid to get involved, and brought a brilliant energy to the mock debate. Opportunities like this are so important in helping young people feel confident about having their voices heard."

The visit began in the Parkside Committee Room, where the students were welcomed by the Coun Evans and they then got to meet Bromsgrove District Council leader, Coun Karen May, along with Coun Shirley Webb, Coun Sam Ammar, chief executive John Leach and monitoring officer Claire Felton for a short discussion about their roles and council meetings.

Following this, the group headed to the Parkside Suite, which had been set up ready for a full council meeting, giving students a chance to experience the chamber layout.



They got to test out how the microphones worked and enjoyed an informal mock debate run by the chairman.

The basis of the mock debate was a question students had decided: "How do you think we can make politics interesting and relatable to young adults like us?"

Jules said: "It was a fantastic opportunity for our students to get an insight into how decisions are made locally and to see firsthand the roles councillors and officers play.

"Experiences like this really help make politics more accessible and relatable, and our students came away inspired, informed, and excited to continue learning more."

**Coun Sam Ammar, council leader, Coun Karen May, Coun Shirley Webb (back) with CEO John Leach, chairman Coun Sam Evans, monitoring officer Claire Felton (middle) and students with their learning support assistants from Chadsgrove College (front). s**



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# Walking challenge after heart attack

by Ryan Smith  
ryan.smith@bullivantmedia.com

**A DROITWICH councillor is preparing to take on a walking challenge just four months after a near-fatal heart attack, to raise vital funds for a cause that is important to him.**

On October 3, councillor Richard Morris, the leader of Wychavon District Council, woke up early and went on his usual dog walk but he began to feel a bit unwell and started sweating.

Shortly after arriving home, his heart had stopped.

Luckily, Coun Morris' brother was on hand to call 999 and give him cardiopulmonary resuscitation, and now the elected member is on the road to recovery.

Coun Morris is looking to do his bit to help those who go through similar ordeals by taking on the Walk For Hearts this month, for the British Heart Foundation.

He has raised £285 for the charity, more than double the target on his JustGiving page.

Coun Morris said: "After my experience, I have the desire to thank those who helped me but also try to help those who may experience similarly, and need support. The British Heart Foundation is so important, with the work they do, and I am so pleased to sign up

for their Walk for Hearts during February.

"Before my heart attack, I walked at least 10,000 steps every day for over five years and I am building strength and ability to get back to that level.

"I take the dogs on my walks and enjoy meeting and talking with others too, so it becomes quite social.

"We have many great green spaces in Droitwich to enjoy.

"The Walk for Hearts means I can get walking and, hopefully, raise money for the British Heart Foundation."

## Meeting

Last week, Coun Morris attended his first Wychavon District Council meeting since suffering his heart attack.

He said he now wanted to emphasise how precious life was and to encourage people to cherish every day with family and friends.

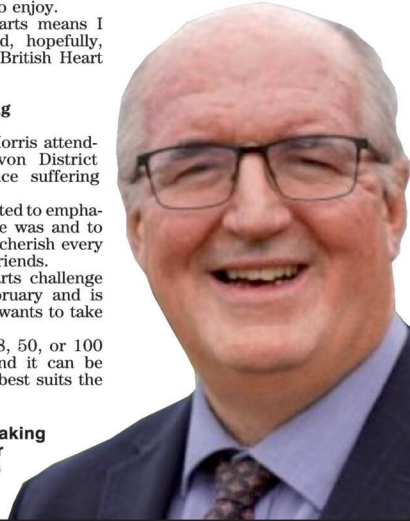
The Walk For Hearts challenge runs throughout February and is open to anyone who wants to take part.

People can walk 28, 50, or 100 miles in February and it can be completed wherever best suits the fundraiser.

**Richard Morris is taking part in the Walk for Hearts just months after his own scare. s**

Visit [justgiving.com/page/richard-morris-1769171474628/](https://justgiving.com/page/richard-morris-1769171474628/) to donate to Coun Morris' fundraising total.

Visit [bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/events/virtual/walk-for-hearts](https://bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/events/virtual/walk-for-hearts) to sign up for the Walk For Hearts challenge.



The car which fled from police and then rammed a patrol car was later found by officers. s

## Police car rammed in chase

A MOTORIST in Bromsgrove failed to stop and drove off from police before ramming a patrol car during a pursuit.

The driver made off at speed, driving dangerously and putting members of the public at risk.

During the pursuit, the vehicle rammed into the pursuing police car, causing damage and further escalating the danger.

The suspect vehicle was located

a short time later, just outside the West Mercia Police force area and was recovered for forensic testing as part of an ongoing investigation.

A West Mercia Police spokesperson said: "We remain committed to tackling dangerous driving and will continue to take robust action against those who choose to disregard the law and endanger our community."

## Cafe closes in popular park

THE CAFE in Bromsgrove's Sanders Park closed temporarily on Monday, for refurbishment.

The eatery shut after the previous tenant operator's lease ended.

An interim mobile catering provider will now be sought to offer refreshments to park visitors while a long-term solution is finalised.

The closure does not affect the recently-upgraded public toilets by the cafe, which remain open and fully accessible.

Bromsgrove District Council's

portfolio holder for leisure and Culture, councillor Shirley Webb, said: "With the cafe's change of tenancy, it's time to assess the options for improvements that could make an even better experience for park users.

"That will take a bit of time, so thank you for your patience."

An estimated 350,000 people visit Sanders Park every year.

As well as a cafe building and toilets in its 16 hectares, the park boasts a bandstand, bowling green, tennis courts, skate park, and multiple play areas.

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# Public ownership brings 'new era' for rail services



Picture by Tristan Harris, Bullivant Media Group Ltd.

RAIL SERVICES operated by West Midlands Trains were transferred to public ownership on Sunday, in line with government plans for a simpler and more unified railway.

The historic change tomorrow saw West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern initially being taken over by the government-owned DfT Operator Limited until new public-body Great British Railways is fully established.

West Midlands Trains will be the fourth operator to enter public ownership under the government's Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act, joining Greater Anglia, C2C and South Western Railway.

More than 8,500 publicly owned rail services are now running daily, helping over 660million passengers get where they need to go each year, and at a time when the government has frozen rail fares for the first time in 30 years.

Transport secretary Heidi Alexander, said thousands of passengers who travelled with West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern were now using services owned by the public and run with their interests at heart.

"We're working hard to reform a fragmented system and deliver a reli-

able railway that regenerates communities, rebuilds the trust of its passengers, and delivers the high standards they rightly expect."

## The services

Services operated by West Midlands Railway include routes across Worcestershire and to Hereford and Birmingham. Among them are the Cross City Line from Bromsgrove and Redditch to Lichfield via Birmingham New Street. There are also routes to Worcester and Kidderminster and other West Midlands areas, including to Coventry, Solihull and Dorridge and across Warwickshire to Stratford, Leamington, Warwick and Rugby.

London Northwestern Railway operates between Liverpool and Birmingham and along the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.

West Midlands Trains managing director, Ian McConnell, said: "We are proud to be one of the fastest-growing train operators in the country with millions of passengers travelling on West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services every month.

"We've introduced more than 100 new trains and upgraded our depots

and station facilities.

"We're looking forward to opening five brand new stations this year and we're also rolling out 'Pay-As-You-Go' ticketing across 75 locations to enable seamless tap-in, tap-out travel.

"Public ownership is an exciting opportunity to build on this success through a strong culture of collaboration and integration with the wider family of publicly owned operators."

West Midlands Railway is jointly managed with the West Midlands Rail Executive led by Mayor Richard Parker, through a Collaboration Agreement with the DfT - that was also renewed on Sunday.

Mr Parker said: "For too long passengers have had to put up with unreliable and overcrowded trains and a confusing ticket system run by companies who put profit before people.

"Now we have a government which is delivering on its pledge to take public ownership and fix our broken railways."

"More needs to be done"

Although this is a positive step, Johnbosco Nwogbo at public ownership campaign organisation We Own It, said there was still a long way to go to improve services for passengers.

"Bringing train operating companies like West Midlands Railway into public ownership hardly gets us a quarter of the way to delivering the experience passengers really expect.

"With the company seeing the second highest growth in unreliability across the railway in the year to March 2025, public ownership will be a powerful tool to unite incentives for the benefit of passengers in the region. But it will not be a panacea.

"So much will come down to the broader reforms that the government's Railways Bill will create, and on that front their approach to that is scattershot.

"On the one hand they want to remove private interests from train operations, but the bill leaves private profiteering intact in train, or rolling stock, ownership."

Over the past 100-years the structure of railway ownership in the UK has changed since the Railways Act introduced privatisation in 1921. That lasted until 1947 when the Transport Act established the government-owned British Rail, which remained in place until 1993 when privatisation re-emerged.

Finally, in 2025 the Railway Bill was introduced bringing about the demise of the current privatisation status, and the creation of Great British Railways.

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- 27TH FEB: ABBA GOLD
- 28TH FEB: THAT BRITPOP BAND
- 4TH MARCH: THE TAP CHAPS
- 6TH MARCH: BEATLEMANIA
- 7TH MARCH: NEARLY DAN - THE SOUND OF STEELY DAN
- 15TH MARCH: THE SPICE PARTY - 30 YEARS OF THE SPICEGIRLS
- 19TH MARCH: TINA TURNER EXPERIENCE
- 20TH MARCH: FLEETWOOD UNCHAINED
- 21ST MARCH: FEARLESSLY TAYLOR (JANOR SWIFT TRIBUTE)
- 2ND APRIL: SMOOTH CRIMINAL - MICHAEL JACKSON EXPERIENCE
- 4TH APRIL: ELECTRIK LIVE ORCHESTRA
- 9TH APRIL: K-POP SUPERSTARS
- 10TH APRIL: THE RADIOHEAD PROJECT
- 11TH APRIL: THE ANNIE LENNOX & EURYTHMICS SHOW
- 12TH APRIL: SHANIA TWAIN - BY SHANIA LIVE
- 17TH APRIL: ONE NIGHT OF ADELE - NAOMI JOHNSON
- 23RD APRIL: WILD BOYS OF THE 80S
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- 31ST MARCH: ROYAL OPERA LIVE: SIEGFRIED
- 20TH APRIL: NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: ALL MY SONS
- 21ST APRIL: ROYAL OPERA LIVE: THE MAGIC FLUTE
- 5TH MAY: ROYAL OPERA LIVE: EUGENE ONEGIN
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- 26TH MAY: WONDERS OF THE UNIVERSE
- 24TH - 27TH JUNE: SLEUTH
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- 26TH FEB: FAT THEO - THE CONTENDER
- 5TH MARCH: MATT PARKER GETTING TRIGGY WITH IT
- 26TH MARCH: ACOPALYPSE NOW - ALFIE MOORE
- 14-15TH APRIL: JONNY COLE ARMAGUDD'N
- 21ST NOV: TINY TIM'S FAMILY ADVENTURE
- 21ST NOV: TNY TIM'S STAND UP ADVENTURE



### SPOKEN WORD:

- 18TH MARCH: BIRMINGHAM CITY LEGENDS - AN EVENING WITH CLINTON MORRISON AND MICHAEL JOHNSON

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# Hopes high for rail line under public ownership

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

**THE GROUP** which represents rail passengers across Bromsgrove and Redditch has welcomed a move to bring West Midlands Railway into public ownership.

The Bromsgrove and Redditch Rail User Partnership (BARRUP) spoke out after Sunday's monumental change which, it is hoped, will make life better for people using trains across the two towns, whether to commute or for leisure purposes.

The most up-to-date figures show that between 2024 and 2025, a total 910,428 passengers used Redditch Station and 695,994 passengers travelled from Bromsgrove Station.

The two stations are among the busiest in Worcestershire and are both on the Cross City Line.

Trains travel from Lichfield, via Birmingham New Street, to Bromsgrove and Redditch stations, splitting at Longbridge.

All four Redditch trains every hour (two inbound and two outbound) stop at Barnt Green and Alvechurch and one per hour, to and from Bromsgrove, stops at



**BARRUP hopes journeys and ticketing will improve for passengers.**

Barnt Green. Bromsgrove is also on the line from Birmingham New Street to Worcester and Hereford, via University and Droitwich.

Robert Cholmondeley, the chairman of BARRUP, said: "The Bromsgrove and Redditch Rail User Partnership hopes bringing the rail operating companies under single ownership will lead to improved timetables and better connections between services.

"We feel some of the rail operating companies focus more on their narrow business models, rather than considering the wider demands for public transport. "BARRUP's main hope is that it will be possible to travel directly between Bromsgrove,

Worcestershire Parkway and Cheltenham (and beyond) rather than the current situation, where it is necessary to travel via Birmingham.

"This adds an hour to journey times, with additional cost.

"BARRUP also hopes ticketing will be simplified and that costs will be fairer in the future."

Redditch Station was due to be upgraded.

In November, however, Worcestershire County Council announced the plans had been scrapped, to save cash.

## A flippin' fun event

ALVECHURCH'S annual Shrove Tuesday event will take place at Alvechurch Baptist Church, between 2pm and 4pm on February 17.

The long-standing tradition of pancake afternoon has been enjoyed by generations over many years.

Everyone is welcome to drop in and enjoy freshly made pancakes and there will be a range of fillings along with other sweet treats.

A spokesperson for the event said there would be a relaxed afternoon of conversation and community to enjoy, alongside the pancakes.

"Whether it's a tradition you remember or a first visit, you'll be very welcome," they said.

"Bring the family or a friend and come along for a treat. "We'd love to see you."

■ ST LAURENCE'S Church, in Alvechurch, is appealing for people to help out at its 9.15am Sunday service.

The church aims for the service to be a warm, prayerful and welcoming space with hospitality at The Ark after the service.

But more help is needed to run the services and the church wants to safeguard the service's future.

The current rota runs until mid-April so the church is looking for people to be available on Sundays after that.

Anyone interested can speak to Rev Gail or Rev Martin to express their interest.



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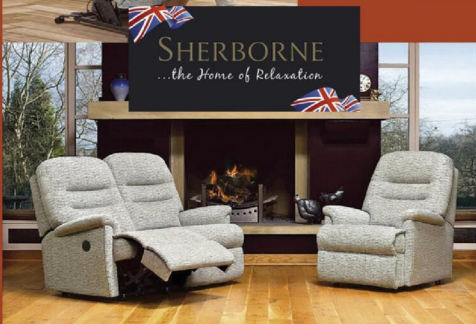
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# Services land a 'good' rating

THE CHILDREN and young people's service at Northfield's Royal Orthopaedic Hospital has been rated good by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Following an unannounced inspection in May 2025, the CQC found the service had an inclusive approach where service users were involved in assessments of their needs and were protected and kept safe.

The report highlighted how people working in the services were kind, caring and compassionate and leaders were visible, knowledgeable and supportive.

The report also highlighted that children and young people received care and support that was kind and compassionate.

Inspectors praised staff for having a good understanding of monitoring and assessing children and young people's individual needs, including communication and any reasonable adjustments they required.

The report added: "The service made sure children and young people were at the centre of their care and treatment choices."

"Staff understood the diverse health and care needs of their patients and their local communities, which ensured flexible and supported choice and continuity."

"The service had a shared direction and culture managed by capable, compassionate, and inclusive leaders."

"Staff felt safe to speak up and understood where to go for support if required."

Matthew Hartland, chief executive officer at The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, said: "I'm delighted to confirm our Children and Young People service



has achieved an overall 'Good' rating following the CQC inspection, and congratulate everyone involved in achieving this outcome.

"Our priority is to deliver compassionate, patient-centred care that empowers our patients to regain their mobility, independence and quality of life."

"I also want to thank the dedication of our staff."

"This rating reflects the efforts of our staff in continuing to provide a safe and welcoming space for children and young people receiving care at The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital."

**The children's and young people's service at Birmingham's Royal Orthopaedic Hospital has been rated good.**

# MP welcomes drop in NHS waiting lists

by Ashleigh Osborne  
ashleigh.osborne@bullivantmedia.com

NHS waiting lists have been falling across the Worcestershire NHS Trust, figures have shown.

Latest NHS data shows waiting lists at Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust have fallen by 4,468 since the general election in July 2024, covering services at the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch, Worcestershire Royal Hospital and Kidderminster Hospital and Treatment Centre.

The local improvement comes alongside a significant national picture. Across England, the NHS waiting list fell by more than 86,000 in November alone to 7.31million - the second biggest monthly drop in 15 years.

Overall, waiting lists are now down by more than 312,000 since Labour came into power, despite record numbers of people coming forward for treatment.

The progress has been made during the NHS's busiest ever year. In 2025, there were 27.8million A&E attendances across England, including 2.33million attendances in

December alone, placing sustained pressure on frontline services.

Redditch MP Chris Bloore has welcomed the news.

He said: "When Labour came into office, more than 7.31million people were stuck on NHS waiting lists, unable to work, care for loved ones or simply get on with everyday life. For too long, patients were promised change but saw little of it."

"Thanks to the dedication of NHS staff, waiting lists have fallen - even while services face record demand."

"That means thousands more patients in Redditch are getting faster diagnoses, quicker treatment or the reassurance of an all-clear."

Mr Bloore warned winter pressures remained severe, with hospitals continuing to battle flu and high levels of demand and urged eligible residents across Redditch to take up their flu vaccination.

He added: "There is still a long road ahead but this shows what's possible when you properly back the NHS with investment and modernisation."

"Ambulances are arriving quicker, GP satisfaction is up and A&E waits are down."

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# Civic society needs to find new officials

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

**THE ANNUAL general meeting (AGM) of Droitwich Spa Civic Society will take place at 7.30pm on February 20 at Sacred Heart Church Hall, on Worcester Road.**

The event will feature a talk from Janine Rusby, heritage engagement co-ordinator for the Worcestershire Building Preservation Trust.

She will discuss the Willow Court Farmhouse project and the building's importance to Droitwich Spa.

Attendees can learn about how the historic building is being converted into affordable apartments with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

The project has included a programme of community engagement and volunteer opportunities and Janine will explain how these have been used to engage schools and the wider community.

She will be joined by project volunteers who have been collecting memories from former residents for an oral history project.

Droitwich Spa Civic Society was founded in 1974 to stimulate pub-

lic interest; promote environmental standards; and secure preservation, protection and improvement of features of interest in the town.

The organisation's strength comes from members with various interests, skills, knowledge and expertise.

The society has planning experience and is well placed to make considered responses to planning applications and developments.

It monitors outline and planning applications, especially where there are potential traffic problems and where applications would adversely affect the locality or be detrimental to the town and its environs.

Members were involved with the draft neighbourhood plan and have



The distinctive chimneys on Willow Court Farmhouse, which will be the subject of a talk from Janine Rusby after the Droitwich Spa Civic Society AGM. s

contributed and made comments during its development.

The society has had a momentous year in which local challenges have been addressed – the outstanding one being a disastrous fire at the Raven hotel.

Mike Meredith, the chair, called a meeting from which the now independent Raven Heartbeat Group

was established. That organisation has since formed a community interest company to secure the historic core of the former Raven hotel and to seek grants and sponsorship to restore it and create a sustainable building for the future.

The civic society AGM is free to attend and is open all, although voting is restricted to society mem-

bers. Items on the agenda include the organisation's amended constitution; an annual report, including financial review, from the chair; and the election of officers and committee members.

Chair Meredith will be standing down after three years in the post and, besides a new chair, a treasurer is also sought.

There will be an admission charge of \$5 for visitors to the Willow Court talk (after the AGM). The talk will be free to members.

Anyone interested in becoming a member of the society, or a committee member, is urged to visit: [droitwichspacivicsociety.co.uk](http://droitwichspacivicsociety.co.uk) to get in touch and find out more.

Subscriptions for the year 2026 cost \$10 per household and new members will be able to join on arrival if they wish to vote at the AGM.



**A COMMUNITY CHAMPION REMEMBERED:** The funeral of a community champion, D-Day veteran and Frankley Parish Councillor has taken place.

Eric Carter BEM died last month after decades serving his local community and country.

He was awarded the prestigious Legion d'Honneur, France's highest military honor, which was given to service personnel for the crucial role of British forc-

es liberating France, particularly during the D-Day landings.

Eric was also made a freeman of Frankley Parish.

Andy Cartwright, who also served on Frankley Parish Council, said: "Eric was a true gentleman who lived for his community."

"I am honoured to have been an elected councillor alongside him and learned so much from him."



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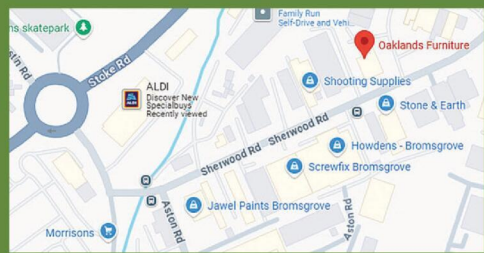
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# We must make the right choices

WE ARE feeling overwhelmed, bombarded with bad news each day – global economic and political instability from the Trump circus and the rule of the rich in Davos, the rising cost of living, job insecurity, and severe weather events.

It is a polycrisis – a coming together of related issues from different directions.

This heightens anxiety and makes it difficult to keep going.

The lack of predictability creates disturbing doubt about the future, which blocks our ability to imagine ourselves in it.

We find it difficult to cope, and the likely result is we switch off and stop trying to think deeply about any of this stuff.

But we cannot afford to ignore it as the issues keep multiplying and pressing for attention.

We owe it to ourselves, to our futures and our children and grandchildren's to confront the fundamental problems.

Who else is there to do this? Our political representatives?

They are mostly ducking and diving to avoid taking action.

Take the largest emergency label: 'climate change'. I know the popular press has recently stated the cost of Net Zero is £7trillion and is therefore 'unaffordable', but this is misinformation (listen to BBC Radio 4 More or Less, January 21 2026).

The true cost of the transition is currently estimated around two per cent of Gross Domestic Product.

The cost of taking action is much less than the cost of inaction.

We are in an emergency situation. There should be an ongoing Public Information warning published across all media like for AIDS or Covid.



This is also a health emergency. In November, a small group of our best climate scientists gave a National Emergency Briefing in London - attended by 150 MPs/peers.

It was recorded and will be turned into a film for general release - some time in April.

View each succinct presentation here - youtube.com/@nebriefing - on YouTube.

There was a wide range of interacting topics as befits such a complex subject, so you can sample from presentations on nature, climate, weather extremes, tipping points, food security, health, national security, economics and energy transition.

Each one is short.

This can be a difficult watch, especially if you have not engaged with these issues before. But there is still hope.

We have a chance to choose which future we want.

And, depending on which version we choose, that transforms our actions today.

We can make choices and collectively work towards that future.

To discuss your thoughts about this emergency, join the next Bromsgrove Climate Cafe discussion - from 2.20pm to 4pm next Saturday, February 14, at the Lemon Tree Cafe.

Email: bromsgrove@extinctionrebellion.uk or text: 07894 251731 to contact Bromsgrove Extinction Rebellion.

Column by Bromsgrove Extinction Rebellion.



LEFT: Organisers celebrate the events success. More than 600 items of clothing (BELOW) were swapped.

# Swap event a success

THE THIRD community swap shop in Redditch has been hailed a success.

The event, aimed at promoting a circular economy and reducing textile waste, saw residents come together to donate and exchange quality clothing and goods entirely for free.

The scheme highlights a growing local movement toward sustainable fashion and community support during the ongoing cost-of-living challenges.

Event organiser Katie Hughes said the atmosphere was incredible.

"It was a pleasure to see the community coming together to support a more sustainable way of shopping.

"By choosing to swap instead of buying new, our attendees played a direct part in reducing waste and helping community members find quality items at no cost.

"The event's success was made possible by the support of my friends and family in helping me run the event by sorting clothes, transporting equipment and providing refreshments."

Around 603 items were successfully diverted from potential waste and the event promoted a

circular economy within the local community. Plans for the next Swap Shop are already in discussion for spring.

Email clothing\_swapshop@outlook.com for more information on future events.





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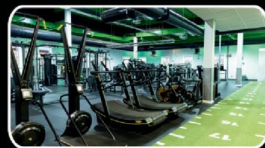
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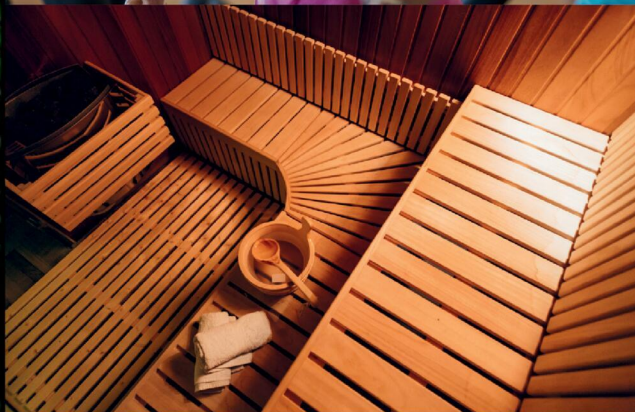
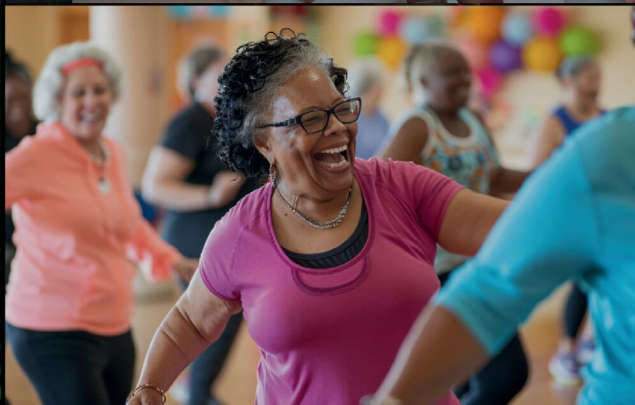


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**THE FIT CLUB**

# Service puts focus on key work of Lay Ministers



Bishop Martin and the Archdeacon of Dudley, Nikki Groarke with the Lay Ministers. s

A SERVICE of celebration for Authorised Lay Ministers (ALM) from across Worcestershire and Dudley was held at Worcester Cathedral.

People from across the Diocese received a certificate from the Bishop of Dudley, Martin Gorick to mark the completion of their courses, which equip them for specific roles in their parishes.

This year's ALMs have been trained to become children and youth work ministers, worship leaders or New Worshipping Community ministers through the Myriad pathway.

As ALMs they will work alongside ordained clergy and licensed lay ministers as part of the ministry teams in their individual parishes.

Representatives from each cohort took part in this service including members of two New Worshipping Communities.

Members of Create, a New

Worshipping Community at St Mary's, Kempsey which uses the Arts as a way of bringing people together, led the prayers, while the leaders of Activity church from St John's, Greenlands in Redditch which brings families to God through crafts, stories and music, taught the congregation one of the songs they sing there, with its associated actions.

Archdeacon Nikki Groarke gave the sermon at the service.

She said: "As you are authorised today to lead in worship in both traditional and new settings, and to invest in children and young people, this will be part of your calling.

"Not only to use your gifts, but to identify and encourage gifts in others...I am certain that when we are all working towards that individually, the church as a whole will reach its potential and flourish."

Chris Day from Worcestershire Severn parishes who completed

the course led by Rector Tim Williams to become a Worship Leader said: "I found the course really helpful.

"It definitely gave me a clearer understanding of how to go about leading worship, and also some pointers as to where to look for further materials."

Vicky Whitehouse from Malvern who undertook the Myriad New Worshipping Communities training added: "I found the course really informative and it was brilliant to meet up with others on

the same journey. I found the modules around making disciples, prayer and teamwork the most helpful.

"It was also great to look at the relationship between the church and our community. Although the course has ended, we're planning to continue to meet up and support each other."

Mark Hambling from St Anne's Church in Bewdley did the children and youth work training course led by Diocesan Lead Simon Hill.

He said: "It was an absolutely fantastic course. Simon explained it all so well, we're very sorry to see him go. The service has been majestic and I'm fairly new to faith, so I've found completing this first course amazing."

While Phil Tricklebank who took part in the course to become a Worship Leader in Alvechurch and Beoley parish said: "Gail's a phenomenal tutor and made it such a joy. There was no pressure, it was a lovely way of learning, and I really enjoyed the course."

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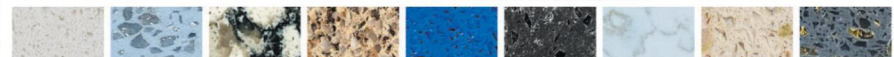
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# Making a date

FEMALE fundraisers are stepping out of their comfort zones and onto a 'dating scene' with a difference.

More than 30 women, aged between 18 and 80, will stand in front of the camera striking a series of cheeky poses for a 'sassy and sophisticated' charity calendar in aid of a host of nominated local and national charities.

And among those taking part is a familiar face on local and national screens, former TV newsreader Suzanne Virdee from Redditch.

Suzanne is best known in the Midlands for co-presenting the 6.30pm BBC regional news programme Midlands Today along with Nick Owen for 11 years.

Over her career she's also been a passionate supporter and mentor to women starting out in journalism.

And, as a published author of A Girl's Guide To Being Awesome and the best-selling A Teenager's Guide To Being Fabulous, she empowers young girls with advice on navigating the difficult teenage years.

Suzanne's chosen charity for the calendar is WAITS (Women Acting in Today's Society), based in Birmingham.

She said: "When I was asked to be part of

this project I absolutely had to say 'yes'.

"I am passionate about helping to empower all women to flourish in every area of their lives and this is a brilliant and fun way to do it.

"I'm really excited to meet and make friends with all the women involved in making this calendar.

"Even more than that I'm thrilled to be able to shine a light on the different issues that stop women reaching their full potential and am delighted to be raising money to do something about it."

The featured ladies will gather for photo-shoot days at Mallory Court Hotel and Spa in Leamington in the spring ahead of the calendar's grand reveal at a stylish red carpet screening event at The Birmingham Repertory Theatre later in the year.

Some of the charities set to benefit include Molly Ollys, Coventry, Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind, and Prostate Cancer UK. Ladies First holds monthly meetings which hear from inspirational speakers, provide informative business skills workshops and make new introductions.

Visit [ladiesfirstnetwork.co.uk](http://ladiesfirstnetwork.co.uk) for more information.



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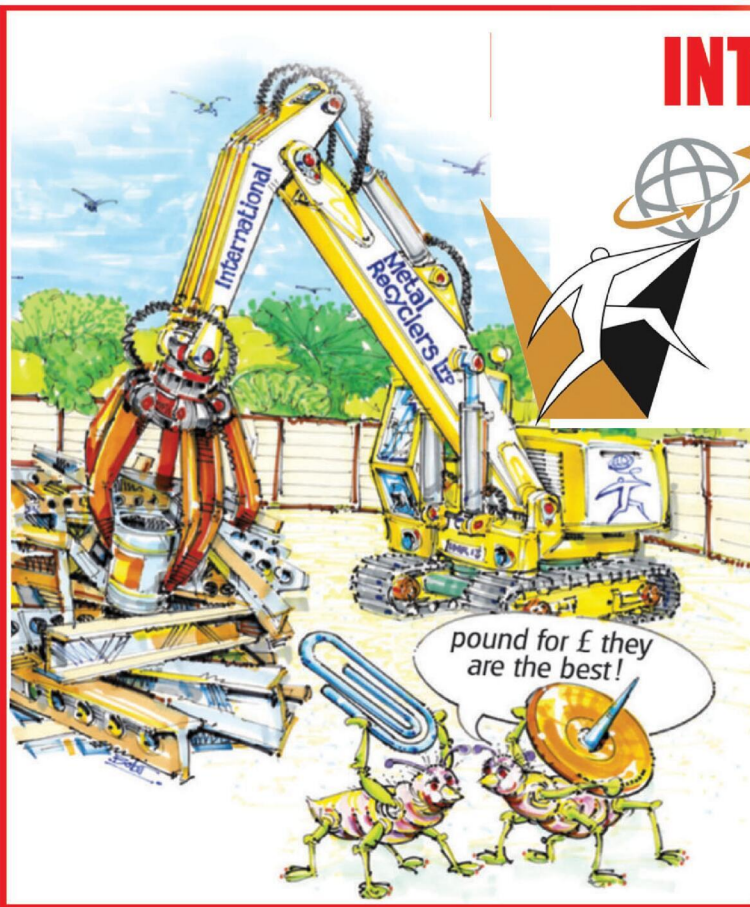
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# Hubs making a fruitful offer

FAMILY HUBS in the county are now offering a free piece of fruit to children when they, their parents and carers visit.

At the hubs, families can learn about support they have eligibility for, along with tips on food planning, reducing food waste and saving money.

To encourage healthy habits and stress the importance of families eating their 'five-a-day', Worcestershire County Council's Public Health Team has ensured fresh fruit will be available at the reception of every family hub.

The scheme has been put in place in support of families maintaining balanced diets, providing essential vitamins, minerals and fibre.

Coun Satinder Bell, Worcestershire County Council's Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, said: "Its great news family hubs are encouraging healthy eating habits and helping children and families build positive habits from an early age.

"Starting this behaviour early stays with you and benefits you throughout your life.

"Healthy eating is incredibly important for families.

"Getting at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day helps grown-ups stay healthy and supports children to grow and develop well."

People can visit: [worcestershire.gov.uk/familyhubs](http://worcestershire.gov.uk/familyhubs) to find their nearest family hub and the services offered there.

Families can go to: [letswasteless.com/foodsavvy](http://letswasteless.com/foodsavvy) for more on being food savvy and: [worcestershire.gov.uk/healthystart](http://worcestershire.gov.uk/healthystart) to see if they are eligible for Healthy Start vouchers to buy food and vitamins.



The Roberts family at Brookside Family Hub where, along with the other hubs, free fruit is available for children. s

# Medical staff encourage a healthy use of NHS App

GP STAFF across Worcestershire are encouraging patients to use the NHS App more to manage their health.

The app has more than 39 million registered users and recent figures from NHS England show that 68 per cent of the population in Herefordshire and Worcestershire have registered.

App users are being encouraged to request their repeat prescriptions through the NHS App, and to turn on notifications, so that messages and appointment reminders from the NHS can easily be viewed on a mobile phone or tablet device.

In addition, users are encouraged to view their GP health record in real time and access test results more quickly.

Anyone aged 13 or over who is registered with an NHS GP surgery in England or the Isle of Man, is eligible to use the NHS App.

It can be downloaded onto a phone or tablet device from the App store on Apple devices, or the Google Play Store on Android devices.

Once patients have set up the NHS App, they can order repeat prescrip-

tions, view their GP health record and test results securely, book and manage appointments, manage their organ donation decision, view their NHS number and use NHS 111 online.

Dr Lucy Glasgow, Clinical Lead for Digital at Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICB, said: "I'm delighted that the new campaign is highlighting that you can do so much more with the NHS App than a lot of people realise, and at a time which suits them.

"This is particularly important for carers and parents managing other's medications and appointments.

"It really is so quick and easy to request repeat prescriptions using the NHS App and every repeat prescription ordered this way saves you and the NHS system time.

"Patients can also get test results in the NHS App faster than contacting the surgery as they are viewable in the app as soon as they are viewed by the GP.

"It is also vital that patients switch on notifications on the NHS App so that they receive messages from their practice and hospital immediately.

Visit [www.nhs.uk/nhsapp](http://www.nhs.uk/nhsapp) for more information.

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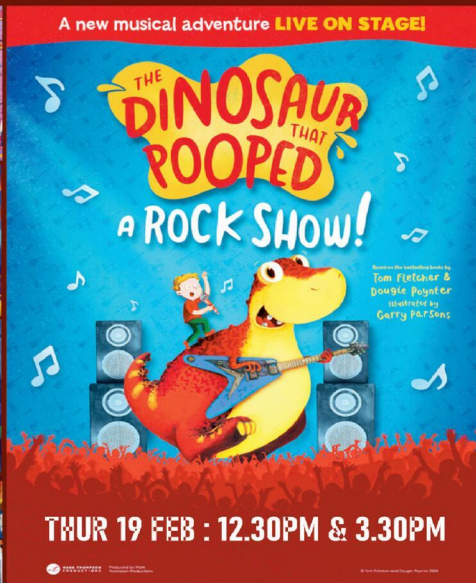


**SUN 15 FEB : 5.30PM**

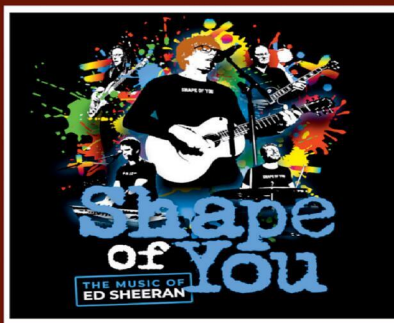


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# CARING People CARING Places

*Because caring isn't something we do, it's who we are.*

## Caring People, Caring Places: The heartbeat of our community

**In every corner of our towns and villages, there's a quiet network of people and places who make care their calling.**

From the vet who checks on your family dog like it's their own, to the funeral director who offers gentle guidance during life's most difficult goodbyes, these unsung heroes are woven into the very fabric of our daily lives. This isn't just about care for the elderly – though they are, of course, a cherished part of this picture – but about the many ways compassion shapes our communities, across all ages and walks of life.

At its heart, Caring People, Caring Places is a celebration of humanity. It's about those who dedicate themselves to the wellbeing of others – people who don't just do a job, but perform a service rooted in empathy, patience, and

dignity.

Take, for instance, the local solicitor who offers free advice sessions on will writing, ensuring peace of mind for families at any stage of life. It's not just about legalese and paperwork – it's about offering reassurance, answering difficult questions, and helping people plan with clarity and care.

Veterinary clinics also tell a powerful story of compassion. Ask any pet owner and they'll say the vet is a lifeline during tough times – when the dog has eaten something it shouldn't, when the cat needs emergency surgery, or simply when a furry friend is nearing the end of their life. These clinics often extend their care beyond animals, understanding how closely our emotional health is tied to our pets. Many offer grief support and work closely with rehoming charities to give abandoned animals a second chance at love.



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# CARING People CARING Places



Speaking of second chances, fostering and adoption services are a profound example of care in action. Across our region, there are families opening their doors – and their hearts – to children who need stability, support, and love. Social workers, carers, and support staff



dedicate their careers to making sure that vulnerable young people find not just shelter, but a sense of belonging.

And while we're on the subject of homes, care homes and supported living facilities continue to provide more than just a roof and regular meals. Many of these places are hubs of life and activity, staffed by people who understand that dignity, independence, and companionship are vital at any age. Increasingly, intergenerational projects and pet therapy schemes are breathing new life into care spaces, offering residents laughter, stimulation, and purpose.

But care doesn't stop at the front door. Funeral directors – some of the most quietly compassionate professionals in our communities – play a deeply important role in helping families navigate loss with grace and respect. Alongside them, stonemasons craft lasting tributes that honour lives lived, with each inscription carved in memory and love. These trades might not often make headlines, but their impact is profound and lasting. And let's not forget the smaller, sometimes overlooked services that make a world of difference. The kennels and catteries that provide safe havens for pets when families are away; the hearing aid specialists who reconnect people to the sounds – and conversations – they've been missing; or the volunteers who give their time to animal shelters and community centres, ensuring no one is forgotten.

These people and places aren't glamorous, and they rarely seek the spotlight. Yet they form a backbone of care and community that deserves



recognition. Their work is local, personal, and essential. They remind us that "care" isn't a service – it's a value. One that's practiced every day in countless acts of kindness, patience, and professionalism.

It might be easy to picture care as something reserved for our oldest citizens – and yes, their needs are crucial – but Caring People, Caring Places shines a light on the broader picture. From children finding safe new homes, to pets being lovingly rehomed, to families finding comfort and support through life's major

transitions, this is a celebration of care in all its forms.

So next time you pass the hearing clinic, walk past the vet's office, or drive by the local foster services banner, pause for a moment. Think of the people inside – doing quiet, tireless work to make someone else's life a little easier, a little warmer, a little more human. Let's support these people, these businesses and these organisations.

Because caring isn't just something we do. It's who we are.



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# CARING People CARING Places



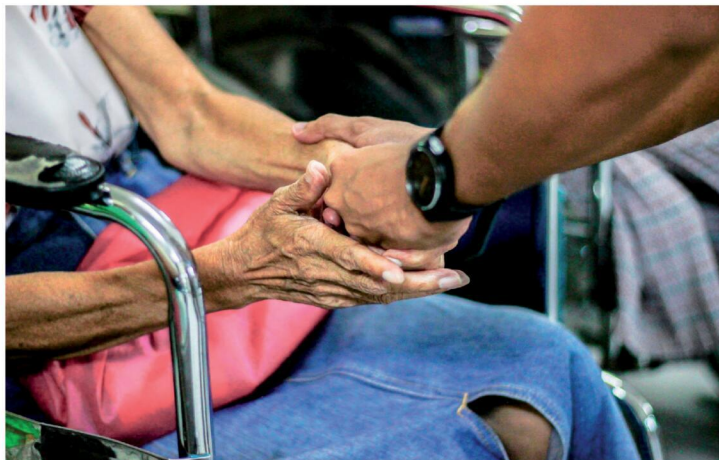
## The Circle of Care: How Support Travels Through a Community

Care has a quiet momentum. It doesn't shout. It doesn't seek credit. But when one person chooses to help another, something remarkable happens – it spreads.

Welcome to the Circle of Care: an invisible, ever-turning wheel powered by acts of kindness, big and small. In towns, villages, and

cities across the country, people are stepping up for each other – and in doing so, sparking a chain reaction of compassion.

It often starts with something simple. A hot meal left on a doorstep. A schoolchild giving up their seat on the bus. A stranger paying for the coffee of the person behind them in the queue. These gestures might feel fleeting to the giver, but to the person on the receiving



end, they can be transformative. Not just for what they provide – but for what they inspire. Take the story of a local couple who began cooking extra portions of their evening meals and delivering them to an elderly neighbour

during lockdown. That neighbour, once isolated, began knitting hats and scarves for a women's shelter in return. The shelter staff, moved by the gesture, started offering monthly pop-ups with free toiletries for the homeless.





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# CARING People CARING Places



And volunteers at those events? Some were recipients of care themselves, now giving back in kind.

This is the Circle of Care in motion. It grows not by obligation, but by invitation. It says: You've helped me – I want to help someone else.

At the heart of this cycle is connection. Care doesn't exist in a vacuum. When we see someone doing good, we're often reminded of our own power to contribute. It's why communities respond so passionately to fundraising pages, food drives, or community clean-up days. They aren't just supporting a cause – they're continuing a story. And it's not always the obvious moments that carry the most weight. A listening ear. A ride to a doctor's appointment. Watching a neighbour's child for an hour so they can rest. These are small acts – but they build trust, dignity, and belonging. They lay the foundation



Local Facebook groups often help this local newspaper and help act as the new town square – offering everything from babysitting swaps to urgent appeals for missing pets. Behind each post is a person reaching out, and another person reaching back.

And when care flows in a circle, no one is left behind. Those who give today may need help tomorrow. Those who receive today may be the first to offer it next time. It's not a straight line. It's a cycle. A rhythm. A shared responsibility.

So if you've ever wondered whether a small act of kindness really makes a difference – know this: it does. Not just to the person you helped, but to the person they go on to help. And the one after that. And the one after that. Because care is contagious. And once it's set in motion, it rarely stops.

Let's keep it turning.



for a community where people feel safe to both give and receive care. In schools, children are learning this too. Many are now taking part in kindness challenges – writing positive notes for classmates, helping with litter picks, or raising funds for local charities. Teachers report that once a culture of kindness takes hold, it becomes self-sustaining. "One child brings in a tin for the food bank, and suddenly the whole class is donating," said one headteacher. "They inspire each other."

Businesses are joining the circle as well. A bakery offering leftover loaves to a shelter.

A taxi firm giving discounted rides to cancer patients. A florist donating unsold blooms to a hospice. These aren't marketing stunts – they're reflections of what it means to be rooted in community.

But the beauty of the Circle of Care is that you don't need to wait for permission to enter it. You only need to ask: What can I do, right now, with what I have? And that answer will look different for everyone. For some, it's time. For others, it's resources. For many, it's simply attention – noticing when someone is struggling and showing up.

Even digital communities are catching on.



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## Could you be on the right lines?

WORCESTERSHIRE County Council's Libraries and Public Health teams, in collaboration with Severn Arts, are looking for young people who enjoy writing to enter to become this year's Poet Laureate.

Young people living or studying in Worcestershire can get involved by submitting a poem on the theme of 'freedom.' Poems will be judged across three age groups: school years six to eight, years nine to 11, and 12 to 13.

Finalists from each category will perform live at The Hive in Worcester, where a winner will be selected from each group.

Previous Young Poet Laureates have had their work published, performed live, one was even lucky enough to perform live on stage with Simon Armitage the Poet Laureate, been interviewed by local radio, and commissioned to write more poetry.

Councillor Ian Cresswell, cabinet member with responsibility for environment and communities at Worcestershire County Council, said: "The Young Poet Laureate event is such a special tradition for Worcestershire, celebrating the creativity and unique voices of our young people."

"This year's theme, 'Freedom', invites them to express powerful and personal ideas, and I'd encourage all young writers to get involved with this year's competition."

Jen Loffman, community producer at Severn Arts, adds: "We love seeing the creative ways young people interpret the theme, and it's always inspiring to hear them speak about what matters most to them. If you're thinking about entering, just give it a go."

The deadline for applications is 5pm on Sunday February 22. The final will take place at The Hive on Sunday March 22 2026.

Visit [severnarts.org.uk/yp126](http://severnarts.org.uk/yp126) for more information.

# Delight as tourism team makes award shortlist

VISIT Worcestershire, Worcestershire County Council's tourism team, has been shortlisted for Destination of the Year at the UKinbound Awards for Excellence.

Over the past 18 months, Visit Worcestershire has strengthened relationships with the travel trade, including organisations such as Destination Management Companies (DMCs), travel agents and online retailers who are seeking distinctive and new English destinations, while building on established touring routes that already include neighbouring areas such as the Cotswolds.

This approach has positioned Worcestershire as a natural extension for international tourist itineraries.

The scheme has already delivered tangible results, with contracts in place for some Worcestershire tourism businesses, bringing new overseas visitors to the county.

Coun Alan Amos, cabinet member with responsibility for business and skills at Worcestershire County Council, said: "This shortlisting reflects the quality of Worcestershire's tourism offer and the real progress being

made in linking local businesses with international travel markets.

"I want to congratulate the council's Visit Worcestershire team on this recognition, which shows their continued focus on supporting businesses of all sizes, strengthening the visitor economy and delivering benefits for communities across the county."

The county will host a familiarisation visit and product showcase in partnership with UKinbound this March, following strong early interest from the travel trade after its initial promotion. International travel trade buyers will visit Worcestershire as part of a three-day Discover Workshop.

The visit will provide local, travel trade-ready tourism businesses with a rare opportunity to meet buyers face to face and showcase the county's offer directly to key overseas markets.


The programme includes visits to tourism businesses and a dedicated trade event focused on developing partnerships between the buyers and Worcestershire's trade-ready suppliers.

The winner will be announced at the UKinbound Awards for Excellence Gala Dinner on February 26.



Visit [www.ukinbound.org/events/awards-for-excellence-2025/](http://www.ukinbound.org/events/awards-for-excellence-2025/) for more information.

Visit Worcestershire has been shortlisted for Destination of the Year. s



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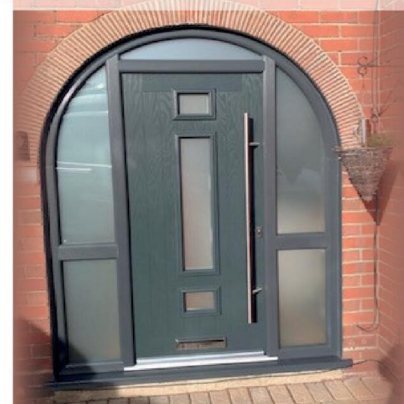



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# SUDOKU

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

## EASY

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

## HARD

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

# 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.

## Counties of the UK

**S** S E O R T H E A N E A R A L  
 O R T N H T A N Y D W O L W L  
 M E R A I O M P T H D N R N C  
 L Y G N A L O T A G O N O I A  
 L R C E I D N S M R A D C T H  
 W O T S M O F H I R E E Y E N  
 M I E R K L R N O O L R R S S  
 S R H S S U O N D N R E T A L  
 U T I R T S S O X L A G R E I  
 F N A E S A E X F T N D O C N  
 F O M I D E Y E O U R E L H I  
 K L T A L G W R R D I R N S R  
 W E S N D S Y R U S H M T E E  
 D I E S M D N N S O M I D S D  
 E S Y R E D E A G R A L G R O

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										
			23							

## ACROSS

- Engaged (9)
- Tune (3)
- Ping-pong (5-6)
- Dead body (7)
- Banishment (5)
- Like better (6)
- Young swan (6)
- Outcome (5)
- Followed (7)
- U.S. gorge (5,6)
- Beverage (3)
- Free from blame (9)

## DOWN

- Epoch (3)
- Musical drama (5)
- Took notice (6)
- Thickly (7)
- Religious drama (7,4)
- Defended (9)
- Twisted sweetmeat (6,5)
- Charm (9)
- Lift (7)
- Artist's workroom (6)
- Astonish (5)
- Choose (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.

- Embraces
- Hauls
- Falls behind
- Girl
- Final



# 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.

- 1322** gives an animal;
- 57796** gives a bird;
- 5345678** gives a fish.

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

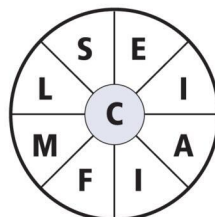
# CODEWORD

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.

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

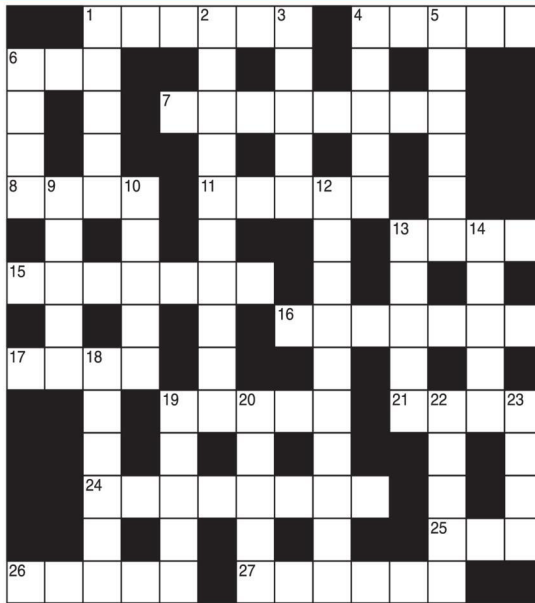


How you rate  
 15 words: average    25 words: very good  
 20 words: good      30 or more: excellent.

# GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

- One of two small masses of lymphatic tissue situated at the back of the throat (6)
- Large, long-tailed parrot (5)
- Island formerly known as Ceylon (3,5)
- Greek hero, son of Zeus and Alcmene (8)
- Lioness in Born Free (4)
- Surname of the engineer, designer of the Phantom II Continental motor-car (5)
- Dried outer covering of nutmeg (4)
- A cutting tooth (7)
- Austrian-born tenor, composer of Old Chelsea (7,6)
- Greenaway, artist famous for her drawings of children (4)
- A shoulder-wrap (5)
- Wading bird with a curved bill (4)
- Voice between tenor and bass (8)
- See 3 Down
- French landscape painter, 1796-1875 (5)
- Public gambling room (6)



## DOWN

- 'Hard ---', Charles Dickens novel (5)
- David Copperfield's hero at Creakle's school (10)
- Novel by Kingsley Amis (5,3)
- Surname of the writer of the "Pooh" books (5)
- Coarser kind of cinnamon (6)
- Blackthorn fruit (4)
- See 6 Across
- Plant with aromatic seeds used in making cordials (5)
- Tragedy by Shakespeare (10)
- The Muslim messiah (5)
- Short-legged dog with a fox-like head (5)
- See 16 Across
- Small European herring (5)
- Member of a native American people who inhabited Mexico (5)
- Musical instrument of the guitar kind (5)
- Surname of the commander of the 14th "forgotten" army of WWII (4)

# SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Berthoud; 8 Air; 9 Table-tennis; 11 Carcase; 12 Exile; 13 Prefet; 15 Cynet; 16 Richard; 17 Kate; 19 Shaw; 21 Ibis; 24 Barton; 25 Jim; 26 Corot; 27 Casino.  
 DOWN: 1 Times; 2 Steerforth; 3 Lucky; 4 Millie; 5 Cassia; 6 Sloe; 9 Lanke; 10 Anise; 12 Coriolanus; 13 Mahdi; 14 Corgi; 18 Tauber; 19 Sprat; 20 Aztec; 22 Banjo; 23 Slim.

## General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Berthoud; 8 Air; 9 Table-tennis; 11 Carcase; 12 Exile; 13 Prefet; 15 Cynet; 16 Richard; 17 Kate; 19 Shaw; 21 Ibis; 24 Barton; 25 Jim; 26 Corot; 27 Casino.  
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## Crossword

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## Wordwheel Pathfinder

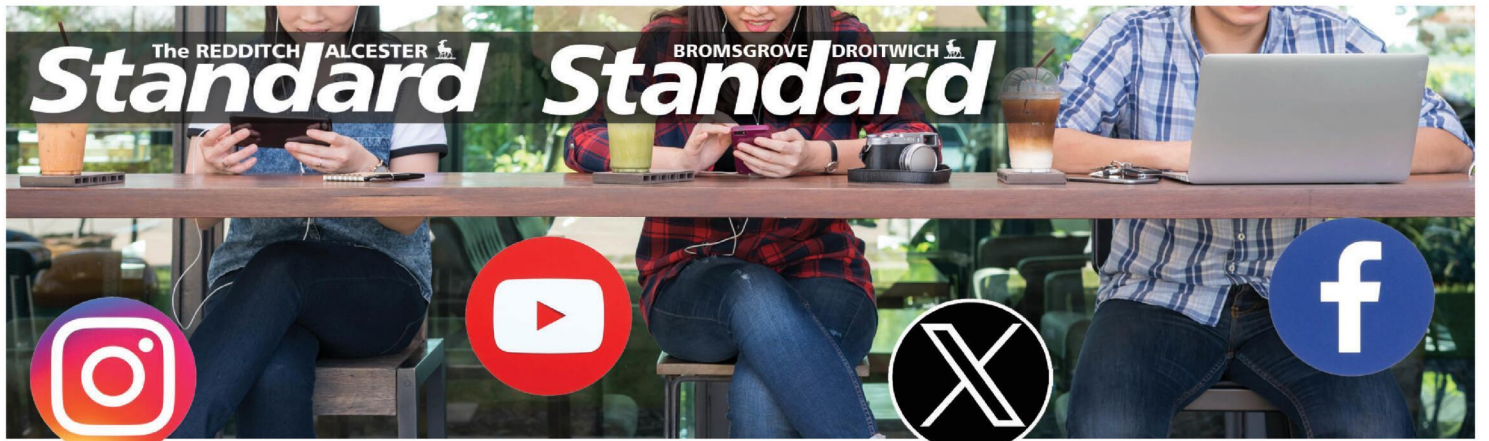
1=W, 2=F, 3=K, 4=L, 5=Z, 6=T, 7=Q, 8=Y, 9=C, 10=L, 11=N, 12=E, 13=R, 14=B, 15=X, 16=M, 17=H, 18=U, 19=Y, 20=A, 21=S, 22=O, 23=P, 24=D, 25=G, 26=J

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

Hard

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

Easy  
Sudoku



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live for today,  
hope for tomorrow.  
Anonymous

# Family Notices

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### IN MEMORIAM

**John Meredith Chambers**

A much loved Husband, Father and Grandfather. Love is the way they wear what they gave and now they will always be remembered.

*Love Jennifer and Family*  
xxx

### DEATHS

**PHILLIPS**  
**Michelle Andrea**

Passed away suddenly at The Alexandra Hospital on 10th January 2026. A much loved Daughter, Sister and Mom. Michelle will be greatly missed by all of her family and friends.

A service to celebrate Michelle's life will take place at Redditch Crematorium on Wednesday 18th February 2026 at 11.45am.

The Family have invited you to wear bright colours please.

Donations, if desired, may be made to The British Heart Foundation, c/o Thomas Brothers Birchfield House 494 Evesham Road Redditch B97 5JF  
Tel: 01527 547777  
Thank you.

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### IN MEMORIAM

In loving memory of  
**Patricia Ann Wrenn**

Who passed away 5th February 1990.

Always in our Hearts and Minds.

*Love from Paul & Leesa and grandson Jordan.*

*And all of your friends from The Birches*  
XXX

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

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### IN MEMORIAM

**CROSS**  
**Maggie**

8/2/92

A much loved Mum. Always remembered.

*Senitra, Roger, Francis, Hazel, Julie and families*  
XX

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Act of such Kindness  
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live for today,  
hope for tomorrow.  
Anonymous



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## FUNERAL DIRECTORS

## FUNERAL DIRECTORS

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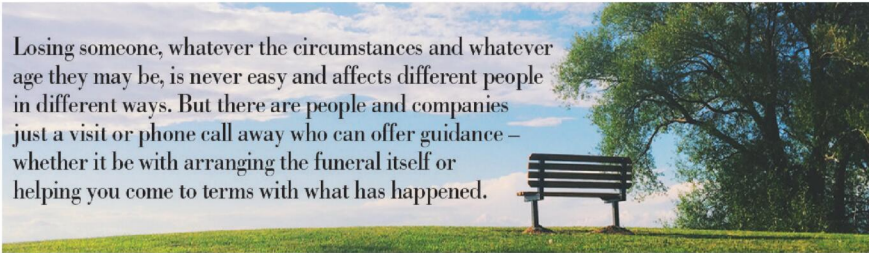
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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### Warwickshire County Council

#### ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1924

Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

#### C39 BURFORD LANE, SPERNALL

**Order Effect:** Road closed to vehicular traffic from Spennall Lane to Sheffield Green Lane.

**Reason for Order:** Carriageway patching and associated works, 08.00hrs-16.00hrs.

**Order Commences:** 10 February 2026 for up to 18 months.

**Anticipated Completion:** 10 February 2026.

**Access & Diversion:** Spennall Lane, B4089 (Village Road, Henley Road, Alcester Road), Burford Lane and vice versa. Access/egress to/from Upper Spennall Farm Road will be via Spennall Lane whilst works are in progress.

**Contractor:** Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

#### STATION ROAD, SALFORD PRIORS

**Order Effect:** Road closed to vehicular traffic.

**Reason for Order:** To safely enable works to install LED lights.

**Order Commences:** 24 February 2026 for up to 18 months.

**Anticipated Completion:** 5 March 2026.

**Access & Diversion:** A46, Chadbury Bypass, Evesham Road, Harvington Lane, Abbots Salford Road, Crest Hill, Station Road and vice versa.

**Contractor:** Chevron TM, Tel: 01785 338 990.

#### C98 MORTON BAGOT ROAD, MAPPLEBOROUGH GREEN

**Order Effect:** Road closed to vehicular traffic between A4189 Henley Road and Hardwick Lane.

**Reason for Order:** Carriageway patching and associated works. 08.00hrs-16.00hrs.

**Order Commences:** 23 February 2026 for up to 18 months.

**Anticipated Completion:** 23 February 2026.

**Access & Diversion:** A4189 Henley Road, Hardwick Lane and vice versa. Vehicular access & egress will be maintained where possible and safe to do so for businesses and residents only.

**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](http://warwickshire.gov.uk/roadworksmap) or call us 01926 412515.

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 06 Feb 2026

### BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL & REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Advertisement Key: ADVSTD = Wider Publicity, CA = Conservation Area, FP = Affects Footpath, LB = Listed Building.

**26/00065/FUL ADVSTD CA**  
Site: 3 - 4 The Square, Alvechurch, Worcestershire B48 7LA.

**Proposal:** Change of use from 2 bed residential flat at first floor to Class E (office) and erection of external stair for access.

**26/00029/FUL CA LB**  
Site: Ground Floor, 67 High Street, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 8AQ.

**Proposal:** Change of use of premises use class E (current use) to use class F1-a (education centre), new signage, a/c units, internal alterations, and all associated works.

**26/00030/LBC LB CA**  
Site: Ground Floor, 67 High Street, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B61 8AQ.

**Proposal:** Change of use of premises from class E to class F1-a (education centre), new signage, installation of a/c units, internal alterations, and associated works.

**25/01429/FUL FP**  
Site: Crowfields Farm, Fockbury Road, Dodford, Worcestershire B61 9AW.

**Proposal:** Construction of dwelling to replace existing barn approved for residential conversion

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

Comments can be submitted online, via email to [newplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:newplan@bromsgroveandredditch.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

### HYCONTROL LIMITED PENSION PLAN (THE "PLAN")

#### NOTICE UNDER SECTION 27 OF THE TRUSTEE ACT 1925

Notice is hereby given by the Trustees of the Hycontrol Limited Pension Plan, pursuant to section 27 of the Trustee Act 1925, that the Trustees are in the process of winding up the Plan. Any person that believes that he or she has a claim against, or entitlement to a pension or any benefit from, or interest in the Plan is hereby required to send particulars in writing within two months of the date of publication of this notice of his or her claim or entitlement (together with full name, present address, date of birth, National Insurance Number, details of the period of employment with any relevant employer (including one or more of those listed below) to which their claim relates (where appropriate) and the full name of the Plan).

Details should be sent to: The Trustees of the Hycontrol Limited Pension Plan, c/o XPS Administration, 1 City Square, Leeds, LS1 2ES. You may have a claim if you were an employee or former employee who was a member of the Hycontrol Limited Pension Plan.

After the expiry of two months from the date of publication of this notice, the Trustees will proceed to wind-up the Plan and will distribute the assets of the Plan among the persons entitled to them, having regard only to those persons of whose claims and entitlements they have notice. The Trustees shall not, with regard to the Plan or the Plan assets so distributed, be liable to any person of whose claim they did not receive notice within this two-month period. Any individuals who have already been contacted by or on behalf of the Trustees about this matter should not respond to this notice as the Trustees already have details of their claims and entitlements.

The Trustees will remain responsible for the Plan until this process is complete and you are welcome to liaise with the Trustees via XPS (using the contact details above) should you have any queries in relation to this notice. Issued on behalf of the Trustees of the Hycontrol Limited Pension Plan.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### DESMOND JOHN ELMES Deceased

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 anyone with a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the deceased, late of 36 Yvonne Road, Redditch, B97 5HR, who died on 06/07/2024, must send written details to the address below by 07/04/2026, after which the Estate will be distributed with regard only to claims and interests notified.

**Kingsguard Legal, 31 New Road, Stourbridge, D18 1PA. Ref: JH19104**

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### GEOFFREY WALKER Deceased

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 anyone with a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the deceased, late of Pink Green Hill Farm, Wapping Lane, Beoley, Redditch, B98 9ER, who died on 28/05/2020, must send written details to the address below by 07/04/2026, after which the Estate will be distributed with regard only to claims and interests notified.

**Helen Webster c/o Irwin Mitchell LLP, 4 Wellington Place, Leeds, LS1 4BZ. Ref: HW/05373994-00000002**

To advertise call 01527 588688

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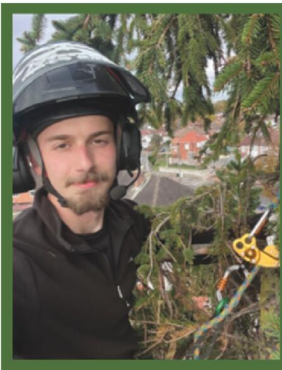
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## New Twingo set to launch

**RENAULT is set to bring extra spark to London this February, as the new Renault Twingo E-Tech electric makes its UK debut at rmlt London Battersea, the brand's innovative concept store at the iconic Battersea Power Station, from February 7-15.**

Taking place within Renault's recently-opened immersive retail space on Battersea Power Station's Electric Boulevard, the occasion will give visitors the exclusive opportunity to see the only example of the new Renault Twingo E-Tech electric in the UK.

London Battersea is Renault's first UK rmlt concept store and provides an exciting snapshot of the brand's all-electric line-up, culture and lifestyle merchandise, in a prime retail space of over 200 square metres at one of the capital's most loved destinations.

David Isherwood, Marketing Director, Renault UK, said: "Twingo E-Tech electric is

built for the city, so there's no better place for its UK debut than Battersea.

"Our concept store is designed to immerse visitors in Renault's electric world, and this event gives guests the chance to experience Twingo up close.

The Renault Twingo's UK debut marks another milestone in Renault's bold electric momentum, building on the success of the Renault 4 E-Tech electric and Renault 5 E-Tech electric, which have helped capture imaginations with their blend of iconic design, cutting-edge technology and everyday usability.

With excitement already building around the new Renault Twingo E-Tech electric, those keen to get ahead of the queue when orders open later this year can secure their place with a Renault Twingo R Pass.

Priced at £100, it offers priority access to ordering, plus exclusive benefits including a miniature Twingo, a unique green Renault

key cover, and a dedicated concierge service. Renault Twingo E-Tech electric is designed to be a true game-changer in the A-segment, bringing a cheerful personality and compact city-friendly footprint together with modern electric technology.

Targeting a starting price below £20,000, it aims to make electric mobility more accessible than ever, while offering a WLTP range of up to 163 miles from its LFP battery and a lively 60kW electric motor.

Twingo E-Tech electric also introduces features typically seen in larger segments, including One Pedal driving and the availability of OpenR Link with Google built-in, helping make driving in and around cities more enjoyable.

Visit [www.renault.co.uk/electric-vehicles/twingo-e-tech-electric.html](http://www.renault.co.uk/electric-vehicles/twingo-e-tech-electric.html) for more information.

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# Spa go top with comfortable Cribbs win despite late red

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

**FOOTBALL:** ROHAN Levy scored and saw red as Droitwich Spa cruised to a 4-0 home win against Cribbs to move top of the table.

Levy completed the scoring after goals from Charlie Tilley, Will Dallaway and Josh Hurdman put Spa in command at the King George Playing Fields.

However, defender Levy received a second yellow card late on as the Saltmen finished the game with 10-men.

Spa boss Andy Crowther celebrated his birthday with a victory as Droitwich ended a three-game winless run in all competitions.

The result lifts Droitwich to the top of the Hellenic League Premier Division table, two points clear of Roman Glass St George.

And the three remaining clubs in the play-off places all have at least two games in on the Saltmen.

The Saltmen made a fast start as Tilley curled a shot narrowly over the crossbar from distance early on.

And Cribbs goalkeeper Aaron Greatbanks then saved Cory Rudd's powerful effort from range with Hurdman unable to turn home the rebound.

However, Spa broke the dead-



lock on 14 minutes when Tilley finished Jack Brighton's cutback after good work from Dallaway.

The home side created further chances as James Baldwin smashed over from the edge of the penalty area.

And Reiss Taylor-Randle then poked a shot wide from close range when attempting to turn

home Dallaway's low cross from the left.

Droitwich deservedly doubled their lead on 27 minutes when Dallaway produced an emphatic finish from Baldwin's pass.

The away side's only chance of the first half saw Keiran Clayton fire a free-kick well wide of the target from a prom-

ising position.

Spa almost added a third goal before the interval as Hurdman saw his free-kick travel the wrong side of the post.

And Brighton fired inches past the post on the stroke of half time as Spa went into the break with a two-goal advantage.

Cribbs almost halved the defi-

cit early in the second half when Greg Yarde shot wide from distance.

And Buster Reed's powerful effort also failed to trouble the Spa goal as the visitors spurned another chance to reduce the deficit.

Taylor-Randle almost sealed the points for Spa soon after as Greatbanks made a fine stop to keep Cribbs in the contest.

However, Hurdman extended Droitwich's lead from the resulting corner on 54 minutes with a shot into the bottom corner on the turn.

Spa continued to dominate as Greatbanks denied Taylor-Randle again before Hurdman's volley went inches over the crossbar.

A stooping header from Brighton failed to find the target before Levy turned home Hurdman's corner on 68 minutes to score his first senior goal for the club and seal the points.

However, Levy picked up a second yellow card seven minutes from time but Spa comfortably saw out the remaining minutes.

Droitwich are next in action against Lydney Town on Saturday, February 7 with kick-off at 3pm at the King George Playing Fields.

**Rohan Levy scored his first senior goal for Spa but later received a second yellow card. Picture by Mathew Mason.**

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