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Town is in the hat to pick up the cultural crown



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

DROITWICH will be looking to showcase what it has to offer to the country after announcing a bid to become the UK's first-ever town of culture.

Droitwich town councillors on the community and amenities committee agreed to work with the Droitwich Place Board to put forward an expression of interest to become the town of culture for 2028, with the grand prize, if successful, of a £3million cash injection to deliver its programme.

The Town of Culture scheme was announced by the Department for Media, Culture and Sport last

month, to celebrate the significant contributions of towns to our national story and giving the chance for smaller areas of the country to tell their story.

The bid will focus on continuing to carry out the Droitwich Spa town centre prospectus, which looks to promote and develop the town as an attractive hub for leisure, living and business.

An expression of interest will need to be submitted by March 31 with the town council hoping a draft will be ready by March 17.

From there, bid development grants of £60,000 will be awarded to each of the shortlisted places, which are invited to submit a full application.

This cash could be used for



research and development for the bid, as well as consultation costs, human resources, data gathering and commercial expertise.

One small, medium and large-sized town would then be short-listed as finalists.

The winning town will be awarded £3million to deliver a cultural

programme in 2028 of around six months.

The two finalists from their category will receive £250,000 each to deliver elements of their bid.

Coun Richard Morris said: "Droitwich has a rich history and a fantastic community with many events to support an application."

"We are famous for the Rik Mayall Comedy Festival, a traditional and evolving series of festivals and activities, street art and murals, nationally recognised mosaics at Sacred Heart, John Heminge, co-editor of the First Folio, the collected plays of Shakespeare, and our Norbury Theatre and many great local societies and groups."

"In my view, Droitwich already is a well-known Town of culture, but

to be nationally recognised as such would be fantastic."

Coun Alex Sinton added: "We're not going to get too excited about this, but we've spotted a way to put forward the high profile of the town."

"There is a lot to base it on and I think that if we don't try, we don't succeed."

"There are hundreds of towns, but it was worth putting something forward."

The Rik Mayall comedy festival is one of Droitwich's biggest cultural offerings. The Norbury Theatre (LEFT) has been a cultural hub in Droitwich for years. Main picture by Marcus Mingins 0925007MMR2

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The children crafted their own Paddington bears. s

Paddington event is a hit

A REDDITCH church welcomed families from across the area for a lively Paddington craft and film day filled with creativity, colour and a great deal of orange peel.

Children and parents crafted Paddington bears and decorated picnic bags and jam jar lid covers to take home, at St Philip's Church in Webheath.

Prayers starting with 'Please look after...' were written on luggage labels attached to Paddington's brown leather suitcase and volunteers made their way through plenty of oranges to prepare fresh marmalade.

The rest of the morning was spent making marmalade

sandwiches for a shared picnic, enjoyed while watching the *Paddington* film.

St Philip's Church vicar, Rev Sarah Jayne Hewitt, said: "Paddington carries kindness with him wherever he goes."

"The church felt warm and full of life and it was a relaxed and joyful atmosphere that felt more like a community living room than a formal space."

The morning brought generations together at tables covered in orange peel, sticky tape and homemade Paddingtons. Paddington Day is the latest in a growing programme of events at St Philip's for families to gather and connect.

Comedy fest has big names

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

THE HEADLINE acts for Droitwich's 2026 Rik Mayall Comedy Festival have been revealed.

The list is led by stars of hit '80s BBC alternative comedy sitcom *The Young Ones* - Alexi Sayle and Nigel Planer - who are heading to Rik's home town.

The nine-day festival runs from May 29 to June 6, with a variety of venues hosting events and the Norbury Theatre at the heart of it all.

The event will celebrate alternative comedy, have a significantly expanded fringe and a brand new, official second stage.

General tickets will go on sale on Saturday, March 7, with a 24-hour exclusive pre-sale on March 6 for festival newsletter subscribers.

Last year, the headliners sold out within minutes.

Organisers have confirmed more than 100 events will be on sale from launch day, with additional shows being added daily in the run up to the festival.

The 2026 programme brings together

alternative-scene pioneers, major contemporary names and returning festival favourites.

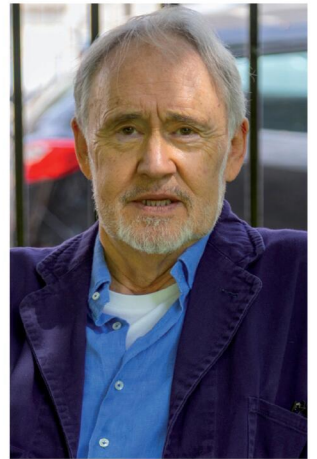
Planer brings his *Young Ones* book tour to the Norbury Theatre and Sayle will appear for a special 'in conversation' event with Robin Ince, reflecting on Rik Mayall and the 1980s comedy revolution. The *Young Ones* connection continues with a new exhibition curated by acclaimed photographer Andy Hollingworth.

Other headliners at the Norbury include Richard Herring, with a live edition of his award-winning podcast *RHLSTP*, *John O'way* (*Rock and Roll's Greatest Failure*) and Peter Richardson, founder of The Comic Strip.

Rachel Fairburn returns following a sell-out appearance. Nick Helm, Robin Ince, Redditch's Lindsey Santoro, Phil Ellis, Red Richardson and Harriet Kemsley also feature in the packed nine days.

Returning festival favourites Laura Smyth and Tiff Stevenson complete the line-up of big names.

Beyond the Norbury Theatre, an even larger fringe festival is expected, with appearances from Helen Lederer, *Young Ones* director Paul Jackson and other friends and collaborators



Nigel Planer will be among the headliners, along with fellow *Young Ones* star Alexi Sayle. s

of Rik Mayall, including *Grim Tales* director Bob Baldwin.

There will also be theatrical productions and family shows and Droitwich Working Men's Club will be transformed into The Lord Flashheart Club, curated by Mitch Benn and sponsored by PSS. Outdoor stage and roaming performances will also take place during the weekends, in High Street and Friar Street.

Visit: rikmayalfestival.com for more details and to sign up to the festival.



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A miracle for brave Leo

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

Teen gets stem cell match

A BROMSGROVE teenager who has battled leukaemia has been thrown a lifeline after receiving a 'quiet miracle' stem cell transplant.

After months looking for a match, 16-year-old Leo Sproson received three bags of stem cells on February 18 and a further bag on the 19th. He began chemotherapy last Friday.

Leo's loved ones thought they had received the best Christmas present ever after a stem cell match was discovered in the UK.

That transplant, however, 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 another suitable match.

This month, his family had a call from the hospital and Leo's 10/12 unrelated match was cleared.

A statement released by Leo's mum Jenna said: "After everything Leo has endured – the diagno-

sis that shattered our world, the chemo, the fear in the middle of the night, the sleepless nights, the moments we tried to be strong when we felt anything but, we were standing watching a quiet miracle happen.

"It looks so simple – a bag, a line, a drip but to us, it is everything.

"Those tiny cells carry hope for

the life we refuse to stop believing in, future birthdays, ordinary mornings, laughter filling our home again, even arguments.

"We are overwhelmed with gratitude for the donor who gave this gift to the doctors and nurses who have carried him this far, and for the strength our boy has shown through something no child should ever have to face.

"We all really hope that one day we will have the opportunity to meet you. It wasn't just a medical procedure – it was the moment we dared to believe."

Leo will be in the hospital until May 25, meaning he will not be home for his birthday on March 25. His family now want to collect letters and cards for Leo to read when he comes out.

Send a letter or card to Leo at Leo's Army, PO Box 18935, Bromsgrove, B60 9LF.



Leo, left, has received a 'quiet miracle' after battling leukaemia for months. s

Flying the flag

WYCHAVON District Council marked four years since the outbreak of war in Ukraine at a flag-raising ceremony.

The Ukrainian flag was raised above the civic centre in Pershore as a show of solidarity with those affected by the conflict with Russia.

Councillors and dignitaries were joined by some of the Ukrainian guests the district has welcomed since the conflict began.

A minute's silence was held to remember those who have lost their lives, been displaced or continue to suffer as a result of Russia's illegal invasion of the country.

Councillor Mark Goodge, chairman of Wychavon, said: "By raising this flag today, we recognise the lives lost, stand firm with all those whose lives have been changed by this war



The Ukrainian flag was raised outside Wychavon Civic Hall. s

– including those who have sought sanctuary locally – and reaffirm peace, security and justice will prevail."

He praised the compassion, kindness and friendship from everyone in the district to those who had fled the fighting.

"While we hope 2026 will be the year peace returns to Ukraine, we are also prepared to continue to stand

by our Ukrainian friends for as long as it takes," he added.

More than 350 Ukrainians in the district are being helped and more than 500 have been helped since the start of the war. Anyone in Droitwich who is willing to offer a room as a place of sanctuary to a Ukrainian fleeing the conflict, can visit: bit.ly/3MrT8gj for more.

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Call goes out for charity runners

The Blood Cancer UK fun run is back



Nicole Harris is hoping people will sign up to the annual Bromsgrove Blood Cancer UK Fun Run and, for trivia whizzes, the quiz. Picture by Marcus Mingins 1125008MMR

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

BROMSGROVE Blood Cancer UK will hold its annual fun run on **May 10**, with participants choosing between a **5k or 10k** course.

More than 60 runners have already registered for the event, which starts and finishes at Bromsgrove Rugby Club, and the organisers are hoping more will follow suit.

Individuals can line up on their own or with family and friends and the event is also usually popular with gym and running clubs.

This year, Bromsgrove Blood Cancer UK is also hoping to join with Leo's Army on the day, to try to get as many people as possible to join the DKMS stem cell register.

The charity does the research but donors are needed for those with blood cancers.

Marshals are also being sought for the race, as are sponsors to help cover costs.

Nicole Harris from Bromsgrove Blood Cancer UK said: "We only require £100 from each sponsor, so every penny goes directly to the research."

Runners signing up receive a race number and information, all finishers get a medal and there are prizes for the first, second and third placed finishers in both male and female races.

Runners who raise £30 or more before the event get a t-shirt on the day.

Bromsgrove Blood Cancer UK is also holding a quiz night at Avoncroft Arts Centre, at 7.30pm on March 13.

Entry costs £28 for each team of four.

Visit bcukbromsgrove.org and click the 'fun run' link at the top for more on the run and to enter online, and click 'events' for the quiz.

Alternatively, call Nicole on 01527 878493 or 07802 637093, or email her at nicoelharris@aol.com for further details.

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... and the Inkberrow relay needs entrants too

ENTRIES are open for the Inkberrow village relay race, on May 17.

The event is open to running clubs, workplace teams, friends and community organisations, for a mix of competition and village spirit.

Prizes will be awarded

in various categories, with details nearer race day.

As usual, race profits will go to local charities and community causes.

The event is backed by Hills Ford, which has been involved since the first race.

Richard Hill, of Hills Ford, said: "The Inkberrow relay is

a brilliant example of what local community events should be about, bringing people together while raising meaningful funds for local charities.

"We've supported it since the first race and are proud to continue that support in 2026. It's a fantastic day

for the village and wider Worcestershire community.

"Entries are now open and teams are encouraged to secure their place early for what promises to be another fantastic day of competition and community spirit."

Visit hillsford.co.uk/relay for more information.

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Care-for-carers respite service is set to be shuttered

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

A SERVICE offered at Princess of Wales Community Hospital, for families and carers who support people with learning disabilities and complex health needs, is set to be closed down.

Churchview, which is delivered by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (HWHCT), and commissioned Worcestershire County Council, is due to shut its doors in June.

The *Standard* understands staff are being redeployed to other areas of the trust.

Churchview has been operating for four years and there are 45 people who use the service across its two sites – they have eligible adult social care needs and their care is funded by the county council.

In response, Worcestershire County Council said alternative care would be in place for the summer and the authority was working on the transition.

"The alternative provision will

ensure that appropriate, high-quality replacement care continues to be offered to our residents who currently use this service," said the council.

When asked about consultation about the changes, a spokesperson said: "Where possible, we work with families and service users to keep them up to date with what's happening with their care options."

"The provision of replacement care will match or improve existing care and therefore, a formal consultation is not needed."

Respite

Replacement care, also known as respite care or short breaks, is a service commissioned by the county council to complement the range of services available in Worcestershire to adults with social care needs and their families and carers.

The council said the service formed part of the options available to meet an individual's assessed eligible needs under the Care Act 2014.

For residents with such needs, the service has recently been provided by HWHCT.

The authority added, the trust recently gave notice on its contract to provide adult replacement care and respite at Churchview, enabling it to focus on its core health and nursing services.

"Following discussions with HWHCT, we have concluded the only option available to the council is to recommission this service, providing ongoing respite care for this group," said the council in a statement.

"Worcestershire County Council recognises and values the significant support and care that carers provide to vulnerable adults, children and young people, and we recognise the importance of supporting carers to maintain their own physical and mental health and wellbeing in order to sustain their caring roles alongside having a life of their own, through these services."

HWHCT said that Worcestershire County Council was planning to develop a new adult social care replacement care offer.

The trust added, it is committed to working closely with the council to support the service users affected and their families during the transition to the new type of service.



Droitwich Mayor Coun Chris Bowden, centre, joins Heritage managers Becky Butler, left, and Catherine Finn at the re-opening of Droitwich Heritage Centre. Picture by Marcus Mingsins 0626008MMR1

Heritage centre refurb is proving a hit with visitors

DROITWICH Heritage Centre has enjoyed a stellar first few weeks since it reopened, with hundreds of people visiting the venue.

The new-look Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre opened earlier this month, following a three-year revamp to improve the visitor experience and expand the museum's offering.

The reopening came just in time for visitors to enjoy the attractions over February half term, during which more than 400 visitors walked through the doors and saw what the centre had to offer.

A spokesperson for the organisation said: "We've had an incredible

half-term week at the Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre.

"Thank you to everyone who came along and shared such fabulous and very useful feedback.

"It's been wonderful to hear your thoughts and see so many people enjoying the new space and exhibits."

"If you haven't visited us yet, why not pop in and see what everyone's talking about? We'd love to welcome you."

The Heritage Centre is open between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday, and between 10am and 1.30pm on Saturdays.

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Station is top of the charts

ALVECHURCH railway station has been the highest performing in Worcestershire over the past six months, new figures have revealed.

Since August, Alvechurch has performed the 754th best out of the nation's 2,643 stations, the highest ranking of any in the county.

The data has been collected by the On Time Trains website.

Of the trains scheduled to stop at Alvechurch over the past six months, 65 per cent have been on time, while 86 per cent have been less than five minutes late.

In addition, just two per cent of trains have been 10 minutes late or more and five per cent have been cancelled.

Alvechurch is the 1,509th busiest station in the country. In 2025, an average of 448 passengers either arrived or departed Alvechurch Station every day.

The numbers over the past three months have also been encouraging, with Alvechurch ranked the 575th best station in the country. This ranking is 401 places higher than in the previous three months.

Kidderminster has been the second highest performing station in Worcestershire over the past six months, with Blakedown, Redditch and Wythall stations making up the rest of the top five.

Alvechurch Station is operated by West Midlands Railway.

A spokesperson for the rail firm said: "We run over 1,200 services each day and work



closely with industry partners to continuously improve reliability.

"The OnTimeTrains website measures the proportion of trains arriving at a particular station early, on time or less than one minute late. For each station, most of the trains recorded as delayed were one to two minutes late.

"Delays or cancellations can occur for a wide variety of reasons, including industrial action, cable theft, weather and infrastructure issues.

"Any passenger whose journey is delayed by 15 minutes or more for any reason can claim compensation via the Delay Repay scheme."

Alvechurch station has been named the best in Worcestershire for reliability. s



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Now it's official - this is a great place to live

BROMSGROVE and Ombersley have been named among the best places to live in the UK.

The two areas have been named among only eight areas in Worcestershire in the 2026 Muddy Stiletto's '260 top places to live guide'.

In the guide, Bromsgrove was described as a 'thriving market town' with a backdrop of rolling countryside.

The guide added: "Bromsgrove nails the sweet spot between buzz and breathing space."

"It has a lively indie high street packed with cafes, boutiques and bars, while fast links to Birmingham mean you're within half-an-hour of big city delights."

"From top schools to a busy arts calendar and a weekly outdoor market, Bromsgrove is a town with lots of life, giving good value for your hard-earned pound."

"And when you need a nature fix, Clent and Walton Hills are just minutes away for scenic walks or cycling."

"Down-to-earth Bromsgrove has that winning mix of character, convenience and countryside charm."

Ombersley, meanwhile, was described as 'quintessentially English yet brilliantly connected'.



Bromsgrove is one of the UK's best places to live.

The guide added: "Ombersley delivers country charm with a side of convenience - Worcester and nearby cities are just minutes away."

"Regularly voted one of the UK's most beautiful places to live, this black-and-white timbered gem has all the right credentials - excellent schools, a warm community spirit and glorious countryside on all sides."

"Foodies flock here for its standout deli and characterful

pub, while families love the sensibly priced homes and lively, bunting-happy vibe that peaks with proper village celebrations."

"A laid-back little sister to buzzy Droitwich Spa, Ombersley is the dream mix of low-key luxe, good living and forever-home feels."

The Muddy Stiletto's guide selects 260 places from 31 different counties and regions across the UK and features a

'best of the rest' category.

It gives 'insider intel' on the loveliest city spots, towns and villages that feature the best schools, shopping and pubs.

The other Worcestershire areas to be featured were Bewdley, Bretforton, Broadway, Malvern, Tenbury Wells and Upton-Upon-Severn.

Visit glosworcs.muddystiletto.co.uk/best-places-to-live/worcestershire/ for the full list.

GET YOUR FIX: THE FREE Droitwich Community Repair Cafe will return tomorrow (Saturday).

Everyone is welcome to go along to the BD Makerspace and see if their household items can be fixed by the expert repairers.

The event runs from 10am to 2pm at the Droitwich Spa Baptist Church on Ombersley Street East - the last items accepted for repair will be 1.30pm. It is usually on the last Saturday of the month.

Repairers can fix everything from clothes and curtains to TVs, computers and clocks.

Although repairs are free, donations are always welcome as each repair cafe costs between £40 and £50 to put on. This covers the venue hire, insurance and sundry items (including batteries, solder, tape and glue).

Visit: tinyurl.com/bdmsfaq for more on the Droitwich Repair Cafe and frequently asked questions.

TRIO CHARGED: THREE men have been charged over a knife-point robbery in Rubery.

The incident happened at the Rubery Express in New Road around 4am on Thursday.

Following the incident three men were arrested on Thursday evening.

Habib Khan, 19, of Fountain Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, Ibrahim Ahmadzai, 22, of Whitacre Road, Bordesley Green, Birmingham, and Rooaf Nasir, 26, of no fixed abode have been charged with robbery.

The three men remain in custody and are due to appear at Birmingham Crown Court on March 23.

SHOTS HEARD: SHOTS were fired at a car in Radnor Close, Frankley, around 10.30pm last Tuesday.

The car hit a stationary vehicle before those inside then fled the scene.

West Midlands Police said no injuries had been reported to the force, adding investigators were working to establish who was involved and trace them.

Following the incident, patrols have been stepped up in the area to offer reassurance to the community.

Witnesses or anyone with information, including dash cam and mobile phone footage, should call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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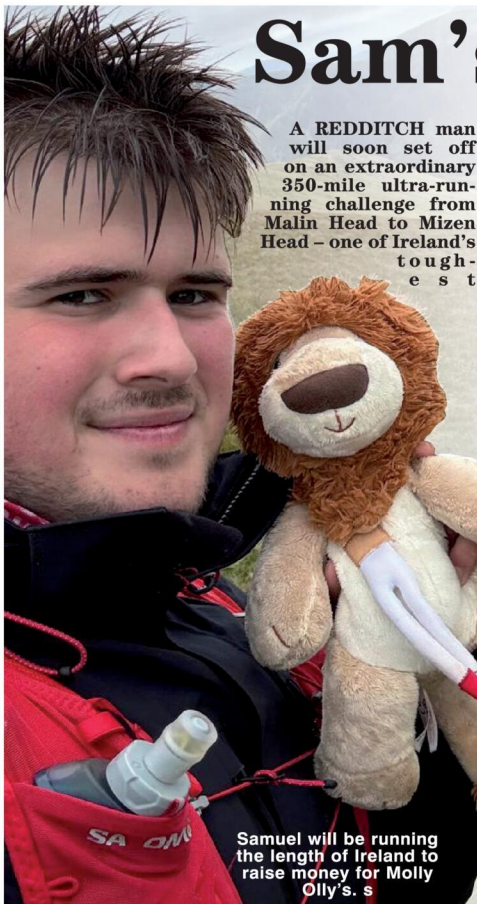
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Samuel will be running the length of Ireland to raise money for Molly Ollys. s

Sam's epic feat

A REDDITCH man will soon set off on an extraordinary 350-mile ultra-running challenge from Malin Head to Mizen Head – one of Ireland's toughest

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

endurance routes – to raise £50,000 for children with life-threatening illnesses.

Samuel Atwell will spend 10 consecutive days covering vast stretches of rural Ireland, battling harsh weather, fatigue and unforgiving terrain.

His mission is to support Molly Ollys, a charity he represents as an ambassador and which helps grant wishes and provides vital emotional support to seriously ill children and their families.

Samuel said: "I know how quickly life can change. That's why I'm doing this."

Samuel's determination is deeply rooted in personal loss. Having lost his grandmother to cancer and then, devastatingly, his best friend – who passed away at just 18 years old – those experiences ignited a drive in him that went far beyond sport.

He said: "When you lose the people you love far too soon, it changes you.

"It makes you realise how precious time is – especially for children who don't get the chance to grow up.

"Running across Ireland is nothing compared to what these

families face every day. If my miles can bring smiles, strength or support to even one child, then every step will be worth it."

From May 18, Samuel will embark on a journey from the northernmost tip of Ireland to its southernmost point, completing the route on May 27.

If successful, Samuel will join a very small and elite group and will, at just 21, become one of the youngest solo runners ever to complete the route.

Samuel plans to make the challenge highly visible, sharing daily video updates, GPS maps and live progress as well as training insights, milestones and setbacks and honest, unfiltered footage.

His goal is to ignite momentum, inspire others, and make the challenge go viral.

"£50,000 isn't just a target, it's the difference we can make to the lives of so many poorly children," he added. "If I reach my fundraising target, then that money will deliver up to 100 wishes, provide more than 2,500 therapeutic toys and books and support vital projects in children's hospitals.

"Molly Ollys stands beside families at the toughest moments and every pound raised strengthens that support."

Samuel has already secured more than £12,000 sponsorship from businesses connected to his family, support he says means everything as he prepares for his immense challenge.

Visit justgiving.com/page/samrunsireland to donate.

Queens Head apartments plan

AN APPLICATION has been submitted to turn a former pub in Redditch town centre into new homes.

The plans, submitted by HABDesigns, would see the conversion and extension of the Queens Head pub into 10 one-bedroom flats.

The Queens Head pub has been closed and left unused since August 2023, and has been up for sale since January 2024.

The development would be 'car parking-free' and the location is within a walkable distance to essential amenities, according to the application documents.

The applicant said the site would be a suitable location for residential homes by regenerating a derelict building and providing additional required homes in Redditch.

To view the full planning application, search for 25/01421/FUL on the Redditch Borough Council planning website.

Redditch man's not guilty murder plea

A REDDITCH man has pleaded not guilty to murder.

Benjamin Day, 20, was accused of murdering 24-year-old Maria Saceanu at an address in Oldbury between December 19 and 22.

Day appeared at Wolverhampton Crown Court via prison video link on February 18, where he spoke only to

identify himself and to enter a not guilty plea to murder.

The case has been adjourned for a trial date yet to be fixed.

Day, of Yeardon Close, was charged on December 24, a few days after police were called to an address in

Barncroft Road where a woman was confirmed dead at the scene.

WHAT'S ON AT ARTRIX

LIVE MUSIC:

- 27TH FEB: ABBA GOLD
- 6TH MARCH: BEATLEMANIA
- 7TH MARCH: NEARLY DAN - THE SOUND OF STEELY DAN
- 19TH MARCH: TINA TURNER EXPERIENCE
- 20TH MARCH: FLEETWOOD UNCHAINED
- 21ST MARCH: FEARLESSLY TAYLOR (TAYLOR SWIFT TRIBUTE)
- 28TH MARCH: THE ARMED MAN - BARN'T GREEN CHORAL
- 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
- 2ND MAY: GIVE ME THE NIGHT (GEORGE BENSON TRIBUTE)
- 3RD MAY: THE SABRINA CARPENTER TRIBUTE
- 4TH MAY: CASSIDY JOHNSON SINGS CAROLE KING
- 8TH MAY: AND FINALLY PHIL COLLINS
- 9TH MAY: OASISH
- 14TH MAY: ELTON'S SONG - BEYOND THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD
- 15TH MAY: THIS IS MERSEYBEAT
- 16TH MAY: CLASSIC ROCK REVIVAL
- 17TH MAY: CELEBRATING CELINE - A NEW DAY
- 22ND MAY: FRANKIE - THE CONCERT (FT THE FALSETTOS)
- 29TH MAY: RHINESTONE COWBOY: THE GLEN CABELL STORY
- 30TH MAY: BURN DEEP PURPLE TRIBUTE
- 5TH JUNE: THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE
- 6TH JUNE: EVERLY BROTHERS: BY CANDLELIGHT
- 19TH JUNE: BEEGEES YOU SHOULD BE DANCING
- 26TH JUNE: I'M EVERY WHITNEY
- 4TH JULY: SOUND & VISION (TRIBUTE TO BOWIE)
- 10TH JULY: BLONDISH (THE MUSIC OF BLONDE)
- 11TH JULY: G2 DEFINITIVE GENESIS
- 23RD JULY: ULTIMATE ELVIS EXPERIENCE
- 24TH JULY: DESPERADOS EAGLES

EVENT CINEMA:

- 2ND MARCH: NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: THE AUDIENCE
- 3RD MARCH: ROYAL OPERA LIVE: GISELLE
- 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
- 28TH MAY: NT LIVE: LIVE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD
- 25TH JUNE: NT LIVE: LES LIAISONS DANGEROUS

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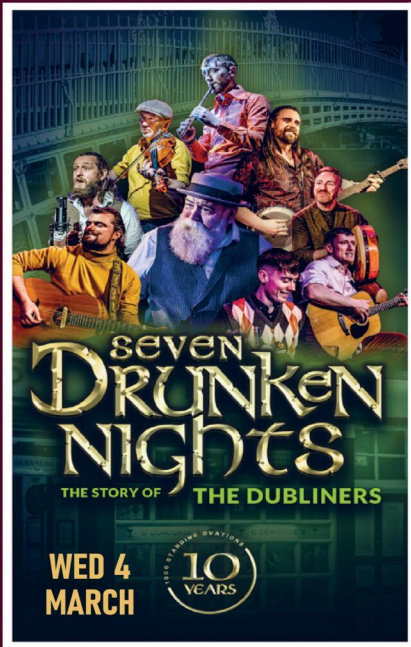
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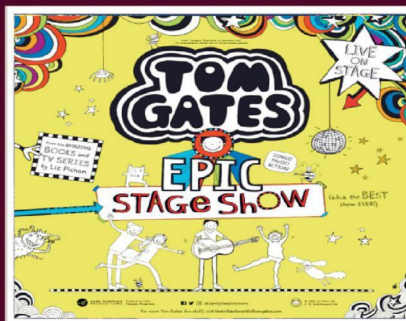
SAT 14 MARCH



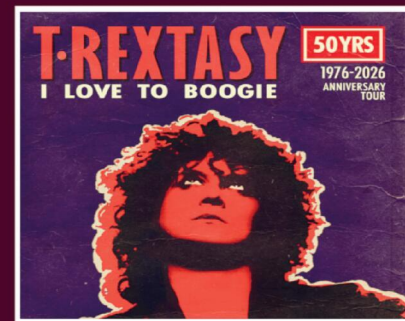
TUE 17-WED 18 MARCH



THUR 26 MARCH



TUE 31 MARCH



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The group went bowling at Tenpin Redditch and, inset, the young people also gained independence by travelling on public transport, learning about routes and timetables. s

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

THE FIRST special educational need and disability (SEND) session at the Bromsgrove Thrive Hub was hailed a huge success, helping young people build confidence, independence and friendships.

Youngsters made meaningful social connections at the event, hosted at Social Sticks, in the town.

The activities on offer included pet therapy, games, creative

crafts and group exercises – all within a safe and welcoming environment.

The day was created to help young SEND adults to develop life skills while having fun and forging lasting friendships.

A key highlight was a partnership with the Fit Paws Dog Walking Company, which saw participants collect dogs and experience what it was like to run their very own dog-walking service.

Young people took the dogs on an adventure walk, supported with light grooming and basic training before safely returning the pets to their owners.

The experience introduced participants to the responsibilities of animal care and offered insights into dog walking as a potential profession.

After a shared group lunch – to help build independence – attendees travelled together using public transport and learned routes, timings and travel skills in a supported environment that encouraged confidence away from parents and carers.

The afternoon activities centred on fun and social interaction, with bowling and arcade games at Redditch providing the perfect setting for laughter and teamwork.

Parents and carers enjoyed much-needed respite time knowing their young people were engaged in a positive, structured experience that prioritised wellbeing, friendship and real-world skills.

Simon Connell, Thrive Hub Bromsgrove founder, and a local secondary school teacher, said the response from families and the wider community had been overwhelming.

“We wanted to create something that truly supports young people to grow socially and develop independence in a way that feels natural and enjoyable,” he said. “Seeing friendships forming,

confidence growing and families getting some breathing space has been incredibly powerful.”

He added, demand was far greater than expected and the group is planning to expand the service and host more sessions to support more local families.

Thrive Hub Bromsgrove focuses on creating inclusive experiences which combine social activities with practical life skills, helping young SEND adults gain confidence in everyday situations.

Plans are now under way to expand the provision and introduce additional dates and Wednesday night socials, to meet growing demand.

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A teenager was arrested on Northfield high street. s

E-scooter arrest

A TEENAGER was arrested after a police officer was seriously injured as he tried to stop a youth illegally riding an e-scooter.

Officers were on patrol in Northfield high street around 1.30pm last Thursday when the incident happened.

They spotted the rider acting suspiciously and he tried to make off down an alleyway.

The officers waited to stop him and the rider performed a U-turn and headed back onto the high street.

There he collided with a police constable from West Midlands Police's Guardian Taskforce which is dedicated to tackling knife crime and serious youth violence.

The officer suffered a fractured knee and had to undergo surgery. He is continuing his recovery.

An 18-year-old from Longbridge was arrested on suspicion of wounding, dangerous driving and

failing to stop for police and the e-scooter was seized.

The suspect has been released on bail while the investigation continues.

Det Supt Dave Sproson, of Birmingham Police, said: "The officer who was injured was simply trying to detain the rider so he could be spoken to, but has instead been seriously injured.

"Thankfully, he's in good spirits and is getting lots of support from family and colleagues.

"We're grateful to the members of the public who stopped to help the officer in the immediate aftermath."

Officers have already spoken to a number of witnesses and recovered CCTV and body worn video.

Anyone who witnessed the incident or who has information and has not yet spoken to the police should call officers on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Biggest stage yet for synchro group

A SYNCHORISED swimming group with members from Droitwich and Worcester will perform in front of 29,000 people over two days at a national event at Birmingham's NEC.

The Synchro Stingrays, who perform in lakes and lidos across Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire, will put on four shows at the National Outdoor Expo.

The performance will be the Stingrays' biggest ever so far since members came together two years ago at a synchro taster session. It was hosted by Swim with Ray and led by swim coach and choreographer Ray Farr.

As well as firm friendships being made and the giddy highs from their end of course show, the group has gone on to perform at events across the three counties.

Shows have included a full moon event at Broadfields in Cutnall Green, New Year's Day Mayoral swim at Woodside Country Park in Lebury and a charity event for Sue Ryder at Cheltenham Lido.

The Stingrays hail from all over the counties including Droitwich Spa, Worcester, Hereford and Lebury.

Ray, who will also be running swimming sessions at the event as well as directing the Stingray's shows, said: "We are so excited to be performing at the National Outdoor Expo.



The Synchro Stingrays, including members from Droitwich and Worcester, will perform in front of 29,000 at the National Outdoor Expo at Birmingham's NEC. s

"In just two years this group of women has gone from putting their toe in the water and trying a new activity, to performing for hundreds - and now thousands - of people.

"I have seen how the open water community has grown in recent years and how important it has been for people's mental health and to combat social isolation.

"Confidence grows and new friendships are formed and I am really proud to play my part in that - and especially proud of the Stingrays.

"They have come out in all weath-

ers and even in the dark to make sure they are show ready to entertain - and inspire - the crowds."

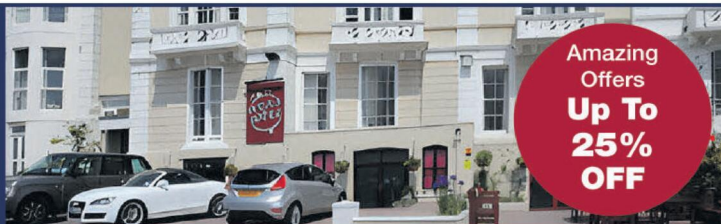
The National Outdoor Expo runs from March 21 to 22 and the Stingrays will be performing on both days at 11am and 1pm.

The Synchro Stingrays will also appear at other events this year including a Kate Bush Day in Worcestershire and a Wedding Fayre in Herefordshire.

Visit swimwithray.com or follow the synchro stingrays on Facebook and Instagram for more.

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Monday 20th April - Friday 24th April	Was £299 NOW £251pp
Monday 27th April - Friday 1st May	Was £299 NOW £251pp
Monday 4th May - Friday 8th May	Was £309 NOW £258pp
Monday 11th May - Friday 15th May	Was £319 NOW £262pp

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Friday 20th March - Monday 23rd March	Was £269 NOW £222pp
Friday 27th March - Monday 30th March	Was £269 NOW £230pp
Friday 3rd April - Monday 6th April (Easter)	Was £315 NOW £269pp
Friday 10th April - Monday 13th April	Was £279 NOW £240pp
Friday 17th April - Monday 20th April	Was £279 NOW £240pp
Friday 1st May - Monday 4th May	Was £295 NOW £259pp
Friday 8th May - Monday 11th May	Was £295 NOW £251pp



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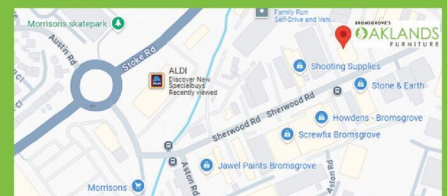
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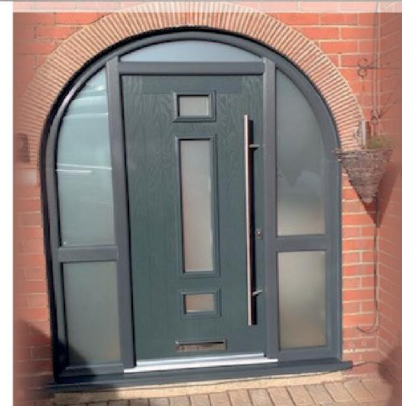
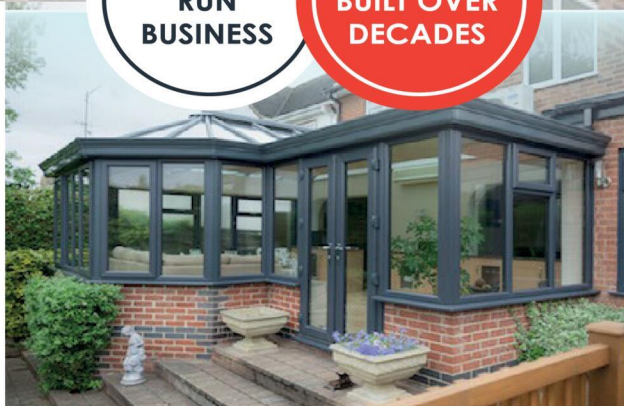


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Spark scheme is cancer boost

A TEAM at the Royal Orthopaedic Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (The ROH) in Northfield has secured a place on the Spark the Midlands programme for an anti-cancer project it has developed.

The scheme uses a minimally invasive anti-cancer and bone regenerative injectable paste, using the cancer-killing properties of gallium.

Spark the Midlands aims to provide academic support to advance healthcare research discoveries in the region.

The team from the ROH includes Dr Lucas Souza, Prof Adrian Gardner, and Jonathan Stevenson, alongside Professor Richard Martin and Dr Eirini Theodosiou from Aston University.

Together, they will use the Spark programme to secure a clear pathway for the cancer-killing paste to be taken from the lab, into clinics and hospitals.

If proved effective through clinical trials, the paste - a gallium-doped bioglass - could be used to treat patients with primary and metastatic bone cancer.

Dr Lucas Souza, Research Laboratory Manager at The Royal Orthopaedic Hospital, said: "Where the global success rate for new ideas making it to clinical trials is less than five per cent, Spark has recorded a project success rate of 62 per cent."

"Thanks to this programme, the ROH will have the support to develop a regional pipeline for the translation of ideas for orthopaedic and bone cancer applications to NHS-approved medical use."

Spark the Midlands is a collaboration



between Aston University, the West Midlands Health Tech Innovation Accelerator and Forging Ahead.

The programme originated out of Stanford University in California and has proved hugely impactful in improving the success of innovations making their way to clinical trials and then clinical practice.

The programme provides access to specialised knowledge and technical expertise regarding diagnostic, therapeutic and medical device development and sources of funding to support translational efforts. It also helps to provide mentorship and forge networks between researchers, those with technical and specialist knowledge and potential sources of funding.

The ROH's orthopaedic oncology and arthroplasty consultant, Jonathan Stevenson, and Dr Lucas Souza, Research Laboratory manager. s



Startin Fleet Hub have supplied 20 new vehicles to Redditch Borough Council. Picture by Marcus Mingins 0626009MMR

IMPORTANT TRIP: A FLEET of new service vehicles are being delivered a mile to Redditch Borough Council's Housing Property Services this month.

It will take just three minutes for the 60 new vehicles to complete the short trip across Arrow Valley Country Park to the council's Crossgate Road operations headquarters, after a £1.9million fleet replacement contract was won by nearby Startin Group.

The new council-branded vans will become a familiar sight across Redditch as the authority's plumbers, electricians, and other staff start using them to serve tenants across over 5,500 properties in the borough.

Half the new vehicles will come into service this year and the rest next year, under a planned replacement programme to deliver improved long-term reliability and value for money.

With many of the vehicles they will replace being over a decade old, the move will reduce growing reliability issues that have resulted in

avoidable delays and disruption for tenants.

The council's portfolio holder for housing, Coun Bill Hartnett, said the investment supported the wider commitment to improve services for tenants and it was delighted to boost a local business in the process.

"These vehicles will enable housing property services teams to more efficiently support customers for years to come."

Lee O'Connell, head of group fleet at the Redditch-headquartered Startin Group, said: "Supplying Redditch Borough Council is exactly the kind of work the new Startin Fleet Hub and compound was built for."

"Public sector fleets need dependable delivery, clear communication and vehicles prepared to a consistent standard."

"This facility gives us the control and capacity to do that properly."

Redditch Borough Council's social housing functions are not funded by council tax - they are funded by low social rents paid by tenants with occasional extra Government funding.



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Making change is project's goal

A CHILDREN'S charity trustee has visited a Redditch foundation to see the impact of their evening football sessions on the local community.

Mark Williams, grant application coordinator for the Oakland Foundation, was at the Unlocking Potential (UP) Foundation CIC's Monday evening football sessions for 10 to 13-year-olds at Trinity High School.

The lively session, attended by 26 young people, highlighted the difference the programme makes every week.

Running during term time from 5.30pm to 7pm, the sessions are funded by the Oakland Foundation as part of its commitment to helping local children access safe, positive activities.

Mark said: "Seeing these sessions first-hand really brought home how vital they are."

"When young people are given safe spaces, positive influences and opportunities to connect, it can completely change the direction of their lives."

"These sessions aren't just about football - they're about confidence, belonging and giving young people the chance to thrive."

"The Oakland Foundation is delighted to support the UP Foundation's work and to see the real, tangible impact it's having."

"Dedication of the staff, the energy of the young people and the sense of community they have built is outstanding."

"It's exactly the kind of programme we're proud to champion, one that opens doors and removes barriers for young people who deserve every opportunity."

The UP Foundation has been supporting children and young people aged 10 to 25 across



Redditch for the past decade.

Its mission is to unlock the potential of every young person it works with, helping them overcome barriers to social inclusion, education, personal development and wellbeing.

The twice-weekly football sessions are a key part of that mission.

Speaking about the programme, Heather Stephens of the UP Foundation said: "The sessions attract young people from a variety of backgrounds and allow them to exercise, connect with others and build confidence."

"By rewarding positive behaviours, such as resilience and teamwork, vital skills are learned."

UP Foundation Football Coach and Youth Work Mentor Orrin Pendley with trustee and grant application coordinator of the Oakland Foundation Mark Williams, participants and Up Foundation youth volunteer. s

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Bromsgrove Swimming Club had some great results in the Worcester County Championships. s

A golden occasion for town's young swimmers

BROMSGROVE Swimming Club (BSC) won 11 gold medals competing at the Worcester County Championships at Sandwell Aquatics Centre.

Some 45 Bromsgrove swimmers took to the water at the County Championships - an increase from 25 qualifiers at last year's event.

Bromsgrove athletes achieved an 81 per cent personal best (PB) rate while many swimmers achieved a 100 per cent PB record across all of their races.

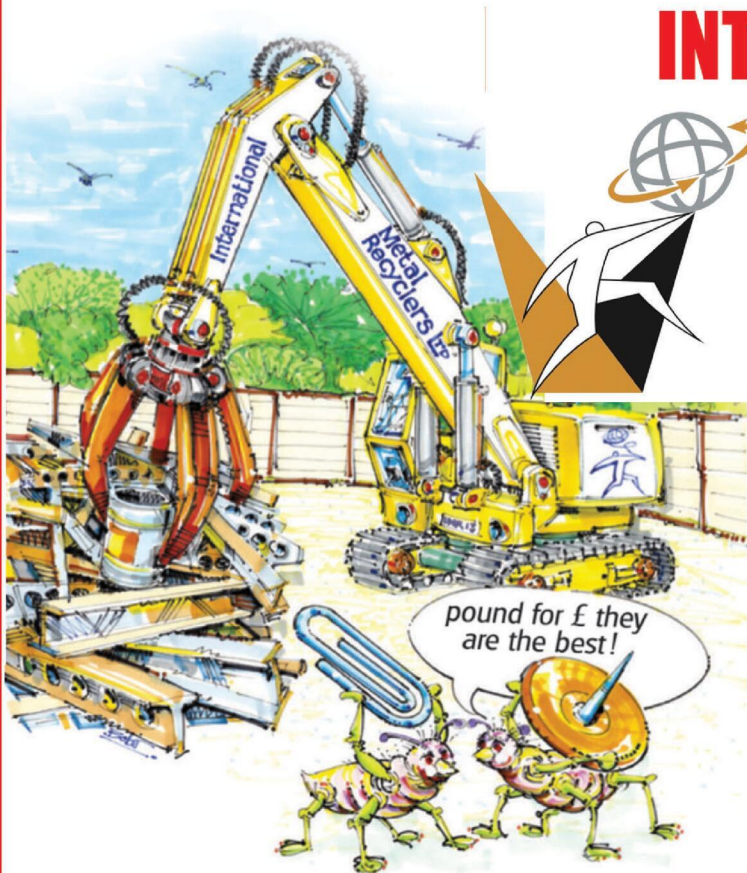
In total, BSC qualified for 62 finals and won 11 gold, five silver and eight bronze medals

along with eight junior medals and three senior medals.

Some of the standout achievements saw Sam McDonald become junior county champion while Luke Jones broke the club record in the 100m breaststroke on his way to the senior title.

And Darcey Hackett broke both the 50m freestyle county record and 50m butterfly county record in the 13-year-old category.

BSC head coach, Morgan King said every swimmer who competed should be incredibly proud of themselves after representing the club with pride and professionalism.



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PUTTING THEIR CASE: MEMBERS of Bromsgrove Golf Club have created their own leaflet in response to one put out by the developer hoping to build on the site.

In their document, the campaigners outline their concerns about the 700-home proposal for the site revealed earlier this month.

Developer Blenheim Strategic Partners launched a consultation on their proposal, adding responses would help shape a planning application being submitting to Bromsgrove District Council.

That consultation closed yesterday (Thursday) but prior to that, the firm created a leaflet detailing the plans and the positive impact they

would have, distributing it to homes surrounding the club.

The applicants claim the development will help meet demand for new homes in Bromsgrove and the initial plan detailed a mix of starter and family homes with 50 per cent of them being affordable housing.

To counteract that, in their leaflet, campaigners highlighted the club's busyness with 60,000 rounds of golf played there each year by its 1,100 members and visitors.

They also highlighted the thriving Junior Academy - the largest in England - with more than 200 young people enjoying learning how to play golf there.

And they raised issues with the

development, claiming 20,000 mature trees could be lost, spelling disaster for wildlife, the loss of the community venue and 80 jobs - from the club and those businesses supplying it.

In 2017, the club's owners responded to a Bromsgrove District Council 'Call For Sites', putting the land the golf centre is on up for consideration for potential future development.

The council identified the site as suitable and the owners entered a long-standing contractual agreement with Blenheim Strategic Partners.

Visit bromsgrovestandard.co.uk for more on this story.

Gentlemen's Club Captain, Gary McCartney, with past captain, Lee Machin, and Ellie with the leaflet they have produced. Picture by Marcus Mingins 0826003MMR



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Visit www.showcoachtours.co.uk for the full programme

MP meets mail chiefs over delivery issues

REDDITCH MP Chris Bloore has met senior Royal Mail executives alongside Lichfield MP Dave Robertson to press for urgent improvements to postal services following continued complaints from residents and businesses about delays, missed deliveries and unreliable post.

The MPs held the meeting with Kate Seals, Royal Mail's regional operations director, and David Gold, director of external affairs and policy, to challenge persistent service failures and demand clear action.

Discussions focused on concerns around inadequate staffing levels, shortages of appropriate equipment and an over-reliance on overtime simply to maintain basic

delivery routes.

During the meeting, Mr Bloore raised the direct experiences of constituents in Redditch and surrounding villages who have reported inconsistent delivery times and prolonged disruption.

He also highlighted the impact of poor performance on people waiting for NHS appointment letters, legal documents and other time-sensitive correspondence.

The MPs further challenged Royal Mail's communication with the public, particularly around the Universal Service Obligation and the lack of clear information about what level of service households were entitled to and how mail was now delivered.

Mr Bloore said: "Residents rightly expect a postal service they can rely on.

"Too many people are still telling me the same story - late post, missed deliveries and no clear explanation.

"That simply isn't good enough, which is why Dave Robertson and I have taken this right to the top of Royal Mail's leadership team."

Mr Bloore said it was clear staffing pressures, equipment shortages and inconsistent communication were contributing to the problems.

"At the same time, these issues cannot be solved without working together.

"I welcome the fact senior executives came around the table and engaged constructively but communities across Redditch and the Midlands now need to see real action, not just assurances."

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Aiming to pack a bigger punch

FILMING for a documentary which tells the story of Wallop Boxing Club and its lead coach and director, Carl Dickens, has been extended.

Freelance videographer Harry Johnson, from Feckenham, has been filming at the Redditch club over the past few months.

However, such is the success of Wallop's fighters, both Harry and Carl, have agreed to extend the project by several months.

Harry started filming the club and its ongoings last summer after conversations with his dad Neil.



Neil used to sponsor Carl when the latter fought as a professional boxer.

And London-based videographer Harry believes an extension to the project will help tell a stronger story about Wallop and the club's fighters.

Harry said: "Progress has been great. There's been so much to film from compared to when we initially spoke to just tell the story of the gym."

"With me being down in London, Carl calls me with an update and I end up coming back

and filling days with filming. Progress is really good.

"We decided to extend the project to justify the story a bit more because it didn't feel like the story was over after the first couple of months."

"The main surprise for me is just how much is in there from the initial idea of showing how boxing can help people, mixed with the success of the gym."

Harry has previously worked on productions for Channel 4 and has thoroughly enjoyed the process of documenting Wallop.

And he hopes the final cut of the documentary will cast a different light on the sport.

Harry added: "You hope whatever you film is authentic."

"It hasn't been a difficult process, compared to other things I've worked on because everything I'm filming with Carl is good stuff."

"We want to keep the premise the same in terms of what boxing does for people so when it comes to the edit, it's going to be very difficult leaving anything out."

"The premise that's coming out of it is the good that boxing can offer to people on all kinds of levels."

"I don't want the documentary to have a singular message."

"I hope it will show people a different side to what they might think boxing actually is."

"It will hopefully be a few stories within one story."

Carl Dickens is Wallop's founder and a former professional boxer. Picture by Harry Johnson.



Alan Owen, featured in 'Our Planet, The People, My Blood', has fought tirelessly for the rights of those affected by nuclear weapons testing.

Documenting testing story

A FEATURE-length documentary which exposes the effects of nuclear weapons testing is having one of its first public UK screenings in Bromsgrove.

'Our Planet, The People, My Blood', created by Everlock Productions, will be shown at Fairfield Village Hall on March 15.

After the screening there will be question and answer session with some veterans who appear in the documentary.

After three years of filming, director, Daniel Everitt-Lock, is proud to present the piece which centres on Alan Owen, a descendant of an Atomic Soldier, who has fought tirelessly for the rights of those affected by nuclear weapons testing around the world.

Through global first hand accounts, viewers follow Alan his journey, as he takes on the UK's Ministry of Defence, in a landmark legal battle which seeks recognition and compensation for millions.

The film was recently sponsored by Sir John

Hayes, CBE MP, and Rebecca Long Bailey MP, for a special Parliamentary screening in January which saw the UK's Atomic Test Veterans - the main subject of the documentary - gain cross party recognition and support from multiple MPs.

Sir John said: "This outstanding film chronicles a decades-long campaign for the recognition of those who witnessed the first nuclear tests."

"Recognition must go beyond a medal, it must include acceptance of the effects of radiation on them and their descendants. The work addressed in this film will, in the end, deliver what these people deserve: justice."

The event is part of the Bromsgrove Arts programme and there will be free parking at the venue and a licensed bar.

Visit bromsgrovearts.org.uk for more.

Email info@truepfilms.com for more on the documentary - the Bromsgrove showing marks the start of a run throughout March.



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Enjoying a packed visit

The REDDITCH Rowan Beavers were given a behind-the-scenes experience when they visited the Amazon centre.

The Amazon team in Redditch hosted the Beavers for a guided tour of the centre.

During the tour, the children had the opportunity to track their own packages around the centre, watching robots move items through the building.

The Beavers also took part in a hands-on activity where they packaged their own Amazon box, complete with a goody bag to take home. Beaver Scout leader Holly said: "Our

young Beavers had a wonderful visit. "They did an exceptional job hosting the tour and our Beavers were very engaged in the technology at the site."

Beavers are the second youngest section of the Scouting family in the UK, typically aged between six and eight years old.

Beaver Scouts have the opportunity to be creative and explore their local community through meetings, games, crafts, and sleepovers.

The scouts enjoyed their day out at the warehouse. s

Taylor-made music and lots more

THERE is a packed programme at Bromsgrove's Artrix throughout March - from showstopping musicals and iconic tribute nights to brain-boosting comedy and world-class cinema events.

Fans of the Fab Four can go on a Magical Mystery Tour through John, Paul, George and Ringo's greatest hits when Beatlemania come to the venue next Friday, March 6.

Other tribute acts at Artrix include Nearly Dan - The Spirit and Sound of Steely Dan - on March 7, Tina Live - The Tina Turner Experience - on March 19, Fleetwood Unchained - The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Celebration - on March 20 and Fearlessly Taylor - a must for Swifties - on March 21.

In between those acts is The Great British Bake Off Musical from March 12 to 14. The deliciously



funny and heartwarming theatrical treat, inspired by the nation's favourite baking show, boasts catchy songs, lovable characters and plenty of theatrical sparkle.

Families and young performers will shine in Disney Newsies Jr on

March 22, bringing the rousing story of young newspaper sellers to life with energy and heart.

Mathematicians looking for mirth can go along to Getting Triggy With It - Matt Parker 'does the maths' blending laugh-out-loud comedy

mixed with mind-bending maths.

Football fans will not want to miss 'An Evening with Birmingham City Legends' on March 18, promising fascinating stories and football nostalgia.

Classical audiences can expe-

rience The Armed Man by Karl Jenkins on March 28, a moving and dramatic choral work.

And Alfie Moore brings his hilarious Acocalypse Now show to Artrix on March 26.

There are also cinema screenings of world-class performances and national shows.

National Theatre Live: The Audience is on Monday, March 2, a day later - on Tuesday, March 3, is ROH Live: Giselle, CinemaLive with James Acaster - Cinemagoers Welcome - on March 16 and ROH Live: Stegfried, bringing down the curtain on the month on March 31.

Visit: artrixbromsgrove.co.uk for times, tickets and more information or call into the on-site box office between 10am and 12pm on Wednesdays and Saturdays and between 6pm and 8pm on Mondays.



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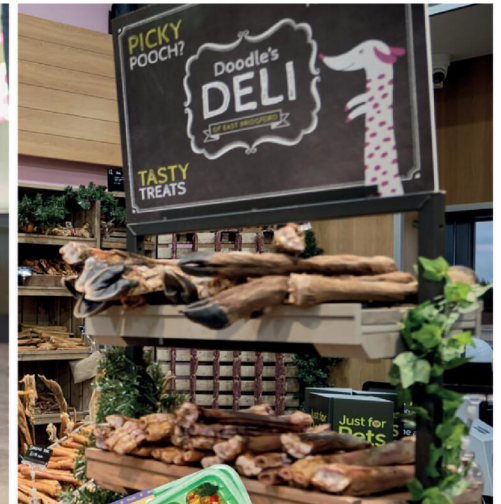


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Campaign aiming to prevent the menace of tailgating

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

MIDLANDS drivers are among the worst in the country for 'tailgating'

Research from National Highways shows the region is below the national average for safe driving when it comes to leaving sufficient space from the vehicle in front.

Shocking statistics have been released as part of National Highways' 'Too Close for Comfort? Stay Safe, Stay Back' campaign.

The figures show tailgating was a factor in 106 fatal or serious-injury collisions on motorways and major A-roads in the Midlands last year.

The research also revealed 36 per cent of drivers in the Midlands admitted to tailgating

and the region rated fourth out of six on National Highways' 'manners map'.

National Highways is urging motorists to make sure they drive a safe distance from the vehicle in front.

The organisation says, despite Britain priding itself on politeness and consideration, millions of drivers across the country feel their day-to-day manners worsen when driving.

Nationally, 4.9million drivers said their manners slip behind the wheel when they are under pressure, especially when they are running late.

A further 2.4million motorists admitted tailgating deliberately, to push slower drivers to speed up.

National data suggests running late is the biggest trigger for poor driving etiquette (with 27 per



This HGV is too close to the car in front, on the M5. Pictures courtesy of National Highways. s

cent of respondents citing it as a reason), followed by tiredness (20 per cent) and peak time commuting (16 per cent).

Some 37 per cent of Midlands drivers rated road etiquette as 'good', putting the region fourth on the manners map.

Concern

Colin Stevenson, National Highways' road safety information lead, said: "While the regional picture varies, it's clear tailgating remains a real concern."

"It may seem harmless, but it can put everyone on the road at risk. Following too closely means there is less time to react and stop safely if the vehicle in front slows down or stops."

"Leaving a safe gap makes driving safer, keeps traffic moving more smoothly and is a simple

courtesy that helps everyone feel more relaxed behind the wheel."

He added, a good rule of thumb for faster roads was the 'two-second rule'. Drivers count two seconds from the car in front passing a fixed point to when they pass the same point, to gauge a safe distance. Two seconds allows time for drivers to think and stop safely (including the braking distance) and should be doubled to four seconds in poor weather or reduced visibility.

Nationally, tailgating contributes to around eight per cent of people killed or seriously injured annually on motorways and major A-roads, according to long term Department for Transport data.

Dr Neale Kinnear, a behavioural psychologist specialising in driving behaviour, said: "Most of us see ourselves as considerate people but driving is a unique

context. It is goal focused and often time pressured.

"When we're running late, or behind other traffic, frustration can build.

"In that moment, closing the gap can feel like taking control or making progress.

"The reality is different - drivers tend to overestimate how much time, if any, they save by pushing on.

"As frustration rises, perspective on the importance of keeping a safe margin, and the impact it has on others, can be lost."

The importance of adhering to the 'two-second rule' is also highlighted by the fact tailgating is an illegal offence.

Police can take action if they believe a driver is too close to the vehicle ahead and it can result in a £100 fine and three penalty points.

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If you have 'News to Tell' then call **Tristan Harris (Editor)** on **01527 588657** or email: **tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com**

or if you have a local business and have 'A Service or Something to Sell'

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Projects invited to apply for cash

A WORCESTERSHIRE charity has opened its annual fund for community projects across the county.

Causes are invited to apply for up to £6,000 for projects which align with Prime Foundation's aims of improving education, physical and mental health and social wellbeing at a local level.

The Foundation invests in communities where Prime, a health and care property developer, has built new facilities using a proportion of profits from developments.

Previous funding recipients include schools, scout groups, a theatre group, sports groups, community groups, respite care providers and a variety of community support causes.

In 2024 1st Redditch Scout Group successfully applied for funding for a training defibrillator and choking vest for use in emergency aid training.

The group's Scout Leader, Sallie-Ann Eaton, said: "We have really benefited from the equipment this grant allowed us to purchase.

"We have been able to show our Scouts there's nothing to be afraid of when using a defibrillator so they know, should the need arise, they could help someone.

"The choke vest trainer was great fun but provided the Scouts will real life experience on how to save a life if someone was choking that our explaining in words previously could never have achieved."

Charities, community groups and CICs are all welcome to apply.

Hannah Cashmore, trustee of the Prime Foundation, said: "We've witnessed the profound impact of our funding on local groups year-on-year, and we're eager to open applications for community-led projects once again.

"We look forward to reviewing submissions and continuing to invest in the wellbeing of our local community."

Visit: primeplc.com/foundation/apply/ to apply. The deadline for applications is May 4.

Inspired to urge others to think about alcohol

A MAN who quit drinking after a serious health scare has backed a campaign encouraging others to think about how alcohol fits into their everyday lives.

Matthew Guest from Bromsgrove decided to stop drinking four years ago after realising how much alcohol was affecting his mental health.

For years, drinking was just a part of his life and he consumed alcohol to socialise and cope with an always-busy mind.

He said: "Those first few drinks felt like they took the edge off, but the calm never lasted. Looking back, I can see how much alcohol was actually making things worse.

"My sleep was poor, my anxiety was higher, and I constantly felt foggy.

"I knew it wasn't helping, but like a lot of people, I pushed that thought aside.

"A serious health scare forced me to stop and reassess. That moment changed everything.

"I made the decision to quit drinking completely and, although it wasn't easy at first, it was absolutely the right choice."

He added the benefits came gradually but steadily - better sleep, a more stable mood, clearer thinking, stronger relationships and a sense of control he had not felt in years.



important parts of my wellbeing. "Four years on, I feel more grounded, more present and more like the person I want to be."

Research shows even small shifts in drinking habits can lead to better sleep, improved mood and clearer thinking.

Worcestershire County Council's Public Health team is looking to show residents how small changes to their drinking habits can make a positive difference to their wellbeing.

Coun Satinder Bell, Worcestershire County Council's cabinet member for health and wellbeing, thanked Matt for sharing his story and added: "Honest conversations like this help people realise they're not alone."

He said Public Health was here to support residents to stay well and, rather than telling people not to drink, it was about everyone feeling confident in their choices and understanding the impact of alcohol."

Visit: worcestershire.gov.uk/alcohol for more information and support around alcohol, including tips for cutting back.

Call 0300 303 8200 or visit the Cranstoun website if you are struggling with alcohol intake.

"More recently, I was diagnosed with ADHD, which helped me understand why my mind had always felt overloaded.

"Alcohol had seemed like a quick fix, but it was actually making things harder.

"Sobriety has become one of the most

Matt Guest, with his dogs Nala and Maggie, is backing an alcohol awareness campaign.

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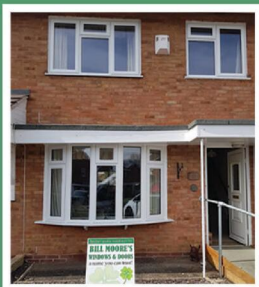


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Harry has a vision of a greener rail network

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

AN ASPIRING, green-thinking young artist has won a contest to design an environmentally-friendly railway station of the future.

Pupils from three Worcestershire primary schools took part in the contest to mark Railway 200 – the 200th anniversary of train travel in the UK.

The Worcestershire Community Rail Partnership (WCRP) and Platform Rail Education held the competition to inspire children to think about sustainable transport and the environment.

Participants aged seven to 11 entered from St John's C of E Middle School Academy, in Bromsgrove; and from Norton Juxta Kempsey C of E Primary School and St Barnabas CE First and Middle School, both in Worcester.

The pupils were tasked with designing an eco-friendly station

of the future, imagining how such places might look in 2046.

As part of the project, pupils looked at the history of the railway, from the first steam engines of 200 years ago to the modern-day train network, to help create their own visions for greener, more welcoming stations.

Artwork featured ideas such as green roofs, solar panels, wildlife habitats, cycle hubs, community cafes and colourful public art, reflecting how railways and stations could further support both people and the planet.

Judged

The designs were judged by Artists Clubhouse – a Worcester-based community interest company dedicated to promoting positive mental health through creativity.

The overall winner was Harry, from St John's C of E Middle School, and the winning artwork will now be displayed at Bromsgrove Railway Station. The



A detail from Harry's design and, right, the artist himself.

display is part of the Railway 200 celebrations, which have been supported by West Midlands Rail.

Harry also received a family train trip to London, with additional prizes and certificates awarded to runners-up and all participating schools.

Everyone who entered the contest received a Railway 200 certificate, recognising their creativity and contribution to the project.

Tom Painter, WCRP chair, said the entrants' ideas were 'genuinely inspiring'.

"Their artwork shows how clearly the next generation understands sustainability, community and the importance of rail in everyday life," said Tom.

"As we mark 200 years of railways, their visions remind us that

the future of rail is in very thoughtful hands."

Katie Hall, head of year at St John's C of E Middle School Academy, said the project provided pupils with a valuable opportunity to enrich learning beyond the classroom.

"It strengthened links between different subjects as the children were able to use and apply their geography and PSHE [personal, social, health and economic] knowledge of the environment and how to care for it," she said.

"It was great to get involved in a community project and make the children aware of the wider role West Midlands Rail has."

Katie added, the children benefited from being involved and

the chance to get creative and felt proud of their contributions.

She said the competition had had a positive impact on pupils' confidence and creativity, with children becoming more willing to share ideas and try new things.

The competition was part of a wider programme across the county to celebrate the past, present and future of the UK's railways.



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**Mr Faisal Hussain
Consultant Surgeon**

SUDOKU

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

EASY

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

HARD

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

African countries

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

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

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

ACROSS

- Understanding (13)
- Glue (8)
- Merit (4)
- Units of measurement (6)
- Severe test (6)
- Diminish (6)
- Annually (6)
- Suffer (4)
- Riches (8)
- Public notice (13)

DOWN

- Summarise (8)
- Oration (6)
- Fairy (4)
- Rite (8)
- Climb (6)
- Indigent (4)
- Inviolability (8)
- Magnetic (8)
- Reconnoitre (6)
- Take for granted (6)
- Whirlpool (4)
- Simplicity (4)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

- Thick, soft mass
- Be compelled to
- Contemplate
- Backless shoe
- Ponder



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.

- 97234 gives a bird;
- 818 gives a female animal;
- 365 gives a male animal.

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

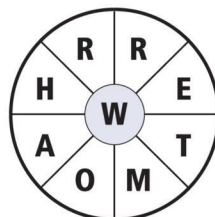
CODEWORD

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.

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

WORDWHEEL

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

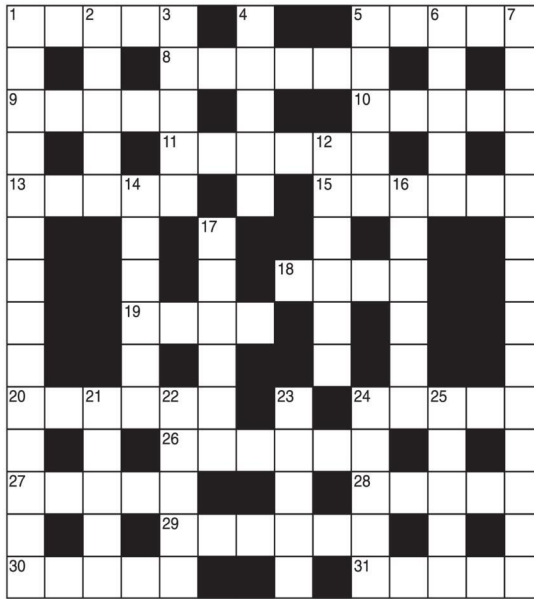


How you rate
 15 words: average 25 words: very good
 20 words: good 30 or more: excellent.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- A commercial establishment in which hairdressers, beauticians, etc. carry on their business (5)
- Dress of a religious order (5)
- The Duke's deputy in Measure for Measure (6)
19. Legendary English outlaw and hero (5,4)
- Hard-twisted cotton yarn (5)
- Mythological maidens inhabiting rivers, hills, etc. (6)
- A daughter of "Young Jolyon" in The Forsyte Saga (5)
- Greek goddess identified with the Roman Minerva (6)
- See 1 Down
- See 9 Across
- Gold leaf prepared for gilding bronze (6)
- American gambling game (5)
- Capital of Eritrea (6)
- Abraham's "bond-woman" who bore Ishmael (5)
- Professional surname of soprano Helen Mitchell (5)
- A summary (6)
- A form of football, with distinct rules codified for the first time in 1871 (5)
- Seaport of County Antrim (5)



DOWN

- 1 and 18. The architect of St. Paul's Cathedral (3,11,4)
- The publication of defamatory matter in writing (5)
- A she-goat (5)
- Name applied to two S. American bird species, the chesnut-bellied heron and the grey-winged trumpeter (5)
- Surname of the composer of The Planets suite, etc. (5)
- To tack in sewing (5)
- Last of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales (3,7,4)
- Leading public school (6)
- Town in Shan State, Myanmar, north-east of Mandalay (6)
- Housing shed for aircraft (6)
17. Hardy dwarf plant of spring or autumn (6)
- A son of Japheth (5)
- 22 & 25. American harmonica virtuoso, who died in 2001 (5,5)
- Roman deity after whom January is named (5)
24. Beast of burden of Asia and Africa (5)
25. See 22 Down

SOLUTIONS

22 Larry; 23 Janus/Janus; 24 Camel; 25 Adler.
 6 Baste; 7 The Parson's Tale; 12 Harrow; 14 Lashio; 16 Hangar; 17 Crocus; 21 Magog.
 30 Rugby; 31 Larne. DOWN: 1 Sir Christopher; 2 Libel; 3 Nanny; 4 Agam; 5 Holsi.
 18 Wren; 19 Hood; 20 Ormolu; 24 Craps; 26 Asmara; 27 Hagar; 28 Melba; 29 R&Sme.
 ACROSS: 1 Salon; 5 Habit; 8 Angelo; 9 Robin; 10 Lisle; 11 Nymphs; 13 Holly; 15 Athena;
 16 Yearly; 18 Bear; 20 Treasure; 22 Advertisement; DOWN: 1 Condense; 2 Speech; 3 Pert;
 4 Ceremony; 5 Ascend; 6 Poor; 11 Sanctity; 13 Alluring; 15 Survey; 17 Assume; 19 Eddy;
 21 Ease.

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 7 Comprehension; 8 Adhesive; 9 Earn; 10 Inches; 12 Ordeal; 14 Lesson;
 16 Yearly; 18 Bear; 20 Treasure; 22 Advertisement; DOWN: 1 Condense; 2 Speech; 3 Pert;
 4 Ceremony; 5 Ascend; 6 Poor; 11 Sanctity; 13 Alluring; 15 Survey; 17 Assume; 19 Eddy;
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Crossword

EARTHWORM Republic of Congo, Zimbabwe, Djibouti, Algeria, Cote d'Ivoire,
 Ethiopia, Cape Verde, Uganda, Equatorial Guinea, Tanzania,
 Swaziland, Burkina Faso, Botswana, Mauritania, South Sudan,
 Seychelles, Madagascar, Sierra Leone.

Niner

WORDKMATES

Wordwheel Pathfinder

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

Codeword

Push, Mush, Must, Muse, Mule, Moll, Pull

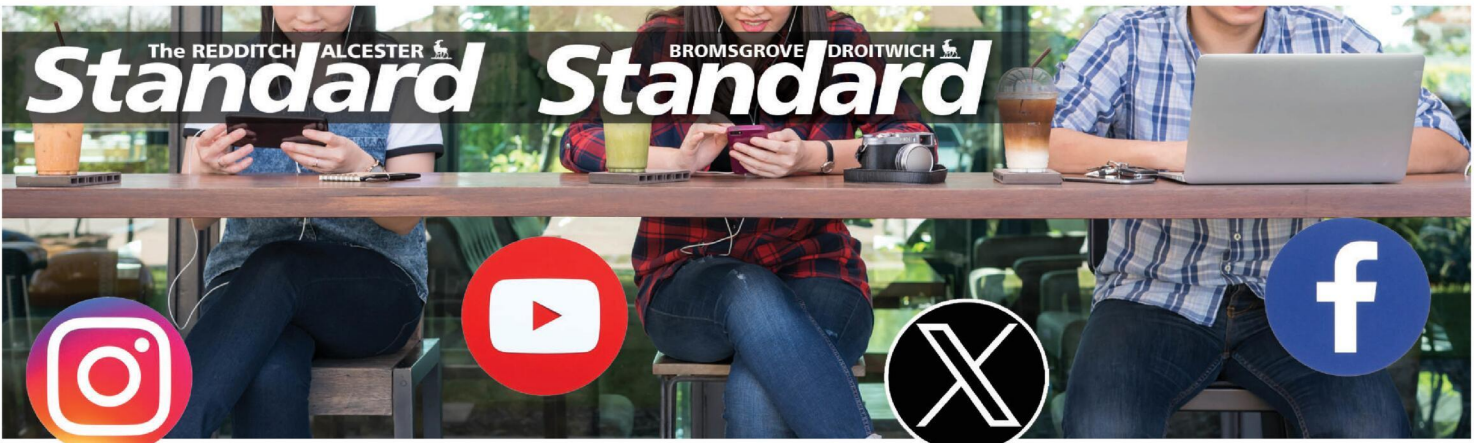
Ladder

Easy

Sudoku

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

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



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25-2-2011

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DEATHS

BLUNDELL

Ann

Aged 88 years
01/02/1938 – 06/02/2026

Passed away peacefully.

Reunited with beloved Husband Michael. A much-loved Mum to Jan, Jayne, Jeanette and Clare. A loving Grandma to Elizabeth, Grace and Billy.

Ann will be greatly missed by all of her family and friends.

Ann will be received into Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church on Wednesday 25th March 2026, at 5pm.

A service to celebrate Ann's life will take place at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church on

Thursday 26th March 2026, at 12 noon.

A Committal will follow at Redditch Crematorium.

Donations if so desired may be made to Dementia UK and Bowood Care Home

c/o Thomas Brothers
Birchfield House
494 Evesham Road
Redditch
B97 5JF

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Thank you

DEATHS

STRONG

Anthony (Tony) Kerr

Aged 86 years

Died peacefully on
Wednesday, 11th February 2026, at
Studley Rose Care Home.

Dearly-loved husband of Rhonda, father of Robert and Kate and grandfather. Tony will be greatly missed by all his family and friends.

The funeral service will take place at St. Matthias & St. George Church, Astwood Bank on Monday, 16th March 2026 at 11:30am, followed by a short family committal at Redditch Crematorium.

Family flowers only please. Donations if desired to Astwood Bank Royal British Legion or Register of Engineers for Disaster Relief (RedR) may be sent to

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Thank You.

DEATHS

BROWN Patricia

Much loved wife of the late Denis, Mother of Anita, Graham and Clive, Grandmother and Great-Grandmother, passed away peacefully on 9th February 2026 at The Shrubbery Care Home, aged 89 years.

The funeral will be held at Droitwich Methodist Church on 17 March 2026 at 4.45pm.

All friends welcome.

Family flowers only, but donations can be made via the collecting plate in the church or directly to benefit Dementia UK at dementiauk.org

DEATHS

LEES Patricia

Aged 91 years

Passed away peacefully on Sunday 1st February 2026.

A much-loved Mum to David, Elizabeth, Clare, John and Matthew.

Patricia will be greatly missed by all of her family and friends.

A service to celebrate Patricia's life will take place at Redditch Crematorium on Friday 6th March 2026 at 1.15pm.

Family flowers only please.

Donations if desired, may be made to Alzheimer's Society
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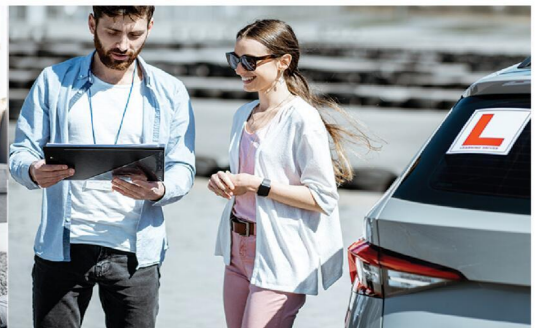


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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
A435 BIRMINGHAM ROAD, COUGHTON, STUDLEY
Order Effect: Road Closed to vehicular traffic between the entrance to the Kings Court Hotel and the entrance to the Throckmorton Arms Public House.
Reason for Order: Carriageway resurfacing and associated works, overnight 20.00hrs-06.00hrs weeknights only.
Order Commences: 3 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 11 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: A435, A422, A441, A448, A435 and vice versa. Access/Egress to/from adjoining roads will be restricted whilst works are in progress.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

15294 BLEACHFIELD STREET, ALCESTER
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Stratford Road/Swan Street to Flax Close.
Reason for Order: Drainage maintenance and associated works, 09.30hrs-15.30hrs.
Order Commences: 6 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 6 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: Bleachfield Street, Newport Drive, Evesham Street, Swan Street Roundabout, Swan Street and vice versa.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

CHURCH ROAD, ULLENHALL
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To replace a telegraph pole.
Order Commences: 5 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 5 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: Church Road, Church Hill, Henley Road, Barris Park, Grimshaw Hill, Green Lanes, Oldberrow Lane, Oldberrow Road and vice versa.
Contractor: M J Quinn, Tel: 01543 547 118.

B4089 KINWARTON ROAD/CAPTAINS HILL/SCHOOL ROAD, KINWARTON/GREAT ALE & D5355 COUGHTON FIELDS LANE, KINWARTON
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic as follows: Kinwarton Road/Captains Hill/School Road, Kinwarton/Great Ale closed between the junctions with Kinwarton Farm Road and Spernal Lane. Coughton Fields Lane, Kinwarton closed for a distance of 75 metres from its junction with Captains Hill/School Road.
Reason for Order: Carriageway resurfacing and associated works, 08.00hrs-17.00hrs weekend only.
Order Commences: 28 February 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 1 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: Main Diversion: B4089 (Henley Road, Alcester Road, Woolton Rise, Alcester Road), A3400, A4189, A435, B4089 (Arden Road, Tything Road, Kinwarton Farm Road and vice versa. Access/Egress to Coughton Fields Lane will be via A435 Birmingham Road whilst works are in progress.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
SCHOOL ROAD, SALFORD PRIORS
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To safely enable works to renew water hydrant.
Order Commences: 14 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 15 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: School Road, Station Road, Norton Lenchwick Bypass, Salford Road, Victoria Road, Steppes Piece, Bidford Road, High Street, Broom Lane, Dunnington Road, Tothall Lane and vice versa.
Contractor: GTM South, Tel: 08455 040 123.

For all of the above temporary orders, pedestrian access to and egress from properties and land situated adjacent to the length of road to be closed will be maintained at all times. Vehicular access will be maintained where possible.
 To report any problems with these works or for further details of our current & planned roadworks visit our website warwickshire.gov.uk/roadworksmap or call us 01926 412515.
 S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance,
 Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 27 Feb 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

APPLICATION TO VARY A PREMISES LICENCE OR CLUB PREMISES CERTIFICATE UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003.

Bromsgrove Sporting FC are applying to extend the area where alcohol will be sold during events at the ground. The extension is to cover the whole of the area occupied by the football club including car parks, enabling "fan zones" to be established for events and matches.
 Notices will be displayed at the stadium and if any person has any concerns please submit objections to:
 Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF or enquiries@worsregservices.gov.uk by 15th March 2026.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Zero Waste Recycling Limited of Unit 13, South Moons Moat, Redditch, B98 0AR is applying for a Restricted Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence to use 2 goods vehicles at the operating centre at Unit 13, South Moons Moat, Redditch, B98 0AR.
 Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected should make written representations to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner, Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice.

GOOD VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE
 Simon David Gunn trading as Universal Tanker Solutions Limited of Unit 12A Bold Industrial Estate, Neills Road, St Helens, Merseyside, WA9 4TU, is applying to change an existing license as follows, to keep and additional 1 vehicle and 2 trailers at the operating centre at H Gittins Transport, Aston Road, Bromsgrove, B60 3EX.
 Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representation to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to Making Representation is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE – LICENSING ACT 2003 APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE OR CLUB PREMISES CERTIFICATE TO BE GRANTED UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

Applicant: **ROBERT HOLDCROFT** Postal address of premises/club premises or description: **McDonalds, Kingfisher Shopping Centre, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 4EQ**
 The applicant proposes to carry out the following licensable activities or qualifying club activities on or from the above premises/club premises: **Provision of Late Night Refreshment (indoors), Days: Monday to Sunday Hours: 23:00 – 01:00. The premises will operate as a quick-service restaurant providing hot food and hot drinks to members of the public for consumption on or off the premises. No other licensable activities or qualifying club activities are applied for as part of this application.**
 Representations by interested parties or responsible authorities should be made in writing to Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Wyre Forest, House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF or enquiries@worsregservices.gov.uk by 18 MARCH 2026 The record of the application is available for inspection by appointment. Please call us on 01905 822799 for an appointment.
 IT IS AN OFFENCE, LIABLE ON CONVICTION TO AN UNLIMITED FINE, UNDER SECTION 158 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 TO KNOWINGLY OR RECKLESSLY MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT IN, OR IN CONNECTION WITH, AN APPLICATION

PUBLIC NOTICES
BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL & REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL
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Proposal: Change of use from Public House to 10 No. one bedroom apartments including rear extension
Application forms and plans may be inspected online <https://publicaccess.bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk/> **online-applications**
Comments can be submitted online, via email to neplan@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.

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MANS genuine sheepskin coat, brown 42 inch chest. Excellent condition £30 Tel 07784170721

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DALLAS COMPACT MOBILITY SCOOTER complete with battery and charger, comes apart and folds easily for car transporting. Good condition. Can deliver locally. £150 Tel: 0121 475 7948 (Longbridge area)

MAMAS & PAPS, rocking horse on wooden frame. Very good clean condition (collection only) £50.00. Tel: 07934132759

ROLAND Cartier leather shoes with mesh inserts, peep toe, stiletto heel, colour pewter, size 8. Still in box. Worn once indoors. Excellent condition. Original cost was £65.00. Will accept £20.00. Tel: 07934132759

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CHILDRENS Garden Multi-swing set £50 ONO 01905 775305

KING size bed free to collector (A donation to Mary Steven's Hospice) 07490988252

DINING table & 4 chairs brand new never used £50 ono 07713769333

MISCELLANEOUS

DALLAS compact mobility scooter complete with battery and charger, comes apart and folds easily for car transporting. Good condition. Can deliver locally. £150 (Longbridge area)

WHEELCHAIR in vgc little used £50. Can deliver local Kidderminster 07518902804

LOST Golf balls no problem all good names & condition 100 balls £22 01564 784171

STRESSLESS type chair & footstool brown leather with round wooden bases £150 ono 07789064907

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MISCELLANEOUS

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Motoring

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THE NEW Audi RS 5 is Audi Sport's first high-performance plug-in hybrid (PHEV) – with real RS DNA and the highly-tuned hybrid-technology to match.

For the first time at Audi Sport, the powertrain pairs a 2.9-litre twin-turbo V6 outputting 375 kW (510 PS) and a 130 kW electric motor. They are joined by bespoke RS sport suspension with twin-valve shock absorbers, a completely new quattro drivetrain with Dynamic Torque Control, and world-first electro-mechanical torque vectoring at the rear.

The new centre differential has a preload to always remain partially locked, managing longitudinal torque distribution. Transverse torque distribution at the rear is provided by a new differential that can shift torque between the wheels in milliseconds.

Audi CEO Gernot Dollner said: "The A5 model series' new pinnacle is our first high-performance plug-in hybrid. Our newly developed quattro drivetrain with Dynamic

Torque Control is the world's first electro-mechanical torque vectoring system in a production car.

The sophisticated technical interplay between combustion engine and electric power brings performance and efficiency together in a new way at Audi.

Customers can experience both peak sportiness and every-day comfort."

Rolf Michl, Managing Director of Audi Sport added: "The RS 5 and its innovative drive concept mark the beginning of a new era for our RS models. They bring a new level of dynamics to the driving characteristics our customers love and further improve day-to-day use value thanks to all-electric driving and innovative technologies.

"A new interpretation of the true RS experience."

The Audi RS 5 delivers motorsport performance for the road. Measuring around 90mm wider than the base-model A5 at the front and rear with flared fenders, it has a muscular stance.

The three-dimensional Singleframe with a honey-comb grille and Air Curtains to control airflow dominate the front.

At the rear, the aerodynamic diffuser and the RS sport exhaust system's matte oval tailpipes ensure a sporty finish.

Both during the day and at night, the darkened Matrix LED headlights

and their digital day-time-running-light signature in a checkered-flag design reinforce the car's purposeful appearance.

The high-performance PHEV is the first production RS model to feature a modular electrified powertrain.

At its heart are an improved 2.9-litre twin-turbo V6, an electric motor outputting 130 kW, the hybridized eight-speed gearbox, and a completely new rear transaxle with electro-mechanical torque vectoring – a world first in a production model.

An actuator, overdrive gears, and a differential combine to intelligently transfer torque between the rear wheels.

They do so almost fully variably and depending on the driving situation.

A control unit recalculates optimal torque distribution between the rear wheel every five milliseconds – a frequency of 200 Hz.

The torque vectoring system then immediately and precisely implements it.

Put simply, electro-mechanical torque vectoring is the invisible maestro conducting an orchestra of performance and making sure customers experience driving fun and safety like never before.

The accurate interplay between all suspension components defines the driving characteristics of the Audi RS 5.

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Saltmen score five on return to action to reach cup semi-finals

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

FOOTBALL: DROITWICH
 Spa romped to a 5-2 victory against Fairford Town to reach the semi-finals of the Marsh Challenge Cup.

A brace from Charlie Tilley, either side of James Baldwin's strike, put the Saltmen in command at the King George Playing Fields.

Fairford threatened a comeback after Lewis Phillips put through his own net and a strike from veteran striker Chris Zebroski reduced the deficit to a single goal.

However, substitute Alex Dugmore scored twice to seal Droitwich's place in the last four of the competition.

And the Saltmen will play promotion rivals Slimbridge in the semi-finals of the Marsh Challenge Cup on Saturday, March 7.

Spa took to the pitch for the first time since a 4-0 victory against Cribbs at the end of January.

And Droitwich needed just 26 minutes to dust off the cobwebs as Baldwin headed in the opener to score his first goal since returning to the club last month.

Spa doubled their lead seven minutes later as Tilley produced a fine first time finish from James Lemon's backheel.

Tilley appeared to all but seal Spa's place in the last four when he scored his second of the game with a header from Perry Moss's cross six minutes after the break.

However, Fairford kept themselves in the contest with a goal on 57 minutes as Phillips inadvertently turned the ball into his own net following a scramble in the box.

And the visitors went close soon after as Harrison Edwards saw his effort cleared off the line.

Fairford further reduced the deficit on 69 minutes when former Football League striker Zebroski headed in Tommy Oldridge's corner.

However, Spa restored their two-goal cushion on 80 minutes when Dugmore finished Moss's pass to score on his return from injury.

And Dugmore completed the scoring deep into injury time as he pounced on a loose ball to grab his second of the game from the bench.

Droitwich are next in action against Cirencester Town on Saturday, February 28 with kick-off at 3pm at the King George Playing Fields.

ABOVE RIGHT: James Baldwin celebrates his opener. Pictures by Mathew Mason.

BELOW RIGHT: Reiss Taylor-Randle bursts into the box.



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We can provide you with a beautiful new patio or driveway in Coventry, Bromsgrove, Redditch, Solihull or Birmingham

5 Year guarantee

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