

# DROITWICH Standard

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Friday, April 3rd 2026 Week 14

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# Can you see the beauty in these things?



by **Ryan Smith**  
 reporter.name@bullivantmedia.com

A CALL has been made for people to help transform Droitwich's street cabinets into works of art.

The green boxes, which house vital broadband and phone connections, are often viewed as unsightly and can be vulnerable to graffiti.

Wychavon District Council and cabinets owner Openreach, have teamed up with community public arts

organisation WeTheSeeds to launch the 'signals of joy: cabinet mural competition', which will see nine cabinets turned into professional, hand-painted works of art.

The art will be inspired by the stories, hopes and memories of the people of Droitwich.

WeTheSeeds was the creative force behind the murals on Union Lane and The Talbot.

Anyone who lives, works or studies in Droitwich is invited to join a community workshop between 3pm

and 5.30pm on Tuesday, in the John Corbett Room of the Droitwich Spa Community Hall.

Councillor Rob Adams, Wychavon executive board member for strong communities, culture and sport, said: "I urge residents to answer the call and help turn an essential part of our communication infrastructure into a celebration of everything that makes Droitwich Spa special."

Rikesh Patel, creative director of WeTheSeeds Public Arts Placemaking UK, said: "We need as many people

to share their stories and ideas with us as possible so we can turn this overlooked infrastructure into beautiful markers of identity, community and change."

For those who cannot make the event, a worksheet can be downloaded from [wychavon.gov.uk/signals-of-joy](http://wychavon.gov.uk/signals-of-joy) and submitted online. Paper copies are available from Droitwich Spa Heritage Centre and The Craft Café in Old Market Court, on High Street.

The closing date for entries is May 11.

## It's time to splash away

DROITWICH'S new £550,000 splash pad has opened in time for the school holidays.

The new-look area, which will open from 10am to 6pm each day, is part of the lido's expansion and moved from the outdoor saltwater pool to a new site near the tennis courts.

The previous water play area opened in 2011 but, in recent years, frequently broke down and was costly to repair.

During the easter break, the site will host 'splash hours' featuring inflatables, floats, rubber rings, music and plenty of water fun.

The next sessions are planned from 1pm to 2pm today (Good Friday), between 2pm and 3pm tomorrow and Easter Sunday, (April 4 and 5) and from 1pm to 2pm every day from bank holiday Monday to next Friday.

All splash hour sessions cost £5.80, for both children and adults.



The new-look splash pad has opened in the Lido Park. Picture courtesy of Wychavon District Council. s

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Michelle Doidge is one of five artists exhibiting her work. s

# People are urged to visit MIU unless they need emergency care

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

**PEOPLE are being urged to ensure they get the right treatment this easter bank holiday weekend.**

The minor injury unit (MIU) at Kidderminster Hospital and Treatment Centre will be open from 8am to 10pm every day, including today (Friday) and on Easter Monday, and x-ray services will be available between 9am and 5pm.

This follows a successful extended offer in March, which saw x-ray services available for patients across most Saturdays and Sundays.

People are urged to go to the MIU for minor injuries, rather than to A&E at Redditch's Alexandra Hospital or the Worcestershire Royal.

Waiting times are often shorter at the MIU and patients can be seen a lot quicker.

MIUs are open throughout week-

ends and bank holidays, treating injuries such as sprains, simple fractures, cuts, burns, minor head injuries and wound infections. Using your local MIU, when appropriate helps reduce waiting times and keeps emergency departments free for more serious cases.

Dawn Shaw, MIU team lead at Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, said: "Bank holidays are often busy for both families and local services and people aren't always sure where to go for help.

"By extending x-ray services throughout the easter weekend, we're making it easier for people to get the right care quickly for minor injuries while also easing some of the pressure on our emergency departments at a particularly busy time."

Patients will be assessed by the MIU team first.

X-rays are not available as a walk-in service, however.

Visit [hacw.nhs.uk/MIU](http://hacw.nhs.uk/MIU) for more on Worcestershire's MIU opening times.

People can get expert confidential advice for minor incidents and illnesses as well as medicines for a range of minor ailments.

Pharmacy times over the easter bank holiday weekend will be different to the usual ones.

Today, the Tesco pharmacy in Coldfield Drive, Redditch, will be open from 10am to 4pm; and Morrisons, in Bromsgrove from 9am to 5pm.

On Easter Sunday, the County Pharmacy in Church Road, Redditch, will open from 10am to 1pm; and Knights Pharmacy, in Catshill, Bromsgrove, between 12pm and 3pm.

On Easter Monday, the Tesco pharmacy on Coldfield Drive, in Redditch, will be open from 10am to 4pm; and Bromsgrove Pharmacy, on New Road, runs from 12pm to 3pm.

People can visit: [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk) or call 111 to get advice from trained NHS staff, including signposting to the best service to meet their healthcare needs.

## Artists put on a show

AN EXHIBITION of 70 original works by five Worcestershire artists is going on display at Hanbury Hall.

Nature's Force will be available to view in the venue's Long Gallery, from 9.30am to 4pm every day between Easter Sunday and April 15.

It celebrates the wonderful, colourful and mystical world around us, featuring bold landscapes in oils and acrylics, vibrant work in pastels, digital artwork, collage, textiles and felting.

The artists – Michelle

Doidge, Amanda Pardoe, Lucy Rendle, Lyn Sharp and Lucy Silina – create pieces in a variety of media.

The exhibition boasts an eclectic mix of expressive, abstract and representational, bold, colourful and contemporary pieces.

Each artist has their own individual technique and style, giving something to suit all tastes.

Visitors will be able to meet the artists and find out about their techniques and what inspires them.

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A decision will be made on a McDonald's 'drive-thru' in Bromsgrove next week. s

# McDonald's tables new drive-thru proposal

by Ryan Smith  
ryan.smith@bullivantmedia.com

## A DECISION looms on plans to open a McDonald's 'drive-thru' in Bromsgrove.

Bromsgrove District Council's planning committee will make the decision on whether to permit the construction of the takeaway and restaurant, at its meeting on Thursday.

The outlet would be on the Stourbridge Road car park and is similar to the proposal submitted back in 2018.

The application also includes car parking, landscaping and alterations to access the site, which are different to the 2018 application.

The proposed restaurant is expected to employ more than 65 full-time and part-time staff.

The restaurant would have a kitchen and customer seating on the same level and the proposal includes a side-by-side

drive-thru lane, two order points, canopies and an outside patio area. The children's play area on the previous application has been removed.

In planning documents, McDonald's claimed its proposal conformed to what the town centre site could be used for.

Documents added, a traffic assessment confirmed the restaurant and takeaway would be accessible by various modes of transport including cars, public transport, by bike and on foot. Cycle stands are included in the application.

In 2018, there was backlash to the proposal with several concerns highlighted, including increased traffic on the Stourbridge and Birmingham roads and the fact that the fast food outlet was 'within walking distance of three schools attended by more than 1,600 pupils'.

The planning meeting will start at 6pm on Thursday.

Watch the full meeting live on Bromsgrove District Council's YouTube channel.

## Jail for driver who injured two people

A DRIVER who seriously injured two pedestrians when he crashed his car in Northfield has been jailed.

Jason Walker was sentenced after the man and woman, who were both in their 60s, were struck by a black Mercedes near the junction of Frankley Beeches Road and Sir Herbert Austin Way, just before 1pm on December 16, 2024.

The pair suffered serious injuries.

Walker, of Ambleside, in

Bartley Green, Birmingham, was arrested for causing serious injury by dangerous driving.

An investigation by West Midlands Police's serious collision investigation unit (SCIU) found that Walker had been driving between 49mph and 56mph moments before he crashed into the man and woman, almost double the 30mph speed limit.

The 54-year-old pleaded guilty and was jailed at

Birmingham Crown Court for two years and eight months.

Sgt Paul Hughes, from the SCIU, said: "Walker showed complete disregard for the safety of others.

"His actions demonstrated a shocking lack of care and responsibility.

"This case is a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of dangerous driving. One reckless decision behind the wheel can destroy lives forever."

## Drug-driving arrest after car halted

A MAN was arrested on suspicion of drug-driving when police pulled over a vehicle in Droitwich on Sunday.

The stop was made by officers after the vehicle was linked to suspected drug possession and supply. All three people on board were searched under section 23 of the Misuse of Drugs Act.

The driver failed a roadside drug test for cannabis and was arrested on suspicion of driving over the limit. Checks showed they had no licence or insurance. The vehicle was seized. Officers urged anyone with concerns about drug activity or dangerous driving to report it by calling police on 101, or 999 if the crime is in progress.

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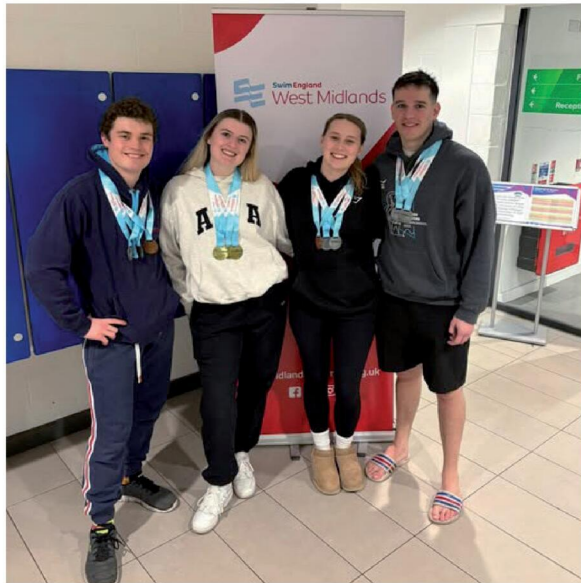
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**Bromsgrove Swimming's Club's masters squad stand with their medals. s**

**SCOOPING THE POOL:**  
BROMSGROVE Swimming Club's masters team won a total of 15 medals competing at the West Midlands Masters Championships. The club's swimmers took gold in the 4x50m mixed medley relay and bronze in the 4x50m freestyle relay to win two team medals at the Alan Higgs Centre in Coventry. And Bromsgrove's masters swimmers also brought home four gold, five silver and four bronze medals

in the individual events. Assistant head coach and masters team member, Tilly Anderson, said: "The club's masters programme continues to go from strength to strength, highlighting the opportunities available for swimmers to compete and succeed at any age." Anyone interested in joining Bromsgrove SC's masters squad should email: [bromsgrove.sc@swimclubmanager.co.uk](mailto:bromsgrove.sc@swimclubmanager.co.uk) for more information.

# MP joins the Easter family fun activities

REDDITCH MP Chris Bloore visited the Easter eggs-travaganza in the Kingfisher Centre to try his hand at some of the activities.

The Easter Blessings event was organised by the Redditch Mission Area and was set up at Unit 6, New Walk, where the church's popular Christmas toy appeal was based.

Families were able to go along there, spend some quality time, make some memories and also receive free chocolate eggs and age-appropriate Bibles.

In total, 300 Easter eggs were given out, along with 200 children's Bibles, 50 youth Bibles and 40 adult ones.

Easter Blessings offered activities for all ages over the two days, including arts and crafts, a quiet place for those seeking reflection, egg-and-spoon assault course and a prayer tree, where people could leave their hopes and thoughts.

There was also a challenge asking participants to design packaging to protect a hen's egg in a bid to keep it in one piece when dropped to the floor.

Mr Bloore said: "I want to thank Elaine for putting the event on and inviting me down.

"And, although I failed miserably at the egg drop, it was great to take part in the activities which I know will have brought a lot of fun to Redditch families.

"Easter Blessings provided a won-



**Elaine Whitfield with MP Chris Bloore and Easter Blessings volunteer Reg Moore. Picture by Tristan Harris. © Bullivant Media Group Ltd.**

derful opportunity for people to come together and do something as a family which is what Easter is all about."

Elaine Whitfield, the church and mission support coordinator for the Redditch Mission Area, said it was great for Mr Bloore to come down

and support the event.

"It went really well - we had lots of great positive feedback from people who said they loved it.

"Many were already asking what we will be doing next."

She wished everyone a very happy Easter.



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More than 200 plants were found during the raid on Wednesday. s

# Man arrested after raid on cannabis farm

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

**A MAN was arrested on suspicion of producing cannabis after a property in Droitwich town centre was raided on Wednesday morning.**

The Droitwich safer neighbourhood team (SNT) and officers from West Mercia Police's task force unit entered the property on Victoria Square in the town, where they discovered around 200 cannabis plants.

Around 10 officers swooped in and smashed their way into the premises.

A 34-year-old man was found inside and was arrested on suspicion of the production of cannabis. He remained in custody for questioning as the *Standard* went to press.

Safer neighbourhood inspector for Droitwich, Lisa Hornberger, said: "Today's warrant should serve as a clear reminder that we will act on information from the public and take robust action against those involved in drug production in our town."

"Cannabis cultivation is not a victimless crime – it can be linked to wider criminality and poses real risks, including fire hazards and exploitation."

"We encourage anyone with concerns about drug production or supply to report them so we can continue to act and ensure Droitwich remains a safe place."

Anyone who believes there may be criminal activity in their community should report it to police by calling 101 or visiting westmercia.police.uk – the police force's website.

Alternatively, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

## Two more criminal damage teens

FURTHER arrests have been made after criminal damage was caused in Droitwich. Police last week launched an appeal to identify suspects involved in a spate of criminal damage incidents in the early hours of Sunday, March 15.

Cars were damaged on The Dale, Lower Meadow and Padgewell Hill, along with a property on Oakham Place.

A 13-year-old boy was arrested the fol-

lowing day on suspicion of criminal damage and later released on bail.

Two more teens have now been arrested on suspicion of criminal damage. They have been bailed as the investigation continues. A further teenager is due to be voluntarily interviewed.

Anyone with information should email Droitwich safer neighbourhood team at droitwichtown.snt@westmercia.police.uk.

## Police appeal after summer break-in

POLICE have released this picture of a man they want to speak to after £20,000 was stolen from a business in Northfield High Street.

Police have carried out enquiries since a break-in in July and officers have issued this CCTV image as part of the investigation.

It is believed the man pictured may have links to Bromsgrove.

Anyone who recognises him, or who knows where he is, should call West Midlands Police on 101 or visit westmidlands.police.uk to pass on the information via Live Chat.



Police want to speak to this man after the theft of £20,000 from a business in Northfield. s

  
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# A donkey delight

A REDDITCH church was filled with excitement and wonder last week as two reception classes from Webheath Academy stepped into the story of Palm Sunday in a truly memorable way.

The children arrived full of energy and curiosity, ready to discover the events leading up to easter, at Webheath church St Philip's.

Together, the youngsters took part in their own Palm Sunday procession, waving leaves they had made at school and calling out 'hosanna' as they journeyed through the churchyard, echoing the welcome given to Jesus all those years ago.

The highlight of the visit came as a complete surprise.

Waiting to greet them were three donkeys from The Animal Pantry, at Astwood Bank, and the

team from the church said the children were delighted to meet them up close.

Rev Sarah Jayne said: "It was such a joy to welcome the children into church and to share the story of Palm Sunday and easter with them.

"Their enthusiasm, their singing and their sense of wonder made it a really special occasion for all of us."

Staff from Webheath Academy also praised the visit, noting how beautifully the children engaged with the experience and how meaningful it was to bring learning to life in such a hands-on way.

The visit was part of St Philip's ongoing commitment to working with local schools and helping children and families explore faith through creativity, storytelling and shared experiences.



The children with the donkeys. s



Lauren Hawkesworth (second from right) with the other category winners and the judges of this year's Worcestershire Young Poet Laureate competition. s

by Chinaza Eke

## THIS YEAR'S Worcestershire Young Poet Laureate will be Lauren Hawkesworth, who was named after winning the 2026/27 competition.

Lauren, who attends South Bromsgrove High School, fought off competition during the contest, at The Hive in Worcester.

The event was organised by Worcestershire County Council and Severn Arts and is in its 16th year of championing the county's most talented young writers.

This year, poets explored the theme of 'freedom', writing pieces which were creative, insightful and emotionally deep.

The judges chose performances that highlighted both writing skill and emotional performance.

London Ward won the school Year 6, 7 and 8 category and Mercedes Ampomah

took the title in the school Year 9, 10 and 11 section.

Councillor Ian Cresswell, Worcestershire County Council's cabinet member with responsibility for environment and communities, congratulated Lauren and the other finalists for 'putting on a brilliant showcase'.

He said: "It was inspiring to see such creativity, confidence and heart put into every performance, highlighting the incredible talent of Worcestershire's young people."

Jen Loffman, community producer for Severn Arts, said: "We're really proud to see such a wide range of voices and backgrounds getting involved in this year's competition."

"The standard was so high it made choosing a winner tough but that just shows how much talent is out there.

"We're excited to see what Lauren will do during her year in the role."

The competition provides a valuable platform for young poets to express themselves, gain recognition and share their work with the wider community.

Reaching the final alone is a remarkable achievement and the standard of entries this year was exceptionally high.

The 2026 Anthology, featuring poems from finalists, and other entries, will be published soon, celebrating the creativity and voices of Worcestershire's young writers. It will be available to view on the county council and Severn Arts websites.

Lauren will act as an ambassador for creative writing, inspiring other young people to explore poetry. She will also take part in a range of projects throughout the year, will have her work published, and will perform at events.

Visit: [worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/read-and-discover/young-poet-laureate](http://worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/read-and-discover/young-poet-laureate) to read Lauren's winning poem.



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Cofton Park Manor Care Home staff are celebrating a CQC rating of outstanding, for caring, and good overall. s

# Care home staff celebrate rating

by Andres de Miguel

STAFF at Cofton Park Manor Care Home are celebrating after being rated 'outstanding' in the caring category and 'good' overall by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The home, in Cofton Hackett, received a further good rating in the safe, effective, responsible and well-led categories.

After the visit to the home, run by Hamberley Care Homes,

the inspectors wrote: "Staff were exceptional in their approach and communication."

"People were made to feel at the centre of all that happened and made to feel important and respected."

The inspectors cited hosting a rave for a dance music fan, reuniting the former owner of a classic car with the newly restored vehicle and arranging a bagpipe performance for another resident as examples of the home's outstanding care for its residents.

Home manager Kerry Hill said: "Everyone at Cofton Park Manor is

over the moon to receive such an incredibly positive report from the CQC inspectors."

Aderio Rocha, director of operations at provider Hamberley, said: "This achievement reflects the dedication, professionalism and warmth of the entire Cofton team, as well as the positive leadership culture that supports colleagues to deliver high-quality care every day."

"We would like to thank our residents and their families for their trust and our colleagues for the passion and pride they bring to their roles."

## Easter delight from Regency

A DROITWICH clothing firm is bringing chocolate treats to families across the town this Easter bank holiday weekend.

Regency Clothing has donated more than 200 chocolate eggs to Droitwich Foodbank so they can be passed on to those in need.

This is the first time Regency Clothing's staff have donated chocolate eggs to the town's foodbank and they hope the gesture will spread some Easter cheer to hundreds of local families.

Sue Hicks is the head of busi-

ness and operations at Regency Clothing, which supplies uniforms to more than 50 schools and colleges and workwear to 75 businesses across a number of sectors.

She said: "Everyone here at Regency Clothing enjoys doing as much as possible to support local causes so it made total sense to donate the chocolate eggs this year."

"We don't want any local children to go without a chocolate treat and it means a great deal to us to play our part this Easter."



Sue Hicks and Dan Adcock, from Regency Clothing, donating Easter eggs to Droitwich Foodbank. s

## Rotary hosts a quiz night

A QUIZ night will take place next month to raise awareness of Droitwich Rotary Club.

The event, at Droitwich Spa FC, in Briar Mill, and between 7pm and 9pm, on April 11, is more than just a community quiz.

It is designed to boost the profile of the club, which returned in January after a gap of three years following a forced closure due to

lack of members. It is hoped the quiz will blend the popular social experience with a good cause.

Anyone wanting to find out more about the quiz or the club can email Matthew Kenny at matt@droitwichrotary.org for further details.

People can visit [buytickets.at/droitwichrotaryclub/2128223](http://buytickets.at/droitwichrotaryclub/2128223) for tickets, which cost £10.

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# Village crimes

POLICE are investigating a car theft and an attempted burglary in Bromsgrove villages.

The car theft took place on Bromsgrove Road, in Hunnington, between 9.30pm on Monday 23 and 6.15am on Tuesday 24 March.

Thieves went onto the driveway and stole a titanium Lexus NX45, without keys.

The attempted burglary took place at an address on Station Road, Hagley, at some point between 2am and 3am on Thursday, March 26.

The raiders tried to force the back doors of the property and were disturbed by a family pet.

Witnesses, or anyone with information, should email the Hagley and Rubery Police safer neighbourhood team at hr.snt@westmercia.police.uk, or can call West Mercia Police on 101, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

# Burglar patrols

OFFICERS from Redditch Police's response teams have been carrying out patrols in Inkberrow to reassure residents following a number of burglaries in the area.

The force said a number of break-ins had been reported over the past few months and the increased police presence was in response to residents' concerns.

Officers added: "A number of vehicles have been checked during our patrols and we have also engaged with residents to offer reassurance."

Anyone who notices anything suspicious should call 101 to report it. Always call 999 if a crime is in progress.



The Bel Canto Singers will perform its spring concert a week tomorrow (Saturday) and its summer show in June. s

# Concert dates for choir

by Chinaza Eke

**THERE will be music in the air when The Bel Canto Singers performs its next two charity concerts.**

The Redditch-based choir's spring concert takes place at 7.30pm on Saturday, April 11, at Bromsgrove Methodist Centre and will raise funds for the church.

Those who attend will be guaranteed a relaxing evening of wonderful music on a spring evening.

The second performance will be the summer concert, on June 13

at Parkside in Bromsgrove, in aid of Redditch charity Where Next, which provides work experience to people with learning disabilities.

Ollie Neale, a choir master and organist at All Saints Church, in Bromsgrove, has been the band's musical director for more than 12 months.

Wendy Quirk is the band's pianist and often performs solos at the choir's concerts.

The choir prides itself on having a wide and varied repertoire, ensuring there is something for everyone to enjoy.

The Bel Canto Singers is always

looking for new members and highlights the benefits of singing for members' wellbeing.

Singing is shown to release 'happy hormones', strengthen the immune system, increase lung capacity, improve posture and benefit cardiovascular health through deep breathing.

Singing also activates multiple parts of the brain, aiding memory and cognitive function.

The choir welcomes new members, preferably with an ability to read music but that is not essential. The choir ensures rehearsals are full of fun and a warm welcome

awaits anyone wanting to join the ranks.

Tickets for the spring concert, which include refreshments, cost £10 and are available from the choir's website or on the door.

The choir can also be booked for events.

Visit belcantosingers.org.uk, to listen to some of the Bel Canto Singers' performances, browse the gallery, find ticket prices and concert times, buy tickets and read more information about the group.

Alternatively, call 07985 238334 for further details.

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- 10<sup>TH</sup> APRIL: THE RADIOHEAD PROJECT
- 11<sup>TH</sup> APRIL: THE ANNIE LENNOX & EURYTHMICS SHOW
- 12<sup>TH</sup> APRIL: SHANIA TWAIN - BY SHANIA LIVE
- 17<sup>TH</sup> APRIL: ONE NIGHT OF ADELE - NAOMI JOHNSON
- 2<sup>ND</sup> MAY: GIVE ME THE NIGHT (GEORGE BENSON TRIBUTE)
- 3<sup>RD</sup> MAY: THE SABRINA CARPENTER TRIBUTE
- 4<sup>TH</sup> MAY: CASSIDY JOHNSON SINGS CAROLE KING
- 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY: AND FINALLY PHIL COLLINS
- 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY: OASISH
- 14<sup>TH</sup> MAY: ELTON'S SONG - BEYOND THE YELLOW BRICK ROAD
- 15<sup>TH</sup> MAY: THIS IS MERSEYBEAT
- 16<sup>TH</sup> MAY: CLASSIC ROCK REVIVAL
- 17<sup>TH</sup> MAY: CELEBRATING CELINE - A NEW DAY
- 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY: FRANKIE - THE CONCERT (FT THE FALSETTOS)
- 29<sup>TH</sup> MAY: RHINESTONE COWBOY: THE GLEN CABELL STORY
- 30<sup>TH</sup> MAY: BURN DEEP PURPLE TRIBUTE
- 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE: THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE
- 6<sup>TH</sup> JUNE: EVERLY BROTHERS BY CANDLELIGHT
- 19<sup>TH</sup> JUNE: BEEGEES YOU SHOULD BE DANCING
- 26<sup>TH</sup> JUNE: I'M EVERY WHITNEY
- 4<sup>TH</sup> JULY: SOUND & VISION (TRIBUTE TO BOWIE)
- 10<sup>TH</sup> JULY: BLONDISH (THE MUSIC OF BLONDE)
- 11<sup>TH</sup> JULY: G2 DEFINITIVE GENESIS
- 23<sup>RD</sup> JULY: ULTIMATE ELVIS EXPERIENCE
- 24<sup>TH</sup> JULY: DESPERADOS EAGLES
- 6<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST: 50 YEARS OF FENDER
- 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER: LUKE COMBS EXPERIENCE

**EVENT CINEMA:**

- 20<sup>TH</sup> APRIL: NATIONAL THEATRE LIVE: ALL MY SONS
- 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL: ROYAL OPERA LIVE: THE MAGIC FLUTE
- 5<sup>TH</sup> MAY: ROYAL OPERA LIVE: EUGENE ONEGIN
- 28<sup>TH</sup> MAY: NT LIVE: LIVE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD
- 25<sup>TH</sup> JUNE: NT LIVE: LES LIAISONS DANGEROUS

**CHRISTMAS SHOWS:**

- 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER: MICHAEL BUBLE TRIBUTE
- 14<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER - MICHAEL BUBLE TRIBUTE
- 17<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER - OLLY MURS AT CHRISTMAS (TRIBUTE) - ON SALE SOON!
- 21<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER - DES COLEMAN & THE ALL STARS BIG BAND XMAS CELEBRATION

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MPs Bradley Thomas and Nigel Huddleston met with members of Worcestershire Hunt. MP Chris Bloore (RIGHT) is backing the ban. s



# Trail hunting issue splits opinion

REDDITCH MP Chris Bloore has backed the Government's manifesto promise to ban trail hunting after a public consultation was launched asking how to take the ban forward.

Trail hunting sees hounds follow a pre-laid animal-based scent across the countryside, mimicking traditional hunting. It became popular in the UK after the Hunting Act 2004 became law, as an alternative to traditional fox hunting.

Concerns also persist around whether trail hunting is being used by some as a 'smokescreen' to facilitate illegal hunting with dogs.

Mr Bloore attended a Parliamentary drop-in session in Westminster to discuss trail hunting, animal welfare and the impact of hunting activity on rural communities.

The event provided an opportunity for MPs to meet the League's expert team and examine briefing materials on the effectiveness of current hunting laws.

Discussions also focused on concerns that, more than 20 years after the introduction of the Hunting Act, loopholes and enforcement challenges may mean the legislation was not always operating as intended.

Assistant Chief Constable Matt Longman, who leads on hunting for the National Police Chiefs' Council, has previously said he believed trail hunting was providing a smoke-screen.

Mr Bloore said: "I have been open to considering alternatives.

"If a credible and workable means could be found to close the existing loophole while safeguarding genuinely non-lethal trail hunting, I would

give it serious consideration.

"However, no such solution has been put forward.

"It is also important to be candid - there is evidence that the current system is being abused and this is acknowledged even by some within the hunting community.

"I do not believe it is constructive to proceed on the basis that this problem does not exist.

"A ban would provide clarity in the law, strengthen enforcement and better protect animal welfare."

Bromsgrove MP Bradley Thomas and Droitwich and Evesham MP Nigel Huddleston have hit out at the ban with both saying they would be voting against it.

Mr Thomas said: "Our rural way of life is under attack once again from this Labour Government.

"This latest attack comes in the

form of a Government consultation on how to ban trail hunting - a lawful activity that has operated since the Hunting Act 2004, contributing an estimated £100million to the rural economy each year and supporting a wide network of jobs and businesses - from farriers and feed suppliers to local pubs and rural services.

"Last week, Nigel Huddleston MP and I met with members of Worcestershire Hunt and heard firsthand the devastating consequences a ban could have on rural communities, livelihoods and lawful countryside activities."

Mr Huddleston said trail hunting was part of our national tradition and integral to the rural economy.

"There are many misperceptions, but I understand the concerns that are often raised.

"It is imperative the practice is

conducted within the law and, having visited many local hunts in my time as an MP, I am convinced that they are law-abiding.

"The organisers and participants take great pride and responsibility for animals and wildlife.

"Getting rid of these local traditions will have many unintended consequences on the local economy, not to mention what will happen to the hounds. This is just another attack from Labour city dwellers attacking the countryside."

The public consultation runs until June 18.

■ WHAT do you think? Should trail-hunting be banned? Or do you think it is 'an attack on the rural way of life'? Email: editor@redditchstandard.co.uk or: editor@bromsgrove-standard.co.uk with your views.

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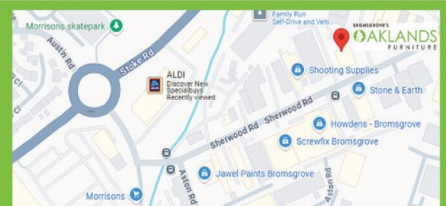
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# I backed social media ban for under-16s

OVER THE last few weeks we have had significant votes on issues ranging from children's safety to justice and the digital world.



## Westminster Diary

Nigel Huddleston MP writes for The Standard



Parliament has also marked national and international events. I voted against the government's proposals to remove, for most people, the right to trial by jury. Jury trials are a cornerstone of our justice system and allow members of the public to participate directly in decisions that can lead to conviction and imprisonment. Removing that safeguard risks undermining confidence in the fairness of our courts.

Hundreds of constituents have contacted me, either directly or through the survey on my website, about a potential social media ban for under-16s.

After careful consideration, I voted in favour of banning social media access for under-16s as part of the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, reflecting concerns raised by many parents, teachers and young people themselves about the potential harm these platforms can cause. The Labour government blocked the ban, opting instead for a consultation, and Reform MPs did not vote at all.

I voted in support of Benedict's Law - stronger protections for children with severe allergies in schools. The proposals would

require schools to have clear allergy policies; keep spare emergency treatments, such as adrenaline auto-injectors; and ensure staff are properly trained to respond to anaphylaxis.

This month in parliament, we marked national and international events.

World book day highlighted the importance of reading for pleasure and developing confidence, imagination and curiosity among young people.

I attended the Commonwealth Day ceremony in parliament, celebrating the partnership between 56 nations across the globe and shared history, cultural ties and trading relationships that continue to connect our countries.

The chancellor, Rachel Reeves, delivered her spring statement, which came against the backdrop of slowing economic growth and rising unemployment. It was an opportunity for the government to change course and support businesses and working people but that opportunity was missed. With the situation in the Middle East escalating, the chancellor should rethink her fuel duty policies.

As shadow secretary of state for



MP Nigel Huddleston, right, this month visited venues across his constituency, including Droitwich Heritage Centre, which was officially reopened after a revamp. s

culture, media and sport, I used departmental questions to raise two important issues.

I asked the government about an incident during the British Academy of Film and Television Arts awards, where involuntary comments made by a person with Tourette's were broadcast by the BBC despite a time delay.

The incident caused understandable concern and should be properly investigated.

I also pressed ministers on the listed places of worship scheme, as government budget cuts meant the fund ran out of money, delaying vital repair work to churches.

I urged the government to restore funding and provide clar-

ity about the replacement scheme. I was pleased to mark English tourism week, celebrating the vital contribution tourism and hospitality make to our economy.

The sector supports millions of jobs across the country, including many here in Worcestershire. I encourage everyone to visit a tourist site.

Because of the Middle East crisis, I know many constituents are concerned about the rising price of heating oil and I am aware in some cases, existing orders are being cancelled only for customers to be forced to reorder at a far higher price.

There are approximately 10,000 off-grid households in my constitu-

ency and I am concerned about the impact this is having on constituents.

I have, therefore, raised my concerns with ministers at the Treasury, the Department for Energy, the UK Competition and Markets Authority and with heating oil providers. I am concerned the limited intervention recently announced by the government will not help many of my constituents.

Any constituents who have difficulties, or issues, can email nigel.huddleston.mp@parliament.uk, to reach my office.

**Nigel Huddleston MP**  
MP for Droitwich, Evesham and the villages

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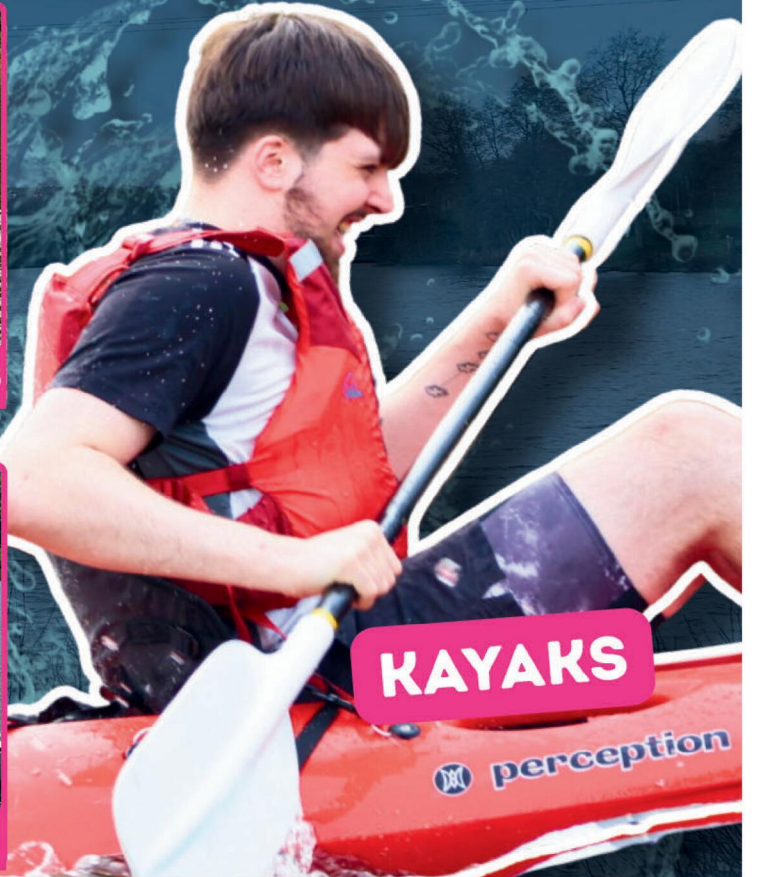
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NEWS in brief

POLICE seized a car after the motorist behind the wheel was found to not have a driving licence or a MoT for the vehicle.

The driver, who was stopped at the junction of Woodrow South in Redditch, near the Alexandra Hospital, also had a seven-year-old child in the car who had no child seat or seat belt.

As well as the car confiscation, the driver has been reported for these offences.

Police were alerted after several people called regarding the manner of the motorists driving and concerns they did not hold a licence.

Following the incident, officers are reminding drivers that any child 12 years old or 135cm tall should normally use a car seat, although there are exceptions.

Visit: [orlo.uk/ZYQSR](http://orlo.uk/ZYQSR) for more.

Failing to use an appropriate child seat can result in serious injury in the event of a crash and motorists will also be prosecuted if police find drivers flouting the law.

Anyone who knows someone driving illegally can report it by calling police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

A VAN which had been abandoned and had no valid road tax was seized by police in Bromsgrove.

Officers from Hagley and Rubery Police Safer Neighbourhood Team

And they stressed the importance of drivers being insured and having road-worthy cars, which are taxed and have a valid MoT.

Failure to do so can result in motorists receiving fines, points on their licence and vehicles being taken off the road.

A West Mercia Police spokesperson said: "We'll continue taking proactive action to keep our roads safe and our neighbourhood protected."

# Promoting a colourful way to support hospice

THE PRIMROSE Hospice and Family Support Centre is urging people to get involved in its annual GO YELLOW week in June to raise funds and awareness of the charity.

The hospice is encouraging local businesses, schools, clubs and community groups to host their own yellow-themed fundraising between June 8 and 22 to support the cause.

The Primrose offers its services free to those living with life-limiting illnesses and their families and, to do that, needs to raise £1.95million each year.

People are being urged to hold their own Yellow Week event or fundraiser with their family, friends, workplace, school or club.

Keen bakers could host a yellow-themed bake sale, school staff and pupils could plan a bright fancy dress day, bosses and employees may want to schedule a 'dress-down-in-yellow' day at work or people could dunk each other into a bath of yellow custard.

Jack Taft, Primrose Hospice's fundraiser, said: "Go Yellow is a local community and business fundraising drive across two weeks in sunny June.

"It's where we encourage creative ideas and endeavours to come together, bringing a diverse array of community hosted fundraising activities and events.

"It is all geared towards raising



vital funds for Primrose Hospice and the patients and families in need of our support.

"Get involved yourself, whether its hosting or supporting an event and help us make 2026's GO YELLOW better than ever."

The charity wants to support

people, groups, schools and businesses with any fundraising events they are planning so organisers are urged to let the Primrose know.

Visit: [primrosehospice.org/events/yellow-week/](http://primrosehospice.org/events/yellow-week/) or call 01527 889796 for more or to sign up for the GO YELLOW campaign.

Tutnall Hall Care Home hosted a tea party as part of last year's Go Yellow campaign for the Primrose Hospice. s



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# Hundreds turn out to pick up on key advice

A PENSIONERS' Fair held by Bromsgrove MP Bradley Thomas has been hailed a great success after more than 200 older people turned out for the event.

The free event, which was sponsored by Excool, Right at Home and The Gables Care Home, took place last Thursday at the Ryland Centre in Bromsgrove for the first time.

The fair was 'bigger and better than ever before' and saw more than 40 exhibitors showcasing free information and advice and there was a pop-up cafe.

Mr Thomas said: "I got into politics to help people, and so I'm proud my Pensioners' Fair helped more than 200 people in just one day, especially at a time when the cost of living continues to bite."

He thanked everyone who made the event the success it was, especially the sponsors for making it possible and the

exhibitors who gave up their time to be there.

"I look forward to hosting the Pensioners' Fair next year and helping even more people."

Duncan Williams, chief executive officer of Excool, said the company was proud to have once again sponsored the fair.

He added Excool had a long history of supporting the local community and he was delighted there was such a bumper turn-out.

Paul Turvey, from The Gables Care Home, said: "It was a real pleasure to attend and be one of the sponsors for this year's fair."

"Events like this are so important in bringing the community together and providing valuable information and support for older people and their families."

"It was wonderful to see so many local organisations in one place, all sharing the same goal of supporting our community."



ABOVE: Margaret Sherrey pays a visit to the Pensioners' Fair and meets Right at Home's trainer David Gleave and care co-ordinator Hollie Birkenhead, MP Bradley Thomas and The Gables' home admissions advisors Paul Turvey and Emily Hocking. Picture by Marcus Mingins 1326013MMR



RIGHT: Representatives from the Barnt Green Macular Society Group on their stall. s

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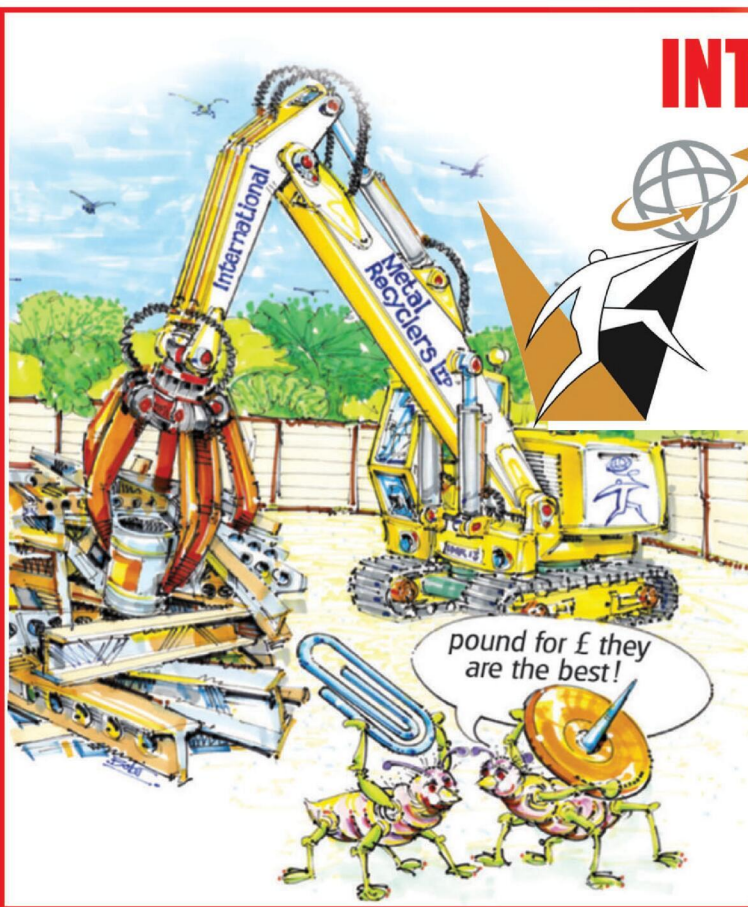
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# Welcome to church this Easter

**Maundy Thursday 2nd April † Good Friday 3rd April**

**Holy Saturday 4th April † Easter Sunday 5th April**

**St Leonards CofE, Church Hill, Frankley, B32 4BL  
07748 693408**

Good Friday, 2pm - Prayers at the Cross  
Easter Sunday, 11:15am - Easter Communion

**St Chad's CofE, New Road, Rubery, B45 9JA  
0121 2383168**

Maundy Thursday, 7.30pm - Informal Communion service  
Good Friday, 2pm - Quiet, reflective service  
Holy Saturday, 9pm - 'Lighting the Fire'  
Easter Sunday, 10am - Family-friendly Holy Communion

**Holy Trinity CofE, Rose Hill, Lickey, B45 8RR with  
St Catherine's CofE, St Catherine's Rd, Blackwell  
B60 1BN, 0121 445 1425**

Good Friday, 2pm - Service of reflection at St Catherine's  
Easter Sunday, 10am - Easter Communion at St Catherine's  
Easter Sunday, 4pm - Easter Praise at Holy Trinity Lickey

**Our Lady's RC, Leach Green Lane, Rubery, B45 9BQ  
0121 453 3452**

Maundy Thursday, 9pm - Mass of the Lord's Supper  
Good Friday, 7pm - Stations of the Cross  
Holy Saturday, 11am - Blessing of Food for Polish Community  
Holy Saturday, 9pm - Easter Vigil  
Easter Sunday, 11.15am - Mass

**Beacon Church Centre URC, Whetty Lane, Rubery,  
B45 9DL, 07526 250645**

Maundy Thursday, 5pm - Communion Service  
Good Friday, 3pm - Reflective Service  
Easter Sunday, 11am - Worship with Holy Communion

**Longbridge Methodist Church, Bristol Rd South,  
B45 9TY, 0121 257 2584**

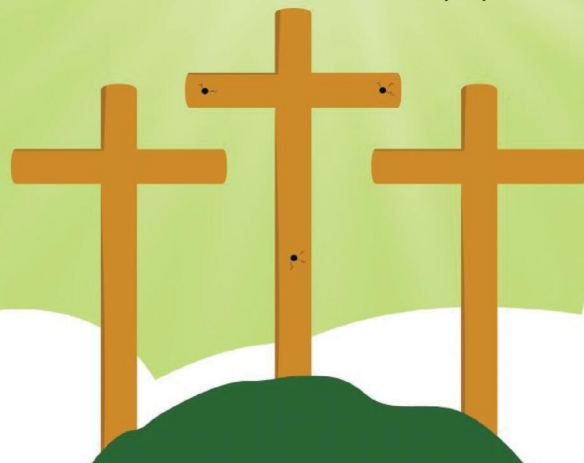
Good Friday, 6pm - Good Friday service  
Easter Sunday, 11am - Easter morning fun for everyone -  
worship, refreshments, activities and the Easter bunny!

**St Stephen's CofE, Edgewood Road, Rednal, B45 8SG  
0121 243 4634**

Maundy Thursday, 7.30pm - Maundy Thursday Communion  
Good Friday, 2pm - An hour at the cross  
Holy Saturday, 7.30pm - Vigil Service  
Easter Sunday, 10am - Holy Communion for Easter Day

**St Andrew's CofE, Sandhills Road, Barnt Green,  
B45 8NR with St Michael's CofE, Cofton Church Lane,  
Cofton Hackett, B45 8PT, 0121 447 7097**

Good Friday, 9.30am - Good Friday Reflection at St Andrew's  
Easter Sunday, 9.30am - Easter Day Communion at St Andrew's  
Easter Sunday, 6pm - Easter Day Communion at St Michael's



**Good Friday  
Walk of Witness**  
Gather at Our Lady's  
on Leach Green Lane  
(B45 9BQ) from 10am  
for a 10.30am start.  
The walk will end at  
St Chad's with hot  
cross buns!

**Easter Sunday  
Sunrise Service**  
Join us on Beacon Hill  
(use the Monument  
Lane Car Park)  
at 6.15am to welcome  
the new light of this  
new day!

# He is Risen!

# MP learns about child-loss charity

REDDITCH MP Chris Bloore recently met representatives from 2Wish to discuss the charity's vital work supporting families affected by the sudden or unexpected death of a child or young person.

The meeting took place at Mr Bloore's constituency office, where he welcomed Alison Parry, immediate support coordinator at the charity, to learn more about the support available to families and professionals in Worcestershire and West Mercia.

The 2Wish organisation is a bereavement charity which provides support to anyone affected by the sudden or unexpected death of someone aged 25 or under.

### Founding

Founded in South Wales in 2012 by Rhian Mannings, in memory of her sons, the charity has expanded across England and now supports families in areas including Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Shropshire.

The organisation works closely with professionals in healthcare, emergency services and education, to ensure families receive compassionate and timely support.

Following a referral, families are typically contacted within 48 hours and can access a range of services including counselling, play therapy, complementary therapies and practical support, such as memory boxes and bereavement rooms in hospitals.

The MP said: "Losing a child or sibling is every family's worst nightmare.

"It was incredibly valuable to meet with Alison and learn more about the work 2Wish is doing to support families during some of the most difficult moments of their lives.

"From memory boxes at hospitals to counselling and play therapy in the months and years that follow, their work provides a safe and compassionate space for people who are grieving."



# Help is at hand for struggling families

Chris Bloore MP and Anita Hughes-Arthur, from Animal Foodbank UK, with Tesco employees at the hub. s

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

### A NEW centre has opened in Redditch to help those in the community facing cost-of-living pressure.

The 'hub', based in Woodrow, is home to Animal FoodBank UK and Inspire Baby Bank Redditch and Bromsgrove.

Animal FoodBank provides pet food and supplies to families who may be struggling financially, helping to ensure pets can remain with their owners during difficult times.

Inspire Baby Bank supports parents with essential items such as nappies, clothing

and other equipment for babies and young children.

Redditch MP Chris Bloore visited the hub and met Anita Hughes-Arthur, one of the organisers of Animal FoodBank UK, and Karen, who runs Inspire Baby Bank.

Mr Bloore heard about increasing demand for cost-of-living support and the importance of community donations in keeping such schemes running.

The MP praised residents and businesses – including Tesco in Redditch – for their generosity.

Mr Bloore said: "It was fantastic to see the Woodrow Hub in action, supporting both parents and pet owners. Anita, Karen and their teams are doing incredible work to

make sure no family has to choose between putting food on the table and looking after their children – or their animals.

"These grassroots initiatives show the very best of our community: neighbours stepping up to support one another.

"I'm hugely grateful to the volunteers who give their time, and to local residents and businesses like Tesco, for backing them with donations.

"These projects simply couldn't run without that support."

The MP encouraged residents who may benefit from the services – or who would like to donate or volunteer – to check the organisations' social media pages for details of upcoming drop-in sessions.

# Easter Egg Hunt

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# On the menu

FOOD and drink producers across Worcestershire are being invited to submit their entries for this year's Great British Food Awards.

Recognised as some of the nation's most prestigious accolades, the Awards celebrate not only our regional traditions and ingredients, but our farmers, makers, innovators, and diverse melting pot of cultures.

The Awards are an opportunity for food and drink brands to have their products tasted and judged by some of the most experienced palates in Britain including Raymond Blanc OBE, Adam Handling, Jack Stein and Merlin Griffiths.

Jenny O'Neill, head of the Awards team, said: "Each year, the Great British Food Awards celebrate the remarkable talent, craftsmanship and innovation found across the UK's food and drink sector."

"We're proud to provide producers of all sizes with a platform to showcase their products to our expert judging panel. We can't wait to discover this year's stand-out products."

Entries close on May 22, with shortlisting and judging take place in July and August.

Visit [greatbritishfoodawards.com](http://greatbritishfoodawards.com) for more information.

# Live feed offers a chance to ride with the police

PEOPLE can get an unprecedented real-time insight into frontline policing, thanks to a new virtual ride-along experience launched today (Friday) by West Mercia.

Viewers can join officers for their shift without leaving the room by watching a controlled live feed from body-worn video as officers respond to incidents across Worcestershire, Herefordshire and Shropshire.

This latest virtual ride-along is in addition to the in-person Ride-Along Scheme, launched in October. On that one, there are restrictions on some people attending.

Whilst the virtual version does remove those barriers, the force is making sure sensitive or risky situations can be paused where appropriate.

Ch Insp Charles Parker said: "This virtual ride-along marks an important step in opening up policing and giving our communities a clearer understanding of the realities our officers face every day."

"By allowing people to see a shift unfold in real time, we can build greater transparency, strengthen trust, and show the professionalism and dedication that underpins frontline policing."

He added the virtual ride-along gave the public a much broader view of the fast-paced and often unpredictable nature of the job.

"It provides a safe, controlled way for people to experience the pressures, decision-making and communi-



ty interactions that shape every shift."

And he welcomed the innovation, adding West Mercia Police was proud to be one of the first forces to offer this level of access to the public, reflecting a commitment to openness, modernisation and working closely with the communities served.

Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion welcomed an 'innovative way of giving the public a genuine insight into the everyday work of police officers'.

"The principle that 'the police are the public, and the public are the police' still holds true today, and this virtual ride along brings that relationship even closer."

"I hear daily about the professionalism and dedication of West Mercia Police officers, and this project offers a real snapshot of that commitment in action."

Those interested in going on a shift can visit: [westmercia.police.uk/search?q=ride+along](http://westmercia.police.uk/search?q=ride+along) to register and choose whether to apply for an in-person ride-along or opt for the virtual one.

For the virtual option, the force will contact applicants and arrange a time for them to go to their local police station where they can watch the shift unfold.

PC Ryan Davies and PCSO Jordan Newborough will be among those on shift on the virtual ride-alongs.

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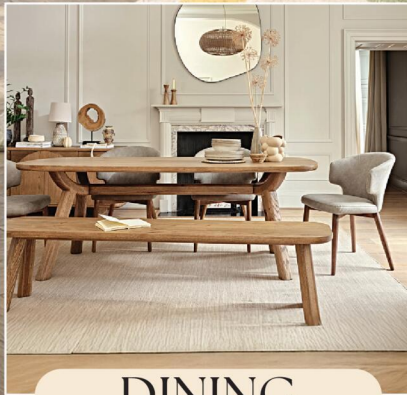
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# £800k boost to fight back in battle on rural crime

THE POLICE and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for West Mercia has welcomed an £800,000 funding boost to tackle rural crime across the country.

John Campion has spoken about the importance of tackling rural crime following the investment announcement from the Policing Minister Sarah Jones.

It was made at the National Rural Crime Network conference, which was attended by Deputy PCC Marc Bayliss, who sits on the network's national project delivery group for serious organised rural crime. The cash will come from the National Wildlife Crime Unit and the National Rural Crime Unit.

This will help increase co-ordinated efforts across law enforcement, politicians, the farming community and insurers to stop rural crime.

The West Mercia Policing area makes it vulnerable to rural crime as - according to data from DEFRA - it is home to 8,451 farms - more than double the number in Lincolnshire, which has the second highest total of 3,431.

Mr Campion said: "Rural crime is a key commitment within my Safer

Communities Plan, so I welcome this additional funding to support local efforts to prevent crime and bring offenders to justice but it's just one part of the solution.

"Rural crime is complex, with our rural communities facing a number of crimes that can often be complex.

"That's why I will continue to amplify their concerns and ensure everything possible is being done to provide them with the policing service they expect and deserve."

To ensure people living in often isolated rural communities feel safe, the PCC has already taken substantial action.

This has included funding five Rural and Business Crime Officers across West Mercia and investing £190,232-a-year into the force's 'We Don't Buy Crime' scheme. This is a four strand programme aimed at preventing acquisitive crime in towns and villages and includes the roll-out of SmartWater.

West Mercia Police call handlers have also received dedicated rural crime training, through a partnership with the NFU, following concerns from farmers about how their reports were being understood and managed.



Early Careers Worcestershire is working with schools and employers to move beyond the traditional one-week placement model. s

BUSINESSES in Worcestershire are being urged to help shape a more modern and flexible approach to work experience for young people.

Early Careers Worcestershire, part of Worcestershire County Council's Skills and Employability service, is working with schools and employers to move beyond the traditional one-week placement model.

The new approach includes workplace visits, employer-led projects, industry encounters and shorter placements delivered throughout a student's secondary school journey. Working alongside the Careers and Enterprise Company and Worcestershire Growth Hub, the programme aims to make work experience more inclusive, relevant and aligned to local skills needs.

A new campaign, "If not you...then who?", is encouraging employers to step forward and play a leading role in shaping tomorrow's workforce.

A special business forum will take place on Wednesday, 13 May at Visit Worcestershire New Road, home of Worcestershire County Cricket Club, to introduce the new model and give employers the opportunity to get involved.

Councillor Alan Amos, cabinet member with responsibility for business and skills at Worcestershire County Council, said: "We cannot sit back and hope someone else prepares the next generation. Worcestershire businesses have a responsibility - and a real opportunity - to get involved.

"This is about opening doors, raising aspirations and showing young people exactly what is possible right here in Worcestershire.

"Those who step forward will help shape the workforce of the future. Those who don't risk being left behind."

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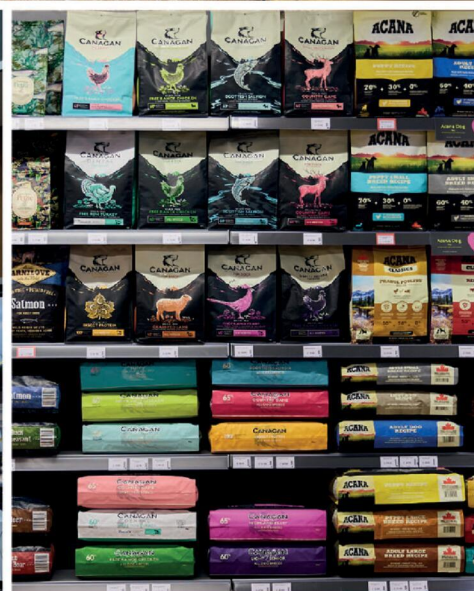
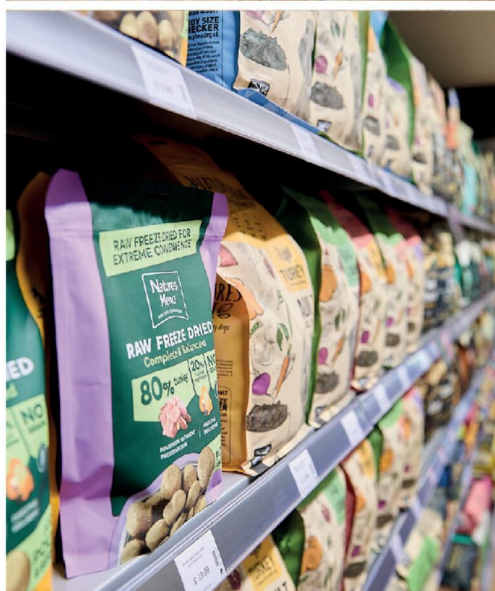
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# HOP INTO SPRING: Easter Home & Garden Ideas to Brighten the Bank Holiday Weekend

**Spring has officially sprung, and with Easter upon us, there's no better time to freshen up your home and garden with a seasonal touch.**

Whether you're hosting family for an Easter Sunday roast, planning a garden egg hunt for the little ones, or simply want to embrace the joys of spring, we've gathered the best tips to help you celebrate Easter in style – without breaking the bank.

### **Bring the Outdoors In**

Easter and spring go hand in hand with fresh blooms and greenery. Now is the perfect time to liven up your interiors with floral arrangements – think tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, and narcissus. A

simple jug of yellow daffodils on the kitchen table is instantly uplifting and costs less than a fancy takeaway coffee. If you're after something longer-lasting, potted primroses or violas make charming indoor centrepieces and can be planted outside later.

*Top Tip: Add a sprig of rosemary or thyme to your arrangements for a subtle scent and an Easter twist.*

### **A Touch of Pastel**

Easter décor doesn't need to be fussy. Soft pastels like duck egg blue, blush pink and mint green can freshen up your space. Try swapping out cushion covers or adding a pastel runner to your dining table. Even a few painted eggs in a basket can add an easy seasonal touch.

Crafty types can get the whole family involved with DIY decorations. Blow out

hen eggs, paint them in soft tones, and hang them from willow branches for a stunning Easter tree.

### **Set the Perfect Table**

Planning your Easter meal: Whether it's roast lamb with all the trimmings or a veggie tart with spring greens, a beautifully set table makes everything feel that little bit more special.

Layer white crockery with a pastel-coloured tablecloth or runner. Napkins tied with raffia and a sprig of lavender or rosemary are an effortless but classy touch. Scatter chocolate mini eggs or foil-wrapped treats across the table for a fun, edible flourish.

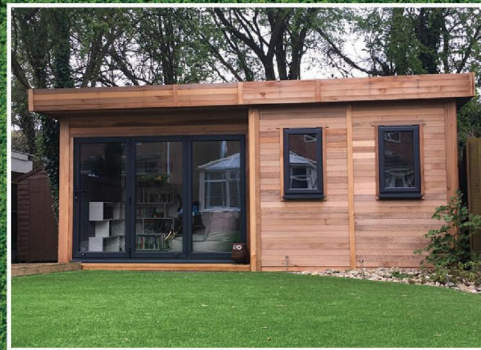
For an extra bit of fun, write guests' names on hollowed eggs and use them as place settings.



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# Easter HOME & GARDEN

## Garden Glory: Ready for Guests (or the Easter Bunny!)

After months of rain and frost, your garden might be in need of a little TLC. Start by clearing leaves and debris from beds and borders. A quick trim of the lawn and a sweep of the patio can make a huge difference. Now's the time to plant hardy spring flowers like pansies, primulas, and marigolds – ideal for instant colour. You can also sow wildflower

seeds in sunny spots to attract bees and butterflies later in the season. If you're hosting an Easter egg hunt, create zones in the garden using bunting or plant pots. Hide eggs in flowerbeds, behind trees, and among the shrubs for a fun challenge. For a magical touch, hang ribbon-tied eggs from branches to guide younger children on the hunt.

*Top Tip: If the weather isn't playing ball, move the egg hunt indoors! Use post-it clues and hide treats around the house for a rainy-day version.*

## Spring Clean with Purpose

Easter is a natural time to tackle a bit of spring cleaning. Open windows wide to air out rooms, and don't forget neglected spots like skirting boards, behind furniture, and window sills. Natural cleaning solutions using vinegar, lemon and bicarbonate of soda work wonders – and leave a fresh scent behind. Decluttering is key: clear out winter bits, pack away heavy throws and make space for lighter, brighter spring vibes. If you're switching to summer duvets, pop a lavender sachet into your linen cupboard to keep everything smelling fresh.

## Sustainable and Stylish

Easter doesn't have to mean piles of plastic and waste. Choose foil-wrapped or cardboard-packaged eggs and avoid single-use decorations. Craft your own bunting from fabric scraps, or decorate reusable jars with ribbon to use for treats or table settings. Plantable seed cards or eco-friendly wooden



decorations make thoughtful, low-waste gifts, and can be reused year after year.

## In Bloom and In Style

Easter is a season of renewal – not just in nature, but in our homes too. Whether you're adding a few daffodils to a windowsill or

throwing a full-blown garden party, a little creativity goes a long way. Celebrate this long weekend with warmth, colour, and a touch of spring magic and don't forget to save a chocolate egg for yourself.

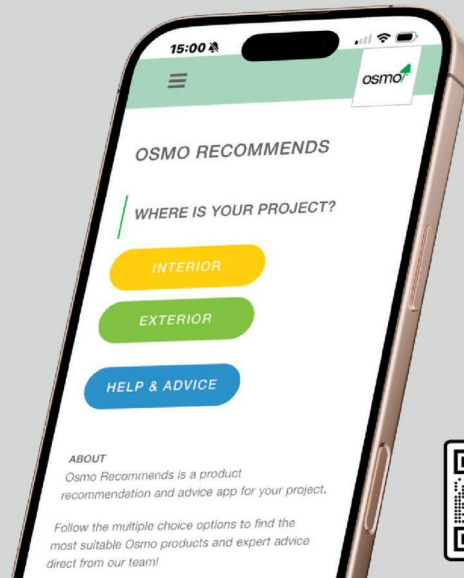
**Happy Easter!**

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**ABOUT**  
Osmo Recommends is a product recommendation and advice app for your project. Follow the multiple choice options to find the most suitable Osmo products and expert advice direct from our team!



# Get Your Garden Spring-Ready Over the Bank Holiday Weekend

Easter weekend is the perfect time to dust off the trowel, pull on your gloves, and get stuck into the garden. With longer days and milder weather (fingers crossed!), now is the time to set the stage for a colourful, blooming summer.

Whether you've got a sprawling lawn or a few pots on the patio, here are 10 expert-approved Easter gardening tips to help you make the most of the spring energy:

### 1. Plant Some Instant Colour

Bring borders and containers to life with hardy spring favourites like pansies, primroses, violas, and marigolds. These tough little blooms add an instant pop of colour and can cope with unpredictable April weather. *Top Tip: Don't forget to deadhead flowers regularly to keep them blooming for longer.*

### 2. Start Your Veg Patch

Easter is a brilliant time to sow early crops. Try lettuce, spinach, radishes, carrots, and peas – all can go straight into the ground (or deep pots). For smaller spaces, use growbags or raised beds.

*No garden? No problem. Salad leaves grow happily on windowsills or balconies!*

## TOP GARDENING TIPS FOR EASTER

### 3. Pot Up Strawberries

Strawberry plants thrive in pots and hanging baskets – and planting them now means you'll have juicy fruits by summer. Look for varieties like Cambridge Favourite or Hapil for UK conditions.

### 4. Prune and Tidy

Cut back dead stems on perennials and tidy up shrubs, especially winter-flowering ones. It's also time to prune lavender, hydrangeas, and roses – but always check specific care advice by plant type.

*Remember: Avoid pruning spring-flowering shrubs until after they've bloomed.*

### 5. Feed Your Plants

Plants are waking up hungry after winter. Use a general-purpose fertiliser on beds and borders, and liquid feed for containers. Roses, fruit trees, and clematis all benefit from a boost right now.

### 6. Sow Wildflowers for Pollinators

Support bees and butterflies by scattering wildflower seeds in sunny spots. Choose UK native mixes and rake lightly into the soil.

They'll bring colour and wildlife to your garden from early summer onwards.

*Look out for mixes labelled "Bee Friendly" or "Pollinator Mix".*

### 7. Watch Out for Pests

Slugs and snails love tender young shoots. Use organic deterrents like copper tape, eggshells, or wool pellets around vulnerable plants – or try beer traps for a humane solution.

### 8. Replant Bulbs After Display

If you've had bulbs like tulips or daffodils indoors or in pots, you can replant them in the garden once the flowers fade. Let the leaves die back naturally – this feeds next year's bloom.

### 9. Sort Your Tools and Shed

Easter's a great time to give your tools some TLC. Sharpen blades, oil hinges, and clear out the shed or greenhouse. A tidy gardening space makes a huge difference as the season ramps up.

### 10. Plan Your Summer Showstoppers

It's not too early to sow summer stunners like cosmos, zinnias, sweet peas, and nasturtiums.

Start them indoors or in a cold frame, then harden off in May before planting out.

*Tip from Jo Fielding, local garden designer: "Think ahead. Easter is the time to prepare – the real show starts in June!"*

### Final Thought:

Easter gardening isn't just about jobs – it's about joy. Take a moment to sit outside, notice the buds on trees, and listen to the birds. Nature's putting on a show – and you've got front-row seats.





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# Easter at BOTANY BAY

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Easter is a great time to get your wellies on and get out in the garden. Take advantage of the long weekend and get your garden ready for the season ahead.

With spring buds appearing and beautiful blossom in full flower, this time of year inspires us all to get growing.

Gardening lifts the spirit like nothing else. The mix of fresh air, plenty of physical exercise and the connection with nature improves mood and lowers stress levels.

Growing your own plants, flowers and produce has a nurturing effect, boosting self-esteem and creating a sense of purpose.

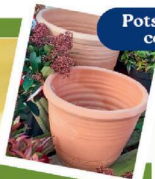
You don't need a large garden to reap the benefits of gardening. Even a small patio or a balcony can give the same feeling of pride and satisfaction.



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Pots, troughs & containers

## Gardening Jobs for Easter



There's lots you can do in the garden over Easter, whether you have a grand garden or a small space. So get outside, get to work and have fun!

Tidy up your borders and flower beds. Remove old stems, leaves and other debris. It's a good idea to apply a layer of mulch to improve the soil and suppress weeds ready for planting. Use farmyard manure, fine bark or any other organic matter.

It's time for the first cut of your lawn. Dig out large weeds then reseed any patchy areas. The warmer spring days will encourage germination.

Start growing your veg and salad. You can plant your beans, brassicas and lettuce directly outside. Protect your tomatoes, peppers and cucumbers by keeping them in the greenhouse or conservatory.



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# Heading to the garden centre? Here's a handy phrase book...

**WANDERING** into a garden centre can feel like arriving in a foreign country without a phrase book.

As part of its Make It Bloom campaign, British Garden Centres wants to change that by sharing knowledge and language of the garden centre floor.

**Annual:** A plant that completes its entire life cycle within a single year. Annuals grow, flower, set seed, and then finish.

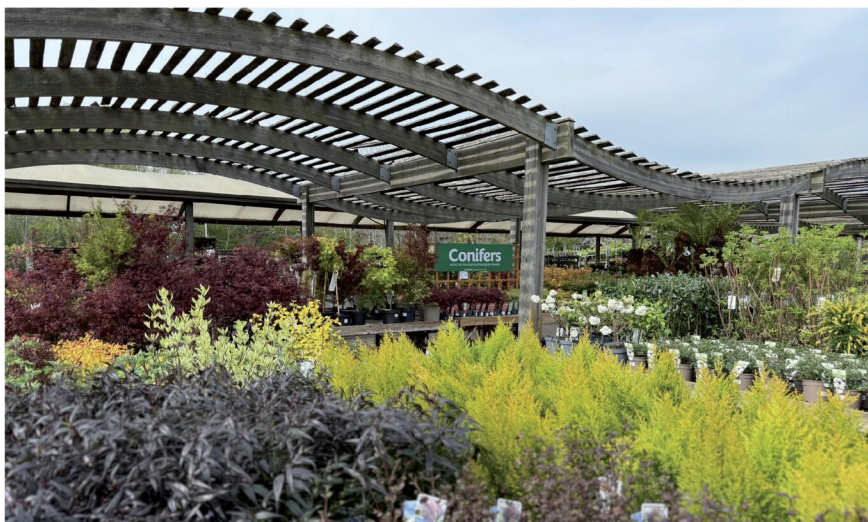
**Biennial:** This type of plant takes two years to complete its life cycle, growing leaves in year one and flowering in year two.

**Deciduous:** Put simply, this is a tree or shrub that sheds its leaves at the end of the growing season and grows them back the following year.

**Ericaceous:** A plant that thrives in acidic soil, which has a low pH. Blueberries, Camellias, Azaleas and Rhododendrons are all ericaceous plants.

**Half Hardy:** These plants can tolerate low temperatures, but they need protecting when hard frosts arrive.

**Hardy:** The gardener's dream: plants that can handle even the coldest British winters without any extra help from you.



**Herbaceous:** A plant that dies back down to the ground over winter but pushes up fresh new growth each spring.

**Perennial:** Comes back year after year, season after season. Unlike annuals, you plant a perennial once and enjoy it for many years.

**Tender:** Plants that will not survive a frost outdoors, like dahlias, begonias and bananas. Tender plants need to come indoors or into a frost-free greenhouse before the first cold snap.

**Shrub:** A woody plant that is smaller

than a tree and typically branches from the base rather than from a single trunk. Hardy shrubs need little attention once established, making them one of the best investments you can make in your garden.

**Understanding plant labels**

Every plant in a British Garden Centres store carries a label that tells you at a glance what that plant needs to thrive. Here is a straightforward guide to the ones you'll see most often.

**Full Shade:** This plant can survive on minimal direct sunlight, making it ideal for shady corner spots, and east or north facing gardens where the sun rarely reaches.

**Partial Sun / Shade:** Thrives in early morning or late afternoon sun but needs shelter from harsh midday rays.

**Full Sun:** Perfectly at home in dry, hot conditions.

**Bee symbol:** Plants carrying this symbol will attract bees and butterflies into your garden.

**Grown by Us:** When you see the British Garden Centres 'Grown by Us' badge, those plants were nurtured from the very start in our own nursery.

Julian Palphramand, Head of Plants at British Garden Centres, said: "We want every person who visits one of our centres to leave feeling more inspired and more confident than when they arrived, and that starts with making our world easy to understand."

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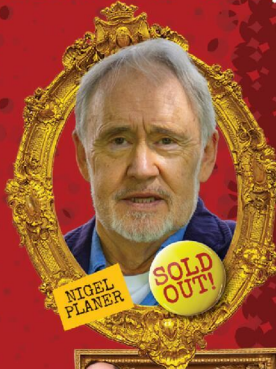
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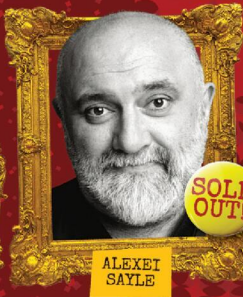
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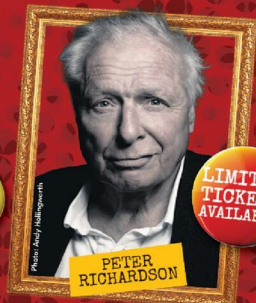
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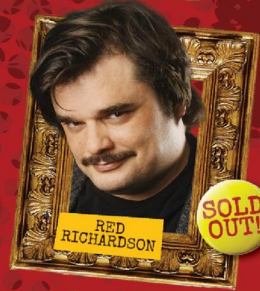
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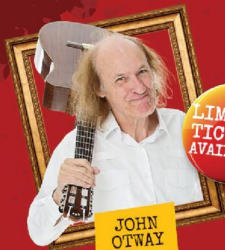
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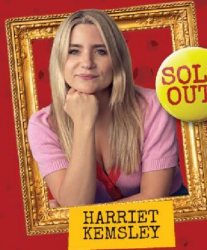
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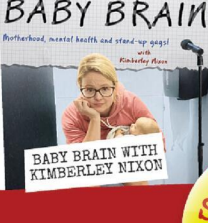
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# SUDOKU

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

## EASY

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

## HARD

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

# PATHFINDER

Beginning with the top highlighted letter, follow a continuous path of words associated with the given subject. The trail goes through each letter once, twisting up, down and sideways, but never diagonally.

## Composers

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

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

- Scatter here and there (11)
- Serpent (3)
- Instruction (9)
- Type of duck (5)
- Apart (7)
- Beginning (6)
- Highest point (6)
- Relate (7)
- A dead language (5)
- Vigorous (9)
- Untruth (3)
- Anyway (2,3,6)

## DOWN

- Pinch (3)
- Senior (5)
- Shriek (6)
- Shut out (7)
- Blown spray (9)
- Seek advice (4,7)
- Rebuked (11)
- Cleansing agent (9)
- Gospel (7)
- Stinging plant (6)
- Sordid gain (5)
- Allow (3)

Scribble pad

# LADDER

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

- Scorch
- Chair
- Achievement
- Gathering
- Clenched hand



# 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.

- 752435 gives a flower;
- 1368 gives a tree;
- 9887 gives a plant.

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

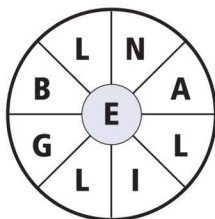
# CODEWORD

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.

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

# 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.

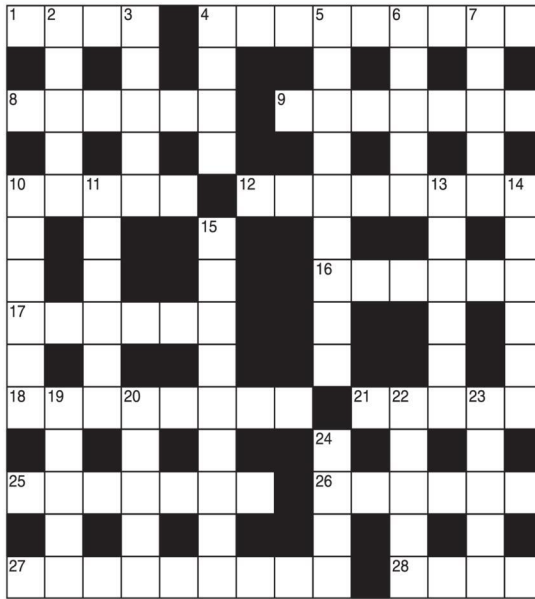


How you rate  
 15 words: average    25 words: very good  
 20 words: good      30 or more: excellent.

# GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

## ACROSS

- Large triangular plucked, stringed instrument (4)
- The air force of Nazi Germany (9)
- Figured material, now usually of linen (6)
- Small, brownish spot on the skin, caused by sunlight (7)
- Surname of the composer whose works include Rigoletto and La Traviata (5)
- See 27 Across
- Region of central Italy in the Apennines, capital Perugia (6)
- Delicately-flavoured, ovate fruit with a brownish, rough outer skin, native to China (6)
- Spanish composer famous for The Three-Cornered Hat, etc. (6,2,5)
- Basic unit of length in the metric system (5)
- State in the southeastern US, capital Montgomery (7)
- Artist, traveller and writer who popularized the limerick (6,4)
- Novel by Francis Brett Young, published in 1928 (2,7,8)
- River of East Africa (4)



## DOWN

- Banded or cloudy silica, used to make ornaments and objects of art (5)
- Woolen cloth, with a tartan or chequered pattern, of Scottish Highlanders (5)
- Evangelist closely associated with St. Paul (4)
- Any of the Theraphosidae family of large, often hairy, spiders (9)
- Racecourse where the Gold Cup, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Stakes, etc., are run (5)
- See 18 Across
- Finer kind of parchment (6)
- Climbing palm from which a kind of cane is made (6)
- Large insect of the wasp family, inflicting a serious sting (6)

- A delicate difference in meaning, opinion, colour, etc. (6)
- Diving bird of the auk family (9)
- A mixture of metals (5)
- Brown earth used as pigment (5)
- Muir, Orkney-born poet famous for 'The Horses', etc. (5)
- Pertaining to the country, as distinguished from the town (5)
- See 26 Across

# SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Harp; 4 Luftwaffe; 8 Damask; 9 Freckle; 10 Verdi; 12 Jonathan; 16 Umbrta; 17 Litchi; 18 Manuel de; 21 Metre; 25 Alabama; 26 Edward; 27 My Brother; 28 Nile. DOWN: 2 Agate; 3 Plaid; 4 Luke; 5 Taramula; 6 Ascot; 7 Falla; 10 Vellum; 11 Rattan; 13 Home; 14 Nuanetsi; 15 Guillemot; 19 Alloy; 20 Umber; 22 Edwin; 23 Rural; 24 Lear.

## General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Intersperse; 9 Asp; 10 Directive; 11 Elder; 13 Asunder; 14 Outset; 16 Zenith; 18 Narrate; 19 Latin; 20 Energetic; 21 Lie; 22 At all events; Down: 2 Nip; 3 Elder; 4 Cream; 5 Exclude; 6 Spindrift; 7 Take counsel; 8 Reprehended; 12 Detergent; 15 Evangelist; 17 Mettle; 19 Lucree; 21 Let.

## Crossword

LABELLING: Richard Strauss, Jean Sibelius, Edward Grieg, William Byrd, Johann Sebastian Bach, Antonio Vivaldi, Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, Henry Purcell, Giacomo Puccini, Joseph Haydn, Richard Wagner, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Frédéric Chopin, Giuseppe Verdi. PHILANDER: Maurice Ravel, Edward Elgar.

## Niner

Richard Strauss, Jean Sibelius, Edward Grieg, William Byrd, Johann Sebastian Bach, Antonio Vivaldi, Hector Berlioz, Franz Liszt, Henry Purcell, Giacomo Puccini, Joseph Haydn, Richard Wagner, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Frédéric Chopin, Giuseppe Verdi.

## Wordwheel Pathfinder

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

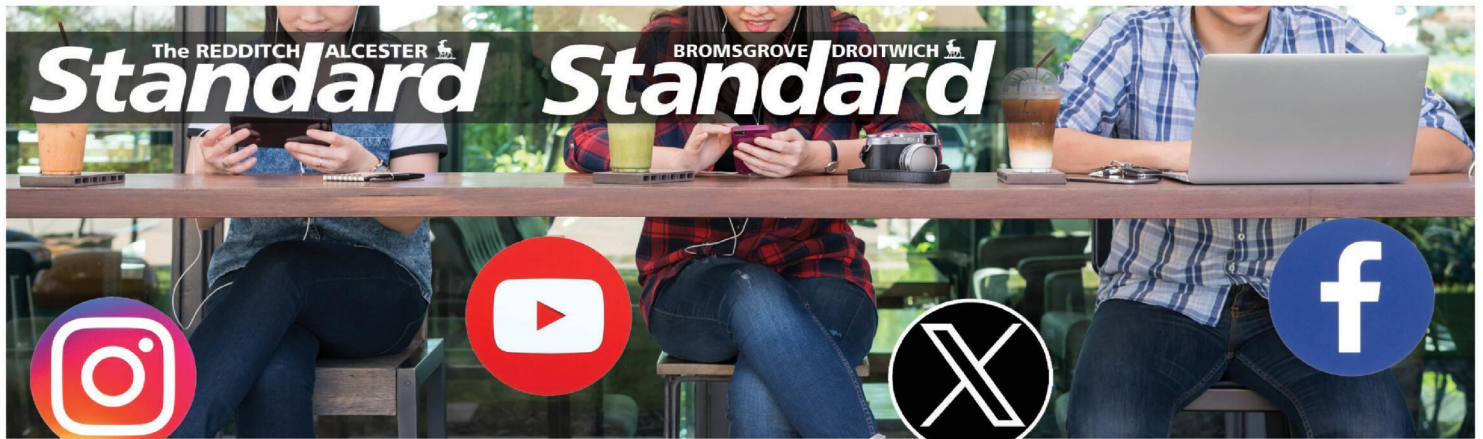
## Codeword

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

Hard

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

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**A**dmit you are a sinner and repent your sins with a sincere heart.

**B**elieve with all your heart that Jesus is the son of our living God.

**C**all on Jesus to come into your heart and be your lord and saviour.

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Jesus said "No one comes to The Father except through me"

John 14 vs 6

"No one is righteous, not one"  
Romans 3 vs 11

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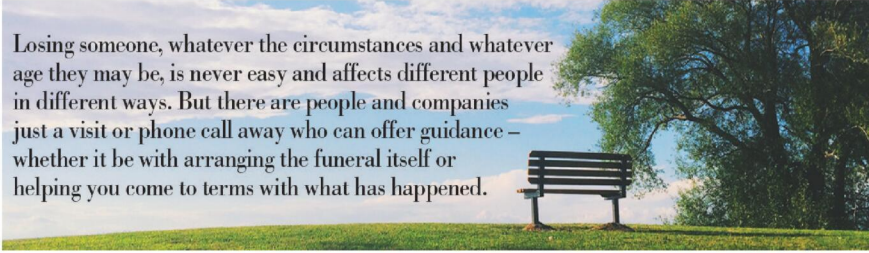
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### PUBLIC NOTICES

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Advertisement Key: LB = Listed Building.

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Comments can be submitted online, via email to [newplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:newplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) or in writing Planning Services, Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH

### PUBLIC NOTICES

#### Warwickshire County Council

##### ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

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

**D5434 LOWER HASELOR LANE, HASELOR**

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between its junctions with Pelham Lane and Trench Lane. In addition, the Weight Restriction on C46 Pelham Lane, Haselor between Wood Lane and Walcot Road/Lower Haselor Lane will be temporarily suspended.

Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 09.30hrs - 15.00hrs.

Order Commences: 20 April 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 23 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Trench Lane, A46, A435, B4089 (Arden Road, Tything Road West, Kinwarton Farm Road, Captains Hill, School Road, Village Road), Pelham Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415302.

##### HOO MILL ROAD, KINWARTON

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: To enable water network survey works.

Order Commences: 24 April 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 24 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available.

Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 0330 008 0820.

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

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

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 02 April 2026

### PUBLIC NOTICES

#### MARGARET ELIZABETH FORRESTER Deceased

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 anyone having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the deceased, late of Studley Rose Care Home, Pool Road, Studley B80 7QU formerly of 36 Barlich Way, Redditch B98 7JP, who died on 30/01/2026, must send written particulars to the address below by 04/06/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to claims and interests notified.

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### MISCELLANEOUS

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## New Lambo set to be launched

A LAMBORGHINI Urus SE Widetrack by Urban Automotive, the latest in its range of luxury vehicle enhancements, makes its global debut today at its UK design and carbon fibre production facility in Milton Keynes and this evening in Las Vegas, USA.

Combining the launch in the UK and USA marks a significant milestone in Urban Automotive's continued international expansion.

Being the home of the SEMA show and sharing a bold and attention-grabbing car culture with Los Angeles, Las Vegas was the natural venue for the Lamborghini Urus

SE Widetrack's American debut in an unmistakable Inozetek Gloss Pearlescent Pearl Marigold Orange premium wrap.

As a leading global designer of vehicle enhancements for luxury cars, Urban Automotive, used its OEM+ philosophy to undertake a comprehensive, ground-up reimagining of Lamborghini's latest high-performance SUV.

The attention to detail of Urban's design took 10,000 hours of design and development time to create and subtly references some revered models in Lamborghini's history.

Every exterior surface of the Urban Urus SE Widetrack has been considered, refined and, where possible, enhanced with bespoke carbon

fibre components designed and produced exclusively by Urban Automotive. The result is a vehicle that is more purposeful and visually attractive than the standard model.

At the front, a three-piece carbon fibre splitter with canard end planes creates an

immediate impression.

Above it, a dramatic carbon fibre replacement bonnet features an exposed, functional 'bull nose' vent design directly inspired by the legendary Lamborghini Aventador SVJ, with 3D printed vent inlets and outlets finished in Lamborghini's iconic Hex pattern.

Urban's six-piece carbon fibre Widetrack wheelarch extensions have exposed carbon accents and broadened the Urus by 40mm to give it a more purposeful and unmistakable presence on the road.

Replacement carbon fibre side panels feature 3D printed inlays integrating Urban Automotive's iconic UA logo within the Lamborghini Hex pattern, while exposed carbon fibre sill extensions incorporate an aero feature that pays homage to the legendary Miura's iconic sill air intake as a subtle nod to Lamborghini's heritage.

At the rear, the replacement carbon fibre rear bumper really makes a statement by enhancing the standard Urus SE's design with an exposed carbon, double-vented diffuser and separated canard end planes.

To complete the aerodynamic styling package a visual carbon fibre spoiler adds to the original version fitted to the car to create a dramatic

'double stacked' aero feature, complete with endplates bearing the UA logo.

Urban's enhancements to the Lamborghini Urus SE are completed with quad billet exhausts featuring outer accent details, making statement to add to the visual impact to the rear of the car. At launch, the vehicle rides on Urban-Vossen UV-1R wheels - perfectly proportioned to fill the space created by the Urus' widened arches.

Matthew Welch, managing director of Urban Automotive, said: "Our Urus SE Widetrack styling programme is by far the most technically sophisticated and visually dramatic Lamborghini build we have ever produced."

"Every detail, from the Aventador SVJ-inspired bonnet vents to the Miura sill reference, has been designed and produced by our expert in-house team with real intention and passion.

"We wanted to create something that feels authentically Lamborghini in its spirit, while being unmistakably Urban in its OEM+ design execution. Launching simultaneously in the UK and USA feels exactly right for a car like this. It will attract customers from around the world to Urban."

The full Urban Widetrack conver-

sion for the Lamborghini Urus SE is available from £51,800 (fitted). Customers also have the option to create a bespoke interior with a choice of colours and materials to their own requirements.

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# Spa beaten by leaders after Challenge Cup final defeat

by Aaron Sutcliffe  
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

**FOOTBALL:** DROITWICH Spa's title hopes appear all but over following a 3-0 defeat away at top-of-the-table Slimbridge in midweek.

Goals from Olly Sully, Shiyak Sutherland and Jack W Smith at Thornhill Park condemned Spa to a third consecutive defeat on the road in all competitions.

The result means Droitwich sit fourth in the Hellenic League Premier Division table with a game in hand on the three teams above them.

However, the Saltmen now trail leaders Slimbridge by 11 points with just five matches left to play.

The game's first chance fell to Slimbridge as Jack Smith broke down the left and drilled an effort inches past the post.

Spa created a chance of their own at the other end when Nathan Binner fired off target while Perry Moss directed an overhead kick onto the roof of the net.

However, the home side eventually broke the deadlock in first-half injury time as Sully beat several defenders and smashed a shot past Joe Stockton in the Spa net.

Droitwich went close after the break as Binner saw his effort saved by Slimbridge goalkeeper



Steve Sarkodie.

However, Slimbridge doubled their lead three minutes from time when Sutherland blasted an effort into the net to all but end the game as a contest.

And the home side added a third goal less than a minute later as Jack W Smith rounded Stockton and found the net to dent Spa's title hopes.

That came after Droitwich missed out on the Challenge Cup trophy last weekend after letting a half-time lead slip in a 3-2 defeat against Hereford Pegasus.

Spa fell behind to Jordan Williamson's early goal only for

Reiss Taylor-Randle and Moss to turn the game in Droitwich's favour at the break at Old School Lane.

However, Mike Burgess equalised for Hereford just past the hour mark before Morgan Ewing scored a late winner for Pegasus who had home advantage in the final.

More than 400 Droitwich supporters made the trip to Hereford only for a goal eight minutes from time to deny Spa some silverware.

Hereford had the ball in the net after just five minutes only for the assistant referee to raise his flag for offside and hand Spa

a reprieve.

However, Pegasus broke the deadlock just a minute later when Williamson sent a stunning volley into the top-left corner from 20-yards out following a free-kick into the Spa box.

The Saltmen almost drew level later in the half as Hereford goalkeeper Matthew Gwynne kept out James Lemon's free-kick and two follow-up efforts from James Baldwin and Cory Rudd.

However, Droitwich drew level on 22 minutes when Taylor-Randle scored directly from a corner as the set-piece sailed over everyone in the box and into the net.

And Spa stunned the home side two minutes later after Gwynne brought down Lemon in the box and Moss converted the resulting spot kick.

Droitwich looked to extend their lead before the break with Charlie Tilley just unable to connect with Jack Brighton's cross on his 200th appearance for the Saltmen.

And Moss lifted a chip narrowly over the crossbar moments before the interval as Spa took a narrow one-goal lead into the break.

Andy Crowther's side remained on top early in the second half as Gwynne scrambled back to his line to deny Lemon after the striker tried his luck from range.

However, Hereford equalised against the run of play on 68 minutes when Spa goalkeeper Stockton could only parry a free-kick and Burgess pounced to draw Pegasus level.

And Hereford completed the turnaround on 82 minutes as Ewing's low shot from outside the penalty area went beyond the outstretched arm of Stockton and into the net.

Droitwich are next in action against Longlevens AFC on Saturday, April 4 with kick-off at 3pm at Saw Mills End.

**Perry Moss scored from the penalty spot for Spa in the Challenge Cup final. Picture by Mathew Mason.**

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