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Is it last orders for the Gardeners Arms?

by **Ryan Smith & Tristan Harris**
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tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com

THE OWNER of the Gardeners Arms pub, in Droitwich, has moved to clarify the situation surrounding a planning application for the site.

Proposals have been submitted to Wychavon District Council to convert the building into two homes.

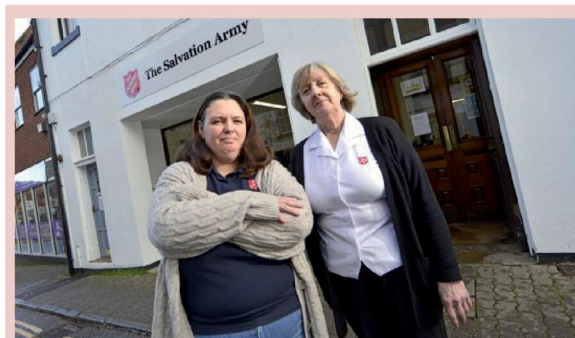
Speaking to *The Standard*, landlord and owner Simon Berry said: "Everyone knows pubs are struggling and many are closing.

"Licensees have to think about their futures."

The pub trade has been struggling in recent years due to increased taxation on alcohol, considerable energy cost increases and cash-strapped customers having reduced disposable income.

A report in the planning application also highlighted several unique challenges the Gardeners Arms faced, in addition to the general issues all pubs encounter. They include the pub's cul-de-sac location, with no passing trade, and more centralised competition from other pubs in the town centre.

Mr Berry said he and his wife Edith, who runs the business with



Lisa Evans-Lochin and corps officer Mjr Sandra Collins have been upset by break-ins at the shop.
 Picture by Marcus Mingins 0426008MMR

Another break-in at shop

THE SALVATION Army Charity Shop in Droitwich has reopened following an attempted burglary less than three months after more than £500 was stolen from the store.

The shop, on St Andrews Street, had the back door smashed and a small window broken at around 4am in the latest incident.

Shocked staff discovered the break-in when they opened up.

Workers initially told customers the shop was unable to open until further notice but, after cleaning up, they were able to open that afternoon. The need to replace the affected windows caused some disruption, however.

The till was tampered with but there was no cash in the building – after the previous burglary – so nothing was taken.

More than £500 was lost in the January break-in, when a large window was smashed and the safe forced open.

Mjr Sandra Collins, corps officer for The Salvation Army in Droitwich, said the staff were upset about the latest incident and added: "We would like to thank everyone for their understanding and continued support – it really means a lot."

Visit salvationarmy.org.uk/droitwich for more on Droitwich Salvation Army and to donate.



The Gardeners Arms pub, as was. s

him, have no intention of leaving Droitwich.

"We are focusing on putting on more festivals and events in the town," he said, "they always go down really well and are helping put Droitwich on the map.

"We have also got to face facts – because of its size and location – the Gardeners Arms is not commercially viable.

"As well as the festivals, we are

currently in discussions regarding relocating to another central Droitwich location that would not have the issues the Gardeners faces and would be more commercially viable."

The planning application states the SaltFest event threw the struggling pub business a lifeline.

That boost to trade did not come from the pub but from marquees selling food and drink dur-

ing SaltFest and other events, the report stated.

Mr Berry bought the pub in 2016 and it has recently been used as a base for outdoor events rather than as a drinking establishment.

The couple said they are also working with Visit Worcestershire on a major tourism project.

Visit wychavon.gov.uk/planningportalandsearch/W/26/00046/FUL to see the application.



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Tory politicians join opponents of new housing

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

RESIDENTS of Wythall came together to say 'no' to the prospective housing developments set to go before the planning board.

Around 50 residents turned up to the meeting, held by Worcestershire County Councillor Adam Kent and Bromsgrove MP Bradley Thomas.

They were joined by shadow housing minister Sir James Cleverly, who, before the meeting, visited two of the sites earmarked for housing.

Mr Thomas and Coun Kent have been fighting against increased development in the village since the central government raised its national housing target.

Bromsgrove District Council put a draft development strategy – meant to control long-term housing expansion – out for feedback from June to October. Wythall was earmarked for 1,295 houses across three sites: land south of Houndsfield Lane, a parcel east of Lea Green Lane and land south of Station Road.

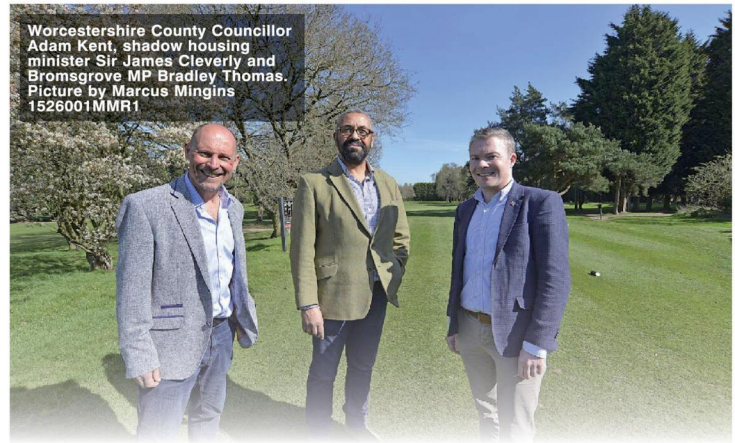
The proposed influx of housing caused outrage among villagers, with many claiming local infrastructure cannot cope.

During the residents' meeting, at Hollywood Golf Club, attendees raised their concerns with Coun Kent, Mr Thomas and Mr Cleverly, who encouraged them to make their opposition known by commenting on the planning applications submitted to Bromsgrove District Council.

Mr Cleverly said it was clear the site on Houndsfield Lane is in the green belt and that reclassification of under-used, low-quality or previously-developed green belt sites into 'grey belt' land is causing the increased development.

He also said there was a flood risk to the site, with a brook running through it.

"The proposed development is perverse, it is directly contradictory to the government's plans," said the shadow minister. "They say they want less people driving, well this puts more cars on the road. [The government] says it wants to protect the environment, but it is going to be bulldozing over it. The housing targets are completely counter-productive and it does feel spiteful."



Worcestershire County Councillor Adam Kent, shadow housing minister Sir James Cleverly and Bromsgrove MP Bradley Thomas. Picture by Marcus Mingsins 1526001MMR1

Residents said Wythall was also being affected by cross-border development, with more houses to be built in Solihull.

After the meeting, Mr Thomas said: "The message from the public meeting was loud and clear: Wythall says no to overdevelopment. The village is facing a barrage of speculative housing applications because developers have been emboldened by the government's housing policy."

"My constituents and I aren't NIMBYs ['not-in-my-back-yard' opponents]. We all accept the need for new houses but not on the scale the government is imposing."

"The government should build on brown-field land first and provide communities with the infrastructure that will be needed before any houses are built."

Coun Kent said: "It's quite clear from the meeting, the residents of Wythall see the current avalanche of planning applications as deeply concerning, both in terms of scale and inappropriate locations with a distinct lack of infrastructure."

"With over a dozen potential sites already in play, we could see planning applications increasing the size of Wythall by over 60 per cent."

He added, coupled with large scale Solihull development, there was 'a major problem looming'.

He called on the district council to open immediate discussions with neighbouring South Warwickshire to find a 'more sustainable' solution to the area's housing needs, and at a more appropriate scale.

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Bradley Thomas MP with local residents concerned about the Groveley Garden Village plans. s

Local opposition kills off garden village plan

CONTROVERSIAL PLANS for a 1,450-home Groveley Garden Village will not go ahead.

After pressure from residents and Bromsgrove MP Bradley Thomas, Bournville Village Trust has confirmed 'no proposals remained under consideration' with the scheme 'no longer proceeding.'

The plan, from St Modwen Homes, would have seen homes built on land stretching south from Groveley Lane to Bittell Reservoir across 404 acres of green belt land – approximately

twice the size of Alvechurch village.

MP Mr Thomas met concerned residents and survey local views about the plans. Some 92 per cent of respondents opposed the garden village.

A statement from Bournville Village Trust to Mr Thomas, seen by *The Standard*, said: "We can confirm no proposals remain under consideration and the scheme is, in effect, no longer proceeding."

"While we cannot speculate on any potential developments

in the longer term, we can state clearly that none of the proposals that were the subject of the enquiry to Bromsgrove District Council will be taken forward."

Mr Thomas said: "Groveley Garden Village would have decimated our precious green belt and expanded urban sprawl into the Worcestershire countryside."

"Working with residents, we have stopped the destruction of our green belt in this part of our community. Thank you to everyone who made their voices heard."

"However, although this battle has been won, the fight continues to protect our precious green belt across Bromsgrove and the villages, following the government's 85 per cent increase in our housebuilding target."

"I will continue to challenge the government's flawed housing formula – used to calculate our house-building target; encourage development on brownfield sites; and urge the government to build in our cities, where the need is greatest."

Application to extend divisive solar project

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

A PROPOSAL has been brought forward to extend a controversial solar farm in Upton Warren.

Spring Dev 10 Limited has applied to Bromsgrove District Council for an extension to Foxwalks Solar Farm, on land at Timberhonger Lane.

The proposed extension is would be immediately north of the original Foxwalks site, on Grafton Lane.

The application includes equipment housing, fencing, CCTV, ancillary equipment, landscape and biodiversity enhancements.

Application documents claim the extension would use already approved infrastructure yet to be installed at Foxwalks, including access, a substation and connection to the national grid.

The 15.7ha application site is a rectangular field of which 9.57ha would host the proposed solar panels and equipment associated with the solar farm extension.

The applicant says the extension would be able to generate around 13 megawatts – enough electricity for around 4,400 households. Spring Dev says the extension would save an anticipated 2,300 tonnes of CO₂ per year.

A planning statement by the developer said the proposed extension to Foxwalks Solar Farm is an ecosystem services solution to

the climate change challenge and seeks to integrate biodiversity features into the design whilst making an important contribution towards carbon reduction targets.

"It has been carefully considered to avoid significant harm to visual amenity, protected habitats or the setting of heritage assets, whilst maintaining agricultural use of the farm," the developer says of the extension.

The site lies outside the defined settlement boundary for Bromsgrove so it is classified as being within the open countryside. It is also not allocated for development within the adopted local plan.

It is claimed the original, 100-acre solar farm, approved in April 2024, can supply more than 13,000 homes with electricity during peak operation and will be operational for 40 years.

The Foxwalks Solar Farm Opposition Group has expressed major reservations about the original project.

Group chairman and Grafton Lane resident Carl Bishop claimed, at the time of the original application, residents were being 'deceptively convinced it was something more environmentally friendly than it actually was'.

The opposition group fears the proposed extension will set a precedent for future development, with 'significant implications' for rural areas.

Visit the planning portal at bromsgrove.gov.uk and search for application reference '26/00187/FUL' to see the application.

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We still need you Bernard!

Bernard Sugden will take on his first marathon at the age of 63, for three charities, including Bromsgrove and Redditch Welcomes Refugees. s

A RUNNER will take on his first marathon at the age of 63 to raise funds for three of his favourite charities, including Bromsgrove and Redditch Welcomes Refugees (BRWR).

Bernard Sugden, from Redditch, only took up distance running seven years ago and is putting in the miles before his ultimate challenge: the Manchester Marathon on Sunday, April 19.

Referring to pop classic *When I'm 64*, Bernard said: "I wanted to run a marathon before I was 64 – it's a bit of a Beatles thing."

Bernard, who volunteers for BRWR, added: "The charity does really good work – I love the fact that they help refugees set up their new lives in the area."

"The whole idea is to support people getting on their feet and to help them throughout the process."

He also highlighted English lessons, social events and signposting provided by the charity.

The cash Bernard raises will also benefit the British Heart Foundation and Prostate Cancer UK

Bernard, a retired Nokia sales director, chose the Manchester Marathon after a close friend died during a heart operation in 2021.

At the wake, the man's daughter and her friend said they would tackle the marathon in his honour.

Bernard said: "I wasn't ready back then but now that I am, it had to be Manchester."

Bernard has Just Giving pages for all three charities.

Visit: justgiving.com/page/bernard-sugden-10 for his BRWR page.

'Couch-to-5k' running groups are on offer

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

PEOPLE who want to take up running and get fit can take part in 'couch-to-5K' courses in Bromsgrove and Redditch.

The nine-week courses are designed to take people from doing no running to being able to jog or run for 5km – or around half an hour

They are suitable for absolute beginners or people wanting to get back into being more active.

Participants can embark on the free sessions – run by Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough councils – with like-minded people

Run leaders hold official qualifications from England Athletics and the courses are fully endorsed by the NHS.

The sessions in Bromsgrove take place at 6pm on Mondays at The Ryland Centre running track; at 9.30am on Thursdays at Catskill Meadow; and at 6.30pm on Thursdays, at the Sanders Park Bandstand.

Redditch sessions are held at The Abbey Stadium running track at 9.30am on Sundays and 7.30pm on Mondays and Wednesdays; courses also take place at 7pm on Mondays at Arrow Valley Lake; at 6.30pm on Thursdays in the Matchborough car park; at 9.30am on

Fridays at the Woodrow Centre car park; and at 9.30am on Saturdays at Redditch Cricket, Hockey, Rugby and Squash Club.

Bromsgrove District Council portfolio holder for leisure, councillor Shirley Webb, said: "The couch-to-5K programme is always incredibly popular and it's inspiring to see so many local people begin their wellbeing journey with us."

"Offering the sessions at no cost is something we're truly proud to continue for our community."

Redditch assistant director for leisure Ruth Bamford said: "To be able to continue to host these sessions for free is a major asset for the people of our town."

People can mix and match sessions or attend the same one regularly.

Participants are advised to join at least three sessions per week to build sufficient fitness to achieve the goal of running 5K.

Many couch-to-5K graduates go on to join local running groups, including Parkrun organisations.

Over the last few years, the two councils have also helped to develop many run leaders who are now part of the scheme.

The programme is suitable for runners aged 12 upwards but children will need an adult running with them.

Email the sports development team at sd@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or call 01527 881404 for more details.

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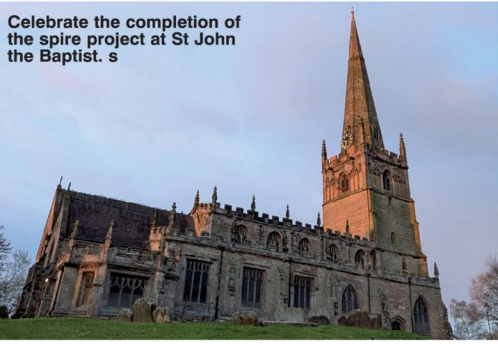
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Celebrate the completion of the spire project at St John the Baptist. s

Invites issued for an in-spire-ing night

A BROMSGROVE church is asking the town to join it in celebrating the completion of a restoration of its spire.

At 7pm on Tuesday, there will be a special service of thanksgiving – including a guest sermon by the Bishop of Worcester – to mark the Spire Project milestone at St John the Baptist Church.

Attendees can see the craftsmanship of the restoration, which included replacement of the spire's summit, intricate stonework repairs to the tower and the restoration of an historic weather vane.

The project was backed by a big

fundraising drive led by The Friends of St John's, fuelled by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the generosity of Bromsgrove residents.

Rev. Ray Khan, vicar of St John's, said: "The spire is more than just stone – it is a landmark for our town and a reminder of God's presence and the goodwill of this community."

"For centuries, the spire of St John the Baptist has acted as the 'north star' for Bromsgrove.

"After a period of intensive restoration, the scaffolding is down, the weather vane is gleaming and the church is throwing open its doors to

say thank you to the town, funders and contractors that saved it.

"This is a remarkable achievement and a testimony to the skills of our craftsmen and the heart of our people.

"We want everyone – whether you are a regular visitor or have simply admired the spire from afar – to join us for this wonderful moment in Bromsgrove's history."

The Friends of St John's team raised £386,000 in pledged grants and there were donations from local and national sources, including £249,975 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund.



Get behind the wheel at Edge Racing. s

Put sim pedal to the metal

by Ryan Smith
ryan.smith@bullivantmedia.com

A RACING simulator company led by a teen who is part of McLaren Formula 1, and his family, wants to bring cutting-edge technology to Droitwich.

Edge Racing Simulators opened on North Bank Berry Hill Industrial Estate in December and offers petrol-heads the chance to 'race' on some of the biggest circuits in the world.

Edge Racing is the brainchild of Charlie Edge, a 2025/2026 FIA British Formula 4 driver with CDR, and his brother Jordan, a keen simulator racer. They run the business with their father Steve.

Charlie, now with the McLaren Formula 1 development programme, has used simulators for his racing career and thinks motorsport fans would like to use them.

Edge offers simulators for people to race in competitions ranging from Formula 4 to Formula 1, as well as rallies.

The business is offering people the chance to experience the raw power, precision and pressure of real motorsport.

Steve told *The Standard*: "Our simulators

are really state-of-the-art and we have simulators that can accommodate everyone. It will give people a real racing experience.

"I'm really proud of my sons for setting this up, and also Charlie for being in the McLaren Formula 1 development programme.

"It's really exciting and a lot of hard work. "The business is going okay so far – weekends are always the busiest times for us but of course we could always do with more people coming.

"We would like to get our name out to other people from other areas, as well as those in Droitwich."

Edge's 'maximum-height' simulators are for people over 5ft tall and the smaller machines have a 4ft minimum height requirement.

Special offers include a 10 per cent discount on Wednesdays and Formula 1 weekends, when the Grand Prix will be shown on the on-site TV.

There is also a race circuit leaderboard and the fastest simulator time on each circuit at the end of the year will get to visit the real thing in 2027.

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The LK Hair team - Lily Saville, co-owner Karen Groves and Cherie Field - with Coun Jane Elledge who organised the first ever Aston Fields best-dressed Easter window competition. s

Transparent winners

THE WINNER of the first ever best-dressed Easter window in Aston Fields was revealed last Thursday.

Bromsgrove Standard editor Tristan Harris judged this year's entries, which included Fuso, Bremis and LK Hair.

And, LK Hair was judged to be the most vibrant and the shop took the title. The display was created by Sarah at Butterfly Delights.

The contest was organised by Bromsgrove District Councillor Jane Elledge.

She said: "There has always been

a really good community spirit here in Aston Fields and I wanted to foster that.

"I saw Rubery had held a best-dressed Easter window competition for years so thought we'd try it here.

"I'm hoping to plan many events like this in the future."

Louise Hutchins, who co-owns the shop with Karen Groves, said: "It's great that we have won the first ever Easter Window Competition.

"Karen - our co-owner - did a marvellous job."

Large turnout for Walk of Witness

MORE THAN 100 people from churches across Redditch journeyed through the town on Good Friday alongside a cross.

The annual Walk of Witness began at the bandstand and travelled to HOW college, the Town Hall and through the Kingfisher Centre. On its journey, the group prayed for the town, its people and the challenges they faced.

Rev Canon Paul Lawlor, Redditch Mission Area Leader and Area Dean for Redditch and Bromsgrove, said, as they undertook the annual event, some knew exactly why they were doing this, others more bemused.

"One fascinating moment was, having sung a song of worship in Milward Square - those following the cross continued to sing the chorus as they travelled. The words included: 'O praise the name of the Lord our God'.

"The events of that first Good Friday are tough to engage with.

"The Christmas narrative is somehow easier for us. It is Good News but Good Friday?"

"On Good Friday we pause at the point of Jesus' execution, His own people having turned against Him. We need to look to the events of Easter Day and beyond to see that this was not a defeat but a victory. A victory not over Roman oppressors but over death.

"I suspect that for many the question remains, what has any of this got to do with the challenges we



The Good Friday Walk of Witness was held in Redditch and journeyed through the Kingfisher Centre. s

face in our lives today? Is there any point in Christians walking through the town with a cross?"

"I would suggest there is more point today than ever. I believe Jesus died for us all. He died that we might all have access to an eternal future.

"I also, believe this is not just a thing for tomorrow, it not just a comfort blanket for when we approach death. The Jesus event shows us that God in willing to be with us in the turmoil of our lives as well as in our eternal future.

"If we can focus on God's justice, God's love, compassion and mercy we will not simply stand by as bad things happen in our world.

"We will have the strength to stand up to oppression, injustice and pain. These things may not go away but together we can stand against them and work and pray for change.

"As I say the Easter story, the Jesus event is not all soft and fluffy, it is not all about the Easter Bunny but it is all about new life.

"New Life is Jesus."

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Councillor Esther Gray with Jo White, who runs the Farm Animal and Bird Sanctuary, and the winning window. s

Easter displays give Rubery shops a lift

THIS YEAR'S best-dressed Easter window in Rubery competition was judged by *The Standard* on Good Friday and 15 traders took part.

Businesses came up with creative and elaborate designs which included eggs, chicks, rabbits and even spring lambs.

The winner, for the second year running, was the Farm Animal and Bird Sanctuary. The shop window had an extensive display which included toilet rolls transformed into sheep.

Mica Hardware finished runner-up.

Jo White, who runs the Farm Animal and Bird Sanctuary, said: "We are delighted to have won the competition again."

"It was all down to Margaret Brown our shop manager – she has a flash of inspiration and then gets to work. Her son made the sheep out of the toilet rolls and we've had lots of nice comments about them."

The sanctuary rescues unwanted farm animals and

provides them with a home for the rest of their lives.

Bromsgrove district councillor Esther Gray, who organised the competition, said: "Everyone really pulled out all the stops this year. There was a lot more detail than we have seen in previous years."

"You can see a lot of effort has been put in and it has certainly brightened up the village for Easter."

"Well done to everyone who got creative and took part."

The government is doing nothing to stop rising bills

IT FEELS like you cannot catch a break right now.

Bills keep going up, eating away more at the money in your pocket, leaving you with less to treat you and your family and less to save for a rainy day.

The cost of living remains too high, despite the many promises the current government made before the election to make life more affordable.

Keir Starmer and Rachel Reeves claim they care about the cost of living but they are hammering families with new taxes and rising charges and businesses with new regulations and red tape.

This government has done nothing but make life harder for working families in Bromsgrove and the small businesses that power our local economy and our country. Instead, this government has chosen to hand out more and more to those on benefits.

Figures show, under this government, families will be £913 worse off this year.

Council tax is up, water bills are up, vehicle excise duty is up, the TV licence is up, rent is up, broadband bills are up, mobile contracts are up and the cost of groceries, recreation and culture, clothing and household goods and services are all up too.

And because of this government's choices, the cost of energy is rising too.

Cornwall Insight has forecast the default [energy] tariff cap will be £1,929 for July-to-September, a

Westminster Diary



Bradley Thomas MP writes for *The Standard*

£288 increase from the price cap of April-to-June of £1,641.

For the average car, the cost of fuelling it will rise from £1,285 to £1,365.

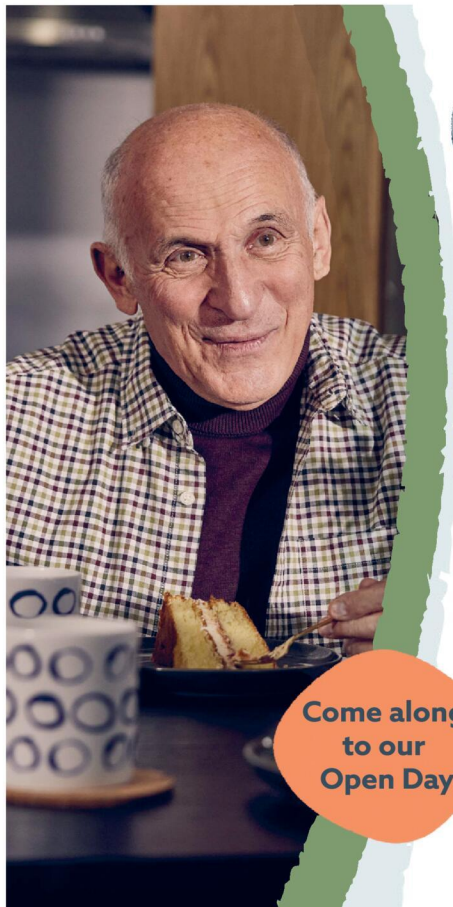
That's why, in parliament, I've voted time and time again to support working people in Bromsgrove.

I've voted for the following: to cut energy bills by £200 per year with the cheap power plan; against the government's planned fuel duty increase; to stop the government from working with the new administration on Worcestershire County Council to put your council tax up by nine per cent; to abolish real interest rates on 'plan 2' student loans; to abolish stamp duty on the family home; to allow for maximum extraction of oil and gas from the North Sea to use the extra tax revenue to cut taxes and to ease the cost of living; and to reverse the 'family farm tax' which will make British food more expensive.

The government voted all this down, which is why your bills and taxes continue to rise.

I will continue to work hard to support working people and to ensure life is more affordable.

**Bradley Thomas
Bromsgrove MP**



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SRS0754

Local history group AGM

THE ANNUAL General Meeting of Redditch History Society will take place on Monday, as the group continues its programme for 2026.

The get-together will be at 2pm at the usual venue: the Oasis Christian Centre on the corner of Plymouth Road, near Redditch bus and railway stations.

After the short business meeting, there will be a screening of some films about historic events or places in the local area. These films, which provide an opportunity for nostalgia, have been sourced and introduced by the society's secretary, Tony Green.

After the film show, there will be the chance for those who go along to take up or renew annual membership of the society.

Any visitor joining that day will not pay the entrance fee and will thenceforth pay a reduced member's price.

The Redditch History Society meets from 2pm to 4pm on the second Monday afternoon of each month.

Non-members are always welcome, for a \$4 entrance fee, and refreshments are available after the talk for just 50p per person.

Future talks and presentations include Art goes to War, 1939 to 1945, local archaeology on The Body on the Bromyard Line, Local Law and Order before 1850 and many other fascinating topics.

Visit redditchhistorysociety.org.uk for further details of the programme or pick up a leaflet from Redditch Library and The Palace Theatre.

Gaynor marks 25 years of helping others stay healthy

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

A SLIMMING World consultant based in Bromsgrove is celebrating a quarter of a century of helping people shed the pounds.

Gaynor Hale has been in the role for 25 years, running sessions at 9.30am, 3.30pm, 5pm and 6.30pm every Tuesday at Bromsgrove Rugby Club.

Her district manager, Maxine Jackson, popped in to see Gaynor in her group, to present her with a gift from the directors at Slimming World and to mark the milestone she had achieved.

Maxine said it was a pleasure to visit Gaynor in her group.

"Over that time, she has shown unwavering dedication, compassion and commitment to helping others transform their lives," said Maxine.

"Her role has always been about far more than weight loss.

"She has created a warm, supportive community where members feel safe, encouraged and truly understood.

"Week after week, she has helped people build confidence, overcome chal-

lenges and celebrate every success, no matter how small.

"Throughout the years, she has supported countless individuals, each with their own story.

"From those taking their very first steps on their journey to those reaching their dream targets, she has been there every step of the way – offering guidance, kindness, and belief when it's needed most."

One of Gaynor's Slimming World members said: "The friendships she has built and the lives she has touched speak volumes about the impact she has made.

"Even through challenges and changing times, her passion has never wavered and her commitment to her members has remained constant."

Gaynor said: "Reaching 25 years as a consultant is such an achievement for me and I'm so proud of the difference I make to people's lives.

"My journey will continue to inspire everyone around me to help them achieve a healthy lifestyle for many more years to come."

For more on Gaynor's groups in Bromsgrove, call her on 07876 700072.



Gaynor Hale, left, has celebrated 25 years running Slimming World sessions in Bromsgrove with a visit from Maxine Jackson. s

ARTRIX UPDATE

HUGE REFIT ANNOUNCED AT ARTRIX THIS APRIL!

At the end of April, we will begin a refurbishment of our auditorium seating, an important step in improving the comfort and experience for everyone who visits the theatre. Alongside this, we will soon launch our new membership programme - Friends of Artrix giving supporters the opportunity to play a direct role in securing the theatre's future.

Membership will offer benefits for audiences while helping sustain the venue for generations to come. For those who want to be even more closely involved, volunteering remains one of the most powerful ways to contribute. Whether welcoming audiences, supporting events or helping shape the future of the theatre, our volunteers truly make Artrix possible.

For more info, we'd love to welcome you to our membership launch event at Artrix on the 31st May 2026, its free, nibbles and a free drink on entry.

A night of live music in the foyer, tours of the venue and meet the team.

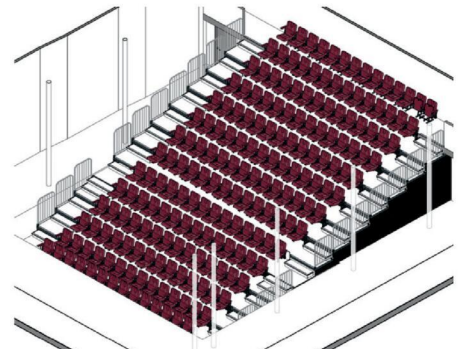
Sign up at: artrixbromsgrove.co.uk/membershiplaunch

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HURRY GRAB THESE BARGAINS BEFORE THEY GO!

South Brum neighbourhoods get rail links back after an 85-year wait

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

SOUTH Birmingham's three new railway stations opened on Tuesday, welcoming passengers to Moseley Village, Kings Heath and Pineapple Road, in Stirchley.

The stations make the areas in the south of the Second City much more accessible for people in Bromsgrove, Redditch and the surrounding areas.

From Kings Norton, it takes around three minutes to reach Pineapple Road, six minutes to Kings Heath and eight to arrive at Moseley Village, before the services go on to Birmingham New Street.

From Bromsgrove and Redditch, on the Cross City Line, it takes around 15 and 27 minutes, respectively, to get to Kings

Norton. There, passengers can change trains to get on the Camp Hill Line.

That means, feasibly and depending on connecting trains, Pineapple Road could be reached by Bromsgrove rail users in 20 minutes and people could get there from Redditch in around 32 minutes.

From Bromsgrove to Kings Heath it could take around half-an-hour, and just above that to get to Moseley.

Redditch rail users could be in Kings Heath in around 45 minutes and Moseley Village in around 50 minutes.

The train services run every half-an-hour from Monday to Saturday and hourly on Sundays.

The trio of new stations make up the Camp Hill Line, providing passengers with a direct rail link between the three areas and Birmingham city centre for the

first time in more than 80 years.

The stations and services are operated by West Midlands Railway (WMR) and connect passengers to Birmingham New Street and Kings Norton.

The line is served by WMR's newest diesel fleet, the Class 196s, which first entered service in 2022.

Features

The three new stations feature sheltered platforms, accessible lifts, passenger help points on each platform and secure cycle racks. The stations at Pineapple Road and Moseley Village also have pick-up and drop-off areas.

The historic Camp Hill Line was closed in 1941, during the Second World War, due to coal shortages, with each new station built on the line's original site.

What the three stations offer

Pineapple Road: Stirchley has been billed as one of the best places to live in the Midlands and boasts the 'Stirchley beer mile' of craft and real ale establishments. There are also artisan bakeries and community activities at the historic Stirchley Baths.

Kings Heath: The area has one of Birmingham's most popular high streets, along with the renowned Hare and Hounds music venue, two peaceful Victorian parks and a variety of independent boutiques to browse.

Moseley Village: In the heart of Birmingham's bohemian quarter, Moseley Village Station enables passengers to visit award-winning farmers markets, explore JRR Tolkien's inspiration at Moseley Bog and enjoy a Michelin-starred dining scene.

Jonny Wiseman, WMR's cus-

tommer experience director, said the new stations were a 'gamechanger' for passengers, whether commuting or visiting family and friends.

"We are so excited to officially open these transformative new stations in south Birmingham, bringing rail services back to local communities for the first time in 80 years," he said.

Sandeep Shingadia, executive director of transport for WMR, said the vibrant neighbourhoods had waited 85 years for rail.

The project was delivered by VolkerFitzpatrick and led by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM), part of the West Midlands Combined Authority, and the West Midlands Rail Executive with WMR, Network Rail, Birmingham City Council and the Department for Transport.

Visit: westmidlandsrailway.co.uk for more details.

Visitors to Pineapple Road can enjoy artisan bakeries, Stirchley Baths and the area's popular craft and real ale pubs and bars. s



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Varied menu for spring concert

DROITWICH Community Choir will hold its annual Spring Concert next Saturday, April 18.

The event takes place at the Droitwich Baptist Church, Ombersley Street East, at 7pm and admission is free.

There will also be free refreshments.

There will be a retiring collection to raise funds for the Acorns Hospices Trust.

The choir will be singing a varied programme and will be joined by the children from Hanbury Primary

School choir.

Last year the choir raised more than \$4,000 throughout the year.

The group is supported by local businesses which advertises in the concert programme.

The group said it was very grateful to all the businesses which advertised.

Pattie Leach from the Droitwich Community Choir said: "We are hoping as many people as possible to attend."

People can just turn up to watch the concert.



Barnt Green Choral performed to a sell-out crowd at Bromsgrove's Artrix. s

BARNT Green Choral presented its annual showpiece concert on March 28 at a sold-out Artrix auditorium.

The programme featured both orchestral and choral works by two living composers - the world-famous Sir Karl Jenkins and the young, but rapidly rising, Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo.

The concert began with two movements from Jenkins' Palladio, which is often heard on Classic FM. This was followed by three short Gjeilo orchestral pieces.

Gjeilo, now living in America, is known for his lush, cinematic and atmospheric music and the audience was enthralled.

The first half concluded with the choir singing Gjeilo's 'Song of the Universal'.

Based on an 1874 American Civil

War poem, the work is a visionary declaration of faith in the goodness of deeper humanity, finding joy in the face of human suffering.

In the second half the 70-strong choir and 26-piece orchestra performed 'The Armed Man' by Jenkins.

Now a national classic, the work was commissioned by the Royal Armouries to promote an understanding of the destructive consequences of war while looking ahead with optimism for peace.

The audience thoroughly enjoyed the piece and the concert and there was plenty of positive feedback.

One person who watched it said: "You really opened my eyes, or should I say ears - a fabulous programme of very different music fabulously sung."

Another added: "The choir sailed over the orchestra with thrilling cli-

maxes together with moving quiet passages."

The choir's next concert will feature modern jazz - Zimbe! by Alexander L'Estrange.

A massed choir of 130 singers (adults and children) from Barnt Green Choral, Bromsgrove Prep School, and Lickey End First School, will perform this toe-tapping music.

That will take place at 6.30pm on June 19 at Routh Hall, Bromsgrove School.

Barnt Green Choral is always interested in hearing from anyone wanting to join its ranks to sing the world's best music in a warm and friendly atmosphere.

Members do not have to read music or have vast experience - just an inner desire to sing.

Visit barntgreenchoral.org for more.



Droitwich Community Choir will perform its annual Spring Concert next Saturday - admission is free. s

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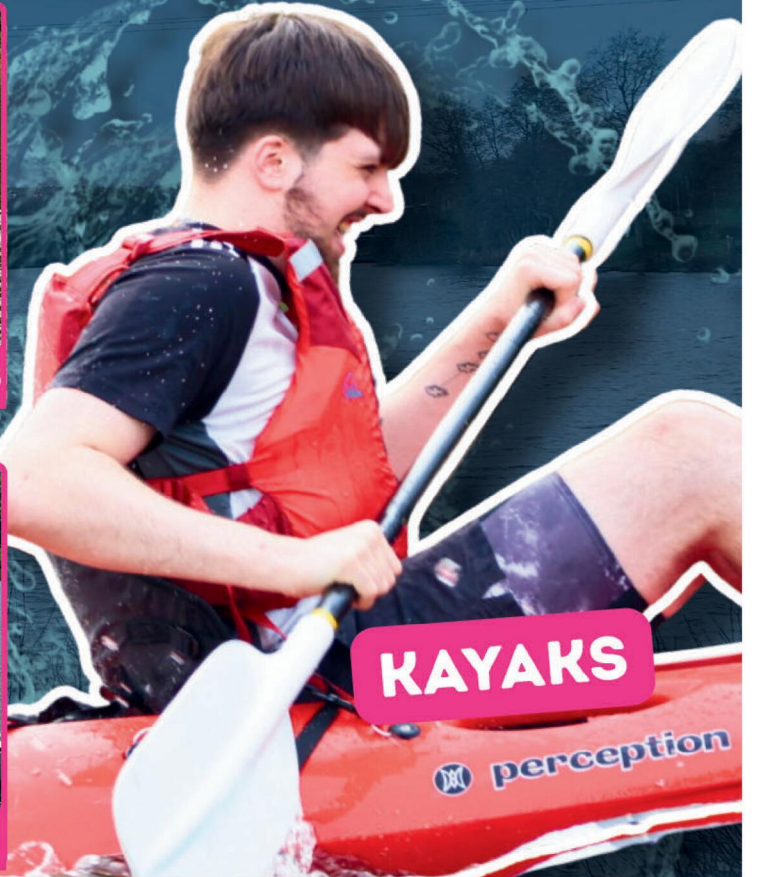
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April is a great time to get your boots on and get out in the garden. Take advantage of the clocks changing and get your garden ready for the season ahead.

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.

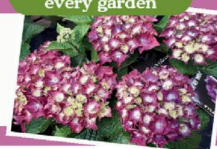
Growing your own plants, flowers and produce has a nurturing effect, boosting self-esteem and creating a sense of purpose.

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.

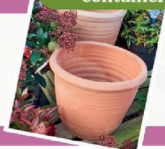
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Gardening Jobs for April



There's lots you can do in the garden in April, 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.



Gorgeous garden furniture



Home-grown bedding plants

Shrubs, perennials & trees

Taking to the streets to give riders top advice

THE Redditch Advanced Motorcyclist Group is running its latest taster day at the town's police and fire station, focusing on supporting motorcyclists on the road to become better riders

Following its success in 2025, the event organised in partnership with Police and Crime Commissioner John Campion, West Mercia Police and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, is an opportunity for motorcyclists to go along and ride for free with one of the group's qualified observers.

Following the 30-minute ride, feedback will be provided to understand what a rider is doing well and what they can improve.

Anyone interested in further learning and support is able to sign up to the Advanced Rider Course. The first 10 riders to sign up for the course will receive a £50 off voucher, which can be redeemed after passing the advanced test or attending 10 training sessions.

Alongside free refreshments, RMT Motorcycle Training will be providing advice to people on getting to the stage of taking their motorcycle test in conjunction with the Riders Hub.

West Mercia Police's BikeSafe team will also have a stall offering taster rides alongside those offered by RAMG and the opportunity to participate in future BikeSafe courses.

Phil Edwards, Chairman of Redditch Advanced Motorcyclist Group, said: "We are delighted to collaborate with West Mercia PCC and Hereford and

Worcester Fire Service again.

"Whilst our main objective is to improve the safety of motorcyclists through training, it is equally important to us that bikers have fun on their journeys.

"We firmly believe better-skilled riders are not only safer but get much more enjoyment from their bikes. It's a win-win. Why would you not give it a try?"

James Holder, Station Commander for Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, said: "Working from the same site with our police colleagues is already showing its worth as we work together towards making our roads safer for all.

"We look forward to welcoming motorcyclists from both Redditch and beyond and appreciate the opportunity to continue our fantastic relationship with Redditch Advanced Motorcycle Group."

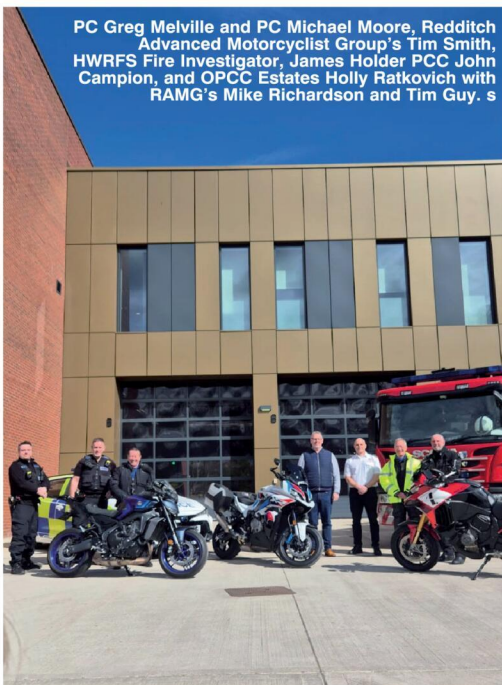
Mr Campion added education was one of the best ways to prevent lives being needlessly lost on the road, which is why he was supporting schemes like this to build riders' skills and confidence.

"With warmer weather on the way and more motorcycles out on the roads, it's vital riders feel equipped with the knowledge and experience to stay safe.

"Having completed the Advanced Rider Course myself, I know first-hand how valuable it is.

"It genuinely makes you a better, safer motorcyclist."

The session will run from 10am to 4pm on April 26.



Upwardly mobile

THE NEW Class 730 electric trains serving the Cross City Line have recorded the fastest speed over the Lickey Incline - the UK's steepest railway gradient.

Steam train era locomotives routinely had to have additional engines to take on the 1/37.7 gradient and to get uphill help.

Even today some heavy freight trains still need help.

Modern express trains, such as the CrossCountry Voyagers, routinely pass through Bromsgrove at 80 mph and with full power will fall to about 70 mph at the top of the hill and could be considered 'Kings of the Lickey'.

But, findings from The Railway Performance Society, show the Class 730 trains - introduced onto the Cross City Line in 2025 - can routinely accelerate to 75mph up the hill from a standing start as they journey between Bromsgrove and Lichfield.

Drivers even have to ease the power to avoid exceeding the 75mph speed limit at the top (Blackwell).

Passengers on the trains may notice the carriage is slightly inclined but in a 730 unit there is little impression that a steep hill is being climbed.

The classic single car DMUs that ran on this route would be doing about 25mph at the top from a standing start, a locomotive hauled express (pre-1990) would see speed fall from around 80mph to 35mph with a 10 coach train.

Exceptionally the former Bristol Glasgow Sleeper with its 15 or 16 coaches would require banking assistance to achieve about 30mph up the hill.

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Cadets put on a show for Mayor



Redditch Borough Mayor and Consort with Redditch and Bromsgrove Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets. s

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

BOROUGH Mayor Coun Joanna Kane visited Redditch and Bromsgrove Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets to watch the unit's ceremonial skill and a display.

Coun Kane, alongside the Consort John Kane, were shown around the unit by one of the newly promoted leading cadets to observe a variety of lessons, including the Royal Marines Cadets' preparation for their Easter camp and learning about ranks and rates.

At the end of the evening Coun Kane presented the cadets with their hard-earned qualifications and promotions.

She said: "It was a huge privilege to gain

an insight into the opportunities, experiences and values of the Sea Cadets.

"Recently, the unit won the Stephenson Trophy as the Best Unit in the South West Area, beating 80 other units, and now go forward to the national finals.

"In addition, Commanding Officer Lisa Wood received the South West Area 'Best Commanding Officer' award, progressing to national consideration for her work."

Coun Kane wished her congratulations to all the cadets.

She added: "A big thank you to everyone who has helped to make this possible, especially the volunteers, trustees and families.

"It was lovely to see the enthusiasm and dedication of the young people as they develop their confidence and other valuable life skills through the Sea Cadet programme.

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Friday 22nd May - Monday 25th May	Was £295 NOW £239pp
Friday 5th June - Monday 8th June	Was £295 NOW £262pp
Friday 12th June - Monday 15th June	Was £305 NOW £268pp
Friday 19th June - Monday 22nd June	Was £315 NOW £272pp







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College opens up for students

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

HEART of Worcestershire (HoW) College has announced an open event this month, to give prospective students a first-hand look at its courses.

From 9:30am until 12:30pm on Saturday, April 18, visitors are invited to explore HoW College's Worcester, Redditch, and Bromsgrove campuses, with the opportunity to tour facilities, meet tutors and discover the courses and pathways that best fit them.

HoW College will be welcoming students who are looking to secure their place before exams this year and applicants who want to attend to familiarise themselves with where they will be studying in September.

Worcester Campus

The multi-site Worcester campus offer courses in performing arts, hair and beauty, computing and IT, hospitality and catering, engineering and inclusive learning. It is also



home to dedicated centres for plumbing and automotive skills, at the Duckworth Centre of Engineering.

Facilities include the All Saints, St Andrew's and cathedral buildings, alongside the Duckworth Centre.

Bromsgrove Campus

The college's Bromsgrove site caters for students interested in everything from art and design to engineering, media production, electrical installation, management and professional qualifications.

Redditch Campus

At the Peakman Street site, visitors can explore courses in public services; hospitality and catering; hair and beauty; business; health and social care; and sports, travel and tourism.

Redditch also supports adult learners, with access to higher education and inclusive learning programmes. The Alliance House site specialises in construction training.

Exciting

Michelle Dowse, chief executive and principal at HoW College, said: "Our open event in April is a fantastic opportunity for prospective students and their families to experience the community we're so proud of."

"Choosing what to do next is a big decision, and we're here to make the journey as clear and exciting as possible."

"Visitors can explore our facilities, speak with our tutors, and gain a real insight into where their chosen course could lead."

Visit www.howcollege.ac.uk/about/open-events/april-open-event-2026/ for more details.

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July

11 RHS BADMINTON FLOWER SHOW **£65**

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A Seasonal Guide to Revitalising Your Space

SPRING is a time of renewal and rejuvenation, making it the perfect season to tackle various tasks around the home and garden.

As warmer temperatures set in and nature reawakens, homeowners can take advantage of this opportunity to enhance their living environments. In this guide, we'll explore a multitude of jobs that can be undertaken to ensure your home and garden are ready for the warmer months, focusing on maintenance, organisation, and cultivation.

Spring Cleaning: Refreshing Your Home

One of the first and most important tasks in the spring season is to conduct a thorough spring cleaning. This involves more than just your regular cleaning routine; it's about

deep cleaning every nook and cranny of your home.

- **Decluttering:** Begin by sorting through your belongings. Gather items that you no longer need or use and consider donating them or organising a garage sale. This will not only declutter your space but also make your home more inviting.
- **Dust and Clean:** Focus on areas that are often overlooked during routine cleaning, such as ceiling fans, light fixtures, baseboards, and behind appliances. Dust accumulated over the winter can trigger allergies, so a good spring clean can greatly improve your home environment.
- **Windows and Curtains:** Take the time to clean windows inside and out, allowing natural light to stream in. Wash or replace curtains and blinds, as this can instantly refresh a room.





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Spring Home and Garden

Garden Preparation: Embracing Nature's Growth

As the days become longer and warmer, the garden requires attention to prepare for a flourishing summer. Spring is a pivotal time for planting and nurturing your outdoor space.

- **Soil Preparation:** Start by inspecting your garden beds. Clear away any debris, weeds, or dead plants from the winter months. Consider testing your soil's pH and nutrient levels, as this will help you determine what amendments may be necessary to promote healthy

plant growth.

- **Planting:** Spring is ideal for planting a variety of flowers, vegetables, and herbs. Depending on your local climate, consider sowing seeds for vegetables such as peas, lettuce, and spinach. In terms of flowers, hardy annuals and perennials can be planted to bring a burst of colour to your garden.
- **Mulching:** Once your plants are in place, apply a layer of mulch to help retain soil moisture and suppress weeds. This will also give your garden beds a tidy appearance.



Lawn Care: Reviving Your Green Space

The lawn often requires extra care in the spring to ensure it remains lush and green throughout the growing season.

- **Mowing and Edging:** As the grass begins to grow, a regular mowing schedule will help keep it at an appropriate height. Additionally, edging the lawn can create a polished look and define borders

between lawn and garden beds.

- **Overseeding:** Consider overseeding your lawn with a good quality grass seed to fill in thin or bare patches. This promotes a thicker, healthier lawn that is more resistant to pests and disease.
- **Fertilising:** Spring is the perfect time to fertilise your lawn, as it will stimulate growth. Choose a slow-release fertiliser suitable for your specific type of grass.



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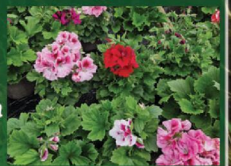
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Home Maintenance: Proactive Upkeep

Spring is an ideal time to inspect and maintain your home's systems and structures, ensuring everything operates smoothly.

- **Roof Inspection:** After harsh winter weather, check your roof for any damage, such as missing tiles or leaks. Be proactive; fix any issues now to avoid more extensive repairs later.
- **Gutter Cleaning:** Clear any debris from gutters and downspouts to prevent blockages. This is essential to ensure proper drainage and prevent water damage to your home.
- **Heating and Cooling Systems:** Have your heating system serviced to prepare for the transition into the warmer months. If you have air conditioning, ensure it is cleaned and serviced to be ready for the summer heat.

Outdoor Spaces: Enhancing Your Experience

Spring is not only about upkeep; it's also an opportunity to improve and enhance your outdoor living areas.


- **Patio and Deck Maintenance:** Inspect your patio and deck for any signs of wear and tear. Clean the surfaces and check for loose boards or railings. A fresh coat of paint or sealant can improve longevity and aesthetics.
- **Garden Furniture:** Wash outdoor



furniture and inspect for any damage. Consider reupholstering or simply rearranging your furniture to maximise space and enjoy your garden more thoroughly.

- **Creating Zones:** If your garden space

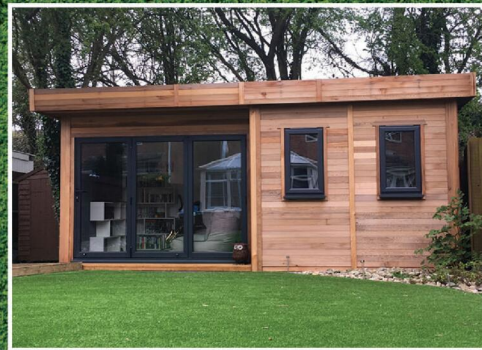
allows, consider creating different zones for various activities—like a relaxation area, a vegetable patch, and a play area for children. This creates a multifunctional space that can cater to all family needs.



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Spring Home and Garden

Creating a Vegetable Garden: Growing Your Own Food

With fresh produce increasingly sought after, consider establishing or expanding a vegetable garden. This not only provides food but connects you with the cycle of nature.



- **Choosing Crops:** Select crops that are well-suited to your climate. Start with easy-to-grow vegetables such as tomatoes, cucumbers, and peppers. Herbs like basil and mint can also thrive in pots or garden beds.

- **Raised Beds:** If you have limited space or poor soil quality, consider building raised garden beds. They can be customised to your height and will improve drainage, making gardening easier and more productive.
- **Companion Planting:** Research companion planting techniques to maximise yield and deter pests organically. For example, planting marigolds among vegetables can help protect against nematodes.

Enhancing Wildlife Habitats: Supporting Local Ecosystems

As you work on your garden, think about ways to make it more inviting for wildlife. A healthy ecosystem is beneficial not just for nature but for your garden's health.

- **Bird Feeders and Baths:** Install bird feeders or birdbaths to attract local bird species. This can help with pest control while providing enjoyment for you and your family.
- **Pollinator Plants:** Plant flowers that attract bees and butterflies, such as lavender, echinacea, and sunflowers. These plants will not only enhance your garden's beauty but also support critical pollinators.
- **Composting:** Consider starting a compost pile or bin to recycle kitchen scraps and garden waste. This will enrich your soil and reduce waste, creating a more sustainable gardening.



Conclusion: Embracing the Spirit of Spring

Spring is a magical time, full of promise and potential. Taking a proactive approach to both your home and garden cultivates an inviting atmosphere for relaxation and enjoyment. By engaging in these various jobs, you will not only maintain your living space but also create a sanctuary that reflects the beauty of the season. As you embrace the warmth and vibrancy of spring, your home and garden will flourish, providing the perfect backdrop for countless cherished memories.

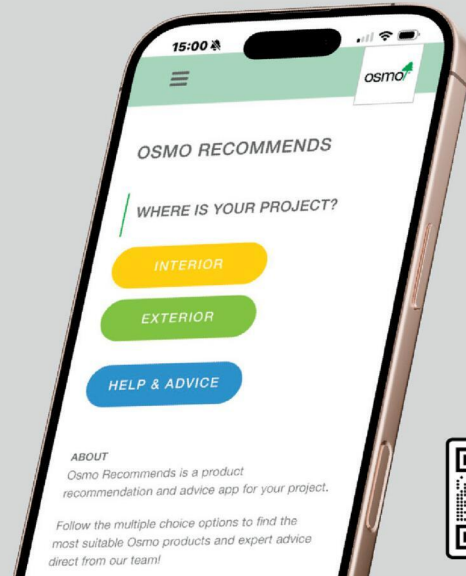
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Tackling the peaks

A TEAM from West Mercia Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (WMRSASC) will tackle the Welsh Three Peaks Challenge in May.

The intrepid group will be raising funds to support survivors of sexual violence across Worcestershire and the wider West Mercia region.

On May 2, staff will climb Snowdon, Cadair Idris and Pen y Fan within 24 hours – covering more than 17 miles and 2,330 metres of ascent – as part of the charity’s 40th anniversary year. The challenge represents both a physical test of endurance and a powerful statement of support for survivors, helping ensure specialist, trauma-informed services remain accessible to those who need them most across Worcestershire.

Jocelyn Anderson, chief executive of WMRSASC, said: “This challenge is about more than reaching the summit. It’s about standing alongside survivors and recognising the strength it takes to seek support and to rebuild.

“For 40 years, WMRSASC has been there for people at some of the most difficult moments in their lives. We are proud of that

work, but we also know the need for our services continues to grow.

“Every donation helps ensure that survivors across our communities have somewhere safe to turn - now and in the future.”

WMRSASC’s services include counselling, early intervention and prevention work, helping survivors access timely, expert support.

The organisation provides free, specialist support to survivors of sexual violence across Herefordshire, Worcestershire and Shropshire.

The service supports adults, children and young people, helping them process trauma, rebuild confidence and move forward with their lives.

Counselling services team lead and adult counsellor Lydia Johnson said: “Through funding counselling sessions, you are giving people the chance to take their power back and change their lives – and that is priceless.”

WMRSASC is encouraging donors across Worcestershire to support the challenge by donating, sharing the campaign or cheering the team on.

Visit /www.justgiving.com/campaign/wmrsasc-welsh-three-peaks to donate.

Enjoy Exclusive, Evergreen Spring Edition of Seasons



Following on from the fantastic response to our debut 'Winter' edition of Seasons, we're delighted to announce that Seasons 'Spring' edition has now Sprung.

As the days grow longer and our towns, villages and the countryside emerge from the long dark days of winter, we are all enjoying the arrival of the 'Spring' of 2026.

Pick up a copy locally for free, or simply browse on line
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The 'Spring' edition of Seasons is a celebration of all things 'local'. It's uplifting, inspiring and quintessentially local across the three counties of Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands.

The beautifully glossy A5 magazine is freely available in print, from a major supermarket near you - and, the 'Spring' edition of Seasons is also available 24/7 on line and...it's being showcased across all of our local Observer and Standard Newspapers, websites and social media platforms, and will continue to be so, for the next 12 months.

Enjoy the exclusive, evergreen, 'Spring' edition of Seasons by logging on to www.seasons-magazine.com

You can still browse the 'Winter' edition of Seasons 24/7 and now, you can enjoy the 'Spring' edition of Seasons too!

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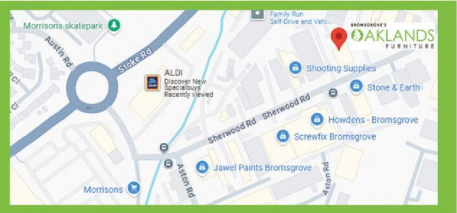
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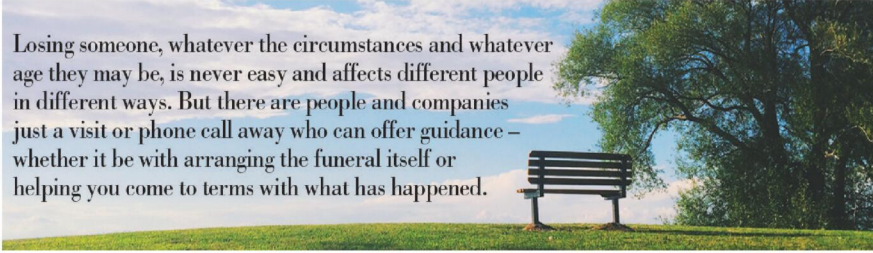
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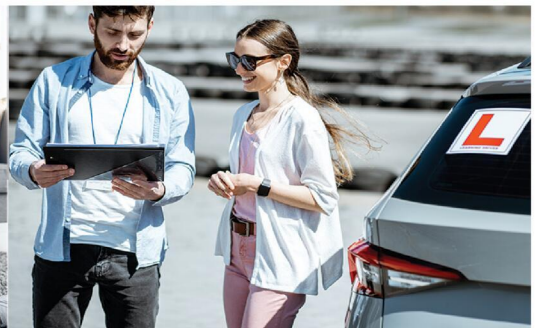


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 Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

C41 PELHAM LANE, GREAT ALNE AND C46 PELHAM LANE, HASELOR
Order Effect: Roads closed between Henley Road/Village Road and Walcot Road/Lower Haselor Lane.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching works, closed 09.30hrs-15.00 hrs.
Order Commences: 27 April 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 1 May 2026.
Access & Diversion: B4089 Henley Road/Alcester Road, Whitehouse Hill, Bearley Road, Wilmore Lane, Billesley Road, A46, Trench Lane (Stratford Road), Lower Haselor Lane and vice versa. Vehicular access & egress will be maintained where possible and safe to do so for businesses and residents only. There will be no access/egress to/from Wood Lane via Pelham Lane whilst works are in progress.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415302.

RIBSDALE CLOSE, SALFORD PRIORS
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to rectify defect in the carriageway.
Order Commences: 28 April 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 30 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: School Road, St Matthews Close, Perkins Close and vice versa.
Contractor: M&A Doocoy Civil Engineering Limited, Tel: 0121 520 9874.

WILLOUGHBY CLOSE AND KINGS COUGHTON, ALCESTER
Order Effect: Roads closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To safely enable sewer lining works.
Order Commences: 27 April 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 28 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Kings Coughton Lane, Alcester Heath, Birmingham Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Sapphire Utility Solutions, Tel: 07775 714473.

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

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

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 9 April 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE OR CLUB PREMISES CERTIFICATE TO BE GRANTED UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003
 Name of applicant/club: **Fab Festivals Ltd** Postal address of premises/club premises or description: **Fab Festival - Redditch Rugby Club, Bromsgrove Road, Redditch, B97 4SP**

The applicant proposes to carry out the following licensable activities or qualifying club activities on or from the above premises/club premises: **Live music, recorded music, performances of dance and the sale by retail of alcohol for consumption on and off the premises during the period Saturday 23 May 2026 to Monday 25 May 2026 (inclusive).** The proposed hours are: **live music 12:00 to 22:00 on Saturday and Sunday and 12:00 to 18:00 on Monday; recorded music, performances of dance and sale of alcohol 11:00 to 22:30 on Saturday and Sunday and 11:00 to 19:00 on Monday.**

Representations by interested parties or responsible authorities should be made in writing to Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Wyre Forest House, Finepoint Way, Kidderminster, DY11 7WF or enquiries@worscsregservices.gov.uk by **6th May 2026**

The record of the application is available for inspection by appointment. Please call us on 01905 822799 for an appointment. IT IS AN OFFENCE, LIABLE ON CONVICTION TO AN UNLIMITED FINE, UNDER SECTION 158 OF THE LICENSING ACT 2003 TO KNOWINGLY OR RECKLESSLY MAKE A FALSE STATEMENT IN, OR IN CONNECTION WITH, AN APPLICATION

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 Comments can be submitted online, via email to newplan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk or in writing Planning Services, Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
 Comments should be made within 17 days of the date of this publication. The Council does not acknowledge comments but will make these available for inspection online.

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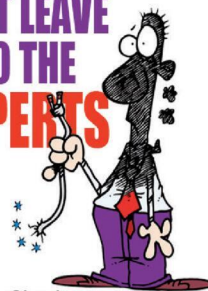
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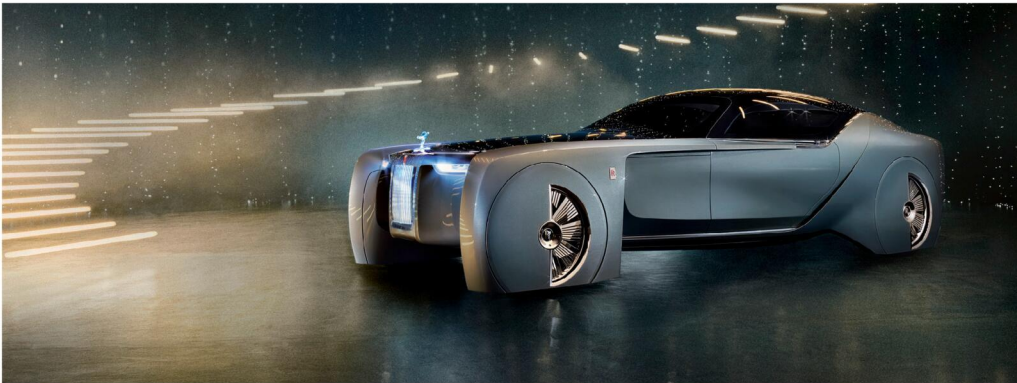
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THIS YEAR Rolls-Royce Motor Cars marks a special triple anniversary - three groundbreaking Experimental (EX) motor cars, built during the Goodwood-era, are recording 20, 15 and 10 years since their respective unveilings.

Each of these motor cars played a foundational role in establishing Rolls-Royce's contemporary design language, technology, engineering hallmarks and commitment to Bespoke individualisation.

Unlike conventional concept cars, which are used to ask the market what it wants, EX motor cars are developed to answer specific needs and desires.

These models were identified through Rolls-Royce's deep understanding of its clients and a clear view of what comes next.

They allow Rolls-Royce's engineers to evaluate innovative technologies, advanced production methods, and bold new material palettes. The three Goodwood-era EX cars are part of a through-line going back to 1EX, which Henry Royce built in 1919.

101EX made its debut at the 2006 Geneva Motor Show.

A full four-seat coupé with twin coach doors, it was built on the same aluminium spaceframe as Phantom VII, but is 240 mm shorter.

Combined with bodywork constructed from carbon fibre composite, and power from a 6.75-litre V12 engine, it was designed to have a more performance- and driver-focused character than its larger sibling.

It also has a lower roofline and shallower glass area - the Pantheon grille is discreetly reclined and extended back across a brushed aluminium bonnet and wind-screen surround.

102EX has a unique place in history as the first battery electric vehicle (BEV) ever built by Rolls-Royce.

Also known as the Phantom Experimental Electric (EE), it was created as a one-off, working test bed for alternative drive-train technologies.

Thus represented the first tangible step on the road that would lead to the advent of Spectre, more than a decade later.

One of the most significant engineering challenges was converting everything that runs directly off the engine in a standard motor car, from power steering and ABS to heating and audio, to battery power.

102EX had what was then the largest capacity battery fitted to a motor car anywhere in the world: its wireless induction charging system was also a world first.

Following its Geneva debut, 102EX embarked on a year-long 'world tour' of client, media and public events, culminating in a landmark appearance at the prestigious Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas.

In 2016, the marque commissioned a special 'Vision' motor car named 103EX, which would define the future of luxury.

Hand-built using the most advanced materials, and powered by a zero emissions powertrain, it revealed a future in which Rolls-Royce offered clients a completely personal, effortless and autonomous experience.

The passenger cabin, known as 'The Grand Sanctuary', surrounds

occupants with precious and contemporary materials carefully chosen to create a feeling of lightness, simplicity and effortless elegance. The seats are replaced with an opulent sofa, which, thanks to artful lighting, appears to 'float' within the cocoon of the cabin.

At 5.9 metres long and 1.6 metres high - the same dimensions as Phantom Extended - 103EX guarantees a Grand Arrival for its owner. For the first time, the Spirit of Ecstasy was made in glass and illuminated from below.

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Spa beaten by Pegasus again as play-off race intensifies

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: DROITWICH Spa shipped five goals in a home defeat against Hereford Pegasus after battling to a narrow victory away at Longlevens AFC.

Spa suffered a 5-3 home defeat against Challenge Cup final opponents Hereford at the King George Playing Fields on Easter Monday.

That came after Droitwich ended a three-game winless run with a 1-0 victory at Longlevens at Saw Mills End.

The results mean Spa sit fourth in the Hellenic League Premier Division table, four points clear of the chasing pack in the race for a play-off spot.

Droitwich came up short against Hereford for the third time this season as Jordan Williamson scored four goals for the visitors to blow the Saltmen away.

Hereford raced into a three-goal lead as Jack Calvillo-Howes broke the deadlock on 17 minutes following a goalmouth scramble at a corner.

And Pegasus doubled their lead on 23 minutes when Williamson tapped home after a long throw from the left reached the striker at the back post.

Williamson struck again for the visitors two minutes later as his shot deflected off Reiss Taylor-Randle and into the net.



Ben Tilbury crashes a header against the crossbar. Picture by Mathew Mason.

Spa immediately reduced the deficit when Taylor-Randle finished from close range.

And Droitwich closed the gap to a single goal after the break

on 53 minutes as substitute Alex Dugmore burst through and produced a confident finish past the goalkeeper.

However, Williamson completed

his hat-trick on 62 minutes with a chip over the onrushing Joe Stockton following a mix-up at the back.

And Williamson scored his fourth

goal of the game 10 minutes later after the Droitwich defence failed to deal with a long goal kick.

The Saltmen scored a consolation goal on 89 minutes when Ben Tilbury finished from the penalty spot after Carlos Moreira handled the ball in the box.

However, prior to defeat against Hereford, Spa ended a run of three games without a win at Longlevens as Charlie Tilley's first-half goal proved decisive.

Longlevens went close early on as Jack Beardsell headed wide of goal when well-placed in the opening couple of minutes.

However, the Saltmen broke the deadlock on 27 minutes when Tilley finished Nathan Binner's through ball from close range.

Spa almost added a second goal as James Baldwin saw his effort saved after he dribbled past several Longlevens defenders.

And James Lemon could not keep his follow-up effort under control as the ball sailed wide of the post.

Longlevens pushed for a leveller late on in the second half as Lemon headed the ball off the line following a corner.

And Spa goalkeeper Stockton made two crucial stops at the death as he first kept out Cameron Williams' free-kick and then denied Beardsell from close range.

Droitwich are next in action against Worcester Raiders on Saturday, April 11 with kick-off at 3pm at the Diary of a Debt Collector Stadium.

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