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**SME** UK Legal Awards 2026

# County signals intent to improve A38 lights

by **Ryan Smith**  
[ryans.mith@bullivantmedia.com](mailto:ryans.mith@bullivantmedia.com)

**CAMPAIGNERS** are celebrating after improvements are set to be carried out to improve traffic at the A38 Copcut junction.

Safety concerns centred on traffic lights at the junction, which operate on a fixed timer, leading to long delays along the A38.

A petition was launched by Coun Richard Morris calling for improvements to the junction and it has gained almost 850 signatures.

Local councillors have been pushing Worcestershire County Council to take action for around a year.

The petition claimed congestion caused by the lights had been affecting residents and businesses, as well as the image of Droitwich, and called for an urgent, improved solution.

The county council has said that, following ongoing public comments and concerns regarding the A38 Copcut 'traffic signalised junction', technology improvements are being planned.

A spokesperson for the authority said: "Worcestershire County Council has been monitoring the new signalised junction in recent months and it is recognised that when the M5



From left: Couns Dan Birch, Richard Morris and Seb James have been fighting for improvements on the A38 Copcut junction. s

motorway has delays and closures, the A38 becomes heavily congested.

"However, concerns about more regular local congestion happening have also been assessed to see if further improvements can be made.

"We will be working on these signals next month and, following this,

a period of monitoring to see the effects and benefits achieved [will be undertaken]."

Coun Morris said: "Thank you to everyone who supported and signed the petition and, whilst it has taken a long time, at least now we can see some positive action to make

improvements, and the promise to further monitor. I pass this junction every day and see the issues, frustration and annoyance of drivers.

"I see and hear the issues daily and thank my fellow local councillors, Couns Seb James and Dan Birch, for helping to get some action."

## Teenagers arrested

FOUR teenagers have been arrested after a "frightening" robbery in Droitwich which saw raiders in balaclavas steal a phone and cash card.

At around 5pm on Sunday, a victim was approached on Burrish Street by children in balaclavas. They blocked his path and demanded he empty his pockets.

The raiders stole the victim's mobile phone and bank card.

The boys, aged 14, 15, 15 and 16 were arrested on Tuesday, on suspicion of robbery. They were taken into custody for questioning and released on bail, pending further enquiries.

Safer neighbourhood inspector for Droitwich Lisa Hornberger said: "This was a frightening ordeal for the victim, who was targeted in broad daylight by a group intent on intimidation and theft. Incidents like this will not be tolerated.

"We are committed to taking robust action against those responsible."

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# Bench unveiled for Bletchley Park codebreaker Betty Webb

by Ashleigh Osborne  
ashleigh.osborne@bullivantmedia.com

**A MEMORIAL bench has been installed at the Gorse Lotts War Memorial in Wythall to honour Bletchley Park codebreaker and Second World War veteran Charlotte 'Betty' Webb MBE, Légion d'honneur.**

The ceremony was attended by family members, friends, residents and invited guests and celebrated Betty's remarkable life and enduring legacy of service to both her country and her local community.

Betty served during the Second World War as a member of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS), contributing to vital wartime work at both Bletchley Park and later at the Pentagon.

In peacetime, she dedicated many decades of service to the local community through Wythall Parish Council, offering her time, wisdom and commitment in support of public life.

The memorial bench was commissioned by Wythall Parish Council, with a contribution towards the bench made by Betty's family.

The service was started by piper

Andy Decomyn, followed by a welcome from Coun Dianne Taylor, Chairman of Wythall Parish Council.

Coun Taylor said: "Betty devoted herself tirelessly to public service in the local community.

"She served Wythall Parish Council for many decades with wisdom, kindness and unmovable commitment.

"Betty's legacy lives on, not only in our nations history but also in the hearts of the community she served so faithfully."

Col (Retired) Ali Brown from the Women's Royal Army Corps told stories of her and Betty's time together, and the lasting impact Betty had on the role of women in the Army.

"Sometimes when the phone rings now I wish it could be her."

Her family also paid tribute, saying how she would not only be remembered for her service, but also her warmth and kindness.

Coun Taylor finished the service by remembering one of the saddest stories Betty told her.

"Unfortunately Betty's parents knew nothing of her work during the war as they died before the lifting of the Official Secrets Act.

"They had no opportunity to be proud of her, well today, all of us here can say we're proud of her."



LEFT: Council members, dignitaries and friends joined to remember Betty Webb MBE. Copyright Bullivant Media.



LEFT: Betty with her invitation to the King's Coronation. Picture by Marcus Mingins.



BELOW: The bench has been installed at Gorse Lotts War Memorial. Copyright Bullivant Media



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See page **28**





These new outdoor facilities will help youngsters to learn. s

## Cooking up muddy play

YOUNGSTERS at Hanbury CofE First School will be able to develop in the great outdoors thanks to a new early-years outside learning area.

Brand new early years and pre-school amenities have been opened at the school as part of an £850,000 transformation project.

They include a heated teepee classroom which will enable youngsters to play, experiment and develop; and an art area; a stage; climbing equipment; and a 'mud kitchen'.

During the day, pre-school students will be able to participate in group activities led by a teacher on the carpet area, such

as reading books, singing songs and playing games.

An official opening ceremony, to unveil the brand new classrooms, outdoor space, playground, reading garden and heated teepee, will take place on June 23.

A school spokesperson said: "We're incredibly proud of what has been created and excited to watch all the learning and adventures that will unfold here."

"The transformation has created an inspiring and engaging environment and, most importantly, the children are flourishing in it."

"The new space offers a wide range

of exciting opportunities for exploration, creativity and physical development.

"Our art area encourages children to express themselves freely, using a variety of materials in outdoor play."

"The stage has quickly become a hub for imaginative play, performances and storytelling, building confidence and communication skills."

The spokesperson added, the water play area has been a huge hit, providing sensory experiences and problem solving and the mud kitchen is full of messy, creative fun, and perfect for role-playing.

The challenging climbing equipment helps children build strength, co-ordination and resilience. "It's wonderful to see children so engaged, active and happy in a space designed for them," added the spokesperson.

# Council to get tough on litter tossed from cars

## Officers can fine offenders £250

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

**DRIVERS** who drop rubbish from vehicles in Bromsgrove could face fines of up to £250, as part of an environmental crime clampdown.

At a Bromsgrove District Council meeting on Wednesday, members voted to empower civil enforcement officers to issue litter penalty charge notices (PCNs) if they spot rubbish being thrown out of cars.

Officers are already out on the streets enforcing parking rules and issuing PCNs.

A report from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) – the organisation which carries out enforcement action for the council – states the officers will help to catch those littering from vehicles in the act.

The partnership working arrangement agreed will enable the council to issue litter PCNs to the owner or keeper responsible for cars if a littering offence is seen.

The littering fine is £250 but reduces to £125 if paid within two weeks.

Bromsgrove District Councillor Kit Taylor, whose portfolio covers the WRS, said: "While this will not detract from the day-to-day job of our parking enforcement officers, if they do see someone littering they can do something about it."

"Hopefully this will also act as a deterrent and prove this council will not tolerate people disrespecting our district and making it an eyesore for our residents and communities."

"The message is loud and clear: please keep your rubbish in your car until you are able to dispose of it correctly, if you want to avoid a fine."

Over the next few months, equipment and licences will need to be updated to issue the fines and the scheme will go live later this year.

Members also agreed, on Wednesday, to adopt the Bromsgrove and Redditch enforcement policy, written by WRS, to replace the joint environmental enforcement strategy.

The new code complements the council's ability to enforce fixed-penalty notices for environmental crimes, including fly-tipping, whilst educating residents and businesses on how they can legally dispose of waste.

The council's cabinet member for environmental services, Coun Peter Whittaker, said: "It shouldn't be down to our place team and our litter-pickers to clean up our district, especially if it has been dropped in the road, placing them at risk."

"Let's be proud of Bromsgrove, and don't drop rubbish in the first place."

People who witness litter being dropped can visit [bromsgrove.gov.uk/reportlittering](http://bromsgrove.gov.uk/reportlittering) to report it.

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## Former Reform UK members launch an independent group

A FOURTH councillor elected to represent Reform UK on Worcestershire County Council quit the party to go independent at the weekend.

Coun Matthew Jones, who represents Kidderminster - St John's, joined the newly formed Worcestershire Independents Group.

The group was launched last week by Coun Ashley Monk who was suspended by Reform UK last week and Coun David Taylor. Coun

Monk had just been elected to represent Reform UK on Redditch Borough Council to go with his Worcestershire County Council seat.

Coun Jones said, while he still supported Reform UK's aims and objectives nationally, he was 'fed up with the mind games and playground antics at a local level'.

"The public don't care about the drama behind closed doors.

"They care about roads, services, value for money, safety, opportunities for their children and having councillors who actually listen.

"I'll continue to speak honestly, stand up for local people and focus on what really matters doing the best for Worcestershire and the people who call it home."

Coun Taylor said Coun Jones brought a willingness to listen, a deep passion for his local area and a relentless drive to help those in need.

"I know Matthew well. He will add genuine value to the group and, like the rest of us, is determined to remove the political circus from local government so we can focus on the job in front of us."

And Coun Taylor said he 'expected further growth' on the Worcestershire Independents Group.

The changes now mean Reform UK are the largest party on Worcestershire County Council with 22 seats. The Conservatives are second with 12, the Greens and Independents are third with 10, the Lib Dems have seven, Worcestershire Independents Group has four and Labour has two.



# Green leader

LEFT: Coun Matt Jenkins was voted in as the new leader of Worcestershire County Council last Thursday. s

another 12 months like this."

Coun Kent, who was elected as deputy leader, slammed the 'public resignations', 'internal feuding', 'leadership coups', 'councillors walking away' and added: "This council has been better known for drama rather than delivery.

"The public are watching from afar and thinking: 'if this is what Government is all about, it has to change'.

"Worcestershire deserves stability, competence, honesty and mature leadership.

"It needs mutual respect between groups who need to put the county before party politics."

Reform UK deputy leader Richard Tice MP slammed the move and accused Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch of 'personally signing off on her party jumping into bed with the Green Party'.

"After bankrupting Worcestershire County Council when they were in charge, the Tories have now inflicted on local residents a radical outfit that wants an amnesty for all illegal migrants and the blanket legalisation of every drug."

Last Thursday, Coun Kent was suspended by the national Conservative Party pending an investigation into the incident.

Then this week, three of his fellow Tory councillors - Coun Karen May, Coun Marcus Hart and Coun Adrian Hardman - quit their cabinet roles in Health, Education and Finance respectively, due to being instructed to do so by Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ).

Coun May told the Standard: "Regardless of this, all three of us are committed to working hard for residents and doing what is best for them on this council."

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Mark Willis will be trekking 250 miles with a 25kg trailer and needs somewhere to pitch his tent for two nights in Bromsgrove. Inset: Mark's four-legged friend Nina will be accompanying him on the charity walk. s

# Can you help Mark and Nina?

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

**A MAN who is taking on a gruelling 250-mile charity trek along canal towpaths is appealing for help in finding a place to pitch his tent in Bromsgrove or Stoke Prior.**

Mark Willis will be walking with rescue dog Nina in July, for Battersea Dogs and Cats Home and the Canal and River Trust.

The fundraiser, who will be entirely self-funded and self-supported, will be hauling the pair's gear in a 25kg trolley the entire way.

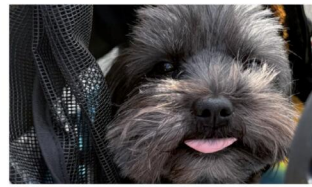
When Mark and Nina pass through Bromsgrove, on July 1 and again on July 22, they will need a place where they can pitch their tent for those nights.

Mark told *The Standard*: "We are turning to the Bromsgrove community.

"We are desperately looking for a local hero.

"If a local farmer, pub landlord or canalside resident near Bridge 42 could spare a tiny patch of grass for a single tent on July 1 or 22, it would be absolutely amazing.

"We've received loads of offers for overnight safe camping spots but Stoke Prior, on our first and penul-



imate nights, is proving difficult to nail down. Our route passes directly through the Stoke Prior area, around Shaw Lane and Bridge 42."

Mark added, because of the 25kg trolley and the need to keep Nina safe, wild camping on the exposed towpath in that specific area was simply not an option, and that has currently left them without a safe harbour for the night.

Regarding the trip, Mark added: "The campaign has gained incredible momentum.

"We received an official letter of support from His Majesty The King, and major national YouTubers – including Ashley Neal, Narrowboat Life Unlocked and Cruising the Cut – are joining us along the route.

"They are helping to promote the campaign."

Anyone who can help Mark and Nina can email mark@surplex.co.uk to get in touch.

## Crematorium hit by vandals

AN INVESTIGATION has been launched after Waseley Hills Crematorium was vandalised.

Shocked staff at the New Inns Lane site received a call from a family on May 10, saying numerous memorials within the cemetery had been damaged.

A statement said, while no headstones had been vandalised, some graves with statues, lights and flowers were criminally damaged.

The statement added: "We have done our best to rectify the issues and clean up the cemetery.

"This matter has been reported to the police and an incident has been logged."

A West Mercia Police spokesperson said the force had received the report of criminal damage and an investigation is ongoing.

■ AN ENTREPRENEUR who co-founded the clothing company Gymshark has been named as the 10th wealthiest person in the West Midlands in the latest *Sunday Times* Rich List.

Ben Francis, who was born and grew up in Bromsgrove, is worth an estimated £800million, putting him among the region's highest earners.

When it comes to the list's wealthiest under-40s, Mr Francis' fortune puts him top in the West Midlands and fifth in the UK-wide list.

Mr Francis, who attended South Bromsgrove High School, co-founded Gymshark in 2012 with Lewis Morgan, whilst they were studying at Aston University together. They began screen-printing and selling fitness clothing in Mr Francis' parents' garage.

Gymshark has its headquarters in Solihull and reportedly generated a record £646million in revenue for the last financial year.

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# Striding ahead for Primrose



Jenna was one of four runners who helped raise £13,481 for the Primrose Hospice by taking on this year's London Marathon.

**FOUR runners raised £13,481 for the Primrose Hospice after taking on this year's London Marathon.**

The cash will go towards helping the hospice and the family support centre.

One of the runners, Jenna, said: "Thank you so much - I had a smashing day and loved seeing you on the course."

"It was an absolute pleasure being part of Team Primrose and I'm so proud of how much we've raised so far."

"I loved all the updates and support you gave - honestly, I can't thank you enough for the effort from the Primrose team."

"It was an incredible experience and I loved every second of it."

The Primrose Hospice said it was extremely proud of all four runners and everyone who so kindly supported them.

"Congratulations to the amazing Team Primrose London Marathon runners - you've done something truly special."

The charity needs £1.95 million every year to keep its doors open, so relies on the generosity of fundraisers and donations.

Anyone wanting to be considered for the 2027 London Marathon, via one of the Primrose Hospice charity places, should visit: [primrosehospice.org/events/run-for-primrose/](http://primrosehospice.org/events/run-for-primrose/) before May 31.

The page also contains a list of Midlands summer running challenges, including in Bromsgrove, Redditch and Malvern.

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Friday 12th June - Monday 15th June	Was £305 <b>NOW £262pp</b>
Friday 19th June - Monday 22nd June	Was £305 <b>NOW £272pp</b>
Friday 26th June - Monday 29th June	Was £315 <b>NOW £272pp</b>
Friday 3rd July - Monday 6th July	Was £319 <b>NOW £279pp</b>
Friday 31st July - Monday 3rd August	Was £325 <b>NOW £283pp</b>
Friday 28th August - Monday 31st August	Was £339 <b>NOW £295pp</b>

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# Community hub opens doors for music-making and stem cell drive

**THERE will be two special events in Clent next Saturday, May 30, offering families a morning of music-making, community spirit and the chance to save a life.**



Kate Gallimore is urging people to sign up to the DKMS stem cell register after she, herself, found a matching donor.

Clent Connect, the village's much-loved community hub and cafe, is opening its doors from 10am to 1pm for a morning packed with activities for all ages.

Families can go along, enjoy a cuppa and a homemade cake in the cafe hub and take part in two very different but equally inspiring events.

Join the Band sees Worcestershire's much-celebrated Music Box bus, run by Severn Arts, roll into the village for a free event.

It will be parked up at Clent Connect for the morning and children and young people are invited to climb aboard and discover the joy of digital music-making.

Working in small groups, participants will get hands-on experience with drum machines, synthesisers, electric guitar, DJ decks and a vocal booth, recreating and recording their favourite sounds using professional music software.

Sessions are open to all ages and no previous musical experience is needed.

Supported by Arts Council England and the Department for Education, Severn Arts is a thriving charitable arts company which has been bringing music and creative arts to people across Worcestershire since 2018. It works in partnership with schools, libraries and community venues to ensure music-making is accessible to everyone.

## Life-saving

As part of the DKMS stem cell registration drive, the message is 'a simple swab could save a life'.

Blood cancer charity DKMS will be at Clent Connect encouraging adults aged 16 to 55 to join the stem cell donor register.

The event is championed by Kate Gallimore, a local surgeon and Clent resident whose own story brings the cause powerfully to life.

Kate was diagnosed with blood cancer after developing unexplained fatigue and a persistent rash.

She found a matching donor on the stem cell register and, thanks to that unrelated donor, has made a full recovery.

She is now back working in the NHS and has set up a community artists group, a studio and a gallery.

Kate is urging others to sign up so that more patients can have the same second chance at life she was given.

Registering with DKMS takes seconds - visitors pick up a free swab kit on the day and swab the inside of their cheeks.

DKMS then analyses the sample to determine tissue type, adding the donor to a global register which gives blood cancer patients worldwide a better chance of finding a match.

Every 14 minutes, someone in the UK is diagnosed with blood



Sally Stuart, Carol Hawkins, Jim Yarwood, Carol Bates, Helen Jordan and Peter Bates are gearing up for some music-making. Picture by Marcus Mingins 2126007MMR

cancer.

Four in ten patients do not find a matching donor.

DKMS, which launched in the UK in 2013, has registered more than 1million potential blood stem cell donors in Britain and has helped give more than 2,500 people a sec-

ond chance at life.

Registration is open to anyone aged 16 to 55 who is in general good health.

Visit: [dkms.org.uk](http://dkms.org.uk) for more on the stem cell register and go to: [clentconnect.co.uk](http://clentconnect.co.uk) for more on Clent Connect.



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

**REDDITCH** residents are in for a treat this summer when internationally renowned dance-circus Motionhouse will perform two of its acclaimed outdoor productions free of charge.

People will be able to see *Captive* at several locations over the May half-term bank holiday weekend and can catch hit show *WILD* in the town centre on June 20.

The performances will be part of Reimagine Redditch's Makers in Motion project, which is inspired by Redditch as a manufacturing town – for needles, springs, lamps, bikes etcetera.

Feedback, given to Reimagine Redditch, that people wanted more ambition, has also contributed to Motionhouse's invite.

The company will stage its live performances to deliver an 18-month co-creation project with communities which will end with a final performance in summer 2028.

Louise Richards, executive director of Motionhouse, said performers cannot wait to arrive in Redditch.

"We believe dance is for everyone, so it's going to be fantastic to share our work in the heart of communities across the area," said Louise.

Richard Bromhall, Reimagine Redditch's programme director, said: "We're thrilled



people across the borough can experience the Motionhouse performances for themselves." He added, it would be a stunning cultural event.

From tomorrow (Saturday) until Monday, there will be three chances to catch the *Captive* show – an exciting mix of dance, acrobatics and aerial work inside a cage (pictured).

Free performances will take place at three key locations at 1pm daily, with no need to book.

Tomorrow, the first show will be at the Tesco Redditch Extra car park, on Coldfield Drive. On Sunday it will be at Morton Stanley Park, in the circular area near the car park, and will be followed by a free family workshop with the Motionhouse dancers for children aged five to 12 and their guardians.

The last performance, on Monday, May 25, will be at Arrow Valley Country Park, near the Boathouse cafe, and will be followed by a free workshop with the Motionhouse dancers, this time for 12- to 18-year-olds.

## ARTRIX UPDATE

### 31ST MAY 2026 - MEMBERSHIP LAUNCH

Artrix 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 31<sup>st</sup> 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](http://artrixbromsgrove.co.uk/membershiplaunch)

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Standby Tickets may be bought online or by phone as well as in-person and the price will be announced daily.

**£30.00 per annum (non transferable)**

Available to purchase online at [artrixbromsgrove.co.uk](http://artrixbromsgrove.co.uk) from the end of May. Or in person at the membership launch event.

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**2026**

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# Get set for free village picnic

THE FREE Alvechurch Picnic in the Park will take place from 10am on Sunday.

The annual event will be held on The Meadows, in Meadow Lane, and will feature a variety of activities for all ages.

At 10am, registration will begin for the dog show, with the contest to get under way at 10.30am.

There will be the official opening of the picnic at midday and then there will be stalls and activities, along

with an afternoon of live entertainment.

At 12.05pm, the Alvechurch Community Choir will take centre stage and there will be live music by Laura at 12.40pm. At 1pm, the Amy Greaves School of Dance will showcase skills and there will be a creative carousel at 1.45pm.

Young talent from the Music Academy Midlands will perform at 2.15pm and that will be followed by an afancy dress competition -

which this year has a fairytale theme - at 3pm.

At 3.05pm there will be fairytale favourites from DJ Panto. The Got 2 Sing Choir will perform at 3.35pm.

The raffle will be drawn at 4pm and then the entertainment for the evening will start, at Alvechurch Cricket Club from 4.30pm.

Visit [facebook.com/alvechurchpicnic](https://facebook.com/alvechurchpicnic) or [alvechurchpicnic.org](https://alvechurchpicnic.org) for more information and updates on the event.

# Mucking in for the town

WORKING in partnership with Redditch Borough Council, Redditch Business Improvement District (BID) has planted flowers in the bays on Alcester Street, outside Threadneedle House.

The bays will be filled with a carefully chosen mix of plants including rhododendrons, hydrangeas, camellias, foxgloves, Japanese anemones, geraniums and much more.

As well as the BID, local businesses Shipways, The Post Office, The Loft and Lamberts all came out to get involved and help with the planting along with Redditch Borough Council.

A spokesperson for Redditch BID said: "It was a brilliant example of businesses and the council rolling their sleeves up together for the good of the town.



People joined together to fill the planters. s

"The council will be maintaining the bays, going forward, keeping Alcester Street looking its best.

"Making Redditch town centre a place people genuinely want to spend time in is at the heart of what we do.

"The look and feel of our streets matters.

"First impressions matter. "When a town centre is well kept and welcoming, it benefits everyone - from the businesses trading here to the visitors coming in for the day."



The team at Bromsgrove's MIU, at the Princess of Wales Hospital. s

# Bank holiday chemist hours

by **Tristan Harris**  
[tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com](mailto:tristan.harris@bullivantmedia.com)

**RESIDENTS across Bromsgrove and Redditch are being urged to ensure they get the right treatment over the bank holiday weekend.**

The minor injury unit (MIU) at Bromsgrove's Princess of Wales Community Hospital will be open from 8am to 8pm daily, including on bank holiday Monday.

Extended x-ray services will be available from 9am until 5pm tomorrow (Saturday) and on Sunday and Monday.

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

Waiting times are often shorter at the MIU

facility and patients can be seen a lot quicker. MIUs are open on weekends and bank holidays to treat injuries such as sprains, simple fractures, cuts, burns, minor head injuries and wound infections.

Using MIUs helps reduce waiting times and keeps emergency departments free.

Pharmacies also offer confidential advice for minor incidents and illnesses, as well as medicines for a range of minor ailments.

In Bromsgrove on bank holiday Monday, Knights Pharmacy, on Market Street, will be open from 12pm to 3pm.

In Redditch, Boots in the Kingfisher Centre will be open from 10am to 5pm and the Tesco Extra Pharmacy, in Coldfield Drive, will be available from 10am to 4pm.

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

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# We need to help struggling businesses

IT IS a pleasure to write again following a turbulent few weeks in Parliament.

Parliament has returned following prorogation - the formal process by which one Parliamentary session is brought to an end before the Government sets out its legislative programme for the year ahead in the King's Speech - written by the Government, but read out by The King.

Before prorogation, there were a number of significant debates and votes.

I voted against the Northern Ireland Troubles Bill, which could see British Army veterans subjected to further investigations and legal proceedings many decades after serving their country.

I also supported an important vote on whether the Prime Minister should be referred to the Privileges Committee over the process by which Peter Mandelson was appointed as ambassador to the United States. I supported the referral so the committee could examine the matter properly and establish the facts.

As Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, I continued to raise concerns about the pressures facing tourism, hospitality, betting and horse racing.

During Departmental Questions, I challenged ministers on how less support, more regulation and higher taxes were supposed to help sectors where many businesses were already struggling and jobs had been lost - including in my own constituency.



## Westminster Diary

Nigel Huddleston MP writes for *The Standard*

I also continued to meet with organisations from across the tourism, charitable, sporting and cultural sectors.

This included discussions with Hospice UK, the Short Term Rental Associations, Jet2, and UK Hospitality, as well as events recognising the work of the EFL, the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and the Youth Investment Fund - a programme I was proud to help initiate in government.

And I spoke at a Freedom in the Arts event which brought together Parliamentarians, artists and representatives from across the cultural sector to discuss freedom of expression and artistic independence.

I was pleased that pupils from Westacre Middle School were able to visit Parliament for a tour.

It is always good to see local schools and constituents visiting Westminster and I would encourage anyone interested in arranging a tour to contact my office.

As always, if I can ever be of any assistance to constituents, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Nigel Huddleston  
Droitwich and Evesham MP

# Youngest ever to serve in top job

by Stan Mills  
news@bullivantmedia.com

THE YOUNGEST ever Wychavon District Council chairman has been elected.

And Coun Gregory Wilkins has pledged to use his year in office to shine a spotlight on issues affecting young people.

Coun Wilkins, who is just 24, took on the chain after being elected on May 13.

The Droitwich South West councillor will represent the council and the district at civic and ceremonial events.

Coun Wilkins will also perform the important role of keeping order in the chamber during council meetings, as well as giving a voice to young people's issues.

And he has vowed to highlight the help on offer from the council to support those struggling with the current cost of living crisis.

He said: "It's an honour to be Wychavon's youngest ever chairman.

"The fact my fellow councillors are willing to trust a young person with an important position like this, when young people are not always listened to or given a chance,



is a testament to the kind of council Wychavon is.

"With local government reorganisation on the horizon, I'd like us to use this platform as an opportunity to encourage more young people to engage our work and get involved with local pundits.

"But most of all I wanted to get out and see as much of our amazing district as possible."

He urged community organisations, voluntary groups, schools, event organisers and others to get in touch to arrange a visit.

Coun Wilkins will be supported in his year in office by his mum Kelly Riding, with Coun John Clatworthy as his vice chairman.

Outgoing chairman, Coun

Mark Goodge, carried out more than 80 visits during his year of office.

He said: "It has been a privilege to meet so many people putting a huge amount of effort into the work they do to make a difference to their local community and the wider district.

"These are the people that make Wychavon the special place it is."

To contact the chairman's office to invite him to an event, email: [faith.hobbs@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:faith.hobbs@wychavon.gov.uk) or call 01386 565679.

**Coun Mark Goodge hands over the chairman's chain to Coun Gregory Wilkins, supported by vice chairman Coun John Clatworthy.**



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The stage is set for Artrix's first Musical Theatre Group which starts rehearsals in September. s

# Group will put Boots on stage

THE ARTRIX Musical Theatre Group is set to be launched with rehearsals starting in September.

The venue's first musical theatre group for performers aged 16 and over will be working towards its debut production - the hit musical Kinky Boots which will run from May 26 to 29 next year.

Weekly rehearsals will take place every Tuesday, from 7.30pm to 9.30pm, beginning on September 8.

To celebrate the launch, Artrix will host a special launch event from 5pm to 8pm on Sunday, August 16.

The evening will give prospective members of the group the opportunity to meet the creative team, hear more about the new asso-

ciation, learn about Kinky Boots and find out how to get involved.

The group will start writing a new chapter for the much-loved community arts centre, creating more opportunities for people to get involved in theatre, performance and the arts within the community.

An Artrix spokesperson said: "Whether you are an experienced performer, a complete newcomer or simply passionate about musical theatre, the group aims to create an exciting, welcoming and inclusive environment for adults who love to perform."

Anyone interested in joining or finding out more can email: [amtg@artrixbromsgrove.co.uk](mailto:amtg@artrixbromsgrove.co.uk) for further details.



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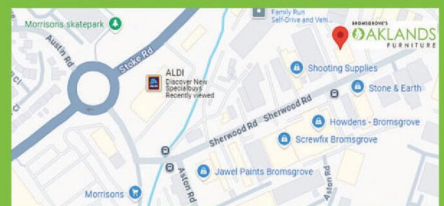
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## Look ahead with planned strikes

RAIL PASSENGERS are being urged to plan their travel in advance ahead of two days of strike action.

On Friday (May 22) and Saturday (May 23) a very limited service will be in operation on the West Midlands Railway (WMR) network due to strike action by members of the TSSA trade union.

The action involves roster clerks who are due to walk out on Thursday (May 21) from midnight for 24 hours, and also duty train crew managers and control staff who have planned strike action from noon on Friday until midday Saturday.

TSSA said the action is over over rest day working payments.

Services on both dates will operate to a reduced timetable with no trains running after 7pm on Friday and a later 7am start of service on Saturday.

Routes with a limited service on Friday and Saturday are the Cross City Line (Lichfield Trent Valley – Redditch and Bromsgrove via Birmingham New Street) – two trains per hour.

Wolverhampton – Walsall via Birmingham New Street – one train per hour and Rugeley Trent Valley – Birmingham International via Birmingham New Street – one train per hour.

Train times will be available in Journey Planners.

No trains will run on any other WMR route, including all routes via Birmingham Snow Hill, the Camp Hill Line or between Nuneaton and Leamington Spa.

Some minor disruption to services is expected on the morning of Sunday (May 24) due to displacement of trains. Visit [www.wmr.uk/industrialaction](http://www.wmr.uk/industrialaction) for more.



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The Alvechurch Morris Men were among those performing at the beer festival. Picture courtesy of The Weighbridge Inn. s

# Beery good fun in Alvechurch

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

**THE LATEST beer festival to be held at The Weighbridge, in Alvechurch, has been hailed a great success.**

The event boasted 32 real ales, mostly from local breweries, plus 18 ciders and perry and craft beers.

On the Friday night, crowds were entertained by the band Snap Crackle and Britpop and on the Saturday there was a host of family entertainment on offer plus a performance by the Alvechurch Morris Men and Aelfgythe women's side.

Keith Gabriel, lead singer of covers band Snap Crackle and Britpop, said: "This was the first Weighbridge beer festival we've

performed at – it was a great turnout and really good fun."

Weighbridge licensee Caroline Spreckley said: "We're absolutely delighted with how successful this year's beer festival has been.

"The atmosphere all weekend was fantastic with people coming together to enjoy great local ales, live entertainment and the real community spirit that makes Alvechurch so special.

"We've had incredible support from both our regulars and new visitors and it's been wonderful to see the pub so busy and full of life.

"A huge thank you goes to everyone who attended, our team who worked tirelessly throughout the weekend and all the breweries and suppliers who helped make the festival such a success."

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## Empowering Healthier Lives: Vitalise Nutrition and Wellness Launches in Alcester

A NEW health and wellbeing business focused on personalised nutrition therapy, lifestyle support, and holistic wellness was launched at Alcester Food Festival last Saturday (May 16).

The venture, Vitalise Nutrition and Wellness, offers one-to-one nutrition consultations, wellness coaching, and tailored health programmes designed to support people with a variety of health goals.

Headed by Lise Evans, a registered nutritional therapist and massage practitioner, the business was created following Lise's lifelong interest in nutrition as well as a response to growing public interest in preventative health and personalised wellness solutions. "More people are recognising the connection between nutrition, lifestyle, and overall wellbeing," said Lise who lives in Alcester.

"My goal is to provide practical, sustainable support that empowers individuals to make informed choices and feel



healthier in their everyday lives." The business combines nutritional therapy with a wider wellness approach, incorporating areas such as sleep support, stress management, mindful living, and healthy habit development. "Nutrition should never feel overwhelming," added Lise, who qualified with the College of Naturopathic Nutrition. "Small, realistic changes can really make a significant difference over time, and my aim is to help people build

healthier lifestyles in a supportive and achievable way." Services are available both in-person from her base in High Street, Alcester and online, allowing clients to access support flexibly. Supported conditions include digestive health, stress reduction, hormonal balance, improved energy, and overall wellbeing. Visit: [vitaliselife.co.uk](http://vitaliselife.co.uk) for more information or follow on [facebook.com/VitaliseNutritionWellness/](https://facebook.com/VitaliseNutritionWellness/) for tips.

**Hi, I'm Lise Evans**  
MANP, RGNC, A REGISTERED NUTRITIONAL THERAPIST & MASSAGE THERAPIST.

I'm on a mission to help people live happier, healthier and more fulfilling lives. Through studying and from personal experience, I know what impact changes to your diet and lifestyle - backed by the latest scientific research - can have on your physical and emotional wellbeing.

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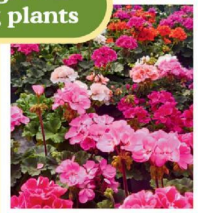
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# Access to NHS closer to home with opening of health centre

**A NEW state-of-the-art health centre has opened in a shopping complex - giving NHS patients access to a range of diagnostic tests closer to home.**

South Birmingham Community Diagnostic Centre (CDC), at Maypole Retail Park, is equipped with cutting-edge imaging and diagnostic technology and is open daily from 8am to 8pm.

It offers NHS appointments to patients across Birmingham for a range of diagnostic tests, including CT, MRI, ultrasound, X-ray and respiratory tests.

Around 37,000 patients a year will be able to have diagnostic appointments at the CDC, which is being delivered through a partnership between NHS Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust and InHealth - an independent healthcare provider specialising in diagnostic services and community-based diagnostic centres.

CDCs are part of a national NHS programme to provide more tests

and scans away from busy hospital sites, in community locations closer to where people live, work and shop.

The opening of South Birmingham CDC comes as the NHS continues its focus on reducing waiting times for elective treatment (planned surgery), with the Government setting a national target for 65 per cent of patients to be seen within 18 weeks by March this year.

Latest NHS figures revealed confirm the NHS has delivered this goal and in Birmingham and Solihull an average of 67.8 per cent of patients are being seen within 18 weeks.

Minister of State for Health (Secondary Care), Karin Smyth, said: "The NHS should fit around people's lives, not the other way around, and this brand-new, state-of-the-art centre for Birmingham is going to offer convenient tests, checks and scans -- without a trip to hospital.

"CDCs like this one are a vital part of how we're rebuilding the NHS and getting people seen on time again."

Danielle Oum, chair of NHS



Birmingham and Solihull Integrated Care Board and NHS Black Country Integrated Care Board cluster, said: "Increasing diagnostic capacity is key to reducing waits, supporting earlier diagnosis, easing patient worries and reducing pressure on our hospitals.

"CDCs also support the direction set out in the national 10-Year Health Plan, shifting services from hospitals to communities, creating health services in our neighbour-

hoods, and increasing prevention of illness through earlier diagnosis.

"That is particularly important in south Birmingham, where we have some of the highest levels of deprivation in our city and where some people face additional barriers to accessing healthcare.

"By providing more tests in community settings, we can help reduce some of those barriers, give patients faster answers, and support better outcomes for our local

populations."

Patients are referred to CDCs by hospital clinical specialists for planned diagnostic tests and scans.

South Birmingham CDC is the second to open in Birmingham and Solihull in a retail setting, following the opening of North Solihull CDC at Chelmsley Wood Shopping Centre - also delivered in partnership with InHealth - which was officially opened by Health Minister Stephen Kinnock last year.

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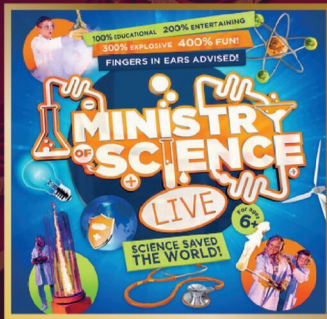
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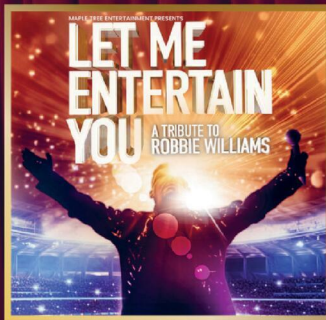
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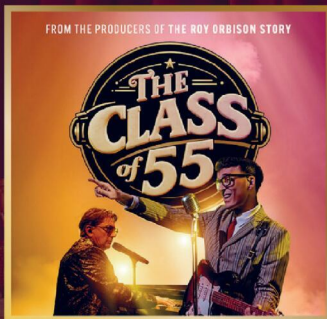
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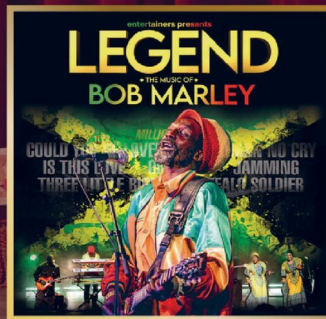
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Can you help the summer reading challenge? s

## Young bookworms wanted

LIBRARIES in Worcestershire are seeking enthusiastic 13- to 24-year-olds to volunteer for the summer reading challenge, as part of celebrations for this year's national year of reading.

People who are passionate about books, love working with children or who want to gain experience that will boost their CV or university application have the chance to get involved and make a real difference.

Emily Wright, a previous volunteer who now works for the library service, said: "Volunteering for the summer reading challenge gave me the experience and confidence to work in libraries across Worcestershire today."

"I volunteered every summer for four years and loved encouraging the same love of reading in children that I experienced growing up. It felt like I was making a real difference to many of those children, a feeling that has only grown stronger during my time working in the library service."

As a volunteer, participants will play a key role in encouraging children to read for pleasure, helping them choose books, tracking their progress and supporting fun library activities throughout the summer.

Visit [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/read-and-discover/summer-reading-challenge](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/council-services/libraries/read-and-discover/summer-reading-challenge) to sign up.

# County adult care services win praise from inspectors

by Ashleigh Osborne  
ashleigh.osborne@bullivantmedia.com

## WORCESTERSHIRE County Council's adult social care services have been rated 'good' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Inspectors noted the strength, compassion and dedication at the heart of the county's support for residents, with people consistently reporting positive experiences and feeling listened to and involved in decisions about their support.

A CQC inspection report highlighted compassionate, person-centred, strength-based practice by committed staff.

Inspectors noted Worcestershire's approach to supporting people, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), is making positive and sustained progress across many areas.

The report praised key areas of performance including assessments, with most people experiencing timely assessments, good communication and responsive support.

They found the adult social care 'front door' was effective, with strong triage, risk management and prevention offers such as the tar-

geted adult support team (TAST), 'reablement' services and assistive technology helping prevent escalation of need.

Safeguarding was also praised, with people appropriately involved in support and protection plans.

Most unpaid carers valued the commissioned carers support service and felt listened to, and there was effective collaboration with health; housing; voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations; and partners to support hospital discharge, prevention, safeguarding and community-based solutions. Integration was developing well at operational level.

The three-day inspection took place between November 11 and 13, with inspectors speaking to staff, partners and service users.

The assessment reviewed performance across nine areas, including leadership, safeguarding, partnerships and how people experience care, with Worcestershire achieving consistently strong scores.

Strategic director for adults and communities, Mark Fitton, said: "This is a fantastic result for Worcestershire and, most importantly, for the people who rely on our services to lead a meaningful life. It is hugely encouraging to see

residents are receiving high-quality, person-centred support that reflects what matters to them, supports their independence and helps them achieve their own goals.

"This outcome is a real testament to the dedication, professionalism and compassion shown every day by our staff and partners, from social care teams and NHS colleagues to providers and voluntary organisations, who work together to make a positive difference to people's lives.

"While we are proud of this recognition, our focus remains firmly on the future. We welcome the inspectors' recommendations and are already taking forward an action plan to build on our strengths and continue improving the services we provide for residents."

The report also identified areas where further progress can be made, including improving access to services in rural communities, strengthening support and communication for people moving between services, ensuring equitable access for under-represented groups and increasing the availability of support for unpaid carers.

To read the CQC report in full, please visit this story on our website.

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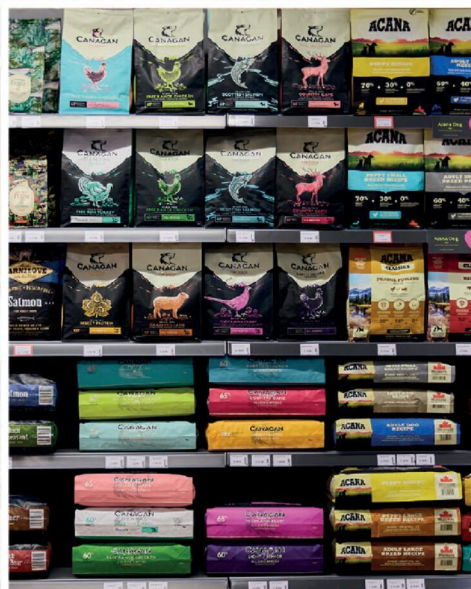
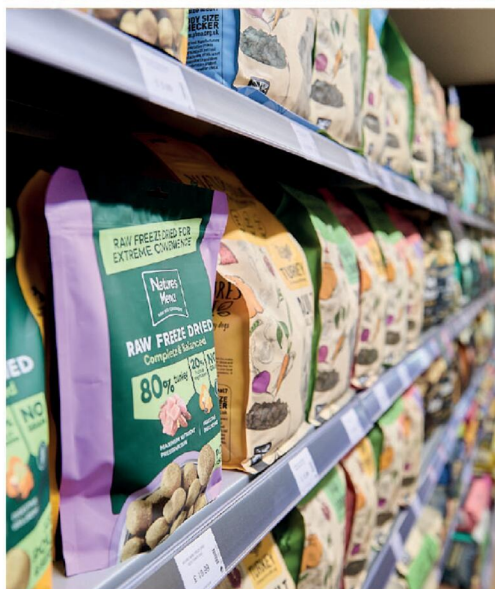
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IN MEMORIAM

# SUTTON Christopher

As time unfolds another year, A constant wish that you were here. An empty space no one can fill, We miss you now and always will.

Love from Janet & Family

DEATHS

# CHALK Jean Margaret

Sadly, passed away on Monday 11th May 2026 Much loved Wife to Michael A devoted Mum to Rosalyn and Stuart and a special Nona to Imogen, William and Phoebe Jean will be greatly missed by all of her family and friends A service to celebrate Jean's life will take place at Westall Park Natural Burial Ground on Thursday 4th June 2026 at 1.00pm Family flowers only please. Donations if so desired to Cancer Research UK & Macmillan Cancer Support may be sent to

Thomas Brothers The Funeral Directors 494 Evesham Road Redditch B97 5JF 01527 547777 Thank you

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DEATHS

# JONES Maureen Ann

Sadly passed away on Saturday 2nd May, 2026, aged 85 years. A service to celebrate Maureen's life will take place at Redditch Crematorium on Wednesday 10th June, 2026 at 11.00 a.m.

Family flowers only please, donations if so desired to National Trust may be sent to:

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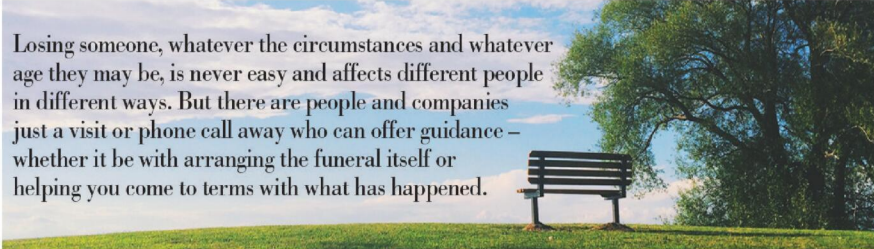
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## PUBLIC NOTICES

### BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL & REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Advertisement Key: ADVSTD = Wider Publicity, FPS = Footpath Setting, LB = Listed Building, MAJ = Major Development.

**26/00502/FUL ADVSTD MAJ**

**Site:** Bumble Hole Poultry Farm/Bumble Hole Foods, Bumble Hole Lane/Rocky Lane, Dodford, Worcestershire B61 9JA.

**Proposal:** Demolition of existing industrial units buildings and construction of a new single-storey industrial unit with associated yard, plant, and infrastructure works.

**26/00523/LBC LB**

**Site:** Harpalce, Stourbridge Road, Fairfield, Worcestershire B61 9NG.

**Proposal:** To install an EV charger to external wall at Harpalce, Stourbridge Road, Fairfield.

**26/00496/LBC LB**

**Site:** 32 Bear Hill, Alvechurch, Worcestershire, B48 7JX.

**Proposal:** Staircase turret timber frame repairs, infill panel repairs & replacement, window repairs & replacement, removal of cement board partitions, lime plastering & pointing, decoration, new storm protection barge & pentice boards, roofing repairs.

**26/00539/FUL FPS**

**Site:** Harwood House, Wassell Grove Lane, Hagley, Worcestershire DY9 9JH.

**Proposal:** Extensions and alterations to dwelling house including front, side and rear two storey extensions, erection of garage, outbuilding and associated infrastructure.

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

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

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

### ERNEST ROBERT WILDRIDGE Deceased

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 anyone with a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the deceased, late of Bank Cottage, Hewell Lane, Tardebigg, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 1LL, who died on 28/02/2026, must send written details to the address below by 23/07/2026, after which the Estate will be distributed with regard only to claims and interests notified.

MFG Solicitors LLP, 3rd Floor Waterloo House, 20 Waterloo Street, Birmingham, B2 5TB. Ref: WL07268.0001

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### Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

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Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL & REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Advertisement Key: DEP = Departure, LB = Listed Building.

**26/00532/LBC LB**

**Site:** 55 - 57 High Street, Feckenham, Worcestershire B96 6HU.

**Proposal:** Removal of Alkyd paint systems. Repairs to east elevation timber frame. Replacement of brick infill with lightweight insulated lime plaster panels. Replacement of doors and windows. Replacement of the internal subfloor and internal lime plastering. New bathroom and cloak room fitted.

**26/00365/OUT DEP**

**Site:** Land At E409210 N276350, Lea Green Lane, Wythall, Worcestershire.

**Proposal:** Outline application for the erection of up to 120 dwellings, associated infrastructure, landscape and biodiversity enhancements, open space, with all matters reserved except for access from Lea Green Lane. The proposed development does not accord with the provisions of the development plan in force in the area to which the application relates.

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

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

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## Circuit special

**CATERHAM has launched its latest limited-edition model, the Seven Nürburgring Edition, to celebrate 100 years of the most legendary and demanding circuit in the world.**

Only 100 examples of the Nürburgring Edition will be made available to customers globally, based on either a Seven 420R or a Seven 340R, market dependent, with prices starting in the UK from £48,995.

The bespoke race suspension has been developed exclusively for this model by Bilstein, using its advanced vertical dynamics test rig at the Bilstein Test Facility.

Engineered specifically around the demands of the Nürburgring, the suspension setup was refined to deliver exceptional capability on ratio of 375bhp/tonne.

Paired with a five-speed gearbox, the Nürburgring Edition accelerates from 0-60mph in 3.8 seconds and tops out at a top speed of 136mph.

Alongside the custom-developed Bilstein damping and performance, there are several visual additions inside and out to match. As a fully licensed Nürburgring product, the edition features the distinctive branding and logo from the circuit, as well as the iconic red and grey colours available as paint finishes.

These include a choice of three Nürburgring paint colours - Verkehrsrot (Traffic Red), Achatgrau (Agate Grey) and Basaltgrau (Basalt Grey), whilst custom paint colours are also available.

Other exterior upgrades include a Nürburgring "red" track day roll bar, a Nürburgring mesh grill with Seven logo in dual colour and a 620-style nosecone with carbon aero whiskers. The chassis colour is a distinctive Gunmetal Grey and the car features carbon front wings, Black Pack (black windscreen, headlamp bowls and exhaust heat shield), composite aero screen and LED rear lights clusters.

On the interior, the leather seats are complete with Nürburgring embroidery and red stitching, which is also found on the transmission tunnel. This is alongside carbon interior panels, a four-point road harnesses and sequential shift lights.

As the final touch, each car has an individually numbered plaque for each of the 100 units produced.

For a century, the fondly named 'Green Hell's' 12.9-mile track in the Eifel Mountains in west Germany has been the ultimate proving ground for both car and driver.

Along with its changing elevation and camber across its 73 corners, the Nürburgring is a site where Caterham's road and race cars have flourished for decades.

Most notably, an 11th place finish at the Nürburgring 24 Hours in 2002, which saw an outstanding drive by Chris Cooper, Chris Harris, Clive Richards and Peter Haynes.

Trevor Steel, Senior Vice President of Operations, Caterham Cars, said: "For a century, this track has championed values that are at the heart of what the Seven is all about - balance, precision and an unmatched driving experience."

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# Landmark podium for Vertu ahead of trip to Snetterton

by Aaron Sutcliffe  
 aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

**BTCC:** TEAM Vertu head into the third weekend of the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) season after securing a 100th podium finish at Brands Hatch.

The Droitwich-based team stepped onto the BTCC podium for the 100th time last time out as Tom Ingram secured the team's first race win of the 2026 season.

Team Vertu entered the BTCC in 2019 and have since taken part in more than 200 races in the prestigious competition.

Ingram won the drivers' championship racing for the Droitwich team in 2022 and 2025.

And reigning BTCC champion Ingram hopes he and his teammates - Ricky Collard, Tom Chilton and Nicolas Hamilton - can capitalise on the pace of the car in future weekends.

Ingram said: "For a while it looked like it was going to be another weekend where nothing went our way, but we managed to recover it with the victory in race three.

"It's not been a stellar, amaz-



ing meeting for us in terms of points but we've done okay, and it was important to get that victory as circumstances have conspired against a little until then.

"We've not had the rub of the green a lot in the opening rounds and even in that final race, I made a mega start but then got boxed in going up to turn one.

"However, one thing that isn't in doubt is the pace we have in the car and clearly we're fast, which we were able to show in getting to the front and

then controlling things from the front.

"It's still early in the season and there's a long way to go, so we've got to keep our heads and make sure we're in the right place at the right time going forward to capitalise on the speed we have."

The BTCC season continues at Snetterton over the weekend of May 23 and 24.

**Tom Ingram on the podium at Brands Hatch. Picture by Mark Cowdrill.**



Droitwich Spa under-12s celebrate. s

## Cup triumph for Spa's under-12 Wildcats team

**FOOTBALL:** DROITWICH Spa under-12s lifted the Mercian Cup trophy following a dramatic penalty shootout victory against Welland Juniors.

The club's Wildcats girls' team triumphed 4-3 on penalty kicks following a goalless draw at the end of regulation time.

The final took place at the home of Pershore Town.

Spa avenged a 3-1 league defeat against Welland the previous month to come out on top in the final.

Droitwich thrashed Alcester Town 8-0 in the semi-finals of the competition.

That came after Spa won 2-0 against Newtown Sports in the quarter-finals.

Spa currently sit fourth in the Mercian Junior League under-12 girls' Division One table.

Droitwich have just one fixture left in the league this season.

The team have won 11, drawn two and lost 10 of their 23 league games this campaign.

Droitwich thrashed Alcester Town 10-1 to record their biggest win of the season in March.

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