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Charity hero Geoff is still stepping out at 85

by **Andy Morris**
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

A **FUND-raising hero** from Rugby has taken on his third and final walking marathon challenge in aid of a hospice charity - at the age of 85.

Geoff Kennedy is showing no signs of slowing down when it comes to supporting The Myton Hospices.

A dedicated fund-raiser since Myton first opened its doors 43 years ago, Geoff co-founded the Rugby 250+ Club which has since raised over £220,000 for the charity.

When the pandemic disrupted the Rugby 250+ Club's fundraising plans in 2020, Geoff took matters into his own hands by walking a full marathon in his garden - raising an impressive £5,600 in the process.

In 2021, he set himself another

challenge, this time walking a marathon across his home town over four days, adding another £3,900 to his fundraising total.

Determined to push his overall total past £10,000, Geoff walked 6.5 miles a day across Rugby, Coventry, and Warwick over four days last week.

Geoff said: "I'll be turning 86 next month, so I wanted to make this final challenge bigger and better."

"The only after effect is some slight aching at the back of the knees. I play golf regularly, so I'm used to walking around five miles each time - it's great preparation."

"I've been raising money for Myton for almost half my life, and it's a cause close to my heart. My late wife received care at Myton's Rugby site before Covid, so I know first-hand the difference their support makes."

Laura Eaton, Partnerships Fundraiser at The Myton Hospices,



praised Geoff's dedication.

She added: "On behalf of everyone at The Myton Hospices, I

would like to say a huge thank you to Geoff. We are all incredibly grateful for everything he has done

Geoff Kennedy is showing no signs of slowing down when it comes to supporting The Myton Hospices.

for Myton over the years and the fantastic amount he has raised.

"Each year, it costs over £14 million for us to provide our care free of charge to people and their families living with life-limiting illnesses across Coventry and Warwickshire. We simply couldn't do it without the support of amazing people like Geoff!"

Geoff set a fund-raising target of £3,000, aiming to take his total to £12,500. Visit <https://www.justgiving.com/page/geoff-kennedy-3> to donate.

Visit www.mytonhospice.org/ support to raise funds for Myton.

Geoff Kennedy is showing no signs of slowing down when it comes to supporting The Myton Hospices.

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Relaunch for children's charity

by **Andy Morris**
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

AN 'INCREDIBLE' charity which has raised millions to rebuild the lives of abused children across Coventry and Warwickshire has relaunched after three decades of fundraising.

Coventry and Warwickshire Children's Charity (CWCC) has raised more than £3.1million since it formed in 1995 to provide vital funding to support work with vulnerable children across the region.

The charity has relaunched with an expanded committee, new brand and enhanced fundraising plans to continue delivering on its mission of 'rebuilding childhoods'.

It will collaborate directly with services in Coventry and Warwickshire to fund specialist practitioners to care for abused children.

The charity's refreshed fundraising strategy will be underpinned by a payroll giving scheme, special fundraising events and a major annual charity ball.

Committee members joined supporters at Coventry Building Society Arena to mark the start of the charity's new era, including new chair David Roberts, who has more than 50 years' experience in the automo-



A new beginning – left to right: Ruby Maxfield, Hamilton Bland, Coun Patricia Seaman, David Roberts, Nicola O'Shaughnessy, Paul Michael, Muff Murfin, Joe Elliott and Jan Patalong.

tive industry and is the founder of EVTEC Automotive.

He said: "After speaking to former committee members, I was incredibly shocked to hear about the harsh reality of life which some children experience in Coventry and Warwickshire.

"If we can do even a little to help rebuild their childhoods, then we should.

"I've always believed in giving back and at the business we've quietly dedicated more than 40 per cent of our payroll to do that.

Simply put, it is the right thing to do. This is a charity with an incredible legacy, built on the achievements of its past leaders, and it will be the responsibility of the new committee members to carry that forward with new energy and expertise."

The new committee includes vice-chair Steve Norris, president Muff Murfin and patron Ian Harnett, a former executive director at JLR. It also includes Angelo Luciano, chief executive officer at Expert Tooling and Automation, Graham Hoare,

chief executive at the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC), Neil Endley, group managing director at TRIGO, Paul Nicholson, chief executive office at WHS Plastics, and several other respected business figures.

Coventry Building Society Arena's managing director Paul Michael has also joined the board and continues a long relationship between the Arena and CWCC.

The Arena is home to the charity's showpiece annual fundraising ball, which attracts up to 600

guests and is set to return this year on September 19 after a one-year hiatus.

Hamilton Bland has chaired the charity's event committee for the last 18 years. He said: "We are incredibly proud of what we have achieved previously, but our focus is now firmly on the future.

"Work is full steam ahead now with six months to go until the return of our charity ball, which is one of the biggest outside London, and will be crucial in raising the funds we need to deliver support for children throughout Coventry and Warwickshire."

Coventry Building Society Arena has also announced it will be working with CWCC as one of its community partners.

Mr Michael said: "The charity ball has been a staple in our event calendar for the last 18 years and we're proud to be expanding our support of Coventry and Warwickshire Children's Charity. We are committed as a business to giving back to our community and making a positive lasting impact too."

Visit www.cwcc.org.uk for more information.

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Follow St George and his Dragon

by **Mia Whitehouse**

THREE free family-friendly events in Coventry city centre will celebrate St George's Day next week.

The St George's Day Dragon trail will take place from Tuesday (April 22) to Friday (April 25) in four participating venues – Coventry Cathedral, Coventry Transport Museum, Belgrade Theatre and Herbert Art Gallery and Museum.

A prize is up for grabs for anyone who completes the trail and locates each dragon on the map.

On the Patron Saint of England's day itself – Wednesday April 23 – there will be a St George's Day Pageant from 11am to 3.30pm where visitors can



There will be plenty of free family-friendly fun in Coventry as part of the St George's Day celebrations. s

catch St George slaying his Dragon in Broadgate, as well as seeing Morris dancers and a DJ.

The Home from Home Arts Exhibition takes place from 5pm to 9pm on Friday (April 25), sharing the values of unity, history

and cultural diversity in its featured pieces.

Coun Abdul Salam Khan, Coventry City Council's deputy leader and cabinet member for events, said: "We're delighted to once again be holding free family-friendly events to celebrate St George's Day this month.

"Those in the city centre will be able to watch performances in Broadgate, take part in the Dragon Trail and explore some of Coventry's fantastic venues or enjoy an evening exhibition with some of Coventry's Cultural groups.

"Last year our St George's Day celebrations were extremely popular and we hope to see many join us again this year."

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Firm's four-day week trial gives worker chance to 'give back'

A VOLUNTEER is giving more time to his role with the Ambulance Service, thanks to his Rugby employer's decision to introduce a four-day working week.

Custom Heat is rolling out the initiative – under which all employees retain their full salaries – until August 31 following a successful trial that showed improved staff well-being and minimal impact on business performance.

Simon Scarfe, a 56-year-old engineer who has been with the family-run heating and plumbing company for four years, found the extra day allowed him to focus on his other passion in life, working with the Ambulance Service as a community first responder.

Industry

Simon, who has worked in the gas industry for 25 years, said: "Before the four-day week, I'd finish work around 6.30 in the evening and feel like I wasn't doing the first responder scheme justice by only being available for an hour or two. With Wednesdays free, I can now dedicate proper time to emergency medical response in our local community."

During his trial, Simon was able to ride along with double-crewed ambulances for full 12-hour shifts.

He added: "The four-day

by Andy Morris
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week has allowed me to give back to the community in ways I simply couldn't manage before.

"During winter, it was challenging to balance everything, but having that midweek break particularly helped with the winter blues. It gave me the ability to do jobs at home, volunteer, and spend more time with family.

"Having that extra day to breathe made a real difference. I could manage household tasks, visit my mother more, and generally not feel guilty about having a little bit of me time."

For 32-year-old Cezary Goman, a service and repair engineer with five years at Custom Heat, the trial arrived at a crucial time.

He said: "My wife had been unwell for three years before the trial, and I was working six or seven days a week trying to catch up on everything.

"For me, it felt like someone taking the pressure off. I could finally relax a little."

The father of two children, aged six and 16, initially had reservations.

"When they first told me about it, I had mixed feelings," he said. "Part of me worried we weren't busy enough, and I might lose progression opportunities. But

I was also happy to have an extra day for myself."

Mr Goman, who opted to take Tuesdays off during his five-week trial, is now looking forward to choosing Wednesdays for the full implementation.

"This way I can work two days, have one day off, then work two more days before the weekend - it's perfect."

Schedules

The company has planned staff schedules to ensure customers will still receive a full five-day service.

Managing director Lincoln Smith said: "We've seen some remarkable benefits from our trial. Staff turnover dropped by nearly 67 per cent compared to the same period last year, and job applications increased by 250 per cent when we advertised positions with the four-day week benefit."

The four-day week concept has been gaining momentum nationally, with data from 4dayweek.co.uk showing that 92 per cent of companies that trial the approach continue with it. The study also reported increased revenue, reduced staff turnover, greater ability to attract talent, and reduced employee burnout.

Custom Heat plans to review the programme's success in September with hopes of making the summer four-day week a permanent annual arrangement.



Engineer Simon Scarfe volunteers as a Community First Responder on his extra day off from Custom Heat.

Council in England's top ten for improving recycling rates

RUGBY has recorded the tenth highest improvement in recycling rates across all councils in England, new figures have revealed.

Between the financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24, the amount of household waste recycled in Rugby rose from 43.2 per cent to 47.4 per cent.

The figures, published by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), showed the average amount of waste collected per person in the borough remained relatively consistent during the same period - but refuse waste tonnages dropped by five per cent, while tonnages of waste collected for recycling rose by six per cent.

Claire Owen, Rugby Borough Council's chief officer for operations and traded services, said the figures reflected the growing commitment of Rugby residents to recycle household waste.

She added: "The four per cent increase in our recycling rate has put Rugby in the top ten most improved local authorities in England, a testament to the dedication of our residents to reduce waste and recycle more."

"However, we have more to do and remain committed to working towards the government's target of 65 per cent by 2035, so we all need to keep up the good work by reducing waste where possible and making

sure we recycle correctly."

The council has issued a reminder to residents about the range of items which can be recycled in the blue-lid recycling bins, which include plastic tubes, bottles and pots; glass jars and bottles; metal cans, trays and foil; paper and cardboard; empty aerosol cans; and empty perfume and after-shave bottles.

Residents have also been urged to avoid contaminating recycling collections by not putting items in the blue-lid bins such as food waste, electrical items, clothing and textiles, polystyrene or nappies.

Visit www.rugby.gov.uk/what-goes-in-which-bin to check.

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Driver killed

A VAN driver died after crashing into a tanker on the M40 on Friday morning (April 11).

The tanker had broken down on the northbound stretch of the motorway between junction 13 at Bishop's Tachbrook and junction 14 for Leamington and Warwick shortly before 9am.

The driver of a white Peugeot van is understood to have hit the stationary tanker shortly afterwards.

Police attended along with West Midlands Ambulance Service but the van driver - a man in his 30s - was pronounced dead at the scene.

Anyone with information about the incident should contact Warwickshire Police online or by calling 101.

Arson appeal

POLICE are appealing for witnesses following a suspected arson in Temple Herdewyke.

It was reported two men lit a fire at a property on Holywell Drive at around 9.30pm on Sunday March 30. No-one was injured and this is currently being treated as an isolated incident.

Anyone who can help Warwickshire Police with its investigation should call 101 or visit www.warwickshire.police.uk/ro/report quoting incident 305 of 30 March.

Alternatively, information can be given anonymously to independent charity Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or via their website.

Convoy of aid is the tenth such mission to Ukraine

A UKRAINE-bound convoy of aid left south Warwickshire marking the tenth 'journey of compassion and solidarity' since the Russian invasion.

The team of eight drivers travelled 1,500 miles to deliver three ambulances and a Land Rover - all loaded with medical supplies - and 2,000 Easter eggs - to help people in the war-torn country.

Their three-day journey eventually took them to Lezajsk, a town on the Polish/Ukraine border, where a central hub for humanitarian aid for Ukraine has been established, before flying home from Krakow.

The vehicles, worth a total of £22,000, were laden with supplies provided by Ukraine Medical Charity based in Warwick and incontinence pads for care homes, supplied by the NHS as well as donations of household goods and Easter eggs from LKQ Euro Parts, Warwick Rotary Club and members of the public.

It marked the sixth such trip for retired judge Antony Cleary, who was joined on the team by David Blick from Warwickshire Gin Company, David Maxted, Richard Kijowski and George Eden, on their third trips and, Ivan Pointon, on his fourth.

But also joining for the first time this year was Warwick councillor Adrian Barton, accompanied by Paul Stoodley.

They travelled from Leamington to Folkstone with overnight stops in



Dortmund, Wroclaw and Krakow.

Dawid Kozlowski, from The Polish Centre in Leamington, which heads up the mission with charity Belveder, said: "The ambulances are too heavy for the muddy terrain. The 4x4s go deep into Red zones, collect the wounded person and take them to the ambulance."

"For me, this work is incredibly important. I'm grateful that, in some small way, we can help save lives

and improve the lives of children. It's humbling to know that the supplies we send can make a real difference."

"We have a connection with sisters of Saint Joseph who run a care home, orphanages and education centres in Ukraine. Household goods such as washing powder and cleaning materials, toiletries are going to be distributed around to people in need by the sisters."

"These sort of materials are very expensive in Ukraine and people just simply cannot afford them, people who are classified as internal refugees - from the east of Ukraine who are now living in central and West Ukraine and have no home to come back to."

Over the past year, more than 40 lorries filled with aid have made their way to Ukraine thanks to the tireless efforts of the community.

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Shop thief given 5-year city ban

by Andy Morris
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

A PROLIFIC shop thief from Coventry is behind bars and has been banned from parts of the city for five years.

Lewis Clamp was sentenced to 12 months in prison after he was arrested in the city.

Clamp, 46, was also given a five-year Criminal Behaviour Order banning him from a number of locations in Coventry.

Clamp was one of the Coventry Local Policing Area's most wanted offenders, with an extensive history of shop thefts.

He was arrested after an investigation helped officers uncover his methods and catch him in the act.

CCTV footage examined by the team showed how Clamp would enter shops at the Airport Retail Park and fill his bag with items before running out.

From there, he would jump on his bike and cycle off into the nearby housing estates before security could catch him.



Prolific shoplifter Lewis Clamp is behind bars.

"Thankfully, we were able to use local knowledge to identify where he was going and how he was stealing. This allowed us to bring him in and take action against him."

A West Midlands Police spokesperson added that local intelligence and information was vital for its teams to tackle shop thefts.

They said: "By knowing where and when prolific offenders are committing crimes, we can build a clear picture of their whereabouts and movements. This makes arresting and charging them easier."

"We investigate all reports of shop theft we receive and will carry out all possible enquiries to identify and arrest those responsible."

"Along with this, our neighbourhood teams carry out uniformed and plain-clothes patrols and operations to keep businesses and shoppers safe."

Report any crime or suspicious activity to police by calling 101 or using the Live Chat facility online at www.westmidlands.police.uk.

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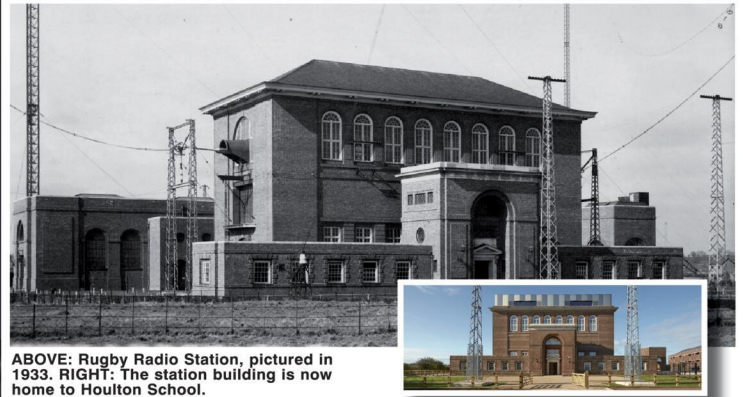
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ABOVE: Rugby Radio Station, pictured in 1933. RIGHT: The station building is now home to Houlton School.

Project calls on 100-year history

A **UNIQUE** digital tapestry will be created to mark the 100th anniversary of the Rugby site where the world's first transatlantic phone call was made.

People living, learning and working in Houlton are being asked to contribute to the Houlton Tapestry project to celebrate the centenary of Rugby Radio Station.

The initiative, backed by Houlton's master developer Urban&Civic, will see thousands of individual pictures combined to form one main mosaic-style image that will be displayed in the area for years to come.

Rugby Radio Station was decommissioned in 2002 but would have been 100 years old in 2026. It was formerly home to 12 820ft masts which helped pioneer global communications in the 1920s.

In 1927, Rugby Radio Station made the first transatlantic broadcast to Houlton, Maine, USA - after which the new neighbourhood is named. The station building is now home to Houlton School.

The Houlton Tapestry project is being put together

by **Andy Morris**
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er by artist Allan Levy for the centenary. He and Urban&Civic are encouraging people to contribute their own images to be part of the tapestry, which will go on show at Houlton School, St Gabriel's C of E School and Rugby Art Gallery and Museum.

Allan said: "This project is for everyone who works, lives or learns in Houlton. Whether you are an experienced photographer or artist or someone who has never tried anything like this before, we want your contribution. It's all about showcasing the diverse voices and talents that make Houlton special."

"We want images that reflect your unique perspective on life in Houlton. Think about what inspires you and choose the medium that suits you best. Your image could be a photograph taken with your phone, a drawing, a painting. It's really up to you."

"The picture could be a beautiful landscape, a cafe, the allotment, or even an

abstract piece that expresses your feelings. The possibilities are endless."

Johanne Thomas, from Urban&Civic, said the Houlton Tapestry project was the first of many projects which will mark the 100-year anniversary of Rugby Radio Station.

She added: "We'll be continuing those celebrations in 2027 as it will be 100 years since that first iconic transatlantic broadcast. We'd love to receive as many pictures as possible from people who live, work, learn or have a connection with Houlton. These will be put together, along with images from our schools and community groups, into a mosaic which will be displayed in Houlton for years to come."

"We hope all those that share a fondness for the history of Rugby Radio Station get involved in this hugely significant part of local history."

Visit <https://rugbyradio.co.uk> for more on the history of Rugby Radio Station.

Visit <https://digitaltapestry.art> for more information on the Houlton Tapestry project, and to contribute.

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Green light for second helipad despite outcry

CONTENTIOUS plans for a second helipad at Aston Martin's Gaydon headquarters have been given the green light in a bid to end misery for residents.

Stratford District Council's planning committee voted unanimously in favour of an application submitted by Aston Martin Lagonda for a 25 metre by 25 metre helipad, which they stated was "essential" for business.

This was flying in the face of a recommendation by planning officer's to refuse the application.

The luxury car maker already has a helipad in operation at the site, close to Banbury Road, which was refused planning permission in 2020, but has nevertheless been in operation much to the anger of residents who have complained about the noise.

SDC has received a number of complaints but no enforcement action has been taken.

Aston Martin submitted a further planning application for a helipad in its existing car park in 2023 which was refused. That was for a helipad to be used 125 days, including weekends and would have allowed flights from 8am until 9.30pm.

The successful application allows the helipad to be used for up to 100 days a year, Monday to Friday, with helicopter landings between 9am and 6pm.

The latest application was supported by Coun Chris Mills who said switching sites would be a great relief to the residents living at Lighthorne Heath.

He said: "Believe me, I can assure you that when this helicopter takes off from the existing site, the windows shake on the homes. I have been there, the place shakes."

"The present helicopter pad that does not have planning permission and has been allowed to be used has caused misery for residents for many years, also being detrimental to the health of some."

"The new helipad would alleviate this problem and allow residents to have a quiet life, free from the cacophony of noise caused by helicopter blades."

Planning officers recommended councillors refuse the application on the basis that no detailed information or evidence had been provided demonstrating how the helipad was 'essential' for the economic benefit or facilitation of the company's day to day operations to outweigh the significant harm that the helipad would cause to the nearby properties.

Speaking at the meeting, Aston Martin's head of government relations and sustainability Rob Colmer said: "Helicopter use is standard practice in our industry, enabling people to move quickly over long distances."

"This facility is a vital economic enabler. Please think, time is money."

He referenced how flights could take overseas investors with limited time in the UK to the F1 team at Silverstone, London, regional airports and Aston Martin's factory in Wales.

He added: "Just one helicopter flight securing a single sale can deliver millions of pounds of revenue."



FAB - Sophia Myles, who starred as Lady Penelope, is reunited with her car.

LADY Penelope has been reunited with her iconic car at the British Motor Museum.

Sophia Myles, who starred in the 2004 film Thunderbirds, paid a visit to the Gaydon-based museum to see her famous pink car, for the first time since the release of the film more than 20 years ago. She signed the dashboard of the FAB 1 car and face-timed Ron Cook who played Lady Penelope's faithful butler and chauffeur, Parker, in the film.

Sophia said: "I never thought I could get emotional about a car, but seeing it again after over 20 years, made me well up. The entire

visit was a joy from start to finish. There are so many amazing vehicles to see."

Ford of Europe's design team brought FAB 1, the larger-than-life limousine, into the 21st century - lower, sleeker and even more grand. FAB 1 had a central part in the 2004 film Thunderbirds with International Rescue, the fictional organisation that saves the world where other forces fail.

In the hands of Parker, FAB 1 can travel on land, air or sea. Inside, Lady Penelope travels in style and luxury. Sitting in her throne-like seat, she is surrounded by wood, leather, sheepskin and chrome.

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Prison and firms unite for bird box project

DOZENS of bird, bat and bug boxes have been distributed to schools and community organisations after borough businesses backed a new project launched by Rugby Borough Council and Onley Prison.

The project was organised by the council's town park ranger, Stephanie Huggett, who contacted the governor of Onley to enquire whether prisoners could build the boxes if the council could source the building supplies.

After Rugby-based Batchelors Builders and MKM Rugby agreed to support the

by **Andy Morris**
andy.morris
@bullivantmedia.com

project, the prisoners set to work on building 70 boxes, including general bird boxes and special boxes for robins, boxes for bats and bug boxes for insects.

Now Stephanie has distributed dozens of boxes to schools, community organisations and voluntary groups in the borough including the Benn Partnership Centre, Brownsover Community School, Overslade Community Centre, Paddox Primary School and New Bilton Community Association.

Boxes have also been put

up in the grounds of the category C prison.

Stephanie said: "We were delighted to get this idea off the ground with the support of Onley and Rugby-based building companies."

"Everyone has a role to play in supporting biodiversity and conserving and creating wildlife habitats, so we really want to encourage our communities to connect with nature through projects such as this one."

John Waters, who runs the Onley Prison working party which built the boxes, said the prisoners were delighted when the governor approached the party with the idea.

He added: "This has been a very good collaborative project which I hope can be continued."

"I have fed back to the men about how the boxes are being used, which has gone down well."

"We have a lot of skills available within the prisoner workforce which could be beneficial for all parties, and doing work like this helps with their rehabilitation and work readiness for their release."

Overslade Community Centre's Tanith Ollier (left) and Anna Litten (right) with the newly-installed bird box at the centre in Buchanan Road.



Residents of Overslade House enjoyed crafting a Union flag collage for the exhibition.



Care home residents joins in VE Day exhibition

CREATIVE residents at a Rugby care home are looking forward to seeing their handiwork on display at an exhibition to commemorate VE Day.

Staff at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum invited the residents of Overslade House to create arts and crafts for the exhibition, which will be on display to

the public in the venue's main foyer from Tuesday April 29 to Sunday May 25.

Inspired by a bustling street party, the exhibit features crafted 'sponge' cakes, vibrant bunting, Union flag mosaics and charming decoupage tea sets to commemorate VE Day.

Residents enjoyed craft-


ing a Union flag collage, making cakes out of sponges, and decorating doilies to make bunting.

Resident John said: "I am really looking forward to seeing our creations at the exhibition to celebrate a momentous occasion, VE Day. We have had great fun."

The home's senior general manager Violetta Baesu

said: "It is so lovely that our residents can engage with the local community and contribute to such a special occasion and have so much fun being creative and imaginative."

"We look forward to taking residents on a trip to the Art Gallery and Museum to view their creations at the exhibition."



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HAF a great time with free activities

by **Andy Morris**
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

CHILDREN in Coventry can enjoy free activities and healthy food options during the Easter holidays.

The city's new spring Holiday, Activity and Food programme (HAF) runs until Sunday April 27.

The programme gives Coventry children the chance to have four activities and one free experience throughout the spring break. Local families are being encouraged to find out if they are eligible as activities get booked up.

Around 18,000 children will be eligible for the programme, with more than 75 new activities happening this spring, thanks to a £1.6million grant awarded to Coventry from the government to continue the programme.

The Coventry programme has had an overwhelmingly positive reception, with 22,000 sessions provided and in 2024, 95-100 per cent of HAF users would recommend it to other people.

Coun Dr Kindy Sandhu, Coventry City Council's Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, said:



Participants in the Holiday, Activity and Food programme can take part in four activities and one free experience throughout the spring break.

"Children and young people will not only be able to benefit from a healthy meal, but they will also be able to learn about their city's heritage and culture at brilliant venues, develop their skills and be able to make friends along the way.

"I appreciate that for many families, the cost of living remains a challenge which is why good quality and family-friendly programmes such as these are vitally important to local communities. I hope many people get online or in touch to see if they are eligible to sign-up for the programme and I look forward to popping along to see some of the activities first-hand."

The HAF programme, which has been running since 2021, gives children the opportunity to join activities and experiences throughout Coventry for free, with a

nutritious meal, available for any children who meet the entry requirements.

HAF also offers opportunities such as free sessions to The Wave, Planet Ice and other outdoor trips and activities like multi-sports, coding, cooking, skateboarding, performing arts, photography and more.

The programme is primarily for pupils of statutory school age, who are eligible for benefits-related free school meals and Coventry has extended eligibility to other children as well.

The HAF programme also gives extra access for children with additional needs, so all children eligible should be able to attend most activities.

Visit coventry.gov.uk/haf or contact the Customer Contact team at 08085 834 333 for more information.

Local Elections are happening on Thursday 1 May 2025



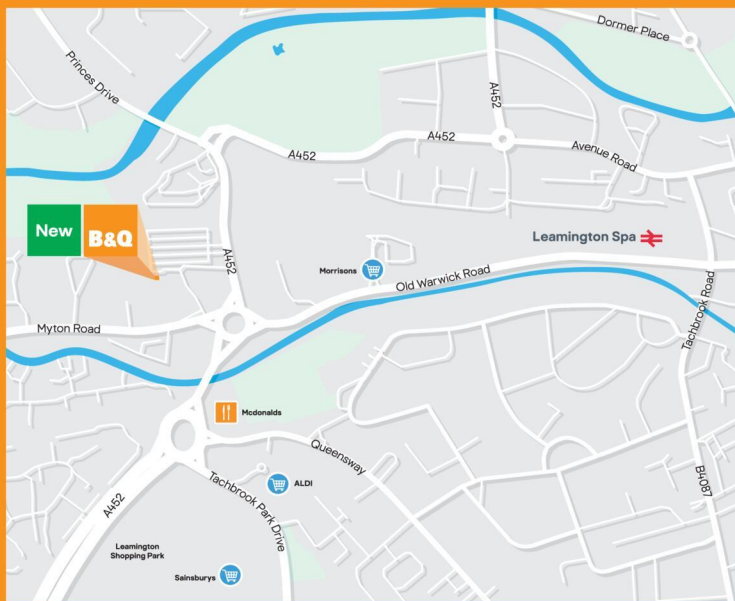
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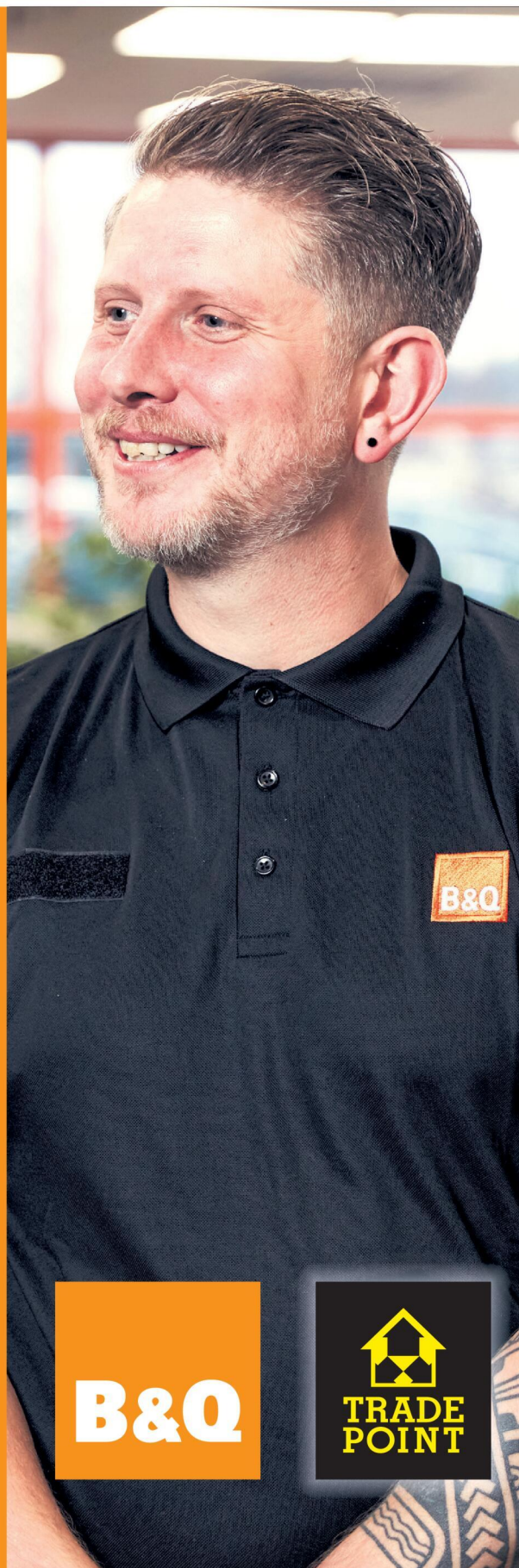


Find out more at www.warwickdc.gov.uk/elections2025

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Voters urged to check the rules

POSTAL voters in Rugby have been warned to avoid falling foul of recent changes to the rules at next month's local elections.

Elections for the borough's ten Warwickshire County Council divisions take place on Thursday 1 May, together with a by-election for Rugby Borough Council's New Bilton ward.

And with postal voters set to receive ballot papers over the next few weeks, the Returning Officer has highlighted key changes to postal voting which came into force for the first time at last year's local elections.

The rules mean postal voters must now complete and sign a postal vote return form when hand-delivering a vote at a polling station or the Town Hall.

A restriction on the number of postal votes which can be hand-delivered by a single voter also remains in place, with a voter only allowed to hand-deliver up to six postal votes - including their own.

Dan Green, Returning Officer for Rugby, urged voters to return postal votes via the Royal Mail in the pre-paid envelope included with the ballot papers.

He also encouraged voters to put votes in the post in plenty of time before polling day, adding: "Returning your postal vote via the Royal Mail removes the requirement to sign a return form, so it's the simplest way to ensure your vote counts at the local elections."

"We have put up signs at the Town Hall to remind postal voters of the rules, together

with warning stickers on our letter boxes to deter voters from hand-delivering a postal vote without signing a return form.

"The rules mean if we receive a hand-delivered postal vote without a signed return form, we cannot inform the voter of the reason the vote was rejected until after the election."



Voters who want to hand-deliver postal votes can complete and sign a return form at the Town Hall from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.

Return forms can also be completed and signed at polling stations on Thursday 1 May.

Other new voting rules introduced under the Election Act 2022 have changed voting by proxy, while voters who want to vote at a polling station need to produce a valid form of photo ID in order to receive a ballot paper. Visit www.rugby.gov.uk/electionready for more information.



Members of Roar Cheer have something to shout about after they received a £1,000 donation for new training kits.

Cheered by a big donation

A CHEERLEADING group in Rugby has something to shout about after a donation funded new training kits to help them prepare for a once-in-a-lifetime performance.

Mulberry Homes donated £1,000 to Roar Cheer, a cheerleading group based near the housebuilder's development in Houlton.

Roar Cheer was founded in January 2012 with the aim of promoting the sport of cheerleading in the community and to provide a safe place for young athletes to train and develop their skills.

The group recently won a bid to compete in the All Star Worlds, a major competition in the sport which is held in the United States.

The donation from Mulberry Homes will be used to provide the team with brand-new

training kits for the occasion.

Claudia Lindstrom, Fundraising Lead for Roar Cheer, said: "The girls will be delighted once they receive their kit and it will be a motivational tool, so the girls feel a sense of belonging. The support is very much appreciated."

Sophie Leathley, Senior Brand and Marketing Manager at Mulberry Homes, said: "We are delighted to be able to help Roar Cheer with preparation for their exciting trip to America, and wish them the best of luck in the competition."

"Community groups such as this play an important role in bringing people together and we're always looking for ways to support them. We're looking forward to finding further opportunities to do so in the future."

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All aboard this family favourite

FULL steam ahead - a quaint attraction which has been delighting Rugbeians for over 70 years is back on track.

The Rainsbrook Valley Railway is gearing up for the first of ten public running days this year.

A trial run earlier this month was the first time trains had taken to the tracks at the miniature railway since the last public running day in October.

And it's all aboard when the Onley Lane



attraction opens to the public on Sunday April 27.

Volunteer Phil Hart said: "A large section of the track at Onley Lane had to be taken up and re-laid where the weather has taken its toll on the old timber sleepers. Incidentally these are being renewed using ones made from recycled plastic."

"In addition to the trackwork, our team of volunteers have been busy carrying out work on the club's steam locomotives and completing the new cafeteria building and picnic areas."

"All at the Rainsbrook Valley Railway are looking forward to meeting both those who haven't been before and those who are returning for another exciting day out."

Run by the not-for-profit Rugby Model Engineering Society, the Rainsbrook Valley Railway is one of the longest ground level and raised miniature railway tracks in the Midlands.

The railway, in one form or another, has been attracting passengers around the town since around 1949, popping up in locations including Wood Street, Whitehall Recreation Ground, Abbey Street and Hillmorton Community Centre before moving to the current site in 1982.

The first public running day for 2025 is Sunday April 27. There will be two sessions - at 1pm and 2.30pm. Trains will be running on both the half mile raised track and the one mile larger ground level track.

Visit www.rugbymes.co.uk for more information and to book tickets.

The Rainsbrook Valley Railway is gearing up for the first of ten public running days this year.



Circus skills will be among the attractions at the Food Festival.

Suiting all tastes...

A GASTRONOMIC gala is returning to Rugby town centre later this month.

The town's Spring Food and Drink Festival takes place in and around Regent Street on Saturday April 26.

Around 50 stalls will offer food and drink from local businesses, farms and producers.

The free event will also feature a funfair, circus skills, a bouncy castle, a children's show, face painting and spoon carving workshops.

Live music, performed at St Andrew's Church Gardens and on Bank Street, will include a Rock Choir, The Big Sing, Joe Davis, David Newman, James Kirkland, Sam Flack, Izzie Porter, Rosie and Ben, Josh

Ireson, Robert Miles Barnett, Steve Litten and The Boat Rats.

Rugby First Business Director Linda Lowne said: "As always, the event has proved very popular with stallholders and is now fully booked."

"Several thousand people are expected to attend the event which promises to provide a huge range of tasty treats for everyone."

"The event will also have a significant impact on the town centre economy by increasing footfall, raising awareness of town centre businesses and increasing spend."

Visit www.rugbyfirst.org for more information.

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SOS reflects on suicide

A REMEMBRANCE day for those affected by suicide is taking place at Warwick Castle.

SOS Silence of Suicide is holding its second annual remembrance day evening event on Thursday May 1.

With growing support and recognition, SOS hopes to establish this as a national day of remembrance to honour those lost to suicide and provide a supportive space for those bereaved.

This year's event at Warwick Castle will once again bring people together in reflection, solidarity, and hope. A highlight of the evening will be a special performance from the Crystal Gospel Choir. The evening will also include personal tributes, inspiring speakers, and opportunities for attendees to light candles in memory of their loved ones.

Yvette Greenway-Mansfield, CEO and co-founder of SOS Silence of Suicide, said: "The response to last year's event was overwhelming, proving just how vital it is to have a dedicated space to remember, reflect, and support one another. Suicide grief is often isolating, but by coming together, we show that no one has to walk this path alone.

"Our aim is to establish this as a national day of remembrance, ensuring that those we've lost are never forgotten and that their loved ones always have a place to turn to for support."

For more information visit sossilenceofsuicide.org

Greens want X factor for county council elections

by Philippa Mingins

THE GREEN Party has demonstrated it has high hopes for the Warwickshire County Council elections after choosing to hold the launch of its national campaign for the local elections in Kenilworth.

Party co-leaders Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay said at the launch on Tuesday April 8 they hoped the party, which has more than 800 councillors already, would be able to add to that number for the eighth election in a row.

Ms Denyer added: "The over 800 Green councillors across England and Wales between them already represent millions of people in this country.

"They are working hard every day to make a difference for their communities, working all year round on practical solutions, not just turning up on the doorstep when it's election time.

"Green councillors are embedded in their communities, listen to the needs and concerns of their residents – their neighbours – and take action to improve their quality of life every day. Offering hope, not division; community not chaos."

Mr Ramsay said: "We know that when people vote green they get the real change that we so desperately need, that is why we have seen



High hopes – Green Party co-leaders Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay at the launch event in Kenilworth.

Green councillor numbers growing year on year, election after election, in fact we are the only party in the UK to have grown our number of councillors every year for the last seven years, because voters are linking what they see and voting of more of it."

After the event, Joe Rukin, the Green candidate for Kenilworth St John's, said: "Greens have won seats from the Conservatives in every council election here in Kenilworth in 2019, 2021 and 2023.

"No other party comes close to

that level of consistency. That's because that after years of inaction from local politicians, with occasional flurries of activity around election time, people can see that Greens are there, working hard in the community, all year round."

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Health chiefs urge vigilance over TB signs

VULNERABLE Warwickshire residents are urged to be aware of the signs and symptoms of tuberculosis following an increase in cases across the West Midlands.

Vulnerable groups may include those experiencing homelessness, those who have drug and alcohol dependency, anyone who has contact with prison inmates and anyone who may have moved to England from a country where TB is common.

The infection is caused by bacteria. It mainly affects the lungs, but it can affect any part of the body, including lymph nodes (glands), bones and the brain, causing meningitis.

It spreads when a person with TB in their lungs or throat, coughs and sneezes.

Symptoms include a cough that lasts more than three weeks, high temperature, night sweats, loss of appetite and weight loss.

Shade Agboola, director of public health for Warwickshire County Council said: "TB is preventable and curable, so we want to ensure that everyone knows the signs and symptoms, especially vulnerable groups."

"However, it is important to know that anyone can get TB. If you or your child experiences one or more of the symptoms, think TB and contact your GP as soon as possible."

"With early diagnosis, TB can be treated with a long course of antibiotics. Testing for TB is free and confidential and will help you to stay healthy."

Anyone coming to stay in the UK for six months from a country where TB is common, is required to have a TB test for infectious TB.

But Latent TB Infection (LTBI) is when bacteria can live in someone's body without making them sick. People will not show signs of LTBI and cannot pass TB on to others.

It is important to note LTBI can be reactivated and can make the person (the host) infectious.

Those at most risk from reactivation are people who have lived with an active case within the previous two years- this includes family members and children.

Visit www.nhs.uk/conditions/tuberculosis-tb/ for more information.



On their way to their fundraising target - Trustees Janette Eslick, Viv Bosworth, Amanda Burford and Angus Aagaard with Warwick mayor Coun Dave Skinner.

CELEBRATION: A MARKET day to celebrate raising \$1.6million for a much-needed new community centre in Warwick has been hailed a success.

The activity-packed event held in Market Square featured live music, market stalls and games, raising £2,500 towards the Priory Pools Community Centre.

It was also an opportunity for trustees of PPCC to share their plans as they head towards their final fundraising target of £2million.

They have already secured \$300,000 from Warwickshire County Council's Social Fabric Fund, \$250,000 from Warwick District Council, \$300,000 from King Henry VIII Endowed Trust, and other large contributions from The Warwick and Budbrooke

Anglican Churches Charity, The Charity of Thomas Oken and Nicholas Eyffler, Warwick Relief in Need, Warwick United Charities, Warwick Provident Dispensary, 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust, and Warwick Rotary Club.

The next step is a spring raffle with prizes up for grabs including meals out, days out and treats.

Visit www.priorypoolsc.org to buy a raffle ticket.

The new community centre will be located between Priory Park and the Packmores Estate and is designed to meet a variety of needs. Its spacious hall will host events and activities, while dedicated rooms will provide space for support services and group activities.

That's the ticket

A MYSTERY Warwickshire woman, known only as Miss N, has landed a £1million lottery prize.






Her plans for the life-changing win, which came in the EuroMillions UK Millionaire Maker draw on Tuesday March 11, include buying a new car and going on holiday.

The lucky resident played a Lucky Dip via the National Lottery website.

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Lots to do & see in Easter break

by **Andy Morris**
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

FAMILIES in Coventry can choose from a programme of activities, events and days out to keep little ones entertained this Easter.

Visit Coventry has shared its top recommendations for ways families can make the most of the Easter break – whether that’s hunting for eggs, a visit to the theatre or enjoying the city’s outdoor spaces.

Paul McMahon, managing director at Visit Coventry, said: “Easter is a fantastic time to explore everything Coventry has to offer.

“Whether families are looking for a low-cost day out, exciting entertainment or something a little different, there’s plenty to enjoy across the city throughout the school holidays.

“We launched our new website recently to help visitors and locals



to discover the city’s attractions, venues and events. This Easter will be the perfect chance to explore the new platform and find out more about everything to do in the city.”

Families are invited to the Lunt Roman Fort on April 22-24 to take part in a huge Easter artwork based on the chariot races of the Circus

Maximus. Visitors will also be able to explore the unique reconstructed fort.

On Easter Sunday, city centre venue The Castle Grounds Pub will host an egg hunt complete with a children’s disco, karaoke, and bonnet making.

Theatre lovers can enjoy a Julia

Families are invited to the Lunt Roman Fort to take part in a huge Easter artwork based on the chariot races of the Circus Maximus.

Donaldson favourite, with Room on the Broom showing at The Belgrade Theatre from April 23-26.

For older children, Boom Battle Bar is offering a family package from April 14–25 (weekdays only), allowing groups to choose three of its top games.

Dinosaur World Live runs at the Belgrade Theatre from April 22–24, featuring life-sized, realistic dinosaurs including a T-Rex, Triceratops and Giraffatitan.

On Thursday April 24, Coventry Cathedral will host Let’s Play!, a free drop-in event filled with indoor games and crafts suitable for all ages.

Blabers Hall Wine Estate is hosting an Easter Open Day and Craft Market on Good Friday (April 18), featuring live music, food stalls and local crafts.

Hatton Adventure World will hold its Spring Spectacular until April 27, featuring new arrivals in the animal marquee, baby animal handling, daily shows and farm-themed activities.

Coombe Abbey Hotel is also offering a special Easter family package until April 25, which includes an overnight stay at the historic hotel, a full English breakfast, and tickets for either Go Ape or The Wave waterpark, plus entry to St Mary’s Guildhall and Hermit’s Hollow for younger visitors.

For sports fans, Coventry City Football Club host West Bromwich Albion at Coventry Building Society Arena on Good Friday (April 18).

As the break draws to a close, families can join the crowds on Sunday April 27 to cheer on participants in the Coventry Half Marathon and 10K, which starts in the city centre and finishes at the historic Cathedral.

Visit www.visitcoventry.co.uk for a full round-up of Easter activities.

The visit to Specsavers in Canley generated £217 for the Guide Dogs charity. s



Guide dogs’ opticians visit raises £200

THREE guide dogs and their owners visited a Canley opticians and helped to raise £217 for Guide Dogs UK.

The dogs greeted customers at the Specsavers in the Sainsbury’s store with the aim to raise awareness and cash for the vital work the charity does for people living with sight loss.

The store’s team also donated £100 to the overall total.

Store director Harpreet Bhara said: “As always, our customers and the local community were incredibly generous and we’d like to say thank you to everyone who donated.

“Just £8 can support a working guide dog for a day

so the money we raised really will make a difference.”

Guide Dogs UK provides life-changing services to aid the independence of people living with sight loss.

For information or to book appointments at Specsavers visit the website at specsavers.co.uk/stores/canley or call 024 7518 9511.

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THE BLINDING BEST: How one Coventry business is raising the bar (and the blinds!)

In a world of quick fixes and throwaway trends, it's refreshing to find a company where craftsmanship, care and community still matter.

Step into the world of Brixham Blinds, and you'll soon see it's not just about dressing windows – it's about transforming homes. Based in the heart of Coventry and proudly serving the West Midlands, Brixham Blinds is a shining example of what happens when passion meets precision. With a service as

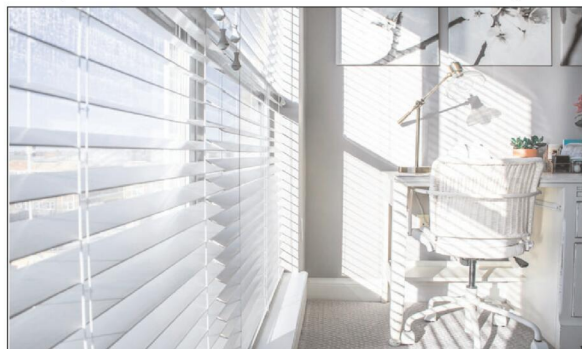
seamless as their sleek roller blinds, owner Zak Manger has spent the past ten years building something truly special: a local business that combines top-tier products with good old-fashioned service. "At Brixham Blinds, we pride ourselves on being more than just a supplier," Zak says. "We provide a made-to-measure service, tailored exactly to each customer's needs, no matter the size, style or shape of their space." And it shows. With 100% five-star reviews and an ever-growing number of loyal customers, Zak and his team have become the go-to for

both homeowners and tradespeople across the region. Whether you're styling a single window or outfitting a whole development, Brixham Blinds offers free consultations, expert advice, and solutions for every question you can think of. From minimalist vertical blinds for a contemporary living room to dramatic Roman blinds that give your kitchen a five-star feel, there's truly something for everyone. Their extensive collection includes roller, venetian, pleated, woodweave, blackout blinds and classic shutters – each one carefully crafted using high-quality materials, and all compliant with the latest child safety regulations. And if you're in the trade? You're in good hands too. "We work closely with builders, interior designers, and property developers to deliver bespoke blinds at competitive trade prices," Zak explains. "Everything is made to measure, and everything is backed by our five-year guarantee." Speed, too, is part of the Brixham promise. "We know timing is everything," Zak smiles. "That's why we offer a seven-day fitting promise and aim to get your blinds measured within 48 hours of consultation." It's that kind of commitment that keeps the rave



reviews rolling in: "Absolutely delighted with all of my blinds. Professional, lovely to deal with and the quality is superb." "They look fantastic. Lovely staff and very quick turnaround. Highly recommended." "Excellent service from start to finish. My blinds were fitted within a week of ordering them." And let's not forget the fitting. Brixham Blinds offers a no-obligation measuring service, a seven-day fitting promise, and a generous five-year guarantee. That's not just service - it's peace of mind. As someone who's wrestled with wonky DIY blinds in the past (hello, lopsided Ikea disaster), I can't tell you what a relief it is to meet

someone who gets it right the first time. Zak and his team don't just fit blinds - they make your house feel like a happy and well functioning home. Whether you're chasing that dreamy, show-home look or just want a better night's sleep in total blackout bliss, Brixham Blinds is ready to help you reimagine your space – beautifully, affordably, and reliably. With Zak at the helm, it's clear this Coventry gem isn't just good... They're the blinding best. Ready to find your perfect fit? Browse their collection online or book a free, no-obligation quote. The blind of your dreams is just a consultation away.



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Just for Pets, Horeston Grange Shopping Centre, Nuneaton CV11 6GU (next to Farmfoods)

www.justforpets.co.uk

Refugee tells story of hope and happiness

'I FEEL needed' - a Ukrainian refugee in Warwickshire has told of how she has found hope and purpose through her volunteering work.

Olha has been in the UK for over a year. When she first arrived, she felt overwhelmed by loneliness and anxiety, often finding herself in tears - but has since found a sense of belonging and happiness thanks to the support of the community.

She said everything changed when she was introduced to Warwickshire CAVA (Community and Voluntary Action).

She added: "Volunteering is sunshine on a long rainy day. CAVA helped me feel the joy of life because it's important for me to feel that I'm helping people. Now I'm happy, I laugh, and enjoy life."

Through volunteering, Olha has made new friends and has also been able to volunteer in a playgroup, looking after pre-school children.

She said: "When I come to the kindergarten, I am very happy. I love children and parents, and it is mutual. I have worked as a teacher all my life; this is my calling, it inspires me."

"I was very sad to leave my job in Ukraine, and in the toddler group, I seem to have returned to my favourite job again and I feel needed."

Olha sees volunteering as an opportunity to contribute to society, as well as an opportunity to say thank you to the British people 'for the warm shelter for the Ukrainian people'.

She added: "It has also provided new

acquaintances with interesting people, a chance to study a new culture and its traditions, and an opportunity to experience life as it is: turbulent, rich, colourful, multifaceted."

Charles Barlow, Head of Community Partnerships at Warwickshire County Council (WCC), said: "Individuals like Olha have brought a remarkable sense of hope and resilience to our community. Their dedication and willingness to give back, despite their own challenges, have been truly inspiring."

"We are immensely grateful for their contributions, which have not only enriched our communities but also demonstrated the profound impact of solidarity and support. Their efforts remind us of the strength found in unity and compassion."

Over the past three years, more than a thousand Ukrainian nationals have begun a new chapter in Warwickshire thanks to over 950 hosted relationships and support from generous Warwickshire residents, many of whom have hosted multiple times.

WCC continues to appeal for more residents to come forward as hosts as the war in Ukraine continues.

The 'Homes for Ukraine' Sponsorship scheme supports Ukrainians fleeing the war by connecting them with sponsors offering accommodation. All hosts receive a £350 payment for hosting. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/yey37d63> for more information.

Anyone interested in hosting in Warwickshire can call 0800 408 1447 or email ukraine@warwickshire.gov.uk for more information.



A night to remember

A MOONLIGHT Walk for The Myton Hospices has broken records.

The glittering event around Warwick saw 2,100 fundraisers stroll out - the largest number to take part in a single event in the charity's history - raising a record-breaking £231,087.

Participants took to the streets of the town centre and the grounds of Warwick Castle on 5km and 10km routes lit up by light trails and moonlight zones.

The new event was an opportunity to come together with friends and family in support of the charity and also to celebrate loved ones passed.

Hospice events manager Natalie Walker said: "Thank you to each and every one of you who joined #TeamMyton - whether you walked, ran, fundraised, donated, volunteered or cheered from the side lines. Your support is helping us continue to care for people and their families living with life-limiting illnesses across Coventry and Warwickshire."

"We are a charity, not the NHS, and just 17 per cent of our funding comes from the NHS. That means this year we need to raise £12.7 million of the £15.3 million it costs to provide our vital services. Thank you all for your amazing support."

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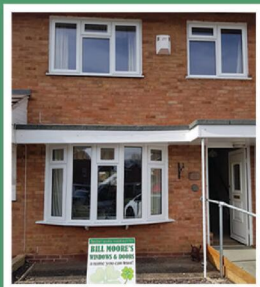


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Bookcase



All the latest books reviewed

THE FIRST four months of the year have been filled with reading.

In an effort to reduce my screen time and get through my constantly growing 'to be read' pile, I have had my nose in a book for most of the year.

Although I have been making my way through the collection, I could not help but buy some new releases - so here are the best books of 2025 so far.

1. The Rewrite by Lizzie Damiola Blackburn



The story starts with Temi and Wale meeting in London. They flirt, date, meet each other's friends - then Wale dumps Temi to go on Love Villa, a fictional version of Love

Island.

Instead of giving in to heartbreak, Temi throws herself into her writing. She's within touching distance of a book deal that would solve all her problems.

But publishers keep passing on her novel and bills still have to be

paid. So, when the opportunity to ghost-write a celebrity autobiography arises, Temi finds herself accepting.

And, of course, the celebrity turns out to be Wale.

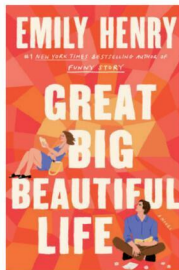
This novel blends sharp humor with heartfelt insight, wrapped in Blackburn's warm, conversational style.

Readers will find themselves rooting for the protagonist through every twist of career reinvention, romantic mishap, and moment of growth.

A perfect pick for fans of contemporary fiction that's both laugh-out-loud funny and emotionally resonant.

2. Great Big Beautiful Life by Emily Henry

Emily Henry is one of the all-time greats. I seldom go on holiday without ensuring I have one of her novels with me, and this is no different. Great Big Beautiful Life takes a slight detour from Henry's usual romantic com-



edy roots and leans into a more introspective, emotionally rich narrative.

While still filled with Henry's signature wit and sparkling dialogue, this novel delves deeper into themes of grief, self-discovery, and what it means to live a life of meaning and connection.

The book centres around Alice Scott, a writer who is still dreaming of her big break, and Hayden Anderson a Pulitzer-prize winning human thundercloud.

They are both on Little Crescent Island for the same reason - to write the biography of a woman no-one has seen in years.

But only one of them will get the chance to have their work published.

If you come for the romance, you'll stay for the profound emotional arcs and the tender way Henry explores the beauty and chaos of everyday life.

It's a refreshing and heartfelt read that proves Henry can master more than just a swoon-worthy love story.

3. Favourite Daughter by Morgan Dick

The novel focuses around Mickey and Arlo, half-sisters who have never met.

Arlo adored her father - but always lived in the shadow of his personality and burdensome vices. Meanwhile, their father abandoned Mickey and her mother years ago, and Mickey

hated him since.

When she receives news of her father's passing, Mickey is shocked to learn that he's left her his considerable fortune, but Mickey must attend a series of therapy sessions before the money can be released.

Unbeknownst to either woman, the psychologist Mickey's father has ensured she meets with is her half sister, Arlo.

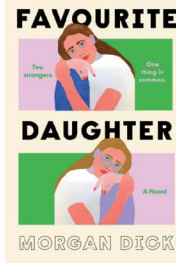
Working together as therapist and patient—with no idea that they're in fact sisters - Arlo and Mickey soon get under each other's skin.

With a voice that is deeply vulnerable, Dick captures the undercurrents of sibling rivalry, maternal pressure, and the blurred lines between love and obligation.

A must-read for fans of literary fiction with a dark, intimate edge.

4. Famous Last Words by Gillian McAllister

An author who is the Queen of gripping psychological thriller, McAllister once again takes readers



on another journey exploring guilt, truth, and the haunting power of hindsight.

The plot follows new mother Camilla as her life changes forever. After months of maternity leave, she will drop her infant daughter off at daycare for the first time and return to her job as a literary agent.

But, when she wakes, her husband Luke is not there. He is in central London in the middle of a

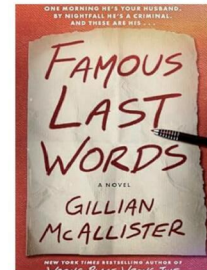
hostage situation - not as a hostage as the gunman.

As the narrative moves backward through time - a technique

McAllister mastered in Wrong Place, Wrong Time - Famous Last Words becomes a forensic excavation of motive and morality.

What starts as a mystery quickly transforms into an exploration of character - what we say in the moment, what we wish we said, and what it means to truly know someone.

Fans of smart, structurally inventive thrillers will find this one utterly addictive.









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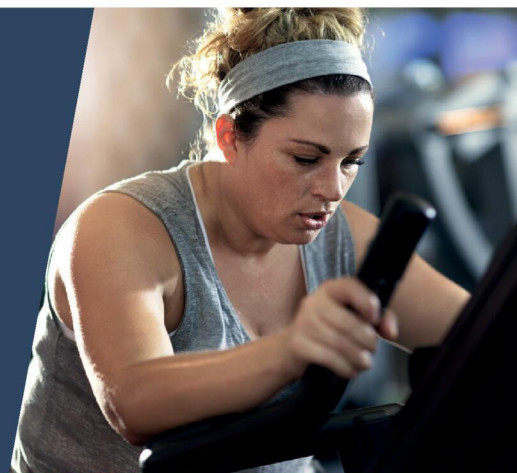
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Starling's decline is startling as Birdwatch results are revealed

by **Sonny Rackham**
sonny.rackham@bullivantmedia.com

STARLINGS have dropped out of the list of the UK's top three garden birds after a national spotting scheme saw the lowest number of the species ever recorded.

The species has fallen from number three to four in the RSPB's latest UK-wide Big Garden Birdwatch results after 600,000 people took part in the wildlife survey across the UK.

House Sparrow held onto the UK top spot once again and the Blue Tit remains at number two, with Woodpigeon in third.

More than 9million birds and over 80 species were spotted during this year's Big Garden Birdwatch between January 24 and 26.

Valuable insight

The scheme is a citizen science survey founded in 1979, providing an annual snapshot of garden birds in the UK.

Participants are asked to count the maximum number of each species recorded at their chosen location - gardens or parks or other green spaces - during a one-hour period.

Teachers and pupils can also take

part in Big Schools' Birdwatch, which reached more than 100,000 participants this year for the first time ever.

Locally, over 9,500 Worcestershire residents and more than 4,700 people from Warwickshire took part.

Worcestershire and Warwickshire's top three were the same as the UK's.

In the West Midlands, the Woodpigeon was the most popular with House Sparrow in second and Blue Tit in third.

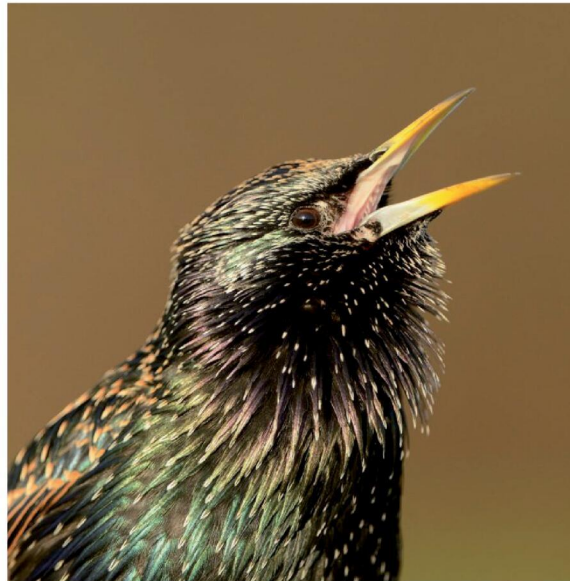
Starlings ranked as the eighth most commonly spotted bird in Worcestershire, it was fifth in Warwickshire and seventh in the West Midlands.

Massive decline

Starlings are medium-sized birds with glossy plumage that has a purple and green sheen, often with white spots during winter. They are also excellent mimics and can make a huge variety of tweets, cheeps and clicks.

They can be found across the UK with their numbers swelling during winter when birds arrive from northern Europe, gathering together to perform spectacular murmurations.

Despite these displays sometimes reaching hundreds of thousands of individuals, Starlings are a red listed species in the UK and considered a high conservation concern due to



their declining numbers.

Although there is not currently enough evidence to confirm what is causing these decreases, the UK breeding population declined by 82

per cent between 1970 and 2022.

Prior to 2000, the Starling was regularly the most numerous species recorded in the Big Garden Birdwatch.

Overall, the survey provides a valuable snapshot of how our most common garden birds are faring and taking part is one important way to help birds and nature.

The RSPB's chief executive, Beccy Speight said: "Starlings are one of our most charismatic garden birds, but this year's Big Garden Birdwatch results is a reason for concern.

"With one in six species at risk of extinction from Great Britain, we've done more damage to our natural UK than we realise.

"However, we can all do our bit to support these threatened birds by taking small actions that can not only benefit Starlings, but a wealth of other garden wildlife.

"Our countryside, our farms and our towns all need support to encourage nature, and while our homes and gardens often provide the perfect place for individual people to help, we also urgently need governments and businesses to join us in the wider fight to restore our natural UK."

Visit: rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch for more information on the RSPB Bird Watch.

The Starling is in decline across the UK - a fact evidenced in this year's RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch results. Picture by Ben Andrew, RSPB. S



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Tips to be open for longer hours

TIPS across Warwickshire are opening for longer over the summer.

Warwickshire County Council's household waste recycling centres are offering greater flexibility with a later-evening opening on Wednesdays until 6pm (excluding Stockton, Shipston and Wellesbourne) and all recycling centres (excluding Shipston) opening until 5.30pm over the weekend.

Over the Easter break, all sites will be open on Saturday and Easter Sunday (April 19 and 20). The smaller sites of Cherry Orchard in Kenilworth, Shipston and Wellesbourne will be closed on Good Friday (April 18) and Easter Monday (April 21) due to planning permission restrictions.

Booking is required for a 15-minute slot for a car. Where there is availability, appointments can be made on the day.

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/hwrc for more information.

Multiple concerns leave businesses in uncertainty

BUSINESSES in Coventry and Warwickshire are shrouded in uncertainty due to an unpredictable global economy, a meeting has heard.

Representatives from a range of companies in the region say they are being impacted by the increase in National Insurance contributions, and by the uncertainty caused by the USA's new trade tariffs.

They raised their concerns with Glynn Jones, the Bank of England's Deputy Agent for the West Midlands, at Coventry Conferences at the TechnoCentre.

Glynn was there to feed back issues raised to the bank to help it understand the sentiment in the regional economy.

He said: "It's not easy to set the context for the economy because things are changing and evolving at pace."

"We made a forecast in February but recent announcements coming out of the USA will have a material impact on the outlook for growth and inflation. However, what we do know is that the UK economy is fairly stagnant and has been for some time."

"There are threats to the economy on both the upside and the downside and there is a huge amount of uncertainty."

"This makes it difficult to forecast growth and is especially challenging for monetary policy given the long



Chamber members meet Glynn Jones.

lags involved before changes in Bank Rate feed fully through to the economy."

Corin Crane, chief executive of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, said: "The only thing that has been certain for businesses over recent years

has been uncertainty. One business around the table has been operating for seven years and they said they didn't know what normal looks like."

"So, it is great to be able to have this conversation with the Bank of England and to talk about the daily

issues being faced by businesses.

"As the voice of business, it's our role to ensure that decision-makers hear directly from those who matter most – our members who are working day and night to grow and make a positive contribution to the local economy."



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Warning to dog owners about the dangers of Easter chocolate

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

AS THE Easter break and festivities get under way pet owners are being warned to keep traditional goodies - such as chocolate eggs and hot cross buns - out of reach of their animals to avoid emergency vet visits.

The British Veterinary Association has issued the warning which comes as statistics from the Veterinary Poisons Information Service (VPIS), which provides emergency advice to veterinary professionals about poisoning cases and runs Animal PoisonLine for owners, reveals it received over 100 enquiries about animals eating chocolate last Easter.

It added that half of the enquiries it received were about pets ingesting hot cross buns, which contain vine fruits that are poisonous to many animals, also unsurprisingly come at Easter.

Although 80 per cent of enquiries related to chocolate ingestion involved dogs, it was not just cheeky canines who bit off more than they could chew - the VPIS reports 15 per cent of enquiries about chocolate ingestion related to cats and three per cent to rabbits.

'Serious danger'



Chocolate, especially dark chocolate, can be dangerous for all pets.

Dogs, however, are particularly susceptible to poisoning due to a chemical called theobromine, which is found naturally in cocoa beans.

Theobromine takes a long time to be broken down inside a dog's digestive system, which means that even small amounts of chocolate can potentially result in toxic levels, especially for smaller dogs and puppies.

Although white chocolate is usually safer for dogs if ingested accidentally, milk and dark chocolate can cause poisoning, so it's better to err on the side of caution and keep all types of chocolate away.

Raisins and sultanas, found in hot cross buns and simnel cakes, and xylitol (found in sugar-free treats) can also be dangerous for dogs if ingested.

British Veterinary Association junior vice president Rob Williams said: "Chocolate eggs and hot cross buns are just a few of the treats which spring onto the shelves at this time of year.

"While they are delicious for us, the VPIS statistics show they are also tempting - but toxic - to our pets.

"Many of us will know the dangers that chocolate presents to dogs, but other pets such as cats and rabbits can also become seriously unwell if they eat it, while hot cross buns

also contain vine fruits which is particularly toxic too.

"It's best to make sure that all sweet treats and tempting tidbits are kept out of reach of your pets to avoid emergency vet visits, but if you think your pet has eaten something they shouldn't, it's really important that you speak to your vet - it could save their life."

Recognise the signs

The British Veterinary Association said symptoms of chocolate poisoning usually appear within 12 hours of ingestion and can last for up to three days.

Initially, pets are likely to experience excessive thirst, vomiting, diarrhoea and restlessness.

These can develop into symptoms of hyperactivity, tremors, increased heart rate, hyperthermia and rapid breathing.

Severe cases may result in fits and heartbeat irregularities, and even coma and death. If you notice these symptoms in your dog and suspect chocolate ingestion, seek veterinary advice as soon as possible.

Visit: animalpoisonline.co.uk for more information on pets and toxic substances and the free downloadable Animal Welfare Foundation Pets and Poisons leaflet.

Pet owners are being warned to keep Easter goodies away from pets.



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Hatton Country World, Hatton, CV35 8XA

Hattonworld.com

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

CHURCHOVER LANE, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable power supply works.
Order Commences: 22 April 2025 for up to 18 months.

Access & Diversion: Montilo Lane, Lutterworth Road, A5 J A4303/B4027 Roundabout, Watling Street, Coventry Road, A5 From J A4303/B4027 Roundabout to start of dualling east of Little Walton, A5 from start of dualling east of Little Walton to end of dualling south west of Cotesbach Se, A5 from end of dualling south west of Cotesbach To J A426 Roundabout, A5 J A426 Roundabout, Leicester Road, School Street, Church Street, The Green, Harborough Magna Road, Hospital Lane and vice versa.
Contractor: New Dawn Projects, Tel: 07834 411 049.

LILAC DRIVE, BILTON, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable duct laying works.
Order Commences: 22 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 23 April 2025.
Access & Diversion: No alternative route available.
Contractor: Core Highways, Tel: 07979 296 733.

LITTLE CHURCH STREET, CALDECOTT, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To safely enable works to reconnect supply.
Order Commences: 21 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 23 April 2025.
Access & Diversion: No diversion available.
Contractor: Network Plus, Tel: 08006 783 105.

ORCHID WAY, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable works on sluice valve chamber.
Order Commences: 22 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 24 April 2025.
Access & Diversion: No diversion available.
Contractor: For STW, Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

PYTHCHLEY ROAD, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from a point outside property number 44.
Reason for Order: For works to repair/replace a defective manhole frame and covers.
Order Commences: 22 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 22 April 2025.
Access & Diversion: Pythchley Road, Faraday Road, Naseby Road, Cromwell Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Customer Solutions Plus, Tel: 07918 298 599.

PUBLIC FOOTPATH R144 RYTON ON DUNSMORE
Order Effect: Footpath closed to ALL Traffic between Grid References E440462, N275356 and E439949, N274986.
Reason for Order: Works are being carried out on or near to the footpath.
Order Commences: 21 October 2024 and was due to expire on 20 April 2025. However, the Secretary of State in exercise of his powers under S.15(5) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 has directed that the order shall continue in force until 1 October 2027, or until the works to which it relates are completed, whichever is the earlier (unless the Secretary of State issues a further direction.
Access & Diversion: Please use an alternative public route.
Contractor: Smiths Concrete Ltd, Tel: 07929 362 801.

Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
CHESTNUT FIELD, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. In addition, the one-way traffic flow will be temporarily suspended.
Reason for Order: To enable new supply works.
Order Commences: 6 May 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 9 May 2025.
Access & Diversion: Chestnut Field, Regent Place, Park Road, North Street and vice versa.
Contractor: Network Plus, Tel: 01392 261 362.

HUNTER STREET, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable works for boundary box installation.
Order Commences: 6 May 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 7 May 2025.
Access & Diversion: Corbett Street, Chester Street, Abbey Street, Cambridge Street, Hunter Street.
Contractor: Chevron Tm Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

MAIN STREET, BRANDON
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable essential inspection of the railway bridge, 21.00hrs-04.00hrs.
Order Commences: 9 May 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 10 May 2025.
Access & Diversion: Main Street, Avondale Road, Brandon Road, Brettford Road, Rugby Road, Fosse Way, School Street and vice versa.
Contractor: KEIAD, Tel: 07977 295 627.

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 18 April 2025

Classified

TELEPHONE 01527 588688 FACSIMILE 01527 584371

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICES

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE BOROUGH OF RUGBY (FOOTPATH R168Y) PUBLIC PATH ORDER 2025

The above Order made on the 16 April 2025 under Section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 will:-

Stop up the footpath from point A grid reference 446290 272230 south easterly for approximately 494 metres to Point B grid reference 446578 271830 and create a new footpath from Point D grid reference 446308 272396 on Bridleway R168x east for approximately 172 metres to Point E grid reference 446479 272300 turning south for approximately 216 metres to Point F grid reference 446513 272094 curving slightly for approximately 19 metres to Point G grid reference 446514 272076 then south for approximately 261 metres Point C grid reference 446491 271821

A copy of the Order and the order map may be seen free of charge at the Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby weekdays. It can also be viewed on the Council's website. Copies of the Order and map may be purchased at the price of £5.00.
Any representations about or objections to the Chief Officer Legal and Governance, Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby not later than 16 May 2025 and should state the grounds on which they are made.

If no such representations or objections are duly made, or if any so made are withdrawn, the Rugby Borough Council may confirm the order as an unopposed order. If the order is sent to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for confirmation any representations and objections which have not been withdrawn will be sent with the Order.
Dated 17 April 2025

Chief Officer for Legal and Governance The Officer appointed for this purpose

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

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

CHURCH LANE, CORLEY
Order Effect: A 30 mph Speed Limit will be imposed.
Reason for Order: For the safety of all road users and contractors working on carriageway.
Order Commences: 6 May 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 9 May 2025.
Contractor: RNR Traffic Management, Tel: 07852 380 338.

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 18 April 2025

PUBLIC NOTICES

GLYNDR JOHN DAVIES (Deceased) Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 2 Cow Crescent, Dunchurch Rugby, CV22 6DX, who died on 02/01/2024, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 19/06/2025, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

BRINDLEY TWIST TAFFI AND JAMES LLP, Lovick Gate, Siskin Drive, Coventry CV3 4JL

PUBLIC NOTICES

ELIZABETH HOWELLS (Deceased) Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 28 School Street, Church Lawford, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV23 5EE, who died on 01/11/2023, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 19/06/2025, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

HOWES PERCIVAL LLP, 3 The Osiers Business Centre, Leicester, LE19 1DX

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

HAMBRIDGE ROAD, BISHOPS THINGINGTON
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Structural examination works of railway bridge, closed 21.00hrs-04.00 hrs.
Order Commences: 22 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 23 April 2025.
Access & Diversion: Hambridge Road, Poplar Road, Chapel Street, Gaydon Road, Knightgote Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Centurion Traffic Management, Tel: 01132 775 360.

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

SCHOOL HILL, NAPTON ON THE HILL
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable works to lay new domestic gas service.
Order Commences: 6 May 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 8 May 2025.
Access & Diversion: Chapel Lane, Hackwell Street, School Hill and vice versa.
Contractor: Headway TM Ltd, Tel: 01214 744 344.

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 18 Apr 2025

Rugby Borough Council Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

Application Number R25/0153 THE MANOR HOUSE, FLECKNOE VILLAGE ROAD, FLECKNOE, RUGBY, CV23 8AT

To repair collapsed listed garden wall and carry out maintenance to the rest of the wall to the east of the gate.
This development may affect a Listed Building

Application Number R25/0297 DRAYTON HOUSE, SOUTHAM ROAD, DUNCHURCH, RUGBY, CV22 6NL

Demolition of two dwellings and garage and the erection of five new dwellings and associated development.
This development may affect a Conservation Area

Members of the public may inspect copies of the application, the plans and documents submitted with it online at: www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk or in an electronic form at: Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby CV21 2RR between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday until 12 May 2025. Please note a planning officer would not be present.

If you wish to make an appointment to discuss the application, please contact the case officer. Any person who wishes to make representation to the above mentioned Council about the applications should make them online - www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk (search for application number and select comment) - or in writing by that date to The Chief Officer Growth and Investment, Town Hall, Rugby, CV21 2RR.

If an application is determined by the Planning Committee, members of the public may have the opportunity to speak at the meeting. More details about public speaking are available from the Council or on-line at: www.rugby.gov.uk/speakingatplanning

For household or minor commercial applications, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at the appeal stage.
Nicola Smith Chief Officer - Growth and Investment

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE UNDER THE LICENSING ACT 2003

Notice is hereby given that Aries Agro International Ltd has applied to Coventry City Council for a NEW PREMISES LICENCE for Premier Heathcote Store, 40 Heathcote street, Coventry, CV6 3B]

Details of Application: To provide Supply of Alcohol . Off sales Sunday - Saturday 06:00 to 24:00

Any person wishing to lodge a representation concerning this application may write to: Licensing Authority, The Council House, Earl Street Coventry CV1 5RR. Or send an email to: licensing@coventry.gov.uk.

The application may be viewed during normal office hours at the above address and further information may be available at www.coventry.gov.uk on the public register.

Any Representation relating to this application must be made in writing to the Licensing Authority by 6th May 2025
Please note it is an offence to knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine on summary conviction for this offence is Unlimited.

PUBLIC NOTICES

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

CP Transportation Ltd of West Cottage Shakers Lane Long Nicholson, Southern CV47 9QB, is applying for a licence to use Bungallow Farm Smeaton Lane Stratford Under Fosse Rugby CV23 0PS as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicle and 1 trailer. 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 office of the Traffic Commissioner, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors 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 at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-making-representations-objections-and-complaints-goods-vehicle-operator-licensing.

Members of the public may inspect copies of the application, the plans and documents submitted with it online at: www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk or in an electronic form at: Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby CV21 2RR between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday until 12 May 2025. Please note a planning officer would not be present.

If you wish to make an appointment to discuss the application, please contact the case officer. Any person who wishes to make representation to the above mentioned Council about the applications should make them online - www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk (search for application number and select comment) - or in writing by that date to The Chief Officer Growth and Investment, Town Hall, Rugby, CV21 2RR.

If an application is determined by the Planning Committee, members of the public may have the opportunity to speak at the meeting. More details about public speaking are available from the Council or on-line at: www.rugby.gov.uk/speakingatplanning

For household or minor commercial applications, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at the appeal stage.
Nicola Smith Chief Officer - Growth and Investment

PUBLIC NOTICES

BARBARA MARINA BELLAMY (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of Drovers House Care Home, Drovers Close, Rugby, CV21 3HX formerly of 9 Heather Close, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV22 6SB, who died on 10/02/2024, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 19/06/2025, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Brethertons LLP, Montague House, 2 Clifton Road, CV21 3PX

HAPPY EASTER

BULL FAMILY
Angie, Charlie and Toni and my eight Grandchildren

HAPPY EASTER
Lots of Love Mum
XXX

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 Published by Bullivant Media Group Ltd, Webb House,
 Church Green East, Redditch, Worcestershire, B96 8BP
 Printed by Newsquest, Newspaper House, Osney
 Mead, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 0EJ

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More success for swimmers at National Championships

SWIMMING: RUGBY Swimming Club's artistic swimmers enjoyed further success at the prestigious National Age Group Championships.

The club won two gold and three bronze medals competing at the London Aquatics Centre - the venue for the swimming events at the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Rugby enjoyed a fine start to the competition by securing four of the top-eight places in the youth category of the highly competitive figure event.

And Frankie Klym earned bronze to claim Rugby's first medal of the Championships in a field featuring more than 100 swimmers.

In the 12 and under category, Catherine Yu provided Rugby's



Rugby's 13 to 15 free team and 12 and under team with their medals.

best placement as she finished 32nd in a strong field. And in the 12 and under duet,

Lottie Wilkins and Sophie Croft delivered a confident performance to finish eighth overall.

Rugby's youth combo team just missed out on the podium with their 'Beetlejuice' routine after finishing fourth.

The team of Saranne Black, Mellinda Bogdanova, Lucy Gates, Amelie Jeary, Darcey Townsend and Isobelle Watkins produced their best swim to date, improving on their recent regional performance.

Rugby enjoyed more success the following day as Molly Dollin's strong swim saw her finish fourth in the youth solo event.

And Keva Ennis delivered a flawless routine with zero base marks to claim bronze in her first year at the age category.

In the youth duet competition, Lola Huett and Klym entered the routine event as leaders following the figure results the previous day.

And the pair produced a stunning performance to secure the national title and become champions in their category.

Rugby's 12 and under free team of Wilkins, Croft, Caitlin-Rose Smith, Amelia Storr, Elsa Gaskin, Yu, Izzy Maglione and Seren Humphry overcame a sixth-place figure ranking to claim bronze.

And Rugby's youth free team of Huett, Klym, Doolin and Ennis also performed to 'Beetlejuice' and secured gold with the highest routine score in their category.

The club also welcomed the mayor of Rugby Coun Simon Ward to a training session at the The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre.

The mayor saw the swimmers in action and congratulated the athletes on their recent success.

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