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Danger warning over illegal bus stop parking

ILLEGAL parking at a hotspot in Rugby town centre has been causing more dangerous incidents.

Warwickshire County Council is urging drivers to avoid unsafe and illegal parking at bus stops outside shops in Clifton Road following recent incidents.

In February, a bus was unable to park at its stop due to a blockage caused by several parked cars. When the driver attempted to pull away, a car pulling out of Moultrie Road tried to overtake the bus and hit the front of it. It caused damage, although nobody was injured.

There have also been a number of instances where cars parked in the bus stop have tried to pull out when the bus was double parked, put-

by **Andy Morris**
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ting passenger safety at risk. The council launched a crackdown on 'consistently inconsiderate and illegal' parking at the town centre end of the road in early 2024 following a number of collisions and near-misses - including one in which a bus driver was injured as he got off his bus which had been forced to double park at the designated stop.

The council is advising residents that parking enforcement is set to increase at the busy section of the road between Railway Terrace and Bath Street, making it increasingly likely that anyone parking there illegally will be fined.

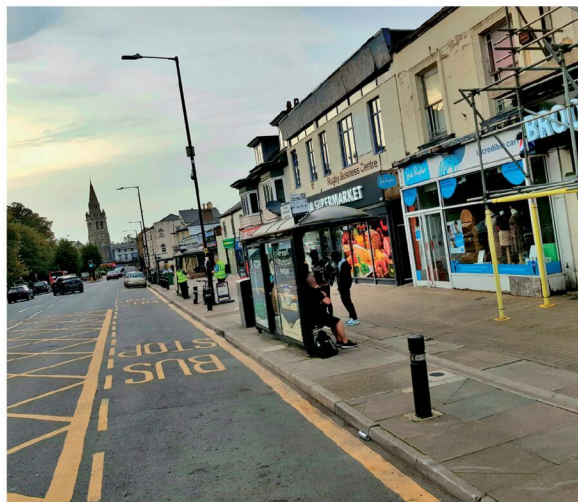
In just over a year, there have

been 173 Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) issued on Clifton Road, with 94 of those issued to cars parking in the restricted bus stop area.

The council is reminding residents that parking at bus stops is strictly forbidden and that anyone caught doing so is liable to be issued with a PCN.

Mark Ryder, Warwickshire County Council's executive director for communities, said: "The current situation of cars parking temporarily in the bus stop cannot continue. The consistently inconsiderate and illegal parking along the Clifton Road of drivers using the shops has left us with little option.

"While enforcement is always a last resort, the actions of a small minority of drivers are putting other



Illegal parking at bus stops in Clifton Road is 'putting people's safety in jeopardy', says Warwickshire County Council's Mark Ryder.

people's safety in jeopardy. That is unacceptable.

"We will work with our partners at the police, step up our monitoring and will not hesitate to fine inconsiderate drivers.

"We are committed to supporting local businesses on Clifton Road and will work with them to ensure their customers are able to park safely near to their shops."

Drivers looking to visit supermarkets, bars and takeaways in the area are advised that legal parking is available nearby at Moultrie Road, Gas Street car park, Railway Terrace car park and John Barford multi-storey car park.

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/roadsandtransport for more information about roads and transport in Warwickshire.



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Championing the needs of Rugby residents since 1991 and delivering the news to you every week

Dad's care is inspiring Lewis to box clever for Myton Hospices

by **Philippa Mingsins**
 philippa.mingsins@bullivantmedia.com

HEAVYWEIGHT support has been thrown behind The Myton Hospices with the appointment of a professional boxer as its ambassador.

Lewis Williams, from Leamington, has pledged his support to the charity, which has hospices in Warwick, Coventry and Rugby, as he continues his professional boxing career.

The 26-year-old's association with The Myton Hospices started in 2023 when his dad was cared for by the Myton at Home team.

He said: "I am immensely proud to be a Myton ambassador. From the moment Myton entered our lives, I knew that if I ever had a platform to promote their incredible work, it would be an honour to do so."

Setting his sights on raising an ambitious £1million over the course of his career, Lewis has set himself the challenge to raise £20,000 over the next year, which could fund one month of specialist nursing care.

Titled '20 in 25', Lewis is hoping to raise this total through chal-

lenges and events.

In 2020, Lewis' dad, Bob, was diagnosed with a lung and heart condition and his health started to deteriorate. At the time, Lewis was getting prepared to train for the Paris 2024 Olympics and had an upcoming tournament that could pave the way to the Olympics.

But Bob's health worsened in late 2023, and the Myton at Home team visited him three times a day where they cared for him in his home during his last month with his family.

Lewis continued: "The Myton team were brilliant with dad and they couldn't have made it any easier for us or him at what was an incredibly difficult and emotional time.

"But what means the most is the time they gave us with dad. I was due to compete in a tournament when Myton got involved and, luckily, one of the nurses had a boxing background and he knew what I was going through. He pulled me aside and told me that time was running out. He didn't tell me to miss the tournament but he was honest about what was happening. So, I pulled out of the tournament and stayed at home with dad."



Champion! - Clinical nurse practitioners Andy Houghton and Jo Pemberton welcome new ambassador Lewis Williams. Picture by Marcus Mingsins 1725010MMR



PHOENIX COACHES

	Adult	Child		Adult	Child
May					
10th Black Country Living Museum	£35.00	£22.00	June		
17th National Memorial Arboretum & Litchfield	£25.00	£20.00	16th Bakewell	£25.00	£20.00
27th Shrewsbury	£25.00	£20.00	24th Pub Lunch	£30.00	£24.00
28th Fantasy Island			28th Hampton Court	£58.00	£50.00
Ingoldmells	£27.50	£22.00	July		
31st Chatsworth House	£58.00	£50.00	5th Skegness	£27.50	£22.00
June					
7th Bath	£29.00	£24.00	8th Melton Mowbray	£25.00	£20.00
14th Liverpool & Afternoon Tea Cruise	£49.00	£37.00	12th Wellesbourne Market	£15.00	£12.00
			19th Southend-on-Sea	£29.50	£24.50
			29th Bury Market	£27.00	£22.00
			31st Weston-super-mare	£27.00	£22.00

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Paignton - Queens Hotel 8th-11th August 2025
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Normandy- Ibis Styles Ouistreham 15th-19th August 2025
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www.phoenixcoaches.org.uk
 Tel No 02476 350 811. 50 Southfield Close, Nuneaton. CV10 OBE

Bob died in January 2024, aged 71, surrounded by family.

Lewis added: "Boxing rules your life, you miss birthdays, weddings and funerals, training is everything. While it was a hard decision in some ways to miss the Olympics, for me it was a no brainer - I'll always have a career but I will only get one dad. I owe my boxing

journey to my dad, he was the one who took me out of Scouts and into the boxing gym, and he was an inspiration even when he was very ill."

Visit justgiving.com/campaign/lewis-williams-20-in-25 to donate to Lewis' fundraising campaign.



ABOVE - Bob was incredibly supportive of Lewis' boxing career.



LEFT - Lewis with his dad Bob.

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See page **30**



Taking on a mini-marathon to support their teacher's efforts

by Andy Morris
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

DETERMINED children at a Rugby infant school have fired the starting pistol on a teacher's fund-raising campaign.

Bilton Infant School teacher Fran Condry is running the London Marathon on Sunday (April 27) in aid of deaf-blind charity Sense - and pupils at the school took part in their own mini-marathon in support of her efforts.

Year 2 teacher Fran - who will be joined at the London Marathon by her dad Ed Condry and her job-share partner Helen Andrews - wanted to raise funds for Sense because the charity has supported her daughter Mia, who was born with cerebral palsy and without eyes, for her whole life.

To raise awareness of the charity and give her fund-raising campaign a boost, Fran organised a mini-marathon at the school.

She said: "We wanted all the kids to challenge themselves to do something they might not otherwise have done.

"We set up a 400-metre course around the school grounds and challenged the children to run around it as many times as possible in an afternoon.

"Mayor Simon Ward wished them luck and started each class in



turn. School staff and Bilton Junior pupils were stationed all around the course to cheer the children on with tambourines and drums, and Year 2 had made signs, motivational posters and London marathon bunting.

"We thought some children would get tired and stop after 15 minutes or so, and so were bowled over when they all kept going until home time! We were amazed at their resilience and determination, and so proud of every single one of them.

"We were blown away by the support from the lovely families at our

school who raised well over £1,000 for Sense."

Fran is facing her big challenge this weekend to celebrate Mia's 18th birthday next month.

She said: "I wanted to do something to give back to Sense to celebrate her birthday, as we were told when she was born that it was unlikely that she would survive.

"I want to thank the charity that has stood by our family in many outstanding and practical ways for the past 18 years. Thanks to Sense, Mia is growing into the confident

and independent adult that she is." Fran said Mia's conditions - which include epilepsy and developmental delay - restrict her movement and mean she requires 24-hour care.

She added: "Mia is growing up in a different world to most teenagers. She doesn't care about what she or anyone else looks like and she is not bothered by phones or technology. Her world view is pretty simple - she wants to have a laugh, go on adventures and eat chocolate.

"Her bravery astounds me - this week she was surfing on a seated

board in hail, wind and rain with really choppy waves. So whilst her body won't let her do a lot of things independently, her heart will let her do most things."

She said Sense had provided Mia with an 'endless list' of practical, fun and creative support over the years, including tailored holidays, activities, training, music and play sessions and more, adding: "Sense has taught us that there should be no limits to what Mia can achieve, as long as she has the right support around her."

Alongside Ed and Helen, Fran has already raised over £12,000 for the cause - and is on her marks to further boost that total.

"I am feeling nervous and excited about running the London Marathon," she said. "But I know that when it is getting hard, I can dig deep and think about Mia and - hopefully! - push through. And I'm hoping that next year she'll be doing it with us!"

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/bdcvcbcu> to sponsor Fran, Ed and Helen.

On your marks! Left to right: Fran Condry, Mayor Simon Ward, Ed Condry and (front, second left) Mia send the first class of kids on their way around the 400-metre course. Picture by Marcus Mingins 1625007MMR2



The school's pupils met on the playground to complete a dance warm up before the event got underway. Picture by Marcus Mingins 1625007MMR3

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The World in Chaos – A New World is Coming
Worried about today? The future?
Do you wonder why the world is in such a state? Every way we turn there seems to be another problem. Perhaps there are things that worry us, such as

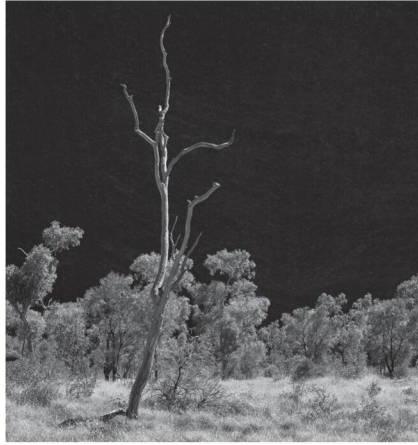
- War and the threat of more war
- Climate change
- Cost of living crisis
- Energy crisis
- Famine
- Anti-social behaviour
- NHS under pressure

Or perhaps the huge uncertainty brought to the world by the new US leadership.

This is the world in which we live, but happily it will not always be the same. God has a plan for

A New World Order
which will soon bring His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, back to the earth to reign as king and bring peace and stability to the benefit of all.
Hear what the Bible has to say about today, but also importantly about the New World which will soon be here

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FAR LEFT:
Welcoming the Passengers by Keith Roberts from Leek Wootton.

LEFT:
Scorched Tree by Gareth Seglenieks from Bidford.

RIGHT:
Mute Swan by David Child from Leamington.



Focus on photographers' skills

PHOTOGRAPHY fans will be in for a treat at Leamington's All Saints' Parish Church where a record number of pictures will be on view from this weekend.

Some 240 prints and digital images will be on display as part of Leamington Spa Photographic Society's (LSPS) annual exhibition, which is free to visit, from Saturday (April 26) until May 4.

LSPS is one of the largest and most active photographic clubs in the Midlands, with more than 100 members and 15 special interest groups, ranging from landscape

by Ian Hughes
ian.hughes@bullivantmedia.com

pen by accident, this is a journey without an end. "I'm honoured to have been asked to judge such a fantastic body of work, and we are fortunate to have a photography club with such skill and talent here in Leamington."

That sentiment was echoed by LSPS chairman Peter Chappell, who said of the exhibition: "The number of entries and the quality of the work is testament to the success of LSPS in encouraging members to develop their photographic journeys."

Leamington deputy mayor Ruggy Singh will present awards to the winners in the annual

competition and other competitions held throughout the LSPS season.

The winning entries, which will be on show alongside other highly-placed and submitted images, were:

Club Level Digital Image - Teamwork by Winnie Liu.

Club Level Print - Mute Swan by David Child.

Portrait Print - Welcoming the Passengers by Keith Roberts.

Local Scene - Summer Loving (Jephson Gardens) by Mike Kupczenko.

Colour Print - Chesil Beach by Richard Earp.

Digital Image - Northern Light

by Hugh Matthews.

Monochrome Print - Scorched Tree by Gareth Seglenieks.

Natural History Print - Low Key Chimp by Rob Musgrove.

Natural History Digital Image - Kingfisher at Union Wharf by Jonathan Corbett.

Landscape Print - Workers Meeting Place by Roger Lickfold.

The exhibition is open daily from 10.30am to 5.30pm (midday to 5pm on Sundays).

It can also be viewed online at lsp.org.uk where information about Leamington Spa Photographic Society can also be found.

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3D printing sees statues return

by Mia Whitehouse
news@bullivantmedia.com

COVENTRY Charterhouse is set to celebrate the return of two 14th-century statues thanks to the 3D printing of the Manufacturing Technology Centre (MTC) which is helping to preserve the city's heritage.

The statues of St Denis and St Lawrence were hidden in the garden at the Charterhouse during the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th-century. They were rediscovered and donated to St Osburg's Church in the 18th-century and were then found and restored in 1944, more than 100 years later.

Now, due to MTC's meticulous work, 3D printed replicas of the statues will be restored to the Charterhouse after being printed layer by layer after detailed scans were carried out to ensure they were identical to the originals.

Joe Darlington, director of technology at MTC, said: "As a Coventry-based organisation, we're excited to apply our technical expertise to the preservation of the region's history."

"While our 3D printing work typically focuses on developing parts and components for industry, this collaboration showcases the versatility of the technology we work with and the meaningful impact it can have on our communities."

This Spring, the Charterhouse is preparing to reopen as part of a new partnership between National Trust and Historic Coventry Trust. There will be new artefacts on display, serving as



a poignant reminder of the site's rich history and the monks who once lived there.

Tom Grosvenor, senior programme manager at National Trust, said: "As we prepare to open the Charterhouse as our first site in Coventry, we're particularly looking forward to working with the local community and creating a place where residents can come together and be part of the Charterhouse's present and future."

Jennie Rutte, manager

at Historic Coventry Trust, said: "It's truly wonderful to see these statues return to their original home at Charterhouse as copies."

Visit www.historiccoventrytrust.org.uk/visit/charterhouse/ to learn more about the Charterhouse, and www.the-mtc.org for more information on MTC.

The 3D printed statue of St Lawrence will be displayed alongside St Denis at Charterhouse. s



Police launch appeal after robber strikes at city shop

Police would like to speak to this man in connection with a robbery in Coventry.

A SHOP worker has been threatened during a robbery in Coventry.

It took place in Alfall Road at around 4pm on March 22.

Police would like to speak to the man pictured in connection with the incident.

Anyone with information is asked to contact police via the Live Chat facility at www.westmidlands.police.uk, or by calling 101, quoting incident number 20/191075/25.

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LEFT: Bookshop owner Christopher Hunt invites book lovers to meet authors at the events.



RIGHT: Award-winning broadcaster and comedian Robin Ince will discuss his new book, *Normally Weird and Weirdly Normal*, at an event in July.

Shop's novel way to meet authors

AUTHORS will give insights into their work at a series of events hosted by a beloved independent bookshop in Rugby town centre.

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

Hunt's Bookshop has announced a line-up of author events taking place in the spring and summer.

Local author Jen Smith will launch her new novel *Carbon Dating*, described as a captivating romance filled with history, second chances and undeniable chemistry, on Friday (April 25).

Author and journalist Alice Vincent will come to the bookshop on May 7 for an insightful conversation around her powerful new book, *Hark: How Women Listen*. Named an Independent

'Best Book to Look Out For in 2025', the book explores the overwhelming noise of modern life – both literal and societal – and asks how women can reclaim listening as something restorative and empowering.

On June 14, author Abigail Johnson will host an afternoon discussing her heartwarming debut, *The Secret Collector* – an uplifting novel about friendship across generations, the strength of community, and finding hope which will resonate with fans of Sally Page.

And on July 2, award-winning broadcaster and comedian Robin Ince will discuss his new book, *Normally Weird and Weirdly Normal* – a candid exploration of anxiety, ADHD, and neurodiversity in which Robin offers a humorous yet insightful perspective, reminding us that it's OK to embrace our differences.

Bookshop owner Christopher Hunt said: "We're thrilled to offer our community the chance to connect with a range of authors, from debut voices to established literary icons.

"Whether you're an avid reader or simply looking for a new way to engage with the literary world, we invite you to join


us for these unmissable events. We are committed to creating a vibrant atmosphere where people can come together, celebrate literature, and meet their favourite authors in person.

"We're dedicated to providing a space for all book lovers to connect with the authors they admire, and we look forward to welcoming you to our events soon."

More events are due to be announced in the coming weeks. Visit www.huntsbookshop.com for more information.



Author and journalist Alice Vincent will host an insightful conversation around her powerful new book, *Hark: How Women Listen*, on May 7.



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Bloor Homes withdraws from rugby club deal

by Philippa Mingins

THE RELOCATION of a Kenilworth Rugby Club has been thrown into doubt.

The club has been granted planning permission for a new ground off Warwick Road and housing developer Bloor Homes had been due to purchase the club's existing Glasshouse Lane sites to help finance the project.

The club signed an agreement in November 2021 to sell the land to Bloor Homes which planned to develop the site for housing as part of the Warwick District Local Plan.

But the developer has now withdrawn.

Rugby club chairman Paul Fountaine described it as a severe blow to the club which celebrated its 100th anniversary this year.

He continued: "We are extremely disappointed, having jointly overcome a number of hurdles that Bloor Homes has decided to withdraw for commercial reasons four years after their original offer was submitted.



A computer generated image of the new ground.

"While the impact of their withdrawal will be heavily felt across all sections of the club, we must now review the options open to us, and gauge the level of interest in our site from other developers such that we can meet the club's aspirations for the new ground where we still hope to provide a top-class facility for the local community and rugby football in south Warwickshire. Events such as KENFEST have demonstrated we are so much more than just a rugby club."

Mr Fountaine added that KRFC will now be reviewing

their development strategy to ensure that the club can maximise its offering to its members and remain committed to fostering a love for rugby, supporting player development, and continuing its proud tradition of community engagement through the values of the game of rugby, across all ages.

Bloor Homes's planning application to Warwick District Council for 200 homes off Glasshouse Lane has not been withdrawn from consideration.

The developer declined to comment.

ARBURY HALL NUNEATON MAY DAY BANK HOLIDAY OPENING



The Hall, Gardens and Stable Tearooms will be open on Sunday 4 May & Monday 5 May 2025 from 1pm until 6pm (last tour 4.30pm)

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Theatre group sets stage for creatives

A 'WONDERFUL' project is bringing a song and a smile to socially disadvantaged and homeless performers in Coventry.

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

Socially disadvantaged and homeless performers from Underground Lights community theatre group have been exploring a range of new creative skills in a collaboration with The University of Warwick.

Working with local musicians and the university's Theatre and Performance Studies department, the group have composed songs with themes and lyrics that are meaningful to their lives – and performed them in public at Coventry Central Hall.

Run for and by adults who are experiencing homelessness, mental health distress, or social isolation, Underground Lights runs 'Creative Cafes' and drama workshops.

Nadine Holdsworth, Professor of Theatre and Performance at The University of Warwick, was recently honoured with the High Sheriff's award for her inspiring work on the project.

She said: "Underground Lights is a wonderful organisation that welcomes everyone and provides a platform for a diverse group of people who have felt ignored and marginalised in society to come together to learn new skills, increase their confidence and build a mutually supportive community."

Group participant John told how his issues with drink and drugs led him to being in and out of jail for around 30 years and becoming homeless 'more times than I can remember'.

Now in recovery, John says Underground Lights is like a second home.

He said: "For my personal journey it's been a great help. I've done loads of stuff with them. I'm a rapper now, and I don't have to write my lyrics, because I spent 20 years when I was in jail writing them."

Fellow participant Johnny, who discovered Underground Lights when he was living in hostels, says the group has helped him make friends and discover more about himself and his talents.

He said: "Recently I've been diagnosed with PTSD, so Underground Lights gave me a good outlet working through some of my issues and memories. It led me to my passion for music, and learning how to DJ."

"I've now worked as a DJ and been paid for it. It's been weird going from sofa-surfing and home-



Socially disadvantaged and homeless performers have composed songs with themes and lyrics that are meaningful to their lives. Picture by University of Warwick / Fai Banks

lessness and living in hostels, to having a one bed place, getting married, living in a three-bed house and meeting a bunch of people that have been through the same experiences, and everyone exploring their own individuality and talents – it's really been an eye-opener."

Johnny now hopes to apply to

study music at university.

The project will culminate in an exhibition that captures the processes and outcomes of the creative workshop phase.

The exhibition takes place at the Creative Learning Space at Warwick Arts Centre at 5pm on Thursday May 15.

The Coventry Memory Singers, which helps those living with dementia, is Armonico Consort's third group. s



New dementia choir aiming to strike a chord

A CHARITY has set up the Coventry Memory Singers for people living with dementia.

The new singing group, Armonico Consort's third, launched earlier this month at Bond's Hospital in Coventry.

The next sessions will be

on May 1 and 15, June 12 and 19 and July 3 and 17.

The sessions include warm-ups, activity songs and familiar tunes, with live musical accompaniment and refreshments.

Sarah Riddle, operations manager at Armonico Consort, said: "Singing

for people living with dementia is such a joyous and liberating experience. Participants at our existing Memory Singers tell us it's the highlight of their week and we're delighted to be launching our third group."

Line of Duty's Vicky McClure's 'Our Dementia

Choir' has also highlighted the positive effects of music as 'medicine', extending to unlocking memories and re-establishing cognitive pathways.

Email sriddell@armonico.org.uk or visit: armonico.org.uk/communities to join, volunteer or find out more.



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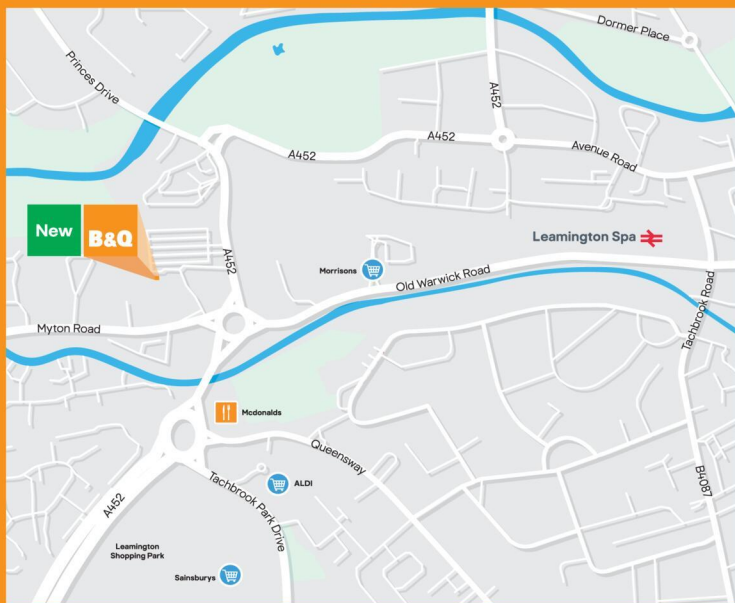
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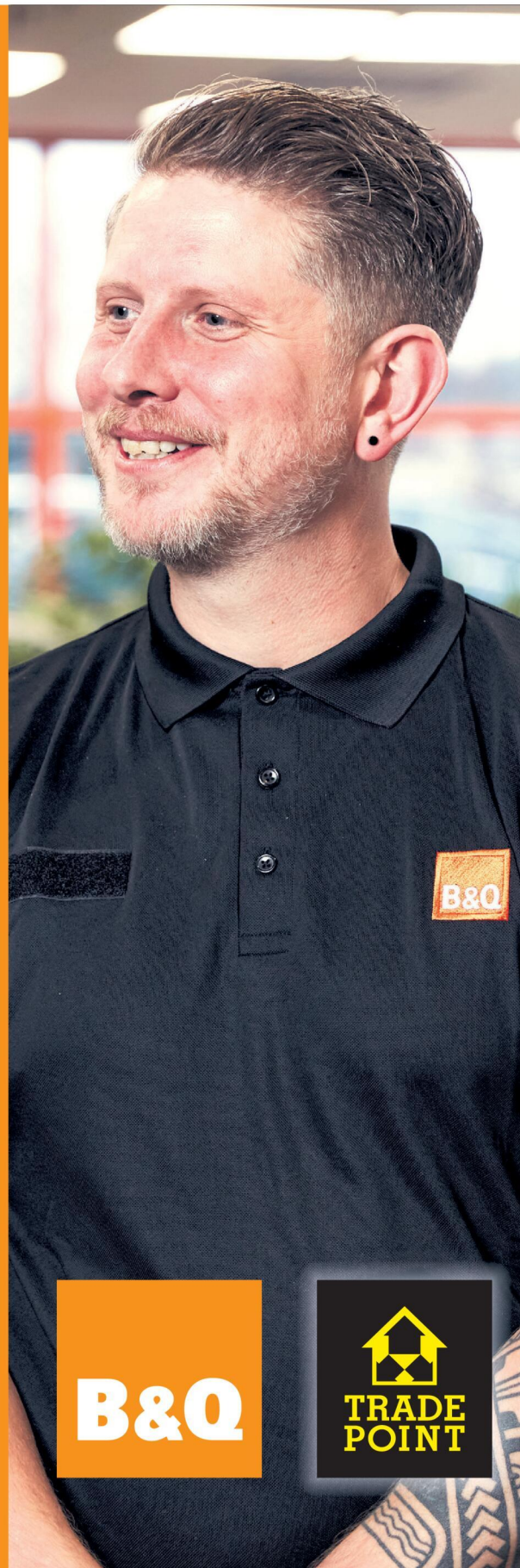
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Extra grants help to spread the love

APPLICATIONS have opened for community grants to support this summer's Love Rugby Festival.

Town centre businesses and community organisations and sports club across the borough can now apply for a grant to help stage an event during the festival, which takes place from June 20 to July 6.

The Love Rugby Festival aims to create the borough's very own summer of love with a packed programme featuring live music, theatre, art, heritage and sport.

Rugby Borough Council has organised the festival aiming to create a sense of pride in the borough, boost footfall in the town centre and celebrate Rugby's diverse communi-

ty. The Love Rugby Festival coincides with Rugby School's Festival on The Close and Warwickshire Open Studios' Summer Art Weeks festival.

Community organisations and town centre business can now apply for a grant of up to £250 to stage a festival event in the town centre.

The community grants aim to support a wide range of events and activities which celebrate Rugby's arts, heritage and culture.

Meanwhile, sports clubs in the borough can apply for a grant of up to \$500 to deliver free taster sessions to encourage new par-

ticipation or stage an open day to promote the club.

Tom Kittendorf, Rugby Borough Council chief officer for leisure and wellbeing, said: "The Love Rugby Festival aims to promote the very best of the borough, bringing our communities together to celebrate our diversity and the place we live."

"Our town centre businesses, community and voluntary organisations, and sports clubs all have a vital part to play in helping us to spread the love this summer during the festival fortnight, so we're looking forward to receiving grant applications and putting the finishing touches to the full festival line-up."

Grant applications, dealt with on a first come, first served basis,



Coun Neil Sandison and Coun Maggie O'Rourke pictured in March, unveiling the logos to launch the Love Rugby Festival.

must be submitted by Wednesday April 30. Visit www.rugby.gov.uk/LoveRugby for more information and to apply.

The council plans to announce the full Love Rugby Festival line-up at

www.rugby.gov.uk/LoveRugby once details have been finalised.

Email chris@ucltd.co.uk for more information about staging a festival event, or support to promote your event.



Rugby Town Guides are experts in the history and heritage of the town.

Guides provide step into the past to showcase heritage

FREE guided tours of Rugby town centre are under way.

The award-winning Rugby Town Guides will run tours every Saturday until October 11.

The guides – experts in the history and heritage of the town – share their unique knowledge with residents and visitors on a journey through the town centre, revealing fascinating facts.

Tours take in iconic buildings and landmarks in the town

centre, with guides revealing the stories behind the borough's history.

Stops on the tours include the Webb Ellis Rugby Football Museum, the statue commemorating William Webb Ellis, The Queen's Gates at the entrance of The Close at Rugby School, St Andrew's Church, the statue of Rupert Brooke and the monument to Sir Frank Whittle.

This year marks the 10th anni-

versary of the volunteer Town Guides Group, initially created to welcome visitors during the 2015 Rugby World Cup.

Rugby Borough Council's chief officer for leisure and wellbeing, Tom Kittendorf, said: "It's lovely to see the town guide tours raring to go again this year, celebrating 10 years since their introduction."

"We look forward to welcoming visitors this season,

with this year's Women's Rugby World Cup back again in England, and being able to share Rugby town's history as 'home of the game'."

All tours start at Rugby Visitor Centre and last for around 90 minutes.

Visit www.therugbytown.co.uk/townguides or call Rugby Visitor Centre on (01788) 533217 to book in advance by 3pm the day before.

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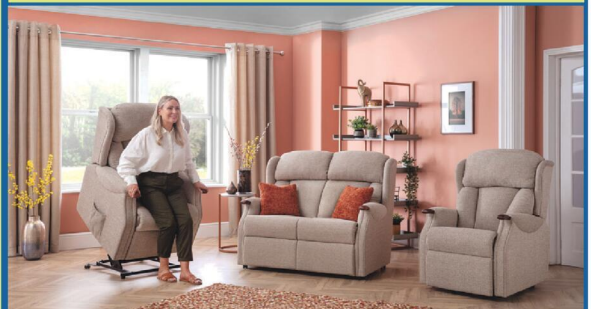
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LEFT: Rugby Art Gallery and Museum's (RAGM) treasure hunt challenged kids to find the pieces of a missing sculpture. Pictures by Marcus Mingsins 1725009MMR1. MIDDLE: Storyteller Olivia Cornell and the Easter bunny with eager listeners. 1725009MMR8. RIGHT: Let's play with clay.1725009MMR7



LEFT: The storytelling session sparked kids' curiosity. Pictures by Marcus Mingsins 1725009MMR9. MIDDLE: We're Going on an Egg Hunt! Olivia Cornell reads stories to children. 1725009MMR10. RIGHT: Throughout the holidays, RAGM invited children to contribute to a collaborative project to create a giant sculpture in the venue's activity space. 1725009MMR2



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A crafty way of keeping everyone occupied over the Easter break

A CRACKING good time has been had by kids in Rugby as a host of Easter activities has been keeping them busy during the school holidays.

Rugby Art Gallery and Museum hosted a programme of arts and craft workshops and activities inspired by its latest exhibition, Beyond the Canvas – A Celebration of British Sculpture from The Ingram Collection.

They included workshops in pottery, wet felting, junk modelling, dough sculpting, a treasure hunt, and an ongoing collaborative project to create a giant sculpture in the venue's activity space.

Across the town centre, Asda hosted free Easter craft activities including the deco-

More pictures opposite

rating of sweet jars, Sweet Art School held Easter Cupcake decorating workshops, and Art at the Alex ran a series of workshops with an Easter twist, in which Rugby artists and makers showed participants how to create fun items to gift, display or use.

Children enjoyed scouring the streets for the Easter bunny during an ongoing town centre trail for a chance to win some Easter treats.

And Hunt's Bookshop hosted a special interactive storytime reading of 'We're Going on an Egg Hunt' and other Easter themed stories, along with some fun activities.

Getting a hand from mum at RAGM's pottery workshop. Picture by Marcus Mings 1725009MMR4



Crafting a love for pottery. Picture by Marcus Mings 1725009MMR3



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£3.3m boost to bring 700 new charging points

ELECTRIC car drivers are set to get much more choice to charge up in Warwickshire.

Around 700 new electric vehicle (EV) public chargepoints are to be installed following Warwickshire County Council's approval to invest nearly £3.3million in public charging infrastructure.

The funding comes from the Department for Transport's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) fund.

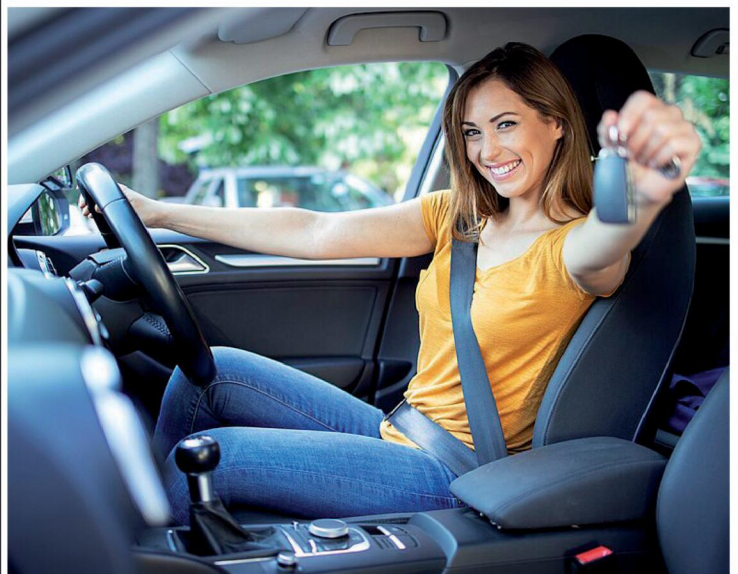
The procurement process is now underway, with the aim of awarding contracts by September. It is anticipated that the new twin-socket chargepoints will be installed across the county over the next three to four years.

The new chargepoints will be delivered with a firm focus on public need, being strategically located to prioritise areas where residents lack off-street parking.

WCC's transport spokesperson Coun Jan Matecki said: "This is a crucial step in our journey towards a more sustainable transport future. By investing in public charging infrastructure, we are making it easier for residents to switch to electric vehicles and reduce their carbon footprint."

"Jointly procuring with other authorities will both allow us to do more in Warwickshire and enable other authorities to do more with their resources. If we are to face the climate challenge, it's vital that we take opportunities like this to work together and get maximum value out of the money we have."

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/roads-transport/charge-points-electric-vehicles to find out more about electric vehicle charging in Warwickshire.



Learner drivers are being offered a helping steer.

Driving a new vision of learning to drive

LEARNER drivers in Warwickshire are being steered in the right direction.

Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership is holding a free event designed to support parents and learner drivers to navigate the learn to drive process.

It aims to provide valuable insights and practical advice to achieve a successful journey towards obtaining a driver's license.

Experienced driving instructors and specialists will be available to share their expertise and personal experience, answering questions and providing top tips for learner drivers and their parents.

The interactive event looks to benefit anyone thinking about learning to drive and learners getting ready to pass. Parents can also benefit by understanding the legal requirements for supervising learner drivers and how to create a safe and supportive learning environment.

This 60-minute event takes place on April 30, from 6pm to 7pm.

To book a place and receive a link to join this event, or for further information visit [events.teams.microsoft.com/event/b2bca0f2-a0f1-4cbf-847b-9a24a40e6e71@88b0aa06-5927-4bbb-a893-89cc2713ac82](https://teams.microsoft.com/event/b2bca0f2-a0f1-4cbf-847b-9a24a40e6e71@88b0aa06-5927-4bbb-a893-89cc2713ac82)

Mark Ryder, Warwickshire County Council's director for communities said: "Learning to drive is a significant milestone, and Warwickshire County Council is committed to supporting our residents through this journey. This free event, in partnership with Norfolk County Council, provides invaluable resources and expert guidance, ensuring both learner drivers and their parents are well-equipped for safe and successful driving. We encourage everyone embarking on this journey to take advantage of this fantastic opportunity."

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Chief Constable Craig Guildford chose the poster winner with police puppies Archie and Kipling.

Force hosts National Police Dog Trials

WEST Midlands Police is set to host the 63rd annual National Police Dog Trials.

The event will be held at three sites across the region including the force's state-of-the-art police training centre, Tally Ho from May 7 to 10.

During the four-day event, police dogs and their handlers from across the country will compete in a series of trials including agility, searching and obedience.

And to help promote the dog trials, the force asked a selection of schools from across the West Midlands to design a poster for the event.

They received hundreds of entries and accompanied by police puppies Archie and Kipling, Chief Constable Craig Guildford chose the winner.

West Midlands Police (WMP) will also be hosting the National Police Dog Trials Community Open Day on May 10 which will be open to members of the public.

This will be a free event but tickets will be limited, so reservation is suggested.

There will be demonstrations from departments such as the Drones, firearms and the police puppies will also be making an appearance.

West Midlands Fire and Ambulance Services will also hold demonstrations.

Chief Inspector Dan Lowe, from the force's Operations Unit, said: "We're looking forward to hosting the 63rd National Police Dog Trials, the first one for WMP.

"Our police dog teams are extremely valuable to police forces and we couldn't do this job without their support. Over the years, our dogs have had incredible results detaining offenders, finding missing and vulnerable people and recovering vital evidence.

"Every day they work to keep our communities safe in the West

Midlands and across the country. We can't wait to showcase their skills and show you how amazing they really are.

"All of those competing will be showcasing skill, control and discipline of the highest standard.

"We look forward to seeing many of you at our community open day."

New electric buses hit region's streets

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

BUS passengers across the West Midlands are set for quieter and greener bus journeys, thanks to a new fleet of zero emission buses now in service.

It comes as National Express West Midlands rolls out 170 new Alexander Dennis Enviro400 double decker zero emission buses as part of a \$95million investment to modernise its fleet, reinforcing the company's commitment to creating a more sustainable future for public transport.

The arrival of these state-of-the-art buses bring the total number of electric buses in operation to 329, meaning nearly a quarter of National Express West Midlands' bus fleet is now zero emissions.

Richard Parker, Mayor of the West Midlands, said: "This region is leading the way on greener public transport – with an entire fleet of electric buses being delivered in Coventry and now 170 new zero-emission buses across Birmingham, the Black Country and Solihull. That means cleaner air, quieter streets and a more comfortable, reliable service for passengers."

National Express West Midlands says each electric bus saves an average of 61 tonnes of carbon annually, reducing carbon emissions by almost 20,000 tonnes every year compared to the diesel counterparts.

Antony Goozee, bus strategy and commercial director at National Express West Midlands, said: "Replacing our diesel buses with electric vehicles and modernising



Ian Alder, business development director at Zenobe, Antony Goozee, bus strategy and commercial director at National Express West Midlands, Jo Shore, director of delivery at Transport for West Midlands and Councillor Tim Huxtable, chair of Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Committee at WMCA. Picture by Stewart Writtle.

our depots are key steps in our journey towards operating a fully zero-emission bus fleet by 2030.

"These new clean, green double-decker buses are not just about improving efficiency and reducing our environmental impact, they also deliver a better experience for our passengers with quieter, smoother and more comfortable journeys."

In addition to the new vehicles, National Express West Midlands has completed a major infrastructure upgrade of its Yardley Wood depot.

Originally built in 1938, the depot has been modernised with the installation of advanced charg-

ing infrastructure as part of ongoing efforts to future-proof its operations and ensure long-term sustainability in its services.

The bus operator's Perry Barr depot is also undergoing an electrification upgrade which is due to complete in the coming weeks.

Supporting this transition is EV fleet and battery storage specialist Zenob, providing an end-to-end Electric Transport as a Service (ETaaS) solution to National Express West Midlands.

This includes financing the vehicles and the on-board batteries to guarantee their performance while in use and replacing them at the end of their first, usable life.

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Saturday July 12th at 11am
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It's 461 years since the birth of the world's most famous writer

Ready to mark the big day for TWO writers

CELEBRATIONS are taking place this weekend to mark Shakespeare birthday

It's 461 years since the birth of the world's most famous writer and his home town of Stratford will be the focus of wide-ranging celebrations to mark the occasion.

But the town will also be celebrating another notable birthday next month – the 164th birth anniversary of the Indian Nobel laureate, Rabindranath Tagore.

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust is inviting people to join the 30th anniversary of its annual Tagore commemorations at Shakespeare's Birthplace.

poem in his honour.

Organisers are bringing celebrations out onto Henley Street as well as in the garden of Shakespeare's Birthplace with performances by two organisations from the South Asian community, Prantik and DESIblitz, along with an interactive dance workshop, and hands-on mural painting.

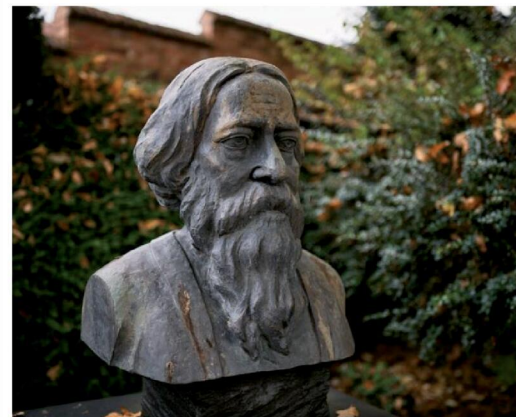
This will mark Tagore's 164th birth anniversary, a date which has been celebrated in Stratford-upon-Avon since a sculpture of the poet was unveiled in the Birthplace garden 30 years ago.

SBT CEO Rachael North said: "This event is one of the most special moments in our calendar. Leading the appreciation of William Shakespeare, his works and his enduring legacy of creative inspiration is central to the Trust's mission."

"We are grateful to our friends at Prantik and DESIblitz for joining us in filling Henley Street and the birthplace garden with a vibrant, colourful and joyful celebrations of our shared cultural heritage."

Visitors are invited to a special celebration which begins with a procession from Bengali cultural group Prantik starting from the iconic Shakespeare statue on Henley Street. The performance will end in front of the bust of Tagore located in the birthplace garden, forming a symbolic journey between the literary giants.

For more information on this weekend's Shakespeare Birthday Celebrations visit www.shakespearecelebrations.com



Visitors can expect an array of captivating performances that bring Tagore's artistic legacy and his connections to Shakespeare to life through music and dance.

Rabindranath Tagore was born in 1861 and is perhaps best known for being the first non-European writer to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

On Sunday May 4, from 11am to 4pm, visitors to Stratford are invited to a day of performances to remember Tagore, who was so inspired by Shakespeare that he wrote a

Bust of Rabindranath Tagore in the Birthplace garden. Picture by Sam Allard.

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FROM LEFT to RIGHT: Craig David Presents TS5 on Saturday July 5. Train play on Wednesday July 2. Will Young takes to the stage on Thursday July 3. Beverley Knight performs on Thursday July 3.

Park sessions to host top names

The Stranglers play on Friday July 4.



THIS July, the gates to St Nicholas' Park will open for The Warwick Sessions, a spectacular series of concerts bringing global artists to the Midlands.

2025's line-up is set to be bigger than ever, welcoming headliners Elbow (Sunday July 6), The Stranglers (Friday July 4), Craig David Presents TS5 (Saturday July 5), Train (Wednesday July 2) and Beverley Knight and Will Young (Thursday July 3) to the star-studded event at St Nicholas' Park in the shadow of Warwick Castle.

Tickets for all shows are selling fast, available to purchase now via thewarwicksessions.co.uk.

The Observer is offering readers the chance to win tickets to a concert of their choice. We're giving away a pair of tickets to see either Train (July 2), Beverley Knight and Will Young (July 3), The Stranglers (July 4) and Craig David Presents TS5 (July 5).

Tickets to be won

To enter, simply tell us in which park The Warwick Sessions will be taking place.

Email answers to editor@leamingtonobserver.co.uk with Warwick Sessions as the subject. Please also specify which concert you would like to attend if you are lucky enough to win. One entry per email address. The closing date for entries is noon on Friday May 2.

Terms & Conditions: The closing date for the competition is noon on Friday May 2, 2025. The prize offered is a pair of general admission tickets to The Warwick Sessions on Wednesday July 2, 2025, Thursday July 3, 2025, Friday July 4, 2025 OR Saturday July 5, 2025. For more information, visit thewarwicksessions.co.uk. Rail tickets, fuel, parking, meals, drinks and accommodation are NOT included. If the winner is unable to attend, no alternative will be offered, and the prize will be offered to the next runner-up.



By Coach from Coventry, Rugby

Reader travel



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Bryn's memory will be with us all the way

"HE'LL be with me on Sunday," says a hospital doctor who is running the London Marathon in memory of the newborn baby she lost exactly a year ago.

Charlie Hughes and her husband Gareth, from Kenilworth, said goodbye to their son Bryn on April 27 2024 after he was born prematurely at 27 weeks. He lived for just nine days.

Charlie said: "We promised Bryn on the night he died that that we would carry on with all of life's adventures, and that we'd take him with us."

"The London Marathon is one of those adventures. He'll be with me every step of the way."

Charlie was working as an obstetrics and gynaecology doctor at University Hospital Coventry when she gave birth to Bryn. She is running the marathon on Sunday (April 27) for pregnancy research charity Tommy's alongside her best friend Emily and the pair have already raised more than £5,000.

She continued: "I want people to know Bryn's name. I hope that by telling his story, it raises awareness of preterm birth and neonatal loss."

"I also want more people to know about the amazing work Tommy's does and the difference it's making. They're at the cutting edge of preterm birth research."

"Unfortunately there was nothing more that could be done for Bryn, but I do believe we're moving



Charlie Hughes and her husband Gareth lost their baby boy Bryn.

towards a place where things will be better."

Charlie, aged 33, discovered early on in her pregnancy that her womb was divided into two halves by a wall of muscle – a condition known as a 'septate uterus' - which put her at higher risk of having her baby early. She was looked after by Prof Siobhan Quenby in the preterm prevention clinic at UHCW.

Bryn was eventually born via emergency Caesarean section at 27 weeks and three days, after Charlie's waters broke and she

experienced further complications. Devastatingly, though, Bryn developed sepsis – the cause of his death at nine days old.

Charlie wants eventually to work towards saving the lives of babies like Bryn.

She added: "I'm extremely passionate about it. I'm hoping to do more myself in preterm birth research – that's where I'm hoping my career will lead."

Visit 2025tcs.londonmarathon.enthuse.com/pf/charlotte-hughes-to-donate.

Textile challenge brings in £10,000

GENEROUS textile donations from residents at Warwickshire's recycling centres have raised over £10,000 for Guide Dogs.

As an incentive to encourage people to recycle unwanted clothes, Warwickshire County Council's waste management team donate ten per cent of income received from textiles recycling to the Guide Dogs for the Blind based in Leamington.

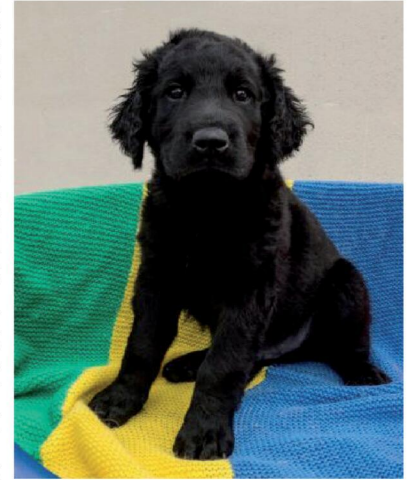
And as an extra bonus, once a certain amount of textiles are collected, residents get to name a Guide Dog puppy. The last puppy to be named was Hugo in 2021 and residents will soon have the chance to name another.

WCC's environment spokesperson Coun Heather Timms said: "Warwickshire residents have shown incredible generosity, turning unwanted textiles into a lifeline for Guide Dogs."

"This £10,000 milestone demonstrates the power of community recycling, proving that small actions can make a massive difference. Every bag donated helps train a life-changing guide dog, and we're immensely grateful for everyone's contribution. Let's keep up this fantastic effort." Unwanted clean clothes, hats, tow-

els sheets, blankets, duvet and pillow covers, curtains, paired shoes, bags and belts are all welcome at local household waste recycling centres.

Residents will be given the opportunity to vote for the name of the



new puppy on Facebook over the coming weeks and should follow @warwickshirerecycles for more details.

Alfie, a Guide Dogs for the Blind puppy named by the service in 2015.



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A milestone for River Rangers

SEVERN Trent has marked a significant milestone with its River Rangers reaching 10,000 visits to rivers and waterways across the region.

This highlights the essential work the River Rangers have been doing since their launch in 2022 to monitor water quality, protect local rivers, and engage with and contribute towards in their local communities.

The team of 11 River Rangers have been at the forefront of Severn Trent's efforts to improve river health and environmental protection across a range of rivers, streams and brooks.

Areas in focus for the rangers include Worcestershire, Birmingham, Black Country, Coventry, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire and Sutton Park in Sutton Coldfield.

Their work includes regular inspections, testing for ammonia, phosphate and chlorine, and taking part in conservation activities to support the local wildlife and habitats.

Lauren Quinn, a Severn Trent's Senior River Ranger, said: "From inspecting outfalls to engaging with the public, every day provides me with a new challenge and an opportunity to make a real difference."

"It's rewarding to know the work we do is having a direct impact on the quality of local rivers, as well as raising awareness about the importance of conservation."

Lauren, from Coventry, who has previously worked in environmental laboratory testing and site monitoring across the Midlands, is passionate about rivers, and maintaining

habitats for local wildlife.

The River Rangers also play an important role in educating people about water quality and encouraging participation in conservation activities. The team regularly engages with residents, citizen science groups and public officials to raise awareness about the importance of keeping rivers clean and healthy.

Gareth Mead, Severn Trent's River Ranger Manager, added: "Reaching 10,000 visits while meeting more than 2,400 customers is testament to the dedication and hard work of our River Rangers."

"These visits and inspections are not just about gathering data - they help to ensure we are working quickly to resolve any potential issues that may impact the region's rivers."

"Our team of River Rangers have become an important part of our approach to environmental protection, and we are proud of the difference they are making."

As Severn Trent moves forward, the River Rangers will continue their important work in protecting water quality, engaging with local communities, and supporting the broader efforts that help maintain the health of rivers for future generations.

The River Rangers' work forms part of Severn Trent's 'Get River Positive' programme and earlier this year funding was secured as part of an accelerated £1 billion investment from Severn Trent's investors, to improve waterways quality.

Severn Trent's plans for the next five years will see the company spending over £2 billion on improving river health.

Visit: stwater.co.uk/get-river-positive/blog-meet-the-river-rangers/ for more.



Fabrizio Mihailescu, 16, and Abhay Sangwan, 17, launch the 'Visit 200' website with West Midlands Railway at Birmingham Snow Hill station.

A RAIL CHALLENGE: A PROJECT has been launched to challenge school-age children to visit 200 railway stations across the country by the end of the year. The Visit 200 project is being run in partnership by West Midlands Railway and West Coventry Academy and is inspired by Railway 200, the year-long nationwide campaign celebrating this year's bicentenary of the modern railway.

The project offers schools and colleges the chance to arrange special journeys for groups of students to experience new destinations and build confidence in travelling by train, with students from the Academy launching their own web page listing destinations to be ticked off during the project.

West Coventry Academy career counselor Jo Kerr said: "We want our students to

feel confident using the railway network so they can get out and about and gain independence before they leave school."

"This project is a fun way for all ages to enjoy train travel from primary school up to college, and one of our first visits was to Watford Junction and the nearby Warner Bros. Studio Tour."

Teachers are encouraged to sign up for their visits at least six weeks ahead of time to allow for travel arrangements, while younger students are also being encouraged to put forward designs for a Station of the Future, with the best submissions being displayed at Coventry Transport Museum.

Visit www.visit200.co.uk for more information and to register your school or college's interest.



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Cash can help families cut bills

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason
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THOUSANDS of families across the West Midlands are set to save a combined £3million a year on their household fuel bills as the region is handed greater responsibility from Westminster.

Details showing the impact on the economy and people's standard of living from the £389m Integrated Settlement secured by West Midlands Mayor, Richard Parker, have been published by the Government.

The Integrated Settlement Outcomes Framework, released by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), shows what the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) will deliver over the coming 12 months to boost economic growth, jobs, homes and transport.

The region's first-ever settlement, a cornerstone of the West Midlands' devolution deal with Government, will give the Mayor and local leaders greater control, choice and power to focus the money on regional priorities.

Over the coming year the £389m, alongside the region's existing £211m transport fund, will deliver support for 4,275 businesses, nearly 1,000 new jobs, more than 1,770 new homes, many of them affordable, almost 240m bus journeys and additional cycle routes and electric vehicle charging points.

The money will also be used

to support the three-year, £167m Buildings Retrofit Pilot, which will see 14,000 homes, including 12,300 social houses, benefit from measures such as low carbon heating, and energy efficient insulation.

This is said to cut fuel bills for those households and put an average of £236 a year back into their pockets.

The pilot will also invest £36m into retrofitting public buildings, cutting fuel bills for local authorities, schools, healthcare and emergency services.

The Mayor said: "Government is backing our region - putting funds and powers into the hands of local leaders, so that we can make the right decisions for the West Midlands.

"We will use this money to get more people into jobs with better paid work, maintain and improve our public transport network, deliver more affordable and social housing and help businesses to grow.

"And we will tackle fuel poverty by improving thousands of old and cold homes, cutting people's energy use and bills.

"My mission is clear - growth, jobs, journeys and homes for everyone. This is how we are going to change thousands of lives for the better."

The WMCA will also use part of the Integrated Settlement to further deliver the region's Investment Zone, a 25-year initiative capable of driving more than £5bn of investment and 30,000 new jobs.

Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution, Jim McMahon OBE,



said: "Devolution is an absolute priority for us and the West Midlands receiving their first integrated settlement is a milestone moment. "Transferring power from Whitehall to local leaders who know

their area best is at the heart of our plans to simplify funding and boost regional growth in a decade of renewal as part of our Plan for Change."

The first Integrated Settlement,

which will run to March 2026, will deliver services and projects that had previously relied on the region's ability to win multiple grants from different government departments.






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RSPCA sets target to recruit more Wildlife Friends

NATURE lovers are being urged to embrace the call of the spring and sign up to be Wildlife Friends with the RSPCA.

Last year more than 2,000 people signed up for Wildlife Friends and completed a range of seasonal tasks aimed at helping wildlife to thrive in their own gardens and community green spaces. These included building bug hotels and cleaning bird feeders.

The RSPCA has relaunched Wildlife Friends and hopes even more animal lovers can enjoy fun activities that will help protect and nurture wildlife.

By volunteering and taking action for animals in their communities, those taking part will not only be helping wildlife but will be ensuring that the animal charity's highly-skilled frontline staff have more time to focus on tackling cruelty and neglect.

Wildlife Friends 2025 enjoyed an inspiring start when social media influencer Esme Higgs visited RSPCA Mallydams Wood Wildlife Centre in East Sussex to learn about the work staff do rehabilitating wild

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

animals so they can be released back into the wild.

Esme has generated a huge social media following promoting horse welfare, best practice in equestrianism and her own experiences of countryside life.

Her commitment to nature was enhanced further by a tour of the Hastings centre, which included feeding seals their lunch, meeting two fox cubs that had recently been rescued from a building site and filling up the bird feeders in the woods as part of her Wildlife Friends tasks.

Esme said: "We all know our natural world is facing huge challenges but the great news is that everyone can do something to help. We need everyone for every animal."

"If you want to get involved, become a RSPCA Wildlife Friend to find lots of simple ways you can make life better for wildlife in your community.

"All these small acts of kindness don't take long, but they'll make a huge difference for animals, so

join thousands of other people who care, and sign up today."

For their first task of spring, Wildlife Friends have been making a simple apple and seed bird feeder.

Other tasks to complete during spring include building a nest box for all kinds of wildlife in your garden, including bats, as well as creating neighbourhood corridors for wildlife such as hedgehogs.

Building bug hotels and planting wildlife-friendly plants to support the local ecosystem are other tasks for later in the season.

The RSPCA's lead wildlife officer Inspector Geoff Edmond has some invaluable tips about what kind of wildlife-friendly plants to sow.

He said: "There are many species you can plant that are beneficial for wildlife and can be enjoyed during the year. They include native shrubs such as Hawthorn and Bramble as well as Berberis, which flower in the spring to provide insect nectar, and produce berries in the autumn which the birds will enjoy"

"Some shrubs like these do have thorns and are prickly but this provides extra safe nesting sites for



birds. Something everyone can do easily is to sow wildflower seeds in containers, plant pots and gardens between April and May. They will add colour and beauty to your outdoor environment and provide nectar rich sources for bees, butterflies and other insects.

"It's great fun seeing lovely flowers buzzing with activity on a late spring or summer's day when you see beautiful butterflies feeding on your plants. Whatever you plant it will make a difference, and is the

start of a journey with nature which you are taking to safeguard our wildlife."

Last year RSPCA Wildlife Friends completed 1,653 tasks, the most popular of which were providing food for hedgehogs, taking part in a butterfly count and putting out a bird feeder.

This year the charity wants to recruit at least 2,500 new Wildlife Friends.

To become a RSPCA Wildlife Friend, visit the charity's website.

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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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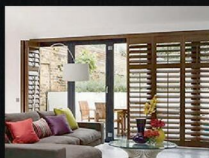
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Bringing scent and butterflies

MAY sees the start of the garden show season – RHS Chelsea gets the ball rolling with its fabulous show gardens that not only inspire but can also create green fingered envy at the same time.

Your garden or outside space may not be up for a gold medal, but that doesn't mean that it's not a 'show stopper' in its own right. Just think of the time you spend feeling good in the space you have created – and that can be as simple as a single pot of lavender on a patio to bring fragrance, beauty and butterflies to your special place.

Lavender loves container life (and being in borders as well) and is also often planted as an edging plant with roses or grown as an informal hedge.

It's a favourite with gardeners not just for its beautiful form and fragrance but also because it attracts essential pollinators.

It's also considered a romantic flower that most gardeners get the urge to plant in their garden sooner or later and can add real value with its scent and shades of purple flowers and silver leaf backdrop.

To successfully grow lavender, it needs to be planted from March to May in a warm, well-drained soil with full sun. It's a tough plant though and once established only requires regular pruning after flowering has finished in the Autumn.

English lavender, *Lavandula angustifolia*, is hardier and lives longer than French and Spanish lavender. Two of the most popular varieties of English lavender



are 'Munstead', an old-fashioned standard height plant with blue-purple flowers and 'Hidcote,' much loved for its dark purple flowers.

Part of the same plant family as lavender is the sun-loving Mediterranean herb oregano. Easy to grow, compact and drought tolerant, it thrives in pots or in the ground and forms a low clump of small aromatic leaves that has attractive small pink or white flowers in summer. It's a perennial, living for many years, and is usually hardy enough to survive the British winter if grown in a warm sunny spot, in a container or in free-draining soil. It is used mainly as a culinary herb, but also makes a great herbal tea – just pick a spring of fresh oregano, let it infuse in boiling water for a few minutes and sweeten with some honey if the taste is too bitter for you. Oregano tea is often enjoyed for its potential health benefits, including its antimicrobial and antioxidant properties. It is believed to support digestion, boost the immune system, and provide relief from respiratory issues.

Herbs are always a good addition to any garden or patio, but for anyone with a lawn, don't forget that it's No Mow May ... so time to let the lawn grow long and let pollinators feed on the flowers.

Which gives you time to tackle some of the other jobs in the garden ... and top tips for the month from the RHS include:

- Watch out for late frosts and protect tender plants
- Earth up potatoes and plant any still remaining
- After all risk of frost has passed, plant out tomatoes, courgettes and pumpkins
- Plant out summer bedding plants at the end of the month, weather permitting
- Water early and late to get the most out of your water, recycle water if possible
- Hoe off weeds in vegetable patches
- Open greenhouse vents and doors on warm days
- Mow lawns but consider leaving some areas uncut for wildlife, or mow less often so flowers can bloom
- Check carefully for nesting birds before clipping hedges
- Lift and divide overcrowded clumps of daffodils and other spring bulbs
- Watch out for viburnum beetle and lily beetle grubs and remove by hand if causing damage.

Sara Milne
The Gardening PR

Lavender is a favourite with gardeners not just for its beautiful form and fragrance but also because it attracts essential pollinators.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

BOCKENDON ROAD, STONELEIGH
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable telegraph pole replacement works.
Order Commences: 14 May 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 14 May 2025.
Access & Diversion: Bockendon Road, Crackley Lane, Dryfield Grange Road, Kenilworth Road, Gibbet Hill Road, Kirby Corner Road, Westwood Heath Road and vice versa.
Contractor: M J Quinn, Tel: 07415 894 179.

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 25 April 2025

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

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

AVONDALE ROAD, BRANDON
Order Effect: Road Closed to vehicular traffic from a point outside property number 20. In addition, the One-way traffic flow will be temporarily suspended.
Reason for Order: To repair/replace defective manhole frame & covers, 09.30hrs-15.30hrs.
Order Commences: 2 May 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 2 May 2025.

Access & Diversion: Rugby Road, Main Street, School Street, Fosse Way, Brandon Road, Brefford Road.
Contractor: Customer Solutions Plus, Tel: 07918 298 599.

BARR LANE, BRINKLOW

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between 1 Barr Lane & Revel Pharmacy.
Reason for Order: To safely enable installation of gas works. Road closed weekends only.
Order Commences: 26 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 4 May 2025.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available.
Access/Egress to be maintained to businesses and residents only where safe and possible to do so.
Contractor: Headway TM, Tel: 01214 744 344.

CHURCH ROAD, GRANDBOROUGH

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: For works to lay a new domestic gas service.
Order Commences: 28 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 1 May 2025.

Access & Diversion: Church Road, Sawbridge Road, Main Street and vice versa.
Contractor: Headway TM, Tel: 01214 744 344.

TOWER ROAD, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable installation of a boundary box and meter.
Order Commences: 28 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 29 April 2025.

Access & Diversion: Naseby Road, Tower Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

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 25 April 2025

PUBLIC NOTICES

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

ANGELA CODREAN trading as TRUST TRANSPORT LTD of 59 Greatmeadow, Northampton, NN3 8DF is applying for a licence to use J Coates Garage Services Ltd, Unit 2, Shawell Depot, Watling Street, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, LE17 6AR as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicles and 1 trailers
Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Mr Lewis Currell trading as LGC Logistics Ltd of 41 St James Crescent, Southam, Warwickshire, CV47 0LX is applying to change an existing licence to keep an extra 1 goods vehicle and 1 trailer at Mitchell Potatoes Ltd, Boots Farm, Bourton-On-Dunsmore, Rugby, CV23 9QQ.
Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House, 386 Harehills Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

PUBLIC NOTICES

ADVERTISEMENT OF CLAIM

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE
BUSINESS & PROPERTY COURTS IN BIRMINGHAM

PROPERTY, TRUSTS & PROBATE LIST (CHD)

Case Number: PT-2024-BHM-000162

IN THE MATTER OF AN APPLICATION MADE UNDER THE GUARDIANSHIP (MISSING PERSONS) ACT 2017 FOR A GUARDIANSHIP ORDER IN RESPECT OF ADRIAN LINDSAY HALLAM

A claim has been issued in the High Court of Justice, Business & Property Courts in Birmingham, Property, Trusts and Probate List (CHD), Claim No. PT-2024-BHM-000162, by Vivian Hallam and Nicholas Hallam for an order that they be appointed guardians in respect of Adrian Lindsay Hallam ("the missing person"), whose last usual place of residence was 30B Langton Road, Rugby, Warwickshire CF21 3UA.

The date and venue for the second hearing of the Claim is Tuesday, 20 May 2025 at the Business & Property Courts in Birmingham, Birmingham District Registry, Civil Justice Centre, Priory Courts, 33 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6DS.

Any spouse, civil partner, parent, child or sibling of the missing person is entitled to intervene in the matter. Any other person having an interest may apply to the Court for permission to intervene in the matter.

If you wish to give notice of intention to intervene or to apply to the Court for permission to intervene, you should do so at Business & Property Courts in Birmingham, Birmingham District Registry, Civil Justice Centre, Priory Courts, 33 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6DS as soon as possible, and no later than 14 days before the date of the second hearing, and serve a copy of that notice or application on the Claimants at the address given below. Delay may harm your prospects of obtaining permission to intervene if you are not entitled to intervene, and, in any event, may be taken into account on any question relating to costs.

Vivian Hallam and Nicholas Hallam
c/o Shakespear Martineau LLP
One Temple Quay
Temple Back East
Bristol
BS1 6DZ

PUBLIC NOTICES

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Apna Skip Hire Ltd of 86 Henry Baxter Drive, Coventry, CV7 8QT is applying for a licence to use Hill View Self Storage, Rowley Road, Coventry, CV3 4FR as an operating centre for 4 goods vehicles and 1 trailers
Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centres who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-making-representations-objections-and-complaints-goods-vehicle-operator-licensing

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

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

NAPTON HOLT ROAD, NAPTON ON THE HILL
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To enable works to install boundary box and water meter.
Order Commences: 30 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 1 May 2025.

Access & Diversion: Napton Holt Road, Thorntons Lane, Chapel Green Road, New Street, Dog Lane, Priors Marston Road, Shuckburgh Road, The Holloway, Southam Road, Welsh Road, Welsh Road East, Holt Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

PARK LANE, SOUTHAM

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to lay new gas service from mains located nearside footway.
Order Commences: 28 April 2025 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 30 March 2025.

Access & Diversion: Park Lane, Market Hill, High Street, Coventry Street, Welsh Road West, Welsh Road, St James Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Headway TM, 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 25 April 2025

PUBLIC NOTICES

CO-OPERATIVE AND COMMUNITY BENEFIT SOCIETIES ACT 2014 - Notice of Cancellation pursuant to section 5 of the Act

Notice is hereby given that the Authority has, pursuant to the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, this day cancelled the registration of Foleshill Ex-Servicemen's Club Limited (Register no. 8608 R) the registered office of which is at 657-659 Foleshill Road, COVENTRY, CV6 5JL. The grounds of the cancellation are that the society has willfully violated section 89 of the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 by not submitting to the Authority any annual returns acceptable for filing since that submitted for the society's financial year ending 2022, 2023. The society ceases to enjoy the privileges of a registered society, but without prejudice to any liability incurred by the society, which may be enforced against it as if such cancellation had not taken place.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Keeping you up to date with all the latest information on Planning Proposals, Traffic Notices, Goods Vehicle Operator Licences To Sell Alcohol, Probate Notices.....
Date: 20 March 2025

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

Application Number R25/0271
THE WHITE HOUSE, MAIN ROAD, ANSTY, COVENTRY, CV7 9HZ
Listed building consent for proposed installation of a fire resistant membrane and roof re-thatch.
This development may affect a Listed Building

Application Number R25/0311
32, OAKFIELD HOUSE, OAKFIELD PARK, BILTON ROAD, RUGBY, CV22 7AL
Change of Use from Social Club (Sui Generis) to Use Class E.
This development may affect a Listed Building. This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R25/0313
32, OAKFIELD HOUSE, OAKFIELD PARK, BILTON ROAD, RUGBY, CV22 7AL
Change of Use from Social Club (Sui Generis) to Use Class E.
This development may affect a Listed Building. 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 16 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
MRTPI

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VIBRO Station training plate £25 ono 07780511800

SPANISH desk & chair £70 ono 07394864098

INDEST electric cooker mint £50 ono 07394864098

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electric rise & recline £169 Manual recline chair £60 High seated chair £40 Can deliver 07703 925662

SALES & WANTS

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Renault to launch mini supercar

FOLLOWING the reveal and official announcement of the reboot on March 17, Renault is opening reservations for the Renault 5 Turbo 3E 'mini-supercar'.

A modern, electric reboot of the legendary Renault 5 Turbo and Turbo 2 of the 1980s, the new vehicle will be available from £135,000 including VAT as an introductory price, excluding options, accessories and personalisation choices.

It will be sold in Europe, including the UK, the Middle East, Japan and Australia.

From Tuesday (April 22), customers wishing to place a secure order for one of the 1,980 numbered examples of Renault 5 Turbo 3E could complete the form on the dedicated page of the Renault website in their country. They will select a dealer who will contact them to make an appointment at

the showroom. Here, they will sign a reservation form. They will then have priority when Renault 5 Turbo 3E becomes available to buy. Customers can choose the number of their future car if they so wish.

In line with the principle of upfront funding, any dealers placing a reservation for a car – in their capacity as key partners – will contribute to its pre-financing, just like the customers. This collective effort will contribute to financing the development of Renault 5 Turbo 3E.

The next phase will start in early 2026, when customers will be contacted by their selected dealer in to specify their personalisation choices. They will then be first in line to order Renault 5 Turbo 3E when it becomes available.

Alongside the historic colours of Renault 5 Turbo and Turbo 2, such as the Rouge Grenade of production

models, or the black, yellow and white racing livery of the Renault 5 Turbo that won the 1982 Tour de Corse rally, customers will be able to choose from a range of new 'gentleman driver' options.

They will have the opportunity to meet Renault designers in order to create their own exterior and interior livery, selecting the colours and materials for a wide range of features – seats, door panels, dashboard and more – allowing them to create a truly unique car.

Finally, in first half 2027, customers will be able to finalise the configuration and order their car from the dealer. The first vehicles configured and ordered will be delivered in 2027.

Ivan Segal, Renault's global sales and operations director, said: "We are proud to have succeeded in involving our dealers, as well as the first customers, in the pre-financing

process of the Renault 5 Turbo 3E.

"To achieve this, we have implemented an innovative reservation scheme, befitting this exceptional vehicle, an major image vector for the Renault brand.

"On one hand, it allows customers to secure a priority order reservation within the network from today.

"On the other hand, it helps us finalise the development of the Renault 5 Turbo 3E and launch the first units in 2027.

"The Renault 5 Turbo 3E could not have come to life without this entirely new process, which demonstrates Renault Group's ability to innovate in the marketing schemes of extraordinary projects."

Built on a custom-designed aluminium platform tailored to its performance and ambitions, Renault 5 Turbo 3E is a vehicle of spectacular dimensions – 4.08m long, 2.03m

wide and 1.38m tall. Combining supercar-width with city-car length and impressive levels of performance, it can claim to create a new class of vehicles – 'mini-supercars'.

Renault 5 Turbo 3E has two innovative in-wheel motors at the rear, making it a rear-wheel drive.

Developing the equivalent of 540hp, it boasts a massive 4,800Nm of torque that is available even faster than with a conventional electric motor.

With its all-carbon superstructure, it weighs under 1,450kg and can sprint from 0-100km/h in under 3.5seconds.

With a 70kWh battery and onboard DC charger able to support up to 350kW with its 800-volt architecture, it charges from 15 to 80 per cent in just 15 minutes.

The standard WLTP range will be over 400km.

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BRINGING YOU **ALL THE LATEST** SPORTS NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE AREA

Valley relegated to Step Five after draw

by Aaron Sutcliffe
 aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: RUGBY Town suffered relegation from the Northern Premier League Midlands despite producing a late fightback to draw 2-2 with rivals Bedworth United.

Valley knew only a win would keep their survival hopes alive at The Oval.

However, Bedworth took a two-goal lead courtesy of strikes from Liam Murphy and Leo Stone.

Rugby reduced the deficit eight minutes from time when Trey Charles found the net before the striker also scored a penalty deep into injury time to draw the teams level.

The visitors had a late chance to snatch the points but were unable to find a winner which confirmed Rugby's relegation.

Rugby now sit four points from safety with one match left to play meaning Ian King's side will play at Step Five next season.

Valley have spent much of the season in the bottom three and parted company with former boss Carl Adams in December with the club five points adrift of safety.

After losing just one of their first five league matches of the campaign, Rugby embarked on a nine-game winless run throughout September and October.

King's appointment failed to turn the tide as Valley won just one of their first nine matches following the departure of former boss Adams although performance did improve.

Results picked up in mid-February, with Valley losing three of their last 10 matches.

However, a draw with relegation rivals Bedworth confirmed Rugby's

demotion while also securing the home side's place in the division next season.

Bedworth broke the deadlock on 31 minutes when Murphy headed in Callum Morris's corner at the near post.

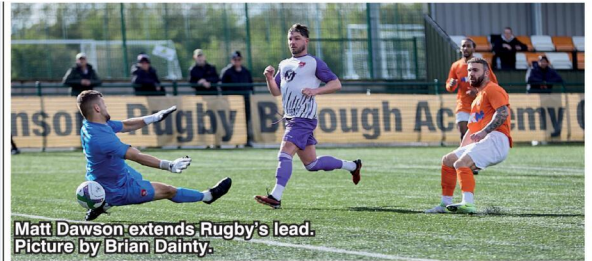
And the home side doubled their lead on 71 minutes as Stone volleyed home from eight-yards out after the ball fell kindly into his path.

Rugby halved the deficit on 82 minutes when Charles squeezed a shot under Liam O'Brien from a tight angle.

And Charles scored from the penalty spot five minutes into injury time after the referee penalised Bedworth for handball in the box.

Valley had one last chance to save his effort blocked at the death.

Rugby finish the season against Sutton Coldfield Town on Saturday, April 26 with kick-off at 3pm at Butlin Road.



Matt Dawson extends Rugby's lead.
 Picture by Brian Dainty.

Borough earn home tie in play-offs after final day win

RUGBY Borough secured a third-place finish in the league and a home semi-final in the play-offs with a final day 4-0 victory against Coventry United.

A brace from Lewis Wilson and further goals from substitutes Matt Dawson and Brady Middleton at Kilsby Lane sent Borough into the play-offs on a high.

Rugby will now play March Town United in the United Counties League Premier Division South

play-off semi-finals.

Borough's win also denied rivals Coventry a place in the top-five.

And the victory earned Rugby a home semi-final after play-off opponents March Town also won their final game of the campaign.

The other play-off semi-final pits Aylestone Park against Eynesbury Rovers.

Rugby host March on Sunday, April 27 with kick-off at 3pm at Kilsby Lane.

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