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Your **FREE** edition - just pick one up and keep up with the news

New Year's honour for charity founder Naomi

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

A DETERMINED Rugby mum who set up a life-saving charity in memory of her son has been awarded a British Empire Medal in the King's New Year's Honours list.

Naomi Rees-Issitt received the title for her work with the OurJay Foundation, which she set up following the tragic death of her 18-year-old son Jamie Rees from a cardiac arrest in the early hours of New Year's Day 2022.

The Foundation has so far installed over 310 defibrillators across Warwickshire and beyond, while raising awareness of their importance and providing training in life-saving skills.

Naomi said: "This is absolutely not for me, it's for my darling Jamie, who is so deserving of this honour for everything he has already changed and will continue to change in this cruel world.

"The lives he has saved and the impact he has had on heart safety in the community and the vital need for accessible defibrillators, makes him my absolute hero and inspiration in every single thing I do.

"I'm so proud, but I would give anything for him to be here to collect this honour himself."



Naomi Rees-Issitt (right) handed over five new defibrillators to Chief Inspector Angus Eagles at Rugby Police Station - accompanied by Adrian, Diana and Kevin from Concrete Repairs Limited, whose donation funded the equipment.

The Foundation recently donated five defibrillators to Warwickshire Police, which are now being used in neighbourhood police vehicles covering Rugby, Leamington, Stratford, Nuneaton and North Warwickshire. Naomi visited Rugby Police Station to hand the new equipment

to Chief Inspector Angus Eagles. She said: "We constantly question why the police are the only blue light service in England that doesn't, as standard, carry defibrillators in their vehicles - yet they continue to be the first to reach so many emergency situations before

other blue light services. "Not only is this so concerning for the public and anyone in these emergency situations, but also for the officers that go to these scenes, without these vital pieces of equipment. "We fight on in our campaign to

make it mandatory for all police vehicles in the UK to carry defibrillators."

A spokesperson for Rugby Police said officers were delighted with the new defibrillators.

They said: "There's a special reason they were presented in Rugby - they've come about because of the inspirational work of Naomi."

They added that the force's officers were the first on the scene when Jamie went into cardiac arrest in 2022 and immediately began administering CPR.

"With an ambulance en route, we radioed for urgent back up from an officer who got hold of a defib and was racing over to bring it to us.

"But sadly Jamie later passed away in hospital. Doctors believe that if there had been a defibrillator closer, Jamie might still be alive.

"We couldn't be more proud of Naomi and everyone at OurJay."

Visit www.ourjay.org.uk for more information on the charity.



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Norma finds hundreds of ways of spreading a little festive joy

A KIND-HEARTED former foster care worker brought comfort and joy to care leavers and those in need across Warwickshire by sending them hundreds of festive hampers.

Norma Wilson – with support from Warwickshire County Council’s (WCC) Children and Families Service, local charity Evelyn’s Gift, and other community and voluntary groups – sent out 203 hampers full of essentials such as socks, gloves, food, and toothbrushes, as well as festive treats and a handwritten card signed ‘Love from Norma and people who care’.

Norma began preparing hampers over 27 years ago within Warwickshire County Council’s Rugby Children’s Team, since when the project has grown into a much cherished tradition of giving.

Drawing on her experience as a foster carer for Warwickshire County Council – during which she cared for over 140 children – Norma understands the challenges faced by young people learning to live independently. Her hampers are a vital reminder that they are not alone.

Norma said: “It brings me great pleasure to provide hampers to



Norma says sending out her Christmas hampers to care leavers each year brings her ‘great pleasure’.

those in need, especially when they may not get anything else at Christmas.

“I do it every year and have done

for 27 years. It makes me happy to hear that they like them.

“The more people we can help, the better. Whether it’s donating

money, organising workplace collections, or volunteering time, every contribution makes a difference. Christmas is a time for giving, and

even the smallest gesture can mean the world to someone in need.”

Helen Smith, founder of Evelyn’s Gift, has been a key partner in supporting the initiative. The charity, set up in memory of Helen’s daughter Evelyn, rallies donations from businesses and individuals across Warwickshire, helping to ensure each hamper is brimming with thoughtfulness.

Norma also expressed gratitude to Puddle Duck Nursery, local businesses, and charities who support her year after year, and gave a special thank you to Calvin Smith, WCC’s Head of Family Help and all the County Council staff who raised funds through charity walks this year, including climbing Mount Snowdon.

WCC leader Coun George Finch said: “Norma’s work is a true testament to the power of kindness and community spirit. Her hampers bring not just practical support but also hope and a sense of belonging to young people who might otherwise feel alone at Christmas.

“We are so grateful for her incredible dedication and the support of everyone who contributes to this wonderful initiative.”

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17th Pub Lunch.....	£30.00	£24.00
21st Telford	£25.00	£20.00
March		
3rd Melton Mowbray	£29.00	£22.00
7th York.....	£27.00	£22.00
17th Cotswold Market & Broadway.....	£27.00	£22.00
21st Afternoon Tea & Litchfield.....	£33.00	£28.00
31st Liverpool	£29.00	£22.00
April		
8th Cheddar Gorge & Clarkes Shopping Village.....	£30.00	£24.00
11th London.....	£30.00	£24.00
14th Cotswolds & Broadway	£29.00	£24.00
May		
5th Pub Lunch.....	£31.00	£25.00
16th Black Country Museum	£27.00	£24.00
26th Lunch & Entertainment	£37.00	
27th Skegness	£29.50	£24.00
Eastbourne - The Haddon Hall Hotel 29th March- 2nd April 26. 5 Days/4 Nights £320 Per Person		
Price Includes- All Coach Hire, 4 Nights accommodation, Evening Meal & Breakfast, 1/2 price bar, entertainment package, Day excursions & An Afternoon Tea		
Scotland- Waverley Castle Hotel 27th-31st May 26. 5 Days/ 4 Nights 425 Per Person		
Price Includes- All Coach Hire, 4 nights accommodation, Evening Meal & Breakfast, Day Excursions, Admission to Falkirk Wheel, and Admission to AInwick Castle		
Llandudno - The Chatsworth House Hotel 10th-14th August 26 5 Days/4 Nights £295 Per Person.		
Price Includes- All Coach hire, 4 nights accommodation, Evening Meal & Breakfast, Day excursions, Portmerion Village & 2 course meal and Welsh Highland Railway Journey		

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Active Travel Commissioner Beccy Marston and Mayor Richard Parker.

Cash boost for active travel

CYCLING and walking is set to get a £36-million boost across the West Midlands.

The funds, secured by West Midlands Mayor Richard Parker, will be used by Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and local councils to build more safe cycling and walking routes, and to deliver programmes like School Streets and Bikeability to encourage more people to cycle and walk.

The Mayor has made increasing levels of active travel, especially for shorter trips, a key part of his Journeys for Everyone priority and the forthcoming Mayor’s Local Transport Plan.

He said: “This extra funding and high rating is a great show of confidence in our ability to deliver on active travel – and we will.

“This means more cycle lanes, road crossings, and better pathways to make it easier and safer for everyone to walk and cycle, especially for those shorter journeys like the school run or a trip to the local shops.

“Investing in active travel is how we will reduce gridlock on our streets, clean our air,

and build a happier and healthier community.”

Last year the Mayor appointed Beccy Marston as the West Midlands Active Travel Commissioner to work with councils, organisations and communities to further increase levels of walking and cycling.

Beccy said: “This funding allows us to further improve the safety and accessibility of walking, wheeling and cycling within our communities. I’m proud of the commitment demonstrated by our regional officers and the politicians who have championed this work, resulting in the retention of our capability rating.

“We will invest this money to continue building a connected, safe network that supports independent travel for young people and helps people make healthy choices for short trips, baking physical activity into daily routines.”

The funding is part of a £626million investment announced by government and Active Travel England for councils across the country.

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Frustrated by delays but pleased to welcome research investment

Campaign for action followed son's death at 26

A BEREAVED Rugby dad has welcomed new government investment in research into brain tumours – the condition which took his son's life at the age of just 26.

Peter Realf welcomed the announcement that more than £13million is being made available – with further announcements pending for funding into clinical trials for brain tumour patients.

Peter has worked tirelessly with the charity Brain Tumour Research for more than 10 years, ever since the death of his son Stephen – a trainee pilot who had been destined to be a high flyer in the RAF.

After Stephen died in 2014, Peter found purpose in campaigning with the charity for greater investment in research into the disease.

On the first anniversary of Stephen's death, his family launched a petition which gained over 120,000 signatures, leading to a Westminster Hall debate and the establishment of a working group on brain tumours.

Peter said: "Stephen's diagnosis with a brain tumour came six years after I was diagnosed with a rare form of leukaemia. The difference in treatment options for the two types of cancer is stark. I was told that because of increased investment in research into leukaemia, I had an 80 per cent survival prognosis. 30 years previously, this had been just 20 per cent.

"While I'm proud of the role my family and countless others like ours have played in campaigning for change for brain tumour patients, I am annoyed that Stephen didn't stand a chance and really frustrated that despite the success of the petition in 2015-16 and the Government's promise of \$40million in 2018, it has taken until now to see more of that money.

"It is more than a decade since Stephen died and we're still waiting for brain tumour patients to gain the treatment breakthroughs that other cancers like leukaemia have."

The announcement of the £13.7million investment is the culmination of a decade of campaigning work by Brain Tumour Research and supporters to increase funding by the Government into research for the disease.

The charity will be a partner in a new National Institute of Health and Care Research (NIHR) Brain Tumour Research Consortium, alongside other charities, hospitals, universities, cancer centres and patients.

Dan Knowles, CEO at Brain Tumour



Peter Realf (ABOVE) has worked tirelessly for more investment into brain tumour research in memory of his son Stephen. Stephen Realf (RIGHT) was destined to be a high flyer in the RAF.



Research, said: "This is a significant step forward and we welcome this crucial investment in a disease that has been chronically underfunded.

"Today and every day, 35 people in the UK are told they have a brain tumour. We will continue to campaign for and alongside those people and their families to unlock government funding for research and innovation.

"We look forward to further announcements leading to vital greater investment, scientific breakthroughs, and clinical trials that will change the story for the brain tumour community."

To donate, visit www.braintumourresearch.org/donate and add 'Peter Realf' as a comment.



The driver ignored a keep-left sign to overtake, nearly hitting an oncoming car.

Nine points for careless driver

A CARELESS driver has been fined, ordered to pay costs, and given nine points on his licence after he was caught on camera nearly hitting an oncoming car while overtaking on a main road in Rugby.

The 52-year-old driver from Rugby was caught on dashcam on the Rugby Western Relief Road back in August.

The owner of the dashcam submitted the footage to Warwickshire Police's Operation Snap for review by a road traffic officer.

Speaking after the sentence, Insp Dave Valente said: "This driver ignored a keep-left sign, nearly hit an oncoming car, and showed

no regard for others.

"The sentence reflects this as the outcome could have been so much worse. We hope that being so close to losing his licence will now encourage him to be a better driver."

Police are asking the public to keep submitting footage of traffic offences, such as driving dangerously or carelessly, using a mobile phone while driving, ignoring traffic lights, or driving too close or too fast past horse riders and cyclists.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/yumv25tt> for more information about Operation Snap.

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SILVER WINNING BRITISH TRAVEL AWARDS 2024

Bronze WINNING BRITISH TRAVEL AWARDS 2024

Helping keep veterans safe

WEST Midlands Police has backed a UK-wide safeguarding scheme for serving members and veterans.

The Forcer Protocol is a tool that can be used for missing persons investigations involving military personnel.

It was set up by Claire Lilly in memory of her late husband, Lance Corporal Alan Forcer, who took his own life after going missing in 2020.

Claire established the Forcer Protocol to help prevent such tragedies occurring again by providing a means for police officers to access important information that could help them trace missing armed forces members and veterans.

Families, friends and carers of current and past members of the military can complete a form on the Safe and Found website. Information held is completely confidential and police can only access the profile if the person featured is reported missing.

Details such as the person's medical history and mental health status, behavioural triggers, particular care needs and other relevant wellbeing information can then be used to support the investigation.

Mark Nevitt, locate manager within the police's Public Protection Unit, said: "The Forcer Protocol can quickly help us assess risk and it gives us clues as to where someone might be based on any difficulties they may be experiencing, their past behaviour, and other valuable personal information that we've gathered about them."

"This is potentially life-saving information, so if family members and friends of serving or former members of the military are worried about their loved one's welfare, I'd encourage them to register details."

Anyone concerned that someone who may be vulnerable, can record important information about them that could help keep them safe.

Partnership helps more find much-needed home

'HOUSING for people who desperately need it' is being provided at renovated flats in Coventry.

A partnership between Coventry City Council, GreenSquareAccord and the P3 Group has provided safe, stable housing and support at Ribbon Court in Foleshill for families experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

GreenSquareAccord and P3 Housing converted the former 'extra care' scheme into 50 flats after it had been under-occupied for long periods.

Having re-opened in September as a 'supported exempt accommodation service', 47 of the 50 units are now occupied, housing 57 adults and 74 children.

Support workers from P3 Charity have been commissioned by Coventry City Council and are located onsite, providing 24-hour support.

As well as benefiting from recently refurbished one and two-bedroom flats, residents have access to a range of other on-site services, such as family support and wellbeing services and activities that offer opportunities to build connections and community.

As part of their tenancy, all occupants sign a licence agreement with strict conditions for occupancy, parking use and visitor policies. Breaches of these agreements may lead to termination of licence.



Representatives of Coventry City Council, Green Square Accord and the P3 Group at Ribbon Court in Foleshill.

Coun Naeem Akhtar, the council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, said: "I visited the flats and was really impressed. They provide a good standard of housing for people who desperately need it. The Council's homelessness service receives around 120 enquiries a week and this scheme provides a positive solution for families."

Foleshill Councillor Shakila Nazir added: "Where possible, it is an option for families who are homeless from the Foleshill area to stay in the area, which means that many of those moving in already access local services. It is a good step."

Benjamin Taylor, Director of Homes and Communities at GreenSquareAccord, said: "Councils are on the front line of the housing crisis with homelessness rising in many places. We are proud to convert our former extra care facility into managed supported exempt accommodation block for homeless households in Coventry."

Hannah Kavanagh, Managing Director of P3 Housing, said: "Through this partnership we're able to provide good quality, safe accommodation to families from across the city while helping them to move on to more stable, long-term homes."

"Each family has the privacy and dignity of their own space, with on-site staffing on hand when they need advice, guidance or just someone to talk to after a difficult day."

"Feedback from tenants so far has been overwhelmingly positive, and it's heartwarming to see and hear the smiles and laughter from the children making the most of the play area in the communal lounge."

"There's a real sense of community that provides a vital network to families who might otherwise feel isolated, and we look forward to developing the service with support from local community groups."

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Using her skills to uncover traitors

A STUDENT from Warwick is currently taking The Traitors' castle by storm.

Jade Scott is one of the contestants taking part in the hugely popular BBC One game show, which sees the Faithful tasked with weeding out the Traitors.

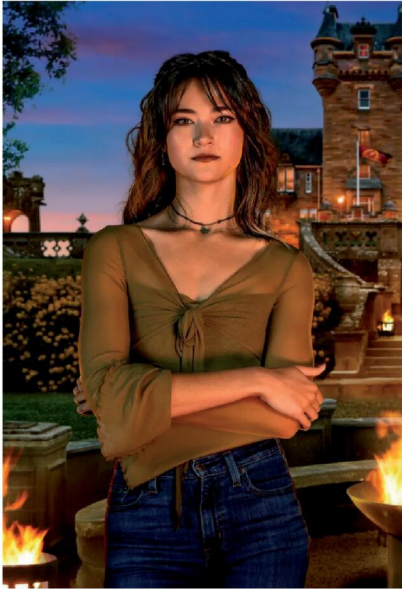
The 25 year-old PhD student says she decided to apply to be on the programme as she plays a lot of video games which are similar to The Traitors.

She graduated from Warwick University with a first-class Master's degree in Biomedical Science. Her PhD involves research into women's health and pregnancy. She also enjoys the gym and running.

Jade considers herself quite an observant person.

Speaking to the BBC ahead of going into the castle, she said: "I'm good with people and I pick up on things that a lot of people think I miss, but that might change if you ask me that at the end of the show."

"I have quite good problem-solving abilities, so that will hopefully help in trying to navigate through the game and missions. I think I can bring good teamwork to the table. I think I'll also get



than a PhD because this is my whole life. I can't go in there and make up a whole new background as that's too much effort to keep up, so I will just play down what I do. I have a resting mean face sometimes, which can kind of look like I'm just staring people out, so I need to watch myself as I can be quite blunt and direct as well.

"It's a game, and I'm here to play the game. I signed up for the game and I'm a gamer by heart. I think everyone there is hiding something to a certain degree or trying to come off as a particular way. You don't really know who these people are, so I am going to go in and be sceptical of everyone."

If Jade wins the game she would like to buy a house.

She added: "I'm the ripe age of 25 and PhD life doesn't pay very well. I'd like to buy a house somewhere I can call home, as I have moved around a lot for studying and so I'd like somewhere to finally call my own."

along with everyone as well."

Her game plan is to play everything that she does down.

She explained: "I'm going to say that I am a master's student, rather

Jade Scott from Warwick is currently a contestant on The Traitors.



Rotary's Santa and his helpers at the Royal Priors Shopping Centre.

WELCOME VISITOR: SANTA Claus was on a flying visit to the Royal Priors shopping centre in Leamington over Christmas, handing out presents to more than 600 excited children.

The event was run by Leamington Rotary Club and raised more than £1,000 for local charities.

Organiser Rotarian Colin Roberston said: "It was free to see Santa but many parents were very generous in making a donation, which will be distributed to very worthwhile local Rotary charities. Rotarians, of course, gave their time free.

"Over the weekend we saw more

than 600 children and they all left clutching a small toy as a gift from Santa and with a big smile on their faces. Many children brought a letter which they had written to Santa, and, of course, Santa was thrilled and was able to immediately put his elves to work dealing with their requests," he said.

Leamington Rotary Club holds a number of annual fundraising events for local charities, including the Cars at the Spa classic car show in the Pump Room Gardens and the Taste of Leamington dining experience.

Visit leamingtonrotary.co.uk for more details.

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FESTIVE HELP OFFERED:
ENTHUSIASTIC volunteers from Amazon in Coventry have helped two Coventry charities with their appeals over the festive period.

They packed Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts at the Samaritan's Purse National Ministry Centre in the city.

The gift-filled shoeboxes were sent out to children in need in Ukraine, Moldova, Albania, Malawi, Ghana, the Balkans, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, West Africa, and the Middle East.

The team also helped with the annual Coventry Myton Hospice Christmas Fayre, supplying £250 worth of items for the gift tombola and helping co-ordinate event stalls.

Nick Cole, Director of Operation Christmas Child at Samaritan's Purse UK, said: "Thank you to the Amazon team in Coventry for their support of Operation Christmas Child."

"Their volunteers brought such enthusiasm and energy to our shoebox packing event, and their contribution will help bring hope and joy to vulnerable children in some of the world's most challenging regions."

"Partnerships like this are vital to our mission, and we're truly thankful for their generosity."

Irene Cobbold from Amazon in Coventry said: "Our team is proud to support two fantastic charities that make a real difference to people's lives."

"It's been rewarding to see our colleagues come together for these causes, and we're grateful for the opportunity to make a positive impact."

Volunteers from Amazon in Coventry packed Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts at the Samaritan's Purse National Ministry Centre.

Pupils and staff at St Patrick's Catholic Primary School celebrate their Platinum OPAL award.



Award is child's play

A PRESTIGIOUS award has been given to a Coventry primary school for its commitment to improving playtimes for pupils.

St Patrick's Catholic Primary School received the top-level accreditation from Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL), a national programme designed to support schools in transforming breaktimes.

St Patrick's has introduced a wide range of outdoor play features to spark imagination and exploration – including a model wooden car made with donated parts, a reading hut, vegetable patch, musical area, and a popular mud kitchen built and donated by a former pupil's family.

A sandpit was also created with the help of family volunteers, with items donated by the community. The facilities are designed to support physical activity, creativity and wellbeing, and provide space for both energetic and quieter play.

Pupils have also been taught how to use the spaces safely, and the school's growing welly bank means children without appropriate footwear can still get involved.

Assistant Vice Principal Elise Liggins said: "We're absolutely delighted to receive the Platinum OPAL Award. These outdoor spaces have completely transformed playtimes for our children, offering opportunities to play, create, imagine and connect in ways that sup-

port their learning and wellbeing.

"It's fantastic to see so many of our pupils engaged and happy outside. The support we've had from families and the community to make it all happen was heartwarming – and it's been incredible to see that pay off."

OPAL CIC has worked with more than 1,500 schools across the UK since 2011 to improve the quality of school playtime.

OPAL mentor Rob Francksen said: "I was delighted to present St Patrick's with their Platinum OPAL award for their commitment to improving play opportunities for every child."

"When you step into the playground, you will witness a hive of activity. Children are playing in the giant sandpit, making concoctions in the mud kitchen, and singing and dancing on the stage."

"There is so much choice that every child can find something they want to do. It is truly magical to watch."

OPAL CIC Founder and Director Michael Follett said: "The benefits of play are well-documented, but it has virtually disappeared from children's lives. That's why we are working with schools across the country to improve playtimes."

"Congratulations to St Patrick's for your recent award and for everything you are doing to make sure children have amazing play every day."

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New cemetery has wildlife features

A NEW cemetery has opened in Rugby.

Mayor Barbara Brown cut the ribbon at an opening ceremony for the new cemetery at Rainsbrook Crematorium, 18 months after Leamington-based O'Brien Contractors started work on site.

The new cemetery has more than 4,100 grave plots and has been designed to improve access for the disabled, with 12 disabled parking spaces now available and a one-kilometre network of new roads and pathways.

More than 200 trees and 13,000 shrubs have also been planted at the site, together with bulbs and a hedgerow which runs across the entire cemetery to create a wildlife corridor set within a wild-

flower meadow.

To avoid water flooding the grave plots during heavy rainfall, an intricate drainage system has been installed beneath ground level, which allows water to run into an underground reservoir which then flows at a controlled rate into the Rains Brook.

Work on the cemetery started a decade after Rainsbrook Crematorium first opened its doors in 2014.

A cemetery was included in the original plans for the crematorium, but the council decided to postpone work until the council's cemeteries at Clifton Road, Croop Hill, Watts Lane and Whinfield were nearer to full capacity.

The new cemetery at Rainsbrook

looks set to serve the borough for the next 40 years.

Coun Brown said: "We were delighted to partner with O'Brien Contractors on this major project for Rugby, with the company's considerable expertise delivering a modern, accessible cemetery built to high environmental standards.

"The landscaping work means the cemetery complements the grounds of the crematorium and the stunning surroundings of Rainsbrook Valley, making it a beautiful place for contemplation and remembrance."

Rainsbrook Crematorium was built by Rugby Borough Council and the then Daventry District Council, before it became part of the new West Northamptonshire Council in 2021.

Rugby Borough Council has sole responsibility for the operation of Rainsbrook Cemetery, with all grave plots owned by the council.

Visit www.rainsbrookcrematorium.co.uk for more information about Rainsbrook Cemetery and Crematorium.

Mayor Barbara Brown (centre) cuts the ribbon at the official opening of Rainsbrook Cemetery, joined by Rainsbrook's Adrian Tierney (left) and Edward Benyon (right).



Cats Protection Rugby volunteers Gemma Packer, Kay Dwyer and Hilary Stevenson have celebrated 21 years of dedicated service to local cats and kittens.

PAWS FOR REFLECTION: Volunteers from the Rugby branch of Cats Protection have proudly celebrated 21 years of dedicated service to local cats and kittens.

Since it opened, the branch has rehomed hundreds of moggies, including over 280 in the last five years, and reunited lost pets with their families – including more than 115 in 2025 alone.

The branch also manages phone and online helplines, responding to 265 cases in the last six months.

The group also supports local families with neutering schemes, and raises vital funds to provide food, shelter, and medical care for cats in need.

Volunteers contribute a combined total of around 7,250 hours each year.

Among them is Hilary Stevenson, who has been with the branch since it opened 21 years ago.

She said: "After 21 years of vol-

unteering with Cats Protection Rugby, my love for cats is still what inspires my dedication. I'm incredibly proud to support such a wonderful charity and to know I'm giving something meaningful back to our community.

"Being surrounded by like-minded people who share the same passion makes every moment worthwhile.

"It's been a privilege to be part of the branch for the past 21 years, and I look forward to many more years to come."

Teena Shilton, Branch Team Leader for Cats Protection Rugby, added: "Our 21st anniversary honours the incredible supporters and volunteers whose dedication has changed countless feline lives. Their unwavering kindness is the reason we can continue our vital work in the community."

Visit www.cats.org.uk/rugby for more information.

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Plaudits after 16 years as manager

CHAIRMAN Jim Scott heralded the 'lasting legacy' left by Leamington Football Club boss Paul Holleran after he resigned as Brakes boss following a 16-year spell as manager.

Holleran took charge of 789 games in a spell which lasted a staggering 5,893 days following his appointment in November 2009.

But with the club currently bottom of the National League North table, the 55-year-old resigned from his role to focus on his health.

Mr Scott said: "We always knew this day would come and there are insufficient words to express our thanks for the fantastic contribution Paul has made to the club."

"He may have had the title 'first team manager' but for all the volunteers, fans and those who interacted with him within the club, his efforts went way beyond his job title and he has left a lasting legacy that is unlikely to be matched."

Mr Holleran added: "I have been on a wonderful journey with the football club and want to thank everyone for their fantastic support throughout my 16 years."

"I just feel the time is right for someone else to take over the reins and provide fresh ideas and impetus within the dressing room."

"Allied to this I have a number of health appointments in the coming month and my focus in the short term has to be on looking after myself."

The club have confirmed discussions will take place with Holleran in the coming weeks regarding a different role within the club for their former boss.

Mr Holleran's final game in charge of



Leamington came on December 30 last year as the Brakes suffered a 2-1 defeat away at Alfreton Town.

He guided the club to three promotions during his tenure while the Brakes achieved a club-record points tally at Step Two last term.

Mr Holleran's reign in charge ended with the club eight points adrift of safety at the bottom of the table on a 16-game winless run in the league.

The club have placed first team coach Chris Knott in interim charge of the side following Holleran's departure.

Leamington saw their first fixture of the New Year at Chorley postponed due to a frozen pitch.

Jim Scott (right) has lauded the legacy left by Paul Holleran (left). Picture by Sally Ellis.



Recycle your Christmas Tree and help The Myton Hospices.

Fir a very good cause

THE MYTON Hospices' annual Charity Christmas Tree Collection, delivered in partnership with Pass The Smile, returns from today (Friday) until Sunday (January 11).

This marks the final opportunity for households to book a collection slot. Teams of volunteers will be out across Coventry and Warwickshire collecting and recycling real Christmas trees. Every tree collected is responsibly recycled, helping to reduce waste and protect the environment, while raising vital funds to support patients and families cared for by The Myton Hospices, both within its hospices and across the com-

munity. Proceeds also help fund research into childhood cancer.

Since the collections began in 2019, a total of 14,190 Christmas trees have been collected, raising an £211,500.

This year the partnership aims to collect and recycle 4,000 real Christmas trees, covering all CV postcodes. Each tree will be turned into compost or biomass, offering residents a convenient and environmentally friendly way to dispose of their tree while supporting a local charity.

Visit www.mytonhospice.org/Trees for more information and booking details.

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For the past 12 years, Jeanette has been a Barnardo's foster carer in England.

She has opened her home, been there through the good days and the hard ones, and made a real difference to children and young people who needed stability, care and a chance to feel safe.

How it Started

Jeanette remembers seeing a little girl who had just gone into care walking to school with her new carer. "She had this huge smile on her face," Jeanette recalls. "It stuck with me – knowing she was safe, settled and happy."

Later, she met two more children who had been fostered, and their confidence and calmness made a lasting impression. "Seeing the difference fostering made to them really motivated me to get started," she says.

Taking the first step felt daunting, but she remembers making that first call to Barnardo's. "The woman I spoke to had such a reassuring voice," she says. "That phone call gave me the confidence to keep going."

Support Every Step of the Way

The fostering journey isn't quick or simple – but it's meaningful. Jeanette describes it as eye opening:

"It makes you reflect on your own upbringing. There were moments we wondered if we could really do this, but Barnardo's guided us every step of the way."

Through training, preparation sessions and the support of a dedicated social worker, Jeanette found a community – that listens without judgement and supports without hesitation.

"Although it was emotional and sometimes overwhelming," she says, "our social worker answered every question. They reminded us why it mattered – and that it would all be worth it."

For Jeanette, the support made all the difference. Barnardo's offers this to every carer, whether exploring fostering or already on the journey.

Jeanette reflects "It doesn't matter what background you come from – you'll get all the skills and training you need to support children in your care."



Barnardo's foster carer Jeanette, with Romarnie – together through it all.

"Something I wish I'd known before I started fostering is just how much of an impact you can have on a young person."

The Difference Fostering Makes

Jeanette's words ring true for Romarnie, who came into

her care as a young person. He arrived after being moved from place to place, feeling unsure about what would come next.



A special reunion: Romarnie returning to the place that felt like family.

It's a reminder that fostering isn't about perfection, it's about showing up with patience, resilience, compassion and a willingness to learn.

"Fostering is a two-way street," says Romarnie, "it teaches empathy and trust. It teaches how to care, how to love, how to be part of a family."

Life Today

Now an independent young adult, Romarnie is thriving at university – something he once struggled to imagine. Looking back on his journey, he shares a heartfelt message with Jeanette:

"Thank you for not giving up on me. I know I was a pain at first, but you didn't give up. You gave me that sense of feeling part of a family again – and it has meant everything."

Today, Romarnie hopes to become a foster carer himself: "Because I've lived through it, I feel I could really pass my experience on," he says.

For Jeanette, seeing him flourish has been one of her greatest rewards.

"It's those moments," she says, "when you see a young person start to believe in themselves."

Thinking About Fostering? Let's Talk Today.

Jeanette never looked back after that first reassuring phone call. If her story has made you wonder whether fostering could be right for you, you might be more ready than you think.

By joining Barnardo's, you'll be part of a children's charity that has been supporting children for over 150 years. We're with you every step of the way, offering tailored support, a competitive financial allowance, expert training, and a welcoming community of like-minded carers. If you're curious about fostering, get in touch with your local fostering team for a friendly, no-pressure chat.



Visit [barnardos.org.uk/foster](https://www.barnardos.org.uk/foster) to learn more.



Joining together to promote hope

RELIGIOUS leaders, civic representatives, and community members from Coventry came together to offer a message of unity and hope in the face of rising social tensions and community fragmentation.

The event at Coombe Abbey Hotel was organised by the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church (SMCC) to mark the inauguration of its Apostolic Visitor's Mission in the UK.

It centred on an inter-faith dialogue examining the role of faith organisations in the UK, chaired by Dr Anuj Mathew.

Panel speakers included Coventry Muslim Forum Chairman Dr Abdullah Shehu MBE, Most Rev. Dr. Thomas Mar Eusobios of SMCC (Bishop of Parasala, India), and Shri Hariprasad, the President of ISKCON Coventry.

The panellists called for regular inter-faith engagement, stronger support for vulnerable and marginalised sections of the society, clearer guidance and engagement with young people, and closer cooperation between spiritual and political leaders.

Discussions highlighted the need for faith communities to act as ambassadors of peace, champion their traditions with humility and embrace diversity as an outlook rather than a sociological factor.

In his inaugural address, His Beatitude Eminence Cardinal Baselios Cleemis, Head of the Syro-Malankara Catholic Church, underscored the importance of dialogue in strengthening understanding across communities. He called for renewed spirituality as a means of deepening appreciation of different faith traditions and their values.

Civic leaders, including Coventry Deputy Lord Mayor Roger Bailey and Ashford MP



Sojan Joseph, praised the initiative and affirmed the contribution of faith organisations to UK society. They welcomed the Church's decision to anchor its inauguration in inter-faith dialogue.

The event drew leaders from a broad spectrum of religious communities from Coventry, including the Jewish Reform Movement and the Salvation Army Church.

Alex Panteli, from the Greek Orthodox Church UK, said: "The event highlighted how diverse faith groups work together with compassion while preserving their unique beliefs and heritage."

The evening concluded with a shared commitment to ongoing dialogue and cooperation to support the UK community.

His Excellency Most Rev Dr Kuriakose Mar Ostathios, SMCC's Apostolic Visitor to Europe and the UK (right), presents a charitable contribution from SMCC to the Coventry Lord Mayor's appeal, received by Deputy Lord Mayor Roger Bailey (left).



Staff and volunteers from Coventry, Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind will use the donation to help revamp an underused area of its allotment into a sensory garden. Picture by Shaun Fellows / Shine Pix Ltd

DONATION HELPS: A GRATEFUL charity is transforming its outdoor space to bring people together to discuss their mental health, with help from a Coventry house-builder.

Coventry, Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind has received a £1,930 donation from Redrow Midlands as part of its community fund.

The charity, which supports people struggling with mental health issues, has used the donation to buy a new pizza oven as part of its broader project to revamp an underused area of its allotment into a sensory garden where clients can connect through cooking and eating together.

The space, located at Sherbourne Valley Allotments in Coventry, is set to open in January.

Project Support Manager Denise Lindsay said: "This donation will make a real differ-

ence to our ecotherapy work at Sherbourne Valley Allotments.

"Bringing people together is a key part of good mental health, and outdoor, food-based activities help people connect, build confidence and feel part of their community."

"The new pizza oven is a fantastic addition. It means we can cook and eat together using produce grown on the allotment, creating simple, meaningful moments that support wellbeing and help people feel less isolated."

"It provides a great opportunity to connect over food, while getting involved in the allotment - whether that's through planting, harvesting, woodwork, craft or a variety of other therapeutic activities."

Elaine Cartwright, Sales Director at Redrow Midlands, said: "We hope our donation ensures that many individuals can benefit from the charity's newly revitalised outdoor space for years to come."



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Mammoth new range of mattresses now on show.

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Born out of healthcare and based on the pressure relieving materials used in medical beds on spinal injury units, Mammoth's secret ingredient is Medical Grade™ foam – a naturally cooling, pressure-relieving but supportive material that's shown to be far superior to standard memory foam.

Unlike memory foam, Medical Grade™ foam doesn't require heat to become pliable, nor does it lock sleepers in place where they may seize up with aches and pains. Instead, Medical Grade™ foam instantly contours to the body and provides a supportive yet flexible surface that aids natural spinal alignment.

This is complemented by Mammoth's innovative PostureCells® – independently moving castellations in the foam that provide even support but reduce partner disturbance. Importantly, the air channels between each PostureCell® also serve to wick away the moisture and allergens that typically build up through the night.

Testing excellence

Under laboratory conditions, Medical Grade™ foam mattresses have been found to provide **46% greater pressure relief** and **69% faster cooling** than standard 50kg memory foam. For sleepers that means:

- Improved circulation through the night
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- Reduced overheating
- Reduced perspiration
- Improved hygiene

Determined to go further, Mammoth also put its mattresses through testing at Northumbria University's Centre for Sleep Research. In clinical trials it was shown that Mammoth's mattresses helped sleepers **fall asleep 29% quicker**, experience a **7% increase in sleep efficiency** and report a **21% increase in sleep enjoyment**.

Award wins

Mammoth's unique technologies helped the brand to win a Bright Ideas in Health award for pressure relief and temperature regulation – awards usually reserved for teams working within the NHS.

These impressive results are among the reasons why Mammoth has become the go-to name for elite athletes and professional sports stars – as can be seen through partnerships with the Rugby Players' Association, British Athletes Commission and Professional Cricketers' Association over the years, as well as relationships with Premier League football teams and Olympians.

Combatting back pain

The unique properties of Mammoth's sleep and comfort technologies have made it the go-to mattress range for health professionals. By improving pressure relief, enhancing postural support and increasing circulation, physiotherapists in particular love the positive patient outcomes offered by Mammoth. With over 50% of adults now estimated to suffer from back pain in their lives, it's never been more important to invest in the very best sleep surface to ease pain and discomfort.

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Sections of Leicester Road are set to close overnight for resurfacing in February and March.

Road closures on way

ROAD closures are set to take place on one of Rugby's busiest main roads, with resurfacing due to begin in February.

A \$1.5million scheme to resurface the A426, from the Tesco Roundabout to Junction 1 of the M6, is expected to last until the end of March.

A northbound section of the road will be closed during the works, with additional closures on southbound sections over weekends to allow the roundabouts to be resurfaced – excluding Newton Roundabout where resurfacing was recently carried out.

The work will take place overnight seven days a week between 7pm and 5am.

An earlier finishing time was agreed to allow staff turnover at local

businesses at 6am.

Coun Jennifer Warren, Warwickshire County Council's spokesperson for transport and planning, said: "We are letting people know well in advance of this work actually happening to let them know we are on our way and to allow time for planning."

"It's been an excellent exercise in working with local businesses and showing flexibility to move timings around to best accommodate them. It's ongoing but we are working well together to keep disruption to a minimum."

Details of timings and road closures are still being finalised. Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/road-worksmap for more information as it becomes available.

Hard work leads to top award for Joe

A BRIGHT spark who works as an electrician on a Rugby building site has been named Apprentice of the Year by a developer.

Joe Moore, 21, joined William Davis Homes in August 2022 and is now in the final year of his training on site in Houlton.

He was awarded for his hard work on site, while also learning his trade in the classroom at Leicester College.

Joe was praised for his attitude, work ethic and willingness to learn at William Davis' annual Apprentice of the Awards event at Burreigh Court in Loughborough.

Joe was presented with a trophy by Managing Director Guy Higgins. He also received £500 in prize money, which he plans to spend on tools.

Joe said: "After seeing electrical work being done on my house, I became interested in the trade and looked for work experience in it."

"My favourite part of the job is when we power up a house after second fix stage, when all the electrics are installed, and check that everything works – it's always a great moment."

"I'm really enjoying learning the trade and it's great to be named Apprentice of the Year."

Now in its 54th year, William Davis' apprenticeship programme has more than 30 apprentices on



Joe Moore received the William Davis Homes' Apprentice of the Year trophy from William Davis Homes Managing Director Guy Higgins.

its books and each is paired with a mentor – many of whom are previous apprentices themselves.

Joe's mentor Graham Farndon said: "Joe consistently puts in 100 per cent effort to everything he does – he's always prepared, attentive and respectful. His dedication reflects the values instilled in him by his family, and he's truly deserving of this award."

Guy Higgins said: "Congratulations to Joe on his award win – he clearly enjoys his work as an electrician, he's keen to learn and is committed to his development, which are all important qualities to achieve success."

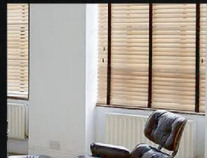
"We look forward to seeing our apprentices continuing to progress in their development over the next year."



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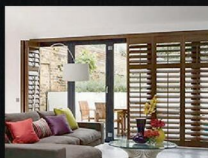
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Rugby-based prize given to road safety officers

The Livia Awards 2025

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

A BEREAVED Rugby couple have presented awards to two police collision investigators who went the extra mile to help their communities, in memory of their daughter who was killed by a dangerous driver.

George Atkinson and Giulietta Galli-Atkinson held the 26th Livia Award for Professionalism and Service to Justice, at a ceremony at New Scotland Yard.

They founded the award in the name of their daughter Livia, who died at the age of 16 in 1998, when a driver mounted the pavement and ran her over while she was walking to her ballet class in Enfield.

Inspired by the police team who dealt with Livia's case, the couple established the award to highlight the work of serious collision inves-

tigators and family liaison officers (FLOs) in the Metropolitan Police.

The 2025 winner of the Livia Award was DC Caroline Landy, an FLO whose case involved a jogger who stepped on to a zebra crossing and was hit by a speeding bus.

DC Landy was commended for conducting her role with compassion and constant support which is thought to have saved the life of the victim's wife, who suffered from mental health issues and became traumatized and paranoid after her husband's death.

The runner up was DC Elliott Lazarus, who investigated a crash caused by a man he discovered to be a Romanian criminal who had been imprisoned in his native country for serious driving offences and who was in the UK illegally.

DC Lazarus' work helped to secure a guilty verdict for causing serious injury by dangerous driving, which saw the culprit jailed for more than four years and deported.

Both officers received the



From left: Met Chief Superintendent Tom Naughton, Livia panellist Mike McAndrew, retired Met DI Julie Trodden, commendee DS Nush Puvitharan with her children, Livia Award chair Stephen Twigg, runner-up Met DC Elliott Lazarus, Livia panellist David Levy, commendee Met PS Jody Carson, winner DC Caroline Landy, Livia panellist and former Rugby MP Mark Pawsey, Livia panellist Paul Cheston and Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire Tim Cox.

prime minister's message of congratulation, presented by Stephen Twigg, secretary-general of the Parliamentary Commonwealth Association and chair of the Livia Award.

Giulietta and George said: "The Livia Award began as a thank you to the Met serious collision investigators assigned to Livia's case, who had been exceptionally professional and caring – but we decided to build on their professional qualities to boost morale and encourage uniform best practice.

"We feel privileged and honoured to have been able to showcase these specialists year on year, who go that extra mile to ensure that justice is done, at their level of professional responsibility. They have our respect, gratitude and support.

"In commemorating Livia, the

award also offers a campaigning platform that focuses on road safety issues and problems, with calls on the government for strong measures like the graduated driving license, to decrease road casualties among 17- to 24-year-olds."

Rugby MP John Slinger, who attended the award ceremony, said road safety was a priority of his.

He added: "It's a clear example of where governmental action, through legislation and other measures, can directly and indirectly reduce road crashes. Giulietta and George live in my constituency and have been in touch with me since I was elected. Their dignified, principled and tireless campaigning on road safety is inspiring.

"All road crashes are ultimately preventable. I'm glad that a 'Safe System' and 'Vision Zero' approach

is being adopted more within the UK. I've spoken to the road safety minister many times about issues raised with me by campaigners such as Giulietta and George.

"The government's imminent road safety strategy will, I'm confident, include many measures that will improve road safety. We owe it to the memory of past victims, and we owe it to road users now and in the future to do more."

The awards were presented by Met Commissioner Sir Mark Rowley, QPM; and Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire Tim Cox, in front of an audience of more than 100 guests, including Mr Slinger, Department for Transport minister Lilian Greenwood, Transport for London commissioner Andy Lord, and former Rugby MP Mark Pawsey.



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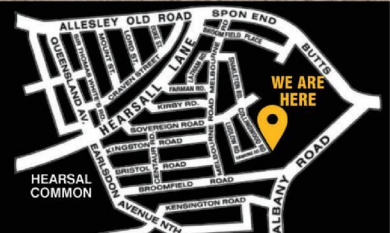
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'Frenzied' attack ends in jail term



A MAN who shouted 'Nobody calls the police on me' before launching a frenzied attack on a bystander who had tried to call an ambulance for him, has been jailed for three years.

Michael Hardy, from Henley, was seen drunkenly shouting at a woman in the street in the town in June

Residents intervened, with one escorting the 37-year-old off a driveway, after which another resident called an ambulance for him after seeing him lying on the ground.

When Hardy began to get up, and appeared uninjured and aggressive, the resident asked for the police.

Hardy approached the resident, shouting: 'Nobody calls the police on me' before repeatedly punching the man in the head. His victim was left with several injuries that needed hospital treatment - including a fractured eye socket.

When arrested, Hardy refused to comment.

He was charged with grievous bodily harm and affray -

Michael Hardy has been jailed for three years following his frenzied attack. s

and, at Warwick Crown Court, was sentenced to three years in prison.

DC Olly George said: "Hardy's cowardly, unprovoked attack against a resident who had been

trying to call an ambulance for him has disgusted the community in Henley-in-Arden.

"We arrested him straight away and were able to build a strong enough case to see

him charged and remanded in custody. Evidently Hardy thought he could attack residents without consequence. He now has plenty of time in a cell to rethink his assumptions."

Boy due in court following car theft

A 14 YEAR-old boy from Warwick has been charged with multiple burglaries and stealing a car.

A report of a theft came from a shop in the Leamington and Warwick area at around 5am on January 1 and three reports of burglaries at nearby houses followed.

One offence reportedly saw a Ford Focus stolen and traffic officers, armed response and dog units worked with patrol officers and CCTV operators to

track the car, which was found on the A46. It was forcefully stopped and a male occupant arrested.

The 14-year-old, who cannot be named because of his age, has been charged with three burglaries of dwellings, one burglary of a non-dwelling, theft of a motor vehicle, dangerous driving, driving without insurance and driving while disqualified. He was conditionally bailed and due to appear at Coventry youth court yesterday (Thursday).

Rural burglaries

PEOPLE living in large rural properties in south Warwickshire are urged to be on their guard following a spate of burglaries.

Thieves are stealing high value items including gold, jewellery and designer handbags and, on occasion walking through fields to the properties.

Break-ins occur via first-floor windows or balconies, often using ladders. Police believe plain coloured, non-

descript vans or 4x4-style vehicles capable of carrying ladders are being used.

The burglaries tend to occur between 4pm and 10pm.

Anyone with information about the burglaries should report it via Warwickshire Police's website or by calling 101.

Alternatively, information can be provided anonymously to the independent charity Crimestoppers, on 0800 555 111.

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Monday 26 th January - Friday 30 th January	Was £249	NOW £199pp
Monday 2 nd February - Friday 6 th February	Was £249	NOW £199pp
Monday 9 th February - Friday 13 th February	Was £249	NOW £204pp
Monday 16 th February - Friday 20 th February	Was £259	NOW £209pp
Monday 23 rd February - Friday 27 th February	Was £265	NOW £215pp
Monday 2 nd March - Friday 6 th March	Was £265	NOW £219pp
Monday 9 th March - Friday 13 th March	Was £269	NOW £225pp
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Friday 20 th February - Monday 23 rd February	Was £259	NOW £212pp
Friday 27 th February - Monday 2 nd March	Was £259	NOW £219pp
Friday 13 th March - Monday 16 th March	Was £265	NOW £219pp
Friday 20 th March - Monday 23 rd March	Was £269	NOW £222pp
Friday 27 th March - Monday 30 th March	Was £269	NOW £230pp
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Call goes out for runners

FUNDRAISERS are being invited to help paint the town pink for a children's charity by signing up for the next Warwick Half Marathon.

Molly Ollys hopes to be well represented at the annual 13.1-mile race on February 1, to top its 2025 fundraising total of £16,000.

The race will follow a route from Warwick Racecourse along Coventry Road to Leek Wootton, Rouncil Lane in Kenilworth and back to Warwick via Hatton and Hampton on the Hill. A 1 km junior run will also be held.

Charity founder Rachel Ollerenshaw said: "For the second year running, Molly Ollys is delighted to be the chosen charity for the 2026 Warwick Half Marathon, one of the biggest events in the Warwickshire running calendar with more than 2,000 runners taking part."

"Although we're based in Warwick, it's still important to raise awareness locally for those people who may not have heard of Molly Ollys and the work we do around the UK to support children with life-threatening illnesses.

Molly Ollys was established in 2011 by Rachel and Tim Ollerenshaw following the death of their eight-year-old daughter Molly from a rare kidney cancer.

The charity works to support children with terminal or life-limiting illnesses and their families and helps with their emotional wellbeing.

Visit mollyolly.co.uk/event/2026-warwick-half-marathon/ to sign up.

Marathon effort ended in A&E stay for Angus

by **Philippa Mings**
philippa.mings@bullivantmedia.com

A FUNDRAISER from Warwick is officially exhausted, after running 40 marathons in 40 different countries around Europe.

Angus Read flew from Luton Airport to Chisinau, Moldova, to start the challenge in August and ended it in hospital with exhaustion when he completed his challenge in London on December 13.

The challenge took Angus from the sunshine of Monaco to sub-zero temperatures in Iceland and he raised more than \$11,000 for Cancer Research UK in the process, in memory of his aunt, who died in 2014.

Angus admitted being a bit under-prepared when he started, but said he would "figure it out" along the way.

After graduating from Leeds University in June, where he studied law, Angus wanted to go solo travelling.

While the 22 year-old was working out his options, he decided he wanted to make a difference by raising money for Cancer Research



Triumphant but exhausted - Angus crosses the finish line at Stoke Newington in London. s

during his travels. On average, Angus ran a marathon every three days, with each event taking him around four-and-a-half hours to complete.

Throughout the challenge, Angus ran solo and slept in hostels, with friends joining him and cheering him on in Sweden, France and Belgium.

Angus first got into running after the Covid lockdowns in 2020 and had completed 50 kilometres every week in preparation for the challenge.

He had previously run two mara-

thons in Leeds but had underestimated how hard they would be. He did, however, get to see more of the world than he had planned.

Angus said: "I've been to so many countries that I wasn't planning on going to originally, which is cool, such as Tallin in Estonia. That was a beautiful city."

"I really enjoyed Sarajevo in Bosnia Herzegovina. My favourite run was Nice to Monaco along the south coast of France - that was stunning - a really sunny day, beautiful coastline."

By the end, Angus said, his left knee was causing him "quite a lot of pain" and he had lots of "niggles and tweaks".

Exhaustion was also a problem, because of the lack of recovery time.

Angus added: "When I finished the challenge, my body kind of shut down in a way. I had to go to A&E and I got diagnosed with severe fatigue, slash exhaustion, really from the whole trip."

He plans to take a few months off to recuperate before looking for work this year.

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Business is developing after some top support



Back – Anna Paget (Rugby Borough Council) and Mick Dalheley (Chamber). Front – Rebecca Corr (Warwickshire County Council), Martina Rehakova (Martina Art Photography).

A FOCUSED Rugby photographer says a regional support programme has not only boosted her business but made her feel like herself again.

Martina Rehakova, who moved to the area from Slovakia in 2008, rediscovered her childhood passion for photography – eventually launching Martina Art Photography from her studio in Bank Street in February 2024.

Needing help to organise and grow the business, she contacted the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce for support – which was offered through Business Start-Up programme.

Martina said: “When I was younger, we had an old family camera and photography was something we all enjoyed.

“It wasn’t like today where you can take thousands of shots. You had to get the settings just right to capture a good picture. I still remember making prints with my dad in the bathroom under the red light, with the smell of chemicals. That memory has stayed

with me. But back then, photography wasn’t considered a ‘proper job’, so life took me in a different direction.

“When I became a single mum, it was like starting a new chapter and I wanted something that worked around me and my son and that gave me balance.

“I work a lot with women. For me, it’s not just about taking the perfect picture, it’s about the feeling and the connection. Many women come to me feeling overwhelmed or lacking confidence, and they leave the studio feeling proud and beautiful.

“That’s why I say I don’t take pictures with my eyes, but with my heart. It starts from the first message, I want clients to feel comfortable and understood, not just like they’re paying for photos.

“As a woman, you start a business thinking you can work flexibly and fit it around your family life but you suddenly realise it is 24/7. You are trying to work on the business while taking care of the household and the family!

“One of my biggest challenges was structure. I’m full of ideas but strug-

gle to organise them. When I started building my website and creating packages, it was overwhelming. I didn’t know what to focus on: branding, family photography, business portraits, and I was doing it all alone without a team.”

She was assigned to Chamber business adviser Mick Dalheley for one-to-one help.

She said: “Working with him and listening to his advice gave me structure. He became my team!

“We worked on my packages, decided what to prioritise, and created short-term and long-term plans

with deadlines. That way, I knew what to focus on.

“It was a game-changer. Mick helped me tidy up all of the ideas in my head and to focus on what mattered. He guided me on marketing and how to position my business.

“I can already see that my business is growing thanks to the help, but I also feel more relaxed and authentic again, which means more customers want to work with me because I am being myself.”

Mick said Martina was a talented photographer and an honest, authentic person.

He added: “She was struggling to focus on the areas of the business that would lead to growth and also give her the most satisfaction.

“By working with her, we could make short, medium and long-term plans and decide on two or three areas to concentrate on. Martina now has a great website, easy-to-understand packages, plans that she can manage and a really happy client-base.”

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/tp2zh7m2> for more information on the Business Start-Up programme.

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Sitting comfortably - NFU Mutual has donated 600 items of furniture to mental health charity MIND.



A very welcome donation

A MAJOR furniture donation has been made to Coventry, Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind to help kit out one of the charity's new developments.

Stratford-based insurer NFU Mutual has given up to 600 items of furniture to the mental health charity, which was looking to source pieces for its new 'Berry Mews' premises, based in Coventry, as well as for its various other sites.

Among the donations included tables, chairs, sofas, screens, office equipment and soft furnishings – all of which to help benefit the entire organisation.

Steven Hill, CEO from Coventry, Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind, said:

"We're incredibly grateful to NFU Mutual for their generous gift of furniture, which has helped us create welcoming spaces for children and young people in Coventry, as well as for our new venue in Worcester."

"From residential services and community hubs across the region to staff offices and shared spaces, this donation will help us create environments that feel safe, comfortable and professional for both service users and staff."

Coventry, Warwickshire and Worcestershire Mind is a local mental health charity, providing a range of services that support individuals with mental health problems.

Survey aims to help identify phone blackspots

EFFORTS are being made to improve mobile phone coverage in Warwickshire.

A survey launched by Warwickshire County Council aims to gather information from residents and businesses about signal quality and to identify coverage 'blackspots' which require service improvements from mobile operators.

The council's Connected Warwickshire team will use the survey evidence to work with the operators to help improve coverage.

The survey, open to all Warwickshire residents and businesses, is calling for people to share their experiences with mobile signal issues, including dropped calls, slow data speeds, and complete lack of service.

Poor or unreliable indoor signal also continues to be a challenge for many residents and businesses alike. The submitted survey

reports will be used to build a comprehensive map of mobile coverage problems and highlight areas most in need of infrastructure improvements.

WCC's economy spokesperson Coun Rob Howard said: "We are acutely aware that people in areas of poor coverage are at a disadvantage, socially and economically, and we want to address that."

"We are launching our mobile phone service survey to find out the level of coverage people are getting from their mobile phone providers and pinpoint where the problematic areas are. This will help inform our conversations with the industry when they are making plans for future service improvements in Warwickshire."

Visit ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/mobile-coverage/issues/ to complete the survey.

SHARE VIEWS: OPINIONATED residents in Warwickshire are being invited to join an online panel.

The Voice of Warwickshire is a group of local people, aged 18 and over, who play a vital role in helping Warwickshire County Council understand the views, needs and priorities of those who live in the county.

Launched in 2021, this initiative aims to ensure that the council's decisions and priorities are informed by the perspectives of residents from across Warwickshire.

Members of the panel are invited to take part in engagement activities on a wide

range of topics - from libraries and green-spaces to Fire and Rescue and artificial intelligence. Feedback from the Voice of Warwickshire directly informs the council's planning, policies, and service delivery.

WCC's customer spokesperson Coun Mike Bannister said: "The decisions we make affect the residents in the county, so it is important to seek their views on a range of subject areas that we work on as a council."

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Cash to get in the saddle

Warwickshire will receive nearly £2 million in funding for four years, from the 2026/27 fiscal year, to support new walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure. s

WALKING, wheeling and cycling in Warwickshire are set to get a major funding boost of around £10 million.

The cash, from Active Travel England (ATE), is set to make active travel easier and more appealing for residents of all ages across the county.

The multi-year funding package comes after Warwickshire County Council showed it was making progress in the planning and delivery of walking, wheeling and cycling capability across the county.

Warwickshire will receive nearly £2 million in funding for four years, from 2026/27, to support new walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure, as well as some £625,000 for

three years, from 2026/27, to fund behaviour-change programmes, community engagement and support for people to choose active travel for everyday journeys.

The Department for Transport will issue guidance on what the funding can be used for, in due course.

Across the full period, this represents almost £10 million of new investment, a major boost for Warwickshire's long-term active travel plans.

The funding will be provided as part of the Department for Transport's consolidated local transport settlements and offers Warwickshire Council greater certainty to plan and deliver schemes across the county.

Law firm raises concerns about cyclist road safety

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

NEARLY 100 cyclists have been injured on Warwickshire roads in the past year, according to new figures.

Data obtained by Advice.co.uk has confirmed Warwickshire Police recorded 99 cyclist casualties during the 2024-25 reporting period.

Among them were two fatalities and 26 serious injuries.

The data highlighted specific hotspots, with Warwick recording the highest number of incidents,

with 32, followed by Stratford, with 23.

With more riders navigating the county's mix of busy urban centres and high-speed rural roads, experts are warning that infrastructure is failing to keep pace with participation.

Tracy Chick, road traffic accident manager at JF Law, said: "Cyclist injury levels are still far too high. Many crashes could be prevented; they often stem from driver inattention, worn-out road surfaces and a lack of safe, dedicated cycling routes."

"The consequences for cyclists can be extremely serious. From broken bones and head injuries to

long-term emotional and financial strain, the impact of a collision is often life-changing.

"As more people take up cycling across the UK, improving road safety and ensuring justice for injured cyclists must remain a national priority. It's vital that anyone injured in a cycling accident understands their rights and seeks legal advice as soon as possible.

"If the accident was caused by someone else's negligence, whether that's a motorist, local authority or another party, they may be entitled to make a compensation claim to help cover medical costs, loss of earnings and other related damages."

Fake parking charge text-message scam

DRIVERS have been warned to be on their guard against a parking-related text scam.

Fake phishing scam SMS text messages are being sent to Warwickshire residents, posing as penalty charge notice (PCN) payment requests.

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) says it does not send text messages about the pay-

ment of PCNs and warns people not to click any links or part with any personal information as a result of the messages.

WCC's transport spokesperson, Councillor Jennifer Warren, said: "We urge residents to stay alert to these scams. Never share your personal details for payment unless you are absolutely certain it is a trustworthy

source. If you receive a text about a PCN, delete it. It is not from us."

For clarification - penalty notices are issued by being placed on a vehicle's windscreen or sent by post, if windcreens are not an option.

Genuine PCNs from Warwickshire County Council will start with the letters ZQ.

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Josephine Rugg

Ambulance fleet set to be bolstered by new units

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

WEST Midlands Ambulance Service Trust (WMAS) is set to get an extra 23 vehicles.

The trust said it was set to benefit from a multi-million pound investment which would see the number of ambulances on the frontline rise by five per cent, helping crews reach patients faster and deliver life-saving care when it matters most.

The additional funding, from the Department of Health and Social Care, will see the trust's frontline fleet rise by 23 to 500 vehicles, in total.

In addition to the diesel ambulances, the trust will also receive eight fully electric ambulances by the end of March.

The expansion forms part of a wider investment that will see 142 vehicles added to the fleet by the end of March.

Of those, 87 have already been delivered and are supporting communities across the West Midlands.

Chief executive officer, Anthony Marsh, said: "This investment means more ambulances on the road, more capacity for our crews and faster help for patients when they need us most.

"Every vehicle plays a part in saving lives, and increasing our fleet strengthens our ability to respond to emergencies across the West Midlands.

Greener

"We're also proud to continue investing in modern and electric vehicles, supporting both our staff and our commitment to a greener NHS."

Alongside increasing capacity, the investment also supports WMAS' commitment to sustainability. The service operates one of the most modern ambulance fleets in the UK.

The additional vehicles support the trust's long-standing five-year replacement cycle for frontline ambulances, helping crews have access to reliable, modern vehicles



West Midlands Ambulance Service is set to get an extra 23 vehicles to help its frontline responses. s

equipped to provide high-quality patient care.

WMAS was the first ambulance service in the country to trial electric ambulances, in 2020.

The trust is just one of several set to benefit from a new fleet of more than 500 ambulances nationally.

The government says the vehicles - replacing old ambulances across England - represent one of the biggest upgrades to the NHS fleet in recent years and have been rolled out to every region of England, helping emergency services respond faster and more reliably through winter.

Health and social care secretary Wes Streeting said: "In an emergency, every minute matters.

"When someone dials 999, they should get help fast - not be left

waiting because of creaking kit or preventable delays.

"These new ambulances are already helping to cut response times and keep more vehicles on the road, just as the NHS is facing a tidal wave of 'flu and the ongoing disruption of strikes.

"I want to thank NHS staff for their extraordinary dedication this winter.

"They are going above and beyond for patients, often in incredibly tough conditions, and this government is backing them with the modern equipment they need to do their jobs safely and effectively.

"Modernising our ambulance fleet means better care for patients and stronger emergency services - while backing British jobs and driving economic growth."

Number of 999 calls is on the rise

THE NUMBER of emergency calls to West Midlands Ambulance Service has risen by nine per cent, from the same period of 2025.

Call assessors in Stafford and Brierley Hill took 1,510 calls between midnight and 7am on New Years Day - up from 1,386 the previous year. It is the second busiest new year for the service in recent times.

Over the two days (December 31 and January 1), the trust took a total of 9,289 calls, slightly down on the 9,965 calls the previous year.

West Midlands Ambulance Service chief executive, Anthony Marsh, said: "A massive thank you to the hundreds of staff and volunteers who worked over this period, many giving up time with their family and friends to work additional shifts and support the service through these notoriously busy periods.

"It's not just those on the road but the team in our control rooms and also the staff who support these colleagues in areas such as vehicle preparation, mechanics, stores, distribution and IT - it is a real team effort and I am immensely grateful for all that you have done to help the people of the West Midlands in their hour of need."

Browse the Winter Edition of Seasons



As winter's chill begins to settle across our three counties, there's a certain kind of beauty that only this time of year brings.

This, then, feels like the perfect moment to launch 'Seasons' - our brand-new glossy magazine, created to celebrate the people, places, and stories that make Worcestershire, Warwickshire and the West Midlands such a wonderful part of the world

Pick up a copy locally for free, or simply browse on line
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Each quarter, Seasons will follow the rhythm of the year - from the crisp calm of winter to the first buds of spring, the brightness of summer and the richness of autumn - highlighting the very best of local life, from independent shops and community ventures to countryside walks, home inspiration, and hidden gems worth discovering.

Our first Winter edition is all about warmth - in every sense of the word. You'll find features that reflect the spirit of the season: comforting food, inspiring people, caring places, and ways to make the cold months glow with local charm.

This magazine is for you - our readers, neighbours and local businesses - and we can't wait to share the year ahead with you, one beautiful season at a time.



For even more details call 01926 317118 or 0121 270 2295
'Seasons' magazine is brought to you by your local 'Observer' Newspaper team

Nature plan to preserve habitats



New strategy is part of mayor's £100m green initiative

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

GREEN spaces, waterways and wildlife across the West Midlands are set to get a helping hand to survive and thrive under new plans.

The West Midlands Local Nature Recovery Strategy has outlined 62 actions that will protect and enhance nature while also unlocking benefits for the health, wellbeing and prosperity of communities and businesses.

The measures include restoring wildlife habitats, improving the region's rivers and iconic canals, planting more trees and opening more urban green spaces for people to enjoy.

These measures are said to boost biodiversity, improve quality of

life for the region's residents, help adapt to climate change and create green jobs.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has developed the strategy in partnership with local councils and environmental organisations, community groups, businesses, schools and colleges, universities, landowners, farmers and developers.

West Midlands Mayor, Richard Parker, said: "Our region has one of the country's most distinctive landscapes, with a unique mosaic of industrial heritage, iconic canals, vibrant urban centres, parks, rivers, nature reserves and millions of trees.

"We must treasure all of our natural assets because they have the power to drive a more prosperous, healthier and more attractive West Midlands. This strategy will help ensure our natural spaces sur-

vive and thrive for generations to come."

The mayor launched the strategy during a visit to a restoration project on a section of the River Rea, on the edge of Birmingham city centre.

The strategy highlights several other significant nature and climate projects that could be accelerated if partners work together.

These include improvements along the River Cole through Solihull in the Tame Valley Wetlands Nature Improvement Area and to tackle green deprivation, strengthen the city of Coventry's climate resilience and create training opportunities and apprenticeships through the Coventry Green for All programme.

The West Midlands Nature Investment Hub will go live this year to support the mayor's plan to pour up to £100 million of private and public sector funding into

hundreds of environmental projects across the region.

The WMCA has already provided £1.6 million for more than 50 community-led environmental projects.

Those have improved access to green space for more than 500,000 residents, restored 245,000 square metres of wildlife habitats (an area the size of 35 football pitches), and created 260 jobs and opportunities for people to learn green skills.

Gina Rowe, landscape recovery development manager for Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, said: "Warwickshire Wildlife Trust looks forward to continued partnership working with the combined authority as the Local Nature Recovery Strategy moves into delivery, with particular interest in the cross-boundary links between Warwickshire, Solihull and Coventry across the Local Nature Partnership area."

PACKED PROGRAMME THE LINE-UP for the West Midlands Business Festival 2026 has been revealed.

Mayor Richard Parker has announced a packed programme of more than 100 events for his second event.

Thousands of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and the wider business community will come together between February 2 and 13 to find out more about the Mayor's Growth Plan to create more jobs and secure new investment into the region.

Events will include support for exporters, practical sessions on how to use AI to boost productivity, create standout digital content and strengthen cyber security, and new events focusing on workplace mental health, the retail sector and the night-time economy.

There will also be leadership and entrepreneurship masterclasses, chances to explore funding and investment opportunities, and opportunities to connect at networking events designed for early-career talent, ambitious start-ups, executives and entrepreneurs.

Mr Parker said: "February can't come soon enough. Once again we will come together to share ideas, insights and expertise to make our region the best place to start and scale up a business."

The West Midlands Business Festival is organised for the Mayor by Business Growth West Midlands (BGWM), which is part of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).

It is backed by all three of the region's Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), universities, and many other business organisations. Most events are free to attend.

Visit www.wmbf.org.uk to book a place and to see the full line-up.



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How to boost your winter vitamin D levels

by **Lise Evans**,
nutritional therapist,
DipCNM, mANP

AS winter sets in, shorter days and weak sunlight can make it difficult to maintain healthy vitamin D levels - especially in northern latitudes such as the UK.

Vitamin D plays a vital role in many aspects of health, and ensuring adequate intake during winter is essential for physical and mental wellbeing.

Vitamin D is unique because the body produces it when the skin is exposed to sunlight, specifically ultraviolet B (UVB) rays.

In winter, shorter daylight hours, lower sun angles, and more time indoors significantly reduce UVB exposure.

In northern regions such as the UK, sunlight from October and March is too weak for effective vitamin D synthesis and even people who spend time outdoors may struggle to produce enough vitamin D. That increases reliance on food sources and supplementation.

Why vitamin D matters

It supports the immune system: Vitamin D helps regulate immune responses and supports the body's ability to fight infec-

tion. During winter, when colds, 'flu, and other respiratory illnesses are more common, maintaining sufficient vitamin D levels may help the immune system function more effectively.

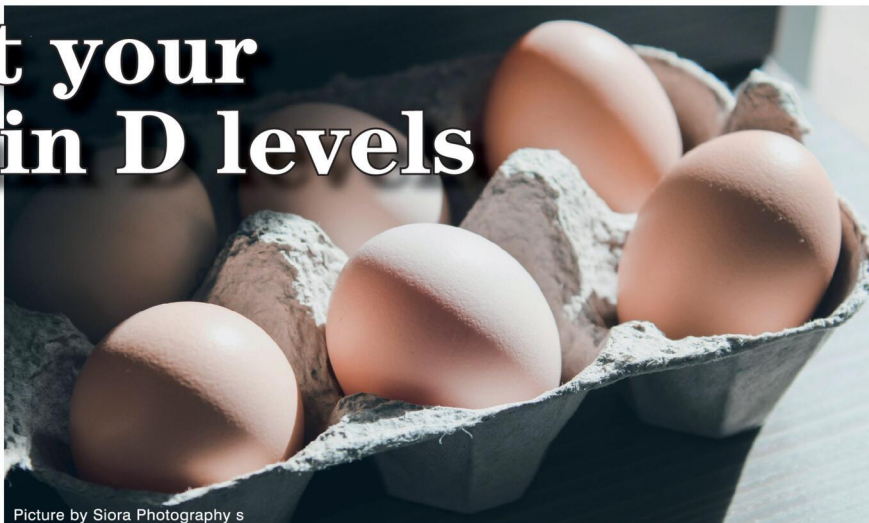
It is essential for bone and muscle health: Vitamin D enables the body to absorb calcium and phosphorus, crucial for strong bones and teeth. Low levels increase the risk of bone pain, muscle weakness, and conditions such as osteoporosis, particularly in older adults.

It plays a role in mood and mental health: Reduced sunlight exposure in winter is associated with lower vitamin D levels, which may contribute to low mood and seasonal affective disorder (SAD). Adequate vitamin D supports brain health and has been linked to improved mood and emotional balance.

It helps reduce the risk of chronic disease: Maintaining healthy vitamin D levels may help reduce the risk of certain chronic conditions, including cardiovascular disease, type two diabetes, and inflammatory conditions. While vitamin D is not a cure, it is an important part of overall long-term health.

Vitamin D and winter

During winter, sunlight alone is not sufficient for vitamin D pro-



Picture by Siora Photography s

duction and in 2020 the NHS changed its guidelines to recommend everyone consider taking a daily supplement of 400 IU (10

micrograms) of vitamin D, from October to early March. This is especially important for people who spend limited time outdoors

or who keep their skin covered. Although it can be difficult to obtain enough vitamin D from diet alone, several foods can contribute. These include oily fish such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, and trout; egg yolks; mushrooms (particularly those exposed to sunlight or UV light); and fortified foods including some cereals, plant-based milks, and spreads.

Whilst winter presents unique challenges for maintaining adequate vitamin D levels, understanding the impact of low light levels, following NHS supplementation guidance, and consuming vitamin D-rich foods, people can support immunity, bone health, mood, and long-term wellbeing.



Mackerel in a can. Picture by Leo Caharija s



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SUDOKU

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

EASY

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

HARD

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

PATHFINDER

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

Dog breeds

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

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

1	2		3		4		5		6		7
			8								
9									10		11
12			13				14				
15				16		17					
18				19				20			
21											
									22		

ACROSS

- Cease (4)
- Achieve (10)
- Example (8)
- Untamed (4)
- Vigorous (6)
- Given to reverie (6)
- Hidden gunman (6)
- Former Spanish currency (6)
- Not so much (4)
- Wisdom (8)
- Monstrous (10)
- Vocal inflection (4)

DOWN

- Evanescence (10)
- Section (4)
- Sparse (6)
- Threaten (6)
- Lack of speed (8)
- Hut (4)
- Restriction (10)
- Revelation (8)
- Relinquish (6)
- Dove (6)
- Plunder (4)
- Throw (4)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

- Crush
- Pole
- Majority of
- Debatable
- Source



NINER

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

- 9853 gives a bird;
- 4266 gives another bird;
- 151773 gives a monkey.

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

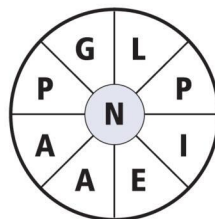
CODEWORD

This puzzle has no clues. Instead, every number printed in the grid represents a letter, with the same number always representing the same letter. For example, if 8 turns out to be a V, you can write in V wherever a square contains 8. Using your knowledge of words, complete the puzzle.

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

WORDWHEEL

You have 10 mins to find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the hub letter and at least 3 others. Letters may be used only once. You cannot use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one 9-letter word to be found.

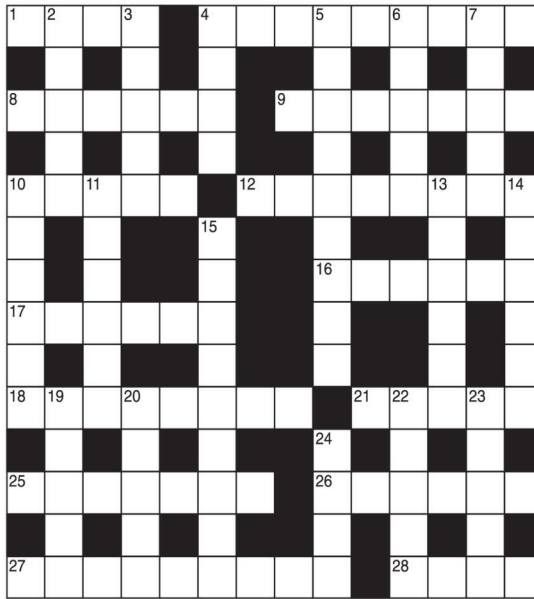


How you rate
 15 words: average 35 words: very good
 25 words: good 40 or more: excellent.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- The fourth planet from the sun, sometimes known as the Red Planet (4)
- A gentleman of Verona who marries Katherina in *The Taming of the Shrew* (9)
- Yarn or fabric made from the hair of the Angora goat (6)
- Industrial city on the Zayandeh River, Iran (7)
- Surname of the British artist and poet whose works include *The Book of Thel* and *Jerusalem* (5)
- Saint and founder of Christian monasticism in the West (8)
- Capital of a province of the same name in Piedmont, about 30 miles west of Milan, Italy (6)
- Hebrew prophet who became leader of the Israelites after their defeat by the Philistines (6)
- Surname of the Italian composer famous for his *Cavalleria rusticana* (8)
- A hiding-place for treasure, provisions, etc. (5)
- Square cap worn by RC and some Anglican clerics (7)
- 26 and 3. Novelist famous for *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (6,5)
- 27 and 4 Down. The sixth wife of Henry VIII (9,4)
- Non-metallic material obtained during the smelting of metallic ores (4)



DOWN

- A string of coral islands surrounding a lagoon (5)
- See 26 Across
- See 27 Across
- English spelling of Don Quixote's steed in Cervantes' famous novel (9)
- Market town of Somerset and birthplace of Margaret Bondfield, first British woman cabinet minister (5)
- Son of Abraham and Sarah and father of Jacob and Esau (5)
- A liquid resin or resinous, oily substance (6)
- A member of the "Three Musketeers", in the historical romance by Alexandre Dumas (6)
- Style of type in which the letters slope to right (6)
- County town of Kerry in the Republic of Ireland (6)
- Reptile, of a mainly American family, with powerful jaws and sharp teeth (9)
- Spanish town, in Old Castile, which was the birthplace of St. Teresa (5)
- A member, or language, of the most westerly branch of the Slavs (5)
- Surname of a country gentleman and rival of Captain Jack Absolute, in Sheridan's comedy *The Rivals* (5)
- Carnivorous, dog-like quadruped of Africa and South Asia (5)
- Another name for a pochard, widgeon, pintail, etc. (4)

SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Mars; 4 Ferruccio; 8 Mohair; 9 Israhah (Esfahan); 10 Blake; 12 Benedit; 16 Novara; 17 Samuel; 18 Mascaagn; 21 Cache; 25 Brette; 26 Murel; 27 Catherine; 28 Slag. DOWN: 2 Atoll; 3 Spark; 4 Parr; 5 Fosnante; 6 Chard; 7 Isaac; 8 Hyena; 24 Smea; 25 Balsam; 11 Aramis; 13 Italic; 14 Tralee; 15 Alligator; 19 Avila; 20 Czech; 22 Acres.

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Stop; 8 Accomplish; 9 Instance; 10 Wild; 12 Lively; 14 Dreamy; 15 Sniper; 17 Peseta; 18 Less; 19 Sagacity; 21 Outrageous; 22 Tone; Down: 2 Transience; 3 Part; 4 Scanty; 5 Impend; 6 Slowness; 7 Shed; 11 Limitation; 13 Exposure; 16 Resign; 17 Pigeon; 18 Loot; 20 Cast.

Crossword

APPEALING: Dachshund, Golden Retriever, Cihuahua, Portuguese Water Dog, Yorkshire Terrier, Cocker Spaniel, Great Dane, Bloodhound, Siberian Husky, Kortweiler, St. Bernard, Border Collie, Bichon Frise, Pomeranian, Jack Russell.
WORDWHEEL: Newfoundland, Basset Hound, Palamatin, Old English Sheepdog.NINER: Dog, Yorkshire Terrier, Cocker Spaniel, Great Dane, Bloodhound.BUNGALOWS: Pomeranian, Jack Russell.

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

Ladder

Wash, Mast, Most, Moor, Roof, Room.

Codeword

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

Hard

Sudoku

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

Easy



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Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

SCHOOL LANE, WOLVEY

Order Effect: Road Closed to vehicular traffic between points opposite to Furlow and The Paddock.

Reason for Order: To enable duct laying works. Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 14 January 2026.

UNION STREET, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road Closed to vehicular traffic from the junction with Russelsheim Way.

Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs. Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 13 January 2026.

MONKS KIRBY LANE & BOND END, MONKS KIRBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable works for renewal of a water main.

Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 22 February 2026. Access & Diversion: Main Street, Millers Lane, Fosse Way, Coal Pit Lane and vice versa.

FRANKTON LANE, STRETTON ON DUNSMORE

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from a point outside the garage.

Reason for Order: To enable works for new water connection. Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 26 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Frankton Lane, Princethorpe Road, Rugby Road, Fosse Way, and vice versa.

CROSS STREET, LONG LAWFORD

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable duct laying works.

Order Commences: 13 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 15 January 2026. Access & Diversion: Cross Street, Main Street, Baileys Lane, School Street and vice versa.

Contractor: M J Quinn, Tel: 01543 547 118.

A426 LEICESTER ROAD, RUGBY (SOUTH BOUND CARRIAGEWAY ONLY)

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Technology Drive to Newbold Road.

Reason for Order: Carriageway works, overnight 20.00hrs - 06.00hrs. Order Commences: 11 January 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 12 January 2026. Access & Diversion: A426 Leicester Road, A5 Watling Street, A361 Daventry Road, A361 Ashby Road, A361 Drayton Way, A45 Braunston Road, A45 London Road, A45 Daventry Road, B4429 Coventry Road, A45 A45 Road, A4071 Straight Mile, A4071 Blue Boar Flyover, A4071 Coventry Road, A4071 Rugby Western Relief Road, A4071 Parkfield Road, A4071 Rugby Western Relief Road, A4071 Newbold Road.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

CAWSTON LANE, DUNCHURCH

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Coventry Road to Northampton Lane.

Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs. Order Commences: 16 January 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 16 January 2026. Access & Diversion: B4642 Coventry Road, Alwyn Road, Northampton Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

MILL FURLONG, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable works to repair/replace defective manhole frame and covers.

Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 12 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Mill Furlong, Benches Furlong, Longstork Road and vice versa.

Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298 599.

NORTHAMPTON LANE, DUNCHURCH

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable works to repair/replace defective manhole frame and covers.

Order Commences: 13 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 13 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Cavston Lane, Rugby Road, Northampton Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 389 363.

LONGSTORK ROAD, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable works to repair/replace defective manhole frame and covers.

Order Commences: 14 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 14 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Crackthorne Drive, Tower Furlong and vice versa.

Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298 599.

FLECKNOE ROAD, LEAMINGTON HASTINGS

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable installation of a boundary box and meter.

Order Commences: 13 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 14 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Southam Road, Hospital Lane, Main Street, Hayway Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

OVERSLADE MANOR DRIVE, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between properties number 29 to 31.

Reason for Order: To enable duct laying works. Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 13 January 2026. Access & Diversion: Overslade Manor Drive and vice versa.

Contractor: Core Highways, Tel: 07979 296 733.

TEESWATER CLOSE, LONG LAWFORD

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable works to repair/replace defective manhole frame and covers.

Order Commences: 13 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 13 January 2026. Access & Diversion: No diversion available. Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298 599.

CHURCH ROAD, GRANDBOROUGH

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable works for hydrant chamber rebuild.

Order Commences: 13 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 15 January 2026. Access & Diversion: Church Road, Main Street, Sawbridge Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

THE LOCKS, HILLMORTON, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: Holes and trenching in tarmac footway for reinforcement scheme.

Order Commences: 15 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 22 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available. Contractor: Network Plus, Tel: 08081 642 252.

PUBLIC FOOTPATH R252 IN THE PARISH OF WOLFHAMPSCOTE

Order Effect: Footpath Closure to All traffic at Grid Reference X45028 Y265376.

Reason for Order: To avoid the likelihood of danger to the public because of a collapsed bridge along its route.

Order Commences: 17 July 2025 for up to 6 months. However, the Secretary of State in exercise of his powers under Section 15(5) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 has directed that the Order shall continue in force until 16 January 2028, or until works are completed, whichever is the earlier (unless the Secretary of State issues a further direction).

Access & Diversion: Please take an alternative route using alternative public footways.

Contractor: WCC Rights of Way Team, Tel: 01926 412 909.

LITTLE LAWFORD LANE, LITTLE LAWFORD

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To safely enable tree trimming works.

Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 12 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Harborough Road, Rugby Road, Pailton Road, Coventry Road, Stretton Road, Main Street, Lutterworth Road, The Crescent, Broad Street, Fosse Way, Newnham Lane, Bretford Road, Little Lawford Road, Little Lawford Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: Environmental Solutions, Tel: 07824 014 740.

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

RUGBY ROAD, BLUE BOAR, DUNCHURCH

Order Effect: Road Closed to vehicular traffic from A45 London Road slip road to A4071 Blue Boar Flyover junction.

Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 08.00hrs - 17.00hrs.

Order Commences: 25 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 25 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: A45 London Road east bound d/c, A45 London Road west bound d/c, A4071 Straight Mile, A4071 Blue Boar Flyover, A4071 Rugby Road, A4071 Coventry Road, A4071 Rugby Wester Relief Road, A428 Lawford Road, A428 Rugby Road, A428 Coventry Road, Lawford Heath Lane, Coalpit Lane (locally known as Lawford Heath Lane) and vice versa.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

BATH STREET, TOM BROWN STREET & MARKET STREET, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable replacement/repair of defective manhole cover and frames.

Order Commences: 29 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 29 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Railway Terrace, Craven Road, Murray Road, Whitehall Road, Clifton Road and vice versa.

Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298 599.

FARM LANE, EASENHALL

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Langdon House to Apple Tree Farm.

Reason for Order: To enable duct laying works. Order Commences: 26 January 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 30 January 2026. Access & Diversion: No diversion available.

Contractor: Callan Connect, Tel: 01213 275 167.

EDYVEAN CLOSE, OVERSLADE, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To safely enable works to lay duct in carriageway.

Order Commences: 27 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 29 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available. Contractor: Quantum Traffic Management, Tel: 01724 786 286.

WEST LEYES, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable repair/replacement defective manhole frame and covers.

Order Commences: 28 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 28 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available. Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298 599.

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/roadworksp or call us 01926 412515.

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 08 Jan 2026

Classified

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

SHAWBURY LANE, FILLONGLEY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To safely enable works for meter renewal.

Order Commences: 14 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 16 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Broad Lane, Fillongley Road, Kingshill Lane, Shawbury Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: Chevron Traffic Management Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

BUTLERS CRESCENT, EXHALL

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: Works to remove hydrant and pipe through onto existing water main.

Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 30 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available. Contractor: RNR Traffic Management, Tel: 07852 380 338.

C127 MILL LANE, WOLVEY

Order Effect: Road closed between Leicester Road and Cloudeley Bush Lane.

Reason for Order: Carriageway patching works, closed 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs.

Order Commences: 16 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 16 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Leicester Road, B4114 Lutterworth Road Roundabout, Cloudeley Bush Lane and vice versa. Vehicular access & egress will be maintained where possible and safe to do so for businesses and residents only.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

HALL ROAD, WOLVEY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To safely enable works to lay duct in carriageway.

Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 15 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Hall Road, Church Hill, Bulkington Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Callan Connect, Tel: 01213 275 167.

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

CG4 CHURCH LANE, CORLEY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between its junctions with Stonehouse Lane and Tamworth Road.

Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 09.30hrs - 15.30hrs.

Order Commences: 26 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 30 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Common Lane, Wall Hill Road, B4102 Meriden Road, B4098 (Coventry Road, Tamworth Road) and vice versa.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 4715 302.

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/roadworksp or call us 01926 412515.

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 08 Jan 2026

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Vidrel Cojocar trading as VIO Transport Limited of The Bryants, Brandon Lane, CV3 3GW is applying for a licence to use Mitchell Potatoes Ltd, Boots farm, Bourton on Dunsmore, Rugby, CV23 9QQ as an operating centre for 2 goods vehicles and 2 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.

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 from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

WELSH ROAD EAST, SOUTHAM

Order Effect: A 30mph Speed Limit will be imposed on Welsh Road East, Southam extending the existing 30mph limit for a distance of 85 metres in a south easterly direction.

Reason for Order: For the safety of all road users and of the contractors working on or near to the highway.

Order Commences: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 28 January 2026.

Contractor: Chasetown Civil Engineering Ltd, Tel: 01543 682 564.

RIDGEWAY LANE, LONG ITCINGTON

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To enable works for installation of a new boundary box.

Order Commences: 15 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 16 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available. Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 03300 080 820.

A423 SOUTHAM BYPASS, SOUTHAM

Order Effect: Road Closed to vehicular traffic between Leamington Road and Daventry Road.

Reason for Order: To enable carriageway resurfacing works, overnight 20.00hrs - 06.00hrs.

Order Commences: 24 November 2025 for up to 18 months. Unfortunately, these works were delayed but are now rescheduled as follows: 15 January 2026 - 23 January 2026

Access & Diversion: Banbury Road, Leamington Road, Southam Road, Ufton Hill, Fosse Way, Long Itchington Road, Oxford Road, Coventry Road, Station Road, Marton Road, The Green, Southam Bypass and vice versa.

Contractor: Fitzgerald Contractors, Tel: 08008 199 001.

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

NAPTON ROAD, STOCKTON

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. Reason for Order: To safely enable works on sewer lining.

Order Commences: 27 January 2026 for up to 18 months. Anticipated Completion: 27 January 2026.

Access & Diversion: Napton Road, Stockton Road, Butt Hill, Southam Road, Daventry Road, Southam Bypass, Coventry Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Sapphire Utility Solutions, Tel: 08009 992 266.

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/roadworksp or call us 01926 412515.

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 08 Jan 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH RESOURCED PROVISION AT BROWNSOVER COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Name, address of proposer: Warwickshire County Council, Access to Education, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL

Name, address of school: Brownsover Community School, Webb Drive, Rugby CV23 0UP

Proposal: To establish resourced provision for up to 8 primary aged pupils diagnosed with communication and interaction needs. The full proposal and details of how to comment can be found at https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/schools/resourced-provision-browsover

Alternatively, copies of the proposal can be obtained by emailing schoolorganisation@warwickshire.gov.uk or writing to Education Sufficiency, Shire Hall, Warwick, CV34 4RL

The deadline for comments is 1 February 2026.

PUBLIC NOTICES

MAUREEN LILLY HATCH (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 1 Kanzan Road, Coventry, CV2 1RX, who died on 17/02/2024, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 10/03/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Band Hatton Butler LLP, Earlson Park, 53-55 Bulls Road, Coventry, CV1 3BH

ARLUS ARNOLDS VEIDE (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 Room 11, Garden Anneke, Cathorpe Manor Estate, Lilbourne Road, Cathorpe, Lutterworth, LE17 6DF, who died on 03/07/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 10/03/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Bretfelters LLP, Montague House, 2 Clifton Road, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 3PX

JAMES FREDERICK BENEKLEY FROST (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 Hill View, Southam Road, Church, Rugby CV22 3NW, who died on 05/12/2024, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 10/03/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Bretfelters LLP, Montague House, 2 Clifton Road, Rugby, Warwickshire, CV21 3PX

PIAR KAUR (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 122 Widdington Road, Coventry, CV1 4DY, who died on 07/08/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 10/03/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Angels Solicitors LLP, 117-119 New Union Street Coventry CV1 2YW

MOLLY HORREY (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 48 Dewsbury Avenue, Coventry, CV3 6LF, who died on 07/06/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 10/03/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Classified

TELEPHONE 01527 588688 FACSIMILE 01527 584371

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

**Application Number R25/1067
UNIT 3, SYMMETRY PARK, SYMMETRY
CLOSE, RUGBY, CV23 9GS**
Proposed four fixed canopies
This development may affect a Public Right of Way

**Application Number R25/1075
RUGBY GATEWAY, LEICESTER ROAD,
CHURCHOVER**
Variation of condition 1 in order to amend property levels of Parcel R6 only of R23/0453. (Erection of 550 dwellings for Phases R5, R6 and R7 with associated play area, and sports pitches. (Approval of Reserved Matters: Access, Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale in relation to outline planning permission R10/1272)).
This is a major development

**Application Number R25/1096
DUNCHURCH PARK HOTEL AND
CONFERENCE CENTRE, RUGBY ROAD,
DUNCHURCH, RUGBY, CV22 6QW**
Proposed ancillary accommodation comprising 40 cabins for a three year period.
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 **30 January 2026**. 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.co.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
MRPTI**

PUBLIC NOTICES

**WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH RESOURCED
PROVISION AT BINLEY WOODS PRIMARY SCHOOL.**

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Warwickshire County Council intends to establish educational provision for children with special educational needs in the form of resourced (specialist) provision at Binley Woods Primary School.

Name, address of proposer: Warwickshire County Council, Access to Education, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL

Name, address of school: Binley Woods Primary School, Coombe Drive, Binley Woods, Coventry CV3 2QU

Proposal: To establish resourced provision for up to 10 primary aged pupils diagnosed with communication and interaction needs. The full proposal and details of how to comment can be found at <https://ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/schools/resourced-provision-binley-woods>

Alternatively, copies of the proposal can be obtained by emailing schoolorganisation@warwickshire.gov.uk or writing to Education Sufficiency, Shire Hall, Warwick, CV34 4RL.

The deadline for comments is **1 February 2026**.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

DEATHS

**EASON
Carole Elizabeth**
Formerly of Lillington, Leamington Spa, died on 30th August 2025 at Southfields Court Care Home, Almondbury, Huddersfield, aged 84.

Beloved widow of Joseph, she leaves her sons Richard and Christopher, and grandchildren Elliot and Elizabeth.

Gregarious, loving and supremely talented, she will be greatly missed.

A private funeral has been held. Donations, if desired, to Dementia UK. Messages may be emailed to: eason.condolences@xemap.com

SALES & WANTS

MISCELLANEOUS

BEDS NEW Doubles £95 Singles £59 King size £159. Second hand doubles £49 Singles £29 Fridges £49 Freezers £59 Can deliver 07703 925662

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

TWO abbey light oak, double door wardrobe with three drawers measurements: height - 180 cms width - 72 cms depth - 52 cms drawer measurements: 65 cms for one drawer 32 cms for two small drawers 52 cms depth each wardrobe for £25 or two for £45 07721197331

COMPUTER desk in dark walnut with keyboard tray, home / office furniture with wheels. height 72 cms, width 55 cms, depth 45 cms. £15 0772117331

MANUAL singer vintage sewing machine. good and working condition with new belt. £60 / o.n.o. tel: 0772117331

LEFT hand chaise lounge plush grey sofa brand new. £250 o.n.o. tel: 0772117331

POWAKADDY Golf Trolley Transit Bag £10 Tel 07925170951

MISCELLANEOUS

BLACK glass coffee table with shelf. length -99cms, width- 49 cms, height-45cms. £20 077211331

BLACK glass tv table with two shelves. length- 60 cms, width- 42cms, height- 56cms. £15 077211331

ELECTRONIC piano keyboard. njs800 keyboard. 100 timbres, 100 rhythms, 61 keys. £15 077211331

INFRARED foam massage. magnetic health, vibration massage, infrared therapy. £5 077211331

DARK brown leather sofa plus single chair £60 (cash only) 07599203623

BRAND new unused £25 Squash racket dunlop nanomax racket and carrying case with 2 yellow dot squash balls 07977913225

SINGLE bed with hypnosis mattress vgc flame retard label. No marks. £45 fully sprung 07977913225

CYCLE brake levers Brand new £5 for pair lhs and rhs unused 07977913225

SOLID oak bedside cabinet £40 good quality vgc 07977913225

BABY COT Wooden with sliding side, ideal spare for grandparents, no mattress £20 Tel 07925170951

WANTED

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Finance Administrator

Holy Trinity Church, where William Shakespeare was baptised, worshipped, and is buried, has been a place of worship for over 1,000 years and welcomes tens of thousands of visitors annually. More importantly, it remains a vibrant, working church hosting daily worship and major life events including Christenings, Weddings, and Funerals.

We are seeking a reliable and detail-focused **Finance Administrator** to support parish finances, including accounts, payroll, and shop back-office administration. This varied role works closely with the Treasurer, clergy, staff, and volunteers.

Key Responsibilities:

- Accounts payable/receivable, invoicing, banking, and reconciliations
- Payroll processing
- Basic shop administration

Skills:

- Strong attention to detail and good communication
- Excel essential; Sage/Staffology desirable
- Able to work independently and as part of a team

Hours:
20 hours per week

Salary:
£13,970 per annum

How to Apply:
Application forms are available at www.stratford-upon-avon.org or via the Parish Office (Tel: 01789 266316).

Deadline:
23:59, Sunday 25th January 2026

Interviews:
Tuesday 3rd February 2026 at the Holy Trinity Parish Centre

Motoring

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TELEPHONE 01926 451900 FACSIMILE 01527 584371



Volkswagen claims UK top spot

VOLKSWAGEN is once again the most popular brand with UK car buyers.

Figures released by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) confirm the German brand is the UK's best-selling new-car brand for the fifth year running.

A total of 178,607 new Volkswagen passenger vehicles were registered in the UK in 2025. That's 12,303 more than in 2025 and 55,884 ahead of the closest competitor.

The figures equate to a leading market share of 8.84 per cent for Volkswagen UK – ahead of the brand's market share in 2024 (8.52 per cent).

The Golf was Volkswagen UK's best-selling model in 2025; its 32,478 registrations placed it at number six in the market overall. The Tiguan was also among the top 10 best sellers in the UK, with 29,857 registrations.

Volkswagen's electric models – the ID.3, ID.4, ID.5, ID.7 and ID.7 Tourer – contributed more than 30,000 units to the brand's overall total in 2025.

This was a rise of about 45 per cent compared with 2024, pointing to additional demand for electric cars generated by the Government's Electric Car Grant and the launch of Volkswagen's ID Promise, which

offers customers up to 100 days to return their cars if for any reason they change their minds or find an electric car doesn't suit their lifestyle needs.

The brand's attention turns now to 2026, when the new T-Roc goes on sale in the UK and the hotly-anticipated electric ID. Polo, ID. Polo GTI and ID. CROSS Concept will make their world premieres. This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the iconic GTI hot hatch, which is being celebrated with the Golf GTI EDITION 50.

It will be the most powerful production model in the history of GTI, and is set to arrive in UK show-

rooms in the spring of 2026.

Rod McLeod, Director of Volkswagen UK, said: "The news that Volkswagen is once again the top-selling new-car brand in the UK is the perfect start to what will undoubtedly be a really exciting year for the brand."

"The results announced by the SMMT – which show a healthy gap between us and the number-two brand in the market – underline the enduring popularity and quality of Volkswagen cars, as well as the outstanding customer service provided by our fantastic network of Volkswagen Retailers."

"The trends we are seeing with

our electric ID. range are really pleasing, and I can't wait to see and drive the new models coming to market in 2026."

The Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand has a global presence, producing vehicles at 28 locations in 12 countries, and employs 170,000 people.

In 2024, Volkswagen delivered around 4.80million vehicles worldwide. These included bestsellers such as the Polo, T-Roc, T-Cross, Golf, Tiguan and Passat, as well as the successful all-electric ID. models. Volkswagen handed over about 383,000 all-electric vehicles to customers worldwide in 2024.

Bethell comes of age with maiden century in final Ashes test

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

CRICKET: WARWICKSHIRE'S Jacob Bethell scored a stunning maiden first class century for England in the fifth and final Ashes test against Australia

Bethell kept England's hopes alive on day four at the Sydney Cricket Ground as he reached 142 not out to help the visitors close on 302-8 at the end of play - a lead of 119 runs.

The 22-year-old eventually succumbed to the bowling of Mitchell Starc (3-72) for a score of 154 in a 265-ball knock on the final day.

Playing in just his sixth England test, Bethell managed 10 runs from 23 deliveries in the first innings as England reached 384 all out.

Bethell's dismissal left England on 57-3 only for Joe Root (160) and Harry Brook (84) to help England past the 350-run mark.

However, Australia impressed with the bat to post 567 all out in reply thanks in large part to opener Travis Head (163).

Bethell claimed his first-ever Ashes wicket with the dismissal of Head after he trapped the opener LBW.

The all-rounder also took two catches to help remove Marnus Labuschagne (48) and Alex Carey (16).

Bethell finished with figures of 1-52 from 15.2 overs at an economy



Jacob Bethell celebrates after recording his maiden first class century.

of 3.39 - the second lowest average behind only Josh Tongue (3-97).

Returning to the crease at number three in England's second innings, Bethell helped his country recover from 4-1 after Zak Crawley (1) fell in the first over.

Bethell's 142 not out on day four featured 15 boundaries in a 232-ball knock which frustrated Australia.

However, the hosts eventually took the scalp of Bethell with England all out for 342 leaving Australia in pursuit of 160 for victory.

And Australia reached the required target with five wickets to spare to win the series 4-1 as the tourists ended the Ashes series with another defeat.

Reflecting on his maiden first class

century, Bethell told BBC Sport: "It was very good. It's one of those wickets, the new ball was the trickiest part, once we got past that it was nice to bat on. You just had to concentrate."

"Obviously it was goosebumps when I got over the line, on 99 there's a few nerves - I made the mistake of getting out in the 90s over in New Zealand."

"You just had to concentrate. All I was focusing on was watching the ball and playing every ball like I had done throughout the innings."

"I was very small growing up. I was only able to start hitting boundaries when I was 15 or 16-years-old. I had that ability to bat long periods of time which is instilled in me throughout now."

Blaze topple Giants after Clan victory

ICE HOCKEY: COVENTRY Blaze won back-to-back games for just the second time this season with victories against Glasgow Clan and Belfast Giants.

Blaze won 4-1 away at Glasgow at Braehead Arena to claim their first win of the New Year.

And Coventry then came from two goals down to beat Belfast 4-3 at the Skydome Arena.

The results leave Blaze eighth in the Elite League table.

Coventry travelled to Scotland seeking a first win in 2026 and Kevin Moore's side duly delivered with a clinical performance.

Blaze went close early on as Matthew Gleason saw his backhand effort saved by Clan netminder Sami Aittokallio.

And Mat Robson stood tall at the other end to keep out Daniel Tedesco's effort while Grayson Constable hit the post for Coventry moments later.

Blaze eventually broke the deadlock at 9.04 when Elijah Barriga finished through the legs of Aittokallio from Gleason's feed.

And Coventry doubled their advantage at 13.24 as Jordan Power opened his account for the club with a snapshot as Grant Mismash and Sam Ruffin provided assists.

However, Glasgow halved the deficit at 16.35 on the powerplay when Deven Sideroff converted a rebound from Rylan Schwartz.

Blaze spurned a powerplay opportunity in the second period with neither side able to trouble the scoreboard further.

However, Coventry stretched their lead at 46.04 as Constable finished from close range after neat behind-the-net play from Alessio Luciani on the powerplay.

Blaze survived two Glasgow powerplay chances before the returning Ivan Chukarov scored an

empty net goal with 16 seconds remaining after Clan pulled Aittokallio for an extra skater.

And Coventry completed a four-point weekend with a come-from-behind victory against Belfast on home ice.

Belfast spurned a golden chance early on as Robson made a glove save after the Giants broke two-on-zero in the opening minutes.

And Blaze punished the visitors at 9.23 when Artem Buzoverya pounced on a rebound and fired home with assists from Mike Pelech and Jack Hopkins.

However, the Giants equalised at 15.47 as David Goodwin picked his spot to draw the visitors level following a face-off in the Coventry zone.

And Belfast completed the turnaround early in the second period at 21.34 when Goodwin grabbed his second of the game with a strike from the blue line.

Coventry searched for an equaliser as William Boysen hit the post only for Belfast to score again at 28.38 when JJ Piccinich intercepted a cross-ice pass and raced clear to finish on the break.

Blaze halved the deficit minutes later at 30.16 when Jere Vertanen converted Mismash's feed on the powerplay.

And Vertanen levelled the game just 58 seconds into the third period with a powerful snapshot as Blaze scored another powerplay goal.

The home side's powerplay proved decisive at 52.34 as Luciani finished through traffic to complete the turnaround.

Coventry are next in action against Dundee Stars on Friday, January 9 with the face-off at 7.30pm at the Skydome.

Blaze then travel to Guildford Flames on Saturday, January 10 with the face-off at 6pm at the Guildford Spectrum.

Eccles want to see Sky Blues 'personality' come out after Birmingham defeat in thriller

FOOTBALL: JOSH Eccles insists Coventry City must let their personality out on the pitch after slipping to defeat at Birmingham City.

Eccles drew the Sky Blues level early on at St Andrew's after Marvin Ducksch put the home side ahead.

Coventry drew level for a second time when Ellis Simms cancelled out Lewis Koumas's strike only for Ducksch to score again for Blues to condemn Frank Lampard's side to defeat.

And Eccles insists the Sky Blues must begin to show their personality on the pitch if they are to achieve promotion to the Premier League.

Eccles said: "We know the talent we've got in the squad. We've got the belief."

"We've got the personality, it just needs to come out. The desire, the passion, it doesn't come easy."

"If you want to get to the Premier League, you've got to work hard every game. You can't just expect to win every game."

"These losses set you back but we've given ourselves such a head start with the start we had at the start of the season."

"It allows you the chance to bounce back in the next game."

Coventry sit six points clear of Middlesbrough at the top of the Championship table with Ipswich Town eight points behind but with a game in hand.

And Eccles admits the Sky Blues let in poor goals against Blues which left them with a mountain to climb on three separate occasions.

Eccles added: "We've had a pretty tough schedule but results like this hurt the most."

"Especially, when you play and feel like you should be beating your opponents."

"We're disappointed. The game was there for the taking."

"It's hard to do when you allow three pretty poor goals in."

"We shot ourselves in the foot, we gave ourselves a mountain to climb."

"When you score and lose, it feels pointless."

Midfielder Jamie Allen missed the match due to a close family bereavement.

The club showed their support for Allen by wearing black shirts with his name and number on during the warm-up.

Eccles said: "We're such a tight-knit group this year, there's no separate groups. We're part of one."

"We sorted the shirts out before the game to show our support. He knows we're always there for him."

"He means a lot to us. We all know what he can give to us in the team."

The Sky Blues made the worst possible start as Ducksch volleyed in Kai Wagner's cross from the left at the back post from 12-yards out after just five minutes.

However, the visitors equalised just two minutes later when Ephron

Mason-Clark found Eccles in space and the midfielder curled a shot past James Beadle from 25-yards out.

Birmingham punished the Sky Blues on 17 minutes when Koumas rounded Carl Rushworth and squeezed a shot over the line from a tight angle from Patrick Roberts' perfectly-timed through ball.

However, Coventry drew level for a second time on the hour mark when Simms received Jack Rudoni's pass from the left and reversed a low shot back across goal from 20-yards out.

The home side reclaimed the lead three minutes later as Ducksch latched onto another Roberts pass and slid a shot past Rushworth at his near post from the right-hand side of the penalty area.

Coventry dominated possession late on and felt they should have had a penalty in the final minute when Tomoki Iwata pulled Mason-Clark to the ground in the box with the referee unmoved.

Sky Blues defender Bobby Thomas received a straight red card in injury time after he appeared to kick out and slap Phil Neumann softly on the back of the head following a coming together between the two players.

Coventry play Stoke City in the FA Cup this weekend.

The Sky Blues return to league action against rivals Leicester City in the M69 derby on Saturday, January 17 at the Coventry Building Society Arena.

Winning run continues

RUGBY UNION: COVENTRY Rugby claimed a 41-26 bonus point win against Cornish Pirates as Alex Rae's side secured a fifth successive victory.

A couple of tries from Allan Ferrie and further scores from Peter Sullivan, Aristot Benz-Salomon, Senitiki Nayalo and Ewan Baker

sealed a six-try success at Butts Park Arena.

The result means Coventry sit fourth in the Champ Rugby table, five points behind Bedford Blues in second.

Coventry are next in action against Bedford on Saturday, January 24 with kick-off at 3pm at Goldington Road.

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Borough surrender lead in home derby defeat

FOOTBALL: RUGBY Borough began the year with a 2-1 home defeat against local rivals Racing Club Warwick.

A penalty from Cyrus Bruce put Borough ahead only for strikes from Archie Hamp and James Harding to turn the game in Warwick's favour at Kilsby Lane.

The result means Rugby sit 13th in the Northern Premier League Midlands table.

Borough's clash against the Racers came after Rugby claimed a thrilling 3-2 Boxing Day win against Coventry Sphinx.

The visitors went close early on as Archie Hamp headed narrowly wide from James Hancock's cross from the left.

However, Borough won a penalty on 15 minutes after Johnson Gyamfi went down in the box under a challenge from Ryan Moore.

And Bruce converted from the spot to put Rugby ahead with Tom Allsopp only able to push the striker's spot kick into the



top right corner of the goal.

The Racers almost drew level at the other end as Reece Blackmore lashed a half volley inches over the crossbar from just outside the penalty area.

And the visitors equalised on 29 minutes when Hamp squeezed a shot past former Racers stopper Sam Lomax at the near post from Hancock's low ball in from the left.

Warwick almost completed the turnaround before the break as Lomax tipped

Cameron Ebbutt's powerful half volley over the crossbar at full stretch.

Borough almost reclaimed the lead after the interval as Bruce lifted a shot inches over the crossbar from close range under pressure from a Warwick defender.

Lomax denied Aaron Opoku at the other end before Hamp nodded over from close range and Harding saw his shot pushed to safety.

However, the Racers eventually turned the game on its head on 78 minutes as Harding received Callum Coyle's pass and spun his marker before finding the net from 12-yards out.

Borough went in search of an equaliser as substitute Antonio Cristofaro saw his effort from 25-yards out travel narrowly over the crossbar.

Rugby are next in action against Long Eaton United on Saturday, January 10 with kick-off at 3pm at Grange Park.

Valley lose for third game in succession

RUGBY Town made a losing start to the New Year after slipping to a 1-0 defeat away at Shepshed Dynamo.

The game's only goal came on 17 minutes when Jesse Friend found the net to settle the contest at the Dovecote Stadium.

And the result means Rugby sit 17th in the Northern Premier League Midlands table, two points clear of the relegation zone.

The game's solitary goal arrived just past the quarter-hour mark with Marcus Bald only able to parry Jude Collins' shot as Friend pounced to strike from close range.

Prior to the goal, Shepshed twice hit the crossbar after Rugby

failed to clear their lines at a long throw.

Chances were at a premium throughout as high winds and heavy rain made conditions difficult for both teams.

However, Valley's best chance came early in the second period as Stan Anaebonam beat his man on the left and cut in only to lift a powerful shot narrowly over the crossbar.

The home side almost doubled their lead late on as Bald denied Jowan Partridge with the visitors unable to find an equaliser in the closing stages.

Rugby are next in action against Belper Town on Saturday, January 10 with kick-off at 3pm at Butlin Road.

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