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Council playing catch-up as pothole issue spirals

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

POTHOLES have almost trebled on Warwickshire's roads this winter amid a major backlog of permanent repairs.

Prolonged wet weather has seen 4,962 pothole fix requests submitted to Warwickshire County Council in the first two months of the year - nearly three times the 1,678 raised across the same period in 2025.

Director of highways Richard Fenwick described 'a difficult few months' with more than 30 gangs working seven days a week since Christmas to try to play catch-up.

He said the complaints received from drivers were 'justified' but WCC was having to fall back on crude short-term pothole fixes as a necessary evil.

Speaking to the communities overview and scrutiny committee he explained that for the sake of speed and hazard mitigation more than half of current repairs involved little more than a dollop of tarmac for the time being, acknowledging that some break away within a matter of days.

But while aware that was far from ideal, he added the realities of staying on top of the problem made for a 'tough choice'.



Warwickshire County Council is working hard to deal with a tripling in reports of potholes. Picture by Marcus Mingsins 0926003MMR

He said: "Doing it right first time is best for value for money and means fewer revisits but the permanent saw-cut fixes take significantly longer to do.

"We have to choose between getting there in time to try to save people's wheels from being broken or worse, even though we know we might have to go back, or leaving the hole there for longer with those gangs (doing the spot fixes) taking at least twice as long to do permanent repairs."

The county has a backlog of 1,624 permanent repairs, including revisits to those quick fixes, but Mr Fenwick hoped that would come down as the weather improved.

The temporary fix sees hot tarmac stuck in the hole as it is, while a permanent patch involves cutting into the road and removing debris under the right conditions before filling it and pressing into the road surface.

The council aims to keep temporary fixes to between ten and 20 per cent of overall jobs, but Mr Fenwick noted the current rate of 56 per cent was 'not where we want to be'.



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Coventry City players and mascot Sky Blue Sam with staff at Coventry Myton Hospice. s



Sky Blues stars visit hospice

by **Andy Morris**
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'A SPECIAL experience' – Coventry City players brought smiles to the faces of patients, families, staff and volunteers at Coventry Myton Hospice when they took time out of their busy schedules to pay a visit.

Ben Wilson, Josh Eccles, Jack Rudoni and Brandon Thomas-Asante spent the afternoon swapping stories with life-long Sky Blues fans, reminiscing about matchday memories and striking a pose for photos.

Myton patient David said: "I've been a fan for 75 years so this was such a treat.

"It meant so much to have the players come and see us all and hopefully it will help raise awareness of Myton and the wonderful work they do."

Michael, whose brother Tim is at the hospice, said: "I've been a CCFC fan for 61 years and in all that time I've never missed a home game but I've never had the chance to meet the players.

"They were all so lovely and gave us so much of their time. It was such a special experience to share with my brother."

Jeanette, the niece of hospice patient Dot, said: "It was so lovely to see a smile on Aunt Dot's face – she even gave them all a thumbs up. We're so grateful we got to share this moment with her."

Sky Blues midfielder Jack Rudoni said there was an abundance of good spirit at the hospice.

He said: "I'm glad we could come and see everyone today.

"Coming to do something like this gives us an extra lift, seeing how much it means to everyone, so I'm glad we could bring a smile to people's faces."

Centre-forward Brandon Thomas-Asante said the visit meant a great deal to the players.

He added: "Coming here is an opportunity to see into the lives of people who support us.

"Seeing how people remain positive in tough situations is inspiring. It's amazing to see how people can come together."

Coventry-born midfielder Josh Eccles said it was important to him to do his bit for the community.

He said: "It's one of those things that means a lot to me, being from Coventry and playing for the club.

"It's nice for us to come out here and see them and have a little chat."

Goalkeeper Ben Wilson added: "To be able to give people joy and put smiles on people's faces is amazing."

"The response has been great, the spirit has been lifted and that's a fantastic feeling for us and everyone at the hospice."

Sue Medlock, ward manager at Coventry Myton Hospice, and a season ticket holder at Coventry City, arranged the visit.

She said: "We are incredibly grateful to the players for taking the time out of their busy season to visit us. Their kindness and generosity brought smiles to so many faces.

"Moments like these are so special, helping families create memories during what can be a very challenging time. We can't thank the team enough for their support and for taking the time to visit Myton."



The players signed shirts for supporters at the hospice. s

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Coventry killer reportedly attacks child-murderer

Soham killer Huntley in 'serious' state

by **Andy Morris**
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A TRIPLE murderer from Coventry is suspected of attacking notorious child-killer Ian Huntley in prison.

Anthony Russell, formerly of Rile Square, is reported to have attacked Soham double murderer Huntley with a makeshift weapon at HMP Frankland – a high security prison in County Durham – according to reports by the BBC and the *Daily Mail*.

Russell, 43, is serving a whole-life term for murdering Julie Williams, her son David Williams and Nicole McGregor in the space of seven days in October 2020.

Huntley, 52, who killed 10-year-old schoolgirls Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman in 2002, suffered significant head trauma in the attack and was taken to hospital where his condition was described as

serious. Durham Constabulary said a male prisoner in his mid-40s suspected of carrying out the attack was 'in detention', and detectives investigating the attack were liaising with staff at the prison.

Russell's reign of terror started on October 23, when Julie Williams telephoned police to report her 31 year-old son David had not been seen for two days.

Violent

Officers forced their way into her Coventry home and found the 58-year-old dead on the living room floor, having been killed in a violent attack by Russell earlier in the day.

Russell fled on October 26, after the discovery of Julie's body, with money and a mobile phone taken from a 78-year-old man a day earlier. That day, officers raided Russell's Coventry home after a tip-off he had confessed to two killings. They found David's body under a bed.

A manhunt was launched for Russell, who had travelled to Kenilworth by bus and dragged a 71-year-old woman on the ground before robbing her of £200. Russell went on to Leamington by bus, where 18-weeks-pregnant Nicole, whom he had never met, became his third victim. Her body was found on Newbold Comyn days later. He was also found guilty of her rape.

Russell was seen leaving Leamington on foot on October 28, attacking a 75-year-old man before stealing his car.

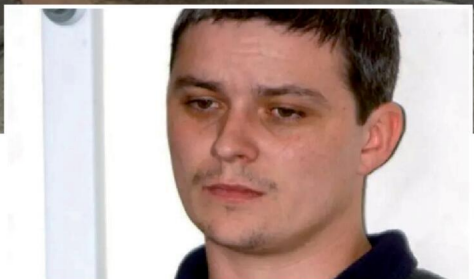
A nationwide hunt ended two days later, when Russell was found in Staffordshire.

He was told he would never be released from prison, when sentenced at Warwick Crown Court in 2022.

In summer 2002, Huntley lured Holly and Jessica to his home in Soham, Cambridgeshire, and killed them. Their bodies were found in a Suffolk ditch nearly a fortnight later. Huntley was sentenced to at least 40 years.



Triple-murderer Anthony Russell, above, reportedly attacked Soham double-murderer Ian Huntley at HMP Frankland. Pictures by West Midlands Police. s



Drug dealer given 28-month sentence after carrying coke

A DRUG dealer found in Rugby with more than £6,000 in cash and street-value cocaine on him has been jailed for two-and-a-half years.

On January 14, officers from Police's serious organised crime team spotted Royis Samuels, 43, of Wentworth Road, behind the wheel of a car he wasn't supposed to be driving, in Newbold Road.

They followed him to a drive-through and, when they tried to stop him, he ignored them and tried to run off but was caught and arrested.

He had more than £2,000 in cash and £4,000 worth of cocaine in his pockets.

He was charged with possessing cocaine with intent to supply, acquiring/using/possessing criminal property, using a motor vehicle on a road without third-party insurance and driving a motor vehicle otherwise than in accordance with a licence.

Having admitted the offences at a previous hearing, he was sentenced, at Warwick Crown Court, to 28 months in prison.

Investigating officer Det Cons Matthew Rapkins said: "I'm delighted the drugs are now off the streets as they truly do cause misery in our communities.

"Above all, I hope Samuels' sentence goes some way to reassuring the public we will proactively target those we believe to be involved in drugs, use our powers to disrupt any activity and bring offenders to justice."

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/2fwmdtxt> to report information or concerns about drugs.

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



Drug dealer Royis Samuels has been jailed for two-and-a-half years. s

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New artist's work is featured in landmark year for town museum

by **Andy Morris**
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A 'POWERFUL and fitting addition' – Rugby Art Gallery and Museum has marked 80 years of collecting by acquiring a painting by a renowned British artist.

The gallery has added *A Place to Rest* (2025), by Hettie Inness, to The Rugby Collection, which is celebrating its 80th anniversary with the exhibition Unveiled.

A Place to Rest was selected following a consultation with gallery staff, friends of the gallery and borough councillors as an artwork which aligns with Rugby's collecting policy, values and community ambitions.

Hettie has described the work as drawing on a memory of walking through Fornby Pine Woods – triggered by the feeling of warmth from sunlight through a window – and says it offers a sense of calm, reflection and renewal.

Hettie said: "It is a privilege for my painting to be included in the Rugby Collection – my first work entering a public collection in the UK – and to be alongside so many artists who have influenced me and those I have only just discovered from visits to the gallery."

A gallery spokesperson said: "Hettie's practice explores the idea of 'Black flu-

idity', treating identity as lived, layered and continually unfolding.

"Her work offered a fresh counterpoint to the collection's historical emphasis on the figurative, introducing a form of emotional abstraction that is generous, sensorial and open to interpretation.

"Younger audiences found her work bold and relatable while others described a sense of nostalgia and warmth that made the painting feel welcoming.

"It was frequently described as a bridge between past and present, offering a new visual language while remaining true to the collection's founding principle of collecting artists of promise and renown."

Exhibition

The Unveiled exhibition brings together all 257 artworks from The Rugby Collection into the gallery for the first time in decades.

The Rugby Collection holds notable examples of 20th and 21st century British art and aims to reflect ambition, innovation and the changing character of British creativity.

New acquisitions should be by British artists of promise or renown; reflect the continuing development of British art; contribute to public engagement, education and cultural pride; and support representation, diversity and contemporary relevance.

Katie Boyce, senior exhibitions officer at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum, said: "This acquisition captures exactly what we hope The Rugby Collection can be.

"As we mark 80 years of collecting, we wanted this moment to feel inclusive and forward-looking.

"Inviting people to share their views on the shortlisted works was vital and the connection visitors felt with Hettie's painting was immediate. It speaks to memory, belonging and change in a way that feels very relevant today. We're proud to see it join the collection at such a significant milestone."

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke, Rugby Borough Council spokesperson for partnerships and wellbeing, said: "This is a very special moment for Rugby. For 80 years, The Rugby Collection has grown and Hettie Inness' *A Place to Rest* feels like a powerful and fitting addition at this milestone.

"It brings a contemporary voice into the collection while honouring its founding principles and it shows our continued commitment to representation, creativity and public engagement."

Her Liberal Democrat counterpart Coun Neil Sandison added: "I was pleased to view this wonderful new acquisition as part of the Unveiled exhibition and urge all residents to take the time to visit."

Unveiled runs at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum until June 6.



Hettie Inness with *A Place to Rest* at the launch of the Unveiled exhibition. s



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'Lost' treasure is at heart of exhibition

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

ART lovers can enjoy a tour of some of Warwickshire's historic portraits while supporting a major conservation project.

Portraits of the Shire Hall will take place at the Judges' House at Shire Hall in Warwick on Saturday March 21, from 2pm to 3.15 pm.

Led jointly by art historian Dr Adam Busiakiewicz and historian Aaron Manning, the tour will explore the portraits and paintings within the Judges' House.

The event will help fund the restoration of a portrait of Henry VIII rediscovered in 2024 after 'hiding in plain sight' at Warwickshire County Council's Shire

Hall base. The painting was spotted by Dr Busiakiewicz, who has since re-identified the painting as a lost work which was once part of a famous set of 22 portraits commissioned in the 1590s by Ralph Sheldon.

The portrait collection was originally hung at Weston House, the tapestry maker Sheldon's Warwickshire home, and only a handful of paintings from the group survive.

Examples can be viewed by the public at the National Portrait Gallery, in London; one survives at Eton College; and another can be found at Knebworth House. Scholars had always considered Sheldon's portrait of Henry VIII to be missing.

The rediscovery was made when Dr Busiakiewicz spotted the painting in a photograph on the X social media platform, hanging in the corner of a room of Warwick's Shire Hall. It bears a distinctive arched top, which is a special feature of the Sheldon set, and happened to be housed in a frame which is identical to other surviving examples.

Participants on the tour will gain insights into the history of the artworks, the lives of the sitters and the connections between monarchs, Warwick and the surrounding region.

Dr Busiakiewicz said: "Most visitors to Shire Hall probably think of the paintings collection simply as wall decoration."

"However, since rediscovering Ralph Sheldon's lost portrait of Henry VIII in the summer of 2024 – hiding in plain sight in the collection there – it's been clear to me that there are more fascinating artworks waiting to be uncovered."

"It is a very exciting and rare opportunity to shine a light on these overlooked paintings."

"Importantly, 50 per cent of all ticket sales will go directly towards the restoration and future display of Ralph Sheldon's portrait of Henry VIII, helping to preserve this significant work for future generations."

Tickets cost £20. Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/heritageboxoffice/ to book tickets.



■ Proceeds from the tour will go towards restoring Ralph Sheldon's portrait of Henry VIII. s

Kenilworth toymaker's book is in town library

A CHILDREN'S book penned by a real life Kenilworth-based Geppetto is available for youngsters to read at the town library.

Cyril Hobbins' picture book *Uncle Buckle – Inventor Extraordinaire*, which is aimed at primary-school children, tells of an inventor who creates contraptions which take him along the ground and into the air powered by steam, petrol and sometimes manpower.

The author, who died last year, spent much of his life bringing joy to others. The wooden toymaker earned an invite, from Disney,

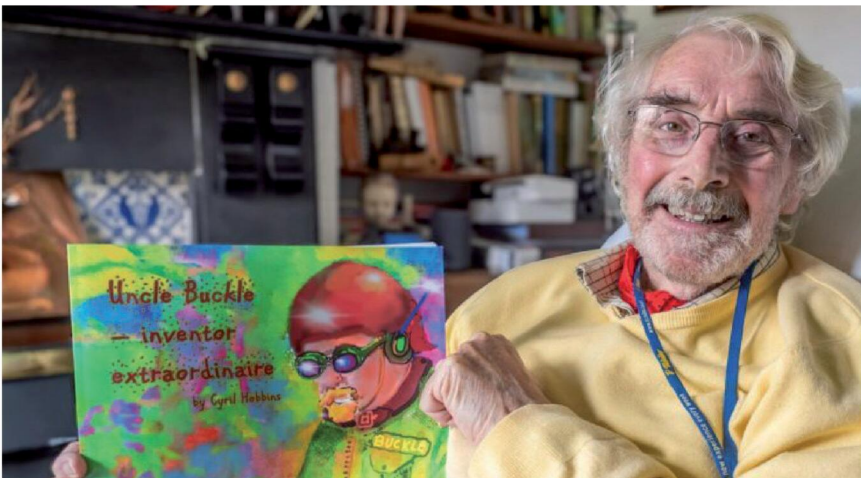
to Hollywood in 2009, where he was filmed explaining how his toys were made for an extra feature on a re-mastered DVD of classic film *Pinocchio*.

Cyril, well-known in Kenilworth, said he wrote Uncle Buckle for the kind of child he was: "a little shy and a bit bookish" but with an imagination that took him to other worlds.

Candy Evans, of Spring View Publications, said: "Cyril was very keen to have the book available to all children through Kenilworth Library but sadly did not live to

see this. It's great that the book is now available, following support from Councillors Alison Insley and Richard Dickson. The book is in the reference section of Kenilworth Library so children will need to read it within the library."

Cyril's long-time friend Nick Green said: "As I gradually got to know him, he would tell me many of his life stories, which were truly amazing. He certainly came from a different era. It was a pleasure for me to forward his name for a street name to Kenilworth Town Council, who gave it their full support."



The late Cyril Hobbins' book is now available for youngsters to read at Kenilworth Library. s

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Chance to share your views

A CONSULTATION event will give Rugby residents a chance to comment on a pioneering project to use the region's canals to transfer water from the Midlands to the Southeast.

The Grand Union Canal Transfer (GUCT) scheme, a joint project between Affinity Water, Severn Trent and the Canal & River Trust, will transfer highly treated recycled water to ensure future drinking water supplies, and strengthen the UK's water infrastructure.

It will recycle readily available treated wastewater, transfer it via the canal, treat it, and supply it to customers' taps.

The consultation event in Hillmorton will give communities, residents and businesses a chance to offer their thoughts on the scheme's progress as it moves towards

securing a Development Consent Order – a type of planning permission granted by the government for major infrastructure projects.

Natasha Coackley, Head of Strategic Resource Options for Affinity Water, said: "Engaging with the communities, residents and businesses that will be impacted by the scheme enables us to build a scheme that works for everyone."

"From identifying opportunities to embed social value in locations along the route, to partnering with local businesses, there are an abundance of opportunities for us to work collaboratively."

The consultation event will be hosted at the Waterside Pub inn Crick Road on Friday March 13 from 12-3pm. Visit <https://guct-transfer.co.uk/consultation/> for more information.

Reminder to all voters as polls draw closer

THE RETURNING Officer for Rugby has urged electors to plan ahead before voting in May's local elections.

Elections for 14 Rugby Borough Council wards take place on Thursday May 7, together with parish council elections in Easenhall, Long Lawford, Shilton and Barnacle, Wolston, and Wolvey.

The council has relaunched its 'Are You Election Ready?' campaign to remind residents of recent changes to voting.

They include the need to produce a valid form of photo ID to vote at a polling station, the requirement to complete and sign a postal vote return form when hand-delivering a postal vote to the Town Hall or a polling station, and a limit on the number of postal votes a single voter can hand deliver.

And Dan Green, the Returning Officer for Rugby, warned 2,155 electors in the borough had postal votes cancelled on February 1 after falling foul of a new rule which means electors must now renew postal votes every three years.

This means electors who applied to vote by post before October 31 2023 needed to renew postal votes by January 31 this year in order to vote in the May elections.

Mr Green said the new rule, introduced under the Elections Act 2022, meant the 2,155 electors now needed to make a new application to vote by post on May 7 – or vote at a polling station on election day.

He said: "The requirement to renew your postal vote every three years was the final change to the way we vote introduced by the Elections Act 2022 and our electoral services team has contacted all electors impacted by the change by letter, email and phone."

"The team will always contact electors who need to renew postal votes well in advance of an election, so if you've not heard from us, your postal vote remains valid."

"There's still time for electors to apply for a postal vote for the May elections, but I'd encourage everyone who intends to vote in the local elections – whether in person at a polling station, by post or by proxy – to take five minutes now to check they're ready for polling day."

Electors have been reminded of the key deadlines in the run-up to the election:

- Register to vote by Monday April 20 (www.rugby.gov.uk/register2ovote)
 - Apply for for postal votes by 5pm on Tuesday April 21 (www.rugby.gov.uk/postalvote)
 - Apply for a Voter Authority Certificate by 5pm on Tuesday April 28(www.rugby.gov.uk/voterID)
 - Apply for proxy vote applications by 5pm on Thursday April 30 (www.rugby.gov.uk/proxyvote)
- Visit www.rugby.gov.uk/electionready to check whether you are election ready.



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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
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30th Camden Market	£30.00	
June		
6th Gloucester Docks & Quays.....	£26.00	£20.00
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Car thief Shane Jackson has been jailed for six years. s

Serial car thief was found hiding in bed

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

A PROLIFIC car thief has been jailed after a spate of Coventry 'car-key burglaries'.

Shane Jackson was caught hiding in a bed when Coventry Police raided an address in the city in November.

The 26-year-old has been jailed for six years after pleading guilty to burglaries and car thefts.

Officers began investigating a series of thefts and attempted burglaries in Finham in September.

Several people recorded Jackson attempting to open their front doors

so he could steal car keys. Jackson was twice able to enter and steal keys but one of the victims had an airtag on the keys, which enabled their owner to trace the location of the keys.

Doorbell camera footage was examined by officers, who identified Jackson from his clothing and distinctive limp.

After several weeks evading capture, Jackson was found hiding in a bed by officers during a warrant.

He did not offer any explanation or deny his involvement in the thefts and refused to leave his cell for interview.

Jackson was charged and remanded in custody in November and jailed in February, at Warwick Crown Court.

He pleaded guilty to two burglaries, two attempted burglaries, four vehicle thefts and a charge of handling stolen goods.

Det Sgt Jay Aston, from Coventry CID, said: "Burglary is a deeply invasive crime which leaves victims feeling unsafe in the one place they should feel safest: their homes."

"DC Laura Carter worked tirelessly to link the offences and identify Jackson as a suspect, meticulously piecing together the evidence to secure charges against him."

"We welcome a custodial sentence and hope this serves as a firm reminder of how seriously we take acquisitive crime."

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/4r438j4b>, for advice on preventing car and vehicle theft.

Witness appeal

A STREET brawl in Coventry has sparked a police appeal for witnesses.

Police were called to Albert Street in the city centre shortly after 5am on February 1, when a group of men started fighting.

Officers would like to speak to the men pictured, right, or to anyone who was in the area and has information about the incident and the events leading up to it.

Anyone with information should call West Midlands Police on 101, quoting crime number 20/132692/26.



Police would like to speak to these men in connection with the brawl. s

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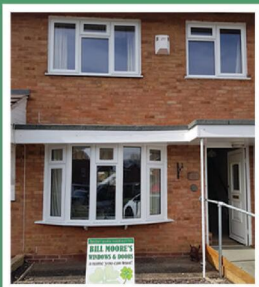


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Time to get crafting

CRAFTERS are being invited to a special Mother's Day gift-making workshop in Warwick.

A button-rings and bead earrings event will be held at St John's House on Saturday, March 14 – the day before Mother's Day – from 2pm until 4pm.

Over the two hours, participants will learn how to make two pairs of bead earrings and two button rings to take home and treasure. No experience is needed, just a willingness to have a go and enjoy some creative time.

All materials will be provided but participants are being encouraged to bring along their own buttons or beads – perhaps from an old coat, a favourite dress or a long-forgotten jewellery box.

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/heritageboxoffice to book a place.

Take a peek into the county's rich history

HISTORY enthusiasts will be able to enjoy two talks at Warwickshire County Record Office this spring.

The first subject, The Puckerings and Warwick Priory, will take place tomorrow (Saturday), at 2pm.

Historian Trevor Langley will tell the tale of the Puckerings family, once owners of Warwick Priory – the very site where the County Record Office stands today – including how sole heiress Jane Puckerings was abducted from a royal park in London in a daring plot to seize the family's fortune.

The second talk: Plagues, Potions and Parish Records: A Journey Through Medical History, will be held on

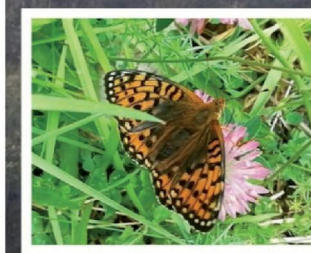
Tuesday, March 24, at 6pm.

From an 18th-century recipe for "a most excellent medicine against the plague" to tales of robberies, hangings and medical research in parish registers, the collections at the record office reveal fascinating stories showing how people in the past used to prevent and treat illness.

Both events involve a short tour behind the scenes into the strong-rooms and the chance to explore documents from the collections.

Tickets cost £10 for each event and include tea and coffee.

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/heritageboxoffice to book.



Sheep are helping bring butterflies back to land near Harbury Tunnel.

Flocking to help site

by Philippa Mingins
philippa.mingins@bullivantmedia.com

SHEEP are helping restore a rare butterfly habitat next to a south Warwickshire railway tunnel.

The area, by Harbury Tunnel near Leamington, suffered a huge landslip in 2015, causing major disruption and damaging ground alongside the track.

The landslip also affected a site of special scientific interest (SSSI) frequented by a rare butterfly species.

Network Rail engineers have worked to restore the embankment, for safety and the SSSI habitat, by planting meadow grasses and wildflowers favoured by pollinating insects.

The slope makes it costly to use the

mechanical mowing needed to prevent tree growth, which encroaches on the butterflies' habitat.

Network Rail, Butterfly Conservation and a local farmer instead moved sheep onto the site.

The sheep will winter on the embankment, grazing grass and weeds to give the best possible chance for pollinators to thrive again in spring.

Simon Thatcher, assistant track safety engineer for Network Rail's central route, said: "This site represented a tricky challenge for us because of its location and unique ecology."

"The devastation caused by the landslip depleted the available habitat and this work will help improve the line-side ecology and the SSSI."

"We're really pleased we've been able to come to this agreement and bring

sheep onto the embankment. They will be a welcome addition for local wildlife and passing passengers."

Mike Slater, chair of Butterfly Conservation's Warwickshire branch, said: "This is a fantastic project for butterflies and we are delighted to be involved. By managing this land in the right way, we have the opportunity to create the perfect habitat for five rare species of butterfly: small blue, dark green fritillary, grizzled skipper, dingy skipper and green hairstreak."

"To make this project work, Network Rail used special fencing not used in this way before in the UK and which is high enough and sturdy enough to keep sheep safely on-site. We are very grateful for this innovative work and hope it will inspire more projects to help restore nature across the UK."

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Sheila Rendall said a fond farewell to pupils at Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School.

Standing down after 39 years

A BELOVED dinner lady who has served up a million meals over four decades at a Coventry primary school has been given an emotional retirement send-off by pupils.

Great-grandmother Sheila Rendall has retired after 39 years at Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School, where she is estimated to have cooked around one million meals.

Sheila joined the Spring Road school in January 1987, just a few months before Coventry City lifted the FA Cup and Margaret Thatcher secured a third term in office.

Sheila said she plans to spend her retirement travelling around the UK with her husband Stuart as well as helping to raise her five grandchildren and great-grandchild.

The lifelong Coventry resident, who said mac and cheese had become her signature school dinner dish over the last few years, was presented with flowers and a personalised rolling pin by pupils to say thank you.

Sheila said: "A lot has changed in the last 39 years but it's always been a case of if the

children are happy, then I'm happy, so I've always tried to make sure the food looks and tastes great.

"There is rightly much more of a focus on providing nutritious meals compared to when I first started.

"There have been so many highlights, but seeing the Christmas celebrations each year, cooking festive meals and hearing the children sing will stand out as my fondest moments – it's quite a magical place to be at that time of year and I'll certainly miss it.

"I've felt at home since day one and have always been supported by everyone around me over the years, which I'm incredibly grateful for. I've had a brilliant last few days and I'm going to miss everyone, but I'm looking forward to retirement."

School Principal Michael Kirby said: "Sheila has been a tremendous asset to Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School over the years and we will be sorry to see her go.

"She will be missed by staff and pupils alike and we wish her the very best for her retirement."



Staff from Orbit Homes visited Whoberley Hall with books which aim to support pupils with their understanding of feelings and growing up.

Some welcome stories

BOOKWORMS at a Coventry primary school are getting in touch with their emotions thanks to a donation of reading material for World Book Day.

Pupils at Whoberley Hall Primary School received a donation of mental health and wellbeing themed books from local house-builder Orbit Homes.

Staff from Orbit Homes, the house-building arm of Coventry-headquartered not-for-profit housing group Orbit, visited Whoberley Hall with books which aim to support KS1 and KS2 pupils with their understanding of feelings and growing up, as well as activity books to help them stay

calm and relaxed.

Year 3 teacher Sally Mills said: "These books will help give the children confidence in expressing their emotions and feelings, and will support them in developing good habits for managing their mental health and wellbeing."

Emily Kemp, Marketing Manager for Orbit Homes in the Midlands, said: "Reading is a crucial part of young people's education and development, and we're very proud to donate books that can support the children with their reading and also encourage them to learn about helpful techniques for taking care of their mental health and wellbeing."

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HOME COMPOSTING: GARDENERS in Warwickshire can start cutting costs and growing stronger plants by attending one of a series of home composting workshops this spring and summer.

The free one-hour workshops are being held at libraries in Rugby, Kenilworth, Wolston, Alcester, Nuneaton, Bedworth and Atherstone from April to July.

They aim to provide the knowledge required to successfully turn kitchen and garden waste into nutrient-rich compost.

Warwickshire County Council is offering discounted compost bins to those who attend.

The council's environment spokesperson Coun Darren Cheshire said: "Our home composting workshops are a fantastic opportunity to learn more about the simple yet significant impact that home composting can have."

"It's an easy way for residents to enrich their gardens naturally, reduce waste and save a bit of money along the way."

"Our workshops provide all the guidance needed to get started, and with the added incentive of discounted compost bins, we hope many residents will take advantage of this opportunity over the next few months."

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/green-waste/composting for more information, or to book a place at a workshop.

Theatre set to offer a Stranger thriller

A RARE, recently discovered Agatha Christie thriller is next on the bill at Rugby Theatre.

The Stranger is a stage version of Christie's short story Philomel Cottage, but even though the playwright penned the adaptation in 1932, it wasn't performed or published in her lifetime.

It tells the story of a woman called Enid, who rejects her long-term fiancé for a handsome and charming stranger called Gerald. But when the pair move to a remote country cottage, Gerald's true personality begins to emerge, leading to a dark and shocking conclusion.

The show's director Debbie Hibberd said: "The Stranger is different to any other Agatha Christie play you might have seen, with psychological suspense rather than overt action."

"How do you know if a stranger is telling you the truth? The internet has raised the profile of romance fraud, but it's actually a very old form of deception, and The Stranger feels much more of the moment than you might expect for an Agatha Christie play."

Debbie, who has been an Agatha Christie fan since she was at primary school, described the play as a 'lost and found story'.

She added: "It was hidden in Christie's archives until 2017, and the first professional production was in 2019 in America. The UK premier of The Stranger didn't take place until 2021, so this is a rare opportunity for theatregoers."

Enid and Gerald are played by renowned Rugby Theatre actors Wendy Kay and Dean Mills, and the central roles are



Left to right: Wendy Kay as Enid, Dean Mills as Gerald, and Melanie Lee as Doris.

supported by Enid's best friend Doris (Melanie Lee) and her fiancé Dick (Chris Allen-Mason). Housemaids Mrs Huggins and Mrs Birch, both played by Jill Dwyer, add humour to the tale.

Debbie added: "Rugby Theatre is delighted to bring you this 1932 edition

of a rather modern crime story. Join us for an intimate psychological thriller, where the queen of mystery reminds us that not everyone is who they seem."

The Stranger runs from March 7-14. Visit www.rugbytheatre.co.uk or call 01788 541234 for tickets.

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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.

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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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Special Feature

Stories from the past have plenty



ABOVE: Prashant Kansara said being involved with the exhibition had changed how he understood his own memories of growing up in the city.

RIGHT: Ayisha Abraham said the exhibition feels especially relevant now. Picture by Ayesha Jones.

INSET: Jitey Samra said sharing lived experiences can help create understanding.

Pictures by Ayesha Jones.



A GROUP of Coventry-based volunteers have shared their stories of British South Asian culture as part of a major exhibition at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum.

'Stories That Made Us - Roots, Resilience, Representation' traces more than 50 years of South Asian life in the UK through four immersive rooms inspired by the real experiences of one Coventry family. Since opening in November, it has welcomed thousands of visitors.

A team of seven South Asian Cultural Ambassadors have contributed their voices and personal histories to the exhibition as part of a partnership between Herbert Art Gallery & Museum and Coventry Archives, which aims to bring stories of identity, belonging and migration to life.

The group, which has been meeting monthly to share and record oral histories which appear in the exhibition, includes Prashant Kansara, Priti Kansara, Ayisha Abraham, as well as Jitey Samra, Mehru Fitter MBE, Suminder Virk and Kausar Husain.

Visitors can hear their voices in key parts of the show - including the 'passport control' room setting, where people describe what it felt like arriving in Britain, and in sound installations exploring what it means to be British South Asian across generations.

The ambassadors' stories aim to

reflect the diversity of Coventry's South Asian communities, with roots spanning India, Kenya, other parts of Africa and South Asia and the wider diaspora.

They explore migration journeys, first impressions of Britain, and how language and attitudes around belonging often repeat across decades.

Jitey Samra, who has worked in men-

much prejudice and inequality was still happening, often quietly, behind closed doors. When people hear these experiences, it creates empathy and helps explain behaviour, trauma and identity in a much deeper way.

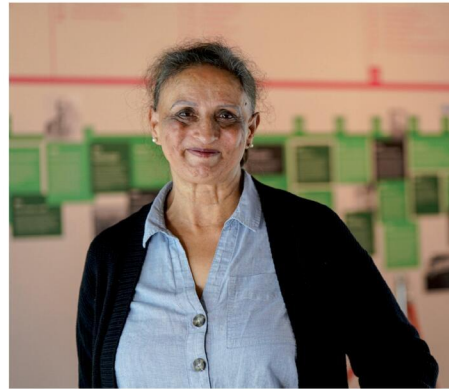
"Hearing more about people's lives in the UK can help to create bonds and build bridges across communities, and that's why this exhibition is so powerful, and why it's important we hear more stories from families in Coventry."

Ayisha Abraham, who was born in London in the 1960s and later left Britain with her family following Enoch Powell's 'Rivers of Blood' speech, said the exhibition feels especially relevant now.

She said: "There's something uncanny about how these stories repeat themselves. The language around who belongs and who doesn't feels uncomfortably familiar."

"What this exhibition does so powerfully is place an intimate family story inside a much bigger historical framework, making global forces human and emotional."

"There is so much that will resonate with you in unexpected ways. That's why it's an unmissable exhibition for people regardless of their background, and why I think so many people feel compelled to speak about it after seeing it."



tal health services in Coventry, said sharing lived experiences can help create understanding.

She said: "I grew up thinking many of the struggles I heard about in my family were in the past. But listening to people's stories made me realise how

Continued opposite

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Josephine Rugg



Special Feature

to tell us about how we live now

Continued

Coventry-born visual artist Prashant Kansara said being involved had changed how he understood his own memories of growing up in the city.

He said: "These were objects and experiences I grew up with but took for granted, or even felt embarrassed by. Seeing them collected and celebrated made me realise they weren't just personal, they held history."

"This exhibition gives value to memories many of us thought were just everyday incidents, and shows they were part of something much bigger. It's an incredible platform to build connection and I can't wait to see what other people make of it."

Coventry is home to one of the UK's most established South Asian communities, with 18.5 per cent of residents identifying as Asian or Asian British – around double the national average.

The exhibition draws on Hardish Virk's 'Stories That Made Us' archive and Coventry Archives' Virk Collection, bringing together photographs, books, magazines, posters, vinyl records, cassettes and personal memorabilia alongside oral histories, radio broadcasts, music and film to bring the nuanced stories of South Asian communities to life.

Shaniece Martin, who coor-

dinates the South Asian Cultural Ambassadors programme, said the ambassador scheme was designed to ensure a range of South Asian voices were embedded in the exhibition.

She said: "When people hear real stories of migration and identity, it becomes much harder to rely on stereotypes."

"Visitors hear what it felt like to step off the plane, the shock of arrival, and how identity is shaped over time. These experiences aren't just history, they're still shaping lives today."

"Now that the exhibition is open, the focus is on encouraging more people from South Asian backgrounds to get involved by visiting the exhibition, sharing reflections, and contributing their own stories to Coventry Archives to help build a lasting record of South Asian life in the city."

The programme is hosted by Coventry Archives as part of the 'Stories That Made Us – Roots, Resilience, Representation' exhibition, conceived and co-curated by artist and curator Hardish Virk in partnership with the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, with support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

'Stories That Made Us – Roots, Resilience, Representation' is on display at the Herbert Art Gallery and Museum until May 25.



Ayisha Abraham, Shaniece Martin and Jitey Samra. Picture by Ayesha Jones.



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Nursing assistant Liberty Murray and John Whalley try out the new doors.

AN OPENING: A BIG-hearted business seized a window of opportunity to help The Myton Hospices. Nationwide Windows and Doors recently donated both time and materials to complete a major improvement project at Warwick Myton Hospice. The work involved replacing patio doors and windows in 14 inpatient rooms, along with additional doors and windows across the Inpatient Unit. The project, which would have cost around \$40,000, was completed entirely free of charge, making it the largest gift in kind of its type ever received by

Myton. As well as significantly improving comfort and the overall environment for patients, the new energy-efficient doors and windows will help reduce energy costs, delivering long-term savings that can be reinvested directly into patient care. This combination of immediate and lasting impact is helping the charity remain resilient in the face of limited statutory funding and increasing pressure on voluntary income. John Whalley, managing director at Nationwide Windows and Doors, said: "Being able to supply much-needed, energy-efficient windows and doors is our way of

supporting an organisation that makes a real, tangible difference to people across the community. "We know how deeply hospice care impacts the lives of patients and the families they support, and we're proud that this contribution will help Myton both now and in the future." Martin Watts, corporate fundraiser at The Myton Hospices, added: "This gift in kind has enabled us to free up vital resources and focus them where they matter most – on patient care – ensuring that people and their families across Coventry and Warwickshire can access the care they need and deserve."

Businesses welcome an 'uneventful statement'

BUSINESS leaders in Coventry and Warwickshire welcomed an 'uneventful' Spring Statement – but say Government must do even more to remove barriers to growth. Chancellor Rachel Reeves delivered the short statement, which saw growth revised down slightly for 2026 but then up for 2027 and 2028. The Chancellor highlighted falls in interest rates and inflation as well as Government borrowing, and said the UK was better insulated from global circumstances. Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with Prime Accountants Group, held a roundtable event at Stockton House with firms from across the region to discuss the content of the statement and also gauge the sentiment among businesses. Corin Crane, chief executive of the Chamber, said: "Businesses wanted it to be quite boring and uneventful – and it didn't disappoint. "We've been calling for stability

and certainty for many years to help give companies the confidence to invest and grow. "So, we welcome the fact that this statement was more of an update on the back of last year's Budget rather than a raft of new announcements. "All of that said, that doesn't mean there aren't concerns around the cost of doing business, particularly around employment costs especially with the rise in National Insurance. "It's therefore vital that Government continues to listen to the Chamber at a local and national level on how businesses are feeling and do everything they can to remove barriers to growth." Steve Harcourt, director of Prime Accountants Group, said: "This was more like a half-term report by the Chancellor and it sounded very much like she was giving herself an A*! "Stability and certainty is very welcome but there is still concern about where stronger growth is going to come from, particularly with this year's figure revised downwards slightly."

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Friday 10th April - Monday 13th April	Was £279 NOW £240pp
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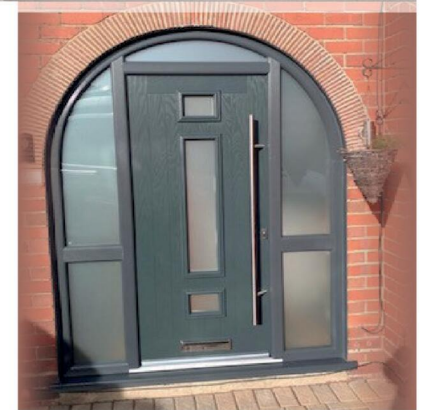
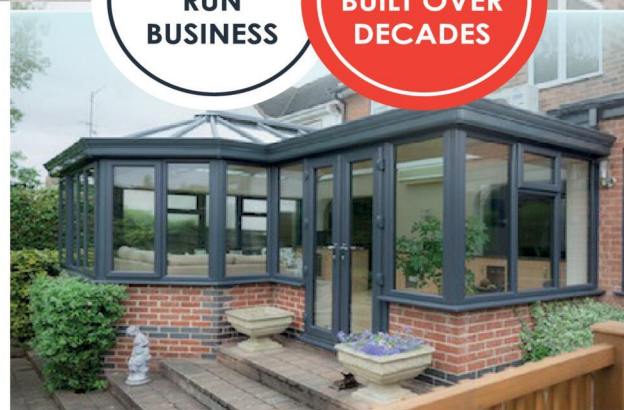


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Campaign to bring even more women for screening

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

THERE has been an increase in the number of women across the West Midlands eligible for regular breast screening who are taking up appointments, the latest figures show.

Mammograms are offered every three years to women between the ages of 50 and 71 and there were 689,664 women in the region eligible in the three years to April 2025.

During that time, 489,210 of those eligible took up the appointments, raising the figure to 70.9 per cent.

In 2024, 69.2 per cent of eligible women went for their breast screening appointment and in 2023 the figure was 65.7 per cent.

In the Midlands, in the 12 months to the end of March last year, more than 3,500 cancers (3,552) were detected – 8.8 cases per 1,000 women screened – for an increase from 2,985 from the data to March 2024.

That means hundreds more Midlands women were able to access treatment earlier, when there are more options available and treatment is more likely to be effective.

Despite the progress, however, the latest statistics from the NHS breast screening programme showed almost three in 10 women did not take up screenings.

Take-up rates vary in different parts of the West Midlands.

The lowest take-up was in Birmingham, where 109,767 women were eligible and 66,662 took up their appointment. That equated to 60.7 per cent, up from the previous year, when 58.9 per cent in the Second City attended appointments.

Coventry had the region's second lowest take-up, with 63.7 per cent – 21,862 of 34,297 eligible women. That was up from 62.6 per cent a year earlier.

In Solihull, 72.6 per cent of women aged 53 to 71 (19,035 out of 26,227) went for breast screening in the last 12 months for which figures are available. Warwickshire had a similar figure (72.4 per cent, with 52,441 out of 73,857 eligible women).

Highest

The highest take-up figure in the West Midlands went to Worcestershire women, with 79.6 per cent (almost four in five) attending their breast screening appointment – 61,757 out of 77,616.

Despite percentage rises in all West Midlands areas apart from Walsall, local screening services are working with NHS England in a bid to improve uptake.

The campaign includes targeted outreach in lower-attending areas, reminder texts and expanded use of mobile screening units to bring services nearer home.

The NHS also launched its first national breast screening campaign in February last year, to help even more women to come forward.

The drive is backed by charities including Breast Cancer Now, and has featured public figures including Victoria

Derbyshire, Julia Bradbury and Shirley Ballas, who all shared personal messages to encourage women to attend.

During the campaign, the NHS saw a huge increase in people accessing information online, with tens of thousands of women visiting NHS breast screening pages in a single week, and clicks to the screening service-finder rising sharply.

Stephanie Beaumont, head of public health commissioning and operations at screening for the West Midlands, said: "Breast screening saves lives.

"It is encouraging to see more women attending but we know there is still more to do to encourage those who do not.

"We are working on making it as convenient as possible for women to access the service by using mobile units, which can be located in supermarket car parks and community centres as well as hospital-based sites.

"If you receive an invitation, please don't ignore it – it is an appointment that could save your life."

Women aged 50 and up to the age of 71 are invited for breast screening every three years, with appointments provided locally through clinics and mobile units.

NHS England said breast screening does carry some risk.

Some women who have screening will be diagnosed and treated for slow-growing breast cancers that may never otherwise have been found or have caused them harm, the health service said.

Mammograms also do not always find a cancer that is there but most people feel the benefits of breast screening outweigh the possible drawbacks.



There has been an increase in the number of women taking up their breast screening appointments across the West Midlands. s

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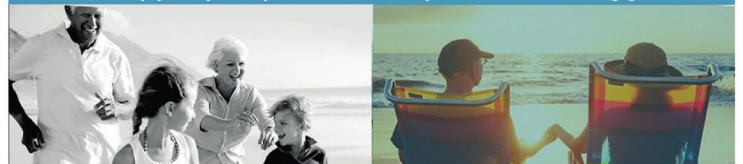
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Railway company secures top award for service

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

WEST Midlands Railway (WMR) has been named Train Operator of the Year at the 2026 Rail Business Awards.

The accolade follows a milestone period for WMR and sister-brand London Northwestern Railway (LNR), as a £1billion investment into new trains and infrastructure came to fruition.

The two brands have introduced three new fleets in recent years, increasing capacity on services by 40 per cent and improving journeys for more than a million passengers every week.

A key part of the programme included WMR's introduction of the Class 730/0 electric trains, to popular routes such as the Cross City Line – the busiest commuter route outside London, which runs from Redditch and Bromsgrove to Lichfield, via Birmingham.

The spacious electric trains feature 'intelligent' air conditioning, improved accessibility and power points at every seat. Since their introduction, figures show customer satisfaction has risen 19 per cent.

Investment was also made into the company's train depots.

Facilities in Birmingham, Coventry, Worcester and Shrewsbury have been modernised, including a £70million refit of Birmingham's Tyseley depot.

The enhancements, unveiled by West Midlands Mayor Richard Parker, provided increased capacity and future-proofed equipment to support the new fleets.

Ian McConnell, managing director at WMR, said: "We are extremely proud to win Train Operator of the Year.

"This award is testament to the hard work of colleagues across our business, who have successfully introduced three new train fleets and future-proofed our train depots while continuing to keep passengers moving every day.

"It's been a tremendous team effort so it's fantastic to be recognised for our achievements over the past year.

"We are committed to keeping up

this high standard and continuing to improve so we can deliver the best possible service for our customers and communities."

The investment programme has driven passenger growth.

A recent report from the Office of Rail Road showed a massive, 12 per cent year-on-year increase in the number of people using the sister operators' services in the first quarter of the 2025/26 fiscal year, equating to more than 2million extra journeys. WMR and LNR carried 67.7 million passengers in 2024/25 and that figure is forecast to rise to more than 80 million journeys in 2025/26.

The Rail Business Awards is held in Manchester and run by the *Railway Gazette*.

■ On February 1, West Midlands Trains became the fourth operator to enter public ownership under the government's Passenger Railway Services (Public Ownership) Act, joining Greater Anglia, C2C and South Western Railway.

It is part of the government's Great British Railways plan to improve services for commuters and leisure passengers.

The government wants to bring the whole railway together under one brand with one mission: to deliver for passengers. The brand aims to create a more unified railway, putting customers first, making the experience better for passengers, improving reliability and having simpler rail fares and ticketing.

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Campaign aiming to prevent the menace of tailgating

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

MIDLANDS drivers are among the worst in the country for 'tailgating'

Research from National Highways shows the region is below the national average for safe driving when it comes to leaving sufficient space from the vehicle in front.

Shocking statistics have been released as part of National Highways' 'Too Close for Comfort? Stay Safe, Stay Back' campaign.

The figures show tailgating was a factor in 106 fatal or serious-injury collisions on motorways and major A-roads in the Midlands last year.

The research also revealed 36 per cent of drivers in the Midlands admitted to tailgating

and the region rated fourth out of six on National Highways' 'manners map'.

National Highways is urging motorists to make sure they drive a safe distance from the vehicle in front.

The organisation says, despite Britain priding itself on politeness and consideration, millions of drivers across the country feel their day-to-day manners worsen when driving.

Nationally, 4.9million drivers said their manners slip behind the wheel when they are under pressure, especially when they are running late.

A further 2.4million motorists admitted tailgating deliberately, to push slower drivers to speed up.

National data suggests running late is the biggest trigger for poor driving etiquette (with 27 per



This HGV is too close to the car in front, on the M5. Pictures courtesy of National Highways. s

cent of respondents citing it as a reason), followed by tiredness (20 per cent) and peak time commuting (16 per cent).

Some 37 per cent of Midlands drivers rated road etiquette as 'good', putting the region fourth on the manners map.

Concern

Colin Stevenson, National Highways' road safety information lead, said: "While the regional picture varies, it's clear tailgating remains a real concern.

"It may seem harmless, but it can put everyone on the road at risk. Following too closely means there is less time to react and stop safely if the vehicle in front slows down or stops.

"Leaving a safe gap makes driving safer, keeps traffic moving more smoothly and is a simple

courtesy that helps everyone feel more relaxed behind the wheel."

He added, a good rule of thumb for faster roads was the 'two-second rule'. Drivers count two seconds from the car in front passing a fixed point to when they pass the same point, to gauge a safe distance. Two seconds allows time for drivers to think and stop safely (including the braking distance) and should be doubled to four seconds in poor weather or reduced visibility.

Nationally, tailgating contributes to around eight per cent of people killed or seriously injured annually on motorways and major A-roads, according to long term Department for Transport data.

Dr Neale Kinnear, a behavioural psychologist specialising in driving behaviour, said: "Most of us see ourselves as considerate people but driving is a unique

context. It is goal focused and often time pressured.

"When we're running late, or behind other traffic, frustration can build.

"In that moment, closing the gap can feel like taking control or making progress.

"The reality is different - drivers tend to overestimate how much time, if any, they save by pushing on.

"As frustration rises, perspective on the importance of keeping a safe margin, and the impact it has on others, can be lost."

The importance of adhering to the 'two-second rule' is also highlighted by the fact tailgating is an illegal offence.

Police can take action if they believe a driver is too close to the vehicle ahead and it can result in a £100 fine and three penalty points.



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Swords, thrones and stars all feature in new RSC season

THE THREE Musketeers will be running riot at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre in Stratford this Christmas.

This year's RSC's festive show will be a re-telling of Alexandre Dumas' classic in new co-production with Told by an Idiot, running from November 28 to January 9.

It is part of the new season which includes the already announced Game of Thrones: The Mad King coming this summer. Although dates have still not been confirmed, priority booking for the much-anticipated first ever stage play arising from George R. R. Martin's epic fantasy series, opens on April 14.

Shakespeare productions include an all-male As You Like It, directed by RSC co-artistic director Daniel Evans, and a revival of the acclaimed all-female Julius Caesar, set in a women's prison, and directed by Phyllida Lloyd, and featuring Olivier Award-winning actress Harriet Walter returning to the RSC to play Brutus.

Another Warwickshire writer also gets a look-in, with George Eliot's expansive study of provincial life, Middlemarch, coming to the stage in a two-part adaptation by Nina Raine.

RSC co-artistic directors Daniel Evans and Tamara Harvey said: "We are delighted to share our new season, which brings together five productions including an epic fantasy, a 19th century literary master-



piece, a swashbuckling adventure and two plays from our in-house playwright. Each of these productions, in their own way, celebrate how time-honoured stories, when viewed through fresh eyes, can defy expectations, and help us to see the world around us anew.

"From the sweet-natured romance of As You Like It to the righteous anger of Phyllida Lloyd's Julius Caesar, the anarchic adventures of The Three Musketeers to the sweeping societal shifts of George Eliot's Middlemarch, themes of identity, transformation, freedom, justice

and the liberation that comes from breaking free of expectations loom large this autumn, as classic stories and universal struggles take on powerful new resonance in the hands of some of the most exciting artists of today.

"As ever, our commitment to the

An all-new version of The Three Musketeers is this year's Christmas show at the RSC.

dual mission of making theatre and education through theatre remains at the heart of who we are as a company. In 2026, we celebrate the milestone of 20 years working in long-term partnership with schools across the UK.

"Since 2006, we have seen our network of Associate Schools expand to reach over 280 schools in 100 towns and cities across England, transforming the lives of thousands of young people in the process.

"We know, from our own evidence-based research, what a very real difference our pioneering theatre-based teaching approaches to Shakespeare make to the way children see themselves, and the way that the adults in their lives see them, which is why we are thrilled to be working with KPPL productions to bring the seminal production of Julius Caesar to the heart of communities across England.

"This landmark tour represents a new milestone in the RSC's long-term partnership work with schools and is one of a series of celebratory events taking place throughout 2026 to showcase the life-changing impact this work has, empowering young people to see themselves and the world with fresh eyes."

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Help there for those with young drivers

HELP is at hand for parents of soon-to-be young drivers set to take to the roads on their own.

Warwickshire's Road Safety Partnership is running a webinar designed to help families navigate the learning-to-drive period and beyond.

Taking place on Thursday March 19, between 6pm and 7pm, the webinar brings together specialist speakers in road safety and young driver development, who will share practical advice and insights.

Research shows that newly qualified drivers are at greatest risk in their first six to 12 months on the road, particularly within their first 1,000 miles of independent driving.

The one-hour webinar will explain how everyday conversations, expectations and parental behavior can significantly reduce risk and help young drivers develop safer habits for life.

Warwickshire County Council's transport spokesperson Coun Jennifer Warren said: "Learning

to drive is a major milestone, and it can also be a time when young people face some of the greatest risks on our roads.

Parents and carers play a vital role in shaping safe attitudes and behaviours, both during lessons and after a test has been passed.

This webinar is a fantastic opportunity to hear directly from experts, gain practical tips, and feel more confident about how to support a young driver through this important stage.

"Through the work of the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership, we are committed to helping families understand how small actions - from positive conversations to setting clear expectations - can make a real difference to safety."

The free online event is open to all parents and carers, with young people also welcome to attend.

Visit Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership's website for more details and to sign up.

Chance to check up on safety

PARENTS are being offered the chance to ensure their child's car seat is safe.

Warwickshire Road Safety Education, in partnership with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, is expanding its programme of child car seat check events with the launch of a new referral and booking process. This will allow community settings such as family hubs, nurseries, preschools, schools and community groups to request and host onsite car seat checking sessions directly.

Warwickshire County Council's transport spokesperson Coun Jennifer Warren said: "Making sure children are travelling safely on our roads is something every parent and carer cares deeply about, and these expanded child car seat check opportunities are an important step in helping families feel confident they are getting it right."

"By working in partnership with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service and community organisations across Warwickshire, we are making expert advice more accessible, more convenient, and more responsive to local needs."

"We know that many car seat issues happen unintentionally, and a simple check can make a significant difference to a child's safety in the event of a collision. This new referral and booking system will allow us to reach more families, support community settings, and play our part in achieving the Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership ambition of reducing deaths and serious inju-



ries on our roads by 2030."

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/road-safety-education/child-car-seats/5 for more details.

Safety first - Warwickshire Road Safety Education, in partnership with Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service, is expanding its programme of child car seat check events.



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Using the NHS app could save more than your time



The campaign is reminding people to sign up to receive appointment reminders on the NHS app. s

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

MORE than one in four people in the West Midlands have missed an NHS appointment because they forgot or arrived too late, according to a new survey.

The NHS has launched a new campaign urging people to turn on 'push alerts' from the NHS App so they get reminders about appointments and can rearrange any they can't make, helping to free up millions of appointments for others.

Of those who had missed an appointment in the West Midlands, 13 per cent forgot and 13 per cent arrived but were too late.

The latest appointment statistics also show that patients did not attend 16million GP appointments in 2025, with no shows for one in 23 appointments – the equivalent of an entire day of missed appointments at every GP practice in England each month.

The figures also reveal that the NHS arranged 37 million appointments at GP practices in 2025 - 8.4million more than in 2024.

The new 'Tap the NHS App' campaign is highlighting the benefits of enabling notifications, with adverts appearing on pharmacy bags, radio channels and social media.

Users are also being encouraged to cancel or rearrange their appointments through the app and to use it to request repeat prescriptions instead of having to visit their GP practice.

Last year, the NHS rolled out a new Amazon-style prescription tracking feature in the NHS App which updates users on the progress of their prescription and when it is ready to be col-

lected. It is currently available at 2,000 pharmacies across England.

Trish Thompson, director of primary care, NHS England-Midlands, said: "With one in four patients in the West Midlands saying they've missed a GP appointment in the West Midlands, it's more important than ever that patients who are using the NHS App enable their notifications from their GP, so they don't miss out."

"The NHS App helps you quickly and easily request your repeat prescription. And if you turn on notifications, you'll get messages and appointment reminders as soon as they're sent."

"The app also helps GPs whose staff will spend less time answering calls for renewals at 8am every morning."

Dr Amanda Doyle, national director for Primary Care and Community Services at NHS England, said: "People will often have genuine reasons for not being able to make an appointment or arriving too late, but it's really important that they let us know if possible so we can offer the appointment to someone else."

"One of the easiest ways you can reduce the risk of missing an appointment is by tapping the NHS App to turn on notifications to get reminders, so you can cancel or rearrange them if they need to."

Latest ONS figures show that people are increasingly preferring to contact their GP online when they have a health problem.

Three-quarters of adults found it easy to contact their GP practice, up from 71.6 per cent a year ago.

The NHS App has over 40million registered users, who are able to view their GP health record, order repeat prescriptions and access a range of NHS services to manage their own care.

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The beautifully glossy A5 magazine will once again be freely available in print, from a major supermarket near you - and, the 'Spring' edition of Seasons will also be available 247 on line and will be showcased across all of our local Observer and Standard Newspapers, websites and social media platforms for the next 12 months.

So you'll be able to enjoy the exclusive, evergreen, editions of Seasons by logging on to www.seasons-magazine.com where you can browse the 'Winter' edition of Seasons 247 and soon, you'll be able to enjoy the 'Spring' edition of Seasons too!

If you'd like your business to be featured in the next edition of Seasons, or if you'd like more details - just call **01527 588688** and speak to Kelly, Caroline, Roisin, Paul, Gareth or Sharon.

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A stamp by any other name...

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

THE BEAUTY of English roses is being celebrated in the latest stamp collection by Royal Mail.

Each of the 10 stamps' vibrant images feature original watercolour illustrations of wild and garden roses, commissioned and created for Royal Mail by acclaimed botanical artist Marie Burke.

The set showcases a range of wild and cultivated roses, including Constance Spry, the first English rose bred by David Austin, in 1961. That flower launched a new era in rose breeding, combining the beauty and fragrance of old roses with the flowering performance of modern types.

The stamp collection aims to celebrate the beauty of the nation's favourite flower.

The stamps showcase a stunning selection of roses, from delicate wild species to classic garden favourites, each capturing the unique colour, form and character of the flower.

The roses featured in the set are the dog rose (rosa canina); rosa Queen Elizabeth; rosa Just Joey; rosa Paul's Himalayan Musk; rosa Étoile de Hollande; rosa gallica versicolor; the field rose (rosa arvensis); rosa Charles de Mills; rosa Peace; and rosa Constance Spry.

The stamp issue coincides with the 100th anniversary of the birth of David CH Austin OBE, whose work transformed modern rose breeding and helped reintroduce fragrance, beauty and romance to gardens.

David Gold, Royal Mail's director of external affairs and policy, said: "Roses are a familiar part of many British gardens as well as holding a special place in British culture and heritage.

"These beautiful stamps bring together art and horticulture through original illustrations of 10 distinctive roses, each carefully interpreted to capture its unique character."

Royal Mail worked with horticultural historian Jennifer Potter on the collection.

All roses trace their ancestry back to wild flowers native to the northern hemisphere which typically bear single, five-petaled flowers, such as the dog rose and the field rose found in the UK.

Garden varieties emerged gradually over centuries, first through natural mutation and later through deliberate breeding.

Old European roses such as gallicas, albas, damasks and centifolias – including rosa gallica versicolor and rosa Charles de Mills – are celebrated for their rich scent and early summer flowering.

From the 18th century onwards,

Chinese roses introduced repeat flowering in a development which transformed rose breeding and lead to the modern hybrid tea roses that remain so popular today.

The stamps, and a range of collectible products, are available at royalmail.com/roses, or by calling 03457 641641.

A presentation pack of all 10 stamps is priced at £13.75.



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
www.seasons-magazine.com

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.

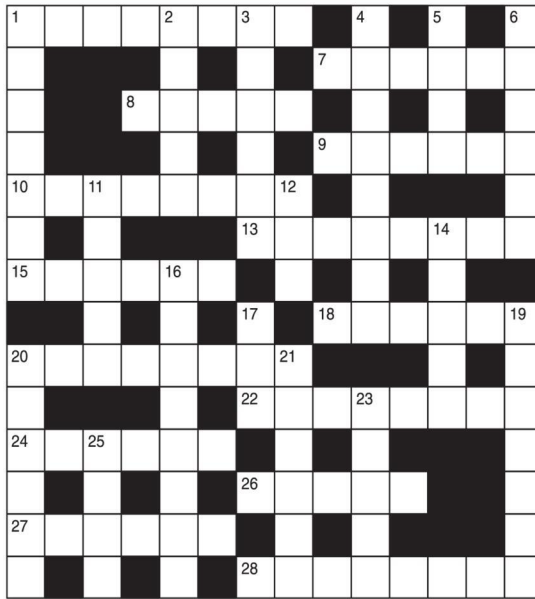


For even more details call **01926 317118** or **0121 270 2295**
'Seasons' magazine is brought to you by your local 'Observer' Newspaper team

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Animal described in Job, Chapter 40 (8)
- Ornamental clasp, worn on a dress, etc. (6)
- In short, it's beneath one's dignity (5,3)
- One of a race of female warriors in legend (6)
- A plant of the genus Narcissus (8)
- A golden-sand-coloured horse with a white mane and tail (8)
- One of the dominant people of Nepal (6)
- Improvises words in acting (2-4)
- Small planet revolving round the sun (8)
- A horse and pony meeting, for races, competitions, etc. (8)
- Alcoholic drink of beer, and ginger beer or lemonade (6)
- the Great; one of the Twelve Apostles and son of Zebedee (5)
- Fruit sometimes known as a "love apple" (6)
- Measure of capacity equal to 52.5 imperial gallons of wine, or 54 gallons of beer (8)



DOWN

- The hero of stories by Sapper (H.C. McNeile) (7,8)
- Fleshy fruit eaten ripe or used for pickles (5)
- Biennial plant cultivated for its edible, white or yellow-fleshed root (6)
- See 1 Down
- An Israelite of rank, and second husband of Ruth (4)
- Ancient religion of Japan (6)
- Professional chief of the Royal Navy (5,3,4)
- An old convict (3)
- One of the Balearic Islands (5)
- Transmission from one generation to another of genetic factors that determine resemblances (8)
- See 8 Across
- See 11 Down
- Property of an insolvent person, considered as chargeable for all debts, etc. (6)
- A machine for generating electric currents (6)
- Joints between the thighs and shinbones (5)
- River in the Crimea, scene of an early battle of the Crimean War (4)

SOLUTIONS

General Knowledge Crossword
 ACROSS: 1 Behemoth; 2 Brooch; 8 Intra; 9 Amazon; 10 Daffodil; 13 Palomino; 15 Gurkha; 18 Ad-libs; 20 Asteroid; 22 Gymkhana; 24 Shandy; 26 James; 27 Tomato; 28 Hogshhead. DOWN: 1 Building; 2 Mango; 3 Turnip; 4 Drummond; 5 Boaz; 6 Shinto; 11 First; 12 Lag; 14 Ibiza; 16 Heredit; 17 Dig; 19 Sea Lord; 20 Assets; 21 Dynamo; 23 Knees; 25 Alma.

Crossword
 ACROSS: 6 Zealous; 7 Arson; 9 Try; 10 Encounter; 12 Disarranged; 15 Oliver Twist; 17 Smartness; 19 Ire; 21 Put on; 22 Reflect. DOWN: 1 Weirid; 2 Sly; 3 Turn; 4 Frankness; 5 Forever; 8 Sorrow; 11 Silver fox; 13 Arrant; 14 Clamour; 16 Trick; 18 Seem; 20 Ale.

Wordwheel Pathfinder
 Partners in Crime, Nizop, Lena Martell, The Archies, Baz Luhrmann, Fern Kinney, DJ Pied Piper, Teletubbies, Joe Dolce, Music Theatre, Clive Dunn, The Kumars, Anita Ward, Althea and Donna, Las Ketchup, Tubeway Army, Mr Oizo, Typically Tropic, Ricky Valance, Brian and Michael, Sak Noel.

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

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

Sudoku
 Easy
 Hard



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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICES



How much will Council Tax Figures be for Coventry in 2026-2027?

Band	Value of property (as at 1991 values)	Full charge (annual)	25% discount (annual)	100% (premium)	200% (premium)	300% (premium)
A with Disabled Person Relief	up to and including £40,000	£1397.82	£1048.36	N/A	N/A	N/A
A	up to and including £40,000	£1677.39	£1258.04	£3354.78	£5032.17	£6709.56
B	£40,001 - £52,000	£1956.96	£1467.72	£3913.92	£5870.88	£7827.84
C	£52,001 - £68,000	£2236.53	£1677.40	£4473.06	£6709.59	£8946.12
D	£68,001 - £88,000	£2516.09	£1887.07	£5032.18	£7548.27	£10064.36
E	£88,001 - £120,000	£3075.22	£2306.41	£6150.44	£9225.66	£12300.88
F	£120,001 - £160,000	£3634.35	£2725.76	£7268.70	£10903.05	£14537.40
G	£160,001 - £320,000	£4193.49	£3145.12	£8386.98	£12580.47	£16773.96
H	More than £320,000	£5032.18	£ 3774.13	£10064.36	£15096.54	£20128.72

Local Government Finance Act 1992 Notice Of Council Tax 2026/27

The Warwick District Council, being the Billing Authority for the district of Warwick has, in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, resolved at the meeting on 25 February 2026 that the level of Council Tax to be levied on domestic properties shall, in relation to the individual areas shown, be in accordance with the schedule below for the financial year 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.



Parish/Town Council	Council Tax for each category of Dwellings Valuation Bands							
	Band A	Band B	Band C	Band D	Band E	Band F	Band G	Band H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Baddesley Clinton	1,636.43	1,909.17	2,181.91	2,454.65	3,000.13	3,545.61	4,091.08	4,909.30
Baginton	1,651.85	1,927.15	2,202.46	2,477.77	3,028.39	3,579.00	4,129.62	4,955.54
Barford, Sherbourne & Wasperton	1,665.15	1,942.68	2,220.20	2,497.73	3,052.78	3,607.83	4,162.88	4,995.46
Beausale, Haseley, Honiley & Wroxall	1,649.37	1,924.26	2,199.16	2,474.05	3,023.84	3,573.63	4,123.42	4,948.10
Bishops Tachbrook	1,649.36	1,924.25	2,199.15	2,474.04	3,023.83	3,573.61	4,123.40	4,948.08
Bubbenhall	1,652.99	1,928.48	2,203.98	2,479.48	3,030.48	3,581.47	4,132.47	4,958.96
Budbrooke	1,645.25	1,919.45	2,193.66	2,467.87	3,016.29	3,564.70	4,113.12	4,935.74
Burton Green	1,646.73	1,921.19	2,195.64	2,470.10	3,019.01	3,567.92	4,116.83	4,940.20
Bushwood	1,610.52	1,878.94	2,147.36	2,415.78	2,952.62	3,489.46	4,026.30	4,831.56
Cubbington	1,645.10	1,919.28	2,193.47	2,467.65	3,016.02	3,564.38	4,112.75	4,935.30
Eathorpe, Hunningham, Offchurch, Wappenbury	1,647.32	1,921.87	2,196.43	2,470.98	3,020.09	3,569.19	4,118.30	4,941.96
Hatton	1,622.73	1,893.18	2,163.64	2,434.09	2,975.00	3,515.91	4,056.82	4,868.18
Kenilworth	1,632.60	1,904.70	2,176.80	2,448.90	2,993.10	3,537.30	4,081.50	4,897.80
Lapworth	1,630.15	1,901.84	2,173.53	2,445.22	2,988.60	3,531.98	4,075.37	4,890.44
Royal Leamington Spa	1,630.51	1,902.26	2,174.01	2,445.76	2,989.26	3,532.76	4,076.27	4,891.52
Leek Wootton and Guy's Cliffe	1,684.87	1,965.68	2,246.49	2,527.30	3,088.92	3,650.54	4,212.17	5,054.60
Norton Lindsey	1,641.63	1,915.23	2,188.84	2,462.44	3,009.65	3,556.86	4,104.07	4,924.88
Old Milverton & Blackdown	1,640.79	1,914.25	2,187.72	2,461.18	3,008.11	3,555.04	4,101.97	4,922.36
Radford Semele	1,637.52	1,910.44	2,183.36	2,456.28	3,002.12	3,547.96	4,093.80	4,912.56
Rowington	1,636.63	1,909.41	2,182.18	2,454.95	3,000.49	3,546.04	4,091.58	4,909.90
Shrewley	1,628.51	1,899.92	2,171.34	2,442.76	2,985.60	3,528.43	4,071.27	4,885.52
Stoneleigh & Ashow	1,648.35	1,923.07	2,197.80	2,472.52	3,021.97	3,571.42	4,120.87	4,945.04
Warwick	1,647.61	1,922.22	2,196.82	2,471.42	3,020.62	3,569.83	4,119.03	4,942.84
Weston-under-Wetherley	1,659.94	1,936.60	2,213.25	2,489.91	3,043.22	3,596.54	4,149.85	4,979.82
Whitnash	1,673.48	1,952.39	2,231.31	2,510.22	3,068.05	3,625.87	4,183.70	5,020.44

Andrew Rollins, Chief Financial Officer, 25/02/2026

www.warwickdc.gov.uk

Council Tax 2026/27

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Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

CHESTER STREET, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Abbey Street to Corbett Street.

Reason for Order: Water pipe renewal works.

Order Commences: 7 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 8 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Abbey Street, Cambridge Street, Hunter Street, Corbett Street and vice versa.

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

D3131 ST. MATTHEWS STREET, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed in its entirety from Lawrence Sheriff Street.

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

Order Commences: 10 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 10 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: No suitable diversion. 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.

HOUTLON WAY, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: To safely enable manhole works to clear blockages.

Order Commences: 11 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 13 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Houlton Way, Crick Road, A5, Lilbourne Road, Main Street, Rugby Road, Vicarage Hill and vice versa.

Contractor: STW Sewerage, Tel: 03456 027 723.

ST JOHN STREET, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between Dale Street and Newbold Road.

Reason for Order: To enable boundary box installation works.

Order Commences: 9 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 10 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Dale Street, Hill Street, Newbold Road and vice versa.

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

MERE LANE, COPSTON MAGNA & WOLVEY

Order Effect: Roads closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: Works to renew water mains within the carriageway and verge.

Order Commences: 9 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 7 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Fosse Way, Watling Street, A5, Smockington Lane, Luttworth Road, Cloudestey Bush Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: Severn Trent Water, Tel: 08007 834 444.

PUBLIC FOOTPATH HAWLANDS, RUGBY

Order Effect: Footpath closed to all traffic between properties 52 and 110.

Reason for Order: Water mains renewal works.

Order Commences: 9 March 2026 for up to 6 months.

Anticipated Completion: 19 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Hawlands, Lloyd Road, Rydal Close and vice versa.

Contractor: Severn Trent Water, Tel: 08007 834 444.

SHAKESPEARE GARDENS, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: To enable works for repair to wastewater pipework.

Order Commences: 9 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 13 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Dunchurch Road, Overslade Lane, Shakespeare Gardens and vice versa.

Contractor: CSP, Tel: 03456 027 723.

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

D3421 LONG FURLONG, D3426 FAWLSLEY LEYS AND D3427 BADBY LEYS, RUGBY

Order Effect: Roads closed to vehicular traffic as follows: Long Furlong closed from Oren Leys to Charlesfield Road, Fawlsley Leys closed from Long Furlong to Staverton Leys, Badby Leys closed from Fawlsley Leys to o/s nos 19 & 20.

Reason for Order: Carriageway resurfacing and associated works, weekdays 09.00hrs-15.00hrs.

Order Commences: 25 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 30 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Diversions will be signed using Staverton Leys, Oren Leys, A426 Dunchurch Road, Kingsway and Anderson Avenue.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

LEICESTER ROAD, GIBBET HILL, CHURCHOVER

Order Effect: A 30 mph Speed Limit will be imposed from A5 Gibbet Hill roundabout to Luttworth Road. In addition, a temporary one-way south westerly traffic flow will be imposed from A5 Gibbet Hill roundabout to Rugby Interchange.

Reason for Order: To safely enable new supply works.

Order Commences: 24 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 26 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Leicester Road, M6 Junction 1 to M1 Junction 19 On Slip, Newbold Road, Rugby Western Relief Road, Lawford Road, Warwick Street, Corporation Street, Lawrence Sheriff Street, Dunchurch Road, Rugby Road, Southam Road, Southam By Pass, Daventry Road, Shuckburgh Road, Napton Road, Main Street, Park Hill, A425 Daventry Road, A425 Staverton Road, Leamington Way, Steney Way, A361 Badby Road West, London Road, Weedon Road, A45 Daventry Link Road, Watling Street, A5.

Contractor: Network Plus, Tel: 01392261 362.

HORTON CRESCENT, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: The erection of scaffolding and building works on the Rugby School site.

Order Commences: 23 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 29 May 2026.

Access & Diversion: Horton Crescent and vice versa.

Contractor: Rugby School Estates Dept., Tel: 0702 357 854.

D3141 VICTORIA AVENUE, RUGBY (ONE-WAY STREET)

Order Effect: Road closed between Edward Street and Avenue Road.

Reason for Order: Carriageway resurfacing works. Road closed 09.00hrs-15.30hrs.

Order Commences: 23 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 26 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: One Way Diversion - Edward Street, Gladstone Street and Avenue Road. 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.

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

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

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 05 March 2026

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. The works relating to this speed limit were delayed but have now been rescheduled as follows: 16-31 March 2026.

Order Commenced: 12 January 2026 for up to 18 months.

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

VICARAGE ROAD, NAPTON-ON-THE-HILL

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: To safely enable installation of an inline washout.

Order Commences: 7 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 8 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Vicarage Road, Butt Hill, Southam Road, Daventry Road, Welsh Road East, Holt Road, Napton Holt Road, Thomtons Lane, Chapel Green Road, New Street, High Street, Hackwell Street and vice versa.

Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 0330 008 0820.

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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.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

A45 BIRMINGHAM ROAD WESTBOUND ON SLIP, MERIDEN

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from County Boundary to A45 Birmingham Road.

Reason for Order: Carriageway resurfacing and associated works, overnight 20.00hrs - 06.00hrs.

Order Commences: 6 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 9 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: B4104 (Birmingham Road, Hampton Lane) and A452 Kenilworth Road Northbound to Stonebridge Roundabout.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

A45 (EASTBOUND) SLIP ROAD ON STONEBRIDGE ROUNDABOUT, GREAT PACKINGTON

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from the County Boundary to the A45.

Reason for Order: Carriageway resurfacing works.

Order Commences: 10 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 22 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: A452 Stonebridge Roundabout, A45 Westbound to M42 Junction 6 Roundabout and A45 Eastbound. Vehicular access & egress will be maintained where possible and safe to do so for businesses and residents only.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415302.

CHAPEL LANE, BARNACLE

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: To enable works for renewal of a water pipe.

Order Commences: 11 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 13 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: No diversion available.

Contractor: Chevron TM Ltd, Tel: 0330 008 0820.

WESTON LANE, BUBBENHALL

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: Works to rebuild water hydrant chamber.

Order Commences: 9 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 11 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Weston Lane, Rugby Road, Kenilworth Road, Leicester Lane, Leamington Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Chevron Traffic Management Ltd, Tel: 0330 008 0820.

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

WOOD END LANE, FILLONGLEY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: Works to cut trench in carriageway and reinstatement works.

Order Commences: 27 March 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 9 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Wood End Lane, Astley Lane, Coventry Road, Nuneaton Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Vocom, Tel: 03333 448308.

SANDY LANE, FILLONGLEY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: To safely enable tree felling works.

Order Commences: 24 March 2026

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City post loss as accounts published

FOOTBALL: COVENTRY City have posted a pre-tax loss of £21.6million for the 2024/25 season, according to the club's published accounts.

The Sky Blues increased turnover by almost \$5million to just over £34million owing to improved gate receipts, broadcast revenue and commercial income.

The club's run to the play-off semi-finals saw match receipts alone increase by almost £2.5million.

However, operating expenses increased by \$5.6million to around \$32million through what the club described as "continued investment in the playing squad".

Expenses also increased due to the compensation costs involved in sacking former boss Mark Robins and appointing Frank Lampard as his successor.

Profit from player sales decreased by £20million to just over £3million compared to the previous financial year.

Coventry also said "significant external investment" alongside "reinvesting the funds generated from the high-profile sales of the 23/24 season" have enabled the club to build meaningful "squad value".

The club also believe the estimated current transfer market value of the squad vastly exceeds the figure stated on the balance sheet.

The club filed accounts for the year ended May 31, 2025.

Coventry owner and executive chairman, Doug King said: "As I highlighted in last year's accounts release, the operat-

ing position (EBITDA number) remains significant and longer term unsustainable.

"Having said that, the club has desperately needed this three-year period (since takeover in January 2023) of inward investment and owner support to rebuild key-infrastructure, squad value and revenues.

"The club could and would never have been competitively sustainable if this had not been done. As is evident for all, Coventry City was languishing well below its potential and had been for a long time.

"Moving forward with the newly-acquired arena now as an asset, the goal of our club is to significantly reduce the annual operating loss from the 26/27 season onwards whilst remaining competitive at the top end of the Championship and reaching our goal of a play-off berth three times in every five years.

"Whilst the Championship remains grossly distorted by the Premier League parachute payment scheme, this is the only realistic target.

"Coventry has built strong foundations over the last three years. It is the best supported club in the Championship, and its revenue growth will continue to meaningfully increase to sustain the competitiveness of the club despite the unlevel playing field of our current league.

"No one said it was easy but with the continued support of all our great fans and commercial partners, I remain bullish for our future."

United out of Vase

COVENTRY United's historic run in the FA Vase came to an end at the quarter-final stage following a 3-0 defeat at AFC Stoneham.

A brace from Mat Bainbridge either side of Oliver Jenkins' goal brought an end to United's run in the competition at Stoneham Lane.

United's quest for a place in the semi-finals was made all the more difficult following Charlie Faulkner's red card just before the half-hour mark with the visitors already a goal behind.

Coventry had never previously gone beyond the fourth round stage of the competition but entertained greatly en route to the last eight.

However, Wessex Football League Premier Division leaders Stoneham proved a step too far for Terry Anderson's side.

The home side broke the deadlock on 21 minutes when Bainbridge ran onto Duarte Martins' chest down and lashed a shot into the roof of the net from 15-yards out.

And Coventry then had Faulkner sent off six minutes later after the referee deemed the striker to make a reckless challenge on Stoneham keeper Callum Lee.

Stoneham made the most of the man advantage on 38 minutes when Jenkins finished at the second attempt from close range after United goalkeeper Dan Moore made a fine initial stop.

And Stoneham sealed their place in the last four on 74 minutes when Moore failed to gather Lewis Nagle's cross from the right and Bainbridge pounced to score his second of the game.

Blaze stun Belfast to reach first Challenge Cup final in 19 years

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

ICE HOCKEY: COVENTRY Blaze stunned Belfast Giants to claim a 9-5 aggregate victory and reach the Challenge Cup final.

Blaze claimed a 6-3 second leg victory in the rearranged tie to book their place in the Challenge Cup final for the first time since the 2006/07 campaign.

Coventry will play Nottingham Panthers in the final of the competition on Wednesday, March 18 with the face-off at 7.30pm at Motorpoint Arena.

Blaze came into the second leg clash with a one-goal advantage following a 3-2 first leg victory in Coventry.

And the visitors made a strong start as Giants netminder Jake Kupsky made a series of fine saves before Belfast spurned the game's first powerplay opportunity.

However, Belfast levelled the game on aggregate at 10.42 when Carsen Twarynski finished into an open net after Brandon Whistle produced a toe drag to evade the Blaze defence.

Coventry responded at 17.36 as Matthew Gleason capitalised on a defensive error to win the race to a loose puck and break clear before finding the net.

Gleason almost doubled his tally for the game on the powerplay early in the second period only for Kupsky to make a crucial save.

However, Belfast could not deny Gleason his second of the game at 30.34 as he reacted quickest to fire a loose puck through traffic and stretch Coventry's

Coventry Blaze head coach Kevin Moore has guided the club to their fourth Challenge Cup final. Picture by Scott Wiggins.



aggregate lead.

And Blaze moved three goals ahead on aggregate at 36.12 as Jere Vertanen's shot beat Kupsky to leave the home side stunned.

Coventry took full control of the tie in the third period at 43.47 when Alessio Luciani converted on a breakaway to give the visitors a four-goal cushion.

The Giants threatened a late comeback as Ryan Smith pulled a goal back at 53.22 with less than seven minutes left to play.

Belfast pulled netminder Kupsky for an extra skater with five minutes remaining and the gamble paid off at 55.16 when Twarynski grabbed his sec-

ond of the game.

Blaze still held a two-goal aggregate lead and Grayston Constable finished into an empty net at 56.04 to dash Belfast's comeback hopes.

The home side pulled Kupsky again in the closing stages only for Colton Saucerman to fire into an empty net with nine seconds remaining to seal Blaze's place in the final.

Coventry are next in action against Sheffield Steelers on Saturday, March 7 with the face-off at 7pm at Utilita Arena.

Blaze then host Nottingham Panthers on Sunday, March 8 with the face-off at 5.30pm at the Skydome Arena.

Butts Park Arena to be renamed in honour of former rugby director at ceremony this month

RUGBY UNION: COVENTRY Rugby will rename their Butts Park Arena home in memory of former club director Nick Newbold.

The club's ground will be known as the Nick Newbold Stadium from Saturday, March 21.

A naming ceremony will take place before the club's home fixture against Doncaster Knights.

Newbold died in February last year at the age of 62 and spent 17 years working for Coventry Rugby.

Coventry chairman, Jon Sharp said: "I knew Nick - 'Nobby' - for well over 30 years, the last 16 or so being when he served on the board of this club so well.

"Fun, kind, caring, cheerful, mischievous, chaotic, dedicated, enthusiastic, brilliant! I am delighted for the club to honour him and his legacy in this way."

The family and friends of Newbold added: "The Newbold family are incredibly proud to have Nick's name forever linked to the club and city he loved so much.

"We all miss him every day, but the stadium renaming ensures the Nick Newbold legacy will live on, continuing to support the city he cared about so deeply."

Newbold also served as chair of trustees at Sky Blues in the Community - the official charity arm of Coventry City.

The Coventry native was a lifelong

supporter of the club.

He was also a member of the Acorns Coventry fundraising group in aid of Acorns Children's Hospice.

COV TRIUMPH IN THRILLER

On the pitch, Murray Davidson's late try earned Coventry Rugby a thrilling 40-36 bonus point victory away at Amphill.

Davidson touched down late on at Dillingham Park as Tommy Mathews, Senitiki Nayalo, Jordan Poole, Morgan Strong and Api Bavadra all crossed for tries for the visitors.

The home side ran in five tries of their own to come away from the fixture with two bonus points.

And the result means Coventry sit fourth in the Champ Rugby table, just six points behind second-placed Bedford Blues.

Amphill scored the game's first try after 11 minutes as Josh Barton ran a sharp line from a scrum to dot down and then kicked the first of three conversions.

Coventry responded on 19 minutes when Mathews finished a flowing move which involved Allan Ferrie and Strong.

However, the home side scored their second try just over a minute later as Toota Auvaava powered over.

The visitors drew level on the half-hour mark when Nayalo applied the finishing touch to sustained pressure

as Mathews kicked the first of five conversions.

Amphill reclaimed the lead just before half time as Barton slotted a penalty between the posts to nudge the home side into a three-point lead at the break.

And the home side scored their third try three minutes into the second half as Oscar Wilson finished under the posts following a break.

Coventry responded three minutes later when Poole crashed over from close range from a driving maul.

And the visitors took the lead for the first time on 50 minutes as Strong dotted down from Ewan Baker's storming break to score Coventry's bonus point try.

The lead changed hands again on the hour mark when Wilson crossed for his second try of the game.

Coventry went back in front just over a minute later as Bavadra sliced through the line to score after Tom Bacon executed a 50:22 kick.

The tries continued to flow when Joe Heslop crossed for Amphill on 68 minutes as he squeezed over in the corner.

However, Alex Rae's side took the points with the game's decisive try five minutes later when replacement Davidson grounded a textbook move from a driving maul.

Coventry are next in action at home against Doncaster Knights on Saturday, March 21 with kick-off at 3pm.

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Valley held to draw by bottom side St Neots

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: RUGBY Town failed to ease their relegation fears after seeing a late penalty saved in a 2-2 draw away at bottom side St Neots Town.

Valley fell behind to Rhys Thorpe's goal only for Jamal Adams and Sam Tye to turn the game in the away side's favour at Kester Way.

However, Robbie Parker scored a penalty just past the hour mark to restore parity in a result which does little to help either side in the battle to avoid relegation.

Valley spurned a golden chance to take the points late on as Caine Elliott saw his late penalty saved by St Neots goalkeeper James Goff.

The result means Rugby remain 21st in the



Northern Premier League Midlands relegation zone, three points from safety.

Basement club St Neots broke the deadlock on 22 minutes when Thorpe headed in Sam Willis's deep cross from the right from inside the six-yard box.

However, the visitors drew level seven minutes later as Adams reacted quickest after Goff could only parry Trey Charles' initial

effort from the edge of the penalty area.

And Valley completed the turnaround one minute before half time when Tye powered a header into the net from seven-yards out from Teddy Rowe's cross.

St Neots equalised on 63 minutes as Parker scored from the penalty spot after the referee penalised Nathan Kabeya for a challenge on Harvey Williams in the box.

However, Rugby won a penalty of their own 10 minutes later as Charlie Bowen upended Kobi Bivens in the area and the referee pointed to the spot.

But Elliott saw his penalty saved by Goff as Valley ended their five-game losing run but missed the chance to earn just a second victory since the turn of the year.

Rugby are next in action against AFC Rushden and Diamonds on Saturday, March 7 with kick-off at 3pm at Butlin Road.

A frustrated Trey Charles is flagged offside. Picture by Martin Pulley.

Bears on tour as new season nears

WARWICKSHIRE CCC's men's side are ramping up their pre-season preparations with the club currently on a two-week tour of South Africa.

The Bears headed to Stellenbosch and Cape Town earlier this week and will play six T20 fixtures and two red-ball two-day games across the two-week period.

Warwickshire play Western Province in the first of three double-header T20 days on March 7 at the iconic Newlands Cricket Ground beneath Table Mountain and Devil's Peak.

The Bears then face Loughborough UCCE and Durham UCCE (March 10) and Northamptonshire (March 13) at Maties Cricket Ground in Stellenbosch.

The two-day games will also take place at Maties Cricket Ground, with two

Bears teams being fielded simultaneously against Essex and Western Province on adjacent pitches.

Aside from Jacob Bethell and Dan Mousley, who are both on varying England duties, a full complement of Bears will be in attendance.

Warwickshire's first team coach, Ian Westwood said: "We're all excited to travel down to South Africa, with preparations really ramping up."

"It's been a good winter, with lots of impactful work done at Edgbaston, but nothing truly replicates playing matches and training outdoors, so we're looking forward to seeing the squad in action."

The Bears return from the tour on March 18 with Warwickshire to begin the competitive season against Surrey just 16 days later.

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