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

Campaign will provide light in the darkness for town tunnel



Rugby MP John Slinger says the lack of lighting in the Mill Road tunnel is 'hazardous'.

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

A 'DANGEROUSLY' under-lit tunnel in Rugby is set to brighten up thanks to a local campaign led by the town's MP.

Safety lighting upgrades for the Mill Road tunnel - which runs under the town's railway station - are set to be installed this summer.

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) will install the new lighting,

with funding coming from the government's £104million local transport investment programme.

Rugby MP John Slinger welcomed the move, having raised the issue repeatedly with the council and Network Rail alongside Coun Sarah Feeney, who represents Rugby's Benn ward at WCC.

Mr Slinger said: "I kept raising this because residents told me it was dangerous - something that I also know from personal experience.

"Mill Road tunnel is used by hundreds of people every day. The lighting was genuinely hazardous, especially on bright days when you go from sunshine to near-darkness in seconds.

"I wrote to the council, I raised it on social media, I met with Network Rail, I took it to the CEO of Warwickshire County Council. I am glad we have got a result, and I want to thank Coun Sarah Feeney who has been championing this locally for a long time.

Coun Feeney added: "Last year we had cat's eyes added to the road, but we have been trying to ensure better, safer lighting for several years.

"Having nearly witnessed an accident in the narrow part of the tunnel, I believe that this will help to make everyone safer."

Mr Slinger has also submitted proposals for a safe crossing on Coventry Road near Nature Trails Nursery, improved road markings on the A426, and better pedestrian

safety measures approaching Bilton on the B4642.

He added: "Mill Road Tunnel is sorted, but I am not stopping there. Road safety is not glamorous, but it matters to every parent, pedestrian, and driver in Rugby. If you have a road safety concern in the constituency, tell me. I will raise it."

Installation of the upgraded lighting is expected this summer, pending relevant approvals from Warwickshire County Council and Network Rail.

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An artist's impression of the proposed new base for Warwickshire's Air Ambulance Service.

Air ambulance needs new base

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

THE LIFE-SAVING charity which provides air ambulance services across Warwickshire wants people to keep it airborne by helping fund a new base of operations.

The Air Ambulance Service for Warwickshire has launched an appeal to help it build a new base outside Catthorpe, near the border between

Warwickshire, Leicestershire and Northamptonshire.

The charity launches many of its missions from Coventry Airbase, which is scheduled to close this summer to make way for the Coventry and Warwick Gigapark battery production and tech site.

The charity, which responded to 470 emergencies in Warwickshire last year, despite receiving no NHS funding, says the new base would mean faster response times for patients, new crew facilities and family-friendly spaces for aftercare and recovery support.

The Air Ambulance Service

chief executive, Peta Wilkinson, said: "A quarter of the UK population say they know someone that has been helped by an air ambulance but a mission doesn't start when we take to the air – it starts with someone choosing to support their local air ambulance charity."

"We have always needed to use rented premises for our helicopters and rapid response vehicles but this is no longer sustainable. We urgently need a permanent base that is owned by the charity so we can secure our future and continue to provide care in the air in the fastest time possible."

"This site in Catthorpe is perfect as it lies at the centre of the three counties with superb access to the M1 and M6. Because of the vital nature of the project, we are investing substantially from our reserves but hope that we can count on the support of the communities we help."

"Businesses, organisations and individuals can all contribute in a variety of ways to what we are calling our Big Bases Appeal but every penny will provide security for a service that any one of us may need one day."

The charity says the new base

would bring economic and social value to the region by creating local jobs and supply chain opportunities during construction. It would also provide highly skilled clinical roles and specialist training for local NHS partners and would be a learning hub for advanced, pre-hospital emergency medicine.

Plans for the base include a national operations centre for children's transfers, incident simulation rooms and crew welfare facilities.

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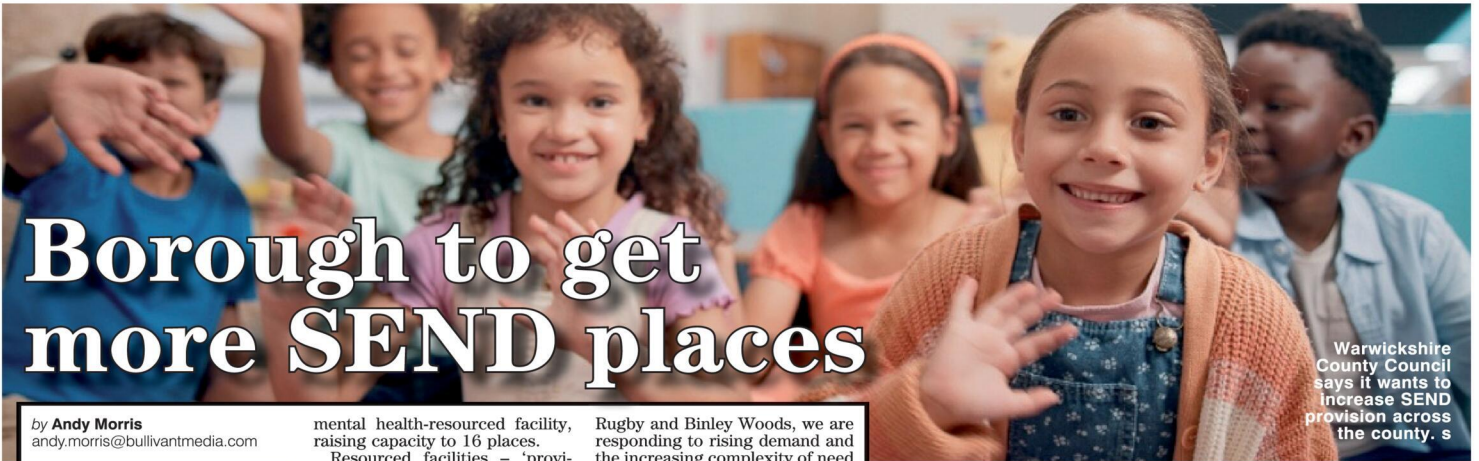


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See page **30**



Borough to get more SEND places

Warwickshire County Council says it wants to increase SEND provision across the county.

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

RUGBY borough will receive more school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Warwickshire County Council's cabinet has allocated £321,000 for new SEND provision at Binley Woods Primary School, Brownsver Community School, St Oswald's CofE Academy and Padox Primary School.

At Binley Woods, 10 new places will be established for pupils with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) whose primary needs are communication and interaction (C&I), backed by £118,000.

A new, eight-place, £87,000 C&I-resourced facility will start at Brownsver Community School.

A similar, £116,000 site will be established at St Oswald's CofE Academy, subject to Department for Education approval of a required 'significant-change' application.

At Padox Primary School, two new places will be added to the existing social, emotional and

mental health-resourced facility, raising capacity to 16 places.

Resourced facilities – 'provisions' are specialist spaces at mainstream schools which aim to give children inclusive mainstream education while accessing targeted support.

Demand for specialist provision in Warwickshire is growing, with the number of pupils with EHCPs increasing by nine per cent annually over the past five years.

Increase

The council aims to increase the number of resourced provision places to more than 500 by 2028.

Councillor Wayne Briggs, portfolio holder for education at Warwickshire County Council, said: "We are committed to ensuring that children and young people with SEND can access the right support in the right place at the right time.

"The decisions taken by cabinet will increase specialist resourced provision within mainstream schools, helping more children to thrive in their local communities.

"By investing in additional high-quality resourced provision across

Rugby and Binley Woods, we are responding to rising demand and the increasing complexity of need while supporting inclusive education and improving outcomes for pupils and families."

The three new schemes will be funded from the council's high-needs provision capital allocation.

Coun Stephen Shaw, portfolio holder for finance and property at Warwickshire County Council, said: "This targeted investment, of £321,000, demonstrates our continued commitment to using our capital funding responsibly and strategically to meet the growing demand for specialist provision.

"By expanding resourced provision within existing school sites, we are making effective use of our assets, ensuring value for money and helping to reduce longer-term pressures on the high-needs budget – including transport costs – while delivering improved local access for families."

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/special-educational-needs-disabilities-send for more information about SEND provision in Warwickshire.

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Colleges group being turned around

WARWICKSHIRE College Group (WCG) has bounced back from being on the verge of bankruptcy.

The group – which teaches 11,500 students at colleges in Leamington, Moreton Morrell, Rugby and Warwick – plus Pershore, in Worcestershire – received a financial bailout package from the government in 2024.

A Department for Education (DfE) report at the time stated the college urgently needed £1.7million to keep running. WCG also asked for government help to refinance the remainder of a £3million loan it was at risk of defaulting on.

Wages were highlighted as a major reason for WCG's travails. The DfE report described payroll as "significantly above budget" and accounting for more than 70 per cent of the group's total income of £51.6million in the previous financial year.



Chief executive and principal Sara-Jane Watkins has hailed a new era for Warwickshire College Group.

That prompted the DfE to issue a 'notice to improve' (Nti), severely limiting WCG's control over how it operated.

Eighteen months on, however, the DfE has confirmed the Nti has been lifted, allowing WCG to again access funds and development opportunities previously restricted by its 'intervention status'.

WCG chief executive and principal Sara-Jane Watkins – who took up the job in September 2024 and who was praised in the original, damning DfE report for her 'posi-

tive, joined up approach to leadership and governance" – said lifting of the Nti marked a new era.

She told *The Observer*: "Moving out of intervention is a pivotal moment for WCG.

"It demonstrates the DfE's confidence in our recovery and strategic direction. This progress is the result of an incredible collective effort from our new executive team, and staff across all our campuses.

"We have moved at a rapid pace to address inherited financial issues, making tough decisions to ensure we have a sustainable foundation.

"Our commitment to our communities, staff and students remains resolute. I would also like to note the support provided by the further education commissioner's team (at the DfE) throughout this process has been excellent."

During the intervention, WCG underwent a major leadership restructuring, appointing new campus principals at every site.

Addressing the financial problems involved the closure of Evesham College and the consolidation of its provision into Pershore College.

WCG has now agreed a post intervention monitoring and support plan with the further education commissioner, to ensure future progress.

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Colleagues Hassan Ali and Hayley Cotter were in the pink at Barratt Homes in Upper Lighthorne.

Thinking pink to help out

BIG-hearted staff at Barratt Homes in south Warwickshire donned their pink protective gear for Breast Cancer Now's Wear it Pink day.

The colleagues at the Aston Grange site in Upper Lighthorne also contributed £500 towards the charity's research and services.

Managing director Adrian Evans said: "We have loved organising Wear it Pink days on our developments over the years and are proud to continue to support Breast Cancer Now."

"At Barratt Homes, we do our best to sup-

port and uplift Breast Cancer Now and we encourage anyone interested to join us in raising money to fund the vital research to beat breast cancer."

Wear it Pink was first introduced more than 20 years ago and has raised over £43 million for Breast Cancer Now. The charity helps towards funding cutting edge research across the UK and Ireland to help find a cure for breast cancer at all stages. Its mission is to make sure that by 2050, everyone with breast cancer lives and is well-supported.

Council leader vows to go on after vote win

THE LEADER of Warwickshire County Council has vowed to get on with his job after surviving a vote of no confidence.

Nineteen-year-old George Finch's future as leader saw him hang on by a single vote at a full meeting of WCC on Tuesday (March 17).

A total of 26 councillors voted in favour of removing Coun Finch as leader, but 27 voted against, with two abstentions.

Coun Finch, who was appointed to the top position at WCC last summer, faced the vote after being accused of bringing the authority "into disrepute".

Green Party councillors called for a vote on Coun Finch's position amid suggestions the Reform UK councillor had "abused the office of leader".

Warwickshire Green Party group leader Coun Jonathan Chilvers said the motion had been submitted due to incidents including a dispute with police over their handling of a case involving the rape of a 12 year-old girl in Nuneaton by an Afghan asylum seeker, and a row with the council's chief executive, Monica Fogarty, over the flying of Pride flags at WCC's Shire Hall headquarters in Warwick.

Coun Chilvers continued: "George Finch has abused the office of leader of the council and time and again brought Warwickshire into disrepute."

"His repeated attacks on staff, partner institutions and use of his role for constant cheap and nasty political points scoring is unac-

ceptable and violates rule of law, democratic norms and basic decency."

Of the 55 councillors who attended the full council meeting, two independent councillors, 19 Reform councillors and six Conservative councillors voted against the motion.

Fourteen Liberal Democrat councillors, one Conservative, six Green, three Labour and two independent councillors voted in favour.

Two Restore Britain councillors abstained from voting.

After the vote, Coun Finch said the result of the motion was what the electorate had voted for, and what had happened in the council chambers would not affect how the authority was run.

He continued: "We are in a minority administration and we do have to work with other parties and we've shown that from day one."

"To be honest with you, I don't want to waste any more time on things like that."

"I want to make sure the people get the county council that's working for them and that's what I'm committed to do. I don't want to waste any more time talking about it or going over it, because that's not what the people voted us in for."

Coun Finch added: "There has been terminology I could have used better and I take that on board, but again I still agree 100 per cent with what I was saying."

"Everyone slips up every now and again and that's real life, we're human."

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Jason Wills. Images courtesy of West Midlands Police. s



David Ball.

'County lines' dealers jailed

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

'PURELY motivated by greed' – a drug dealer and his accomplices have been jailed for a total of more than 30 years after moving vast amounts of class A drugs through Coventry and Warwickshire.

Daniel Wheeler, 38, of Nuneaton, who led a drugs line named after him, made more than £750,000 profit from his operation.

The 'Wheeler line' saw the 38-year-old co-ordinate a network of drivers and runners to carry out drug deals on his behalf and drive him around the country.

Selling 0.5-gram to one-ounce units of cocaine, Wheeler and his underlings would keep people indebted to them by threatening anyone who couldn't pay their debts.

Wheeler was joined in his operation by Coventrymen David Ball, 39, of Fletchamstead Highway; Jason Wills, 40, of Burnaby Road; Liaquat Hussain, 48, of Middlemarch Road; and Anthony Hooper, 36, of Guilsborough Road, who each carried out a different role within the drugs line.

Ball was Wheeler's driver and allowed him to use one of his bank accounts to launder his drug profits while Wills and Hussain operated as street-level dealers.

Hooper also allowed Wheeler to use his bank account to launder more than £100,000.

An investigation into the drugs line, involving Coventry local policing area and West Midlands Police's county lines taskforce, established the gang had sold at least 10 kg of cocaine in 11 months.

In May 2023, Wheeler was arrested from a car in Coventry where he was found to be in possession of a phone linked to the

drugs line as well as money and a key to a nearby house in which police found a large amount of cocaine.

More cocaine, and chemicals used for cutting the drugs, were found at the addresses of the other suspects, as well as more phones and bank cards linked to illicit accounts.

Wheeler, Ball, Wills and Hussain received jail sentences ranging from 12 years and eight months to four years and three months, for conspiracy to supply class A drugs.

Hooper was given a suspended sentence of 20 months for money laundering.

Det Cons David Cockbill, from West Midlands Police's county lines taskforce, said: "Wheeler operated an incredibly busy and sophisticated cocaine line throughout Coventry and the surrounding area.

"He was purely motivated by greed; exploiting and threatening vulnerable people to further his drug business and avoid police detection.

"He showed no care for the misery his drugs inflicted on the community and was happy to threaten violence to keep people in line.

"The lengthy sentences reflect the amount of harm he and his associates caused."

A West Midlands Police spokesperson added: "Our teams across the West Midlands work round the clock to identify, investigate and prosecute suspected county lines drug dealers.

"These criminals exploit vulnerable people, including children, and inflict misery on them and their families by introducing them to a life of crime.

"If you have suspicions a young person you know might be at risk of exploitation, let us know, via 101."

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/ynju7xfu> for more information on county lines drug dealing.



Daniel Wheeler.



Anthony Hooper.



Liaquat Hussain.

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WHERE THINGS FOR YOUR GARDEN WON'T COST YOU THE EARTH

Clubs pay tribute to rugby ace fundraiser

by Sarah Mason
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HEARTFELT tributes have been paid to a former rugby player who raised more than £1.5million to help others going through a similar diagnosis as him.

Ex-Coventry Rugby Club player Matt Gallagher died on March 8 – two-and-a-half years after being diagnosed with Motor Neurone Disease (MND).

Matt, from Solihull, and his family set up the Matt Gallagher Foundation after he was diagnosed in October 2023, to raise money to support more than 100 families living with MND.

Matt's family said they were "heartbroken" by the news their "devoted husband, loving father and unbelievable role model" had died. They said: "Matt wasn't just the driving force behind the Matt Gallagher Foundation, he was an unbelievable role model, a devoted husband, and a loving father. His

courage and compassion inspired everyone who knew him, showing what it truly means to live with kindness at the very heart of who you are.

"Through the foundation, Matt brought people together, raised awareness for MND and supported over 100 families, all while facing his own battles with remarkable bravery. With over £1.6 million raised, his legacy of hope and generosity is immeasurable.

'Sleep tight'

"We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported the foundation and shown so much love. This is more than a legacy, it is the mark of a true hero. We love you Dad and we will carry you in our hearts forever. Sleep tight."

Since the launch of the foundation, Solihull has come together in Matt's name to raise funds.

Activities have included a charity cricket match, an annual ball, a 3km run, a burpee world record attempt and the Solihull School



The Solihull community came together to help Matt raise more than £1.5m for others with MND. s

Matt attended dedicating its annual charity week to his fund.

Paying tribute, Solihull School said: "Matt Gallagher was an integral part of the Solihull School community as a pupil, a parent, a friend to many of us and a brilliant rugby coach.

"Many of the students he coached will remember his encouragement, his determination and his belief in them. We will continue to support the foundation he set up after his MND diagnosis."

Matt began playing at Solihull Rugby Club aged five and went on to play for Birmingham Bees by the age of 18.

He continued his career at Sheffield Hallam, where he won the British Polytechnic Cup twice, and at Nottingham Rugby Club, playing in the Championship at the

age of 20.

He signed for Coventry RFC in 1996, playing more than 100 games before leaving in 2001 and concluding his rugby career at Birmingham and Solihull, in 2003.

Coventry Rugby Club said: "Matt was a valued member of the Coventry rugby family whose connection with the club spanned far beyond his time on the field.

"While many supporters will remember him as a talented full-back who made 100 appearances for the club, after joining in 1996, those who knew him best will remember him for his character, kindness and the way he brought people together.

"Everyone at Coventry Rugby sends their heartfelt condolences to Matt's family, friends and all those connected with the Matt Gallagher

Foundation at this incredibly difficult time. He will be greatly missed across the rugby community."

Birmingham and Solihull RFC said: "Matt was a valued member of the B&S family, and rugby more widely, and will be remembered fondly by teammates, friends, and all who knew him around the club. His courage and determination in the face of motor neurone disease inspired many.

"Through The Matt Gallagher Foundation, he helped raise awareness and support for those affected by MND across the Midlands and we are proud the club has been able to play a small part in supporting its work. Our thoughts and heartfelt condolences are with Matt's family, friends and loved ones at this incredibly difficult time."

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Gun fanatic made own ammo at home

by Ian Hughes
ian.hughes@bullivantmedia.com

A GUN-OBSESSED 'doomsday prepper' caught with a pistol and home-made ammunition has been jailed.

Slovakian national Stefan Fenyes was sentenced to five years for possessing a gun and manufacturing live ammunition following a National Crime Agency (NCA) investigation.

The 47-year-old told NCA investigators he had a keen interest in survivalism and doomsday prepping.

Fenyes came to the attention of the NCA after making 227 separate online orders for items that could be used to manufacture live ammunition.

Orders included tools to reload fired rounds, specially-made brushes to clean gun barrels and boxes for storing ammunition.

Fenyes was swiftly arrested, on March 20 in Leamington, at his place of work.

His Cattell Road home was searched and NCA officers recovered a viable Czech-manufactured pistol complete with a loaded magazine and rounds of live ammunition.

Other items seized from the address included gun barrels and component parts, as well as the tools Fenyes had ordered online to manufacture live ammunition.

He also had military survival guidebooks and a series of items relating to hunting and archery, including a collection of crossbows and knives.

In interview, Fenyes claimed to have sent the pistol to himself by mistake during a 2024 trip to Slovakia when, unbeknown to him, he claimed, it was in a fishing-tackle box he posted to his UK address.

He told NCA investigators he was in the process of learning how to manufacture ammunition as it would be useful knowledge if the UK was invaded by a foreign state, or in a scenario of large-scale civil unrest.

Rick Mackenzie, NCA senior investigating officer, said: "Stefan Fenyes is clearly obsessed with guns and was intent on assembling an arsenal of weapons.

"Our investigation has, crucially, removed a lethal firearm from criminal circulation, as well as live ammunition.

"While gun crime in the UK is among the lowest in the world, suppressing the availability of illegal firearms to criminals is a priority for the NCA."



Fenyes had potentially lethal crossbows. s



He also had a collection of knives. s



NCA investigators recovered a pistol and an arsenal of weapons. s



Doomsday prepper Stefan Fenyes has been jailed for five years. s



Fenyes had been manufacturing ammunition at home. s

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at

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Photo by Andrew Moore

Spring into Lego
Until 12 April



Photo by Jamie Gray

Big Blue Blocks
Until 12 April



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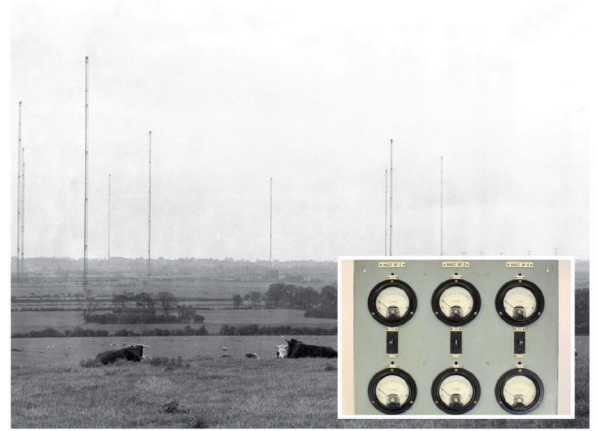
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Rugby Radio Station, photographed in 1933. s



A photograph of the Rugby Radio Station masts taken from Lilbourne Road in the 1950s, by Rodney H Huntingford and, inset The Rugby Radio Station mast alarm panel, dating back to the 1920s. s

How Rugby ruled the airwaves

by **Andy Morris**
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A NEW exhibition explores how Rugby ruled the airwaves 100 years ago, when Rugby Radio Station was at the cutting edge of global telecommunications.

Opening at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum on Wednesday, April 15, 100 Years of Rugby Radio celebrates the centenary of the station and features a treasure trove of apparatus, models and images from the museum's social history

collection, dating back to 1926. Rugby Radio Station became operational on January 1, 1926, with its GBR transmitter – then the world's most powerful radio transmitter – sending news broadcasts and telegrams worldwide.

A year later, the station started transmitting the iconic time-signal 'pips' from the Royal Greenwich Observatory and launched the world's first transatlantic telephone service – with calls costing £15 for the first three minutes (the equivalent of more than £600 today).

During the Second World War,

Rugby Radio Station operatives supported the RAF during bombing missions in Germany. The post-war telecommunications boom saw the radio station expand in the 1950s, with its 57 transmitters making it the biggest station in the world.

Technological advances led to the station's GBR transmitter being decommissioned in 2003. Four years later, transmissions from the station came to an end.

Now home to the Houlton housing development – named after the town in Maine, USA, which received the first transatlantic

telephone call – the site's developers incorporated Rugby Radio Station's grade II listed C building into Houlton School.

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke, Rugby Borough Council spokesperson for partnerships and well-being, said: "Everyone of a certain vintage remembers the radio station's 250m masts dominating the skyline as you returned to Rugby via the M1 or the West Coast Mainline, a reassuring reminder you were nearly home."

"But 100 years ago, Rugby Radio Station placed the borough at the heart of telecommunica-

tions across the world, pioneering the first commercial, transatlantic telephone service and communicating vital information to Royal Navy ships."

Coun O'Rourke's Liberal Democrat counterpart Coun Neil Sandison said: "This new exhibition gives visitors the chance to discover the rich history of Rugby Radio Station and find out how Rugby once ruled the airwaves."

The exhibition runs from until Saturday, October 3.

Visit www.ragm.co.uk for more about exhibitions and events at Rugby Art Gallery and Museum.



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Winners, supporters and attendees at this year's Coventry Health and Wellbeing Awards. s

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

VOLUNTEERS were among the people and organisations honoured at the Coventry Health and Wellbeing Awards.

At the event, held on behalf of the city council's health and wellbeing board, 25 awards were given out – including 12 for outstanding contributions to health and wellbeing, and eight from the chair of the board.

Damon Croft, from the Bell Green Amateur Boxing Gym which started in January last year, was among five volunteers to win prizes. Damon – who helps train 55 youngsters weekly, up from

two initial members – said: "I'm absolutely delighted to receive this award. I've seen the Bell Green Boxing Gym expand and I volunteer my time to make a difference to the young people who come."

Other projects to receive awards included the Hillfields Mobile clinic, which operates a Hillfields Health Day offering community support; It's K to Talk, which helps young people affected by ketamine use to get health assessments; and the Macmillan Welfare Benefit Team, which provides benefits and advice to people diagnosed with cancer.

Dina Oketch, who helps run the Hillfields Mobile Clinic, said: "We have been using a mobile van to raise health awareness in the Hillfields area and it is really overwhelming to receive the award for

outstanding contribution to health and wellbeing.

"We are grateful and we want to do a lot more work in this area."

Chair's Award recipients included Coventry City owner Doug King, for his support with Sky Blues in the community; and Raja Mubarak, who has provided practical and emotional support to isolated elderly residents in the city.

Councillor Kamran Caan, City Council chair of the health and wellbeing board, said: "I founded and launched these awards in 2019 to recognise community members who uplift our community through their work and to inspire others to get involved.

"These are the fifth awards. We had more than 90 nominations and the range of awards are proof of the amazing work that has had a

positive impact on the health and wellbeing of local people.

"We wanted to recognise volunteers as well as organisations and senior figures – every recipient has played their part.

"It is important that we highlight all of their efforts and each one has their very own personal story to tell."

Coventry's deputy lord mayor, Coun Roger Bailey, was among those who presented the awards.

He said: "I know only too well the importance of health and wellbeing and it was a privilege for me to meet so many deserving award winners.

"They are a credit to the city and I hope their work can go from strength to strength."

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/4eztwt75> for the full list of recipients.

Jobs advice at Coventry event

RECRUITERS will be on the lookout for employees at a jobs fair in Coventry next week.

National and regional employers will showcase job opportunities, training options and support services at The Coventry Jobs Fair, at the Coventry Building Society Arena, from 10am to 1pm on March 27.

Roles ranging from entry-level to senior management will be on offer from employers in different sectors.

Coventry Building Society, the University of Warwick, the British Army, Childbase Partnership and Prospects are among the organisations that will advertise vacancies, offer careers advice and connect directly with potential applicants.

Sean Heppinstall, head of operations at Job Fairs by The Bridge – which organises the event – said: "We're delighted to be showcasing so many exciting vacancies from a real mix of employers.

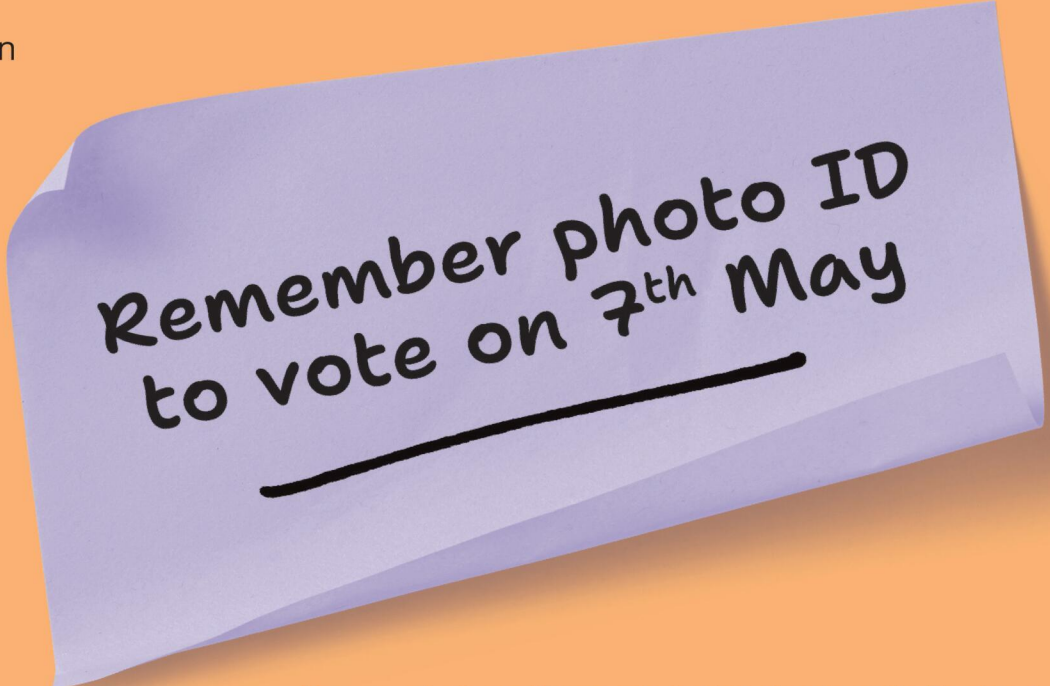
"Whether just starting out, changing careers or looking for a fresh challenge, the Coventry Jobs Fair is designed to give jobseekers the confidence, connections and information needed to make the first, or next step in their careers."

Jenni Ford, director of sales and marketing at the Coventry Building Society Arena, said: "As well as exploring job vacancies, attendees can pick up useful tips on how to make their CVs stand out, which can really help to boost people's confidence at what can be a difficult time.

"It's such a valuable event for jobseekers and employers and one we're incredibly proud to support."

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/4nrvspek> for tickets to the free event.

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Local volunteers sought for new project aimed at protecting our key liquid assets

RUGBY residents are being invited to play a vital role in protecting local waterways through a new citizen science initiative.

Rugby Borough Council has partnered with the University of Birmingham to train and equip volunteers to become Rugby River Champions.

They will monitor the health of local watercourses – including the Avon, Swift and Sow Brook – by measuring pollutants and helping to identify invasive species.

In doing so, they will build a detailed picture of river health across the borough while gaining practical skills and hands-on experience in environmental monitoring.

With national figures showing around three quarters of UK rivers are in poor ecological health and

only 14 per cent in good condition, the new project aims to put environmental science into the hands of the community.

The project is funded by Rugby Borough Council following support from the council's Climate Emergency Working Group.

Data collected by volunteers will support the council's engagement with local stakeholders, such as Severn Trent and the Environment Agency, and prompt action to improve Rugby watercourses.

To support the scheme, the University of Birmingham is recruiting a dedicated Volunteer Coordinator, who will lead training sessions, support volunteers, and work with existing community groups interested in taking part.

Coun Alison Livesey, Chair of Rugby Borough Council's Climate

Emergency Working Group, said: "Rugby borough is full of people who care deeply about their local environment, and this project taps straight into that passion.

"Our volunteers already make an incredible contribution to our green spaces, and Rugby River Champions will take that a step further by giving people the skills, equipment and confidence to become environmental scientists in their own communities.

"This is about curiosity, collaboration and real-world impact. With the support of the University of Birmingham, volunteers will be collecting meaningful data that helps us and our partners better understand our rivers and take action to protect them for the future."

Coun Sam Edwards, Deputy Chair of the group, said the project would give residents a chance to

get involved in protecting the rivers and streams that run through the borough.

He added: "By training volunteers to monitor river health, we can build a clearer picture of the challenges our waterways face and support action to improve them. The more residents who take part, the greater the difference we can make."

Dr James White, Birmingham River Champions founder and a Research Fellow in Water Sciences at the University of Birmingham, said: "We're delighted to be working alongside Rugby Council to launch the Rugby River Champions initiative, to help address critical environmental issues such as pollution and biodiversity losses.

"Citizen science is hugely important as it allows us to upskill, train and equip volunteers to collect valu-

able data that enables us to monitor the health of local waterways and help inform effective long-term solutions."

The Rugby River Champions scheme is due to launch this spring. Individuals, companies and community groups interested in taking part can email rugbynetzero@rugby.gov.uk for more information.

Coun Alison Livesey, Chair of the Rugby Borough Council Climate Emergency Working Group, Dr James White, Birmingham River Champions founder and a Research Fellow in Water Sciences at the University of Birmingham, Working Group member Coun Isabelle McKenzie, and River Champion volunteers Frank Green, Fern Hodges, and Coun Tony Freeman.

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Rugby Borough FC General Secretary Stu Bishop (right) hopes the club's new clean energy technology will support more investment into its future.

Getting those electricity bills down is the goal for football club's chiefs

A GRASSROOTS football club in Rugby making great saves on its energy bills by generating its own electricity.

Rugby Borough FC has had a new solar and battery system installed by E.ON Next and The Football Association.

The clean energy upgrades, provided as part of England Football's Greener Game programme, are predicted to save the Kilsby Lane club more than £4,000 a year.

After an audit by E.ON specialists to see exactly how the club was using energy, the clubhouse was fitted with a 13kWp solar array con-

nected to a 17.4kWh battery that will store the renewable energy for when it is needed.

The solar panels and battery storage allow the club to generate and store its own renewable electricity. Since the audit, the club also reviewed how it heats water, isolating one of its gas boilers and halving its gas usage for water heating by 50 per cent.

For the club, which runs three full-size 3G pitches used by 92 teams of different ages and stages of development, every pound saved can be reinvested back into facilities, future improvements and the community.

The club's General Secretary Stu Bishop said he hoped the new technology would support more investment for the club's future as well as reduce costs.

Stu said: "We're a large club with 92 teams, and the clubhouse and facilities are used seven days and evenings a week, so these changes make a big difference for a busy community club."

"Thanks to the Greener Game, we were able to install 41 solar panels on the roof, which will save us a significant amount of money over the year – the projected saving is just over £4,000 per year.

"It's not just about the impact on

the club, but the wider community too. The small changes we've made can inspire people to make similar changes at home. It feels like we're leading the way in energy saving within the local community, and that's something people are proud of. That ripple effect is really powerful."

The Greener Game is set to invest £1.5million each year into grassroots football.

Phil Woodward, The FA's Head of Clubs and Facilities, said: "Improving facilities is a key part of our grassroots strategy and our partnership with E.ON Next allows us to give clubs like Rugby Borough

practical tools and knowledge to embrace energy-efficient practices that will not only improve their operations and benefit the environment, but will also enable them to save money."

Scott Somerville, E.ON UK's Director of External Affairs, added: "The most effective way to cut bills is to enable people to generate and store their own energy."

"If clubs spend less on their energy bills, they have more to invest back into what really matters to them and the communities that love them."

Visit www.EnglandFootball.com/greengame for more information.

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Josephine Rugg



Gym looking trim after big refurb

From left: GLL partnership manager Nicola Wood, GLL director of operations Simon Sen, RBC finance partner David Phelan, GLL chief executive Pater Bundy, Councs Maggie O'Rourke and Neil Sandison, RBC assistant director for leisure and wellbeing Tom Kittendorf, and GLL general manager Lisa Fletcher. Picture by Jamie Gray. s

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

A MAJOR refurbishment of the gym at Rugby's council-owned leisure centre has been officially opened.

The gym at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre has new 'Technogym' cardio and resistance stations, free weights, training equipment and flooring.

The gym also has a new layout, with expanded free weights and stretching zones to meet demand.

Improvements to the centre's wet changing areas include a refresh of the showers serving the gym, pool

and sauna – including new tiling and shower fittings.

The revamp also includes improvements to the gym changing area and to basins, taps and mirrors.

The revamp was part of a £560,000 programme of improvements at the leisure centre funded by Rugby Borough Council (RBC), with £360,000 coming from 'section 106' contributions from developers and £200,000 from GLL, the charitable social enterprise which operates the centre, under the Better brand.

Section 106 agreements form part of the planning process and enable the council to secure financial contributions from developers

or landowners towards infrastructure and facilities.

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke, RBC portfolio holder for partnerships and wellbeing, said the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre had seen a significant increase in visitors since 2024, with around 3,400 health and fitness members and 215,000 or so swimmers taking the plunge in the centre's pool every year.

She said: "We want to ensure the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre continues to offer quality sport and leisure facilities at an affordable price, supporting the council's work to promote the health and wellbeing of residents.

"This major refurbishment programme – funded by section 106

contributions – means the centre's gym can now cater for the rising number of health and fitness members, while all visitors can benefit from the refreshed wet changing areas which serve the gym, swimming pool and sauna."

The council opened the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre in 2013.

Coun Neil Sandison, RBC's Liberal Democrat group spokesperson for partnerships and wellbeing, said: "The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Centre is a core service for the residents of Rugby, offering access to facilities which contribute to improving the community's health and wellbeing at prices not available in the private sector.

"These facilities can – and do –

aid those recovering from serious conditions, where a fitness regime can prevent remission and more hospital care."

GLL partnership manager Nicola Wood said community feedback on the renovations had been 'fantastic'.

She added: "We are thankful to our partners Rugby Borough Council for their contribution and support in making it happen.

"As a co-operative, our shared commitment to ensuring our communities have access to affordable sports, leisure and health services remains a key priority.

"Watch this space for more improvements to come, later this year."



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Dancer's dream comes true as she joins Moulin Rouge

Stratford star has joined legendary troupe

by Ian Hughes
ian.hughes@bullivantmedia.com

A YOUNG dancer has realised a dream by making her debut at the world-famous Moulin Rouge, in Paris.

Amelia Cook began dancing at an early age in her home town of Stratford, driven by a love of ballet.

A natural performer, she became captivated by the discipline and precision the art form demands.

Determined to pursue her passion, she attended Elmhurst Ballet School, in Birmingham, where she trained intensively – an important step that ultimately set her on the path to the Moulin Rouge.

A corps de ballet member with Barcelona Ballet, in Spain, a 21-year-old Amelia saw a Moulin Rouge audition advertised, in Paris, and didn't hesitate.

Amelia told *The Observer*: "I was nervous in the days leading up to the audition as this was my ultimate dream job but on the day, I was surprisingly relaxed.

"It was different from other auditions I had done – it was a very positive experience and environment. Everyone auditioning was super nice and supportive. It was the most fun I've ever had at an audition."

To join the Moulin Rouge dance troupe, candidates must demonstrate a strong foundation in classical and contemporary dance. Proficiency in additional dance styles and strong stage presence are valuable assets, and candidates must meet strict height requirements of at least 175 cm, for female dancers, and 185 cm for men.

Two days after the try-out, Amelia heard she had been successful.

"I was in shock but extremely proud of myself and grateful," she said.

Invite

The Moulin Rouge artistic team invited her to join a troupe of 90 international dancers. With around 20 dancers, the UK is the second most represented nationality in the cast.

Amelia had always known about the Moulin Rouge – its glamour and legacy – and had long considered it her dream to join.

She said: "The dance world is incredibly demanding and carving out your place is never easy. Being able to join such a renowned and iconic institution, one that celebrates women – particularly tall dancers – was deeply important to me."

Her debut in November proved

unforgettable. "After a month of intense rehearsals, my premiere on stage was such a surreal experience," said Amelia. "I couldn't believe it was happening! I was very proud of myself and the other new dancers for working so hard to get to this point."

Although it is difficult for her to choose a favourite moment, her highlight was *Féerie*, an iconic scene awash with red feathers.

"The red feathers and jewels are so emblematic of the Moulin Rouge, and the arm movements have a beautiful balletic quality that I love," she said. "It's the number that, whenever I perform it, makes me think: wow – I'm truly a dancer at the Moulin Rouge."

Amelia spent the entire month of October training intensely, mastering choreography for the show, including the famous French Cancan.

"The French Cancan is such an iconic piece," said the dancer. "It's the hardest dance in the show, especially in terms of stamina – but it's also the most rewarding when you see the audience's reactions."

Amelia now dances on the 137-year-old Moulin Rouge stage twice a night, six days a week, alongside 60 other artists, performing for thousands of spectators from all over the world.



Cancan ready: Amelia Cook has realised her dream of dancing at the Moulin Rouge. Picture by Philippe Wojazer (Moulin Rouge), s



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Mayor Richard Parker, left, with WMCA chief executive Ed Cox at the launch of the West Midlands Growth Plan. s



Failing to act on climate change 'to cost millions'

THE WEST Midlands Mayor has warned that failing to act on climate change could cost the region more than £600million a year within this decade - rising to nearly £3billion annually by the 2050s.

This comes as Richard Parker unveiled a new five-year plan to protect jobs, infrastructure and economic growth.

Analysis commissioned by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) shows that climate impacts could reduce regional economic output by over £600m every year by 2030, and up to £2.9bn per year by mid-century if risks are not addressed.

Launching the West Midlands Climate Change Five Year Plan, the Mayor said the choice facing the region is clear: act now to strengthen infrastructure and unlock clean growth or pay a far higher economic price later.

Mr Parker said: "Climate change is already costing our economy. Flooded roads, disrupted rail lines, supply chain shocks and rising energy bills all hit businesses and working families.

"Doing nothing is not cheaper. It's far more expensive.

"This plan is about protecting our economy, backing our manufacturers and making sure the West Midlands stays competitive in a changing world."

The plan focuses on removing barriers to investment and growth, including tackling

grid capacity constraints that delay renewable energy and industrial electrification, establishing a Regional Heat Decarbonisation Unit to unlock shared heat infrastructure and creating a blended regional investment facility to attract long-term private capital.

The Mayor said infrastructure bottlenecks - particularly around electricity grid capacity - are already slowing business investment in new facilities and clean manufacturing processes.

The plan also sets out proposals to work with government and national agencies to secure devolved funding and clearer regional carbon accounting frameworks, giving the West Midlands greater control over delivery as well as further resources and powers for the deployment of adaptation measures to help address climate change.

Energy Secretary Ed Miliband, added: "This is a hugely important deal for the West Midlands - and like so many local authorities across the country, the region is simply getting on with climate action because it's the right thing to do for bills, jobs, energy security and future generations.

"This deal will unlock investment in clean homegrown energy, cut grid delays and help us take back control of energy, delivering a more secure and brighter future for local communities across the region."

The Five Year Plan runs from 2026 to 2031 and forms part of the Mayor's wider Growth Plan for the region.

Review praises 'ambition'

AMBITION strong leadership and a motivated workforce are driving the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to deliver real change for its residents and the region's economy - according to its first Corporate Peer Challenge by the Local Government Association (LGA).

The four-day review, which took place in November, involved more than 40 meetings and discussions with over 170 staff, councillors and external partners.

The LGA report described the WMCA as an ambitious and evolving organisation with a clear commitment to inclusive growth.

It highlighted improved political collaboration, strong partnerships and a renewed sense of unity across the region.

The review noted the collaborative leadership of Mayor Richard Parker and chief executive Ed Cox, and praised the launched West Midlands Growth Plan as a "robust and compelling vision" for the region.

Mr Parker said: "The peer team recognised our ambition, our Growth Plan and

the strength of our partnerships. They saw a region working together and determined to succeed.

"Deeper devolution is coming. We are ready to take on more responsibility and use it to deliver jobs, homes, growth and journeys for everyone."

The report highlights decisive action underway across the region, including the decision to bring buses back under public control, plans to expand the tram network and improve regional connectivity and plans to create 100,000 jobs and deliver around 120,000 new homes.

The review sets out clear priorities for the next phase, including integrating the Mayor's priorities into a coherent medium-term organisational plan and creating a clear and compelling West Midlands narrative.

The authority says it has already begun implementing these recommendations through its transformation programme.

The full LGA Corporate Peer Challenge report is available on the WMCA's website.

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The 'Spring' edition of **Seasons** will celebrate everything uplifting, inspiring and quintessentially local across the three counties of Warwickshire, Worcestershire and the West Midlands.

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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!

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Seasons magazine is brought to you, by your local Observer and your local Standard Newspaper Team

Latest figures prompt warning of prosecutions for dog owners

DOG owners are being warned to keep their pets under control in the countryside - or face the possibility of prosecution.

The Dogs (Protection of Livestock) (Amendment) Act was passed earlier this year, following prolonged industry campaigning, granting police enhanced powers to address dog attacks on farm animals in England and Wales.

New figures released by Stratford-based rural insurer NFU Mutual estimate that farm animals in the Midlands worth £438,000 were severely injured or killed last year in dog attacks.

While that marks a three per cent fall in the Midlands from the previous year, the national figure was ten per cent up at \$1.95million.

The data coincides with findings from a new NFU Mutual survey of more than 1,400 dog owners which revealed 5 per cent let their dogs off leads in the countryside.

But alarmingly, one in ten admitted their dog has no recall while 44 per cent said their dogs came back only 'some' or 'most of the time'.

One in 20 dog owners confessed their dogs had chased livestock, and more than three-fifths felt other dog owners in their area did not treat livestock worrying as a serious issue.

Despite this, some seven in ten said they were not actively taking steps to prevent their dogs from



Dog owners are being warned they could face prosecution if their pets attack farm animals.

For farmers and their families, witnessing these horrific incidents or finding injured or dead livestock after an attack can be utterly heart-breaking.

"Farmers across the UK are living with the constant fear of repeat incidents, which cause immense suffering to livestock and can traumatise all involved in dealing with the aftermath. Anecdotally, we continue to hear reports of dogs injuring or killing sheep while owners are either unable to control their pets or are nowhere to be found.

"Ignoring the risks is never an option; regardless of breed, size, or temperament, all dogs can chase, injure or kill livestock. Even without physical contact, the stress of being chased can lead to exhaustion and stress, and in some cases separate young lambs from their mothers, which can lead to them being orphaned.

"It is crucial dog owners act responsibly by keeping their pets on leads wherever livestock may be nearby to prevent these needless attacks. If there is an incident, we urge those involved to do the right thing by informing a local farmer and reporting it to the police, so that any injured animals are not left suffering in pain."

chasing and almost two-thirds did not believe their dogs were capable of harming or killing animals.

NFU Mutual rural affairs specialist Hannah Binns said: "As the lambing

season gets underway, a time when pregnant ewes and newborn lambs are vulnerable, it is deeply concerning to see the estimated cost of livestock worrying rise to nearly £2

million in 2025.

"As a sheep farmer's daughter, I know first-hand the hard work, long hours and emotional investment that goes into the lambing season.



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Mayor Richard Parker at the launch of the Youth Trailblazer programme, in Walsall. s

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

MORE THAN 800 unemployed young people across the West Midlands have benefited from a £5million job support fund under the government's Get Britain Working initiative.

The West Midlands is one of eight 'Youth Guarantee Trailblazers' in England, that secured funding to help young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) get into work.

With the third highest rate of 16 to 24-year-old NEETS in England,

the region's Youth Trailblazer programme has been focused on breaking down barriers preventing young people getting into work.

West Midlands mayor Richard Parker has committed a further £5million to extend the programme for another year.

Mr Parker said: "Right now, around a quarter of people in our region don't have the skills they need to land quality jobs and that's a big reason why too many young people are out of work.

"Giving young people skills and job opportunities is at the heart of my West Midlands works plan."

Youth Trailblazer, which is being led by the West Midlands Combined

Authority (WMCA) and delivered in close collaboration with partners, has seen interventions take place.

Those include grant funding to help employers lay on work experience opportunities for NEETS and the opening up of key training programmes to 18-year-olds so they can progress into apprenticeships, training and employment.

RSPCA Coventry and District is one employer that has been part of the Youth Trailblazer activity.

Emma Davies, the organisation's marketing and fundraising manager, has been working with one young person, Niah Swift, at the charity.

She said: "The Youth Trailblazer

has been an amazing help to us. As a small charity, independently funded to the national RSPCA, we want to strengthen our work within the local community.

"This scheme has been an effective way to do this and has led to us offering Niah a permanent position as a receptionist. She's been an asset to the organisation from day one and we're looking to see how else we can increase our workforce."

It is expected Youth Trailblazer funding will have supported more than 1,000 NEET individuals, aged 18 to 21, in its first year, with another 1,000 getting help during this year and next.

Cash available for developers

THE REGION'S smaller developers have been urged to consider applying for millions of pounds of funding to help get housing schemes under way.

The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) wants housing developers to take advantage of the financial support on offer to help build the affordable homes needed to tackle the region's housing crisis.

Around £57million has been secured by the WMCA, alongside existing funding for the coming year, to help build new homes on derelict industrial land and other vacant urban sites.

Developers typically find building on such sites too difficult or expensive to undertake on their own because of the high cost of cleaning up the land.

Max Abbott, the WMCA's head of development and delivery, said: "If you have a housing scheme of 10 homes or more but are struggling to make it work financially, then I would encourage you to get in touch and see if we can help make your vision a reality.

"This is an opportunity for private developers to secure the support they need to get spades in the ground and help tackle our region's housing crisis, changing thousands of lives for the better."

Since 2018, the WMCA has awarded around £159million to private and public-sector developers, unlocking more than 8,500 new homes, mostly on derelict industrial sites that are often referred to as 'brownfield' land.

Email invest@wmca.org.uk for more information.



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Last year's very first Moonlight Walk was hailed a record-breaking success.

Spotlight on fundraiser

THE MYTON Hospices' most successful fundraiser is back for another year.

The Moonlight Walk, on Friday April 17, will light up Warwick Castle and Warwick town centre with light trails and moonlight zones.

Participants can choose from 5km or 10km routes, both starting at the castle and taking them through the streets of Warwick. The Moonlight Walk is an opportunity to come together with friends and family in support of Myton – which has hospices in Warwick, Rugby and Coventry – and also to celebrate those who are no longer with us.

Last year's very first moonlight walk boasted 2,100 fundraisers – the largest number to take part in a single event in the charity's history and raised a record-breaking £231,000.

Myton spokesperson Natalie Walker said: "We're incredibly excited to welcome you to this year's Moonlight Walk, following the wonderful success of last year's event. It's set to be a truly special night, and we can't wait to see you there."

Visit www.mytonhospice.org/Moonlight for more details.

Care home is in the top twenty

A CARE home in Warwickshire has been recognised as one of the best in the West Midlands, following feedback from residents and their families.

The Royal British Legion Galanos House care home in Southam has been named a Top 20 Care Home in the West Midlands by care-home.co.uk - places it among the top-rated homes out of 1,576 care homes across the West Midlands.

The accolade is based entirely on independent reviews written by residents, along with their friends and relatives.

Jo-Anne Wilson, registered manager of The Royal British Legion, Galanos House, said: "What makes this recognition so special is that it is based on independent reviews from our residents and their families. It tells

us that the people who matter most feel the warmth, dignity and respect that sit at the heart of everything we do.

"As part of the Royal British Legion, our ethos is rooted in service, integrity, and compassion. We are privileged to care for veterans and their families, and we never forget the sacrifices they have made. Honouring their Armed Forces connection while delivering exceptional, person-centred care is something we take great pride in every single day.

"This award truly belongs to our hard-working employees and volunteers. They go above and beyond in ways that often aren't seen – through small acts of kindness, patience, professionalism, and genuine friendship."

Adult care services rated good

ADULT Social Care in Warwickshire has been rated 'good' in a recent inspection.

The assessment by the Care Quality Commission praised Warwickshire as a well-run local authority with experienced leadership, clear vision and strong support for adult social care, describing an organisational culture that is open, principled, and focused on doing what's right.

Inspectors noted Warwickshire's strong commitment to ensuring equality of access, inclusion and personalised care, underpinned by high quality Care Act assessments framed around the principle of "What matters to me?"

Warwickshire was commended for effective

management of safeguarding concerns and enquiries, strong relationships with NHS partners and voluntary sector organisations, smooth and effective transitions between children's services and adult social care, with clear plans to further enhance the offer for young people and their families, and committed teams delivering high quality care.

The CQC also identified areas where improvements could be made.

Pete Sidgwick, director of Social Care and Support, said: "This outcome reflects the dedication of our staff, the resilience of our provider market, and the strong partnerships we have across Warwickshire."

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Complex maths behind effort to predict number of school places county needs



WCC say ensuring the right number of school places exist across the county was one of its most important responsibilities. Picture by WCC.

COUNCIL chiefs have been pulled up on overestimating the number of school places needed in Warwickshire.

Warwickshire County Council's children and young people's overview and scrutiny committee called in WCC's Annual Education Sufficiency Update after it was approved by Cabinet in December. The report aims to ensure the county has enough school places to meet future needs.

But the scrutiny committee raised concerns around forecasting assumptions, particularly around migration, new housing developments and the potential risk of creating too many places in certain

areas.

The committee stated an over provision of school places would undermine the viability of some existing primary schools. Committee members pointed out that while new housing was being built across the county, new housing in itself does not create people. NHS data revealed there had been a local reduction in population of around ten per cent since Covid, due to low birth rates and a sharp reduction in the net migration into Warwickshire.

While the committee resolved not to overturn Cabinet's original decision, it recommended moves to help councillors improve future forecasting - including workshops

will be organised by the Education Service. Cabinet has since agreed the moves.

WCC education spokesperson Coun Wayne Briggs said: "Ensuring we have the right number of school places across the county is one of our most important responsibilities. Forecasting is complex and must take account of a range of factors, including housing growth, birth rates and migration patterns."

"I welcome the constructive scrutiny provided by the children and young people's overview and scrutiny committee and am pleased that Cabinet has approved these recommendations."

"These steps will help ensure that future sufficiency updates continue

to be evidence-led and responsive to local circumstances, supporting strong, sustainable schools for Warwickshire's children and young people."

■ THOUSANDS of families across Warwickshire have found out which secondary school their child will attend this September.

A total of 6,938 applications were received by the October 31 deadline for the 2026/27 academic year. Of these, 83 percent were offered their first-choice secondary school on National Offer Day on March 2.

Overall, nearly 95 percent have been offered a place at one of their top three preferences.

Coun Briggs said: "I would like to thank parents and carers for submitting their applications on time and for carefully considering their school preferences. We are pleased that the majority of children have secured a place at one of their preferred schools, reflecting our continued work to ensure there are sufficient good quality school places available in the right locations across the county."

"We wish all our Year 6 pupils every success as they look to start secondary school in September."

The National Offer Day for primary and junior school places is on April 16.

Visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/admissions for more details.



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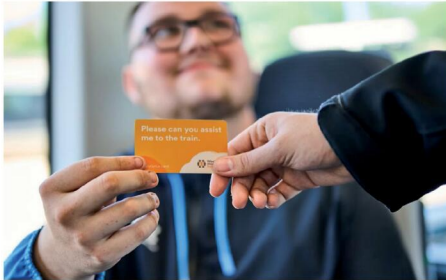
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Underlining support over neurodiversity

WEST Midlands Railway (WMR) has reaffirmed support for neurodiverse passengers.

As part of Neurodiversity Celebration Week, which began on Monday and runs until today (Friday), March 16 to 20, the train operator is restocking stations with its sensory packs which were launched last summer.



The bags are available on request from ticket offices and contain foam ear plugs, sunglasses, fidget toys and a stress ball to support neurodiverse customers in managing sensory overload while travelling. Journey planner notepads are also being

rolled out to stations across WMR's network following a successful trial earlier this year.

Recognising that some passengers prefer information to be written down on paper, ticket office staff can use the notepads to write down journey plans.

Each page features useful information such as how to book passenger assistance, customer relations contact details and social media handles.

For customers who need support communicating, Travel Assistance Cards are free to request from stations or order from WMR's website - the cards are available in a range of different phrases, such as 'I need help buying a ticket' and 'Please be patient, I have a disability'.

Javeriah Abbas, passenger assistance delivery manager at WMR, said: "Making the railway accessible for everyone is a key priority for us."

"We recognise that railway stations can be a difficult environment for neurodiverse passengers, so this Neurodiversity Celebration Week, we want to raise awareness of the options available to help manage sensory overload and support communication."

"Our colleagues receive accessibility training, so passengers can feel confident asking staff for support while travelling with us."



The RSPCA hopes Britain's under-appreciated animals will get their moment on new banknotes.

ANIMAL HOPES: AN ANIMAL charity hopes some of Britain's 'under-appreciated' animals could get their moment in the spotlight.

This comes following the Bank of England's announcement that future banknotes would feature wildlife.

The RSPCA says some of the UK's wildlife was often misunderstood and even unfairly labelled as 'pests'. But, the charity added, it hoped the new banknotes could help change perceptions and encourage people to see the value of all wildlife.

Geoff added: "Brits love wildlife - and animals like foxes, gulls, rats, and pigeons are clever and adaptable, and each have their own interesting personality. Rats have been trained to detect disease and locate landmines, while pigeons played key roles in both World Wars, carrying messages - and we think that's worth celebrating."

According to the charity's Animal

Kindness Index, the public now identify protecting wildlife as the top issue they wish to see the RSPCA address - backing up the UK's reputation as a home to wildlife and nature lovers.

Geoff Edmond, wildlife expert at the RSPCA, said: "Showcasing our native wildlife on everyday banknotes is a wonderful way to celebrate the animals that we share our towns, cities and countryside with - including the ones who don't always make the 'most-popular' lists."

"While some animals are obvious favourites, there are many amazing animals that we see everyday that are often overlooked, or misunderstood."

"What about the pigeons who have been our friends for thousands of years, or rats, with their amazing memories, or even gulls, with their amazing levels of intelligence?"

"They are all fascinating wild animals in their own right - and deserve recognition too."

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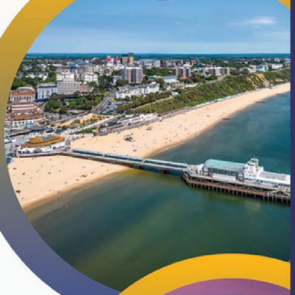
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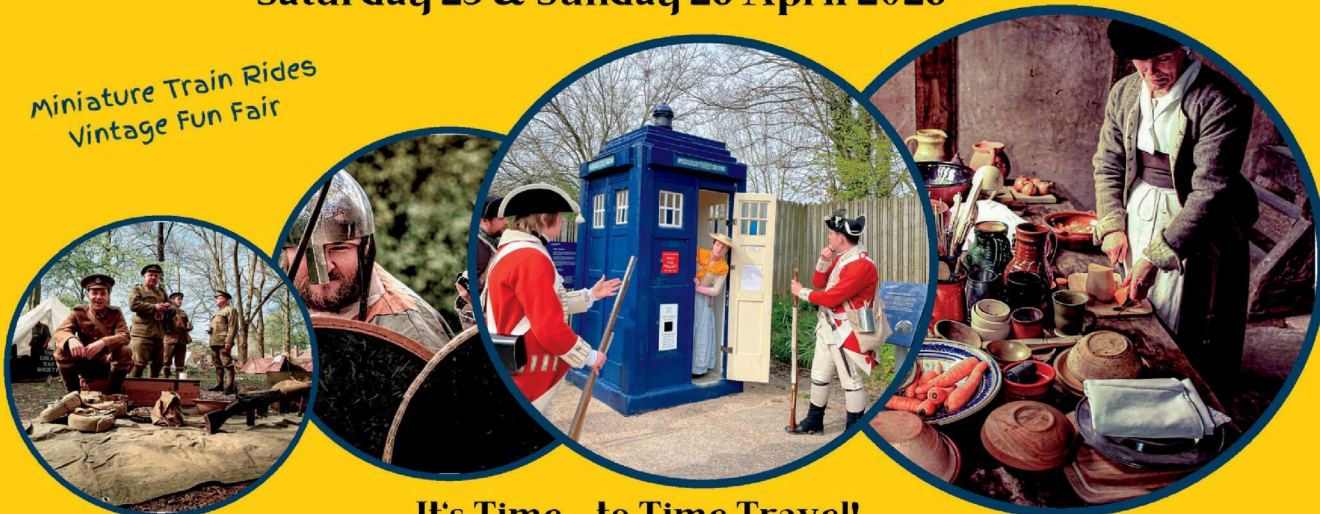


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Gardeners should start to prepare for summer

Violas can add a splash of colour to an early spring hanging basket. s

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

MARCH is the month for getting the garden ready for the summer months ahead.

Sowing seeds should be at the top of your 'to do' list.

Give seeds soil that is wet and warm enough and off they go. A good rule of thumb is, the bigger the seed, the deeper it needs to be in the soil to germinate.

Some seeds can be sown direct into the ground, such as vegetables, whilst others prefer to be in seed trays and a slighter warmer environment, to be given a good fighting chance.

Spring is also the perfect time to start feeding plants but the feeding

regime needs to be tailored to the needs of specific plant types.

For young plants, grown from seed and cuttings, use a diluted, shop-bought liquid feed when the first leaves or growth show.

The same applies to houseplants or plants in pots.

For fruit trees and bushes, use potassium-rich organic feed (made from seaweed, nettles or comfrey).

Most vegetable crops benefit from regular mulching with organic matter such as homemade compost or locally produced mulch.

Brassicas and potatoes need an organic feed yearly, in early spring: poultry manure pellets, comfrey pellets and seaweed meal with some well-rotted organic matter.

For anyone looking for an instant burst of colour, a simple solution is to create a hanging basket by

mixing hardy annuals with small evergreen shrubs for all-year-round interest.

Although most baskets are planted in late spring and put outdoors, after the risk of frost has passed, they can also be filled with frost resistant flowers and plants for colour over winter and early spring.

Favourites

Hardy favourites include pansies, violas, primulas and winter-flowering heathers, along with bulbs like crocuses. Make sure there is good drainage and moist soil.

For anyone growing their own fruit and veg, March is the last chance to prune apples and pears before their buds burst.

As the soil warms up and weeds begin to grow, this is a sign that

it's also time to carry out the first outdoor seed sowings – cabbages, broccoli, cauliflowers, kale, peas, broad beans, maincrop onions, parsnips and turnips can all be sown this month.

It's also time for that post-winter tidy up, especially pruning out rambling roses. Remove thick old stems and try to finish in early March.

Cut back old stems to just above ground level with loppers or a hand saw and cut at an angle to allow water to run off and reduce the risk of rot. That will encourage new, vigorous growth and improve the overall health of the rose.

As a rule, only take out about a third of the whole plant as any more may reduce flowering, and don't forget to mulch around the base after pruning.

Other garden jobs for March sug-

gested by the Royal Horticultural Society include:

- Pruning bushes and climbing roses
- Planting onion sets and shallots
- Planting summer flowering bulbs
- Planting early potatoes
- Lifting and dividing overgrown clumps of perennials
- Mowing the lawn on dry days (if needed)
- Cutting back ornamental grasses left standing over winter
- Pruning buddleia
- Feeding trees, shrubs and hedges
- Starting to sow vegetable seeds outside in mild areas eg, broad beans, carrots, parsnips, beetroot, onions, lettuces, radish, peas and spinach.

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- 4TH APRIL: ELECTRIK LIVE ORCHESTRA
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- 17TH MAY: CELEBRATING CELINE - A NEW DAY
- 22ND MAY: FRANKIE - THE CONCERT (FT THE FALSETTOS)
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- 30TH MAY: BURN DEEP PURPLE TRIBUTE
- 5TH JUNE: THE CARPENTERS EXPERIENCE
- 6TH JUNE: EVERLY BROTHERS BY CANDLELIGHT
- 19TH JUNE: BEEGEES YOU SHOULD BE DANCING
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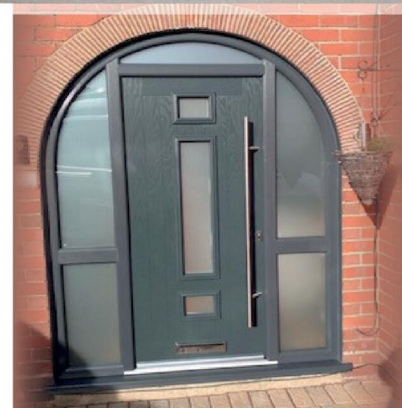
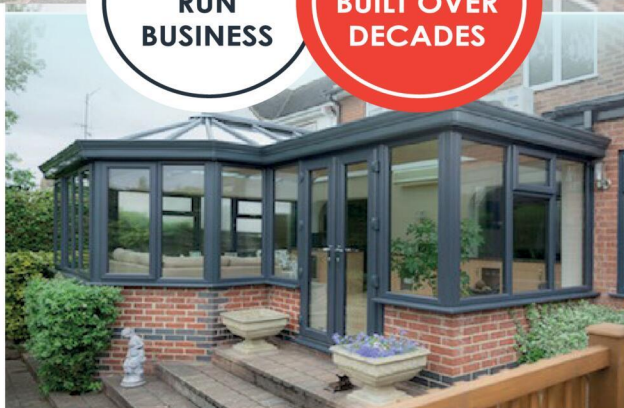


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The Dogs Trust and the RSPCA are drawing up a responsible dog ownership framework.

Charities try to define responsible behaviour

What does responsible dog ownership mean?

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

TWO of the UK's leading dog welfare organisations are asking people what responsible dog ownership looks like, as the UK's canine population reaches a record high.

Research by YouGov, on behalf of the Dogs Trust and the RSPCA, reveals there is a clear gulf between owners' perceptions of what responsible dog ownership is and the reality experienced by others.

The charities have created a responsible dog ownership framework designed to help dog owners and their communities have a better, more consistent understanding of what it means to be a responsible owner.

The organisations are gathering public views on the framework, which covers aspects of dog ownership, how dogs and people can better share public spaces and how owners can provide dogs with a happy, healthy life.

It is hoped the blueprint for responsible dog ownership will be adopted by local government, police forces, animal welfare organisations and other groups, ensuring all dog owners have a clear understanding of what it takes to be a responsible dog owner.

The YouGov research reveals 96 per cent of dog owners consider themselves responsible – citing picking up dog waste in public, ensuring dogs are safe and cared for and proper training and socialisation.

However, 86 per cent of the UK public have experienced issues with irresponsible dog owners, with a quarter witnessing it at least once a week.

Around 72 per cent of those who have seen dog owners behaving irresponsibly report seeing them leave dog mess on the ground, with 34 per cent having seen owners let dogs jump at people, the same proportion having seen pets off-lead in restricted areas and 25 per cent reporting seeing owners ignore their dogs acting aggressively.

In the Dogs Trust's National Dog Survey, four in 10 owners said they worry about the behaviour of other people's dogs and what that means for their dog's safety.

Owen Sharp, chief executive of the Dogs Trust, said: "There are more dogs in the UK than ever before and with so

many now sharing our everyday spaces with us, it's important there is a consistent understanding of what it means to be a responsible dog owner. Responsible ownership benefits everyone, not just owners, because safer, well cared-for dogs help create safer communities.

"However there is a clear gap between what owners perceive as responsible dog ownership and what people are experiencing, so we want to work to bridge the gap. We're asking the public to help shape the future of responsible dog ownership in the UK, so whether you're a dog owner or not, we want to hear what responsible dog ownership means to you."

Dr Samantha Gaines, an RSPCA dog welfare expert said: "Owning a dog can be one of life's greatest joys and being a responsible owner is an essential part of that experience. Dogs are the nation's most popular pet. Understanding what responsible dog ownership is and what that looks like is integral to keeping dogs and communities safe and happy."

"This consultation will be invaluable in building a shared understanding of what responsible ownership looks like – from devoted owners to those who regularly interact with dogs and everyone in between – helping us make a positive difference to dog welfare and community safety."

Visit www.dogstrust.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/research/responsible-dog-ownership to join the consultation.

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SUDOKU

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

EASY

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

HARD

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

PATHFINDER

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

Fruit

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

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

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

ACROSS

- 6. Liken (7)
- 7. Embalmed corpse (5)
- 9. Swift (5)
- 10. Intricate (7)
- 12. Vengeance (11)
- 14. Result (11)
- 18. Claims (7)
- 19. Below (5)
- 21. Angry (5)
- 22. Set free (7)

DOWN

- 1. Sum (5)
- 2. Elf (6)
- 3. Curve (3)
- 4. Preacher's platform (6)
- 5. Sovereign (7)
- 8. Shoe-mender (9)
- 11. Lawn game (7)
- 13. Deserted (7)
- 15. Scabbard (6)
- 16. Annul (6)
- 17. Hire (5)
- 20. Charge (3)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

- Freight
- Nobleman
- Fat
- Bird
- Deficiency



NINER

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

- 159 gives a bird;
- 67284 gives another bird;
- 1235 gives an animal.

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

CODEWORD

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

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

WORDWHEEL

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

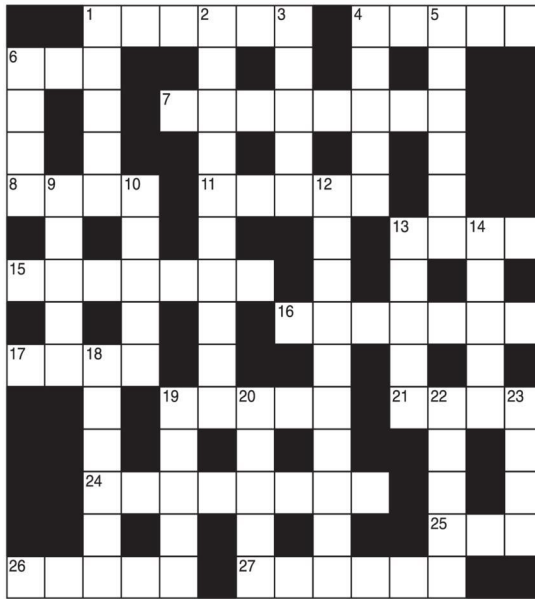


How you rate
 15 words: average 25 words: very good
 20 words: good 30 or more: excellent.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Michael ---, actor who starred in TV's *The Singing Detective*, and the film *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* (6)
- A chairman's hammer (5)
- 6, 8 & 7. Late actor who starred in *Kind Hearts and Coronets*, *The Bridge on the River Kwai*, etc. (3,4,8)
- 7 & 8. See 6 Across
- Republic of west Africa, capital Porto-Novo (5)
26. Seaport and holiday resort in west Dorset, scene of Monmouth's landing in 1685 (4,5)
- According to Euclid, "a line is length without ---" (7)
- Wild, yellow-flowered plant of the nightshade family (7)
- See 22 Down
- First appearance before the public, or in society (5)
- Homeric hero, son of Telamon (4)
- See 4 Down
- City in Cambridgeshire, on the Ouse, whose 11th-Century cathedral is one of the largest in England (3)
- See 13 Across
- Greek island in the Aegean, chief town Mytilene (6)



DOWN

- Surname of the English cricketer who by the end of his career had scored over 54,000 runs, including 126 centuries (5)
- A kind of blowfly (10)
- A fine strong silky fabric (5)
- 24 & 24. Romance by William Henry Hudson, whose hero, Mr. Abel, tells of his love for bird girl Rima (5,8)
- Small room attached to a church (6)
- Large predatory gull (4)
- In music, a slow dignified movement (5)
- Variety of beet with large, white, succulent leafstalks (5)
- Digestive tract below the stomach (10)
- Sign of the zodiac also known as the Scales (5)
- Substance miraculously supplied as food to the Israelites in the wilderness (5)
- Hard, aromatic, spheroidal seed used as a spice (6)
- St. ---, first bishop of Paris and a patron saint of France (5)
- Sandy brown flatfish with white spots, of the turbot genus (5)
- 22 & 17. Ian Fleming's Secret Service Agent, 007 (5,4)
- Electromagnetic radiation, of much shorter wavelength than light, capable of penetrating matter (1-3)

SOLUTIONS

General Knowledge Crossword
 ACROSS: 1 Gambon; 4 Gavel; 6 Sir; 7 Guinness; 8 Alick; 11 Benin; 13 Lyme; 15 Breadth; 16 Henbane; 19 Debut; 21 Ajax; 24 Manstons; 25 Ely; 26 Regis; 27 Lesbos. DOWN: 1 Grace; 2 Bluebottle; 3 Minon; 4 Green; 5 Vestry; 6 Skua; 9 Largo; 10 Chard; 12 Intestines; 13 Libra; 14 Manna; 18 Nutmeg; 19 Denis; 20 Brill; 22 James; 23 X-ray.

Crossword
 ACROSS: 6 Compare; 7 Mummy; 9 Rapid; 10 Complex; 12 Retribution; 14 Consequence; 18 Alleges; 19 Under; 21 Rate; 22 Release. DOWN: 1 Total; 2 Sprite; 3 Arc; 4 Pulpit; 5 Emperor; 8 Cobbler; 11 Croquet; 13 Fortorn; 15 Sheath; 16 Cancel; 17 Lease; 20 Fee.

Wordwheel Pathfinder
 Rasperry, Pomegranate, Redcurrant, Tangerine, Cranberry, Cantaloupe, Apricot, Passionfruit, Clementine, Blood Orange, Elderberry, Persimmon, Honeydew, Breadfruit, Cucumber, Pineapple, Satsuma, Watermelon, Coconut, Blackcurrant, Kumquat, Boysenberry, Nectarine, Grapefruit.

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

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

Sudoku
 Easy
 Hard



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PUBLIC NOTICES

RUGBY BOROUGH COUNCIL COUNCIL TAX 2026/27

NOTICE is hereby given that in accordance with Section 30 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, the council on 18 February 2026 set for the financial year beginning 1 April 2026 the following amounts as the amounts of Council Tax for each of the categories of dwellings shown below.

Parish Of	Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Ansty		£1,662.13	£1,939.15	£2,216.17	£2,493.19	£3,047.23	£3,601.27	£4,155.32	£4,986.38
Binley Woods		£1,635.43	£1,908.00	£2,180.57	£2,453.14	£2,998.28	£3,543.42	£4,088.57	£4,906.28
Birdingbury		£1,637.31	£1,910.21	£2,183.09	£2,455.97	£3,001.73	£3,547.51	£4,093.28	£4,911.94
Bourton & Draycote		£1,639.01	£1,912.19	£2,185.35	£2,458.52	£3,004.85	£3,551.19	£4,097.53	£4,917.04
Brandon & Bretford		£1,649.60	£1,924.54	£2,199.47	£2,474.40	£3,024.26	£3,574.13	£4,124.00	£4,948.80
Brinklow		£1,653.44	£1,929.02	£2,204.59	£2,480.16	£3,031.30	£3,582.45	£4,133.60	£4,960.32
Burton Hastings		£1,616.21	£1,885.59	£2,154.95	£2,424.32	£2,963.05	£3,501.79	£4,040.53	£4,848.64
Cawston		£1,631.01	£1,902.85	£2,174.68	£2,446.51	£2,990.17	£3,533.84	£4,077.52	£4,893.02
Church Lawford		£1,627.77	£1,899.07	£2,170.36	£2,441.65	£2,984.23	£3,526.82	£4,069.42	£4,883.30
Churchover		£1,615.65	£1,884.94	£2,154.21	£2,423.48	£2,962.02	£3,500.58	£4,039.13	£4,846.96
Clifton Upon Dunsmore		£1,623.21	£1,893.76	£2,164.29	£2,434.82	£2,975.88	£3,516.96	£4,058.03	£4,869.64
Combe Fields		£1,601.79	£1,868.77	£2,135.73	£2,402.69	£2,936.61	£3,470.55	£4,004.48	£4,805.38
Copston Magna		£1,598.60	£1,865.04	£2,131.47	£2,397.90	£2,930.76	£3,463.63	£3,996.50	£4,795.80
Cosford		£1,598.60	£1,865.04	£2,131.47	£2,397.90	£2,930.76	£3,463.63	£3,996.50	£4,795.80
Dunchurch		£1,643.23	£1,917.11	£2,190.98	£2,464.85	£3,012.59	£3,560.34	£4,108.08	£4,929.70
Easehall		£1,661.16	£1,938.03	£2,214.88	£2,491.74	£3,045.45	£3,599.18	£4,152.90	£4,983.48
Frankton		£1,650.40	£1,925.47	£2,200.54	£2,475.60	£3,025.73	£3,575.86	£4,126.00	£4,951.20
Grandborough		£1,665.59	£1,943.19	£2,220.79	£2,498.38	£3,053.57	£3,608.77	£4,163.97	£4,996.76
Harborough Magna		£1,653.79	£1,929.43	£2,205.06	£2,480.69	£3,031.95	£3,583.22	£4,134.48	£4,961.38
Kings Newnham		£1,598.60	£1,865.04	£2,131.47	£2,397.90	£2,930.76	£3,463.63	£3,996.50	£4,795.80
Leamington Hastings		£1,598.60	£1,865.04	£2,131.47	£2,397.90	£2,930.76	£3,463.63	£3,996.50	£4,795.80
Long Lawford		£1,677.21	£1,956.75	£2,236.28	£2,515.81	£3,074.87	£3,633.94	£4,193.02	£5,031.62
Marton		£1,641.59	£1,915.19	£2,188.79	£2,462.38	£3,009.57	£3,556.77	£4,103.97	£4,924.76
Monks Kirby		£1,632.67	£1,904.79	£2,176.90	£2,449.01	£2,993.23	£3,537.46	£4,081.68	£4,898.02
Newton & Biggin		£1,629.70	£1,901.32	£2,172.94	£2,444.55	£2,987.78	£3,531.01	£4,074.25	£4,889.10
Pailton		£1,666.17	£1,943.88	£2,221.57	£2,499.26	£3,054.64	£3,610.04	£4,165.43	£4,998.52
Princethorpe		£1,676.22	£1,955.60	£2,234.96	£2,514.33	£3,073.06	£3,631.81	£4,190.55	£5,028.66
Ryton on Dunsmore		£1,694.22	£1,976.60	£2,258.96	£2,541.33	£3,106.06	£3,670.81	£4,235.55	£5,082.66
Shilton & Barnacle		£1,656.75	£1,932.89	£2,209.01	£2,485.13	£3,037.37	£3,589.63	£4,141.88	£4,970.26
Stretton Baskerville		£1,598.60	£1,865.04	£2,131.47	£2,397.90	£2,930.76	£3,463.63	£3,996.50	£4,795.80
Stretton on Dunsmore		£1,687.93	£1,969.25	£2,250.57	£2,531.89	£3,094.53	£3,657.17	£4,219.82	£5,063.78
Stretton under Fosse		£1,671.34	£1,949.90	£2,228.46	£2,507.01	£3,064.12	£3,621.23	£4,178.35	£5,014.02
Thurlaston		£1,650.63	£1,925.75	£2,200.85	£2,475.95	£3,026.15	£3,576.37	£4,126.58	£4,951.90
Wibtoft		£1,598.60	£1,865.04	£2,131.47	£2,397.90	£2,930.76	£3,463.63	£3,996.50	£4,795.80
Willey		£1,607.15	£1,875.02	£2,142.87	£2,410.73	£2,946.44	£3,482.16	£4,017.88	£4,821.46
Willoughby		£1,660.35	£1,937.09	£2,213.81	£2,490.53	£3,043.97	£3,597.43	£4,150.88	£4,981.06
Withybrook		£1,648.73	£1,923.52	£2,198.31	£2,473.09	£3,022.66	£3,572.24	£4,121.82	£4,946.18
Wolfhampcote		£1,624.93	£1,895.76	£2,166.58	£2,437.40	£2,979.04	£3,520.69	£4,062.33	£4,874.80
Wolston		£1,671.89	£1,950.55	£2,229.19	£2,507.84	£3,065.13	£3,622.43	£4,179.73	£5,015.68
Wolvey		£1,654.64	£1,930.42	£2,206.19	£2,481.96	£3,033.50	£3,585.05	£4,136.60	£4,963.92
Rugby Town Area		£1,663.08	£1,940.27	£2,217.44	£2,494.62	£3,048.97	£3,603.34	£4,157.70	£4,989.24
Borough		£116.89	£136.37	£155.85	£175.33	£214.29	£253.25	£292.22	£350.66
County		£1,269.24	£1,480.78	£1,692.32	£1,903.86	£2,326.94	£2,750.02	£3,173.10	£3,807.72
Police		£212.47	£247.89	£283.30	£318.71	£389.53	£460.36	£531.18	£637.42

Jon Illingworth
Chief Officer - Finance and Performance

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Regan Picton trading as Crescent Industrial Ltd of 30 Berrington Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1NB is applying for a licence to use 30 Berrington Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 1NB as an operating centre for 1 goods vehicles and 1 trailers. Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centres who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-making-representations-objections-and-complaints-goods-vehicle-operator-licensing

MARGARET JOBLING RHODES (Deceased)
Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 1 Sycamore Close, Wellesbourne, Warwick, CV35 9SH, who died on 06/02/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 20/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice. Penmans Solicitors LLP, The Precinct, School Road, Wellesbourne, Warwick CV35 9NL (Ref:JW/RH/000009/003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

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

Order Effect: Roads closed to vehicular traffic as follows: Long Furlong closed from Orsen Leys to Charlesfield Road, Fawseley Leys closed from Long Furlong to Staverton Leys. Badby Leys closed from Fawseley 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, Orsen 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 Gibbets Hill roundabout to Lutterworth 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, Davenport Road, Shuckburgh Road, Napton Road, Main Street, Park Hill, A425 Davenport Road, A425 Staverton Road, Leamington Way, Stefan Way, A361 Badby Road West, London Road, Weedon Road, A45 Davenport Link Road, Watling Street, A5.

Contractor: Network Plus, Tel: 01392 261362.

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 357854.

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 415302.

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

PUBLIC FOOTPATH BETWEEN BOUGHTON ROAD AND LEICESTER ROAD, RUGBY

Order Effect: Footpath closed to all traffic.

Reason for Order: To safely enable electricity supply works.

Order Commences: 7 April 2026 for up to 6 months.

Anticipated Completion: 11 May 2026.

Access & Diversion: Waterside Drive, Kinman Way, Projects Drive, footpath from Projects Drive to Boughton Way and vice versa.

Contractor: Power On, Tel: 07980 317 209.

HOULTON WAY & HILLMORTON LANE, CLIFTON ON DUNSMORE

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. In addition, all traffic will be prohibited from turning right and left from Hillmorton Lane into Houlton Way.

Reason for Order: To enable electricity supply works.

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

Anticipated Completion: 15 June 2026.

Contractor: Power On, Tel: 07824 873 544.

BOURTON ROAD, FRANKTON

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: Sewer lining works, closed 07.00hrs - 19.00hrs.

Order Commences: 20 April 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 20 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Fair Close, Frankton Lane, Princethorpe Road, Main Street, Frankton Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Sapphire Utility Solutions, Tel: 07775 714473.

PUBLIC FOOTPATH AMBLESIDE, RUGBY

Order Effect: Footpath closed to all traffic.

Reason for Order: To enable duct laying works.

Order Commences: 8 April 2026 for up to 6 months.

Anticipated Completion: 10 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Public Footpath from Ambleside to Ulverston, Ulverston, Buttermere, Ambleside and vice versa.

Contractor: Quantum TM, Tel: 01724 786286.

GIBBET LANE, SHAWELL

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: To enable pipe renewal works.

Order Commences: 8 April 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 10 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Rugby Road, Main Street, Rugby 6 Road, Service Road, Swinford Road, Lutterworth Road, Shawell Road, Gibbet Lane and vice versa.

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

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 19 March 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

COLIN SALT (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 26 Crossway Road, Coventry, CV3 6JP, who died on 05/02/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 20/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Penmans Solicitors LLP, 17A Queens Road, Coventry, CV1 3DH (Ref:JW/NS/LJ/0006/001)

PUBLIC NOTICES

RACHEL TARR (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of Hawthorne House, Jardine Crescent, Coventry, CV4 9QS, who died on 27/05/2023, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 21/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

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

PUBLIC NOTICES

GODFREY LAWSON TURPIN (otherwise Dick Turpin) (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 5 Hartury Court, Binwood Avenue, Leamington Spa, CV32 3DS, who died on 12/02/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 21/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

BRECHTERTONS LLP, Franklin House, Manorfield Road, Bicester, OX26 6EX

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANTHONY CHARLES EDWARD BELL (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of Lake of the Willows, 38-39 Westminster Road, Easton Coventry CV1 3GB Previously of 10 Canon Hudson Close, Coventry, CV3 3HT, who died on 18/08/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 21/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

BLYTE THE LIGGINS LLP, Edmund House, Rugby Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 6EL

PUBLIC NOTICES

KATHRYN FRANCES O'NEILL (Deceased)

Pursuant to the Trustee Act 1925 any persons having a claim against or an interest in the Estate of the above named, late of 2 Holy Grove Church Lawford Rugby Warwickshire, CV23 5EA, who died on 28/03/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 21/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard

Classified

TELEPHONE 01527 588688 FACSIMILE 01527 584371

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
 Warwickshire County Council has made 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 for up to 18 months.
 Anticipated Completion: 25 March 2026.

Access & Diversion: Wood End Lane, Nuneaton Road, Coventry Road and vice versa.
 Contractor: Vocom, Tel: 03333 448308.

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

SANDY LANE, FILLONGLEY
 Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
 Reason for Order: Pipe sleeve installation works.
 Order Commences: 9 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
 Anticipated Completion: 23 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Wood End Lane, Coventry Road, Nuneaton Road and vice versa.
 Contractor: Vocom, Tel: 03333 448 308.

OVERSTONE ROAD, WITHTYBROOK
 Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
 Reason for Order: Works to lay duct in verge and carriageway.
 Order Commences: 7 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
 Anticipated Completion: 9 April 2026.

Access & Diversion: Main Street, Featherbed Lane and vice versa.
 Contractor: Callan Connect, Tel: 0121 327 5167.

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 19 Mar 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

Notice is hereby given that Standard Triumph Sports Sections has applied to Coventry City Council for a New Club Premises Certificate for Standard Triumph Sports Sections, 101 Tanners Lane, Coventry, CV4 9UB

Details of Application: To provide sale/supply of Alcohol and refreshments to members and their guests during weekdays and weekends 11am to 11pm as and when required.

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

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

Any Representation relating to this application must be made in writing to the Licensing Authority by Midnight 8th April 2026.

Please note it is an offence to knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. The maximum fine on summary conviction for this offence is Unlimited.

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

Application Number R25/1116
12, MAIN STREET, MONKS KIRBY, RUGBY, CV23 0QX
 Listed building consent for proposed replacement of timber windows and french doors to rear
 This development may affect a Listed Building. This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0086
BARNYARD CARS, HALL FARM, BROWNSCOVER LANE, RUGBY, CV21 1HY
 Variation of condition 2 of R2/0085 to extend current use within the existing parameters of the existing planning permission for the land for a further 3 year period.
 This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0123
UNIT 5 SYMMETRY PARK, WESTERN LINK, RUGBY, CV23 9GT
 Installation of 2 loading canopies to Unit 5.
 This development may affect a Public Right of Way

Application Number R26/0162
RENVILLE HOUSE, CORD LANE, EASENHALL, RUGBY, CV23 0HZ
 Proposed addition of pitched roofs to existing flat roofed bay windows.
 This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0203
PARCEL 14 KEY PHASE 1, HOULTON RUGBY, CV23 0AS
 Erection of 82 dwellings and associated works and development including internal roads, parking and garages at Parcel 14 Key Phase 1 Houlton (application for approval of reserved matters relating to appearance, landscaping, layout and scale pursuant to outline planning permission R17/0022)
 This is a major development

Application Number R26/0213
47, THE BEECHES, MAIN STREET, WOLSTON, COVENTRY, CV8 3HH
 Erection of porch at rear entrance
 This development may affect a Listed Building. This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0214
47, THE BEECHES, MAIN STREET, WOLSTON, COVENTRY, CV8 3HH
 Listed building consent for erection of porch at rear entrance
 This development may affect a Listed Building. This development may affect a Conservation Area

Members of the public may inspect copies of the application, the plans and documents submitted with it online at: www.planningportal.rugby.gov.uk or in an electronic form at: Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby CV21 2RR between the hours of 9.00 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday until 12 April 2026. Please note a planning officer would not be present.

If you wish to make an appointment to discuss the application, please contact the case officer.

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

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

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

Nicola Smith - Strategic Director for Place

SALES & WANTS

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Valley slip to bottom after Long Eaton loss

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: A DEBUT goal from Tyler Bruck could not prevent Rugby Town from dropping to the bottom of the table following a 2-1 home defeat against Long Eaton United.

Bruck drew Valley level on the stroke of half time as the Redditch United loanee marked his first Rugby appearance with a goal at Butlin Road.

However, Jahvan Davidson-Miller put Long Eaton back in front early in the second period after Tristan Thompson-Matthews scored the game's opening goal for the visitors.

The result means Rugby slip to the bottom of the Northern Premier League Midlands table, four points from safety



following an eighth game without a win.

Both teams went into the fixture without a win in seven games which has seen Valley slide down the table and into the relegation zone.

And Long Eaton broke the deadlock on 21 minutes when Thompson-Matthews volleyed a cross from the

right into the roof of the net at the back post from close range.

The home side equalised moments before the break as Bruck coolly found the net when one-on-one with Long Eaton goalkeeper Lewis King.

However, the visitors reclaimed the lead eight minutes after the break when former Valley striker Davidson-Miller finished past Xander Grieves at the second attempt.

King denied Bruck when clean through later in the half while Rivel Mardenborough saw his appeals for a penalty waved away by the referee late on.

Rugby are next in action against Bourne Town on Saturday, March 21 with kick-off at 3pm at Butlin Road.

New striker Tyler Bruck scored on his first outing. Picture by Martin Pulley.

Bears triumph in pre-season T20s

CRICKET: WARWICKSHIRE CCC continued their pre-season tour of South Africa with a productive T20 double-header against Northamptonshire.

The Bears played two matches against Northants at the Coetzenburg Oval as the club continued their preparations ahead of the new season.

Warwickshire restricted Northants to 114 all out in the first match as Michael Booth (2-16), Oliver Hannon-Dalby (2-23), and Taz Ali (2-14) all claimed two wickets apiece.

The Bears used their innings as a training exercise and batted

their full allocation of 20 overs to reach 158-8.

Dan Mousley blasted 77 runs from 48 deliveries while Theo Wylie chipped in with 28 from 19 balls.

Warwickshire posted 165-8 in the second match as Jake Lintott top scored with 41 runs from 28 deliveries.

Lintott was supported by Ed Barnard (28) and Rob Yates (25), the latter scoring his runs from just 11 balls.

And Warwickshire's bowlers ensured the Bears won both matches as Richard Gleeson led the attack with 3-23 while Jordan Thompson picked up 2-34.

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