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

£21m bid to give boost to properties

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

LOWER heating bills are on the way for hundreds of council homes in Rugby, as a £21million council programme to install free energy efficiency measures gets under way.

Solar panels have been installed at more than 50 homes in Newbold and Old Brownover as part of Rugby Borough Council's (RBC) Give Your Home a Glow Up programme, which was launched last autumn.

Under the three-year programme the council, in partnership with energy company E.ON, offers its tenants free energy efficiency measures – and has started contacting eligible households on a ward-by-ward basis.

Coun Claire Edwards, RBC's portfolio holder for communities and homes, regulation and safety, said: "We're delighted the first tenants have benefited from the free energy efficiency measures on offer through our Give Your Home a Glow Up programme, measures which can help make our tenants' homes cheaper to heat and stay warmer for longer. "Working in partnership with

E.ON, we aim to make the installation process as smooth as possible for tenants.

"Depending on the measures fitted, installation can take just a few days and we work with tenants to minimise disruption.

"We're working to an ambitious target of improving the energy efficiency of more than 1,000 council homes over the next three years, so, if we contact you offering a free home assessment for a 'glow up', make sure you get in touch."

The council secured a £10.7million government grant to support the programme, with the council match-funding the grant from its Housing Revenue Account – which can only be spent on the management and maintenance of council homes.

The programme forms part of the council's work to ensure all its homes have a minimum Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C by the Government's deadline of 2030.

All eligible households offered a free home assessment during the three-year programme could benefit from a range of energy efficiency measures, including solar panels, air source heat pumps, wall insulation and loft insulation.

Coun Noreen New, Rugby Borough Council's Liberal Democrat group spokesperson for communities and homes, regulation and safety, said the council's partnership with E.ON had a proven track record after it was highly commended in the 'regional large-scale project' category at the West Midlands Energy Efficiency Awards (WMEEA) 2025.

The accolade followed the council and E.ON fitting energy efficiency measures at 112 council homes in Rokeby and Long Lawford last year.

Coun New said: "The experience of fitting energy efficiency measures at homes in Rokeby and Long Lawford has allowed us to hit the ground running with our Give Your Home a Glow Up programme.

"We want this programme to make a real difference, helping council tenants keep homes warmer for longer with the potential to save money on energy bills.

"So, I'd encourage every household invited to have a free home assessment to take up the offer."

Visit www.rugby.gov.uk/warm-homes for more information.



Rugby Borough Council housing maintenance officer Darren Reeves visited one of the first homes to benefit from the council's £21million Give Your Home a Glow Up programme.

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Slowing down to speed things up

THE BRAKES could be put on HS2 trains to save cash.

The government this week told HS2 Ltd to explore options to remove complexity that could cut billions in costs and reduce delays for the project.

The original cost of the controversial high-speed line was estimated at £37.5 billion, but that figure has since spiralled to over £100 billion.

And the line linking London and Birmingham - of which some 54 kilometres of the 190km track will cut through the heart of Warwickshire - was originally scheduled to open later this year, but is now not expected until after 2033.

The latest move comes as part of the government's reset of the line following years of mismanagement.

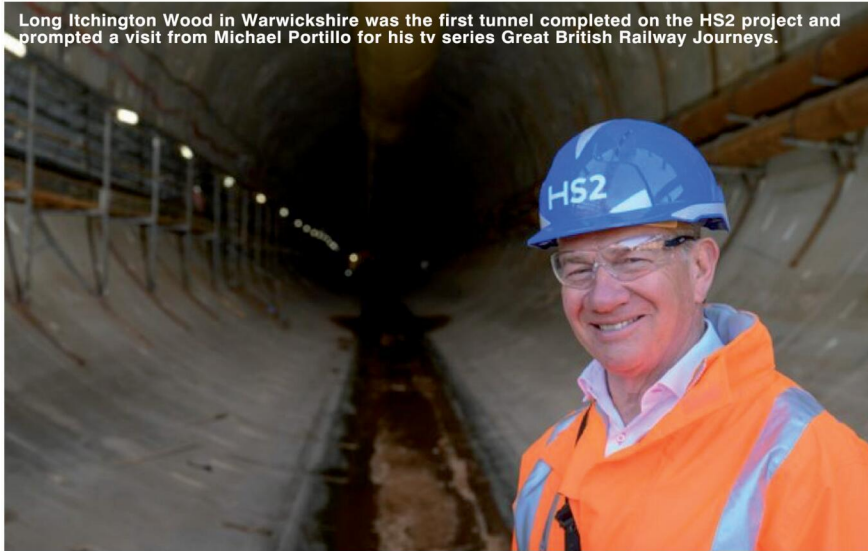
As part of his reset of the project, HS2 Ltd CEO Mark Wild will explore other high-speed options for the railway, which could save taxpayers billions and reduce construction time.

HS2 was originally commissioned to run at 360km/h, which would have made them the fastest conventional high-speed trains anywhere in the world.

But no railway in the UK, or globally, is currently engineered for 360km/h.

This means that HS2 would have to wait for HS2 tracks to be built before testing any trains - an

Long Itchington Wood in Warwickshire was the first tunnel completed on the HS2 project and prompted a visit from Michael Portillo for his tv series Great British Railway Journeys.



approach which could increase costs and delay the completion of the project.

These options would have negligible impact on projected journey

times and get passengers onto trains sooner.

The move would bring HS2 in line with proven high-speed models such as HS1, Japan's bullet trains, and

France's TGV network which all run at 300-320km/h.

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said: "This Government is determined to deliver HS2 as effec-

tively and efficiently as possible. In doing so, I will look at every opportunity to claw back construction time, save taxpayers money and ensure the project delivers for the country.

"I share the public's anger about the waste and mess of the past which is why this Government is pulling HS2 out of its sclerosis and setting it on a more sensible course.

"We're getting a grip, controlling costs, and getting on with delivering the transport infrastructure this country needs."

After investigating further opportunities to bring down costs and delivery timelines, Mr Wild will report back to the transport secretary in the summer, alongside a progress update.

Mr Wild, who was appointed last year to put the project back on track, said: "I made a commitment to the transport secretary that I would regain control of HS2 and bring an end to the project's cost increases and delays.

"With performance moving in the right direction, driven by the hard work of 30,000 people on the ground, we are rightly exploring options to create further efficiencies.

"Speed has never been the primary objective. This railway will deliver better journeys, more capacity on the network, and economic growth - all of which are vital to the country's future prosperity."

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Borough announces big plans to bring in flood defence projects

The projects aim to reduce flood risk, protect homes and businesses and make communities more resilient to extreme weather. s

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

FLOOD reduction schemes are being planned for vulnerable areas in the borough.

Rugby Borough Council (RBC) has agreed projects to protect homes and communities in areas that have seen repeated flooding, including Wolston, Grandborough, Withybrook, Stretton-on-Dunsmore and Brandon.

A major part of the programme

will focus on natural flood management in Wolston – which could include planting trees, improving soil and creating features to hold water back during heavy rain.

Other projects will focus on improvements in known hotspots – including surveys to better understand flood risk in Grandborough, design work for a future flood scheme in Withybrook, repairs to a damaged culvert in Stretton-on-Dunsmore and modelling to support a flood scheme in Brandon.

An RBC spokesperson said:

“Recent storms and wetter winters have increased the risk of flooding across the borough and action is needed to help communities prepare for the future.”

The programme – funded from RBC’s climate reserve and delivered with Warwickshire County Council and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust – supports RBC’s wider plans to tackle climate change and protect residents from its impact.

The council says some schemes will deliver short-term improvements with others forming part

of longer-term plans to manage flood risk across the borough.

Councillor Alison Livesey, chair of RBC’s climate-emergency working group, said: “Flooding has a real impact on people’s lives, from damage to homes to the stress and worry it causes. That is why it is so important we take action.

“These projects will help us better understand flood risk and put measures in place to reduce it. Just as importantly, they will help us cope as our climate continues to change.”

Coun Sam Edwards, deputy chair of the climate-emergency working group, said: “This is about protecting our communities and making them more resilient. By working with expert partners, we can deliver practical solutions in the areas that need them most.

“I am particularly pleased to see the focus on natural solutions, which not only reduce flood risk but also support our environment and local wildlife.”

Work on the projects is expected to begin this year.

Dan’s the Mann for forum position

THE FORUM that represents businesses in Rugby has appointed a ‘solid’ new chair.

Dan Mann, corporate affairs manager at Cemex UK, has been announced as new chair of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce’s Rugby Local Business Forum. He replaces Karen Shuter, who stepped down in October.

The forum meets three times per year to discuss issues for local firms and hear updates from key borough decision makers.

Dan, pictured, said: “I know I have very big shoes to fill, replacing Karen in this role, who chaired this forum over many years.

“I have seen, first-hand, the work the chamber does for Rugby and the wider

region and there are exciting times ahead with the launch of our manifesto this spring.

“We have very good links with MP John Slinger and the local authorities and that dialogue is absolutely vital because understanding the issues that might hold back growth, and how we overcome those together, can strengthen our local economy.”

Chamber chief executive Corin Crane said: “We are thrilled Dan has come on board as chair. He has a great understanding of how businesses can interact with government at all levels, to ensure the area benefits.

“Having a name such as Cemex playing its part at a local level shows the vital role the chamber has in bringing together firms of all sizes and sectors.”



New skills centre planned in town

A NEW initiative will aim to provide training and support for Rugby residents and businesses.

Rugby Borough Council has secured £9.9million to help deliver a training and innovation hub in the town to offer financial and employment training.

The fund, secured by legal agreement from the Frasers Group, will support the hub’s primary activities, including work-readiness training, support for small businesses to access construction and supply chain activities, and training and innovation

schemes for wider community projects.

The hub will also perform outreach work for seldom-heard and hard-to-reach groups in the borough.

The council is currently considering options to provide the hub.

Council leader councillor Michael Moran said: “Rugby’s town centre is an historic and significant part of our town and its regeneration is of vital importance.

“That’s why it is so exciting to have secured this tranche of funding to help support upskilling and

training for the people of Rugby, as well as supporting our businesses to prepare for the future.”

Coun Jerry Roodhouse, chair of the town centre working group, said: “Securing this funding to provide vital support for the businesses and people of Rugby is a huge boost for our town centre.

“We are excited to launch the training and innovation hub as soon as we can and it will help to provide our local businesses with the skills and knowledge needed to take their businesses forward.”

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Council unveils £250,000 fund for wellbeing ideas

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

GRANTS of up to £20,000 are on offer for projects which improve health and wellbeing and promote physical activity in Rugby.

Rugby Borough Council (RBC)

has launched the Love Rugby Wellbeing Fund to help local organisations deliver projects such as improving community facilities, creating new activities, supporting under-represented groups and testing new ideas that help people get into healthy habits.

A total of £250,000 is available, with grants of up to £20,000 for each successful applicant.

Projects must show clear local need, strong community involvement and measurable results – such as increasing participation in physical activity, improving access to facilities or creating more opportunities for people who face barriers.

Applicants are also asked to consider how their plans can reduce environmental impact and support greener ways of working.

RBC leader councillor Michael Moran said: “Through the Love Rugby Wellbeing Fund, the council aims to invest in our local clubs and organisations to expand access and get as many people as possible in the borough engaged in sport and healthy community activities.

“Whether it is a traditional sport like rugby or football, or yoga for pensioners in their village hall, it is

so important for everyone’s physical and mental health.”

Coun Jerry Roodhouse, leader of RBC’s Liberal Democrat group, said: “This fund is about supporting the amazing work already happening in our communities and helping it go even further.

“Local groups know their communities and this funding gives them the chance to grow ideas, reach more people and make a real difference to health and wellbeing.”

Applications will open in mid-April and close on July 31. The successful applicants will be announced in September and delivered over six months up to March next year.

Further information about the Love Rugby Wellbeing Fund, including how to apply, will be available at www.rugby.gov.uk/loverugby.

Hydrotherapy kit set to arrive

NEW hydrotherapy equipment will be installed at Lutterworth’s council-owned leisure centre.

Harborough District Council (HDC) will invest £80,000 toward an £87,000 project to install a ‘hydropod’ and two ‘hydrobeds’ at the Lutterworth site.

The equipment is designed to support recovery from injury, rehabilitation and the management of long-term health conditions.

Hydrotherapy uses warm water to support the body during exercise and treatment, by reducing pressure on joints and muscles, enabling people recovering from injuries – or living with conditions such as arthritis, chronic pain or mobility issues – to move more comfortably while improving strength, flexibility and circulation.

Hydrotherapy also helps reduce stress and promote relaxation and mental health.

The project will be delivered with the council’s leisure operator, Everyone Active, which will project-manage the work and has also

contributed financially towards the scheme.

HDC leader councillor Phil Knowles said: “Investing in facilities that support the health and wellbeing of our residents is a key priority for the council. The introduction of hydrotherapy equipment at Lutterworth Leisure Centre will provide valuable support for people recovering from injury, living with long-term conditions or simply looking for ways to improve their overall wellbeing.

“We are pleased to be working in partnership with Everyone Active, whose support and expertise will help deliver this project and ensure these new facilities are available for the community to benefit from.”

Coun Jo Asher, the council’s cabinet lead for culture, leisure, economy and tourism, said: “Three years ago, we saved the leisure centres and invested millions of pounds to enhance and upgrade them.

“This investment is a further investment in our communities, both for now and for the future.”



Lutterworth Leisure Centre held a community party in 2024, to mark its reopening following a refurbishment. Picture by Marcus Mingsins 4024003MMR2

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County lines operation sees £10,000 of drugs seized



Police seized cocaine, heroin, cannabis, and cannabis-infused vapes during a week-long crackdown. s

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

POLICE in Coventry arrested 13 people and seized around £10,000 worth of drugs during a week-long crackdown on criminal gangs.

West Midlands Police's county lines taskforce, with partners and local teams, targeted gangs who exploit children and vulnerable adults to supply drugs across police force boundaries, as part of a national county lines intensification week.

Officers in Coventry stop-searched 48 people, 11 of whom were arrested for drugs offences including possession with intent to supply and cannabis cultivation.

Two people were arrested after being stopped in a vehicle and found in possession of weapons including a baseball bat and a lock knife. Class A and B drugs,

cash and a burner phone were also found.

The team executed three warrants and seized large amounts of cash, class A drugs and a machete.

Around £10,000 worth of cocaine, heroin, cannabis and cannabis-infused vapes were recovered during the week.

The force's gang and organised crime team visited six suspected 'cuckooed' properties - where dealers take over the home of a vulnerable person - to identify those most at risk of exploitation.

As part of the county lines intensification week, Year 6 pupils from Coventry schools took part in virtual-reality headset workshops to discuss topics such as gang crime and the dangers of carrying a knife, and the West Midlands Police's schools team visited 300 pupils in years 1 to 8 to deliver workshops and safeguarding interventions and to talk to parents.

Ch Supt Paul Joyce, who manages local policing in Coventry, said: "National intensification weeks are a great way to

raise public awareness around the dangers of county lines.

"We know organised gang activity, drug dealing and the exploitation of vulnerable people is a concern all year round. We are relentless in our efforts to safeguard those at most harm in our communities and work tirelessly to bring offenders to justice.

"Our collaborative approach with partners means we are able to take proactive police action and then ensure those released from custody have tangible next steps that can lead them away from a life of crime."

Signs of cuckooing and county lines gangs include a high number of people entering and leaving a property at unusual times of day and night and increased antisocial behaviour or neglect to a property.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/44x66fbb> for information from the Children's Society about how to spot the signs of child exploitation.

Near-miss driver ban

A CARELESS driver from Coventry has received a six-month road ban after narrowly missing an oncoming lorry while overtaking.

The motorist, 25, tried to pass a van driver in Silver Eagle Way in Baginton in April, clipping the van in the process and leaving debris scattered across the carriageway.

He also narrowly missed a collision with an HGV travelling in the opposite direction.

He failed to stop, exchange details or report the incident to police within the required 24 hours.

The van driver caught the incident on his dashcam, however, and submitted footage to Warwickshire Police, resulting in a notice of intended prosecution being sent to the culprit.

After pleading guilty in court, the driver was disqualified for six months,

handed a community order requiring him to complete 120 hours of unpaid, supervised work and ordered to pay £250 in costs and a victim surcharge.

The police prosecutor in the case said: "This collision shows how valuable dashcam [evidence] can be, as the footage provided clear evidence of what had happened.

"The other driver stated he could find no damage to his car but the footage clearly shows the damage sustained and we were able to use this as evidence in court.

"We can only hope the six-month driving ban and unpaid work serves as a wake-up call and encourages him to think more carefully about how he drives in future."

Visit www.coventryobserver.co.uk to watch the dashcam footage.



The careless driver narrowly avoided a collision with an oncoming lorry. s

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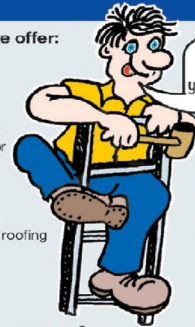
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Young people in conflict zones can bring hope



Dr Michaelina Jakala and Dr Chas Morrison from Coventry University. s

by Andy Morris
andy.morris@bullivantmedia.com

THE POWERFUL stories of young people caught in global conflict have been turned into comic-book style stories for an exhibition that is coming to Coventry.

The real-life experiences of young people working for peace worldwide have been shared by award-winning comics producer PositiveNegatives, as part of a Coventry University research project.

I Couldn't Stand By, which presents stories of young people in countries such as Algeria and Colombia, make up an exhibition heading to Coventry Cathedral in May before settling at the Coventry Refugee and Migrant Centre.

Lead researcher Dr Michaelina Jakala, from Coventry University's research centre for peace and security, says the exhibition's message feels timely given the ongoing conflict in the Middle East.

She said: "With conflict dominating the headlines, this exhibition offers something different – a reminder that peace is built gradually, by ordinary people tak-

ing action. We hope it encourages young people here in the UK to see themselves as part of that story."

The exhibition, which was funded by the Allan and Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust, draws on a six-year research programme which saw a team work with PositiveNegatives, and education specialist Lifeworlds Learning, to explore how young people experience conflict, contribute to peacebuilding and how research can be shared through accessible formats such as comics and podcasts.

Child soldiers

The characters featured in the comics are composites, based on interviews, and represent real experiences, including former child soldiers in Bosnia adjusting to adulthood, youth activists advocating for change in Algeria and Colombia, and displaced families in Iraq rebuilding their lives.

While the full comic series spans five regions, the exhibition focuses specifically on the stories from Algeria and Colombia, selected because they best highlight the project's central message of hope.

The wider research project also

led to the *Generation Peace* podcast – which includes testimony from Bosnian case studies – and created new 'citizenship', 'agency' and 'peace' workshops for secondary schools that use the comics to help students explore identity, agency and positive social change.

Schools in London, the Midlands and the English North West will pilot workshop sessions this year.

The study, led by Dr Jakala and Coventry University colleague Dr Chas Morrison, gathered hundreds of interviews in Algeria, Colombia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iraq and the Kurdistan region.

Findings show that despite experiencing conflict, displacement and trauma, young people often dem-

onstrate leadership, resilience and determination – qualities researchers say are too often overlooked.

Dr Morrison said: "Our research shows that young people are far too often excluded from decisions about conflict and peace.

"Yet in every context we studied, they were shaping their communities in meaningful ways – through activism, culture, education or simply refusing to give up.

"We wanted the exhibition – and the comics behind it – to communicate that message of agency and possibility."

The team identified an overarching theme of hope, supported by three key conditions: access to opportunities, feeling recognised

and heard, and being able to process trauma.

Dr Jakala said: "Hope emerged again and again in our interviews. Young people showed incredible resilience, even when living through displacement, war or long-term post-conflict recovery. What they need is to be recognised, to feel heard and to have opportunities. Without those, hope can turn into disaffection – but where they exist, young people make extraordinary contributions to peace."

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/52frdv6> for details of the research project and exhibition. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/5xudmmh6> to read the comics. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/4yz65uks> to hear the podcast.

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Concern over developer's plan to pump run-off into brook

Coun Will Roberts fears the consequences if waste water is allowed to be pumped into Whitnash Brook. Picture by Warwick District Green Party. s

by Philippa Mingjins
 philippa.mingjins@bullivantmedia.com

ALARM has been raised at plans to pump waste water into a stream in Whitnash just feet away from a nature reserve.

Bellway Homes is building 185 houses next to Whitnash Brook and has applied to the Environment Agency (EA) to pump up to 2,462 cubic metres of rainwater run-off daily – almost enough to fill an Olympic swimming pool – from the site into the stream.

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust has said it is extremely concerned and has asked the EA to consider the impact on the reserve's sensitive ecosystem and the wildlife corridor.

Bellway's request states the discharge could continue until 2030, although the volume would depend on the level of rainfall.

Green Party councillor Will Roberts, who represents Leamington Willes on Warwickshire County Council, is worried about what would happen in extreme weather like the rainfall at the start of this year.

He said: "It's a huge concern. The site is sloping down to the brook so a heavy amount of rain could certainly lead to a lot of

pollutants coming into the brook." A public consultation exercise about the plan was due to end yesterday (Thursday) but Warwick district councillor Becky Davidson said many residents had told her they were not aware of the plans.

Matt Western, Labour MP for Warwick and Leamington, said: "The impact that such discharge into our local river system would have is deeply alarming and residents have every right to firmly object to these plans."

Bellway Homes said, in a statement: "Protecting Whitnash Brook and the surrounding nature reserve is a top priority for us and we are committed to ensuring no risk is posed to these areas. The application is for rainwater runoff from the construction site, which may contain natural silt and soil particles. Bellway remains committed to working collaboratively with the Environment Agency and local stakeholders to address concerns and uphold environmental standards."

In its application, Bellway said "ground investigation at the site identified no evidence of contamination and no elevated concentrations of mobile contaminants presenting a risk to the groundwater, adjacent surface waters or the surrounding environment".

The town's big show is back

PREPARATIONS are under way for Kenilworth Show – with the whole community mucking in.

Shops, cafes, pubs, restaurants and public buildings throughout Kenilworth and the surrounding area will be asked to display posters for the show – which is Warwickshire's largest one-day agricultural event and which takes place at Stoneleigh Park on Saturday, June 6.

Organised by Kenilworth and District Agricultural

Society, the charity-run event has been celebrating farming, food and rural life since 1947 and is back this year with a new programme of activities and some old favourites.

Kenilworth Town Council is also supporting the 2026 event and will be providing a free shuttle bus between the showground, on Stoneleigh Road, and Kenilworth clock tower, in a move to cut down on carbon emissions from the show.

Town mayor James Ken-

neddy said: "The show is such a great event for the whole family, with so much to do and learn, and see what goes on in the countryside around us."

The show provides vital support to local farming and farmers at what is currently a testing and uncertain time for the sector, amid unpopular policy changes, labour shortages, rising costs, market volatility and extreme weather.

Visit www.kenilworthshow.co.uk for more details.



Rural support: Clare Price and Charlie Weetman, from KADAS; Kenilworth mayor James Kennedy; Jo Reynolds, from Church Farm Brewery; Rowan Williams, from Kenilworth Pet and Garden Supplies; and Kenilworth town councillor David Bailey. s

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It's time to share the love

A CELEBRATION of Rugby's art, live music, sports, culture and family entertainment will return to the town this summer.

Rugby Borough Council (RBC) has confirmed the Love Rugby Festival will take place from Saturday, June 20 to Sunday July 5, coinciding with Rugby School's Festival-on-the-Close.

The council is offering community grants of up to £2,000 for organisations to stage events and activities for Love Rugby and community sports clubs can receive up to £500 to host free taster sessions and open days.

The borough festival will conclude with a 'couch-to-5k' fun run on July 5.

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke, RBC spokesperson for partnerships and wellbeing, said: "We're excited for our second year of the Love Rugby Festival and are eager to receive applications from businesses and community groups to host events.

"We can't wait to celebrate and bring together Rugby's residents, and beyond."

Her Liberal Democrat counterpart, Coun Neil Sandison, said: "The council is offering grants of up to £2,000 for businesses and community groups to host events during the festival period.

"Applications should be submitted as soon as possible to bring your event to life."

Visit www.rugby.gov.uk/loverugby for updates on events and activities or to apply for a grant before the closing date of Wednesday, April 22.

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/bdfcspcf> for NHS advice on how to prepare for the fun run. Details on how to sign up will be announced soon.

Contact the town centre events team at loverugby@rugby.gov.uk for more information about hosting a festival event or for help promoting an activity.



Couns Neil Sandison and Maggie O'Rourke announce this year's Love Rugby Festival.

Teen traders can get a taste of market stall life during easter

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

AN EASTER extravaganza is coming to Rugby town centre next month.

Rugby Borough Council (RBC) will host a day of markets and events – including food and drink, live entertainment and drop-in workshops – in Market Place, High Street and Sheep Street on Saturday,

April 4, from 9am to 4pm. Rugby Rotary Club will host an easter egg hunt in Caldecott Park, from 10am to 2pm, and the easter celebrations will also feature the launch of Rugby's Teenage Market – the first of its kind for the town.

A council spokesperson said: "The Teenage Market will give young people, aged 11 to 25, a platform for skills development and a chance to gain confidence, business know-how and real-world experience run-

ning a market stall. Teenage Market events offer a free way for young people to engage with their communities, helping them to develop skills and entrepreneurship while boosting footfall into, and enhancing the vibrancy of town centres."

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke, RBC portfolio holder for partnerships and wellbeing, said: "The Rugby Teenage Market initiative is key to identifying a new generation of market traders and making young

local people an active and positive part of our town centre."

Coun Neil Sandison, RBC Liberal Democrat spokesperson for partnerships and wellbeing, said: "Rugby has amazing diversity and talent amongst its teenagers and this will be a great way to celebrate that energy."

Coun Rob Howard, Warwickshire County Council portfolio holder for economy and growth, said: "It's fantastic that we're supporting teenage

markets, providing a great opportunity for our young people. I hope that local people will come out and support it.

"Teenage Markets are a brilliant way to give young people real-world experience and confidence. They help develop entrepreneurial skills while bringing energy and creativity to our town centres. We're excited to be able to support them."

Visit <https://theteenagemarket.co.uk> to apply to host a stall.

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Support is on offer

COVENTRY residents in financial crisis will soon be able to get support from a new national fund.

The Crisis and Resilience Fund (CRF), funded by the government, will replace both the Household Support Fund (HSF) and Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) nationally and in Coventry from Wednesday April 1.

Coventry City Council will use \$6.6million of government funding to provide Crisis Payments, Housing Payments, Resilience Services and Community Coordination.

Coun Richard Brown, the council's Cabinet Member for Finance, said: "The government's national changes aim to simplify and stabilise crisis support. We know in Coventry that people are finding it hard to manage household bills and that's why we took the decision not to raise Council Tax to the maximum allowed.

"We are also making preparations for the new Crisis Resilience Fund, and we want to help people who need support in the best and simplest way possible that helps people maintain their dignity and independence."

The council is talking to support services and advice agencies about how they can help people to access the funding.

The CRF is open to low-income households. A new web address will be set up from April 1 to provide advice about how people can apply for funding.

An event which will help youngsters in the long run

A POPULAR event to encourage children stay active during the school holidays is returning to Coventry this summer.

The Children's Mile will take place at War Memorial Park on Sunday June 14, offering thousands of local schoolchildren an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors.

The event features a fully accessible one-mile route designed to encourage participation from students, teachers and staff from primary schools across Coventry.

Participants can choose to walk, jog, wheel or run the route at their own pace.

Each participant will receive a commemorative t-shirt, certificate and goodies to celebrate their achievement.

Last year, 1,045 young people from 33 schools took part.

Coun Kamran Caan, Cabinet Member for Public Health and Sport at Coventry City Council, said: "It's great news that the Children's Mile is returning this summer. We're hoping even more schools will join in this year.

"Initiatives like this are fantastic for our young people, offering an inclusive opportunity to get active while exploring the city's fantastic War Memorial Park.

"Inclusive events like this help to inspire a love for physical activity as we prepare for yet another fantastic summer of sport in Coventry."



Coun Kamran Caan with participants from the 2025 Children's Mile.

Coventry's School Games Organisers, Danny Kingham and Stuart Davoile, added: "We're incredibly excited for this year's Children's Mile. Our goal is to have more schools than ever participate in this fantastic initiative, which is

open to all primary schools all over the city.

"We encourage students and staff at our schools to join in and take part in the one-mile route. We also want to see as many parents and supporters there as possible, cheer-

ing on the children."

Entry costs start at \$8, with an 'early bird' discount offer open until April 12.

Participants must sign up through their schools. Email covsport@coventry.gov.uk for more information.

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Tenants move in after new 100-home phase is completed



Daniel King (Homes England), Roy Horsfall (Willmott Dixon), Lewis Young (Homes England), Charlotte Larkins (RBC project officer), Coun Claire Edwards (RBC), Paul Wootton (RBC senior project manager), Michelle Dickson (RBC strategic director for communities), Martin Pallett (Willmott Dixon), Alan French (Willmott Dixon), Alistair Howarth (Michael Dyson Associates), Joe O’Leary (Willmott Dixon) and Tony Dawson (Willmott Dixon) took a tour of the Navigation Way development.

TENANTS have now moved into the 100 new homes at Rugby Borough Council’s (RBC) flagship £22million Navigation Way development. The second phase of homes built on the former Biart Place site was handed over to the council by construction partner Willmott Dixon in the new year. The development’s 60 one and two-bedroomed apartments, 20 maisonettes and 20 two, three and four-bedroomed houses are now fully occupied. All homes were allocated to eligible households on the council’s housing waiting list. Coun Claire Edwards, RBC

portfolio holder for communities and homes, regulation and safety, joined a tour of the completed development. She said: “Navigation Way has transformed the former Biart Place site and delivered 100 modern, sustainable properties which have now become home to eligible households on the council waiting list. “We have worked closely with Willmott Dixon throughout the development and benefited from the financial support of both the Government and Homes England, which helped bring our plans from the drawing board to delivery. “Now work has been complet-

ed, we again want to thank the community who live near the site for their patience and understanding while construction was taking place.” Homes England supported the development with a £6.8million grant from its Affordable Homes Programme 2021-2026, which allowed the council to allocate all 100 homes to households on the waiting list. Navigation Way also secured a further £2million from the Government’s Get Building Fund. Homes at the development have sustainable design and construction features, including electric vehicle charging points,

solar panels and air source heat pumps. Michelle Cotterill, director at Willmott Dixon, said: “Navigation Way is a fantastic example of how collaboration can deliver lasting impact for a community. “Working closely with RBC, we have transformed the old Biart Place site into high quality, energy efficient homes that directly address local need. “Seeing all 100 properties now occupied is a proud moment for Willmott Dixon and reflects our commitment to creating sustainable places where people can thrive. “This development not only provides much-needed housing,

but leaves a legacy that we, the council, and the whole community can be proud of.” The name ‘Navigation Way’ was chosen by councillors to celebrate the role the railway and canal networks played in Rugby’s rapid industrial growth in the 19th century. Coun Noreen New, RBC’s Liberal Democrat group spokesperson for communities and homes, regulation and safety, said: “It is exciting to see the old Biart Place site has been sensitively redeveloped to give so many families the opportunity to live in new, well-equipped homes which are fit for the future.”

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Council cash to give shop fronts a fresh new look in four-year grant scheme



A MAKEOVER for shop fronts in Rugby town centre is on offer after Rugby Borough Council set aside new funding as part of a four-year scheme.

The Town Centre Grant Frontages Scheme will allow businesses and landlords in the town centre to apply for up to £5,000 to get a new shopfront designed and approved through the planning process, and then a further grant of up to £20,000 to fund the works.

The scheme follows the success of the Council's previous scheme delivered from UK Shared Prosperity Funding in 2024-25, where 10 grants with a value of over £90,000 were awarded to local businesses.

The shop frontage grant programme is part of the council's wider regeneration plan to improve the town centre.

The scheme aims to make it easier for occupied and vacant units in key areas of the town to improve their appearance and make them more attractive to external investors.

The programme is open from April 2026 until the end of March 2029, but works will be allowed to continue until the end of March 2030.

Grants will be given to businesses that are visibly in poor condition and are having a negative impact on the area, as judged by site visits from council officers.

Funding will be targeted towards premises in Sheep Street and High Street during the first year of the scheme, before being extended to new areas – likely to be North Street, Railway Terrace, and Albert Street – in the second and third year.

Any business which successfully applies for the enabling grant can then apply for a works grant. While no match-funding is required for the enabling grant, a business applying for a works grant must match-fund at least 20 per cent of the cost.

Rugby Borough Council Leader Coun Michael Moran said: "Like many towns, shop frontages in Rugby town centre could be a lot

better, and we want to work with occupiers and landlords to improve them in the areas that need them the most.

"The targeted approach we are taking will ensure these improvements will deliver maximum impact in the town centre while keeping the cost to taxpayers at a minimum.

"Improved shop frontages, whether at an occupied unit or a vacant one, can make such a difference to the feel of a town.

"We strongly believe that this scheme, alongside the several other projects we are delivering to improve the town centre, will make Rugby a better place to live, work, visit, and invest in, and we encour-

age eligible businesses to apply."

Coun Jerry Roodhouse, Chair of the Rugby Town Centre Working Group, added: "We welcome this new scheme which will enable many businesses in the town centre to access the funding they need to improve their frontages.

"It clearly demonstrates our commitment to working together to not only support our town's businesses, but improve the whole of Rugby town centre."

All applicants will need to follow the council's shopfront design guide, which will be included in the application pack for the grant. Visit www.rugby.gov.uk/w/town-centre-frontages-grant-programme for more information.



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Michelle Rees-Martin from Warwick has retired from the RAF after 35 years.

Hearing first-hand about Helmand life

ROTARIANS in Warwick have been hearing about life in Afghanistan from an army reservist.

Major Lucy Sewell recently gave a presentation to the Warwick Rotarians, offering an account of her deployment to Helmand Province in 2012.

Lucy also completed a 30 year career as a police inspector with Warwickshire Police, balancing the demands of full-time policing with her commitments to the Army Reserve.

Lucy joined the Army Reserve at the age of 19, motivated by a desire to broaden her horizons. She progressed steadily through the ranks and was commissioned as an officer in 2003. Her commitment saw her training regularly at weekends, often transitioning between policing duties during the week and military responsibilities in her spare time.

The dual career afforded her opportunities to travel extensively, including to Canada, France, Germany, Nepal and Austria, before she volunteered for deployment to Afghanistan.

During her six month tour in Helmand Province, Lucy mentored Afghan police officers. Operating in a highly volatile environment, she became adept at identifying threats such as improvised explosive devices and potential sniper positions.

Reflecting on the experience, she spoke candidly of the dangers faced and the personal losses endured, having lost friends during the deployment.

She highlighted the complex chal-



Major Lucy Sewell with Warwick Rotary President Jon Wassall.

enges on the ground, noting that at the time Afghanistan was responsible for the vast majority of the world's heroin production. Corruption within local policing structures, she explained, was widespread at both junior and senior levels. Drug use among some officers, inadequate security standards, and uncertainty over allegiances created an atmosphere of mistrust.

So-called "green on blue" insider

attacks, where Afghan personnel turned their weapons on coalition forces, further eroded confidence between mentors and their counterparts.

British forces were deployed in Afghanistan from 2001 to 2021, during which 457 personnel lost their lives. Today, the country remains under the control of the Taliban, and many of the freedoms previously established have since been lost.

STANDING DOWN: AN RAF stalwart from Warwick has retired after 35 years distinguished service.

Michelle Rees-Martin, a former pupil of Westgate, Newburgh and Aylesford schools, began her Royal Air Force career as a Logistics Supplier in March 1991.

She rose through the ranks to become the Station Warrant Officer at RAF Waddington, one of the most prestigious roles in the RAF.

She has served at numerous stations across the UK and overseas, completing multiple detachments around the world, consistently demonstrating exceptional commitment and leadership.

Her career has been marked by significant achievements, including being awarded an MBE in the King's Birthday Honours List in 2024, in recognition of her outstanding service to the Royal Air Force and her significant contributions to the Royal Air Forces Association.

She was further recognised last year with the prestigious Meritorious Service Medal, awarded for good, faithful, and meritorious

service, with irreproachable character and conduct. The MSM is a rare honour, with only 60 awarded to RAF personnel annually.

WO Rees-Martin has now settled in Lincoln with her husband Wyn - formerly a member of the RAF Police. Their eldest son, Steffan, lives in London, while their youngest son, Corbyn, has followed in his parent's footsteps and recently begun his own RAF journey at the Recruit Training Squadron at RAF Halton.

Michelle said: "I am deeply honoured to have concluded my service career as the Station Warrant Officer at RAF Waddington. While I am extremely sad to leave, serving for 35 years has been an incredible journey, and this role has been a truly fantastic culmination to my career. I now look forward with great excitement to the opportunities and ventures that lie ahead.

"My roots will always lie with Warwick; my older brother Andrew is still in the area and lives with his wife Jeanette in Hampton Magna."

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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.

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

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

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

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Public offered a chance to help choose priorities

WARWICKSHIRE County Council has set out its future objectives and priorities in a new draft Council Plan - Recalibrating Warwickshire - and is urging residents, businesses and partners to share their views on what matters most to them.

The council wants people across the county to take part in a survey, open until April 14, to help shape the final version of the plan. Covering the next four years, the draft plan sets out aims to improve services and how the authority is run.

WCC leader Coun George Finch said: "This draft plan outlines how we will recalibrate Warwickshire so that taxpayers receive a better, fairer deal. Listening to the views of residents, local businesses and our partners is essential, and we will ensure the plan reflects the issues that matter most to them."

"Our ambition is for Warwickshire to be a place where people feel confident that their council is doing everything it can to help them be safer, healthier and able to flourish. I encourage everyone to take the time to read the draft plan and share their views, so they can be assured that this is what we are committed to delivering."

Visit ask.warwickshire.gov.uk/bi/recalibrating-warwickshire/ to complete the survey.

For a paper copy call 01926 410410 or collect a copy from any Warwickshire County Council library.



What matters most to you? Warwickshire County Council would like to know.

Fresh support for businesses

A NEW support service for Warwickshire businesses is being launched.

Warwickshire Business Growth Service (WBGS), led by Warwickshire County Council, will launch on April 1 and build on the work previously delivered through the Coventry and Warwickshire Growth Hub.

The new service will focus on supporting all businesses with advice, events and peer led support, but with a renewed focus on Warwickshire-based businesses and those from sectors including digital creative, automotive and future mobility, visitor economy and rural economy.

Following the announcement that national funding for local business support will significantly reduce from April, with Warwickshire seeing a 91 per cent reduction in core government support, the council has agreed to invest an additional £1million of its own resources to ensure that business growth and economic development services continue for county enterprises. This is alongside the support the council receives from the Department of Business and Trade.

The WBGS will prioritise support for the county's key growth sectors, while also aiming to ensure all businesses can continue to access help and guidance from a wide range of services across the council including skills, property, access to finance, trading standards and business support from Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service.

WCC's economy spokesperson Coun Rob Howard said: "The new Warwickshire Business Growth Service brings the opportunity to connect the wide range of services the council provides to businesses, alongside much-needed programmes of support."

"This is an important investment in the growth of our local economy and the future success of Warwickshire businesses."



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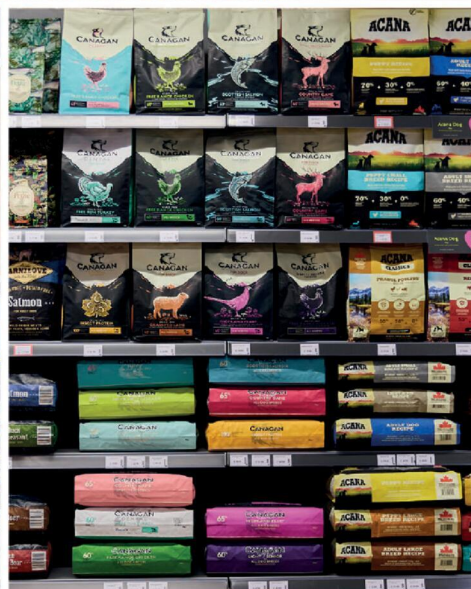
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Cash set to offer support in tackling knife crime

Help is at hand when power cuts out

FUNDS have been handed over to projects designed to empower victims of crime across the West Midlands.

A total of £83,271 has been awarded by the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC), Simon Foster, through the Victims' Code Innovation Fund, to support community organisations to raise awareness of the Victims' Code and help victims obtain access to justice and navigate the criminal justice system with greater confidence.

The funding will support nine organisations delivering targeted programmes over the next 12 months to some of the region's most vulnerable communities – including young people, victims of sexual violence, families bereaved by homicide, deaf victims, South Asian women and Eastern European communities.

Mr Foster said: "Supporting victims and standing up for their rights is absolutely fundamental to delivering access to justice. Too often victims feel unheard, unsupported or unsure of what help is available to them.

"This investment will help ensure victims across our region are empowered to better understand their rights under the Victims' Code and can access justice and the help and support they need, when they need it."

The funding programme has been developed in partnership with the



Natalie Queiroz has welcomed funds from the PCC to support victims of crime across the region.

West Midlands Victims' Advocate, Natalie Queiroz, whose role is dedicated to amplifying victims' voices and ensuring services respond to their needs.

Natalie said: "Every victim deserves to feel heard, supported and empowered throughout their journey. Raising awareness of the Victims' Code is essential so that people know the rights they are entitled to and the help that is avail-

able to them as they navigate their journey through the complexities of the criminal justice system.

"These projects will make a real difference by reaching communities who may face additional barriers to support or access to justice. Barriers such as language, disability, age or culture.

"By working with trusted community organisations, we can ensure more victims are informed,

supported and able to access justice."

The announcement came ahead of the West Midlands Victims' Summit, hosted by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Victims' Advocate, and brought together victims, support organisations, criminal justice partners and policymakers to strengthen collaboration and improve services for victims across the region.

MOST people in the West Midlands are unaware of a vital helpline they can use during a power cut.

New research from National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) shows that 84 per cent of people in the West Midlands don't know about the first port of call in a power cut – the 105 helpline.

The 105 number connects callers directly to their local electricity network operator in the event of a power cut, free of charge.

Power cuts can happen at any time – whether due to severe weather, unexpected incidents, or technical faults.

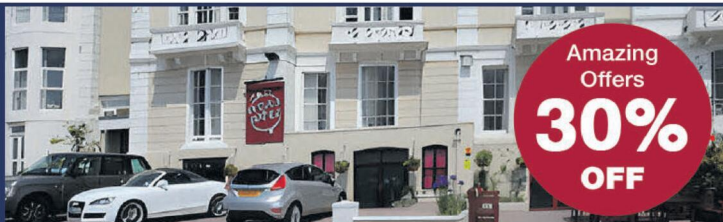
For many, the first moments of a power cut can be confusing for people, especially if it's unclear whether the issue is affecting their home, their street, or the wider area.

The 105 helpline is designed to provide people with fast, direct access to the right support, regardless of who supplies their electricity.

National Grid's support hub at <https://www.customer.nationalgrid.co.uk/wintersupport> provides practical advice on what to do in a power cut.

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When four becomes five

Dudok Quartet with Pieter Wispelwey
Holy Trinity Church, Leamington

MANY claim Schubert's C Major outing to be the finest quintet written, offering a wonderful range of harmony, rhythm and melodic variation. It's certainly a staggering achievement, but to succeed fully it still needs to be played and it can hardly have had many better treatments than this astonishing reading from the Dudok and Pieter Wispelwey.

Schubert's masterwork formed the finale of a concert which had already given so much. Pieces from Rameau and Dowland - the latter a selection from his settings of The Seven Teares which sparkled and lamented in equal measure with a delicious early music texture and sound.

All playing on gut strings but with a variety of bows and a line-up that puts the cellos central and the viola to the side, the Dudok are clearly a quartet who like to do things their way, even having one standing member among the remainder seated.

And there's a similarly quirky, uniqueness to the way they play. From the off the approach was fundamentally relaxed, not lazy or underpowered, just relaxed with a sense of letting the music find its best voice in the acoustic.

Mozart's Quartet No 21 Prussian showcased the musicianship the quartet has to offer. There is a wonderful breadth to the dynamics these four can achieve not just in terms of volume but in terms of an almost palpable softness so delicate placed.

Impressive too is the immaculate intonation throughout, not so easy when the gut-strung cello is asked to leap between octaves with precious little to hide behind. In an acoustic as unforgiving as a large church this was simply faultless.

But it will surely be the closing Schubert that will live longest in the memory. The monumental first movement was testimony to the sheer weight of work this group has put into preparing for the recording studio. Again the spirit is stirred by the wonderful attention to detail, forging strength to gather and then sitting back in the gentlest of registers.

The signature second movement just surpassed everything. This elegant progression of melody and variation was a favourite of Leamington Music's much-missed leader Richard Phillips - and was most movingly played at his memorial service.

Strange to relate among such a wealth of string tonal colour but the abiding memory in this adagio could well be one of just how varied and convincing the pizzicato playing was. No pair of thumbed notes sounded the same and the emotion conveyed by this often percussive playing was simply astounding.

Rounded off perfectly and with a sense equally of concentration and celebration this was a performance to treasure.

It's at moments like this that it's a blessing no encore was given as nobody would wish to have anything take away the memory of such a stunning feast.

Visit leamingtonmusic.org for details of further concerts in this series.

Matthew Salisbury



The Collaboration Choir will be popping up at Kenilworth Castle.

Joining their voices to help bring in the cash

A FUNDRAISING choir will be popping up at Kenilworth Castle this weekend.

The Collaboration Choir, a nationwide network of adult pop choirs with over 800 members, is bringing a series of surprise pop-up performances to the area to raise cash for English Heritage.

And tomorrow (Saturday), singers will be performing at Kenilworth Castle, including in the walled garden and the chapel.

The choir has already raised over \$46,000 for charitable causes since it was founded and this is their biggest street fundraising push yet.

People who go along to support can expect to

hear a mix of pop classics and choir favourites.

Carrie Rawlings, founder of The Collaboration Choir, said: "There's something magical about hearing a choir in an unexpected place. It stops you in your tracks, lifts your mood and reminds you that community is all around you."

"That's what these pop-ups are all about - our singers coming together to give something back through the thing they love most and we want as many people as possible to come along, feel that magic and be part of it."

Visit www.justgiving.com/page/the-collaboration-choir-pop-ups-for-english-heritage to donate

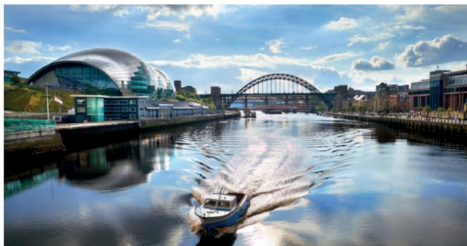
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By Coach from Coventry, Rugby

Reader Travel

Observer



Borders Country Vera's Northumbria & Barnard Castle

Departing Mon 18 May '26

On this break, we journey to some of the filming locations for the popular Vera TV series with a local, specialist guide, discovering the dramatic beauty and heritage of the North East, from Barnard Castle to the Durham Dales and the rugged Scottish Borders.

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- ✓ Guided tour of the Durham Dales, North Pennines & Barnard Castle with a local specialist
- ✓ Guided Borders Country tour (Ford, Etal, Coldstream, Kelso & Jedburgh) with a local specialist
- ✓ Photo stop at the Angel of the North
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Scarborough Heartbeat Country & Whitby

Departing Mon 18 May '26

Step into Heartbeat country on this delightful holiday! Many of its scenes were filmed in Yorkshire, including picturesque Goathland, and we also discover storied Whitby, quaint Hornsea and charming Beverley from our base in the seaside resort of Scarborough.

SO MUCH INCLUDED...

- ✓ Return coach travel from Rugby
- ✓ 4 nights at the Grand Hotel, Scarborough (IG2 rating) with dinner & breakfast
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Downton Abbey Behind the Scenes Exclusive

Departing Fri 10 Jul '26

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SO MUCH INCLUDED...

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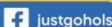
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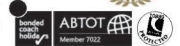
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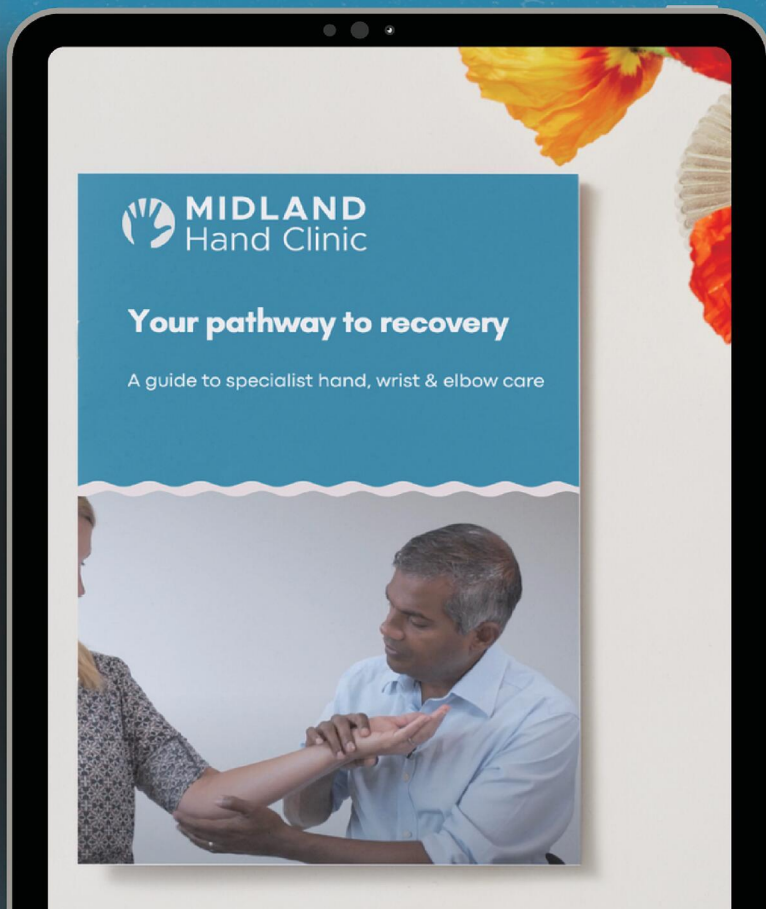


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Your pathway to recovery

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Abuse of retail staff on the rise according to union survey

One in 10 surveyed retail workers said they had been assaulted. s

by Ian Hughes
ian.hughes@bullivantmedia.com

RETAIL workers across the West Midlands are suffering violence, threats and abuse on a daily basis.

Trade union Usdaw's annual survey revealed levels of abuse, threats and assaults last year were higher than the pre-Covid levels of 2019, with shoplifting having more than doubled since the pandemic.

The survey, of nearly 800 staff, found three-quarters had been verbally abused, more than half had been threatened and one in 10 assaulted.

The comments made by respondents to the survey included the following.

"Been called a b*tch, refusing age-restricted items. Had items thrown at me on self-scan. Most incidents happen on a late shift."
"Constant verbal abuse, being recorded without consent, people just being rude to staff, people getting up in my face. Eggs thrown at me, bruise left on arm."

In reference to the requirement to ask for proof-of-age ID when customers want to purchase age-restricted items, one survey correspondent said: "Challenge 25 is definitely difficult – sometimes people get really aggressive. Customer had no ID for alcohol and threatened

to hit me." Another cited: "Foul language, threats and abuse. Store is short-staffed, causing queues at checkouts and self-service. I have had tins of beans thrown at me."

"I had a knife pulled out on me, the bloke was arrested and got an £80 fine – nothing more. Shoplifters hurl abuse at us every single day."

Racial abuse

"Racial abuse, threats and bad manners because they are having a bad day. Because you work in a supermarket, they think they can talk down to you."

Joanne Thomas – Usdaw general secretary said: "It is difficult to

read these testimonies from West Midlands retail workers but, regrettably, they are all too common, with nearly four in five retail workers suffering violence, threats or abuse.

"No-one should feel afraid to go to work. Retail workers provide an essential service and should be respected and have the protection of the law. So we welcome the Crime and Policing Bill, which includes a much-needed protection-of-shop-workers law; ending the indefensible £200 threshold for prosecuting shoplifters and [the introduction of] respect orders for offenders. Respect orders ban repeat offenders from specific locations.

"The government is determined to

drive down retail crime by working in close partnership with the police and retail sector to take the actions that will make the most difference," added the Usdaw representative.

"Their police reforms are lifting national responsibilities off local forces so they focus on tackling local issues. Also, with their neighbourhood policing guarantee, every community now has a named, contactable officer dedicated to addressing local issues, including shop theft.

"After years of campaigning, alongside retail employers, it now feels like the government is listening and taking action to give all retail workers across the UK the protections they deserve."

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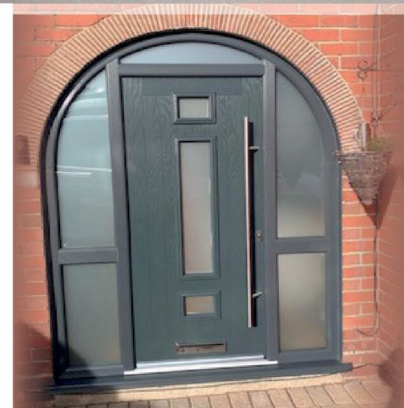
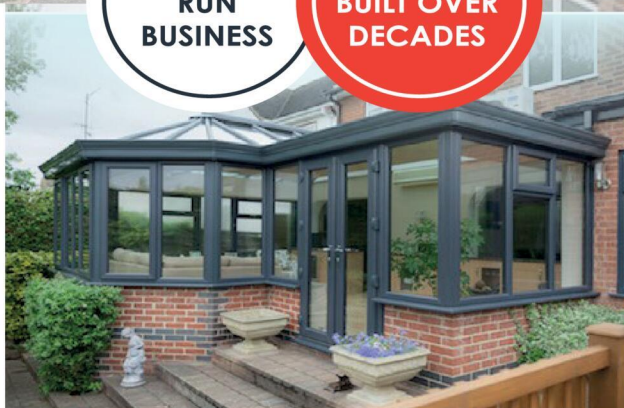


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Primroses create a visually striking spring display when clustered.

It's time to spring into action

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

STARTING a garden can feel daunting. Walking into a garden centre reveals hundreds of plants and it can be difficult knowing which ones will actually work.

As part of its Make it Bloom campaign, British Garden Centres has compiled the following list of plants it recommends to reliably look brilliant in spring.

Bellis: A spring perennial favourite that comes in vibrant colours and has delicate petals that thrive in cool, moist soil.

Easy to grow and beloved by novice and seasoned gardeners, bellis produces continual blooms that add an elegant touch to spring gardens throughout the season.

Erysimum: Also known as the wall-flower, erysimum is a spring perennial known for its long, vibrant blooms and enticing scent.

Thriving in well-drained soil with ample sunlight, erysimum adds

impressive colour to beds and containers with an impressive range of shades from rich purples to sunny yellows, making it ideal for spring gardening and beyond.

Dianthus: Dianthus is a sought-after spring plant featuring silver foliage, vibrant blooms and delightful fragrances, perfect for garden beds and containers.

Low-maintenance and adaptable to various soil types, dianthus delivers quick visual impact with its compact size and is ideal for pathway edging while attracting pollinators from the moment it blooms.

Iconic

Primroses: These are iconic spring bloomers that thrive in cool temperatures and partial shade, making them perfect for early planting. Their vivid colours beautifully adorn beds, containers, hanging baskets and troughs. Low-maintenance and requiring only water and well-drained soil, primroses truly shine in spring when clustered together for a visually striking display.

Lavender: Loved for its fragrant purple blooms, lavender is a very hardy plant that thrives in diverse climates and withstands cold and heat, making it ideal for spring gardens worldwide.

Fast growing and refreshingly fuss-free, lavender adds lasting beauty to gardens and containers while creating an irresistible haven for bees and other pollinators.

Cyclamen: This favourite offers exquisite, heart-shaped leaves and elegant nodding blooms in shades of pink, purple and white.

These delightful plants prefer cool, partially shaded locations with well-drained soil. Easy to establish as a long blooming perennial, cyclamen brings sophisticated charm to shaded garden corners and containers, with minimal fuss.

Potted bulbs: Pre-potted spring bulbs offer the ultimate convenience; simply place them in a cool location and watch as tulips, daffodils, hyacinths and crocuses burst into bloom.

Requiring only water and patience, potted bulbs deliver professional

results without garden preparation, making them perfect for balconies, patios and pathways.

Pulmonaria: "lungwort" is a shade-loving perennial featuring beautifully spotted silver foliage and dainty bell-shaped flowers in shades of pink, blue and purple.

Incredibly hardy and low maintenance, pulmonaria thrives in moist, shaded areas where other plants struggle, making it an excellent choice for woodland gardens and shaded borders.

Classics

Pansies: Beloved spring classics with their distinctive markings and rich colour palette ranging from deep purples to sunny yellows.

Cold-hardy and reliable bloomers, pansies perform beautifully in beds, borders and containers while requiring only basic watering and occasional deadheading for continuous flowers.

Euphorbia: euphorbia adds architectural interest to spring gardens with its chartreuse or lime-

green flower bracts that emerge in early spring.

Drought-tolerant once established and thriving in well-drained soil, euphorbia provides bold colour contrast and texture while requiring minimal water and maintenance.

Forsythia: One of the first shrubs to burst into flower in early spring, covering itself in bright yellow blooms before the leaves even appear.

Forsythia is easy to grow and virtually unstoppable once planted.

Thriving in any soil, tolerating sun or part shade and requiring minimal pruning, forsythia delivers instant spring drama with almost zero effort, perfect for creating an eye-catching focal point.

Julian Palphramand, head of plants at British Garden Centres, said: "With the right plants, even the smallest space can come to life and reward you in spring."

"Our Make It Bloom campaign is all about giving people the confidence to get started and showing just how rewarding a garden can be."

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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

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

HARD

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

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.

Beyoncé singles

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

Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

1		2		3	4		5		6		7
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	17									18	
19											
20					21						
22										23	

ACROSS

- Compassion (4)
- Tranquil (8)
- Be a glutton (7)
- Cherish (5)
- Absurd (12)
- Advent (6)
- Beset (6)
- Miraculous (12)
- Throbbing (5)
- Sincere (7)
- Godliness (8)
- Given new colour (4)

DOWN

- Outlook (8)
- Subject for discussion (5)
- Property (6)
- Promoting the same end (12)
- Luck (7)
- Ogle (4)
- Public accusation (12)
- Solitary (8)
- Sickly-sentimental (7)
- Purpose (6)
- Emitting fumes (5)
- Work (4)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

- Charge
- Register
- Panel
- Irritate
- Grain



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.

- 25865** gives an animal;
- 958643** gives a bird;
- 1536784** gives a fish.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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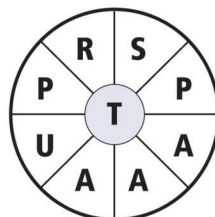
CODEWORD

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.

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

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.

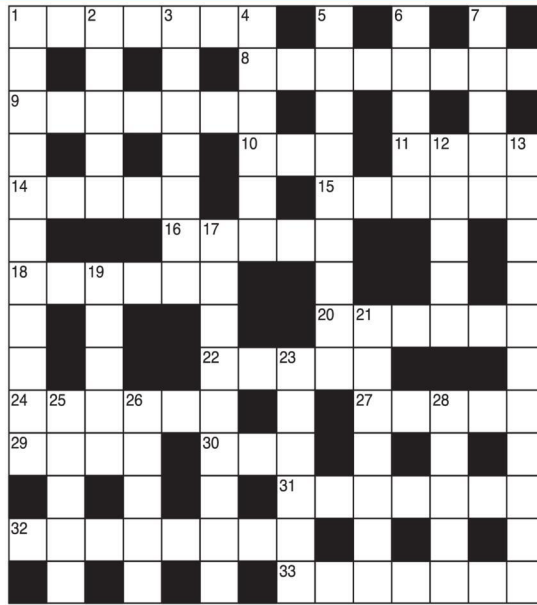


How you rate
 10 words: average 20 words: very good
 15 words: good 25 or more: excellent.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Volumes or manuscripts of ancient text (7)
- One who takes overall administrative responsibility for a motion picture (8)
- Edible pasta cases with savoury filling (7)
- Greek island which gives its name to a long-leaved lettuce (3)
- A cardinal point of the compass (4)
- Sovereign independent republic of Asia (5)
- A castle or fortress in a north African town (6)
- Line with a running noose, for catching cattle, etc. (5)
- Highly endowed by nature (6)
- A brood of chickens (6)
- "I am --- and Omega, the beginning and the end,..." (Revelation, Chapter 21) (5)
- Surname of the author famous for his Diary, kept from 1640 to 1706 (6)
- Pole tossed or hurled by Highland athletes (5)
- Roman emperor from AD 54 to 68 (4)
- 30 & 1 Down. Play by Emyln Williams, published in 1938 (3,4,2,5)
- Outburst or display of bad temper (7)
- Photographic apparatus for increasing or reducing negatives or positives (8)
- State of south-eastern Mexico, largest city Mérida (7)



DOWN

- See 30 Across
- Craig ---, British singer who had a hit single entitled 7 Days (5)
- Type of traditional German, metrical hymn-tune, for congregational use (7)
- Various strong-flavoured or aromatic vegetable substances used for seasoning, etc. (6)
- Popular children's game (9)
- 6 and 25. Author whose works include Twenty Thousand Leagues Under The Sea (5,5)
- Vice ---, a fantasy novel by F. Anstey (5)
- The superior of a community of monks (5)
- Thriller by Graham Greene, set in Vienna (3,5,3)
- In lawn tennis, the next point won after deuce (9)
- Entrance hall of a hotel or theatre (5)
- In a Spartan manner, especially in speech or writing (7)
- According to Wordsworth, "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (6)
- See 6 Down
- A rocking-stone (5)
- A Basque flat, round, woollen cap (5)

SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: 1 Codices; 8 Producer; 9 Ravoli; 10 Cos; 11 East; 14 India; 15 Casbah; 16 Lasso; 18 Gifted; 20 Clutch; 22 Alpha; 27 Caber; 29 Nero; 30 The; 31 Tantom; 32 Entlager; 33 Yucatan. DOWN: 1 Com; 5 Green; 2 David; 3 Chorale; 4 Spices; 5 Hopscotch; 6 Jules; 7 Vers; 12 Abbot; 13 The Third Man; 17 Advantage; 19 Foyer; 21 Laconic; 23 Poetry; 25 Verne; 26 Logan; 28 Bert.

General Knowledge Crossword

ACROSS: 1 Pity; 3 Peaceful; 9 Overeat; 10 Nurse; 11 Preposterous; 13 Coming; 15 Obsess; 17 Supernatural; 20 Pulse; 21 Earnest; 22 Sanctity; 23 Dyed. DOWN: 1 Prospect; 2 Theme; 4 Estate; 5 Contributor; 6 Fortune; 7 Leer; 8 Denouncement; 12 Isolated; 14 Mauldin; 16 Intent; 18 Reeky; 19 Opus.

Crossword

APPARATUS Sweet Dreams; 1 Am.; Sasha Fierce; Beautiful Lie; Crazy in Love; Myself and I, Irreplaceable; Run the World (Girls); Telephone; Broken-Hearted Girl; Déjà Vu; If I Were a Boy; Check On It; SPREADING Dangerously in Love; Halo; Work It Out; Naughty Girl.

Niner

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

Ladder

Wordwheel Pathfinder

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

Hard

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

Easy
Sudoku



It's time to Like, Follow & Subscribe

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- LeamingtonObserver
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- @CovObserverNews
- @LeamObs
- @RugbyObserver

- CovObserver
- Leamington.Observer
- Rugby.Observer

BREAKING NEWS
WHAT'S ON
SPORT
INTERVIEWS

Spring at Avoncroft Museum March & April 2026



Miniature Train Rides
15 March 5 & 6 April

Mother's Day
Weekend

Discover about
Women's Trailblazers
#internationalwomensday



Easter At
Avoncroft

Vintage Fun Fair

Pre Book Mothers Day weekend
to include a Cream Tea & admission to
Avoncroft Museum
14 & 15 March

*Kids Go Free



Golden Egg Hunt & Easter Trail
28 & 29 March 1 to 6 8 to 12 April

Volunteer Open Day
22 March

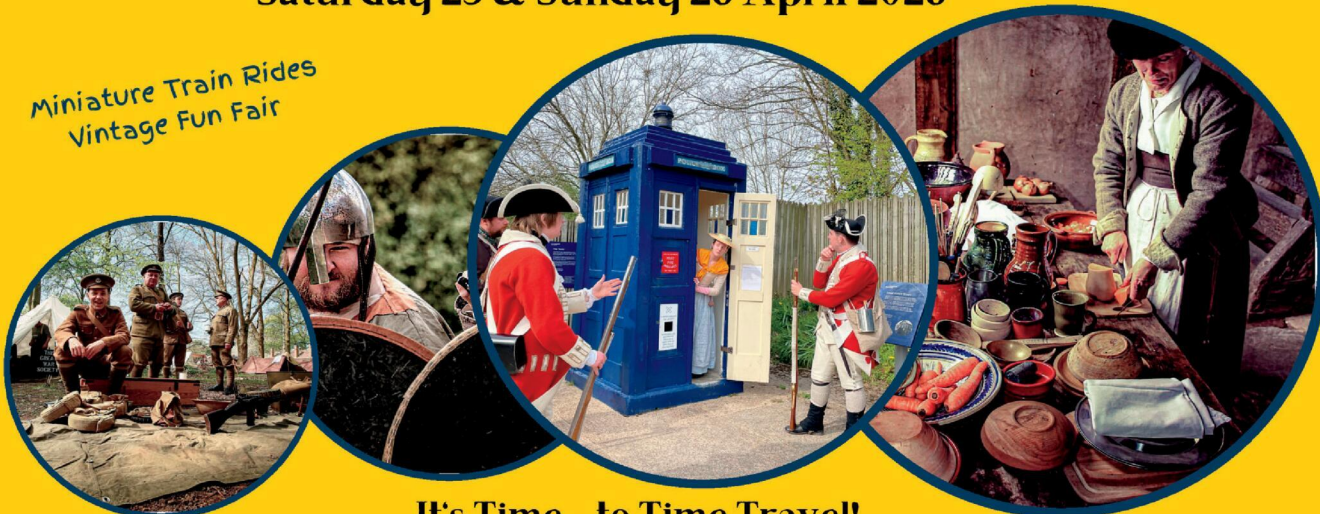


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Living History Festival Saturday 25 & Sunday 26 April 2026



Miniature Train Rides
Vintage Fun Fair



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📍 Avoncroft Museum, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 4JR



Classified

TELEPHONE 01527 588688 FACSIMILE 01527 584371

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
PUBLIC FOOTPATH R282 STREETON BASKERVILLE, RUGBY
Order Effect: Footpath closed to ALL traffic from Grid Reference SP396924 and Grid Reference SP401928.
Reason for Order: To enable permitted development works to progress.
Order Commences: 1 October 2024 and was due to expire 1 April 2026. However, the Secretary of State in exercise of his powers under Section 15(5) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 has directed that the Order shall continue in force until 1 October 2026, or until works are completed, whichever is the earlier (unless the Secretary of State issues a further direction).
Access & Diversion: A diversion route will be appropriately signed.
Contractor: Agrarian Development Holdings Limited, Tel: 0207 478 3333.

B4453 LEAMINGTON ROAD, PRINCETHORPE
Order Effect: Road closed between A423 Oxford Road to Princethorpe College Science Centre.
Reason for Order: Carriageway resurfacing works. Closed 09.00hrs - 15.30hrs, weekdays only.
Order Commences: 1 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 13 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: B4453 (Leamington Road, Rugby Road), Kenilworth Road, A445, A423 and vice versa. Access/Egress to be maintained where possible to businesses and residents only.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415302.

BUTLERS LEAP, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic at the rail bridge.
Reason for Order: To safely enable removal of vegetation and brickwork repairs to railway structure. Closure to stay in place for the duration due to curing time required for brickwork repairs.
Order Commences: 28 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 3 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Butlers Leap, Vicarage Hill, Rugby Road, Main Street, Church Street, Newton Road, Newton Manor Lane, Leicester Road, Boughton Road and vice versa.
Contractor: AMCO-Giffen, Tel: 07766 423500.

Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
TEMPORARY SPEED LIMIT RESTRICTION 40MPH, HINKLEY ROAD, WOLVEY
Order Effect: A 40mph speed limit will be imposed.
Reason for Order: The safe renewal of a telegraph pole.
Order Commences: 14 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 14 April 2026.
Contractor: Quantum TM, Tel: 01724 786286.

PYTCHLEY ROAD, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To repair/replace a manhole frame and cover. Closure 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs.
Order Commences: 15 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 15 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Pytchley Road, Faraday Road, Southfield Road, Cromwell Road and vice versa.
Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298599.

PUBLIC FOOTPATH FROM CROWTHORNS TO CONISTON CLOSE, RUGBY
Order Effect: Footpath closed to all traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to renew water mains in the footpath.
Order Commences: 13 April 2026 for up to 6 months.
Anticipated Completion: 17 May 2026.
Access & Diversion: Footpath from Crowthorns to Coniston Close, Coniston Close, Footpath from Opp No52 to Opp No110, Hawnstons and vice versa.
Contractor: Severn Trent Water, Tel: 0800 783 4444.

EASENHILL ROAD, HARBOROUGH MAGNA
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to renew water mains within carriageway and verge.
Order Commences: 16 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 14 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Main Street, Rugby Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Severn Trent Water, Tel: 0800 783 4444.

TESWATER CLOSE, LONG LAWFORD
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to repair/replace defective frame and covers, closed 09.30hrs - 15.30hrs.
Order Commences: 13 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 13 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: No diversion available.
Contractor: Customer Solutions Plus, Tel: 07918 298599.

NORTHAMPTON LANE, DUNCHURCH
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to repair/replace defective frame and covers, closed 09.30hrs - 15.30hrs.
Order Commences: 13 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 17 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: No diversion available.
Contractor: Customer Solutions Plus, Tel: 07918 298599.

LONGSTORK ROAD, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to repair/replace manhole frame and covers, closed 08.00hrs - 18.00hrs.
Order Commences: 14 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 14 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Crackthorne Drive, Tower Furlong, Longstork Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Customer Solutions Plus, Tel: 07918 298599.

MILL FURLONG, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to repair/replace manhole frame and cover, closed 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs.
Order Commences: 16 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 16 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Mill Furlong, Benches Furlong, Longstork Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Customer Solutions Plus, Tel: 07918 298599.

ROBSON LANE, DUNCHURCH
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Thurlston Drive to Coventry Road.
Reason for Order: Core hole drilling to monitor road construction.
Order Commences: 14 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 14 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Coventry Road, Alwyn Road, Northampton Lane, Cawston Lane and vice versa.
Contractor: RMC Ltd, Tel: 01527 516707.

OLIVER STREET, RUGBY
Order Effect: One way road closure to vehicular traffic on westbound branch.
Reason for Order: To replace/repair a manhole frame and cover. 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs.
Order Commences: 12 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 12 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Evreux Way, Corporation Street, Warwick Street, Lawrence Sheriff Street, Dunchurch Road, Russelsheim Way, Bilton Road, Lawford Road, Oliver Street.
Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298599.

B4112 PAILTON ROAD/RUGBY ROAD/HARBOROUGH ROAD/MAIN STREET, HARBOROUGH MAGNA/NEWBOLD
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between Back Lane/Montlio Lane and Parkfield Road/Brownsover Road.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and works. 09.30hrs-15.30hrs.
Order Commences: 13 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 17 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: B4112 Rugby Road, B4428 Lutitern Road, A5 Watling Street, A426 Leicester Road, A4071 Newbold Road, B4112 Newbold Road and vice versa. Vehicular access & egress will be maintained where possible and safe to do so for businesses and residents only.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415302.

A426 LEICESTER ROAD, RUGBY (SOUTH BOUND CARRIAGEWAY ONLY)
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Technology Drive to Newbold Road.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching works, overnight 20.00hrs - 06.00hrs.
Order Commences: 2 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 3 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: A426, A5, A361, A45, A45 Daventry Road, B4429 Daventry Road and Coventry Road, Symmetry Park, A45, A4071.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

B40380 KILSBY LANE, RUGBY
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between the junctions of the A428 and Nortoft Lane.
Reason for Order: Carriageway structural patching and associated works, 09.30hrs - 15.00hrs.
Order Commences: 2 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 2 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: A428, Barbly Lane, Rugby Road, Ware Road, Kilsby Road, Barbly Road, Chapel Street, Main Road, Rugby Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

RUGBY WESTERN RELIEF ROAD, RUGBY
Order Effect: All vehicles will be prohibited from making a Right Turn into Parkfield Road, Rugby.
Reason for Order: To enable repair/replacement of defective manhole covers and frame.
Order Commences: 17 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 17 April 2026.
Contractor: CSP, Tel: 07918 298 599.

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

To report any problems with these works or for further details of our current & planned roadworks visit our website warwickshire.gov.uk/roadworksmap or call us 01926 412515.
S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 26 Mar 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
G210 OXFORD STREET, SOUTHAM
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Vanbury Road/Pendicke Street to Warwick Road.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching and associated works, 09.00hrs - 15.00hrs.
Order Commences: 30 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 31 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: Warwick Road, Leamington Road, Banbury Road and vice versa.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415 302.

DOG LANE, NAPTON-ON-THE-HILL
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To safely enable works to install boundary box.
Order Commences: 2 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 3 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Dog Lane, St Lawrence Close, Godsons Lane and vice versa.
Contractor: Chevron Traffic Management Ltd, Tel: 0330 008 0820.

A425 SOUTHAM ROAD/UFTON HILL, UFTON
Order Effect: Roads closed between B4455 Fosse Way and Ufton Fields Roundabout.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching works, closed 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs.
Order Commences: 28 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 28 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: B4455 Fosse Way, A423, A425 and vice versa. Vehicular access & egress will be maintained where possible and safe to do so for businesses and residents only.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415302.

STOCKTON ROAD, STOCKTON
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.
Reason for Order: To safely enable tree trimming works.
Order Commences: 30 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 30 March 2026.
Access & Diversion: Stockton Road, Southern Road, Coventry Road and vice versa.
Contractor: GTM Ltd, Tel: 0800 6783 105.

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

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S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 26 Mar 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Wayne Cutler trading as **Wayne Cutler Transport of 5 Cinnamon Close, Chalgrove, Oxford, OX44 7QY** is applying for a licence to use **Thomas of Flecknoe Field farm, Flecknoe Station Road, CV23 8AZ** as an operating centre for 2 goods vehicles and 2 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 from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

PUBLIC NOTICES

All your latest information on Planning Proposals, Traffic Notices, Goods Vehicle Operator Licences, Licences To Sell Alcohol and Probate Notices

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984
Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
B4428 LUTTERWORTH ROAD, PAILTON
Order Effect: Road closed between Montlio Lane and B4112 Rugby Road/B4428 Coventry Road.
Reason for Order: Carriageway patching works, closed 08.00hrs - 16.00hrs.
Order Commences: 2 April 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 2 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: Montlio Lane, B4112 Rugby Road and vice versa.
 Vehicular access & egress will be maintained where possible and safe to do so for businesses and residents only.
Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 03452 415302.

STONELEIGH ROAD, STONELEIGH
Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic between 446 Northbound off and on slip roads and Southbound off and on slip roads, weekends only as follows: 29-29 March 2026, 25-26 April 2026, 30-31 May 2026, 27-28 June 2026, 25-26 July 2026, 27-28 March 2027.
Reason for Order: To safely enable works for new parapet fence, new street lighting modification and TVCB removal.
Order Commences: 28 March 2026 for up to 18 months.
Anticipated Completion: 28 March 2027.
Access & Diversion: Stoneleigh Road, Warwick Bypass, A46, Leamington Road, A46 and vice versa.
Contractor: Colas SIAC Ltd, Tel: 07415 245 295.

Warwickshire County Council proposes to make the following Temporary Traffic Orders:
PUBLIC FOOTPATH AT CHURCH LANE, WYTHROBROOK
Order Effect: Footpath closure to all traffic.
Reason for Order: Works to lay 120m of duct in verge.
Order Commences: 14 April 2026 for up to 6 months.
Anticipated Completion: 16 April 2026.
Access & Diversion: No diversion available.
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.

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S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 26 Mar 2026

GEORGE ALEXANDER INCH (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 126 Bawmore Road, Bilton, Rugby, CV22 6JT, who died on 19/02/2025, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 28/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Brethertons Solicitors, Frinkings House, Manorfield Road, Bicester, OX26 9EX

MARY RITA BAKER (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 107 Kelvin Road, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV32 7TG, who died on 16/02/2026, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 28/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

HCR Wright Hassall, Olympus House, Olympus Avenue, Leamington Spa Warwickshire, CV34 6BF

DAVID JOHN ARIS (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 114 Grelna Road, Coventry, CV3 6DQ, who died on 04/03/2026, are required to send written particulars thereof to the undersigned on or before 28/05/2026, after which date the Estate will be distributed having regard only to the claims and interests of which they have had notice.

Alsters Kelley Solicitors Limited, 1 Manor Terrace, Friars Road, Coventry, CV1 2NU (Ref: TG/AR14/6)

PUBLIC NOTICES

Goods Vehicle Operator's Licence

Nicholas Cooke trading as Performance Transport Limited of Blackhorse Road, Coventry, CV7 9FW is applying to change an existing license as follows, to add an additional 4 vehicle and 6 trailers at the operating centre at Toldish Hall Farm, Coventry, CV2 1NR.

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected, should make written representation to the Traffic Commissioner at Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UE, stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representatives must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice. A Guide to Making Representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's office.

PUBLIC NOTICES

national highways

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTIONS 14(1)(a) and (7) THE M6 MOTORWAY (JUNCTION 1) (SLIP ROAD) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2026

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that National Highways Limited (Company no. 9346363) intends to make an Order on the M6 Motorway, in the County of Warwickshire, to enable bridge maintenance works to be carried out nearby.

The effect of the Order will be to close the slip road leading to the southbound carriageway of the M6 at Junction 1. The closure will be carried out over weekends between 20:00 hours on Friday and 06:00 hours on Monday and is expected to start on Friday 17 April 2026 and continue for two weekends. The Order will come into force on 10 April 2026.

Vehicles being used for police, fire and rescue authority or ambulance purposes and vehicles being used in connection with the works will be exempt from the closure.

A diversion route via the A426, the A5, the M1 and the M6 will be signed.

For further information please contact Daniel Heathcote, a project manager on behalf of National Highways Limited, on 07751 733 753.

Karen Eustace, an officer in National Highways Limited. National Highways Limited (Company no. 9346363) registered office: Three Snowhill, Snow Hill Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6GA. A Company registered in England and Wales.

STRATFORD-ON-AVON DISTRICT COUNCIL Council Tax Premiums for Second Homes

Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Council approved the introduction of council tax premiums for second homes across the District from 1 April 2027.

This follows national changes enabling councils in England to apply an additional charge of up to 100% on second homes, defined as properties that are substantially furnished but not used as anyone's sole or main residence.

Stratford on Avon District has over 850 second homes, representing more than 1% of the District's entire housing stock. Raising the cost of owning a second home is intended to encourage some properties back into the housing market.

Increasing the supply of homes for local residents remains a priority within the Council Plan, which commits to delivering "affordable, well built and maintained homes" and making decisions in the broader public interest.

A formal consultation on the proposed premium was carried out between 15 December 2025 and 2 February 2026.

- 589 online responses were received
- 8 paper questionnaires were submitted
- 14 additional responses were received via letter or email
- All 859 second home owners were contacted directly

The consultation was shared widely through local press, social media, the Citizens' Panel, parish and town councils, and the residents' email newsletter

The consultation report is available for the public to view at <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/council-tax/council-tax-premiums-on-second-homes-consultation-cfm>

All second home owners affected by the change will receive written notification before 31 March 2026. Across the summer, the Council will also be holding some advice clinics for residents who want to understand in more detail what this means for them and if any exemptions apply to them.

The 100% premium will then be implemented from 1 April 2027, in line with statutory requirements to provide one year's notice before changes take effect.

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Blaze down Flyers but draw blank in defeat at Flames

ICE HOCKEY: COVENTRY Blaze bounced back from their Challenge Cup final defeat with a convincing victory against Fife Flyers before defeat against Guildford Flames.

Blaze thrashed Fife 7-3 at the Skydome Arena as Grant Mismash and Adam Robbins both scored twice for the home side.

However, Blaze then drew a blank against the Flames following a 4-0 defeat at the Guildford Spectrum as Coventry failed to score in a match for the first time since the season.

The results mean Coventry sit seventh in the Elite League standings.

Blaze had to recover from an early deficit against bottom-of-the-table Fife as Coventry took to the ice for the first time since their Challenge Cup final defeat against Nottingham Panthers.

Fife broke the deadlock at 7.18 as Ben Brown capitalised on a rebound to score his first professional goal.

And the Flyers struck again at 9.56 when Justin Ducharme finished off a broken play into a virtually empty net.

However, Coventry responded on the powerplay at 13.02 as Robbins struck after good work from Jordan Power following a turnover forced by Jere Vertanen.

And Blaze equalised at 13.51 when Artem Buzoverya reacted quickest to turn home a rebound.

Fife reclaimed the lead in the second period at 24.43 as Ducharme slipped behind the defence and found the net with a sharp wrist shot.

Blaze head coach Kevin Moore responded to the setback by calling a timeout.

And Coventry equalised straight from the restart at 24.57 when William Boysen scored from Elijah Barriga's toe-drag and pass.

Blaze took the lead at 25.41 as Mismash finished Grayson Constable's feed to reach the 20-goal mark for the season.

And the home side extended their

lead at 36.35 when short-handed as Power produced a clinical finish.

Coventry sealed the points at 50.04 as Mismash tipped Colton Saucerman's shot into the net.

And Robbins completed the scoring at 56.50 with his second goal of the game.

However, Coventry then suffered defeat at Guildford to bring an end to Blaze's three-game winning run in the Elite League.

Blaze went close early on as Flames netminder Justin Fazio denied Alessio Luciani with Barriga unable to convert the rebound.

Coventry head coach Moore challenged the play, believing the puck had crossed the line only for the review to rule no goal had been scored while Blaze had to kill a penalty following the unsuccessful challenge.

And Guildford took the lead at 16.08 after Dershahn Stewart denied Sam Talbot only for Josh Waller to react quickest to turn home the rebound.

Neither side troubled the scoreboard in the second period as both teams squandered powerplay opportunities.

However, the Flames doubled their lead at 41.53 when a Blaze powerplay went awry which led to a three-on-one counter attack as Tyler Busch found the net with Guildford short-handed.

Blaze killed an extended five-on-three penalty later in the third period only to lose netminder Stewart to injury as Joel Bearman ventured onto the ice for his senior debut.

The home side sealed the points at 57.31 as Waller scored his second of the game before Jack Jacome completed the scoring with one second remaining on the powerplay after Power and Tyler Prezioso dropped the gloves.

Coventry are next in action against Fife on Saturday, March 28 with the face-off at 7pm at Fife Ice Arena.

Blaze then host Cardiff Devils on Sunday, March 29 with the face-off at 5.30pm at the Skydome.

Cov slay Knights as club officially rename stadium

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

RUGBY UNION: COVENTRY Rugby marked their first game at the renamed Nick Newbold Stadium with a 44-24 victory against Doncaster Knights.

The home side officially renamed their Butts Park Arena home in memory of former director Nick Newbold prior to kick-off.

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

And Alex Rae's side delivered a performance to match the occasion as Coventry ran in seven tries to secure a bonus point victory.

Allan Ferrie crossed twice while Senitiki Nayalo, Tom Ball, Matt Johnson, Morgan Adderly-Jones and Api Bavadra all dotted down for the hosts.

The result means Coventry sit fourth in the Champ Rugby table, three points behind Worcester Warriors in second.

Following the renaming ceremony, a minute's applause took place in Newbold's memory in front of his family and friends.

And Coventry scored the game's first try as Nayalo crashed over from close range after just five minutes as Tommy Mathews kicked the conversion.

Doncaster responded on 13 minutes when Rhys Tait forced his way

Coventry's Butts Park Arena home has been renamed the Nick Newbold Stadium. Picture by John Coles.



over with Russell Bennett unable to add the extras.

The home side scored their second try four minutes later as Ferrie surged over to restore Coventry's lead.

And Ferrie crossed again on 21 minutes to extend Coventry's advantage after Bavadra produced a stunning break from deep inside his own half.

The hosts scored their bonus point try two minutes before the break as Ball powered over following a well-placed penalty kicked to the corner.

However, Doncaster reduced the deficit on 50 minutes when Ben Chapman drove over from the back of a lineout and Bennett converted.

Coventry hit back three minutes later as Johnson finished in the corner after a sharp break and offload from Josh Barton.

The tries continued to flow when Jasper McGuire dotted down on 58 minutes from another driving maul.

However, Adderly-Jones finished off a flowing move on 61 minutes before Bavadra touched down a loose ball two minutes later to take the game out of Doncaster's reach.

The Knights scored the game's final try on 76 minutes when Connor Edwards stretched over the line to dot down.

Coventry are next in action against London Scottish on Saturday, March 28 with kick-off at 3pm at the Richmond Athletic Ground.

Young swimmers star at national competition to win eight medals

SWIMMING: RUGBY Swimming Club's artistic swimmers won eight medals, including six gold's, at the National Age Group Championships.

Another stellar showing from the club saw Rugby's swimmers win six gold, one silver and one bronze medal on the national stage.

The competition, the most prestigious of its kind for the nation's top young artistic swimmers, took place at the GL1 Leisure Centre in Gloucester.

A total of 26 swimmers from Rugby qualified to take part in the event which took place over two days of competition.

Rugby won gold in the youth figures event as Victoria Sharashkina took the national title with a stunning performance in a field of 163 swimmers.

In the 12-and-under figures competition, Alice Danielson proved Rugby's highest-placed athlete with a 15th-place finish in a 114-strong field.

The duet of Lola Huett and Frankie Klym won gold in the youth category with a high-energy performance that elevated them to the top of the podium.

And the pair of Aaron Lee and Keva Ennis, with Christina Kapiris as reserve, won gold in the youth mixed duet event with a powerful and perfectly synchronised routine.

In the team events, the 12-and-under combo squad of Maisie Austin-Roberts, Payton Gaskin, Esme Ravenhall, Elsa Gaskin, Lily

Bartholomew, Katerina Myronova, Emily Secher and Jessie Slater finished outside of the medals despite a vibrant swim.

And the youth combo team of Lee, Amelie Jeary, Catherine Yu, Izzy Watkins, Sophie Croft, Ruby Shepherd, Charlotte Wilkins, Darcey Townsend and Mellinda Bogdanova, with Caitlin-Rose Smith as reserve, secured bronze with a tightly-synchronised routine.

Sharashkina won another medal for Rugby after she claimed silver in the youth solo category while Ennis produced another confident routine.

In the 12-and-under duet, sisters Alice and Florence Danielson impressed judges with their control, expression and maturity to claim the national title and another gold medal for Rugby.

The 12-and-under free team of Izzy Maglione, A Danielson, F Danielson, Secher, Myronova, Gaskin, Slater and Austin-Roberts, with Bartholomew as reserve, also won gold with a dynamic and energetic routine.

Rugby also took home the Richard Whitehead Trophy, awarded to the highest-performing 12-and-under free team.

And the youth free team of Sharashkina, Ennis, Lee, Kapiris, Huett and Klym, with Jeary as reserve, closed the competition in style with a dynamic and technical routine to win gold.

The performance earned Rugby the Mrs Y M Price Trophy, awarded



to the top-scoring youth free team nationally.

And Rugby swimmer Lee has earned a place in the England national youth training squad following his performances at the National Age Group Championships.

Rugby's head coach, Hannah

Secher, said: "It has been a weekend of pride, performance and club spirit, with Rugby Artistic Swimming Club's athletes demonstrating their talent - from first-time NAGs qualifiers to seasoned national champions. "Their commitment, teamwork

and competitive focus were evident throughout the weekend, making this one of the club's most successful National Age Groups to date."

Rugby's 12-and-under and youth free teams both won gold and trophies. s

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Valley blitzed by Bourne to remain at foot of table

FOOTBALL: GRANT Joshua admits 'confidence levels are low' at Rugby Town with the club rock bottom of the Northern Premier League Midlands table.

Valley lost 3-0 at home against relegation rivals Bourne Town last weekend as Rugby conceded three goals in the space of nine first-half minutes at Butlin Road.

Quickfire goals from Zac Allen, Robbie Ellis and Lewis Darlington left Rugby with a mountain to climb with just 20 minutes on the clock.

The result means Valley sit bottom of the Northern Premier League Midlands table, seven points from safety with six matches left to play.

And with Valley winless in their last nine league games, Joshua admits the club have made mistakes in terms of recruitment this season.

Joshua said: "We know we're in a dif-



Rugby suffered defeat against Bourne. Picture by Martin Pulley.

ficult situation.

"The fans are frustrated and they have every right to be, but rest assured we'll be doing everything we can to try and turn things around before the end of the season.

"Confidence levels are obviously low, but I refuse to believe that we're a bad side and hopefully we can show this in the

final six games and at least show everybody that we can be competitive.

"We know we've got things wrong this season. For example, we've brought in too many players and as a result we've lacked continuity in terms of team selection since our good run back in October.

"We know that every game from here on in is a must-win one."

Rugby fell behind after just 11 minutes when Allen chipped the ball over Rugby goalkeeper Xander Grieves as he pounced on Bo Morris's weak defensive header.

And Bourne doubled their lead seven minutes later as Ellis volleyed in Freddie Allen's cross on the turn.

The visitors stunned the home side with a third goal on 20 minutes with Grieves only able to get a hand to Darlington's strike from the edge of the penalty area.

Rugby are next in action against Corby Town on Saturday, March 28 with kick-off at 3pm at Steel Park.

Barnard to captain Bears in all formats

CRICKET: WARWICKSHIRE CCC have appointed Ed Barnard as the club's new captain across all formats after skipper Alex Davies stepped down from the role.

Davies became Bears captain in 2024 but will now pass on the armband to Barnard who already skippered the club's One-Day Cup side.

Barnard will now also skipper Warwickshire's County Championship and T20 Blast teams, stepping up from his role of vice-captain.

Barnard said: "I'm very proud and honoured to be offered the chance to captain Warwickshire.

"I'm very aware of following in the foot-

steps of some great cricketers and people, and it's humbling to be added to the list.

"I've really enjoyed working under Davo and hope to continue the progress the group has made over recent seasons.

"We have built an impressive squad, and with further additions made this winter, the competition for places is greater than ever.

"I know the group feels we can push very hard for silverware this season."

The 30-year-old joined Warwickshire from rivals Worcestershire in 2023 and returned a career-best run tally of 922 runs in the County Championship last season.

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