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Fury as Reform turns its sights on material in county libraries



A row has erupted at Warwickshire County Council over Coun George Finch's statement on 'sex, gender and identity' content in the county's libraries.

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

THE LEADER of Warwickshire County Council has been accused of 'political censorship' by suggesting he could seek to remove materials relating to 'sex, gender and identity' from the county's libraries.

WCC's Reform UK leader Coun George Finch claimed libraries in the county were 'promoting contested gender ideology'.

Warwickshire Pride accused him of 'political targeting' and marginalising members of its community.

Coun Finch said: "Libraries should be politically neutral, and not seek to embolden political ideologies. The council should not be actively promoting contested political or ideological causes to children."

He said his administration would work on a policy to 'provide parents with peace of mind that their children

are not being told to believe one set of political ideas over any other'.

"This policy will cover not just our libraries, but all Warwickshire County Council-owned public spaces," he added.

The Board of Trustees at Warwickshire Pride said Coun Finch's words were 'misleading and dangerous'.

They said: "Being LGBTQ+ is not an ideology or a political campaign. It is part of the diversity of human experience."

"History teaches us important lessons about what happens when politicians decide which books, ideas, identities, or groups are acceptable."

"Public bodies should not limit access to information because some people find it uncomfortable. Libraries should be places of learning, not tools for political censorship."

"The Leader of the Council has a responsibility to represent every resident of Warwickshire, not just those who share his political views."

Coun Sarah Boad, leader of WCC's Liberal Democrat Group, said libraries should not be 'weaponised'.

She said: "We now face the prospect of the Reform UK administration trying to take steps that could discriminate against the LGBTQ+ community. This is an administration that has committed to creating 'safe, inclusive places where people from different backgrounds can live and interact positively'. Targeting LGBTQ+ books does the precise opposite."

"History reminds us of where censorship leads. An open and democratic society trusts people to read widely, rather than deciding what they may and may not see. We will not let Warwickshire go backwards."

Conservative Group leader Coun Adrian Warwick said his group believed that 'libraries should be for everyone' – but also welcomed Reform's proposed review.

He said: "We believe in equality regardless of race, sex or sexual ori-

entation.

"Public institutions exist to serve everyone, not to endorse political or ideological movements. We therefore welcome this review."

"The group is concerned that some parents will be more reluctant to take their children to libraries to engage with reading in an age-appropriate way."

"We hope that if nothing else comes of this review, attention on our libraries will at the very least lead more people to pick up a book and put down their phone."

Deputy Green Group Leader Coun Will Roberts said that to remove books because of political ideology was itself a case of political ideology.

He added: "Libraries give people the opportunity to read books – they do not force anybody to read them."

"Gender is not an ideology, it is a human right, and it is concerning that Coun Finch wishes to attack human rights."

"Warwickshire is the county of

Shakespeare and George Eliot, and is now proposing to ban books. We only need to look at the history of the last century to understand how that can lead us all into darkness."

Labour Group leader Coun Sarah Feeny accused Coun Finch of 'divisive culture-war politics'.

She said: "He has failed to identify a single book, campaign, event or example to support his inflammatory claims."

"The people who decide what materials are appropriate for different audiences are trained and qualified librarians, not politicians chasing headlines."

"Libraries have always been places of learning, discovery and opportunity. They are not vehicles for political indoctrination."

"If he believes there is genuinely inappropriate material in Warwickshire libraries, he should tell the public exactly what it is."

Visit www.rugbyobserver.co.uk for more reaction.



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Take that and party! Legendary boy band hit Coventry

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

MORE than 100,000 tickets were sold as Take That proved they still rule the pop world, at the Coventry Building Society Arena at the weekend.

Fans travelled from The Midlands, UK and Europe as Gary Barlow, Mark Owen and Howard Donald gave crowds the greatest of nights during a three-night Coventry residency.

Take That brought *The Circus Live* back to the city in incredible style, performing aboard a giant robotic elephant as they revisited their legendary 2009 show.

Concertgoers had to have a little patience before the main event, with a standout support bill featuring Belinda Carlisle and The Script helping to build the atmosphere each night.

Carlisle opened with a hit-filled set showcasing a career spanning more than four decades before Irish band The

Script took the stage and raised energy levels even further.

Then Gary, Mark and Howard returned to the Coventry stage after almost 17 years.

The production brought a big top spectacle with dancers, fire-breathers, tightrope walkers, clowns, trapeze artists, trampolinists, balloons, confetti and fireworks.

Thousands of fans joined in with classics spanning Take That's incredible career, from *A Million Love Songs* and *Back for Good* to *Relight My Fire*,

Shine, *Never Forget* and *Rule the World*.

Paul Michael, managing director at the Coventry Building Society Arena, said: "We have had some unforgettable nights of music here but these three evenings were right up there."

"To stage three back-to-back stadium shows for the first time since we last welcomed Take That, was incredibly special."

"It was not only a huge moment for the arena but for the whole of Coventry and the wider region too, with thousands

of fans spending time in the city before and after the shows and helping to deliver a major boost to the local economy.

"Nights like these are exactly why this venue was built. Coventry Building Society Arena was designed to bring major events to the region and attract visitors from across the UK and Europe."

"We will continue to strive to bring the biggest names in live music to the stage here at [the] Coventry Building Society Arena for years to come."

Inset, from left: Howard Donald, Mark Owen and Gary Barlow wowed a 35,000-strong crowd. s

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See page 29



Rugby train station. s

Avanti slashes summer services

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

“SHOCKED” advocates for train travel in Rugby say “disproportionate” cuts to summer services will “disadvantage” the town.

Avanti West Coast will cut 10 per cent of its weekday services over the summer holiday – from Monday, July 20 to Friday, August 28.

Rugby Rail Users Group (RRUG) says a higher proportion of trains serving Rugby have been cancelled during that period – including 20 per cent of trains between Rugby and Euston and 30 per cent of

services between Rugby and Birmingham. The group’s chair, Stephanie Clifford, said the Avanti plan is a retrograde step which would have a disproportionately bad impact on Rugby.

She added: “This change, made on behalf of the Department for Transport (DfT), has been made without any consultation. It will reduce the attractiveness of the train service and of Rugby as a place.

“Since the [Covid] pandemic, Avanti have been telling us they have been restoring train services so that the full timetable could be run. This has given us a predictable hourly timetable which has

transformed the service at Rugby. No alternatives, such as additional calls by other trains, have been provided by Avanti. Rugby should not be disadvantaged in this way.

“We are also concerned that this may be the start of wider service cutting.”

Rugby MP John Slinger raised RRUG’s concerns with Avanti West Coast and rail minister Lord Peter Hendy.

MP Mr Slinger said: “The summer timetable changes are temporary and targeted and represent a reduction in train mileage to reflect lower passenger demand during the holiday period.

“The changes have no implica-

tions for future general levels of service.”

An Avanti spokesperson said the changes were made after the DfT asked operators to find ways to reduce government subsidies.

The spokesperson added: “We proposed a trial of a demand-led timetable – which involves removing a small number of trains where demand is lower. This saves operational cost, creates no negative impact on revenue and with minimum disruption to passenger travel. This means the associated saving goes directly to the government and the taxpayer.”

The spokesperson said service cuts were selected based on routes

and services that were usually “more lightly loaded”, adding: “If the volume of people travelling is above expectations, the trains can be quickly reinstated to provide additional capacity.”

Mr Slinger said the nationalisation of Avanti West Coast services, expected in October, will be an opportunity to improve reliability, accountability and passenger experience for Rugby rail users.

The MP added: “I am determined to make sure Great British Rail works for the people of Rugby.

“We aim to revitalise the West Coast Main Line when Avanti comes under public ownership and I hope this happens as soon as possible.”

Information dates about A46 work

A CONGESTION-busting multi-million pound project to create a “free-flowing” A46 at a notorious bottleneck near University Hospital Coventry, will be the subject of two information events next week.

Residents and road users are being invited to meet the team behind the A46 Walsgrave junction upgrade – designed to reduce congestion on the outskirts of the city.

The £112million project, which received government approval in February, aims to transform the existing three-arm priority roundabout, which connects the A46 to the B4082, into a free-flowing junction, removing a bottleneck for the 57,000 drivers who use the road every day.

Public information events will take place at the Tesco Superstore in Clifford Bridge Road, Coventry on Monday, from 10am to 4pm; and at Warwickshire Shopping Park in Kynner Way, in Binley, on Tuesday, from 10am to 4pm.

The project team will be on hand to answer questions and explain what to expect ahead of construction, which is due to begin in September.

Project manager Emma Winter said: “The Walsgrave junction connects the A46 to the B4082 and is currently a three-arm priority roundabout, which causes substantial congestion in the area.



How the proposed new junction should look when completed. s

“Tackling this bottleneck will make a real difference – delivering more reliable journeys and better safety for drivers travelling between the Midlands, the South West and the North.”

Swati Mittal, roads programme lead at transport policy advisor Midlands Connect, said the junction is a key bottleneck which limits the full benefits of earlier investment.

Swati added: “The planned upgrade will not only enable better traffic flows and ease congestion but will also support economic growth and better access to the Coventry University Hospital.

“It’s a scheme that Midlands Connect have prioritised for many years and will make a massive impact on people, businesses and growth.”

The upgrade forms part

of National Highways’ commitment to improve the A46 trans-Midlands trade corridor, supporting economic growth, employment and housing development between the M5 and the Humber Ports.

A National Highways spokesperson said: “Schemes like this, that deliver better connectivity to centres of employment, enable people to access more job opportunities and employers are able to draw on a wider pool of talent.

“Well-connected areas are also better placed to attract businesses that benefit from being close to one another, boosting innovation and helping local economies thrive.”

The scheme is expected to open to traffic in 2028. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/tz7echns2> for more informa-

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Send me to Alaska! Kryten's coming to visit the museum

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

A STAR from TV shows *Red Dwarf* and *Robot Wars* will visit Rugby Art Gallery and Museum for a new exhibition celebrating the ingenious robot sculptures of artist Mark Haig.

Gizmobots, which will open on Saturday, June 20, will feature dozens of robots, fashioned from found objects, recycled materials, and items picked up from car boot sales and scrap yards.

Mark, an electronics engineer, reappropriates old electronics to turn his "bots" into objects, such as radios and desk lamps.

Each Gizmobot comes complete with a tag explaining his or her personality and their likes, dislikes, hobbies... and catering requirements.

Mark said: "I used to sit in front of my parents' electric fire as an eight-year-old child and make robots and spaceships out of cogs, wheels and bits of wood that my dad brought back from his job as a clock repairer.

"Fast forward through the years and I have continued to use these skills to teach about recycling and reappropriating old electronic equipment so it doesn't just end up in landfill."



Becoming a Robot: Robert Llewellyn, who played sanitation droid Kryten (pictured, right) in the classic comedy *Red Dwarf*, will visit Rugby Art Gallery and Museum for an 'in conversation' event. Images ©

The exhibition includes The Shed – an interactive creative space where children and families will be able to design and build recycled Gizmobots.

The exhibition will also welcome Sir Killalot and Matilda – the famous 'house robots' from television's *Robot Wars* – to Rugby.

To celebrate, the exhibition will include a Robot Warriors arena where visitors can take part in one-on-one battles.

On Friday, July 10, Robert Llewellyn – known as Kryten from classic sci-fi comedy *Red Dwarf*, and as the presenter of *Scrapheap Challenge* – will visit Rugby Art Gallery and Museum for the Becoming a Robot exhibition for a special 'in conversation' event hosted by BBC *Countryside* presenter Tom Heap.

Rugby Art Gallery and Museum will hold a Bits and Bots family fun day on Saturday, June 20, to celebrate the launch of Gizmobots.

That free event will include robot-inspired activities and entertainment and visitors will be able to learn the robot street dance, courtesy of the Ascension Dance Company.

Coun Maggie O'Rourke, Rugby Borough Council's portfolio holder for partnerships, health and wellbeing, said the family fun day was a perfect way to celebrate Father's Day, the following day.

Coun O'Rourke said: "Gizmobots promises to inspire and entertain visitors to Rugby Art Gallery and Museum throughout the summer, featuring Mark Haig's wonderfully quirky robot creations, Sir Killalot and Matilda from *Robot Wars* and a very special guest in Robert Llewellyn, who played the droid Kryten in television comedy *Red Dwarf*."

"The exhibition offers plenty of opportunities to get 'hands-on' and creative, whether in The Shed, the Robot Warriors arena or at one of Mark Haig's robot

workshops."

Mark will return to Rugby Art Gallery and Museum on Tuesday, August 4, to host a series of workshops where creativity will collide with invention.

Free, 90-minute workshops will start at 10am, 11.30am, 1.30pm and 3.30pm, with children (aged seven and above and accompanied by an adult) able to build a Gizmobot.

Coun Neil Sandison, Rugby Borough Council's Liberal Democrat group spokesperson for partnerships, health and wellbeing, said: "We're looking forward to welcoming Kryten from the classic sci-fi comedy *Red Dwarf*, the *Robot Wars* house robots and Mark Haig's Gizmobots to Rugby for a summer of inventive, creative fun."

Tickets for the Becoming a Robot talk, which will start at 6pm on Friday, July 10, cost £10 and can be booked online at www.ragn.co.uk/gizmobots.





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The Rolls-Royce Spirit of Ecstasy in all its glory. Picture by Marcus Mingins 2326012MMR

Inspiration: Eleanor Thornton, also known as 'Nelly'. s

The spirit of Leamington

by Philippa Mingins
 philippa.mingins@bullivantmedia.com

A MOTORING icon was inspired by a Leamington resident.

The latest blue plaque in the town honours Eleanor Velasco Thornton, also known as "Nelly", who was the model for luxury carmaker Rolls-Royce's Spirit of Ecstasy – one of the most recognisable motoring symbols.

The plaque was unveiled at Nelly's former home, at 24 Charlotte Street, by Mayor of Leamington Sarah Boad.

Coun Boad said: "The woman

seemingly-in-flight mascot we know for sitting proudly at the front of this prestigious car has a story behind it that brings a fascinating link to Leamington.

"The story of this Leamingtonian, was of a bright, independent woman who trained as a secretary, obtained a responsible position for an automotive journal and went on to work as a personal assistant to the editor, John Scott-Montagu, of Car Illustrated.

"He was an early car enthusiast and bought a Rolls-Royce and commissioned the sculpture of his muse, Nelly, who modelled for this distinctive emblem.

"The blue plaque commemo-

rates this famous image of Nelly, a resident of our wonderful town, for future generations.

"The Leamington Town Council blue plaques scheme brings together a group of volunteers and statutory bodies dedicated to celebrating the town's rich history. I wish to thank the blue plaque group for their hard work in ensuring that the inspiration Nelly provided as a model for the iconic Rolls-Royce Spirit of Ecstasy is remembered."

Visit www.leamingtonspatowncouncil.gov.uk/council-services/blue-plaques-scheme/ to find out more about the blue plaque scheme and those honoured.



The blue plaque is unveiled in Charlotte Street. Picture by Marcus Mingins 2326012MMR.

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MotoFest



LEFT: Trying out a Lotus for size. Pictures by Marcus Mingins 2426003MMR4. MIDDLE: Lord Mayor Roger Bailey and Lady Mayoress Pauline Venables enjoy the cars. 2426003MMR9. RIGHT: Putting his Ford Escort through its paces. 2426003MMR12



LEFT: Talking cars. Pictures by Marcus Mingins 2426003MMR2. MIDDLE: Coventry College students showcased their automotive paint and body skills.. 2426003MMR1. RIGHT: Some extreme angles. 2426003MMR7



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The festival will end on 5 July with a 'Couch to 5K' fun run suitable for all skill levels, alongside a new 1K fun run for families and children aged 11 and under.

See the festival guide and sign up for the fun runs at rugby.gov.uk/loverugby

MotoFest



Herbie rides again! Picture by Marcus Mingins 2426003MMR5

Revved-up fun helps drive in the big crowds

COVENTRY'S global impact on the automotive industry was celebrated at the city's MotoFest Classic event last weekend.

Vehicle displays in Broadgate formed the centrepiece, where Coventry College students showcased their automotive paint and body skills.

Visitors were treated to a display of the latest electric vehicles alongside hundreds of classic cars and motorcycles.

Military vehicles lined up in front of Coventry Transport Museum alongside a display of Coventry-built Rileys.



els from the Jaguar Daimler Heritage Trust Collection.

MotoFest Classic also hosted a round of the UK Autotest and Autosolo championship in Grove Street Car Park.

Observer photographer Marcus Mingins went along to capture the sights of this year's event.

Leo (ten) and Paul Boylan admire the mini of Matt Dille. Picture by Marcus Mingins 2426003MMR3

More pictures opposite

Coventry Cathedral hosted the award winning Coventry Concours, where vehicles from around the world competed in a contest of design and presentation.

Jaguar celebrated 40 years of the XJ40 with a display in University Square, featuring one-off prototypes and pre-production mod-



Motoring fans get to see some of their favourite cars. Picture by Marcus Mingins 2426003MM6

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

Town and country came together for Kenilworth Show

Lift off: The main ring featured some daring stunts.



by Philippa Mingins
philippa.mingins@
bullivantmedia.com

THOUSANDS of visitors, from town and country, braved the rain to celebrate British agriculture at The Kenilworth Show.

The event, held near Stoneleigh on Saturday, featured quad bike stunts, high-speed horse racing, a tug-of-war between Coventry Rugby Club and Warwickshire Young Farmers and the ever-popular grand parade of livestock.

Organisers the Kenilworth and District Agricultural Society (KADAS) unveiled a series of firsts including a new food hall, packed full of independent local traders; virtual-reality clay pigeon shooting; a Typhoon fighter jet simulator; and an art competition.

As part of the growing food locally competition, schools were asked to submit pieces under the theme 'what does the countryside mean to me?'

The Village Green saw people indulge in food and refreshments and watch a diverse line-up of acts on the trailer stage.

The show boasted dog and sheep shows, an equestrian section, vintage and modern machinery and a procession of classic cars and motorbikes.

Some of the region's best-kept cattle and sheep were on display in livestock competitions and show-goers were able to get hands-on with different crafts in the discovery barn and try out rural pursuits in the countryside area.

Plenty of fun was had in the children's entertainment area where a fun fair, face painting and inflatables were among the attractions.

Clare Price, chairman of KADAS, said: "It was great to bring countryside and urban communities together and to educate people about where food comes from. I think the city, and even some villages, has lost a connection with British farmers so the show is a way to bridge that gap."

"Everyone supported the ethos of where our food comes from, how important our farmers are and the good jobs they do. The show was a huge success and we look to build on that next year as we continue to grow."



KADAS chair Clare Price, left, and Kenilworth mayor Alison Insley judge the school art competition.

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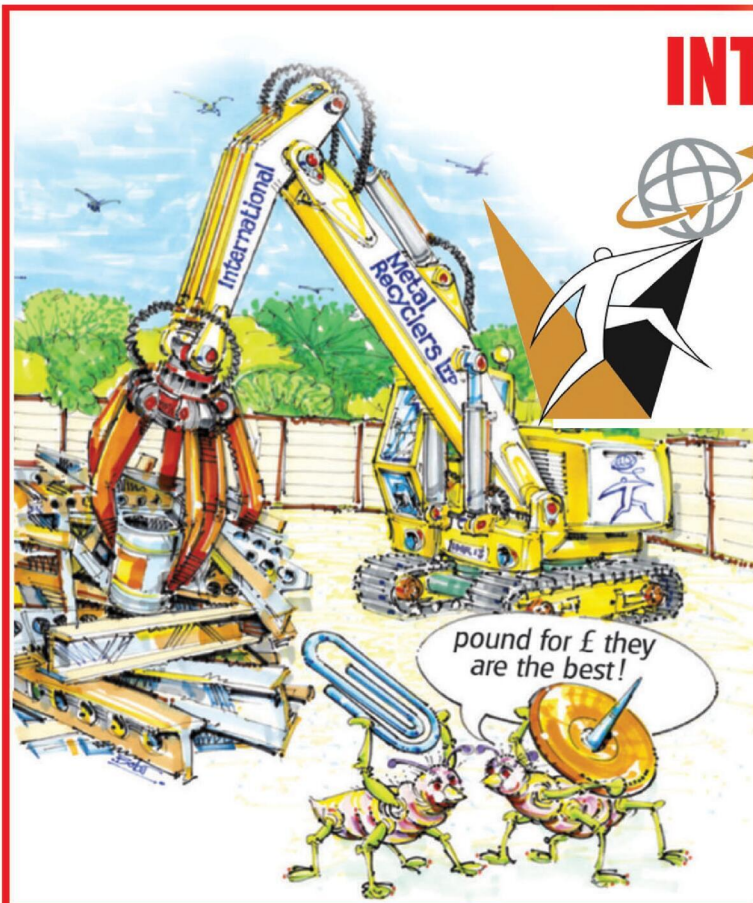
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Funding will aid improvements

A SECONDARY school in Rugby has been given government funding to improve its buildings.

Lawrence Sheriff School (pictured) has received a grant from the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF), a \$450million pot of funding which is being shared among 684 schools and sixth-form colleges across England to replace heating systems, mend roofs and update electrical works, among other projects.

As with all schools receiving grants, the amount given to LSS has not been disclosed to protect its ability to obtain best value from contractors.

The funding forms part of a wider package of investment in programmes including the School Rebuilding Programme, which is rebuilding and refurbishing schools across the country, including those whose buildings contained dangerous reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) materials.

Rugby MP John Slinger said: "Parents across Rugby will remember the significant concern of the RAAC crisis, the fear that children were no longer safe in their own school."

"Labour is turning the page through our Plan for Change, fixing the foundations of our schools so local children are in a safe environment where they can achieve and thrive."

"With free breakfast clubs in places like Wolves and Bulkington, free school meals and safer schools, Labour is setting children up for the best start in life."

The programmes form part of the government's 10-year plan to renew buildings across education, designed to ensure children learn in classrooms fit for purpose.

Education Secretary, Bridget Phillipson said: "Parents expect their children to learn in a safe warm environment. It's what children deserve."

"This investment is about more than just buildings – it's about showing children that their education matters, their futures matter, and this government is determined to give them the best possible start in life."

Schools Minister Josh MacAlister said the funding would help schools tackle urgent issues before they become bigger and more costly problems.

He added: "It is part of our longer-term plan to break the cycle of schools and colleges doing patch-and-mend repairs, by committing to unprecedented long-term funding to improve the school and college estate."

The CIF programme is part of the government's investment of over £2.1billion for this year to improve the condition of schools.



Rugby High School Headteacher Mark Grady chats to Year 7 students.

A chance to look round

PROSPECTIVE students of a Rugby secondary school are invited to an Open Evening later this month.

Rugby High School is inviting Year 4 and 5 students and their parents or carers to visit the school for its Open Evening on Wednesday June 24 from 4.45pm to 7pm.

Visitors will be able to explore the school, speak to teachers and current students, and hear talks from the senior team.

A spokesperson for the school said: "The Open Evening is all about giving visitors the information they need to make an informed choice of secondary school."

"The school hopes visitors will get a sense of the richness and diversity of

the learning experiences that the school offers, and of the friendly and purposeful atmosphere in which students are able to explore their talents and realise their potential.

"Our students come from a wide range of different backgrounds and we want them all to enjoy learning and leave the school well-prepared to make their place in the wider world."

School tours with student guides start after 5pm and speeches from the Senior Leadership Team and students will take place in the hall at 5.05pm, 5.45pm and 6.15pm.

Advance registration is not required.



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National prize for muscular dystrophy help centre

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

A WELCOMING Coventry charity which supports people living with muscle wasting conditions has received national recognition.

Ruth Hereford, chair of the city's Muscular Dystrophy Support Centre, received the Richard Attenborough Award for Outstanding Achievement at the Muscular Dystrophy UK Stronger Together Awards.

Ruth was recognised for her commitment to supporting people living with muscular dystrophy and for helping to expand specialist support services through the charity.

Following the award, renowned theatre director Michael Attenborough visited the centre with his wife Karen, to meet staff and service users and learn more about the specialist therapies and wellbeing support provided by the charity.

Michael, son of actress Sheila

Sim and actor-director Richard Attenborough – and nephew of broadcaster and naturalist David Attenborough – presented Ruth with her award during a national ceremony.

During their visit, Michael and Karen observed physiotherapy and osteopathy sessions, learned about the charity's aquatic exercise classes and hand therapy sessions, and spoke with service users about the affect ongoing support has on their daily lives.

Chair Ruth said: "To receive the award from Michael Attenborough was an incredible honour and it was very special to then welcome Michael and Karen to the centre and show them our work.

"It means so much to see the impact the centre has on people's lives recognised in this way. What began as one day per week of therapy, with one physiotherapist, has grown into specialist support across six Midlands sites, helping hundreds of people living with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions."



Ruth Hereford, left, with Karen and Michael Attenborough at the Muscular Dystrophy Support Centre. s

Muscular dystrophy and related conditions involve progressive muscle wastage, which can affect mobility, breathing, heart function and independence. Many people rely on specialist support to help maintain their strength, mobility and quality of life.

Michael Attenborough said: "Our visit was an even more remarkable eye opener than I had anticipated.

"It was both shocking and inspiring to see, first-hand, the impact the centre has on people's lives and the extraordinary sense of community that has been created here.

"What struck me most during the visit was hearing several people describe the centre as 'like coming

home'. That says so much about the welcome, support and belonging the team have built for people living with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions.

"It is entirely fitting that Ruth Hereford has received an award in my father's name. The determination and commitment behind the centre are truly remarkable."

The visit follows a period of growing recognition for the charity, which recently won the Not-for-profit Champion of the Year prize at the Coventry and Warwickshire Business Awards.

The centre's chief executive, Zoe Richardson, said: "It has been an incredible year for the charity with

recognition both nationally and locally but what matters most is ensuring people living with muscular dystrophy can access the ongoing specialist support they need.

"Visits like this help shine a light on the importance of specialist therapies and the difference they can make to people's independence, wellbeing and quality of life."

The Muscular Dystrophy Support Centre supports adults living with muscular dystrophy and related neuromuscular conditions through specialist therapy, exercise, wellbeing support and community connection.

Visit mdsupportcentre.org for more information.



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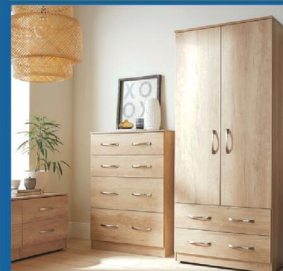
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Corporal Joshua Tan and family visited Mayor Nooria Sayani in the Mayor's parlour at the Town Hall with (left) Nicholas Old, St John Ambulance network lead for north and east Warwickshire, and (second from right) Ginny Taylor-Fallows, St John Ambulance cadet group lead for Rugby.

Donations set to help groups

A HOSPICE, a horse-riding charity for the disabled, and a community football club are the latest to benefit from a housebuilder's donations.

Redrow Midlands, which is building at Houlton in Rugby, has donated a total of £2,400 to The Myton Hospices, Onley Grounds Riding for the Disabled Association and Lutterworth Athletic Football Club as part of its community fund.

The Myton Hospices will use £800 to fund its entire patient and carer wellbeing service for a day.

The charity's CEO Ruth Freeman said: "We are thrilled to have been awarded a share of Redrow Midland's 2025 community fund and are incredibly grateful for this support."

"Our wellbeing approach focuses on what matters most to each individual – helping to manage symptoms, support emotional and psychological needs, and enable patients to maintain independence, while being fully involved in decisions about their care."

"Perhaps most importantly, we enable our patients to live well for longer and give them more quality time with their loved ones."

"Donations like this provide vital support for our wellbeing services, helping to ensure more people can access the care they need, and enabling patients, as well as their carers and families, to experience comfort, dignity and support at every stage of their illness."

Onley Grounds RDA, which offers therapeutic riding and carriage driving for children and adults with disabilities, will use a £600 donation to help cover the costs of hiring horses, ponies and arenas for additional sessions.

And a £1,000 donation to Lutterworth Athletic FC will contribute towards communal



equipment, allowing coaches to deliver more effective training sessions and help children achieve their goals.

The housebuilder's community fund was set up to help organisations to thrive, with local causes encouraged to apply for their share of a £7,500 pot.

Elaine Cartwright, Sales Director at Redrow Midlands, said: "From helping children discover new sports and build confidence to supporting vital wellbeing services and inclusive activities, these charities play an essential role in enriching lives."

"We hope our contributions enable them to continue their fantastic work for the community."

Left to right: Kat Walsh and Martin Watts from The Myton Hospices receive the donation from Kayleigh Stevenson from Redrow Houlton. Picture by Shaun Fellows / Shine Pix Ltd

Appointed to the role

A CORPORAL from Rugby St John Ambulance has been appointed as the Mayor of Rugby's cadet, in a first for the town.

Mayor Nooria Sayani has appointed Corporal Joshua Tan as her cadet for her Mayoral term – the first time a cadet from the first aid charity has taken on the role.

The Mayor's cadet accompanies the Mayor at civic and ceremonial events, while also working to support the Mayor's charities and promote the theme chosen for the year in office.

Coun Sayani has chosen pluralism as the theme for her Mayoral year, and wants to support and raise awareness of three charities – EquiP, RoSA and the Aga Khan Foundation.

She said: "It's the first time in history Rugby St John Ambulance has been invited to nominate a senior cadet to become the Mayor's cadet."

"A charity which works to save lives will

help drive our inclusive message of community compassion and cohesion, so Rugby remains a place where all lives are valued and respected equally."

Joshua and his family attended a ceremony in the Mayor's parlour at the Town Hall for his appointment, where he was presented with a ceremonial cord lanyard and certificate.

The family then enjoyed a tour of the council chamber.

Nicholas Old, St John Ambulance network lead for north and east Warwickshire, said: "We're so proud of Josh and excited to see what opportunities he will get in this highly prestigious role."

Anyone interested in supporting the Mayor's charities can call (01788) 533523 or email the.mayor@rugby.gov.uk

Visit www.mayorofrugby.org.uk for more information on the Mayor of Rugby.

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If you'd like your business to be featured in the Autumn edition of Seasons, or if you would like more details - just call the **SEASONS** team on **01527 588688**

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Children helped design museum's new play sculpture

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

A NEW, interactive play-ground-cum-sculpture, commissioned to celebrate Rugby Art Gallery and Museum's 25th anniversary, has been unveiled.

Inspired by party poppers, *Spiral Spot* was created by Julia Snowdin, who worked with children at the gallery's weekly under-fives mini explorers and mini makers sessions to generate and test design ideas.

The installation's seven arches rise from a circular base into a brightly coloured spiral, mimicking the moment a party popper pops.

The Gallery said *Spiral Spot* encourages children to explore and play creatively, with benches between every other arch offering a place to sit, relax and reflect.

Julia - who specialises in creating playful, interactive, outdoor installations for families - said she wanted to create a welcoming spot

in the town centre for people to come together to explore, learn and discover.

The artist said: "I wanted the installation to have a celebratory feel to mark Rugby Art Gallery and Museum's 25th birthday, and the arches swirl together to create the effect of a party popper going off."

"The curved arches also take inspiration from the shape of the gallery building and of the handlebars of the velocipede on display in the History of Rugby in 50 Objects exhibition.

"I want children to really explore the artwork - tunnelling, hiding, peeking, hopping and skipping; playing imagination games and learning through creativity - a completely interactive experience which introduces children to the world of art which awaits in the gallery next door."

Spiral Spot was commissioned for the museum's 25th anniversary celebrations.

The anniversary programme included exhibitions and a 'big birthday bash' which saw hundreds



Youngsters prepare to cut the ribbon on the new playground-sculpture hybrid, with artist Julia Snowdin and Coun Neil Sandison. s

of visitors descend on the venue for a free family party.

Phoebe Hilton, Rugby Art Gallery and Museum's senior learning and engagement officer, said: "We were looking for an outdoor, interactive sculptural installation to appeal to families and the under-fives; an artwork which embraced our ethos of 'learn, enjoy, create and discover'."

"*Spiral Spot* surpassed our expectations, encouraging young children to explore and play within a work of art, right on the doorstep of the art gallery and museum."

Artist Julia visited Rugby Art

Gallery and Museum to officially launch *Spiral Spot*, which is located next to the venue by the path which leads to the Percival Guildhouse.

A free play session for children aged two and over was held to celebrate the launch.

Coun Maggie O'Rourke, Rugby Borough Council's spokesperson for partnerships, health and wellbeing, said: "Working with children who attend the art gallery's mini explorers and mini makers sessions, Julia has created a colourful, eye-catching sculpture which

encourages interaction and imaginative play, a perfect addition to Rugby Art Gallery and Museum."

Coun O'Rourke's Liberal Democrat counterpart, Coun Neil Sandison, said: "The spirals and hoops will ignite children's imaginations and encourage more exploration of the installation."

"This will also inspire more children to explore all Rugby Art Gallery and Museum has to offer."

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



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Hathaway's cottage visitors will be able to see heritage conservation in action

by **Philippa Mingins**
 philippa.mingins@bullivantmedia.com

CONSERVATION work is set to begin at Anne Hathaway's Cottage.

The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust (SBT) has secured a £244,000 grant from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to support a major programme of conservation work at the historic Shottery home of Shakespeare's wife. The project forms part of SBT's

wider multi-year programme of conservation across the Shakespeare family homes, ensuring the buildings are protected for future generations.

Work at Anne Hathaway's home will start shortly and continue until March. The cottage will remain open throughout, enabling visitors to see conservation work taking place and gain a deeper understanding of the specialist skills required to care for historic buildings.

The project will include essential repair and conservation work to the

Grade I listed building, which dates largely from the 15th century and attract visitors from across the world.

The work will also create new opportunities for apprenticeships, training, volunteering and public engagement linked to heritage conservation.

Mark Ratcliffe, SBT's head of estates, said: "Anne Hathaway's Cottage is one of the most important surviving historic homes associated with Shakespeare and his family. This funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund will allow us to under-

take essential conservation work to protect the building for generations to come, while also giving visitors a rare opportunity to experience conservation in action.

"The project forms part of our long-term commitment to caring for the Shakespeare family homes through a planned and sustainable programme of conservation. We are extremely grateful to National Lottery players."

Liz Bates, from The National Lottery Heritage Fund, said: "Anne Hathaway's Cottage is an interna-

tionally significant heritage site with a powerful connection to England's literary and cultural history.

"We are pleased to support the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust with this important conservation project, which will help safeguard the building while also providing opportunities for people to engage with traditional conservation skills and heritage learning.

"Thanks to National Lottery players, this project will ensure that visitors can continue to enjoy and learn from this remarkable place."

Anne Hathaway's Cottage will be preserved for years to come. Picture by The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust. s

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Lifesaving skills learnt

SCORES of Rugbeians now have the skills to save the lives of their fellow residents – and their pets – thanks to two Rugby charities.

More than 80 people attended free cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) information and awareness sessions in Houlton, led by the OurJay Foundation.

Doggy First Aid sessions were also on offer, from Rugby Guide Dogs, aiming to teach essential dog first aid tips.

The sessions were organised by Urban&Civic, the master developer of the growing Houlton neighbourhood.

U&C Houlton community development lead Ely Hemus said: "We're delighted at how many people attended our CPR information and doggy first aid training events.

"They were hugely informative and we're grateful to the OurJay Foundation and Rugby Guide Dogs for working with us to provide these.

"Not only was it a great way to bring the community together but the information that was shared could be potentially life-saving.

"We're looking forward to holding similar events in the future."

The OurJay Foundation was set up by Rugby woman Naomi Rees Issitt after her son Jamie Rees died at the age of 18, following a cardiac arrest.

Since then, the charity has installed more than 360 publicly accessible defibrillators while raising awareness of their importance and providing training in life-saving skills.

Visit www.ourjay.org.uk for more information.



Charity shoot pulls in cash for farmers

Hitting the mark: a clay shoot at Shuckburgh Estate racked up the cash for the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution. s

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

HUNDREDS of people pulled together and hit the mark at a clay pigeon shoot and lunch which raised more than \$46,000 for a major farming charity.

Southam-based land and property consultancy Newton LDP hosted its fifth annual charity clay shoot at the Shuckburgh Estate on the Warwickshire-Northamptonshire border.

The event was held in aid of the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI)

– a national charity which provides support to the farming community in England and Wales.

The event has now raised almost \$185,000 for RABI.

The popular shoot attracted more than 180 competitors and more than 240 guests, all of whom contributed to the total.

Richard Foxon, managing director at Newton LDP, said: "Having the opportunity to support the farming industry with such a fantastic event is something we are incredibly proud of. Over the past five years, the charity clay shoot has developed into a much-

anticipated event, and we're hugely grateful for the continued backing from the land, property and farming communities. Their enthusiasm and generosity have been instrumental in raising a substantial sum for RABI and the support shown each year continues to make a real difference."

Shooting activities were orchestrated by Honesberie Shooting, before guests enjoyed lunch from Warwick-based Flying Pig Catering, followed by a live charity auction and raffle.

This year's event also featured a keynote address from Paul Pirie, head of fundraising

at RABI, who spoke about the charity's work and explained how the cash raised will provide practical, financial and emotional support to farming people across England and Wales.

Paul said: "The event has truly become a flagship occasion in the rural calendar, bringing people together in support of farming communities while celebrating the very best of countryside spirit and generosity."

"Events like this make a real difference to the work of RABI."

Next year's event will take place on Thursday, May 20.



Naomi Rees Issitt, founder of the OurJay Foundation (third from left), Lynn Docherty from Rugby Guide Dogs (fourth from left), with representatives from both charities and Urban&Civic at the CPR training day in Houlton. s



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Using plant feed can help your garden at a particularly demanding time of year

Your plants need help in summer. s

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

THERE'S a moment every summer when gardens all seem to look so tired. The flowers are not as vivid as they should be, the tomatoes are taking forever and the hanging basket that started so well is beginning to drag.

More often than not, the answer is simple: plants are running low on fuel. As part of its 'make it bloom' campaign, British Garden Centres has put together a straightforward guide for anyone who wants to do right by their garden this summer without wading through confusing labels and conflicting advice.

What's going on in the soil? People should think of plant feed the way they view their food.

Plants draw energy from sunlight and water but also need a range of nutrients from the soil to build strong roots, produce flowers and set fruit.

The trouble is, those nutrients get used up fast, particularly in summer when everything is growing at a pace and frequent watering

washes minerals away before roots can absorb them. Once the soil is depleted, plants start to struggle and they look dull, flower less and become far more prone to pests and disease.

A little feed, applied regularly, is all it takes to keep things on track and outdoor spaces thriving.

What do N, P and K mean on a plant label?

Almost every plant feed shows three letters and numbers on the packaging: N, P and K.

Nitrogen (N) drives leafy, green growth, it's the one that keeps herbs lush and salad leaves coming. Phosphorus (P) goes to work below the surface, supporting strong roots and encouraging flowers to form. Potassium (K) is the one nutrient fruiting plants cannot do without: it helps tomatoes swell and ripen and keeps plants resilient when the weather turns.

For most gardens, a balanced general-purpose feed that contains all three is a perfectly good place to start. Dial things in from there once plants need it.

Finding the right feed

Liquid feeds are the most convenient for most people. Dilute them

in water and apply them directly to the soil, usually once a week. The roots get to work almost straight away. Liquid feeds are the go-to for containers, window boxes, hanging baskets and bedding plants.

Granular feeds work differently but are just as effective. Scatter them on the soil, work them in lightly and they will break down slowly over the coming weeks, feeding plants in the background without any thought needed. They suit borders and larger plants well.

Tomato feed is worth having, even for plants other than tomatoes. It works beautifully for anything that flowers or fruits, such as roses, dahlias, peppers, strawberries and courgettes. Apply every week or two once plants start coming into bud and plants will flourish all summer long.

When growing rhododendrons, camellias or azaleas, use ericaceous feed, a formula designed to work in acidic soil. This is the only environment those plants thrive in. A fortnightly application keeps them in good shape.

To feed gardens as naturally as possible, organic options such as seaweed extract or blood, fish and bone are slow and gentle, building

soil health over time and nourishing the plants themselves.

A few things worth knowing

Always water plants before feeding. Dry soil is poor at absorbing nutrients and there's a risk of scorching roots if feed is applied to parched ground. Once the soil is moist, apply liquid feed directly around the base of the plant, not over the leaves – which can cause brown patches – and dilute according to the instructions. For granular feeds, scatter evenly and rake or press gently into the surface or into the hole they are planted in.

The best time to feed is early morning or evening, as it is cooler, evaporation is lower and plants are under less heat stress.

Julian Palphramand, British Garden Centres' head of plants, has said summer is the hardest time of year for plants as they are growing, flowering and fruiting all at once.

"What we'd love people to take away is that feeding doesn't have to be complicated or time-consuming," said Julian.

"Once you get into the habit, it takes minutes and the difference it makes is something you can actually see."




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Drink-driving footie warning

FOOTBALL fans are being urged to plan ahead and never get behind the wheel after drinking, as the FIFA World Cup gets under way.

With many matches taking place in the evening and early hours of the morning, UK time, West Midlands police and crime commissioner Simon Foster is reminding motorists drink-driving remains one of the biggest causes of death and serious injury on British roads, and that there is no safe amount of alcohol to consume before driving.

The warning comes as pubs, clubs and venues across the region prepare to welcome supporters watching matches throughout the tournament.

Mr Foster said: "Millions of people across the country will be enjoying the World Cup with family and friends over the coming weeks.

"Whether you are watching a match in the evening, staying up late or heading out to a pub to support your team, my message is simple: If you drink, don't drive.

"One poor decision can destroy lives forever. Drink-driving kills and seriously injures innocent people every year and it is entirely preventable.

"There is no excuse for getting behind the wheel after drinking alcohol. Plan your journey home in advance, use public transport, book a taxi, arrange a lift with a designated driver or stay where you are.

"I continue to support a zero-tolerance approach to drink driving and tougher penalties for dangerous drivers. Those who choose to break the law and put other people's lives at risk must face serious consequences."

Force will take a hard line on abuse at all times

BAD DAYS HAPPEN, BUT TAKING IT OUT ON OTHERS IS NOT OKAY

by Sarah Mason
sarah.mason@bullivantmedia.com

THERE'S no excuse for abuse – that's the message from West Midlands Police, which wants everyone to enjoy the football this summer.

The FIFA World Cup was due to kick-off yesterday (Thursday) and will run until July 19.

Whilst the tournament may be a time of fun and celebration for most people, for others it can be quite a nerve-wracking time.

West Midlands Police said football matches do not cause domestic abuse but factors such as increased alcohol consumption and heightened emotions during matches can cause domestic abuse

to increase in frequency and severity.

The force said it will be running an operation which will see officers act on information and seek out perpetrators.

The force's public protection unit will work alongside the operational support unit and local policing areas to target people suspected of being involved in abuse.

The police teams will be visiting the whole of the region to arrest abusers and will look to pursue prosecutions to seek justice.

Det Insp Charlie Sparks, from the public protection unit, said: "Domestic abuse can devastate the lives of a partner, children and other loved ones, both now and in the future. We want everyone to be able to enjoy the football safely this summer without being in fear.

"It's fine to be happy, frustrated or disappointed following a football match but what's not fine is for you to take your feelings out on your loved ones. No matter the score and no matter how you feel about it, there is absolutely no excuse for abuse. We never underestimate the impact of domestic abuse and it's why we're committed to supporting victims and catching perpetrators."

The force said its focused activity will aim to build on the work its teams – do day in, day out, to identify offenders and safeguard victims.

The force said it has made major improvements specifically regarding how it supports people suffering domestic abuse.

That includes significant enhancements to how officers handle incoming calls for service

and there are independent domestic abuse specialists from local charities working across 999 control rooms.

The force said anyone who has experienced abuse of any kind does not have to deal with it alone and it is never the victim's fault.

People should call 999 if they are in danger, if threats have been made against them or if a crime is in progress.

If someone needs the police but is unable to talk due to their situation, they can dial 999 then press 55.

To get support, visit www.nefaproduction.wpengine.com/support/locations/.

Anyone concerned about their behaviour or the behaviour of a loved one, can contact the respect helpline on 0808 802 4040 or visit the respect website.



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TUNING UP: THE VIOLA is celebrated in a summer concert by Warwickshire Symphony Orchestra.

WSO will perform a programme celebrating the rich and distinctive sound of the viola, and including Rachmaninov's magnificent Symphony No 2 in E Minor, at All Saints' Church in Leamington tomorrow (Saturday). Conducted by Roger Coull, the concert features guest soloist Jonathan Barritt in Bruch's Romanze for Viola and Holst's Lyric Movement as well as the symphony and Vaughan Williams' Fantasia on Greensleeves.

Barritt, a member of the Coull Quartet alongside the orchestra's conductor Coull, has worked with leading chamber groups including Capricorn, Divertimenti, Raphael, Gaudier and Primavera, and has

performed quartet concerts with William Pleeth, James Galway and Kiri Te Kanawa.

He is Professor of Viola at the Royal College of Music and the Junior Academy of Music.

Speaking about the programme, Jonathan said: "The Bruch is full of wonderful, heart-warming melodies. The Holst is a far less accessible work, but one that reveals great strength. So in the upcoming concert we have one 'comfortable' easy listening piece and one to slightly stretch the ears."

Tickets are priced from £15, with half price for students and children. Visit www.wso.org.uk for tickets and full details. The concert starts at 7pm.

Violist Jonathan Barritt will be guest soloist at the concert.



Michael Shaeffer, who plays King Aerys II Targaryen, and the rest of The Mad King cast. Picture by RSC.

The game's afoot

THE CAST is busy rehearsing for the eagerly-anticipated arrival of Westeros on the Stratford stage.

The world premiere of Game of Thrones: The Mad King, a new play based on the novels by George R.R. Martin, runs at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre from July 20 to September 5.

Director Dominic Cooke said: "I'm very lucky to be working alongside such a talented group of artists on this show. The creative team and cast are exceptional and we're super excited to bring Duncan Macmillan's brilliant script and George R.R. Martin's vivid imaginative world to life on stage."

"I'm delighted to return to the

RSC, backed by their dedicated team, and I can't wait to share our epic show with audiences in Stratford this summer".

Adapted by Duncan Macmillan, the play spans the final years before the events of the novels, revealing a legendary chapter of Westerosi history.

Executive producer and creator Martin said: "I love this cast - they bring all the strengths, flaws and intricacies within these characters that drive this important chapter of Westerosi history. They have a fire in them, and I can't wait to see them bring that fire to the stage."

Visit www.rsc.org.uk for further details.

The Midland Youth Jazz Orchestra will be swinging in Burton Dassett this evening. Picture by MYJO.



THE MIDLAND Youth Jazz Orchestra will be swinging in south Warwickshire.

They will be performing at All Saints' church in Burton Dassett country park today (Friday).

The orchestra are returning for the third successive year by popu-

lar demand, and are aiming to take inspiration from shows and films over the decades.

All proceeds are for church maintenance funds. Plenty of parking on the hills. The less mobile can drive over the cattle grid to park closer to the church entrance.

Bring a picnic to eat on the Burton Dassett Hills if fine. Bar opens 6.30pm. Performance begins 7.30pm.

To book seats, priced £15, contact Norma King on 07747 783814 or email normakinghollies@btinternet.com.

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Asking for Angela is working across county

by **Philippa Mingins**
 philippa.mingins@bullivantmedia.com

PUBS and bars across Warwickshire have demonstrated they are successfully running the Ask for Angela scheme, which gives customers a simple and discreet way to ask staff for help if they need it.

Agencies from the Safer Warwickshire Partnership Board – including Warwickshire Police, Warwickshire County Council (WCC), borough and district councils and local business improvement districts – carried out tests in town centre venues to

check how well the scheme is being understood and used.

Safer neighbourhood policing teams have been doing the tests as part of 'operation goss'. Officers have carried out joint compliance visits, checking on door staff and venue management at 38 licensed premises in Warwickshire. Only one venue failed the test, and has received additional training and guidance.

WCC community safety spokesperson Leon Livermore said: "It's reassuring to see pubs, bars and restaurants across Warwickshire doing a great job in supporting community safety. The results reflect a strong commitment from venues to safeguarding customers."

National Ask for Angela scheme director Iwona Kossek was pleased with the results. Iwona said: "Visiting 38 licensed premises across town centres, it's incredibly encouraging to see how many venues have implemented the scheme effectively. This outcome clearly reflects the dedication and hard work across the county to create safer, more supportive environments."

"We've been proud to work alongside Warwickshire since 2023, developing bespoke materials and training to support and strengthen the scheme locally and it's fantastic to see that collaboration reflected in these results."

Visit www.askforangela.co.uk for more details about the scheme.

Grants aim to help provide good food

COMMUNITY food projects across Warwickshire have been given a cash injection.

Warwickshire County Council (WCC) has awarded more than £25,000 to 27 community organisations to help initiatives that improve access to healthy, affordable food.

Each group received up to £1,000 in April through the Kind Communities – Kind Food, programme, which supports community-led projects making a difference to resident well-being.

The programme was delivered with Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action, which promoted and administered the application process.

The initiatives are part of Warwickshire's efforts to tackle food insecurity and promote healthier diets through a three-year food strategy – set to end this year – which was developed by the Warwickshire food forum and WCC.

Invested

Over the past three years, WCC has invested £70,000 into nearly 70 community food projects in the county. Plans are under way to accelerate progress through a new Warwickshire food plan, set to run to 2028.

WCC resources spokesperson, Coun Mike Bannister, said: "This fund is to help support and encourage community food projects. Community groups do splendid work promoting and providing healthy and affordable food locally. We recognise this and want to work with existing and new groups – this is an important part of our new plan, going forward."

Alison Thompson, area manager for Community and Voluntary Action, said: "We're really pleased to have successfully delivered this grant funding, working with the county council again. Funding for community activities to support grassroots-led initiatives makes a huge difference to people's lives. It encourages volunteering, builds resilience and community capacity and supports some of the most vulnerable in our neighbourhoods."

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These small but crucial behaviours are what separate dependable professionals from those who leave customers feeling uncertain or disappointed. For homeowners and drivers, peace of mind often matters just as much as the finished job.

Experience plays a big role, but trust isn't built on years alone. It's earned through consistency.

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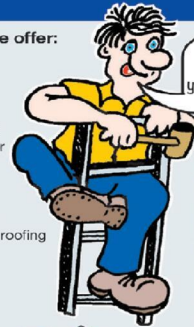
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TRADERS YOU CAN TRUST

Transparency is another hallmark of tradespeople you can trust. Clear quotes, upfront pricing, and honest timelines prevent misunderstandings and help build long-term relationships.



Reliable professionals are comfortable explaining costs and offering alternatives where appropriate, rather than surprising clients with last-minute extras. This openness creates collaboration instead of conflict.


Technology has also reshaped how trust is built. Online reviews, local forums, and social media recommendations make it easier to spot patterns - both good and bad. While a single negative review doesn't tell the whole story, consistent feedback about punctuality, cleanliness, and communication speaks volumes. Trustworthy tradespeople often rely on reputation rather than aggressive marketing, knowing that word of mouth remains powerful.

Respect is another non-negotiable. The best tradespeople treat homes as if they were their own - protecting floors, cleaning up after themselves, and minimising disruption. These details may seem minor, but they leave a lasting impression. For many customers, how a tradesperson behaves matters just as much as the technical outcome.

In a world where shortcuts can be tempting, tradespeople you can trust are those who take pride in doing things properly. They follow regulations, keep up with training, and refuse to compromise on safety or

quality. Their work lasts - and so does the relationship they build with their clients.

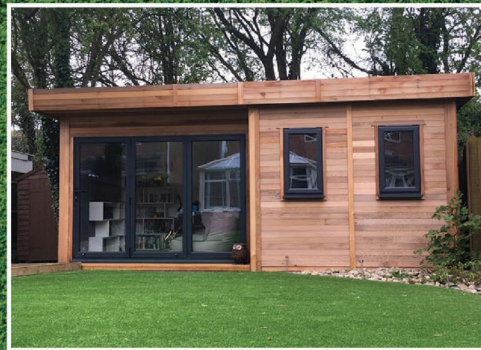
Ultimately, trust is what turns a one-off job into a lifelong recommendation. And for the tradespeople who earn it, trust isn't just good business - it's their reputation, their livelihood, and their legacy.

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How to spot whether an hornet is an Asian threat or native



The British Pest Control Association is spreading the word about the differences between yellow-legged Asian hornets and their native European counterparts. S

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

SIGHTINGS of yellow-legged Asian hornets in the UK have prompted a call for householders in the West Midlands to check for “things that go buzz” this summer.

National trade body the British Pest Control Association (BPCA) has reiterated the importance of correct identification to help prevent the spread of yellow-legged hornets, which are a classed as an invasive ‘alert’ species by the Non-Native Species Secretariat and which pose a significant risk to native ecosystems, particularly honeybees.

The first sighting of a yellow-

legged hornet this year was at Doncaster in February, followed by a report in Sawtry, in Cambridgeshire, in March.

In April, 12 sightings were recorded. Six were in Kent, two in Hampshire, two in Derbyshire, one in Nottinghamshire and one in Surrey. Four further sightings were recorded in Kent in May, plus one in Dorset.

Niall Gallagher, technical manager at the BPCA, said: “The yellow-legged hornet is an invader that was first reported in the UK in 2016.

“It is a predator of honeybees which could disrupt our native ecosystems and impact crop production.

“To the untrained eye, it can be difficult to tell the difference between bees, wasps, native hornets and yellow-legged hornets but

accurate identification is crucial to understanding and preventing the spread of this invasive species.

“The yellow-legged hornet is smaller than our native species.

“It has an orange head and its entire body is almost entirely dark.

“The abdomen has fine yellow stripes and a yellow or orange segment near the base.

“Their legs are dark and have yellow tips.”

Native European hornets are larger than yellow-legged hornets, at 3-4cm long, with a yellow head at the front, a reddish brown or black thorax and legs, and a yellow abdomen with black stripes.

They are important pollinators and are generally less aggressive than wasps, despite being much larger and scarier looking, however they will sting defensively if they

believe their nest is under threat.

Like bees and wasps, hornet stings can be very painful and may result in red swelling and a burning sensation.

In rare cases, a sting can trigger anaphylaxis, which can be fatal.

If anaphylactic shock is suspected, always dial 999.

In the event that a nest is found in a location which poses a risk to people, the BPCA recommends contacting one of its members, who will have the knowledge, experience and kit needed to deal with the problem safely.

The BPCA has an online factsheet that can help householders to identify “things that go buzz”.

Niall added: “There are many different types of wasps, bees and hoverflies that are not classed as pests and are unlikely to pose a

risk to health. There are also some species which are considered pests, such as common wasps but can be safely left alone if they are in an area where they are unlikely to come into conflict with people.

“Buzzing insects tend to be more active during warm weather and, for peace of mind, our guide will help residents identify whether insects can be left to safely pollinate garden flowers or whether you may need to call on the services of a pest professional.

“Any sightings of yellow-legged hornets should be reported to the Non-Native Species Secretariat, either via their website, which also features identification information, or via the Asian Hornet Watch app.”

Visit bpca.org.uk/buzz for more information.

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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.

US states

F	D	A	W	Y	O	R	N	I	A	X	A	S	I	P
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Solutions opposite

CROSSWORD

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ACROSS

- Of inestimable value (9)
- Possess (3)
- Excitement (11)
- Bishopric (7)
- Exult (5)
- Iterate (6)
- Lower (6)
- Mark of omission (5)
- Foretell (7)
- Doubtfulness (11)
- Front (3)
- Efforts (9)

DOWN

- Decay (3)
- Draw out (5)
- Exultant (6)
- Gravel (7)
- Comfort (11)
- Pleasure (9)
- Untimely (11)
- Instruction (9)
- Object (7)
- Scanty (6)
- Precise (5)
- Tawny (3)

Scribble pad

LADDER

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

Climbing plant

Sin

Parasites

Enjoy

Exist



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.

- 1448 gives an animal;
- 82345 gives a bird;
- 628879 gives another bird.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
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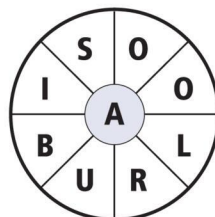
CODEWORD

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.

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

WORDWHEEL

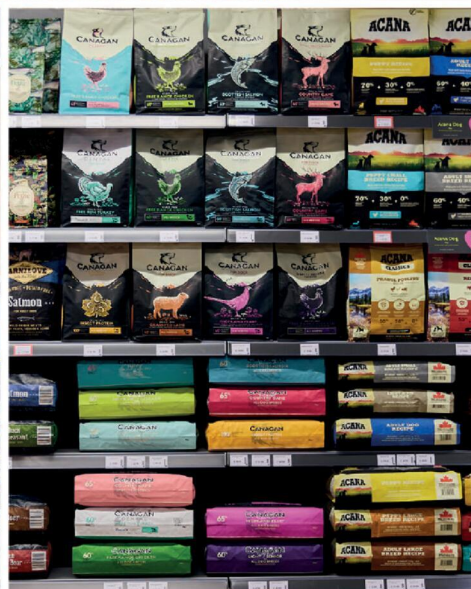
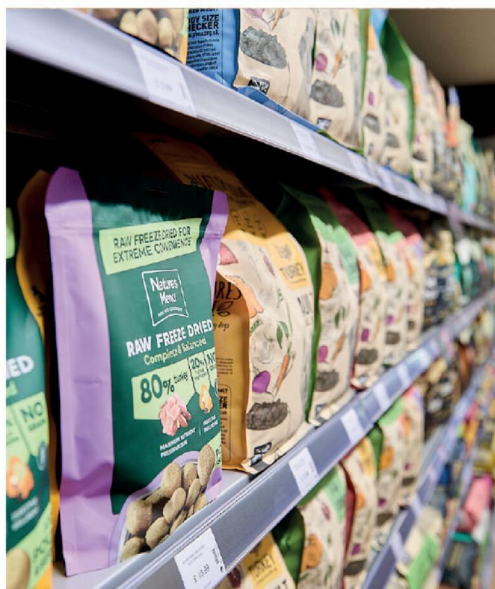
You have 10 mins to find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the hub letter and at least 3 others. Letters may be used only once. You cannot use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one 9-letter word to be found.



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PUBLIC NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

Warwickshire County Council has made the following Temporary Traffic Orders:

VARIOUS ROADS RUGBY – SURFACE DRESSING 2026

Order Effect: Roads closed to vehicular traffic as indicated in the Schedule below:

Table with 4 columns: Road(s) Subject to Closure & Temporary 10mph Speed Limit, Location, From, To. Lists various road closures in Rugby and surrounding areas.

Reason for Order: The closures and temporary speed limits are required to facilitate carriageway surface dressing, carriageway sealing treatments, removal/replacement of road studs, pre-surface dressing patching, road markings/lining, sand carpeting, road sweeping and other associated works.

Order Commences: 15 June 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 30 September 2026.

Access & Diversion: Will be appropriately signed.

Contractor: Balfour Beatty, Tel: 0345 241 5302.

GIBBET LANE, SHAWELL

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Gibbet Roundabout to the County Border

Reason for Order: To enable essential works, overnight 20.00hrs – 06.00hrs.

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

Anticipated Completion: 21 June 2026.

Access & Diversion: A5, Watling Street, Shawell lane, Catthorpe Road, Main Street, Gibbet Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: H W Martin, Tel: 07785 541692.

RUGBY ROAD, CHURCHOVER

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic from Gibbet roundabout to the County Border.

Reason for Order: To safely enable survey works, overnight 20.00hrs – 06.00hrs.

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

Anticipated Completion: 21 June 2026.

Access & Diversion: A5, Watling Street, Coventry Road, Lutterworth Southern Bypass, Sir Frank Whittle Roundabout, Rugby Road, Main Street and vice versa.

Contractor: H W Martin, Tel: 07785 541692.

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

BILTON LANE, DUNCHURCH

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic. In addition, the one-way traffic flow on Bilton Lane, Dunchurch will be temporarily suspended.

Reason for Order: To enable cabling works, 09.30hrs – 15.30hrs.

Order Commences: 1 July 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 1 July 2026.

Access & Diversion: Bilton Lane, Northampton Lane and vice versa.

Contractor: Sunbelt Rentals, Tel: 03700 500 792.

MILL ROAD, RUGBY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic 20 metres either side of the bridge.

Reason for Order: Structural examination of bridge, overnight 21.00hrs – 04.00hrs.

Order Commences: 28 June 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 29 June 2026.

Access & Diversion: Murray Road, Whitehall Road, Clifton Road, Butlers Leap, Mill Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Centurion TM, Tel: 01132 775360.

HOLBROOK ROAD, LONG LAWFORD

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: Works for boundary box and meter installation.

Order Commences: 2 July 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 3 July 2026.

Access & Diversion: Round Avenue, Ashman Avenue, Holbrook Road and vice versa.

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

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

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

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 11 June 2026

Classified

TELEPHONE 01527 588688 FACSIMILE 01527 584371

PUBLIC NOTICES

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

Application Number R26/0395 23-24, MARKET PLACE, RUGBY, CV21 3DU Listed Building Consent for proposed 1 no. new non-illuminated projecting hanging sign and 3no. new nonilluminated fascia signs

This development may affect a Listed Building. This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0400 23-24, MARKET PLACE, RUGBY, CV21 3DU Advertisement consent for proposed 1 no. new non-illuminated projecting hanging sign and 3no. new nonilluminated fascia signs

This development may affect a Listed Building. This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0431 COOMBE ABBEY PARK LTD, BRINKLOW ROAD, COOMBE FIELDS, COVENTRY, CV3 2AB

Listed Building Consent (Grade I) for replacement damaged cartilage listed wall.

This development may affect a Listed Building. This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0474 BUS SHELTER OPPOSITE CHESTNUT FIELD, BUS SHELTER, NORTH STREET, RUGBY, CV21 2AB

Advertisement consent for a proposed double sided digital advertising panel.

This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0509 LUMONIGS HOUSE, SWIFT VALLEY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, VALLEY DRIVE, RUGBY, CV21 1TQ

Erection of 4no. employment buildings for flexible use within Use Classes B2 (General Industrial), B8 (Storage and Distribution) and E(g)(iii) along with all associated development including earthworks, drainage, access arrangements, car parking, HGV parking, servicing arrangements, landscaping, localised highway improvements and other ancillary structures/works.

This is a major development

Application Number R26/0528 PAVEMENT OUTSIDE OS 16 HIGH STREET, RUGBY, CV21 3BG

Installation of 1no. black digital communications kiosk, defibrillator and ancillary advertisement.

This development may affect a Conservation Area

Application Number R26/0529 PAVEMENT OUTSIDE OS 16 HIGH STREET, RUGBY, CV21 3BG

Advertisement consent for Installation of 1no. black digital communications kiosk, defibrillator and ancillary advertisement.

This development may affect a Conservation Area

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

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

BUTT HILL, NAPTON-ON-THE-HILL

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: Works for long comm pipe repair.

Order Commences: 2 July 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 3 July 2026.

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

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

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

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

S Duxbury, Director of Strategy, Planning & Governance, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4RL Date 11 June 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

Warwickshire County Council

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

TAMWORTH ROAD, CORLEY

Order Effect: Road closed to vehicular traffic.

Reason for Order: Works to investigate pole to property.

Order Commences: 18 June 2026 for up to 18 months.

Anticipated Completion: 18 June 2026.

Access & Diversion: Tamworth Road and vice versa.

Contractor: Kelly House, Tel: 07891 414660.

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 11 June 2026

PUBLIC NOTICES

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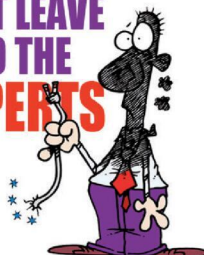
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Captain Tallberg to depart Blaze as players retained



Kim Tallberg will depart Coventry Blaze. Picture by Scott Wiggins.

ICE HOCKEY: COVENTRY Blaze captain Kim Tallberg will depart the club this summer following a four-season spell.

The 34-year-old made 266 appearances for Blaze and registered 171 points, scoring 68 goals and providing 103 assists.

The Swede joined Coventry ahead of the 2022/23 season and quickly established himself as a fan favourite at the Skydome Arena.

Tallberg became captain ahead of the 2023/24 campaign and led Blaze to the Challenge Cup final this season.

He won a clean sweep of individual honours in the 2022/23 season.

Tallberg scooped the coach's player, players' player and supporters' player of the year awards.

And he again won the coach's player of the season at the club's recent end-of-season awards night.

FULL-TIME DEAL FOR CAPPS

Blaze have signed teenage star Brynley Capps to a full-time deal from the start of the 2026/27 Elite League season.

The 18-year-old spent last season with Telford Tigers in the NIHL where he recorded 23 goals and 29 assists in 62 games.

He also claimed the NIHL All-Star young player of the year award.

Capps played for Telford on a two-way agreement with Blaze as he also scored his first professional goal for Coventry last season.

Blaze head coach, Kevin Moore said: "We are thrilled to have Brynley back full-time this season.

"He has put in a tremendous amount of work behind the scenes with Tom (Watkins) in Telford, as well as with our staff on and off the ice.

"We see Brynley developing into a consistent Elite League performer, and we can't wait to see his summer hard work translate into training camp and beyond."

Capps enjoyed a standout 2024/25 season with Blaze and also impressed on the international stage for Great Britain at under-18 and under-20 level.

He finished as the leading scorer with 11 points (six goals, five assists) at the IIHF under-18 men's World Championship Division II Group A tournament in 2024.

More recently, Capps competed at the IIHF under-20 World Championship Division II Group A, where he recorded five goals and one assist in five games to help Great Britain secure a silver medal.

And Capps made his senior international debut for Great Britain's men's team earlier this year.

PLAYERS RETAINED

Coventry have confirmed last season's top scorer Grant Mismash will remain with the club for the

2026/27 Elite League season.

The American forward led the Blaze charts for points (62) and assists (36) in Elite League competitions with a joint high of 26 goals.

The 27-year-old joined Blaze from Belfast Giants last season after he helped the latter side to an Elite League and Challenge Cup double in 2024/25.

And American forward Matthew Gleason will also return to the club next season.

The 24-year-old enjoyed a standout first professional season with Blaze, recording 54 points in 67 Elite League competition games.

He finished as Coventry's joint top scorer with 26 goals, alongside teammate Mismash, to win the Adam Calder forward of the season award.

And British forward Zaine McKenzie has signed a two-year deal with Blaze until the end of the 2027/28 Elite League season.

McKenzie will remain with his hometown club after spending the 2025/26 campaign between Blaze and Peterborough Phantoms.

The 22-year-old recorded three goals and three assists in 23 NIHL appearances and four assists in 35 Elite League competition games.

He made 27 appearances for Blaze during the 2024/25 campaign as he recorded two assists in his first full season.

Canadian defenceman Connor Russell will also remain with Blaze for the 2026/27 campaign.

Russell recorded 20 points (three goals, 17 assists) in his debut campaign with Blaze across 56 appearances in all Elite League competitions last season.

The 30-year-old joined Blaze following four seasons in the ECHL, where he established himself as a reliable and dependable presence on the blue line.

And Ukrainian forward Artem Buzoverya will return to the club next season.

Buzoverya iced in 55 games for the Blaze during the 2025/26 campaign, recording four goals and five assists across all Elite League competitions, and posted a face-off win percentage of more than 50 per cent.

The 26-year-old centreman joined Blaze in 2025 following a season at Bentley University (NCAA), where he recorded 15 points (six goals, nine assists) in 32 games during the 2024/25 season.

And British forward Jack Hopkins is the latest player to commit his future to the club next term.

Hopkins will enter a fourth season with Blaze after recording 21 points (five goals, 16 assists) in 66 Elite League games last term.

He won Coventry's British player of the season award, voted for by Blaze supporters, last season for the second consecutive year.

And he also won the Elite League young British player of the year for the second straight season.



Connor Russell will remain with Coventry Blaze next season. Picture by Scott Wiggins.

Triple podium finish for Ingram ahead of BTCC summer break

by Aaron Sutcliffe
aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

BTCC: TOM Ingram secured three podium finishes in as many races driving in the latest round of the British Touring Car Championship (BTCC).

The Coventry driver finish second in race two and third in races one and three to come away from Oulton Park with a significant haul of points.

Ingram closed the gap on early BTCC leader Ash Sutton to 48 points in the drivers' standings.

And Ingram believes further tweaks to his Team Vertu car will strengthen his chances of retaining the BTCC title when the competition returns following a summer break.

Ingram said: "We've got as much out of the weekend as we could have done really.

"The goal was always to come into the weekend and extract as many points as we could with a slightly unfavourable TTB (TOCA Turbo Boost).

"Other than doing slightly better in qualifying, we couldn't have really asked for much more, I feel very chuffed.

"If we can keep doing 10 points a



Tom Ingram on the podium at Oulton Park. Picture by Darren Price.

round then it's definitely doable. It's a tough order but we have an incredibly fast car which is really encouraging.

"The disappointing thing is I've had this car all year, I've just not been able to show it.

"We've ended the first stage of the season really good. You want to go into the back end of the season in a strong position which is what we've done.

"We've got a few bits and pieces that we're keen to get done with the car that we've not quite had a chance to do.

"I'm looking forward to what we can do in the second half of the season. I think we should be even stronger."

Ingram battled to a third-place finish in race one after qualifying fourth on the grid and pushed Josh Cook all the way as the latter took second behind race winner Dan Cammish.

And Ingram stepped onto the podium again in race two on the hard tyre as he passed Cammish to take second behind race winner Sutton.

Ingram secured a third podium finish in race three as Ingram finished behind Team Vertu teammate Ricky Collard while Charles Rainford took the race victory.

The BTCC season continues at Thruxton on the weekend of July 25 and 26.

Cov begin recruitment drive for next season with trio of new signings

RUGBY UNION: COVENTRY Rugby have signed three new players ahead of the 2026/27 season after reaching the Champ Rugby play-off semi-finals.

Fly-half Bruce Houston, back-row forward Rhys Tait and versatile back Matt McNab have all agreed terms to play at the Nick Newbold Stadium next season.

Houston most recently played for USBPA Rugby in France and previously featured for both Ealing Trailfinders and Cornish Pirates in England's second tier.

Houston said: "I'm delighted to be joining Coventry. The ambition of the club and the direction it's heading in made it an easy decision. I'm looking forward to meeting the boys and the staff and having a season we can remember.

"The opportunity to play in front of such a passionate fan base and contribute my skill set to Coventry's exciting brand of rugby is something I'm really looking forward to."

Head coach Alex Rae added: "From the moment I spoke to Bruce, what stood out was his energy and desire to be part of something here at Coventry.

"Couple that with his ability in mul-

multiple positions and previous experience in this league, it's really exciting to get him on board."

Playmaker Houston can operate at fly-half and inside centre and amassed 238 points in 50 appearances for Cornish Pirates in the Champ.

The 26-year-old began his rugby journey with Randalstown and later progressed through the Ulster Rugby pathway.

Houston recently earned his first international cap for Zimbabwe.

Back-row forward Tait joins Cov from Champ rivals Doncaster Knights where the 23-year-old established himself across 70 appearances.

Tait captured Scotland at under-20 level and spent time with Glasgow Warriors before moving to England's second tier.

Tait said: "I am super excited and grateful to continue my rugby journey at Coventry.

"Coventry play an exciting brand of rugby and draw in big crowds, which I can't wait to be a part of.

"I'm excited to see what we can do with what seems to be a very promising squad for the upcoming campaign."

Rae added: "Delighted to bring Rhys to Coventry. Everyone we've spoken

to has only said great things about him as a player, but also as a person.

"He will really fit into what we do here. He's dynamic, tough and has a great skillset.

"We're excited to see how we can push him on further."

And McNab also makes the move to Coventry from Doncaster where he scored 35 tries in 71 games.

The 27-year-old can play on the wing or at outside centre and has earned 22 caps for Zimbabwe.

McNab progressed to Champ Rugby with Hartpury and spent two years at the Pirates before joining the Knights.

McNab said: "Joining Coventry is a great opportunity for me.

"The club has clear ambition and I'm looking forward to getting stuck in with the group and hopefully sharing plenty of good moments with the players, staff and supporters next season."

Rae added: "Great to welcome Matt to Coventry. He's a player who has always impressed us.

"His pace and power and ability to beat people will really suit how we want to attack.

"What really stood out was how much he wants to contribute to the team off the field and be part of something special."

Sky Blues performance director leaves club

FOOTBALL: COVENTRY City performance director Dr Claire-Marie Roberts has left her role at the club.

Roberts joined the Sky Blues in the then newly-created performance director role back in December 2023.

She spent nearly a decade work-

ing for the Premier League where she led strategic change in football development prior to her move to the Coventry Building Society Arena.

A club statement said: "The club would like to place on record its appreciation of Dr Roberts' contribution to a highly successful period in

the club's history, culminating in its promotion to the Premier League.

"The club has been through significant change in the last three years and her commitment to developing and enhancing the club's performance environment has been highly valued."

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Valley conclude summer deals as trio make Butlin Road switch

by **Aaron Sutcliffe**
 aaron.sutcliffe@bullivantmedia.com

FOOTBALL: RUGBY Town have signed midfielder Charlie Tilley from Droitwich Spa with the club's summer transfer business now complete.

The 23-year-old helped the Saltmen to promotion in 2024/25 and scored 13 goals last term as Spa suffered defeat in the Hellenic League Premier Division play-off final.

Tilley came through Worcester City's youth system and moved to Droitwich in 2022 where he went on to make more than 200 appearances.

He won Droitwich's managers' player, players' player and supporters' player of the season awards across the



Charlie Tilley has joined Rugby Town from Droitwich Spa. Picture by Mathew Mason.

last two campaigns.

Valley boss Grant Joshua said: "Charlie is one we targeted earlier on in the summer and had good, positive

conversations with, but it was always going to be a hard decision to move on from somewhere where you've been for such a long period of time and built your reputation.

"I completely understood and respected his stance of not rushing into a decision and after all that, I am really pleased that he's agreed to join us.

"He's proven in loyalty, longevity, durability and quality. He started 52 games last season and that was a huge plus for us when we identified him early doors.

"He's someone who I'd like to go into battle with. Non-stop, a ball winner and will be one of our high pressers from that area.

"Adding to his already impressive attributes, he's a goal threat as well from the middle of the park."

Rugby have also signed centre-back

Ryan Bridgewater following a spell with Lye Town.

The 26-year-old previously worked under Joshua at Lye.

Prior to Tilley and Bridgewater's arrivals at Butlin Road, Joshua believed right-sided player Nathan Scott would be his final signing of the summer.

Full-back Scott reunites with old boss Joshua after the pair previously won promotion together at Lye in 2022/23.

The 25-year-old recently returned to action with Wolverhampton Casuals following a lengthy spell on the sidelines through injury.

Joshua added: "I'm delighted with our summer recruitment. To be finished at the start of June is impressive from all involved. We now know what we have in the building and we work with them to achieve our goals this season."

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