THE future of the Mothercare store at the Merry Hill shopping centre has been thrown into doubt.

The shop, at the complex in Brierley Hill, was not on the list of 50 of the firm’s underperforming stores lined up for closure.

But its fate and that of 300 Mothercare staff across the country was put up in the air after it emerged that a key plank of the retailer’s restructuring plan was rejected by creditors.

Mothercare said this week that rent reduction proposals for Children’s World, a subsidiary that houses 21 of its stores, including that at Merry Hill, had been knocked back by landlords following a vote last week.

The retailer is now considering “all options” for the unit, including shutting the outlets, following the rejections.

**Landlords**

Those store closures will be carried out through a Company Voluntary Arrangement – a move which allows companies to close loss-making shops and secure rental discounts.

On Friday, Mothercare said it had received the backing of creditors, including its landlords, to press ahead with the CVA.

However, it did not, at the time indicate that plans for Children’s World had been rejected by 73.3 per cent of creditors, including landlords. It had required 75 per cent of the vote.

The store closure programme is part of a wide-ranging restructuring plan that will also see Mothercare bag a re-financing package worth £115.5 million.

Mothercare chairman Clive Whiley said: “KPMG have confirmed the votes relating to Mothercare UK and Early Learning Centre CVA’s passed by a clear majority. However it is now clear that the CVA of Children’s World was not carried by creditors by a narrow margin.

“This will neither unsettle the UK restructuring nor jeopardise our future transformation plans, which are already under way.”

As a board we are now considering our next steps with respect to Children’s World.

Mothercare continues to trade as a going concern under the control of its directors. All other details as set out in announcement of 1 June 2018 remain unchanged.

**FUTURE AT RISK FOR MOTHERCARE**

By John Corser

**COMEDY**

**Chase star Sinha headlines festival**

THE Chase star Paul Sinha headlines the first-ever comedy festival at a Stourbridge pub tonight (Thursday).

Fitz Fèst features 13 pro acts over four nights in a specially-constructed marquee at Katie Fitzgerald’s in Wolverhaston.

Tonight’s opening night is headlined by quiz champ Sinha. It will also feature Nick Page, a semi-finalist on this year’s Britain’s Got Talent.

Tickets still remain for the other nights, featuring Sonny Walsh, Barbara Nics, the housewife creation of Phoenix Nights star Janice Connolly, and popular Black Country comic Jonny Cole.

Compeere, Dudley comic Wayne Beebee, said: “The response has been phenomenonal.”

Tickets cost £15 per show or two shows at £25. See www.skiddle.com/e/13150821

**ATTACK**

**Two are held after man is assaulted**

A MAN was taken to hospital with serious head injuries after being attacked near the Mount Pleasant pub in Kingswinford.

Police, paramedics and Midlands Air Ambulance were called to Cot Lane on Sunday at about 4.50pm. The man, in his 40s, remains serious but stable.

Two men, aged 31 and 23, have been arrested on suspicion of assault and remain in custody for questioning.

**PLANNING**

**Flats bid at old pub**

A FORMER pub is set to be converted into flats, under new plans. An application has been lodged to create four apartments at The Old Crown on Brettell Lane, Brierley Hill. The proposals will now be assessed by planning experts at Dudley Council.

**INSIDE**

**Amy’s back on the Strictly floor**

Paul Sinha
A BID for a new £30 million college campus in Dudley has been given the go-ahead by the Department for Education.

The creation of the Institute of Technology will help transform the town centre, bosses have said.

Proposals led by Dudley College will see land redeveloped in Tipton Road, near the planned Very Light Rail Innovation Centre.

Lowell Williams, the college’s chief executive officer and chair of the board of Dudley Academies Trust, said: “I believe the proposal to create an Institute of Technology at the heart of Dudley is an ambitious vision whose time has come.”

“I felt we had a strong bid and I’m delighted we have been selected to take our proposal forward.

“Developing a technically skilled workforce and providing an even wider range of career pathways for the people of Dudley is what this bid is all about.

“The fact that other regional colleges have been successful too is particularly pleasing and it looks like further education colleges in the West Midlands are leading a renaissance in technical education.”

Innovation

The bid was backed by other organisations including The University of Wolverhampton, Thomas Dudley, Faders and Dudley NHS.

Plans to establish the institute are part of the creation of an ‘innovation park’ in Dudley.

“It’s not only a small group of approved builders across the country – and now needs final sign off by government before building can begin.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin welcomed the news, saying: “Further investment in Dudley and the wider region is always welcome. I’m backing this bid all the way. Well done Dudley College.”

The campus will provide hi-tech facilities for advanced level skills training and will be open to everyone.

An artist’s impression of the Institute of Technology which Dudley College bosses say could transform the town centre

The T-levels are technical qualifications at A-level standard and have been described as the greatest shake-up of technical education for 70 years.

Other successful bids included proposals led by Solihull College and joint bid from North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire Colleges.

Meanwhile, Dudley College of Technology is among 52 schools and colleges to have been named among the first T-level providers.

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A HOUSEHOLDER has given a £1,000 donation to a Hawkesbury-based dance troupe represent England in an international competition in Spain this summer.

Jordon’s School of Dance was chosen be Persimmon Homes Central to become one of its Community Champions.

The scheme invites local groups and charities to bid for a match-funded donation of up to £1,000.

It is the third year that dancers with the troupe have represented England in the dance World Cup competition. This year they will fly out to compete in Spain from June 22 to 29, with school principal Donna and Joanne May.

Donna said: “In the first year, in Jersey, we won one gold and several silver and bronzes. Last year, in Germany, we won three golds and several silver and bronzes, so now we have our sights set on more medals.

“A total of 38 team members will compete in dances from solos, duets and trios to large groups. We have to raise a lot of money in order to compete – our costume bill alone is £15,000.

“We cannot thank Persimmon Homes enough.”

Get creative for free in Coseley

A PROGRAMME of free Friday night activities has been organised in Coseley with the aim of creating a magazine.

The creative events, open to all ages, are run by East Coseley Big Local at Mary Derriottt Hall in Grughy Road from 6.30pm to 8.30pm through to July 27.

The project continues tomorrow (Friday) with the Coseley Photo Walk. There will also be illustration, collage and poetry sessions.

East Coseley Big Local has been working with Beatfreaks, a youth organisation, on the community project. Big Local is funded by the Big Lottery Fund. There are 150 Big Local areas in England allocated £1 million each. East Coseley was selected in 2011. For more details see www.eastcoseleybiglocal.net/coseley-nights-are-back/

Art and dance at family fun festival

A COMMUNITY fun day is being held as part of a Festival of Learning.

Dudley Wood Neighbourhood Learning Centre in Dudley Wood Road will have a family fun festival from June 29 and 30.

It will include crafts, health advice, children’s dancing and an art display.

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Changes on the buses as faster service introduced

A NEW faster bus service will be launched to support Dudley borough’s new plans by National Express West Midlands.

The express service will run between Birmingham, City Hospital, Smethwick, Oldbury, Dudley and Wolverhampton. A new direct service and regular links between Halesowen and Russelle Hall Hospital, and between Merry Hill and Gornal Wood are also expected. The new routes and changes are expected to start from September 2.

Tom Stables, managing director for National Express West Midlands, said: “Our new Dudley network means faster and more frequent services for our Black Country customers. At the same time, we can bring our useful top-spec platinum bus services - with free wi-fi and USB chargers – to Smethwick, Blackhurst and Oldbury.”

National Express West Midlands’ Sandwell and Dudley low fare zone will still apply, with £4.80 for an adult single ticket and £1.50 for a child day ticket. An adult weekly travelcard for inside the area is £1.50 a child’s weekly travelcard costs £1.70.

The low fare zone takes in Stourbridge, Merry Hill, Dudley, Wednesbury, Oldbury, Halesowen, Blackheath and Halesowen. The final draft of proposed changes can be found at tdnbc.co.uk/dudley

Beatles forerunners in festival date

THE skiffle band which went on to become The Beatles will be the star attraction at a village’s music festival this weekend.

Featuring John Lennon’s bandmates from the Quarrymen will be performing at Romstock festival in Romsey, near Halesowen, on Saturday.

Lennon formed The Quarrymen in 1956, playing alongside close friends Colin Hanton, Chas Newby, John Duffellow and Rod Davies.

Paul McCartney joined in 1957, and follow

ing the change of line-up the band later changed its name to The Beatles. Festival organiser Mark Moran said it had taken 18 months of painstaking work to get the original Quarrymen to perform at the festival, to be held in a field off St Kelsnail Road in the village, from 12pm to 8.30pm.

They will be taking part in a meet-and-greet sessions, and will answer questions from the audience, before going on to perform a 45-minute set.

Mark said he said he only got the band to perform after his daughter, who is at university in Liverpool, noticed a plaque on a house where the Quarrymen used to rehearse. “I’ve always been a huge Beatles fan and it got me wondering whether The Quarrymen were still going,” he said.

Rod Davies, who became friends with Lennon from the age of five when they attended the same Sunday School, was replaced by Paul McCart

ney. Rod and John were both pupils at Quarry Bank High School in Liver

pool, which gave the band its name. Tickets for the festival are £20 on the day, or £15 in advance from the Co-op in Romsey. For under-16s tick

ets are £3, and under-18s go free.

Plans to transform a Dudley shopping parade into more than 30 flats have been refused by council planners over a lack of affordable housing.

The application was to convert a building on High Street, near St Thomas’s Church and the war memorial, into 33 apartments.

The scheme, which included our parking and an additional first-floor retail unit, proposed 10 two-bedroom flats, 20 one-bedroom flats and three studio flats.

The 1,000 sq ft site features shops on High Street, which would have formed part of a larger building backing onto King Street. The ground floor commercial space would have been remodelled allowing for three smaller commercial units instead of two larger existing units.

The scheme unviable. The applicant has not thereafter in

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bridge, Merry Hill, Dudley, Wednesbury, Oldbury, Halesowen, Blackheath and Halesowen. The final draft of proposed changes can be found at tdnbc.co.uk/dudley

Florist looking to bloom in contest

A STOURBRIDGE florist will be competing in a national floral design contest June 2019.

Laura Leong, 46, will showcase her skills in the final of Interflora’s Florist of the Year contest, which celebrates excellence in the floral sector in the UK. The winner of July’s contest will soon be announced and will receive a £1,000 cash prize in the contest, which will be held in London in August.

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Dudley Chronicle

Thursday, June 7th, 2018

Huge selection of beds on display

DRAMA Finding Your Feet will be shown as part of a movie matinee programme on July 14.

The film, starring Imelda Staunton, Celia Imrie, Timothy Spall and Joanna Lumley, will be screened at Stourbridge Town Hall.

Tickets cost £4.50. To book call 01384 812812.
Established for over a decade Cloudy2Clear windows have become a leading company for glass replacement. Issues with double glazing can often be gradual and may only be noticed after arrival at the hospital it became apparent that nothing could be done to save him.

Outdoor movement bid
THE Black Country Chamber of Commerce has signed up to the Social Mobility Pledge initiative, demonstrating a commitment to accessing talent from all backgrounds.

Group signs up on social mobility bid
The pledge asks employers to partner with a local school to help young people gain knowledge and experience of the workplace, provide work experience and apprenticeships and adopt open recruitment practices.

It’s a dog’s life for spot on sofa
BESOTTED pet owners admit their dogs are ‘part of the family’ with almost 10 per cent of West Midlands pooches having their own spot on the sofa.

Man in 70s dies from heart attack
A MAN died after suffering a cardiac arrest in Amblecote. Emergency services were called to High Street at around 11.10am on Friday following reports of a one-vehicle collision. A man in his 70s was taken to hospital but later died.

Cloudy2Clear windows have become a leading company for glass replacement. Issues with double glazing can often be gradual and may only be noticed after arrival at the hospital it became apparent that nothing could be done to save him.

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A MATT recycling depot will be built on the former Heals factory site in Lye after planning bosses gave the thumbs up to the scheme.

Commissioning staff, Corin Crane, said: “We are encouraging businesses to become a Social Mobility Pledge accredited employer. People should be granted opportunities based on talent and hard work.”

A MATT recycling depot will be built on the former Heals factory site in Lye after planning bosses gave the thumbs up to the scheme.

The family-run facility will be a ‘destination for all concerned’ that the firm be allowed to remain.

The current site, which has no planning permission, is the subject of a council enforcement notice.

Principal planning officer Peter Reed said the company had been there for more than 12 months and there had been no accidents reported there or problems arising from its presence.

Councillor Mohammed Hanif, who represents the area, said he had received several complaints from residents about noise from the business and asked for monthly noise monitoring checks to be made.

“It is good that this will generate some further employment which is desperately needed but I would like noise assessments to be made and kept on record,” he said.

The depot, which will process 40,000 tons of waste a year, has been given permission to operate from the site for three years.

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Two years in jail for hospital bomb hoax

A DRUNK whose bomb hoax led to major disruption at a hospital has been jailed for two years.

Norman Taylor told a horrified support worker on the second floor of Russell’s Hall Hospital in Dudley that he had explosives in the holdall he was carrying.

The 43-year-old then pulled out a screwdriver and ran off with the bag as the building was put into lock down, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

Taylor had already called police to say a bomb had been placed at the hospital, leaving his correct name and phone number before going to Russell’s Hall Hospital on September 1st last year.

He was on bail at the time.

“Patients were moved, ambulances were redirected to other hospitals and police special unit units were put on standby,” said Miss Laura Culliford, prosecuting.

Police rushed to the hospital and Taylor’s home but he had already left.

“He had gone to the hospital where he encountered a support worker whom he told he had a bomb,” said Miss Culliford.

He was detained at the hospital by security staff. The defendant, who had turned to alcohol after a series of tragedies in his family, had been so drunk he had started to hallucinate, a psychiatrist subsequently confirmed.

Mr Leonard Poulson, defending, said: “The bomb hoax was not a deliberately malicious act. It was the result of temporary psychosis resulting from heavy intoxication. But he takes full responsibility.”

Taylor, of Spiral Close, Halesowen, admitted possession of four improvised explosive devices and charged of making a malicious communications.

James Burridge QC said: “You knew you had a problem with alcohol and should have addressed it but allowed it to take over your life.”

Matt Beveridge, left, and Simon Wilkes at the Olly Wilkes Memorial tournament

More than 50 people signed up to the potential stem cell donors at a football tournament in memory of an Albion fan.

The Olly Wilkes Memorial Football Tournament took place at Thornes Collegiate Academy, in Brierley Hill. It was jointly run by Olly’s family – father Simon, mother Lynn and brother Ben – and his former club Wythenshawe Colts, in memory of Olly, aged 22, who took his own life last year.

Simon Wilkes has been diagnosed with blood cancer and wanted to use the tournament to raise awareness of stem cell donation. Participants and spectators had the opportunity to sign up to the Anthony Nolan stem cell register, by filling in details and providing a DNA sample via a cheek swab. At a similar event last year, 22 people signed up to the register, including Matt Beveridge, 26, of Steptoe.

Anyone aged between 16 and 30, in generally good health, can join the register. Visit www.anthonynolan.org for more details.

Sparkling show for Midlands air ambulance

A FAMILY-RUN jewellery business will be a stand-out to the Amateur Ambulance Charity’s Ball and Reception on Friday, running.

T.H. Baker will be the headline sponsor for the prestigious event later this month, which will be presented by Anne & Norman Taylor.

The event, now in its seventh year, will take place on June 15 at the Vox Conferencing Centre in Resorts World, on the Birmingham NEC site.

Awards sponsor also include JM Bailey, Fusion Communications, Elton John in 2015, The Kingswinford Motorcycle Club, David Myers and所的 inspirational stories of airlift heroes, all who will be honoured for their achievement.

Phil Higgins, managing director for T.H. Baker, said: “We have always been supporters of Midlands Air Ambulance Charity since it first came into operation in 1991, and over the past few years our support has become even stronger.”

Sofia Voutian, corporate partnerships manager for Midlands Air Ambulance Charity, added: “We are regularly blown away by local businesses, Midlands Air Ambulance Charity wouldn’t be able to save lives without the support of local businesses.”

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, June 7, 2018
Showbiz names? Didn’t recognise one of them!

VC (Victor) Beckham — was said to be ‘mortified’ after confusing actresses

Tony Blair — Iraq casts a shadow that will last the rest of his life

Bishop Curry’s 14-minute wedding sermon — attention span was not the issue

REALITY is that they are NOT stars at all

The BEST OF PETER RHODES

Great when they’re dead, then you probably re- gret all God-bothers as at best deluded and at worst dangerous. I have heard many holy men bawling on about the Love of God and the joys of Heaven but I’ve yet to meet one who wants to go there.

IF nothing else, the arrival of the new Duchess of Sussex is a reminder that we’re not all known by our first names. Many of us, for rea- sons of family tradition, personal choice or the demands of showbiz, are known by a middle name. Thus, the Duchess is Rachel Meghan Markle in much the way that the US megastar is William Bradley Pitt, the former Beatles is James Paul McCartney and the ‘Rivers of Blood’ MP was John Emoch Powell.

A USEFUL thing about being known by your middle name is that you can use your first name on official documents. And that means that when an envelope arrives addressed to William Pitt or James McCartney, you know it’s not from a friend.

YOU may get a glow of satisfaction about Russian oligarchs being called to account by UK authorities and made to explain how and when they acquired their riches. But remem- ber this. A quarter of all the income tax paid in Britain is paid by the richest one per cent of income-tax payers. While a moral crusade is heart-warming, dirty money is still money and it may be that the best way to fund the NHS is to look the other way.

ACCORDING to the Sunday Times, rising ocean temperatures may soon make mussels obsolete in the seas around Britain. Excellent news. Unless you have a perfect body, the black-rubber wetsuit is the most unkind and unforgiving item of clothing. I saw a woman on Loch Lomond mounting her jetski. She was a large lass, clad in a wetsuit, straddling the saddle- woman with her ample bum in the air and a jet of water shooting up between her legs. It was un- forgettable, and not in a good way, and yet from her satisfied smile, she obviously thought she looked like a Bond girl

I GAVE an example recently of the casual eff- orting and blinding directed at Tony Blair in online debates over everything from Syria to Brussels. I recall writing, after the 1997 General Election, that impossible as it seemed, this young and popular new Prime Minister would one day be the most hated man in England. But who could have imagined that 11 years after he resigned as PM, Blair would still be so energetically de- spised by so many who once adored him? Blair is desperate for what politicians calls ‘legacy’ but Iraq casts a shadow that will last the rest of his life.

The SPILLAGE of a forceful leave of absence from my bicycle saddle (basically through laziness) I am now fully back roaming the Black Country wearing the best sodden underwear – at least to my place of work anyway.

And I have to say, so far from a couple of predictable clashes with drivers of white vans who really do think they own the road the brave new world of traffic lights is basically Fast & Furious 1 to 8, things have definitely improved.

In the two years of so I have been off the road, pedal-power wise at least, there is a noticeably more relaxed attitude to me in my bright yellow top, gliding past gathered cars in the bike lanes leading up to traffic lights.

I have found in the past that however courteous one driver might be to allow me access across a junction, there will then be one or several heads much less courteous in the queue behind them, who almost am my vehicle at my nuts, steed, with the accompanying high revs and hand gestures making cycling a somewhat daunting experience.

No so now. After a couple of weeks back in the saddle, I am pleased to report there is usually space allowed to my hand side – apart from some aforementioned idiots in vans. Also there is no pressure to get through in a way with an occasional encroaching front bumpt- er belonging to frustrated drivers’ cars behind, and it’s all pretty laid back.

Of course, and it’s often been said, sen- sible sharing of the public highway works both ways, and whatever the road types ignore everything else on the road to make mad dashes around and in front of the self-styled 4 x 4s and other over- sized vehicles, it is no surprise there are tensions.

The only thing I have found disappoint- ing is previously when I was on and off the road, the weather was what many estimated that my journey, which is more or less 35 miles, takes in a Northerly six miles, however with the advance of the internet and the remaining of the seas, which has worked out distances of travelled routes, including cycling. I picked it out as a neatly four mile into and two yet, it feels like a marathon!

I regret to say that it is hard to suffer the ignominy of being overtaken by older, heavier cy- clists who leave me in their dusty tracks. I have come to realise that my bike sim- ply can’t go as fast! However, I must admit it was probably something to do with the gears, chain/tyres etc — and nothing to do with the rider of course!

GRAEME ANDREW

Dudley Chronicle Thursday June 7, 2018
Set the right example in the household

A teacher with 40 odd years experience in primary, secondary and special education, I find both annoying and ironic that the two problems most frequently laid at the door of schools – littering and bullying – are the two issues schools spend most time, effort and money striving to eliminate.

Peter Rhodes, from his holiday on the Tennyson litter-strewn banks of Loch Lomond, questions how many hours it takes in the classroom to convey the message: “Don’t drop that”.

His question would be more pertinent if the word ‘classroom’ were replaced with the word ‘home’.

The most effective tutor of all is example.

In all my 40 years I can honestly say that I never saw a teacher drop litter in school but I doubt very much whether the same could be said of parents with their children at home and elsewhere.

MR B WILLIAMS
Wordsley

Wake up, council, to blinding attraction

DUDLEY visitors and businesses are missing out on the Peaky Blinders phenomenon, created by filming at the Black Country Living Museum close to the Hippodrome site.

While Peaky-themed bars are opening all over the country, there is nothing in Dudley. There’s even a Peaky Blinders tribute band called the Peaky Blinders, yet Dudley cannot see the tourist attraction staring them in the face.

If we cannot reach a resolution contact our complaints service on 01384 666 999 or write to The Editor, Dudley Chronicle, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

MICHAEL CLIFF
Walt Heath

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To the Editor

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Tax those who have benefited

FOR many years I have advocated funding the NHS through taxation. Now, with the NHS at crisis point the government has succumbed to common sense, proposing that most ordinary taxpayers pay up to an extra £2,000 per household per year to improve a dire situation caused by successive Conservative governments.

But this crisis was completely avoidable. The Tories took power from Labour in 2010 based on a promise to cut taxes, which they did, the main beneficiaries being the most wealthy and the multi-national companies.

The government claim to have put in more funds than ever, then massively cut funds under the guise of ‘efficiency savings’. Now they want us to cough up for their mismanagement.

They should substantially increase corporation tax so those who benefited most from the tax cuts would put the money back in.

MICHAEL CLIFF
Walt Heath

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A PIECE of West Bromwich Albion football history will go under the hammer at an auction in Dudley today (Thursday).

The nine carat gold Football League winner’s medal awarded to Dudley-born footballer Joseph Smith for the 1919-20 season will be for sale at the auction being held at Aston’s saleroom in Bury Street, Dudley.

The jewellery, watches, coins and silver auction gets under way at 10am.

Smith, who was born in Netherton, played nearly 500 games in the Football League for the Baggies and Blues, most of which were in the First Division. He also won two full caps for England during his long career.

Debut

He turned professional with Albion in May 1910, and made his debut four months later in a Division Two match against Bolton Wanderers.

He was part of the Albion team that won promotion from the Second Division in the 1910-11 season. During the First World War he made guest appearances for Everton and Notts County.

He was selected for England for the first time in a 1-1 draw with Ireland in October 1919, making one further appearance for England in 1922.

Smith contributed to the Baggies winning the First Division title in the 1919-20 season and went on to play 434 league matches for the club. In 1928, by which time he was 36 years old, Smith joined Birmingham City and stayed with the club for three seasons, playing 50 games.

A DUDLEY-based charity has raised more than £2,000 for new beds at a Romanian centre for people with severe learning difficulties.

Dudley-based Flame Trust picked the town of Calinesti in Maramures, a remote northern region near the border with Ukraine, after employing a man originally from the town. Calin Rezmuves came to the Black Country and was supported in his English studies at Dudley College. He oversaw the delivery of the furniture.

The money was given by Mr Rezmuves’ friends in Dudley. Dave Pope, Flame Trust chief executive, said: “We are very happy to support this initiative that helps us to reach out to vulnerable members of this community.”

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Market leading Stourbridge double glazing business Carera Windows has fitted more than half a million quality windows and doors over the past 28 years.

The company based in Junction Road, Audnam, started out 28 years ago to serve the Stourbridge area but as it has grown it has moved on to serve neighbouring areas including Halesowen, Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Worcester.

The business moved to its present base 20 years ago. Carera offer a full range of windows and doors and also install a full range of conservatories, orangeries and living spaces.

Happy

The company prides itself on having a depth of knowledge in all aspects of the products it offers and industry regulations. The company is fully conversant with all current regulations within the industry. A key aim is to provide a level of customer service that is second to none. More than 70 per cent of all Carera Windows' home sales come via personal recommendation from happy clients, which number many thousands. It takes pride in completing every project to the highest standard.

From the start, Carera is committed to offering only top-quality products, expert installations and unbeatable personal service to both private and commercial customers. Its experienced team is committed to working closely with local authorities, education authorities, landlords, architects and contractors on its commercial work. Carera Windows is keen to get involved in any kind of commercial project from industrial units to office conversions, new build to refurbishments and renovations. The company’s showroom at its base is open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm and Saturday, 10am to 4pm. It offers a wide range of products in various sizes and colours, manufactured using PVCu, aluminium, GRP and hardwood. Carera also installs entrance doors, sliding patio doors, french double doors and porches.

Carera Windows was started by owner and managing director Mark Crompton in 1989, originally from home as a small enterprising double glazing company supplying the local area. Its housing association glazing contracts and commercial premises work now also takes the business across the country. Carera prides itself on offering honest and professional expert advice, installing 100 per cent high quality products, sensible prices and outstanding customer service. It has become a market leader in its area and aims to provide a friendly service without hard sell.

Carera can supply and fit from a single window to complex orangeries and no job is too small or too large for it. The company controls every aspect of its projects.
Amy waltzes back into the Strictly TV ballroom

A PROFESSIONAL dancer based in Dudley will return to Strictly Come Dancing as part of the biggest line-up of professionals ever.

Amy Dowden, 27, is one of 18 professional dancers who have been selected to perform with star partners in the sixteenth series of the hit BBC One show.

She was selected to return after joining for the first time last season when she was paired up with comedian, actor and television presenter Brian Conley. The pair made it to the fifth week.

The dancer, originally from Wales, said: “I am really excited for the show. I cannot wait to start again.”

Last year was so much fun and I learned so much. I made some lifelong friends including Brian Conley. It was great fun to work with him and we are still in touch.

“I am always nervous for the show but the day you are not nervous is the day you should hang up your shoes. I am always nervous for my partner too. “Me and Brian got to the fifth week but hopefully I can do better this year. I just have to wait and see who my new partner is.”

Amy has been dancing since she was eight and decided to pursue dance as a career when she was 18. She went on to win the 2017 British National Championships, is a four-time British National Finalist and reached the semi-final of the World Championship in 2015. She runs a dance academy called Art in Motion, on the Thornleigh Trading Estate.

Three new dancers will join Strictly – Graziano Di Prima, Johannes Radebe and Luba Mushtuk – when it returns in the autumn.

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, June 7, 2018
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A ‘CALLOUS’ driver who killed a young mother when he ploughed into her car as she turned right into Wood Road. Her then 11-year-old daughter Talia, in the front seat, suffered a fractured arm. The impact forced the Alfa Romeo to spin, striking a Mercedes parked in the road, while the BMW ended up 40 metres away after colliding with a Mitsubishi. Prosecutor Mr Robert Price said: “Ms Jones could not have made any provision for a car being driven at such speeds towards her.

“No blame whatsoever can be attributed to Ms Jones for the accident.”

Kendall ran home, drinking ‘copious’ amount of water and telling a party-goes: “I can’t go back, I’m drunk.” He handed himself into police hours after the crash but no alcohol was detected in his blood.

Kendall, who was given an eight-year driving ban, admitted causing death by dangerous driving, causing serious injury by dangerous driving and failing to stop after an accident. Judge Michael Challinor told Kendall: “You deliberately drove at high speed around a make-believe race track. Your failure to stop showed a callous disregard for Vikki Jones and her daughter.”

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**FOOTBALLER’S wife Rebekah Vardy will pour the pavements at Dudley Zoo for children in need. The 36-year-old, married to Leicester City and England striker Jamie Vardy, will join Barnardo’s Big Toddle next Tuesday. She will take to the Castle Hill zoo with her children and Telethon’s ‘Po’ to officially launch the fundraiser, which gets under way at 11am. Barnardo’s ambassador Rebekah, who appeared on last year’s ‘I’m a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here’, said: ‘I’m really looking forward to taking my little ones to the Big Toddle at Dudley Zoo. ‘We are really glad to be supporting Barnardo’s and this is a really fun way to raise some money and spend time outside with your family at the same time.’ Admission is £7.50 for adults and over-fives, but free for toddlers, with medals for all participants and free refreshments. Proceeds will go towards the charity’s work.**

**Andy’s recognised for 40 years of spadework**

DUDLEY Zoo’s longest serving employee has been recognised for years of work keeping grounds looking at their best.

Gardener Andy Palmer began work at the site on leaving school in 1978. To mark the milestones, the 56-year-old planted an acer called Crimson King by the summer beach. Ow Bin Ya Sands, with colleagues from the gardening team and zoo director Derek Grove.

Mr Palmer, who lives in Lower Gornal, has been working at the zoo since finishing his studies at Ellowes Hall School in 1977. “I left school on the Friday, started at the zoo on the Monday and I’ve been here ever since,” he said. In 2003, Mr Palmer planted a silver birch tree to celebrate 25 years of service.

For his 40th anniversary, Mr Palmer was presented with £200 of gift vouchers by Mr Grove. Meanwhile, a Brazilian tapir at the zoo was treated to a carved-stopped cake to mark her first birthday. Keeper Josh Laxton combined all of Luna’s favourite fruits, veg and pellets to create the special treat and then broadcast a video on Facebook.

Luna was born on May 28 last year to parents Chico and Moena, who has had five other babies, after a 13-month pregnancy.

**Wolves go for gold in traditional strip return**

WOLVES will revert to a 1950s-style classic old gold kit for their return to the Premier League next season – as Molineux undergoes a six-figure facelift.

It is believed the new away kit will see the club’s traditional white make a comeback as Wolves and new kit providers Adidas go retro for the highly anticipated top-flight campaign.

Preparations are well under way for Wolves’ first Premier League season for six years. Building work has been ongoing since the end of the season with scaffolding erected outside the stadium’s Billy Wright stand entrance.

The club has to comply with Premier League regulations and is revisiting its changing rooms, manager’s office, referee’s room and kit room, while a new press conference room being installed and floodlights are being brightened to conform with Sky’s state-of-the-art HD replays.

Demands

Cables are being laid around the ground to meet Sky Sports’ broadcasting demands. Work has also started at the corner of the Sir Jack Hayward and Steve Bull stands in readiness for a £200,000 statue of legendary former owner Sir Jack being unveiled this month.

A plinth has been installed near the entrance to the subway at the top of the new kit room, while a new national rate phone number, which will see all calls to the club charged at the same rate as an 01902 number, has also been launched.

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**DUDLEY Chronicle**
£930k paid by drivers to recover stolen cars

VICTIMS of vehicle theft have been forced to fork out almost £1 million to get their vehicles back since 2011.

By Tom Oakley

In 2015/16, £99,335 in charges was paid to Staffordshire Police – almost half of the amount in 2017/18. Councillor Sue Woodward, opposition leader at Staffordshire County Council, said: “It is appalling as it makes victims pay for the consequences of a crime.”

Motorists can be charged between £150 and £6,000 in vehicle recovery costs, depending on the size and type of the vehicle.

Staffordshire Police, which was unable to provide a comment on the issue, said the charges were set by the Home Office.

The number of vehicle thefts across the county went up from 1,100 in 2013 to 1,180 in 2016. The West Midlands rose from 4,161 to 5,930 over three years.

By Tom Oakley

15 Dudley Chronicle Thursday, June 7, 2018

New figures show drivers paid Staffordshire Police £93,862 in recovery and storage charges to retrieve stolen vehicles. In total, 5,782 have had to pay the charges, according to information provided by the Freedom of Information request.

The figures have seen a sudden rise in recent years with hundreds of thousands paid out to the force.

In the past 12 months, £172,057 was paid out, compared to £129,965 in 2016/17.

Calling the charges “appalling”, Alex Ohm, a singer from Upper Gornal, beat 2,000 other contenders in the up-and-coming Pirate Prodigy contest, which scouts the best musicians in the nation.

As part of the prize, he will be performing at festivals all over the country and be coached by top producers.

As part of the prize he will also be treated to free video production, expert branding and marketing advice, social media promotion, and festival slots.

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Go’ in’ Wild for the Carole King story

ong before she was a chart-topping music legend, Carole King was an ordinary girl with an extraordinary talent. Beautiful, which features at Wolverhampton’s Grand Theatre from Tuesday to June 16, tells the inspiring true story of Carole’s remarkable rise to stardom.

It shows her journey from being part of a hit song-writing team with her husband Gerry Goffin, to her relationship with fellow writers and best friends Cynthia Weil and Barry Mann, to becoming one of the most successful solo acts in popular music history.

Along the way she wrote the soundtrack to a generation, including one of the best-selling albums of all time, Tapestry, and countless classics such as ‘(You Make Me Feel Like) A Natural Woman,’ ‘Take Good Care Of My Baby,’ ‘You’ve Got A Friend,’ ‘So Far Away,’ ‘It Might As Well Rain Until September,’ ‘Up On The Roof,’ and ‘The Locomotion.’

Beautiful – The Carole King Musical will roll into Wolverhampton’s Grand Theatre this week and we caught up with leading lady Brontë Barbe to find out what it’s like to play the star.

What are you most enjoying about playing Carole King in the UK Tour of Beautiful? The Carole King Musical?

The songs! The music is amazing; it’s just the best. I haven’t played a part like this in my career so far. I also love how everyone in the company on tour with us is so nice; it’s a big family feel, which is lovely.

Have you always wanted to be on stage and had the performing bug?

Yes absolutely I have. My mum’s always performed – she’s done a lot of amateur dramatics and my auntie is a singer so it was always in the family. I first started dancing when I was three in ballet, and I took dance lessons for years and years but I didn’t actually want to be a dancer. In fact, I was always singing, and I think my mum told me that I would be in the park and singing ‘The Little Mermaid’ to other kids on the swings! I also used to sing Titanic down the phone to my grandma and she used to cry, all that sort of thing! So yes, I’ve always wanted to perform really. I started doing drama at a young age and doing shows with my mum where I would play the child and things like that. There’s nothing else I’ve wanted to do really, I’ve been so firm and set on it. The first time I was on stage was when I played the littlest angel in the Nativity play at primary school, and I’ve loved it ever since.

Were you familiar with Carole King’s work prior to joining the show?

Yeah I was. I’ve had Tapestry for years actually. When I first got a record player I bought it because my Mum said, ‘you have to get this album it’s amazing’, but I didn’t realise until listening to it just how many songs that I already knew were actually written by Carole King. Then I saw the show in the West End and realised there are loads and loads of songs I was pleasantly surprised to know, but had no idea were written by her. So once I started thinking about her songs have filtered into my head without me knowing through the TV or radio.

Was there something in particular that drew you to the role of Carole King, or do you identify with her at all?

Totally, she is so determined, particularly as a woman starting out in the time she did, working in the industry she did. She knew what she wanted, so worked hard and went out and got it, which makes her very inspirational. However, she is also a very relatable character I think.

What is life on the road like? Is there one thing you absolutely couldn’t be without?

My favourite thing in the world is Lush so every town or city we visit I find a Lush because it makes me feel very calm. Most of the time I try and tour with my little dog so that helps. Lots of little things like putting pictures up in my dressing room and having a certain type of tea before the show help me to feel calm and ready to perform. We aren’t in each venue for long but it’s nice to feel a little bit settled.

Do you have any particular rituals for pre or post-show?

I just drink tons and tons of water. I always have an interval orange as well like a football match, I always have one, as it’s so good for energy and no matter how I’m feeling I just feel great after an interval orange, it’s very helpful.

Do you have a dream role that you’d love to take on?

This is absolutely a dream role, being able to play Carole King every night and sing her songs. I would also quite like to be in a period drama. I love to play inspiring women and there aren’t that many fully female-led shows out there so playing Carole King is wonderful.

Carole King is an icon of the singer songwriter world and an idol to many. Do you have any idols that you look up to?

Oh yeah totally. I would probably say Julie Walters and Victoria Wood. My idols are lots of female comedy geniuses. However, playing Carole King every night is great, she’s definitely iconic! The tour stops in Wolverhampton, does this venue have any significance for you?

Wolverhampton is great because I can stay with family which is always lovely.

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.
Gary Barlow is ready to shine as he gets closer to the fans

It’s been 20 years since Gary Barlow last played Birmingham’s Symphony Hall. Now the Take That frontman is back with two shows, on Thursday and Friday, June 14 and June 15.

The last time Barlow played a string of venues this size, which included Wolverhampton Civic Hall, the demand was so high he could have sold some venues out six times over.

The Cheshire-born singer said: “I had such a lot of fun back in 2013 when I played those smaller venues because you’re so much closer to the fans. The audience always seem to love the intimacy of it all too.”

Barlow found worldwide fame as a member of Take That. Since forming in 1989 the group have won eight BRIT awards, sold more than 45 million records and over eight million concert tickets. He has also become a familiar face on TV via a stint as a judge on The X Factor and his own talent show Let It Shine.

He is one of Britain’s most successful songwriters, having written 14 Number One singles as well as being a six-time recipient of an Ivor Novello Award.

In recent years, Barlow has also turned his attention to the world of theatre, composing the score for the hugely successful production Finding Neverland, working alongside screenwriter Tim Firth to write the music and lyrics for musical The Girls and also working alongside his Take That band mates to produce The Band, featuring the music of Take That.

CLIFF Richard’s hit 1963 film Summer Holiday has been turned into a feel-good musical.

It is coming on tour at Birmingham’s New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, June 12 to 16 featuring Ray Quinn as Don, the role originally played by Cliff in the film, who heads on a fun-packed trip in a London bus across Europe in search of a good time and a brilliant summer.

Along the way they pick up a girl singing group and a young American pop star who is on the run from her domineering mother.

The show features such vintage Cliff hits as In the Country, Summer Holiday, Bachelor Boy, Move It, Living Doll, The Young Ones and On the Beach.

Pianist turned actor Bobby Crush, pictured, the Opportunity Knocks winner recently seen in Last Laugh in Vegas, will co-star as Don’s long-suffering agent Jerry. Crush says folks are in for a treat. “My friend Darren Day toured with it some years ago. This is a great show.”

Crush found fame after featuring as a teenage pianist on ITV talent show Opportunity Knocks. “The young people that don’t remember, I tell them it was the forerunner to The X Factor. It had the same impact on a career that the X Factor does and it was great for me. Opportunity Knocks got me a recording contract, a six-album deal with Phillips records, plus an agent. It was a great start.”

“We only had BBC1, 2 and ITV. That was it. It wasn’t diluted like it is now with satellite stations. You could get 17 million watching a week, these days that’s unheard of. I went from £12 a week as an office boy to supporting Jack Jones at the London Palladium on £150 per week. In 1972, that was a lot of money. It really changed my life.”

Poet and Peaky Blinders actor Benjamin Zephaniah has hit the road for his first solo UK tour in eight years, including a home date at Birmingham Town Hall next Friday, June 15.

TheHandsworth-born writer and broadcaster published his autobiography last month, entitled The Life And Rhymes Of Benjamin Zephaniah. “They say you’re supposed to mellown with age but I haven’t. If anything, I just seem to be getting more militant,” says Zephaniah, who is honorary patron of The Vegan Society.

Influential play is brought up to date

In a collaboration between Birmingham Repertory Theatre and Birmingham International Dance Festival 2018, 100 local performers will breathe new life into 19th century play Woyzeck, from June 15 to 23 at the Centenary Square theatre. Georg Büchner’s Woyzeck has been described as one of the most influential German plays ever written. In this new production directors Roxana Silbert and Rosie Kay, and writer Leo Butler, create a Woyzeck for our time. Woyzeck is the story of a young soldier who has started to hear voices in his head. Roxana Silbert, artistic director at Birmingham Rep, said: “Woyzeck is a powerful story that has been sharply brought up-to-date. It’s about the impact of war on communities, the pressure on a young person trying to make ends meet and ultimately about how love can be devastatingly destroyed.”

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**FILM CHOICES**

**MONDAY**

Cry for Justice, Channel 5, 5.31pm
When her son is falsely accused of murder, Jackie fights against the odds to free him. While he languishes in prison while the prosecution seeks a life sentence, their lives are sent on different paths of warring faith and tentative hope. Drama, based on a true story, starring Francine Joyce and Drew Matthews. (2013)

**TUESDAY**

The Wrong Daughter, Channel 5, 5.31pm
Couple Kate and Joe, who have longed to be parents together, are delighted when Damien, a child Kate gave up 17 years ago, comes to stay. Thriller, starring Cindy Busby, Jon Prescott and Sienna Pond. (2018)

**WEDNESDAY**

Strangers in Amish Country, Channel 5, 5.31pm
A military nurse returns from a tour of duty in Afghanistan to her family’s farm in rural Ohio, and falls for an Amish neighbour after an infirmary waeve. Romantic drama, starring Jas MacAlpine, Sean Faris and Kelly Mc Gill. (2017)

**THURSDAY**

Liz & Adidas, Channel 5, 5.31pm
A woman moves across the country to rebuild her life after the tragic death of her boyfriend. She is pleasantly surprised to run into an old colleague and the two become firm friends, but things soon take a turn for the worse when life falls out to win her heart by any means necessary. Thriller, starring Karis Lee Staples, Drew Seeley and Brian Ames. (2018)

**FRIDAY**

The Wolf of Wall Street, Channel 4, 9pm
Lenny and his wife Rosemary (Julian Barratt), his well-meaning wife Deborah (Olivia Colman) and their maladjusted adult twin children Amy (Sophia Di Martino) and Daniel (Ripig). The opening double bill picks up the action a few years later, and it seems that Maurice is now doing better and Deborah has become a best seller penning a book about her husband’s illness. But the clan still has its eccentricities – for a start, Amy has taken up with Hylda (Harriet Walter), an unconventional priest and former addict.

**TUESDAY**

The Martin Lewis Money Show Live ITV, 8pm
According to a survey a few years ago, Martin Lewis was the most Google British man. The Martin Lewis Money Show has become the country’s must see TV programme. In this episode, we will be looking at the current economic climate. Plus, as this is a special special, there is bound to be lots of tips for viewers hoping to get the most out of their Euros, Dollars and Zloty, as well as a clarification of any confusing charges, and suggestions if your flight gets delayed. As usual, Martin is keen for everyone to join in, so whether you have a query on travel insurance, car hire or currency, have your questions at the ready.

**WEDNESDAY**

The Wrong Daughter, Channel 5, 3.15pm
When her son is falsely accused of murder, Jackie gives up 17 years ago, comes to stay. Thriller, starring Cindy Busby, Jon Prescott and Sienna Pond. (2018)

**THURSDAY**

Lethal Admirer, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A military nurse returns from a tour of duty in Afghanistan to her family’s farm in rural Ohio, and falls for an Amish neighbour after an infirmary waeve. Romantic drama, starring Jas MacAlpine, Sean Faris and Kelly Mc Gill. (2017)

**FRIDAY**

The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special Channel 4, 4pm
Richard Ayres provides as Dennis Wise, Roman Kemp, Birley Fisheid, Red and Kate Price compete around the four zones, tackling various challenges to win crystals.

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**BEST OF THE REST**

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The Wolf of Wall Street, Friday, Channel 4, 11.40pm

**THE WOLF OF WALL STREET**

DiCaprio and carey Mulligan star in Martin Scorsese’s latest film. Based on real life, The Wolf of Wall Street is a story about the rise and fall of a stockbroker in the 1980’s. Leo DiCaprio stars as黎bardo Stratton, a stockbroker who makes huge sums of money in an illegal way. However, his life comes to an end when he is caught by the FBI in a fraud case.

When the FBI sets out to investigate Stratton, he has to face the音乐 consequences of his actions. The movie is a great example of how the financial crisis of 2008 happened, and how it affected the American economy.

**TUESDAY**

The Martin Lewis Money Show Live ITV, 8pm

**THE MARTIN LEWIS MONEY SHOW LIVE**

The show hosts an episode of The Martin Lewis Money Show Live, where he discusses the latest news in investment and personal finance. In the episode, Martin Lewis talks about the latest trends in retirement saving, how to get the best deals on insurance, and how to avoid scams and fraud.

**WEDNESDAY**

The Martin Lewis Money Show Live ITV, 8pm

**THE MARTIN LEWIS MONEY SHOW LIVE**

Martin Lewis talks about the latest trends in retirement saving, how to get the best deals on insurance, and how to avoid scams and fraud. In the episode, he also introduces his new book, *Get Rich Slowly*.

**THURSDAY**

The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special Channel 4, 4pm

**THE CRYSTAL MAZE: CELEBRITY SPECIAL**

Richard Ayres provides as Dennis Wise, Roman Kemp, Birley Fisheid, Red and Kate Price compete around the four zones, tackling various challenges to win crystals.

**FRIDAY**

The Crystal Maze: Celebrity Special Channel 4, 4pm

**THE CRYSTAL MAZE: CELEBRITY SPECIAL**

Richard Ayres provides as Dennis Wise, Roman Kemp, Birley Fisheid, Red and Kate Price compete around the four zones, tackling various challenges to win crystals.
1. On which river does Ipswich lie?
2. Which is the capital of Europe?
3. Which European capital is divided by the River Tiber?
4. In biology, what do two gametes merge to form?
5. What is the biggest British vessel ever lost at sea?
6. Which English king was the Younger court painter?

**Double Crossword**

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

**Cryptic Clues:**

**Across**
6. Race movement begins under his orders (7)
7. Each one always yawns initially (5)
9. The last of the screen dramas (3)
10. Fruit used in mimicking on stage (6)
12. Shows off mannequin - racing type, perhaps (6,6)
15. Like a heavenly show? (4-7)
17. Cavi about being unpunctual, but waver (9)
19. Be prostrate as story? (9)
21. Started, for example, in prohibition (6)
22. Obligatory process in book production (7)

**Down**
1. Candidates do so before they can sit (5)
2. Vessel seen in colour, no doubt (3)
3. Ratan part of the castle (4)
4. Subdue because of strength? (9)
5. He can’t do without glasses (7)
8. Learner relieved - it’s on his left (6)
11. Arms appeal in estimation of value (9)
13. Playing under which there could be a snake (9)
14. In which cooking may be done at sea? (7)
16. They have their pride, of course (6)
18. Stumble on excursion? (4)
20. Strange ring worn by theologian (3)

**Quick Clues:**

**Across**
6. Lawfully (7)
7. Polite (5)
9. Twisted (3)
10. Consequent (9)
12. Chance (11)
15. Despondent (11)
17. Impassiveness (9)
19. Pledge (3)
21. Braw (5)
22. Chief (7)

**Down**
1. Marmalise (9)
2. Marion (3)
3. Merriment (4)
4. Spirit-maker (9)
5. Staleness (7)
6. Figure (6)
8. Immature (9)
11. Incalculable (9)
13. Nimble (8)
14. Manage (7)
16. Ascend (5)
18. Pour (4)
20. Append (3)

---

**Sudoku**

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

---

**Codeword**

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.

**Quiz**

1. Which river does Ipswich lie?
2. With which art form is Nina Bausch connected?
3. Which European capital is divided by the River Tiber?
4. In biology, what do two gametes merge to form?
5. What is the biggest British vessel ever lost at sea?
6. Which English king was the Younger court painter?

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**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.

---

**Last week’s solutions:**

Quizz: 1 P.W. Botha; 2 Asthma; 3 Iris; 4 Grouse; 5 Irene; 6 St. Trinian’s; 7 George Fox; 8 1086; 9 Unification Church; 10 Aled Jones.

Niner: MERCANTHS
Connie Lush has been described as the best rhythm and blues singer in Britain. See her and her full band at the Lamp Tavern Friday June 8th. Doors open 8.30pm | Tickets £10 | CONTACT 07702158756

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Connie Lush has been described as the best rhythm and blues singer in Britain. See her and her full band at the Lamp Tavern Friday June 8th. Doors open 8.30pm | Tickets £10 | CONTACT 07702158756
Development’s former show home up for sale

Located on the popular new development of Charles Hayward Drive on the very cusp of Sedgley, 113 Charles Hayward Drive, Wolverhampton, is for sale through Hunters estate agents at £138,950.

Nearby are great local amenities plus transport links into Sedgley Town Centre, Wolverhampton and Dudley.

The accommodation briefly comprises of a secure entry system into communal hallways leading to the apartment entrance hall, an open plan modern kitchen loaded with integrated appliances, an open plan lounge being a flexible living space, two good sized bedrooms and a bathroom with a bath and a shower cubicle.

Designed

The property is the former show home, has been designed to a high specification and has been maintained to an extremely high standard.

The open plan kitchen has splash back upstands and laminate flooring.

There are a selection of floor and wall mounted kitchen cabinets with working surface over, and a one and a half bowl sink with drainer and integrated appliances including an electric oven, gas hob, extractor, fridge freezer, microwave, dishwasher and washing machine.

The open plan lounge has an electric fireplace with a feature stone surround.

Bedroom one has windows to the front elevation.

Bedroom two has windows to the rear.

The bathroom has a window to the rear, a low level flush WC, pedestal wash hand basin, a bath, a shower cubicle, splash back tiling and laminate flooring.

KEY FEATURES

Ground floor apartment
2 bedrooms
New development
On the cusp of Sedgley
Former show home

£138,950
SEDGLEY

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

AGENT: Hunters Estate Agents
TEL: 01902 672274
EMAIL: sedgley@hunters.com

She’s sold

Turn to your local estate agent to sell your property and you will be SOLD ON:

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If you are thinking of selling, look no further than the estate agents in these pages for the best local advice available.
AUCTION - 12TH JUNE 2018

GREYSTONE CROFT 308 BRIDGNORTH ROAD, WIGHTWICK

Immaculately presented & deceptively spacious. Wide Hall, fitted Cloakroom, Lounge, Dining Room, Kitchen, Rear Hallway.

Three Bedrooms, luxury Bathroom, Garage, attractive Gardens. EPC E53

Guide £178,000 / £188,000

VIEWING: Friday & Saturday, 8th & 9th June, @ 10.00 a.m. Prompt

Three bed detached with garage and parking

WOODSETTON

£177,500

three bedrooms, garage, parking and gardens. This home is situated in a well established and popular residential area, close to a wide range of amenities and within easy reach of Sedgley and Dudley together with access to surrounding centres. It has double glazing and gas central heating and the garage is set at the rear. In more detail the entrance hall has stairs off and a cloakroom cupboard.

The lounge has a brick fireplace. The dining room has a French window to the rear garden. The kitchen includes a Belling electric hob with extractor hood over.

Contact Wakeman estate agents on 01384 459999.

Note: Torch essential for Viewing.

PLEASE NOTE: Viewing of all Lots at own risk. Viewings are at the times specified so, should you arrive late, you may find your viewing time is limited or that we have moved on in order to maintain the time schedule. Please Register for Catalogue.

‘GREYSTONE CROFT 308 BRIDGNORTH ROAD, WIGHTWICK

In a magnificent setting enjoying spacious grounds with open view to front a four impressive detached house now ready and ripe for upgrade, long driveway approach, Hall large picture windows, fitted Cloakroom, Lounge, Dining Room, Sitting Room, Breakfast Kitchen, Utility, Cloakroom No. 2, main Bedroom with balcony to front, Dressing Area and En Suite, Three further Bedrooms, House Bathroom, Three-Car Garage & Car Port.

Epc: D.56.

Guide £420,000 / £440,000.

Viewing: Friday & Saturday, 8th & 9th June @9.45 a.m. Prompt

NLs 12-14 CHURCH ROAD, BRADMORE, WOLVERHAMPTON

“Freehold Investment currently producing £19,200 pax”

Four purpose built self contained Flats, well appointed, parking to rear.

EPC’s: E.41, D.68, D.66 + TBA

Guide £190,000 / £210,000

VIEWING: Friday 8th June at 2.00pm and Monday 11th June at 10.30am Prompt

PLEASE NOTE: Viewing of all Lots at own risk. Viewings are at the times specified so, should you arrive late, you may find your viewing time is limited or that we have moved on in order to maintain the time schedule. Please Register for Catalogue.

With well presented accommodation, this three-bedroomed detached house in Sedgley Road, Woodsetton, Dudley, is set well back for the road.

Having a garage and additional parking at the rear of the property, it is for sale through Wakeman estate agents at £177,500.

Contact Wakeman estate agents on 01384 459999.

Three bed detached with garage and parking

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The lounge has a brick fireplace. The dining room has a French window to the rear garden. The kitchen includes a Belling electric hob with extractor hood over.

Contact Wakeman estate agents on 01384 459999.
SEDGLEY, Gospel End Street
An imposing, SIGNIFICANTLY EXTENDED, spacious, family home with panoramic DISTANT VIEWS within walking distance of Sedgley’s Bull Ring, built in 1960 to a first quality specification.不上述が情報提供できます。 cooks/pantry, utility room, fitted cloakroom, FOUR GENEROUS BEDROOMS, ensuite bathroom, garage, driveway. EPC: D SEDGLEY
Offers in the region of £299,950

SEDGLEY, Ashen Close, Northway
Spacious and comfortably maintained and much improved freestanding home in a mature location with good distant views. Offering a well-proportioned DRAWN IN LIVING, separate family room, SEPARATE KITCHEN, 19’7” living/dining room, inner hallway, 13’1” kitchen, reappointed shower room (former bathroom). Three bedrooms, large family bathroom, double garage, spacious driveway with fitted units, transverse CONSERVATORY, large garden, carport, double garage. EPC: C SEDGLEY
Offers in the region of £205,950

LOWER GORNAL, Haslingden Crescent
An attractive, stylish, gas centrally heated, UPVC double glazed ‘starter home’ with GARDEN, enjoying a superb position, adjacent to the open green. Offers in the region of £194,950

KINGSWINFORD, Cot Lane
Enjoying a LARGE AND BEAUTIFULLY LAID OUT GARDEN, stands this lovely, gas centrally heated, UPVC double glazed detached bungalow in the heart of a well-regarded residential area. The property comprises a reception hall, through living room, kitchen/dining, family bathroom, with good distant views. Offers in the region of £409,950

Go to the website to see the full list of properties for sale or to enquire about any of the properties listed above.
Three-bed on a corner plot has no chain

DUDLEY
£155,000

This three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Douglas Road, Dudley, lies on a corner plot and has a large garden to the rear.

It is for sale through Trinity Property at £155,000 with no chain.

Its accommodation briefly comprises an entrance hallway, a lounge, kitchen, rear reception room, a wet room/WC, house bathroom and three bedrooms, which comprise of two doubles and a single.

Outside the large garden has a patio area and is partially lawned.

Of the three bedrooms, one and two have built-in wardrobes.

Contact Trinity Property on 01384 213395.

Detached residence of style and substance

SEDGLEY
£439,950

This fabulous detached residence of style and substance in High Park Crescent, Sedgley, is for sale through Hunters estate agents at £439,950.

It has exceptionally spacious accommodation including five excellent sized bedrooms - three of which have fitted wardrobes, one having a walk-in wardrobe and three having en-suite shower rooms.

In addition to the five bedrooms, there are four reception rooms including a formal dining room and an office. There is also a luxury open plan stylish kitchen with a feature ‘island’, a magnificent lounge and a utility room.

Adjacent to the property there is a double garage and block paved driveway as well as lawned front gardens.

Contact Hunters on 01902 672274.

2 bedroom homes at £148,995
£99 Reservation fee
Help to Buy also available**

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DISCOVER the extraordinary difference in our thoughtfully designed new homes

EXPERIENCE our impressive specification, which includes kitchen appliances, fitted wardrobes and en-suite to master bedrooms

JOIN US and see the lifestyle you can have with the Kier way of living

CGI of the 2 bedroom Woodgate at Elderwood Place. Elevations and finishes may vary. *Carpets available subject to terms and conditions. **Help to buy available upon request subject to terms and conditions.
GREENLEIGHS, Sedgley
Price £380,000
- Dormer bungalow
- Former Sedgley location
- Renovated to high standard
- FOUR bedrooms
EPC rating: D

BERKSWELL CLOSE
Dudley
Price £314,950
- FOUR bed detached
- Beautifully presented
EPC rating: D

CLAREMONT ROAD
Sedgley
Price £199,950
- Traditional semi-detached
- THREE bedrooms
EPC rating: F

GREAT-WESTERN WAY
Kingswinford
Price £195,000
- Himley View Kingswinford
- Only 3 years old
EPC rating: B

THE PADDOCK, Coseley
Price £170,000
- EXTENDED detached
- THREE BEDROOMS
EPC rating: D

VIEWFIELD CRESCENT
Sedgley
Price £139,950
- THREE bedrooms
EPC rating: B

CHARLES HAYWOOD
DRIVE Sedgley
Price £138,950
- FORMER SHOWHOME
- THREE bedrooms
EPC rating: C

NORbury CRESCENT
Wolverhampton
Price £89,950
- Ground floor flat
- TWO bedrooms
EPC rating: TBC

WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD Sedgley
Price £220,000
- A beautiful Cottage
- TWO bedrooms
EPC rating: F

CLAREMON T ROAD Sedgley
Price £199,950
- Traditional semi-detached
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Price £89,950
- Ground floor flat
- TWO bedrooms
EPC rating: TBC
Exceptional home has been upgraded

MILKING BANK
£315,000

A quite exceptional, lavishly appointed and comprehensively upgraded three-bedroomed property, 10 Berkswell Close, off Charlecote Drive, Milking Bank, Dudley, is for sale through Taylors Estate Agents at £315,000.

Being gas centrally heated and double glazed, it is enviably situated at the head of a short favoured cul-de-sac.

The canopy porch covers a feature front door. The reception hall is imposing, having Karndean flooring. Off this is an under-stairs cloakroom/WC. The elegant lounge has a bay window, a feature limestone-style over mantle with a cast inset, granite hearth and a living flame gas fire and Karndean flooring.

Contact Taylors on 01902 880888.

A fabulous dormer style-bungalow, Greenleighs in Sedgley, is situated in a quiet backwater on the Northway development.

Having arguably one of the most sought-after prestigious address in Sedgley, it is for sale through Hunters Estate Agents at £380,000.

The property has been completely renovated and re-designed by the current owners providing high standard and excellent size living accommodation. The property briefly includes an entrance porch, a large entrance hallway, a formal lounge, a sitting room, a dining room, a bathroom, a breakfast kitchen, two bedrooms and a bathroom on the ground floor. There are two further bedrooms and a shower room on the first floor.

Contact Hunters Estate Agents on 01902 672274.
New DB11 AMR takes rightful place as flagship

By Jack Evans

Aston Martin, responding to an increase in rival offerings has taken its DB11, boosted the output of that car’s V12 engine and produced this – the DB11 AMR. Power has been increased, handling sharpened and exhaust tuned to produce a car which is more in line with other grand tourers.

Aston Martin has been keen to impress the fact that the DB11 AMR remains a true cross-country cruiser at heart, with new upgrades simply giving it better handling in the corners without diminishing the car’s comfort levels.

There’s quite an extensive list of upgrades which have been made to the AMR over the regular DB11. The most significant is that power upgrade, now 600bhp more than the older car’s 600bhp. The standard DB11 was never lacking punch, but Aston Martin has responded to other, more powerful cars from rival manufacturers and thrown some extra horsepower into the AMR for good measure. Torque, however, remains at the same 700Nm.

Excellent

Aston Martin has also re-calibrated the eight-speed automatic transmission for faster shifts, while the chassis has also been re-worked to provide better cornering ability without reducing the car’s excellent comfort levels.

Underneath the DB11 AMR’s long, flowing bonnet sits Aston’s glorious twin-turbocharged 5.2-litre V12 engine. It’s a masterpiece of engineering, and is a reminder of just how good these large-capacity units can be in a world where downsizing seems to be reigning supreme. It can power the AMR to 60mph in 3.5 seconds, before pushing it to a top speed of 213mph. It’s a huge amount of performance, and endows this DB11 with a frankly ridiculous engine.

The AMR’s interior feels exceptionally well made, with a variety of high-quality materials contributing to a cabin which is just what you’d expect from a prestige GT car. The seats are supportive yet comfortable, while the leather and Alcantara sports steering wheel feels excellent, in terms of feel and shape.

The central layout of the car remains unchanged over the DB11, and as such stays a little cluttered. The Mercedes-sourced infotainment screen isn’t too bad but lacks the sharpness or definition that we’ve come to expect, while the general button layout could do with simplifying. Though user-friendly enough, the overall feel of the central dashboard section is a little behind the times.

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Prices for the regular DB11 start at around £160,000 and, while we can’t fault that car, we’d struggle to see why you wouldn’t just opt for this AMR version given its relative closeness in price. It’s a more capable car, and the way it drives is reason enough to pick it.

The DB11 AMR always felt so close to the complete package – and thanks to the tweaks added to the AMR, it now is. The way this car steers, along with the way it can transform from savage performance car one minute to luxurious grand tourer the next, is downright remarkable. Aston has said that the AMR is now the fastest model in its current series production range and, going off this test, it’s easily one of the best, too.

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MG shows off its creativity at show

A very special MG took pride of place on the MG Motor UK stand last weekend at MG Live!, taking place at Silverstone Circuit.

The MG3 ‘Art Car’ has a unique paintwork design which draws inspiration from various countries around the globe, paying particular attention to the traditional festivals taking place in each location. Created by a team of students from Coventry University, the artwork is a celebration of culture, incorporating the Surin Elephant Festival from Thailand and the iconic Chilean skull motif in a pattern on the roof.

Roots

The car also represents the rich history of the MG brand, with its British roots highlighted through the incorporation of the iconic clocktower housing Big Ben. The MG3 ‘Art Car’ showcased some of the countries where the car marque’s parent company SAIC operates, including Thailand, China, India, Chile, Australia and the UK.

Commenting on the design of the car, Carl Gotham, design director for MG Motor UK, said: “It’s really inspiring to see what future designers create when you give them a blank canvas with which to work. All the entries were high quality but this one really caught the eye due to its fantastic diversity and global cultural references.

“At MG, we are proud to help students develop their creative talents. Our close links with Coventry University are helping us identify and support some of the most exciting young talent around and we look forward to seeing their careers flourish.”

The annual MG Live! Event, organised by The MG Car Club, brings together a spectacular array of MGs, classic and new, for two days of racing, entertainment and family fun.

British roots are also highlighted by the iconic British MG brand can trace its history back to 1924. It is world famous for making stylish cars that are fun to drive and own and are sold at remarkably affordable prices. Modern MG models continue this long and rich MG tradition.

MG Motor UK currently has three models, all of which are designed and engineered at Longbridge, Birmingham: the MG3 Supermini; the manufacturer’s first SUV, the MG GS; and the recently launched Compact-SUV, the MG ZS.

With entry-level MG3 models starting at £8,995 on-the-road, the MG3 is a supermini which brings fun and affordable prices. The super-fun car was voted fifth best supermini in the Auto Express Driver Power survey. The 1.5-litre petrol-powered car can also be personalised, so owners have the option of giving their car their own style-statement.

Starting from £16,095 on-the-road, the MG GS is MG Motor UK’s first SUV. The MG GS is a family, fun, affordable car. With bags of space, a 1.5 turbo petrol engine, the option of manual or 7-speed dual-clutch transmission (DCT) and tons of spec. Launched to industry acclaim in late 2017, the MG GS is a stylish and versatile car that draws inspiration from various countries around the globe, paying particular attention to the traditional festivals taking place in each location.

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Starting from £16,095 on-the-road, the MG GS is MG Motor UK’s first SUV. The MG GS is a family, fun, affordable car. With bags of space, a 1.5 turbo petrol engine, the option of manual or 7-speed dual-clutch transmission (DCT) and tons of spec. Launched to industry acclaim in late 2017, the MG GS is a stylish and versatile car that represents outstanding value for money. Starting from just £12,495 on-the-road, the car comes with a 7 year/80,000-mile warranty as standard. Complete with ApplePlay, SatNav and Cruise Control, the MG GS represents the future of MG Motor UK, with the distinctive front grille revealing the company’s future design direction.

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MG was voted the in the top 10 for most reliable car brands in the prestigious WhatCar? Awards and took second place in the annual WhatCar? customer satisfaction survey.

In 2017, MG has grown by more than 4% year-on-year, as shown by official figures issued by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. MG has the fastest growing network of dealers in the UK, as sales continue to surge.

1.5i Excite SUV

On the Road Price £13,995.00
20% Cash Deposit or Part Exchange £2,799.00
Balance to Finance £11,196.00
60 Monthly Payments of £186.60
Total Amount Payable £13,995.00

YOU OWN THE MG AT THE END OF THE TERM

0% APR
7 YEAR WARRANTY

VISIT MG.CO.UK TO ARRANGE A TEST DRIVE TODAY

MGZS fuel consumption: URBAN 41.0 mpg | 6.9 l/100km, EXTRA URBAN 58.9 mpg | 4.8 l/100km, COMBINED 49.6 mpg | 5.7 l/100km, CO2 Emissions: 129g/km.
Ford’s EcoSport gets update with plenty to appreciate

By Carmel Stewart

Ford’s EcoSport compact sports utility vehicle didn’t get the rave reviews hoped for when it was first launched in 2014. Critics didn’t like the interior materials, the design, the ride, the handling. In fact, bar the engines, there was very little that they did like.

Roll up the extensively revamped mid-life version with an extra 22bhp and the impressive engine line-up plus improved ride, handling and looks which have just arrived. There’s nothing to complain about and plenty to enjoy.

The engine line-up still includes Ford’s excellent multi-award winning 1.0litre EcoBoost engine strutting its amazing stuff across the Ford range. With 125ps at its disposal it’ll travel from a standing start to 62mph in 12.7 seconds and on to a top speed of 111mph. Clearly not a world beater but more than enough for a practical family vehicle and, with an average 5.4mpg, it’s not too hard on the wallet. A 100ps and 140ps unit are also available.

So, all in all, nothing to complain about and plenty to enjoy.

There’s a redesigned front end light housings, LED daytime running lights, a new look rear bumper and rear taillight design. There are also 12 exterior colours to choose from.

Thankfully, the designers have not relinquished the quirky side-hinged rear door – albeit opening the wrong way for a right-hand drive vehicle. Many do not like it but, to me, it adds character which can be enhanced by selecting the new ST-Line trim and going for a contrasting roof.

Inside, the EcoSport is a comfortable place to be with soft touch surfaces, plenty of storage spaces, ergonomically designed seats, a high driving position, a user-friendly eight-inch touch screen and mercifully uncomplicated reach. Ford has added seven choices of ambient lighting so ‘occupants can match the ambiance to their mood’. Not sure how that will pan out on the M1 on a Friday evening, but nice try.

One slightly old-fashioned feature to smooth the journey is a new BT phone connection. Those sneaky low walls and strategically placed boulders, is another plus for the new EcoSport.

Visual exterior ST-Line cues include unique bumpers, side skirts, black roof rails, 17-inch alloys, ST-Line badging, contrasting roof and colour co-ordinated door side skirts, stainless-steel sports pedals.

The design has been perked up with more colour options, a redesigned front end, new headlight and fog lamps. An automatic transmission is also available.

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A REVOLUTIONARY organisation is bucking the trend in the West Midlands as national participation in sports declines. Thanks to Local Tennis Leagues (LTL), adults have all standards have the chance to play friendly, competitive tennis on public courts.

Local Tennis Leagues have spearheaded a sporting renaissance in local parks. It said what were often Cinderella courts – left behind and forgotten – were now thriving again.

Across Britain there are nearly 200 leagues open to men and women and last year more than 8,000 people took part, playing in excess of 30,000 matches.

In the West Midlands alone there are 11 leagues, including in Dudley, Lichfield & Burntwood and Wolverhampton. Local Tennis Leagues have given advantage to players.

‘Cinderella courts’ – left behind and forgotten – were now thriving again. Local Tennis Leagues have the chance to play friendly, competitive tennis on public courts.

The organisation is moving up to 30 of its staff from Loughborough Technology Centre to Kiehla House, on the Birmingham Road, Walsall. It moves operations closer to the British Judo Centre of Excellence, at the University of Wolverhampton campus in Festival Road in Walsall.

There are also plans for judo to be held at the centre for the Commonwealth Games Free Creek and American Lloyd ‘Sprouts’ Elder but the engine on Elder’s machine refused to fire. However, not one to let the crowd down, Elder borrowed Creek’s bike to put in some spectacular demonstration laps.

Wolverhampton got a taste for the roar of the engines and since then riders have clocked up countless miles on the Monmore track. And 90 years later fans turned out recently to mark 90 years of speedway in the city watching Wolves beat Poole 46-44.

The first time a Wolverhampton team actually raced around the track was in July 1929 against War rington and Wolverhampton-born Tommy Deadman, who was employed by the Sunbeam Factory and was the first biggest star at the time.

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Olsen arrived at Monmore Green at the start of 1970 and won the World Championship final in 1972 and 1975 but the team did not finish any higher than seventh in the league during his time at the club. That was in 1973.

In the same year, the club raced against Leicester and won the Midlands Cup final. Olsen made 179 appearances and scored a total of 2,248 points. In 1986, Wolves signed American Er mollenko who went on to become the club’s all-time leading scorer and won a world title in 1993. Chris Van Straaten took over the club and they climbed to third place in the British League in 1986.

Tragedy has also struck the venue with the deaths of riders such as Gary Petersen during the 1975 Mid land Cup final and severe injuries suffered by Swedish rider Fredrik Lindgren who suffered head, neck and back injuries in August, 2011.

In 2001, they were sponsored for the first time by Fury’s International who back them to this day. The team have enjoyed their most successful period over recent years, becoming Elite League champions in 2002, 2009 and 2016.

Thе British Judo Association is moving its headquarters to the Black Country as talks continue over holding the sport at the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham.

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Himley given the boot by bottom side Wellington

HIMLEY crashed to a seven-wicket defeat at bottom of the table Wellington in Birmingham League Division One.

A devastating spell of four wickets for three new signings - Alex Sibley, Simon Twigger and Ben Woodhull - bowled Wellington to victory with an unbroken 121 second-wicket stand between Jothal and Matt Bradley (67 not out).}

Youngsters’ dream day at Twickenham

YOUNGSTERS from Stourbridge Rugby Club enjoyed a memorable day at Twickenham for the Aviva Premiership final.

Thanks to their involvement with the testimonial season of the Land Rover Premiership Rugby Cup, the under-12s headed to rugby HQ where they shared the turf with World Cup winners Lewis Moody and Jason Robinson.

That same day they secured their spot at the showcase event at the Land Rover Premiership Rugby Cup Festival hosted by Worcester Warriors.

Their reward included the chance to watch Exeter Chiefs and Saracens battle it out for the title as well as meeting with former England stars Moody and Robinson pre-match.

Stourbridge were one of 24 under-11 and under-12 teams in attendance for the final.

Stourbridge player Tate Skinner, a pupil at Old Swinford School, was additionally awarded the honour of being his team’s Most Valuable Player, and the 12-year-old admitted the whole day had been one to savour.

TRIBUTES TO DYSTAWRT

TRIBUTES have been paid to a rugby stalwart who spent four decades at Dudley Kingswinford.

Graham Robbins spent more than 40 years involved with DK in various roles as a player, chairman and then president.

The proud Welshman, described as ‘the life and soul’ of the club, passed away on May 26 following an illness.

Rugby secretary Pete Edmonds said grandfather-of-five Mr Robbins would be greatly missed by all involved with the club.

He said: “Graham was the life and soul of the club – a massive part of it. He was originally a player, served as chairman and moved to be president.

“He will be very sadly missed and was one of those people who were the face of DK when you went down to the club. Everyone at the club will miss his smiling face and him telling us about how his grandchildren are getting on.”

Native

Mr Robbins, who lived in Kingswinford, leaves behind his wife Joan, children Darren and Nicola and grandchildren Sophie, Tom, Jack, Harvey, Zrac.

He worked in the steel industry, moving from his native Wales to South Africa before settling in the Black Country in the early 1970s.

A club statement said: “Graham was one of those guys that you immediately associated with DK, and his presence will be missed at first team games, both by the DK stalwarts and the committee members from all the clubs we currently play.

“Always a true rugby man many a memory of Graham will come to those who accompanied him on club tours prior to the leagues. He even took his kit on the 1991 tour to the Isle of Man, and played stand off for the Wanderers.

“Graham’s memory will burn bright at Heathcock.”

Hot conditions add to test of fitness

WITH very little on the calendar at the weekend it was left to two of the clubs racing ladders to fly the flag for Dudley Kingswinford Running Club by taking part in The Race on the Edge, a nine-mile race over undulating trails from Much Wenlock, Shropshire.

Advertised as a challenging off-road multi-terrain race with a hilly profile, competitors could anticipate some long bursting climbs – and the warm and sunny conditions only added to the test of fitness.

Daniel Connolly was first home for Bridgnorth RC in 54.36, ahead of Wolverhampton & Bilston’s Dan Maskew in 54.36 and Olly Laws of Newham in 58.20.

In the ladies’ race Rachel Parker of Mersea claimed victory in 64.16, from Fern Cotterall of Ludlow in 64.27 and Lisa Laws in 70.36.

DK’s Helen Tremness claimed 46th overall, fifth lady and first in her age group in a time of 72.43 and Hannah McGuire stopped the clock on 88.30 to finish in 122nd place.

Himley players Lewis Moody and Timon Wright, alongside ex-internationals Jonathan Davies and Phil Vickery

DUO SECOND IN BATTLE OF ENDURANCE

THE Double Two Racing team earned a second-place finish in the latest No Limits Endurance series at Donington Park.

Pete Wright and Martyn Siviter drafted in as back rider and Cup 600 championship leader, Scott Stevens for round three of the 600 Club - but from the off things began to go wrong.

Wright, from Trivendale, said: “Scott was to qualify first but realised he had left his armchair bike at the sprint rider pits, so grabbed a pushbike to fit it. But qualifying was seconds from getting under way so I hurriedly got ready and out on to the track.”

Wright posted a time good enough for first in class and 15th overall, but Scott then started suffering severe gearbox issues, which meant Wright and Blackheath’s Siviter would have to do the full six hours between them.

Wright started and maintained first in class, extended by Siviter. A two-lap lead had opened up before major issues followed. The bike cut out three times trying to leave pit lane as the CO2 sensor kicked in due to a blocked air filter.

As Wright tried to make up time, a bike spilled oil in front of him and he was spat back upright by the bike. He then avoided crashing again before the red flag came out.

Still holding third place and with the track rideable again, Wright went on then Siviter dragged the team back up to second. Wright took the checkered flag in heat seven.

They each have the opportunity to compete in 10 new mixed gender events which carry a total prize fund of £100,000 as well as two tour cards for the new mixed-gender snooker tour for the next season’s professional circuit.

Evans lines up for a shot at the men

DUDLEY’S Reanne Evans is joining a new mixed-gender snooker tour for the 2018/19 season.

Ranked number two in women’s snooker, Evans has been nominated to join the Challenge League Division One, alongside world champion and world number one, Ng On Yee.

Their entry also includes women’s British Open and Potch Open champions.

They each have the opportunity to compete in 10 new mixed gender events which carry a total prize fund of £100,000 as well as two tour cards for the next season’s professional circuit.

Evans is a multiple women’s world champion, who has previously risen on the professional circuit before.

Himley’s Mark Lightfoot taking part in The Race on the Edge in 64.27
The smash hit comedy races into Wolverhampton this summer!

Wolverhampton Grand Theatre presents

Ladies' Day

By Amanda Whittington

Featuring live performance from Tony Christie

Starring Cheryl Ferguson, Deena Payne, Emma Rigby, Roisin O'Neill, Sean McKenzie

13 - 28 July
01902 42 92 12
GrandTheatre.co.uk
After the unprecedented success of last year’s production of Brassed Off, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre is once again back in the producing saddle, bringing Amanda Whittington’s smash hit comedy LADIES’ DAY racing into Wolverhampton from 13 to 28 July.

The ambitious creative team at the Grand has decided it’s not enough to bring local audiences to the Lichfield Street venue this year, they want to bring the whole city!

Theatre staff have given the play’s story of four fish factory workers enjoying an eventful day at the races a Black Country makeover, moving the action from York to Wolverhampton Racecourse, making this a truly homegrown production.

Meet the runners and riders turning one eventful day at the races into one great night out at the theatre...

### THE PLAY

**Work, love and life are just one long, hard slog for local fish-filleting foursome Pearl, Jan, Shelley and Linda. Will their fortunes change when they head to Ladies’ Day at Wolverhampton Racecourse?**

Factory hairnets make way for fascinators, secrets are spilled with the champagne and friendships are tested to the limit. Yet as the day unfolds, their six-race bet keeps coming up trumps. If their luck holds, they could hit the jackpot – and more!

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### ADRIAN JACKSON

**CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Last summer Adrian oversaw the Grand Theatre’s return to producing for the first time in almost forty years with a successful production of Brassed Off. Was it a hard decision to produce another show this year?

“The reaction to Brassed Off was fantastic. We were extremely proud of what we achieved, the reviews were great, and most importantly our audiences told us how much they loved it. When you consider all of those things we had no hesitation in making the decision to produce again.”

What made him choose Ladies’ Day for their second producing venture?

“I’ve produced the play before and it was great fun and well received by everyone. It’s a brilliant play full of laughs, a few tears, some great music, it’s a really entertaining night out. But we also wanted to make something that we could put a real ‘Made in Wolverhampton’ stamp on and Ladies’ Day fitted the bill perfectly, it’s got those real Black Country traits down to earth characters and a brilliant sense of humour. We’re really looking forward to presenting this to our audience.”

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### MOVING THE PLAY TO WOLVERHAMPTON

**WRITER AMANDA WHITTINGTON, DIRECTOR JASON CAPEWELL, SET DESIGNER JOHN BROOKING**

So, just how do you move a play from York to Wolverhampton? Writer Amanda travelled to the city to research her new setting before rewriting parts of the play. The result is plenty of local references for audiences to listen out for. “It’s been a lot of fun to be in Wolverhampton and get my head and ear around the accent, to talk to people and find out what audiences want to see in the play and to reflect that on stage.”

The result has seen Amanda breathe new life into the popular story, “it’s been really exciting to return to the script and look at the four characters and their journeys through the day and to reinvent them as people local to this theatre. Also, to put their concerns, their battles and problems in 2018. The play is really bang up to date and absolutely rooted in Wolverhampton.”

With the script tweaked Director Jason made the commitment to bring the sound of the city to the stage, “We decided early on that we wanted to really represent Wolverhampton on stage, so a couple of the actresses are learning Black Country as we speak!”

Jason also thinks the Grand Theatre’s commitment to using local community actors in the ensemble will give the play an authentic feel too. “The Grand is very keen to give opportunities to local actors and they add a real community feel to the action, as well as our principal cast there’ll be some real born and bred local voices on stage.”

Set designer John has been tasked with one of his more unusual design briefs, to quite literally bring parts of Wolverhampton to life on stage! He says, “We did a lot of research before designing and building the set. We visited a working fish factory in Tipton where the play starts, and then Wolverhampton Racecourse which we’ve recreated almost brick for brick in some instances, anyone who’s ever had a cigarette behind the jockeys dressing room will even recognise the air conditioning units!”

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#LadiesDayWLV
LADIES’ DAY puts four very different female characters at the heart of its story, fish factory workers and good friends Pearl, Jan, Shelley and Linda. Where did Amanda get the inspiration for her ladies from?

“There’s a little bit of me in every one of them, and quite a bit of my friends, people I’ve met, people I know, people I’ve worked with. I’ve tried to make the characters as realistic and truthful as possible and people who see the show always say, “I’m a Linda” or “I’m a Pearl” and that’s the greatest compliment you can get as a playwright.”

To tell us more about this fab four, we spoke to the actresses taking on the roles of the race going friends...

DEENA PAYNE
PEARL
Emmerdale favourite Deena plays housewife Pearl, whose upcoming retirement sparks the friends’ trip to Ladies’ Day, but does Pearl have another reason for wanting to spend the day at the races?

“Pearl is the oldest of them all and she’s about to retire... when I first read the play I felt that Pearl was quite staid... a bit happy families and everything... but there’s a little secret there that puts a twinkle in her eye and it all comes out slowly during Ladies’ Day.”

Less of a secret is how enthusiastic Deena is about the play, “I knew I wanted to be a part of Ladies’ Day when I read the script, I thought “I love this!” I love the storylines and I love the character that I play, it’s not all fun, it’s very witty but quite emotional in lots of different ways, it’s heart rendering, it’s fun and it’s exciting, but it would be, it’s the races!”

CHERYL FERGISON
JAN
Former Eastenders’ star Cheryl plays single mother Jan, a woman devoted to making her daughter’s dreams come true while suppressing her own, that is until she lets Pearl’s secret out of the bag and turns everyone’s life upside down!

“She’s a very loyal friend to Pearl, she’s a little bit of a fish out of water at the races. She takes packed lunches in her cool bag and looks after everybody, she’s very mothering. Then, she gets told a secret and alcohol comes into play, she doesn’t normally drink but the secret comes out. She learns a lot about herself and the people around her and that life isn’t as rosy in the garden as she thinks it is.”

No stranger to the Grand Theatre, Cheryl has visited enough times to pick up a local phrase or two. So, how does she feel about acting in front of a Black Country audience again?

“I cor’ wait bab!”

EMMA RIGBY
SHELLEY
Television and film actress Emma, most recognisable for her roles in Hollyoaks and Prisoners’ Wives is making her first ever stage appearance in Ladies’ Day, playing celebrity wannabe Shelley.

‘Shelley wants to be fabulous but she’s actually very gobby, very brash... bawdy, feisty... but she’s very funny.’

But as with her friends, Shelley’s life isn’t as glamorous as she makes out. “For Shelley there are plenty in this play that are so deeply touching, without revealing too much they’re really sad.”

What attracted Emma to make her stage bow in Ladies’ Day?

“I think it’s a brilliant, funny piece but it’s also super touching...Amanda’s writing is so fantastic. It’s the idea that people spend all their time together, which is so realistic. You spend the majority of your time with people you work with, so you have this unique relationship. When the audience watches the play they’ll be able to see that.”

ROISIN O’NEILL
LINDA
Stage actress Roisin plays Tony Christie super fan Linda, she’s very much the quiet member of the group.

“Linda is very sweet, She’s thoughtful and she’s a good friend and I feel like she’s the moderator between the girls when they get into arguments”

She may be sweet, but Linda’s steadfast in her love for Tony Christie, an obsession that’s central to the friends’ future, something Roisin can relate to, “Linda has always been Tony Christie’s number one fan, I’m a big fan of his music too!”

Roisin says lots that audiences can relate to in the story too. “It’s a comedy with real heart... it’s the story of friendship and that’s universal... so I think everyone can relate to it.”

#LadiesDayWLV
Over the course of their day at the races Pearl, Jan, Shelley and Linda cross paths with an eclectic cast of men, with each encounter changing the direction their story takes. To play these roles the script required two men, one with the ability to harness six different personalities and the other a very famous personality indeed...

**TONY CHRISTIE**

Music legend Tony Christie has topped the bill at venues all over the world, including previous visits to the Grand Theatre, but this is the first time he’s been billed in a stage play. His music features prominently in the play’s script, first staged at a time when he was riding high in the charts alongside comedian Peter Kay with ‘Is this the way to Amarillo’. Through the character of Linda his songs help steer the play’s story to its nail-biting finale. How did he feel when he first heard that his music featured in the play? “It was a surprise but I felt honoured and I still am. It’s a great play and this production is not to be missed.”

The Grand’s production will use a mix of Tony’s hits and album tracks, some recorded and some live, how does the Avenues and Alleyways’ singer feel about singing live at the Grand again? “I’m really looking forward to it, they’re a great crowd and it’s going to be a lot of fun.”

**SEAN MCKENZIE**

No day at the races would be complete without some horse racing and for that the play needs a jockey. That role falls to self-confessed “man of a thousand faces”, Sean, who also plays a factory supervisor, a ticket tout, a commentator, a bookmaker, a gambler and a mysterious love interest. So, how’s he finding the challenge of playing six different characters?

“I’ve got my work cut out, remembering all my lines and alternating from one character to another and changing accents and costumes. I have to make sure I’ve got the right costume on at the right point! But the challenge is brilliant... I get to play a variety of roles, some comedy acting, some straight acting.”

With a title like Ladies’ Day does Sean think there’s plenty in the script for men to enjoy too? “It’s not just a show for ladies to come and see, it’s a very funny play that I think the fellows will buy into as well. Amanda’s written four great characters for the women to play and six great characters for me too. It’s going to be a crowd pleaser.”

“Chart topping singer Tony Christie will perform live in Ladies’ Day.”