Halesowen Chronicle

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ROYAL VISIT
Black Country welcome for Her Majesty

STAR ROLES
Newly-weds together in musical show

Works to solve flood problems completed

A £400,000 project to prevent sewers from flooding in Halesowen has been completed.

Severn Trent Water have installed 500 metres of new sewer pipes to prevent the flooding in the Hurst Green area of the town.

The work had led to parts of Hurst Green being sealed off while the work was being carried out for Severn Trent Water.

The project started in April 2014 and was completed last month.

Investment

Gareth Mead, from Severn Trent Water, said: “Sometimes in the past when there’s been heavy rain, the sewers in the area have struggled to cope with the extra water. This has meant several homes were affected by sewer flooding.

“Our new sewers are a significant and important investment, which will help to stop this from happening again.

“They’ll also improve local drainage and protect the environment better, by helping to prevent pollution from overflowing sewers.”

He added: “This kind of work can be disruptive so we’d like to thank everyone for their understanding and patience during the work.”

Festive lights countdown

THE Halesowen Christmas lights will be officially switched on at an event next Saturday.

Dudley Council with Halesowen Chamber of Trade and Cornbow Shopping Centre will stage the event on November 15.

From 11am shoppers will be able to listen to enjoy fair rides in the High Street and live entertainment including a fire show at the top of Hagley Street, culminating with a countdown before the lights are switched on at 5pm.

Town carnival to be revived

A DATE has been set for the revival of Halesowen’s carnival and parade after nearly 30 years without the once popular town event.

New committee members have come on board to help boost plans for a revived carnival to take place in Halesowen next summer.

Plans are gathering pace for the first Halesowen Carnival and parade in 29 years.

Organisers have set a date, July 4 2015, for the event.

The annual carnival was a highlight in the calendar for thousands in its heyday.

Event organiser Simon Walker says he has been boosted by three new committee members signing up in recent days.

Funded

It comes as a business plan is being finalised to show how the carnival will be funded.

This will be used to source the cash which will be needed to run the event.

Various companies and public bodies will be approached in the coming weeks.

Early plans for the make-up of the festival are taking shape including the revival of the once popular parade through the town.

The parade will see the festival over the years and organisations say it is a crucial part of returning the event to its glory days.

Group members were being assigned roles at a meeting of the committee on Saturday in the town centre.

Committee chairman Simon Walker says the group is appealing for help with funding the event, which is scheduled to take place in Halesowen Park.

Mr Walker said: “I’m pleased that we have been able to bring more people on board to help with the project to host the event to its glory days.”

Mr Walker asked anyone keen to sign up to contact the committee by searching for Halesowen Carnival 2015 on Facebook.

Halesowen Councillor Stuart Henley said: “We need more people on board as it is a relatively short time until the carnival takes place.

“But it has to take place now. The people of Halesowen really want it.

“It would be the first time that a carnival and street parade had taken place in the town since 1985.”

Campaigners want to link the event with the new Black Country Day festival.

In a nod to its history, organisers have also pledged to hold the event in honour of well-known Black Country comic Tommy Mandon.

The much-loved comedian died earlier this year, aged 60.

Comedian Andrew McBurney has got his sights set on the big time after scooping an award for best breaking talent at Birmingham Comedy Festival.

Mr McBurney, from Cradley Heath, began getting into comedy around three years ago.

“It was me and a few other friends,” he said. “I said ‘you know all these things talk about when we’re on our own, why don’t we film them?’ We started making our own sketches and it went from there.”

“Just after, a girl I had been with for about eight years left me, and from that I made my first sketch which was about a guy who had been dumped trying to make himself feel better.”

He first took his show to an open mic night at the Holly Bush pub in Cradley Heath.

“People actually really liked it, so I kept doing it,” Mr McBurney said. “I have expanded into other characters now.”

Mr McBurney was given the Breaking Talent Award at the Glee Club in Birmingham last month by Jasper Carrott, who helped £Judge the contest.

Mr McBurney, who moved to the Black Country 21 years ago from Glasgow, said he has toured the country with his act including a return to Rotoria at the Edinburgh Festival.

He is now hoping to give up his T-shirt making job to become a full time comedian.

Comic with character ready to break out

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Church team in centre bid

PARISHIONERS of a church which had to close are to open a community centre in a Cradley Heath shop.

St Luke’s Church closed after almost 150 years of worship due to repair costs of about £750,000 and moved to St Saviour’s or Dudley Wood, after a final service last month.

Parishioners want to continue their community work in the area and have revealed plans for the centre in High Street.
Street lights get energy saving bulbs

New paths to enhance beauty spot

THOUSANDS of street lights could be turned off after some as part of plans to cut council energy bills.

Earlier this year the council replaced lights on turn-offs after midnight in some areas from 2016 onwards.

The council has said it hopes little difference is made as most people are in bed before the lights are turned off.

It is estimated the move could save the council £7.8 million during the 2016/17 financial year.

Thieves ruin rider’s dreams

AN up-and-coming motorcross rider who has been selected for the British Youth National side has spoken of his sadness after thieves stole his two bikes worth up to £10,000 just hours after a competition.

Kyai Bailey’s parents say his dreams have been shattered after the bikes were taken by raiders who broke into a van where they had been kept.

Thieves smashed windows to get into the van, owned by Kyai’s father Matthew who runs pupil company Falshe, in the early hours of Monday.

Kyai Bailey, aged 14, who has been chosen by the authority.

He was appointed temporarily following his pre-decession retirement.

He was tasked with reducing council energy bills.

Councillor Loach said the move was chosen by the authority.

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THUG STABBED HIS PARTNER IN THE ARM AS HER ONE-YEAR-OLD DAUGHTER SLEPT NEARBY.

M. Charalambides, 27, from Halesowen College, was in the kitchen of her Cradley Heath home when cleaning a knife, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard. The 27-year-old woman was said to have followed her upstairs and that she had been sleeping when her three children were sleeping on April 20.

She grabbed hold of the knife, cutting the palm of her hand, and was knifed in the stomach when he pushed her onto the bed where the youngest girl slept. She was taken to hospital.

Mr Warlock, prosecuting, said: “The police attended, various items were being loaded into a Mercedes van driven by Mr Smith and a Ford Transit driven by Mr Gloter. This included 173 cannabis plants and electrical equipment.”

Gloter’s van was tracked to the Birmingham New Road in Dudley. It was searched by police but this didn’t stop the 39-year-old from trying to escape.

Mr Warlock said: “It was typical of a sophisticated cannabis factory. Officers valued the plants at about £30,000.”

In one of the vans they found 173 cannabis plants, compact and electrical wiring. All four were arrested and pleaded guilty to possession of class B cannabis but with mitigating circumstances.

Mr Jan Mann, defending, said Foster, 35, had been promised £100 to carry out the work but didn’t receive the money. Foster, of Treadal Court, Trividsa, was handed a 38-week jail term.

Bills, aged 26, of Overbury Road, Northfield, Birmingham was given 46 weeks in custody. Smith, 56, of Hawkstone Crescent, West Bromwich, was given a 39 week sentence suspended for two years and will be supervised for two years.

Gloter, of St Marks Road, Dudley, was jailed for two years and banned from driving for 24 months.

NUMBERS SOARING AT LEISURE CENTRES A RECORD number of people visited leisure centres in Dudley last year which is a huge boost for healthy lifestyle say council bosses.

Over 1.2 million people headed through the doors of Dudley’s three leisure centres between the 2013/14 period. There were 579,661 visits made to Crystal Leisure Centre whilst 289,908 were made to Dudley Leisure Centre and 400,000 people visited Halesowen Leisure Centre.

The figures also revealed membership of their gyms soared from 600 to 3,817.

Three injured in fight outside club THREE INJURED IN FIGHT OUTSIDE CLUB NEWS IN BRIEF NEWS IN BRIEF Three injured in fight outside club

VISIT www.dudley.gov.uk and the email of Councillor Margaret As- sersley’s charity fund.

Students learn from Untold Dance Theatre director Laura Millward, in the vest top, during a masterclass A PROFESSIONAL dance workshop for students took place at Halesowen College.

A Level and Subsidiary Diploma Dance students were taught about contemporary dance during the visit from Untold Dance Theatre, headed up by theatre director Laura Millward.

Gemma Sherratt, course leader at Halesowen College, said: “It was a fantastical opportunity for the students to experience working with a professional local dance artist. Laura really inspired them for their future choreography projects.”

She also added: “I think it is definitely a good idea. It gives students a boost and helps develop their skills, especially their technical side.”

Halesowen College has around 42 to 50 dance students across its BTEC First, BTEC Extended, and BTEC A Level dance courses.

STUDENT VISIT TO THEATRE DIRECTOR Students learn from Untold Dance Theatre director Laura Millward, in the vest top, during a masterclass

Paying homage to guests and contributions to the local area.

Hurt in horse fall A WOMAN who fell off a horse in a lane near Stourbridge has been named as a specialist 4x4.

The 49-year-old suffered concussion and bruising to her back and was taken to the University Hospital, Wolverhampton for treatment.

The accident happened at 3pm on October 27.

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DANCE Students learn from Untold Dance Theatre director Laura Millward, in the vest top, during a masterclass

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Dance students put through their paces

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

IF HS2 goes from London to Birmingham and HS3 from Leeds to Manchester, what next? A reader suggests HS4 to whack MPs from the Commons to their free bars, with HS5 to take “the most politicians and greedy bankers” out of London and straight over the 500 ft cliff at Beachy Head.

NATIONAL Grid, facing a shortage of electricity, has warned it may have to reduce voltage, leading to “brownouts” of dinner bulbs this winter. In this age of bargain low-energy bulbs, will anyone notice? Remember when a single 100 watt bulb filled your room with glorious light? Own up. How many of us are still sitting on stockpiles of old, expensive 100-watters? By their bright white hearts they shall know us.

ON the Guardian website, of all places, someone emailed: “Why should any man support a feminist movement? He’s commenting on David Cameron’s refusal to stop, said Mr David Swinerton, prosecuting, to indecently assault her. He ignored her pleas to stop, said Mr David Swinerton, prosecuting.

Richard Cooper, of no fixed address, admitted rape while Peter from Eastfold Road, Horsley Fields pleaded guilty to indecent assault.

The teenagers were split up and the woman was pushed against a wall by Richard Cooper who warned he had a “knife and shooter” before beginning to molest her. He ignored her plea to stop, said Mr David Swinerton, prosecuting.

Richard Cooper hit the woman on the neck before his brother continued the indecent assault. The older man then returned to rape the victim.

A NEW super-computer means the Met Office will be able to give us 100 per cent accurate weather forecasts, and where’s the fun in that?

STEPHEN Gough, the so-called “Naked Rambler”, has lost his case at the European Court of Human Rights. The court ruled that the law “does not go so far as to enable lost his case at the European Court of Human Rights. The court ruled that the law “does not go so far as to enable lost his case at the European Court of Human Rights. The court ruled that the law “does not go so far as to enable...
A CROOKED financial adviser who swindled £247,000 out of his victims has lost an appeal against his prison sentence, with a judge saying it was "very harsh".

Mark Lewis promised huge returns on investments in property and solar panels, but left victims empty-handed.

In May, the 51-year-old who lived in Oakenshawe, Huddersfield, was jailed for six years and five months at Stafford Crown Court after admitting 16 counts of fraud.

He was convicted after admitting 16 counts of fraud.

An appeal against his prison sentence was refused.

Conman loses his appeal on sentence

A WIDOW whose husband died after heart surgery has welcomed the resignation of the surgeon involved.

Ian Wilson left New Cross Hospital for "personal reasons" last month.

Mr Wilson had been sacked from the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham, after being accused of failing surgery results. He has also been fired by Solihull carer who is investigating 15 deaths.

The coroner found surgery undertaken by Mr Wilson had been "more extensive than necessary" in three of the deaths. One of the cases involved Peter Brookes, aged 72, from Halesowen, in 2011. He needed a triple heart bypass, but his wife Margaret said that more was done.

"I’m pleased that he left New Cross. There’s been a lot of anger and grief in the past three years," she said.

"The IQ have been very responsive and we can’t believe everything has gone on this long. He never said sorry for what happened to our family.

A General Medical Council inquiry into Mr Wilson is ongoing. He had initially been working at New Cross on a voluntary basis, under intense supervision, before working as a locum.

The inquest concluded that the last mid on Mr Brookes was more extensive than was necessary and led to extra time in theatre, causing more harm. Coroner Louise Hunt said this triggered low blood pressure and a cardiac arrest which caused brain damage. Mr Brookes suffered further cardiac arrests in intensive care.

Judicial reviews of the 15 deaths are taking place. The University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Trust has paid out £2.5m to affected families.

Retired

His victims were from across the West Midlands, including Dudley, many of them retired. They lost life savings, pension pots, money put aside for grandchildren’s education and in one case a beloved father’s legacy.

He appealed but two senior judges on Friday dismissed his case.

Giving judgment at the Court of Appeal, Mr Justice Spencer said the sentence was "undoubtedly stiff".

"Some were very serious offences of their kind which cause the victims untold anxiety and distress, as well as great financial loss," he continued.

"We think that the over-all sentence was just and proportionate and not manifestly excessive."

By Tim Spiers

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Widow welcomes surgeon’s decision to resign

Family relieved over heart surgery’s decision to resign

Pupils hear Holocaust survivor’s story

Survivor Rudi Oppenheimer with the star of David that was sewn onto his clothes

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All part of a campaign by the Fabcett Society, a number of politicians including Ed Miliband, Nick Clegg, and Harriet Harman have been persuaded to wear a T-shirt bearing the words 'This is what a feminite looks like'.

Now a newspaper has claimed that The T-shirts, which are being sold in the trendy clothes shop Whistles, are being made in Indian sweatshops by women workers who are paid the princely sum of 62p an hour.

Personally, I am always suspicious about these ‘raising public awareness’ campaigns, which usually seem to be more about the people taking part than the causes behind them.

It seems noble that anyone can really change anything just by wearing a T-shirt.

And not being funny ladies, but if you really are serious about wanting, to get people to join your cause, telling them they will look Ed Miliband really does seem a strange way of going about it.

FOR many people, particularly the elderly, being famous now seems to be a night of terror.

Teenagers who are really old enough to know better use the tradition of Trick or Treat as an excuse to demand money with menaces from some of the most vulnerable members of society.

Yet while this rather unpleasant practice may have to grow exponentially over the past decade or so, has anybody wondered what has happened to the good old ‘penny for the guy’?

Of course, the penny was usually spent on helping the poor, but I suppose there aren’t so many of the old-fashioned donkeys these days for them to burn their pennies.

But if you really are serious about wanting, to get people to join your cause, why not tell them they will look Ed Miliband really does seem a strange way of going about it.

TALK about man’s best friend. Alleged drug producer Edward Henderson found the game was a little too much when he barked at his own dog.

The owner tried to make a run for it when police raided his hideaway and his dog attacked and managed to hide in the long grass while officers searched for him.

But Henderson was rumbled when an officer put the suspected drug dealer inside, and the dog ran into the field. The officer was his master and stood over him, wagging his tail.

It seems that Henderson lives in a city called Prattville. You don’t say.

CROWDS cheered, Union Flags were held up and hundreds of camera phones burst into life when Her Majesty The Queen made her first visit to Wolverhampton in two decades.

Arriving at the city’s railway station by Royal train, she then made the four-mile journey along the A449 Stafford Road in a Range Rover to the 24A business park.

Wearing a stunning Peter Enrafas ted dress and coat with matching Rachel Trevor-Morgan hat, Her Majesty also carried one of her trademark Wal-mall-sold Launer London handbags for the visit to Jaguar Land Rover’s £500 million Requisite Manufacturing Centre and International Security Printers.

ACCOMPANIED by the Duke of Edin- burgh, the 88-year-old monarch was ani-mated and chatty throughout both visits, which lasted nearly an hour apiece, chat- ing to workers and schoolchildren.

At International Security Printers, Her Majesty was talked through the stamp-printing process, even removing one her leather gloves to feel the texture of a felt stamp, before seeing the press in action.

The Queen shared jokes with staff dur-ing a tour of the world-leading company, which produces stamps for 160 countries. She came face to face with her printed image and viewed historical stamps from the past 50 years.

The firm printed the stamps for the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge’s wed-ding. She also looked at a forthcoming Royal Mail commission celebrating In-vective Britain, showcasing steel-mak-ing and the invention of the internet.

At JLR, she toured two parts of the factory, one where engine components are made and the other where they are assembled. She also met schoolchildren from Wednesfield High School, which specialises in engineering, and Brewood Middle School.

When fully functional, the long-awaited engine plant will have 1,600 staff and see an Ingenium engine some offcime off the production the produc-tion line production lines every 36 sec- onds.

Dignitaries including Ratan Tata, chairman of the Tata Trust and the man who purchased the JLR group, and Professor Lord Bhattacharyya, Warwick Manufacturing Group, as well as MPs and local councillors, joined her for the opening.

The Queen was said to be inquisitive and excited during the JLR tour, which concluded with her unveiling a plaque to officially open the site. Dr Ralph Spoth, chief executive of Jaguar Land Rover, told Her Majesty: “Your commitment and your sense of duty are an inspira-tion.”

“The wealth of ideas and innovation you have nurtured has left us all in awe,” she added.

We are honoured to have your pres-ence to mark one of the most important days in the company’s history. These ingenium represent British engineering at its best. They have been designed and developed by our own engineers, based in the West Midlands.”

JLR presented the Queen with a spe-cially-commissioned, engraved metal plaque depicting the premises and a first-class stamp.

After weeks of planning for the whis-tle-stop tour, JLR manufacturing stand-ard manager Andrew Christie said the day had gone perfectly.

“We had a really fabulous day and it was a true honour to welcome the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh,” he said.

“We’re so pleased with how it all went. She was extremely interested in what we do here and seemed fascinated by the whole process.”

The Royal party is given an introduction before their JLR tour.

The choice then is to either come out of Europe, re-negotiate the rules on free movement or make Britain a less attractive place to go to,

Reforming the benefits system so you can only get one benefit at a time by having had a job is a popular idea, but any Labourф reators to use the NHS. This is either to make a scrap of difference remains to be seen. So is the benefit bill or the NHS’s woes people’s public meetings and immigration because of immigration.

Two Tory councilors have jumped ship, assuming a minister’s party leadership out of touch, and think that is how their party will win.

They have been designed and de-voted elsewhere, they’ve crossed the party’s autumn Labour rather than run to UKIP.

Cheryl Gillings and Glenis Simmons both represent wards in Dudley South, where the incum-ent Grenfell Conservatives’ Chris Kel-ly is standing down. The pair are both former immigration minister.

But the proposed migration bill, which Labour calls the cost-of-living crisis and Christianity, is not one thatLabour would sign.

Any idea the makes the task of the Conservat-ives in holding on to Dudley South any easier.

At the moment they don’t even have a candidate.
In response to the letter: Council did not heed care home warning Twenty two years ago I worked for Dudley Social Services in a care home, Dibdale in Dudley. When this closed, myself and other staff had the responsibility of trying to find alternative homes for 52 residents, which was traumatic for everyone concerned.

The closure of this home had a domino effect and, apart from Russell Hall and New Bradley Hall, the other homes closed. I voiced my opinion strongly that this would eventually result in dire consequences because the private sector often open residential homes mainly as a business. I warned that relying on community care would only provide a good service to vulnerable people if the care they received was given by adequately trained staff.

Everything that has happened has more than proved to me I knew exactly what I was saying.

P.COLE
Kingswinford

Homes not affordable

We keep hearing promises from politicians and others, that hundreds of affordable houses will be built, whether a Conservative or Labour Government should be in power after the next General Election.

However, the question must be asked, affordable for whom? Even if the minimum wage should rise to £8 per hour, then someone on the minimum wage working a 48-hour week would only be earning £384 per week, equating to an annual gross income of £1£000. Using a multiple of three times income, the maximum mortgage would be £309,000.

Are we therefore to believe that houses will be built selling at £60,000 or is it once again that affordable means only for those on average or higher income?

Perhaps some politician could answer that question.

I. HALE
Cradley Heath

UKIP support for the NHS

I WOULD like to make one thing crystal clear and am a UKIP MEP for the West Midlands, a UKIP councilor and UKIP Prospective Parliamentary candidate Dudley North.

I was an elected governor at The Dudley Group of Hospitals for three years.

I give my word that I will never support a policy of scragging to see your GP or tyrannising the NHS. The NHS should remain in the public sector. Anybody who claims that I, or UKIP, believe anything else is at best incorrect and at worst a blatant lie.

BILJ ETHERIDGE

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GLAMOUR girl Jodie Marsh dropped by an Oldbury beauty salon as she filmed her latest TV documentary.

Wayne Denton and his wife Luliia welcomed the model and TV presenter to their salon Glamorous Hair and Beauty, on Causeway Green Road, as she filmed a documentary on international dating, which recently aired on American cable network TLC.

Mr Denton opened the salon five years ago and was joined by his wife in 2011 after they married in the Ukraine after meeting through an online dating agency. Mr Denton juggles his work at the salon with his career as an entertainer, performing on cruise ships and venues around the country, which led to him and his wife being approached to take part in the documentary.

Finals

Mr Denton said: “After reaching TV’s New Faces final in 1986 I was approached by the BBC to be part of a documentary called ‘I had the X-Factor 25 years ago’. They tried to portray how the entertainment business had affected our lives and also what effect it had had on our relationships. I explained that I had met a girl on the internet through an international dating agency and the BBC sent a film crew to our wedding.

“When the Jodie Marsh documentary was put together we were sourced by the researchers.”

The couple left a strong impression on Jodie, who had her nails done by Luliia as they discussed the couple’s history.

Mr Denton said: “Jodie was very down to earth. She seemed very pleased with the interview and her nails.”

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£3m is being invested in training new nurses

The recruitment of 40 extra nurses at Dudley’s Russells Hall Hospital has been welcomed by a local MP. They are being recruited as part of a £3.1 million investment in staff. The move comes after a graduate training programme was also launched by Dudley Group of Hospitals’ NHS foundation Trust to help fill a shortage. It is hoped the scheme will provide 100 nurses

As well as boosting nurse numbers, hospital bosses are hoping to reduce the need for expensive agency staff. Hospital bosses have previously taken their recruitment drive overseas to help fill vacancies.

Care

The hospital trust is looking to recruit for the emergency department, the emergency assessment unit, short stay medical ward and in surgery, trauma, orthopaedics and elderly care. A recruitment open day will take place on November 29.

Stourbridge MP Margot James, MP, has welcomed the graduate training programme for nursing. In Parliament, Ms James said: “The hospital’s graduate programme has attracted 100 students, and will provide a long term source of trained nurses for the future. Front line staff at Russells Hall work incredibly hard, and I am very pleased that the government is recognising those improvements.”

Chief executive Paula Clark said: “We need more amazing talented nurses to join our committed and dedicated staff. We’ve recently been investing in our nursing team and expanded our numbers with home-grown talent and some fabulous nurses from Europe. We are now opening our doors to tempt more nurses to come and join us.”

More nurses are being recruited for Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley

Anti-flu spray for children

YOUNG children across Dudley are being offered a free nasal-spray flu vaccine this autumn.

Children aged two, three, or four will offered the single-dose vaccine, which will continue to be available for people aged 65 or over.

The vaccination was introduced to the UK last year after it was used effectively in America for more than 10 years. The needle-free vaccine is an alternative to the traditional injectable flu vaccine, and will also be available carers and adults and babies aged between six months and two years, with a long-term medical condition.

The Fluzev immunisation is a simple, painless nasal spray that protects children against many strains of the flu virus. Parents or carers of children who qualify for the vaccine will be contacted by their GP about getting their child vaccinated. Visit your local GP for more information.

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“The kitchen of our Dreams, we made so many changes but all was completed with so little fuss...I love showing off my new kitchen to everyone!! Norah & Chris Painter, Pedmore

“A major project completed on time without any problems at all” Gill McKenzie, Codsall

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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO\textsubscript{2} emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 91.1 (3.1), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 85.6 (3.3). CO\textsubscript{2} emissions: 373 - 88 g/km.\textsuperscript{*}

\textsuperscript{*}Free Fuel offer not available on Zafira, Corsa Excite and New Corsa models, other terms, conditions and exclusions apply. £500 inc. VAT Free Fuel will be paid via pre-paid debit card. Purchase only, cannot be used to withdraw cash. Refer to www.vauxhall.co.uk/weekend or contact your local Retailer for details. Participating Retailers only. Offer applies to private individuals, Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 7-24. All other customers are excluded. Offer available on orders between 7 and 10 November 2014, which are then registered by 31 December 2014. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

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**Memorial mountain trek is boost for the Legion**

A SLICE of £4,600 raised for charities by a group of Dudley walkers who trekked to the top of Ben Nevis has been handed to the Royal British Legion.

In total £800 was given to the Legion at the Bert Bissell Memorial Stone in the town’s Coronation Gardens. The money was raised during the Bert Bissell Memorial Walk which saw Dudley North MP Ian Austin scale Britain’s highest mountain with a group of civic leaders from the borough in August.

Mr Bissell, who lived from 1902 to 1998, founded the Young Men’s Bible Class at Vicar Street, Dudley. He was a probation officer and climbed Ben Nevis on VJ Day in 1945, and many times afterwards, building a peace cairn on its summit. He climbed the mountain 107 times and his final climb was done when he was in his 90s.

Deputy Mayor Councillor Steve Waltho said: “It is no easy feat climbing all 4,400 ft of Ben Nevis and it makes you appreciate just what Bert Bissell did even more. Every time we felt tired we thought of Bert and how he completed it in his 90s.”

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Voluntary groups could be asked to run services

Voluntary groups could be drafted in to help run some youth services in the Black Country in a bid to cut costs.

Dudley Council is to slash £200,000 from the budget and youth worker positions are at risk.

Children’s services boss Councillor Tim Crumpton said the council was looking at how voluntary groups could take on services such as helping young people with disabilities.

Councillors across the region have slashed their budgets for youth services.

Walsall Council announced last week that it would be getting rid of £2 million from its budget which will lead to a cut in services, while children’s centres in the borough will also close.

Some 30 youth centres in Wolverhampton closed down earlier this year due to cuts.

The proposals could see cuts of up to 25% of part time youth workers. The protesters said they hoped to reopen a dialogue.

Protesters

Councillor Crumpton’s comments came after a crowd of protesters gathered outside Dudley Council House as part of a campaign against the proposed cuts to the borough’s youth services.

Representatives from unions Unite, Unison and GMB were part of those present on Friday as well as volunteers who work at various youth services in the area.

Dan Millard, a Unite rep, said: “We have taken and suffered these cuts for four years now. “This is the final straw. They are talking about getting rid of universal services and all that will remain is one centre so every other place will lose out. “Over 1,000 young people will not have access to these services anymore. The bottom line is that we do not want any cuts at all.”

The proposals could see cuts of up to £200,000 from youth services and the loss of around 50 per cent of part time youth workers. The protesters said they hoped to reopen a dialogue.

Homes are needed for two kittens found abandoned at the top of Sedgley Beacon.

The kittens were found on the hill three weeks ago by a walker.

Now cat fosterer Pauline Temple-Jones, from Upper Gornal, is calling for help to find new homes for the kittens.

She said: “I couldn’t believe both the kittens were found alone at the top of the beacon.

“There are no homes nearby and they came running to the walker who found them, so I presume they had been dumped not long before.

“They wouldn’t have survived long on their own in the wet and cold up there for sure.

“After the kittens were delivered to her, Ms Temple-Jones has had them checked over by a vet.

“She is planning to get them both neutered before rehoming. Anyone who can help should call Ms Temple-Jones on 01902 672031.
IT was an advertisement in the Express & Star that was to change the life of Billy Wright. It set him on the path to becoming one of the greatest footballers in the history of the game in England. Placed in 1938, it invited schoolboys for trials with Wolverhampton Wanderers. Under the inspired leadership of Major Frank Buckley, Wolves were on the up. That season, 1937-38, they had won the First Division Championship – a feat that they were to equal the next year – and it would be a wonderful opportunity for any youngster who was good enough to be taken on by the club. It was an opportunity recognised by Nor- man Simpson, Billy’s teacher at Madeley Senior School. He spotted the advert and urged the talented youngster from Iron- bridge in Shropshire to respond. When Billy reached Molineux, disappointment met him. Major Buckley said he was too small to make the grade, but for some reason, 20 minutes later this imposing man changed his mind and decided to give Billy chance by signing him as an apprentice on an eight-month trial. That was all that Billy needed. Just 14 years old, he made his debut for Wolves in a B team, but he was not to stay a second stringer for long. A year later, he was chosen for the first team and aged 17, Billy signed as a professional but it was during the Second World War, and competitive football was limited – especially at Wolves. On September 1, 1946, League football returned to England. The rain pelted down but it failed to dampen the keenness of spectators who had not seen a league match for six years. Two years later, former captain Stan Cullis took charge as manager, and Billy Wright replaced him as leader on the field. Within a year, the club were runners-up in the League and winners of the FA Cup for the first time in 41 years. The FA Cup triumph in 1949 came in a 3-1 victory over Leicester City at Wembley. That and finishing runners-up in the League were tremendous achievements by Cullis, who would go on to develop a memorable Wolves side. The next few seasons were the most exciting in the history of the club. The team included other great names such as Bert Williams, Peter Broadbent, Johnny Haynes, and Ron Flowers. In 1954 they won the League championship for the first time in the club’s history, and became champions again in 1955 and 1956. This success was matched by outstanding performances against the best sides in Europe, where they defeated Honved, the Hungarian champions, 3-2 in one of the most exciting and exhilarating games of football ever seen in England. His outstanding performances led to an England call-up, and in 1948 he was made captain. Remarkably, he led the team 90 times – an all-time record that he shared with Bobby Moore – and he was the first football player in the world to earn 100 caps. In 1954 Billy was made centre-half at the World Cup in Sweden by the manager, Walter Winterbottom. Billy retired as a player in 1959. In all, he played 543 games for Wolves and 105 for England – which included a record run of 70 consecutive appearances. He went on to management and then became a television pundit and Head of Sport for ATV and Central Television. 

**Takeover**

In 1990 he joined the board at Wolves as part of the takeover by Sir Jack Hayward and later had a stand named after him. Billy died in 1994. Two years later, a statue of him was erected in his honour outside Molineux, the home of his beloved Wolves. Unequalled for his dedication, determination, loyalty, decency, consistency and unselﬁshness, Billy was a true Englishman. Walter Winterbottom got it right when he said that Billy Wright ‘had a heart of oak’. 

**MEMORY LANE**

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Plans aim to build Co-op store on pub car park site

A CONVENIENCE store could be built on part of a pub car park in Wordsley after Marstons released land to a developer.

More than 200 premises were sold by the pub giant to New River Retail in a reported £50m deal last year.

Now plans have emerged for part of the car park outside the Ashwood Inn, off Sandrigham Place, to be developed.

A notice has been installed at the pub to announce the plans but a formal application has yet to be tabled to Dudley Council. It comes as ward councillors called for more details over the store which would be near a shop vacated.

Ward councillors have been working to fill empty stores in Sandrigham Place with three shops vacant.

Councillor Paul Brookfield has also recently raised the issue of rubbish gathered around the rear of the shops. He has welcomed news of new jobs which the store could bring but urged bosses to look again at the scheme.

Concerns over problems with parking have also been raised if spaces within the car park are lost. “They have not consulted with the locals over this scheme which I have concerns about,” he said.

“I have no objections to the Co-op store as such, especially with bringing in new jobs. But I would ask them to consider whether there could be a redevelopment of the shops too.”

Ward councillor Derrick Hemingsley, added: “When they put the application in I would say that rather than building another shop in the area I would hope they would consider utilising the existing shops.”

Support supply for power grid

A SMALL-SCALE electricity plant could be built in Dudley to supply support in the region, under new plans.

UK Power Reserve wants to operate four gas-fueled engine generators on land behind Jewson timber yard off Pedmore Road.

In a planning application by the Solihull firm, it says the generators would be turned on when supply on the National Grid was short. Bosses claim the plant will not generate any noise or emissions.

A support document from the firm said: “The proposed development site will produce electricity that will help support the local grid.”

Dudley Council will make a decision in the coming weeks.

Final few days to save...

“We’re clearing large quantities of lounge, dining, living and bedroom furniture!”

• ALL STOCK MUST GO!
• THIS WEEKEND ONLY!
• DOORS CLOSE SUNDAY 5pm!

Free insulation for borough residents

DUDLEY Council is offering free loft and cavity wall insulation to homeowners in the borough as part of its Winter Warthm service.

The offer is being funded through the government’s Energy Company Obligation, which means that electricity and gas suppliers have to help homes become more energy-efficient and to reduce carbon emissions.

The funding is on offer for a limited time. Homeowners do not need to be receiving benefits and simply need to be a resident in Dudley borough.

Councillor Gaye Partridge, cabinet member for housing, said: “I would encourage borough homeowners to get in touch with the Winter Warthm service to claim their free loft and wall insulation. This insulation can save the average household up to £250 per year on heating bills.”

The council’s Winter Warthm service can be contacted on (01384) 817686.

A MUSICAL society in Stourbridge is tuning up for a special concert to commemorate the First World War.

A Musical society in Stourbridge is tuning up for a special concert to commemorate the First World War.
DUDLEY Council was accused of “lacking leadership” in a stormy meeting over £27 million worth of cuts.

Draft budget proposals including a rise in burial fees and streets and parks being maintained less often, were approved by the decision-making cabinet last week.

The cuts equal £27m of the £57m in savings the council needs to find by 2017/18 and put around 300 jobs at risk.

In a bad-tempered meeting, Councillor Patrick Harley, leader of the Conservative opposition, said the council should consider using different ways of delivering its services to help make the all-important savings, pointing to a film overheard in children’s social services.

“Time and time again we are being told it is out of control. Families and children will need help from the authority and this is not being addressed,” Councillor Harley said.

“The figures change every time we have a cabinet meeting. We are told that it is not a problem but it’s clear that things need to change. There is a complete lack of leadership.”

Councillor Harley suggested that cabinet members would “pass the buck” to council officers.

But Councillor Tim Crumpton, children’s services boss, said: “There will be no passing of the buck, quite the opposite, as we will work very hard with the officers to make sure we keep the children safe.”

A rise in the £1.2 billion council budget, to £1.26 billion, means that it is not a problem but it’s clear that things need to change. There is a complete lack of leadership.

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A COMMUNITY centre in Dudley had a major refurbishment work.

Thomas Dudley carried out the work at St Thomas’ network in Bowerroad West. The centre’s main hall and committee room, as well as improving several smaller rooms.

The main hall was named after Thomas Dudley, while the committee room was named after former Dudley Councillor Cyril Woodall.

Former Mayor of Dudley, Mr Woodall, died last year aged 87 after a political career spanning more than 30 years. His two nieces Margaret Silvester and Val Parish cut the ribbon watched by Martin Dudley, Hugh McCrorquodale, of Thomas Dudley, and centre manager Jennifer Gregory.

By Heather Large

Mr Woodall was mayor of the borough in 1990-91 and was awarded the title of honorary alderman for his outstanding services to Dudley.

He was awarded the MBE in 2007.

“We are so grateful for the company’s work. They have done an amazing job upgrading the entire centre.

The network was set up more than 20 years ago to boost community spirit in a deprived area of Dudley. It provides training in English and on computers. There is a youth club and a nursery at the site.

Mr Woodall was mayor of the borough in 1990-91 and was awarded the title of honorary alderman for his outstanding services to Dudley.

So if you’re looking for a bargain, now is the time. Hurry, stock moving fast!

Stock is arriving daily, with many one off bargains that won’t be repeated as well as leading brand names, for immediate delivery. There’s also massive discounts on all made to order items, so you can choose exactly what suits your home.

This event offers a great opportunity to buy up to 70% on an unrivalled selection of furniture, carpets, beds and homewares.

A CRACKDOWN on rogue landlords who offer poor quality homes in Dudley has been hailed a success.

The programme, run by Dudley Council and West Midlands Police, aims to tackle a range of issues. It includes taking action against property owners who have sub-divided properties in multiple bedsits without relevant permission.

As a result of the operation, which started last year, a number of benefit claims have been withdrawn and notices have been served on five properties to enable the council to complete a change of use charge.

The programme has also resulted in a prosecution for failure to comply with enforcement notices and a landlord fined £12,000.

By Margaret Silvester and Val Parish with Martin Dudley, Hugh McCrorquodale, and manager Jennifer Gregory

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Guilty

Latif Rehman, of Lerdwood Road, Birmingham, pleaded guilty to 14 offences, including not being licensed as a private landlord.

Rehman admitted a string of offences for failing to comply with the Housing Act 2004.

In mitigation, 55-year-old Rehman told the court a misunderstanding and misjudgment had occurred.

He said he had discovered as many as five people living in some of the rooms and when he had confronted the tenant he had been threatened with violence and had to call the police.

The court also heard that the landlord had done little to co-operate with the local authority in relation to issues at the property, despite requests for it to be brought up to standards, with a letter to a request for a warrant to enter the premises.

Councillor Judy Foster said: “This operation proves what can be achieved when we work together to make more efficient and effective enforcement procedures.

The operation has seen council enforcement officers working closely with benefit fraud, building control and private-sector housing teams. The scheme has been acknowledged by a national planning award. The winner will be announced on November 18.

Solicitor Rob Simpson of West Midlands Police said: “This was the result of a joint effort out to ensure landlords provide both high standards and an appropriate level of accommodation for any tenants.”

The brewery will be celebrating its 100th anniversary next year and is in the midst of putting in a new brewery extension.

The shop is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, 9am to noon on Saturday and 10am to noon on Sunday.

A DUDLEY brewery has launched its own brand of port scratchings to complement its beers.

The Holms’ Scratchings will be sold at all of its pubs. They are already on sale in the shops at the Hopkin Brewery, off Sedgley Broadway, Westwood. The 100 gramme bags cost £2.39 in the shop, which also stocks a range of branded beef sausages.

Managing director Jonathan Holms said they were far above the stock in about 10 of the brewery’s pubs. They are being made for Holms by a company in the UK and are rolled in the shop.

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The Holms’ Scratchings will be sold at all of its pubs. They are already on sale in the shops at the Hopkin Brewery, off Sedgley Broadway, Westwood. The 100 gramme bags cost £2.39 in the shop, which also stocks a range of branded beef sausages.

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Scheme to help solve family strife saves £40m

DUDLEY Council has saved more than £40 million helping troubled families turn their lives around.

More than 2,200 of these families across the region potentially costing taxpayers £468 million a year are being helped by local authorities and partners as part of a Government programme.

Troubled families are defined as those who are involved in youth crime or anti-social behaviour, have children who are regularly truanting and have an adult on out-of-work benefits. Across the Black Country, 4,850 families are labelled as such.

In Dudley the £40m, has been saved by helping 536 of its 740 identified families.

Dudley Council was granted £2m per family and is one of only two authorities in the West Midlands to be awarded more funding towards its programme. Around 750 families were offered help during the first two years of the scheme and now the authority has revealed that it hopes to support a further 2,500.

The council will reach out to families with a broader range of problems including domestic violence and abuse with younger children who need help and a range of physical and mental health problems.

The Government says these families cost the public sector an estimated average of £75,000 per year. Government data collected in October and November 2011 estimated that £5bn is spent annually on troubled families.

Secretary of State Eric Pickles said: “The Troubled Families programme demonstrates exactly what our long-term economic plan means for people: new opportunities for families to turn their lives around and make something of themselves.”

The programme was launched in the wake of the 2011 riots.

Bev in annual gig to raise cash for charity

Bev Pegg and No Good Time Jazz Gang will be performing in aid of charities at Hagley this weekend.

BLACK Country musician Bev Pegg will be performing at an annual charity event aimed at helping the staff behind food service which helps needy families.

Top clarinetist and saxophonist Zoltan Sagy is appearing at Hagley Community Centre on Saturday alongside Bev and his Good Time Jazz Gang.

The Rotary Club of Stourbridge is hosting the event with cash raised helping the Black Country Food Bank together with other rotary charities.

Pegg, from Halesowen, and his band have been performing at this function every autumn since 1998.

The event takes place from 7.30pm at the community centre, off Worcestershire Lane, Hagley, near Stourbridge.

Pegg will be singing, playing guitar and banjo, alongside his line-up musicians.

Tickets are £14 each including fish and chip supper. They can be bought from Chris Fonteyn, at 24 Field Lane, Oldswinford, Stourbridge or by calling (01384) 376965.

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, November 6, 2014
Artist books in her inspirational works at library

THERE is an added touch of fantasy at Stourbridge Library after an artist donated four out-of-this-world murals for its children’s section.

Natalie Perry, from Wollaston, had wanted to help spruce up the walls for several years but it was not until its refurbishment as part of the Crown Centre development she was given the go-ahead.

She hopes the four paintings— which were unveiled last week— will inspire the next generation of bookworms.

Process

The project has proved to be a labour of love for the 29-year-old, with the whole process from design to creation taking two years.

She said: “It started with workshops I put on where we got the community to come in. We had children with their parents and a few adults on their own.

“I asked them what were their favourite books and what were their favourite parts of books.

“We also asked them why it was they came into the library, took inspiration from what came out and then pieced together the four murals.”

Each mural is centred on a different setting including a dark woodland, an underwater scene and winter.

The fourth, fiery image includes a Hobbit-inspired dragon, one of several characters taken from popular children’s books.

It has been very much a family project for Natalie—a part-time art technician at King Edward VI College, Stourbridge—with husband and fellow artist Luke helping to cut the boards and a baby girl arriving just a few months after work began.

She added: “I have had to find time when ever I could over the last year. I’ve been working in nap times and bed times.

“I hope my work will make the space feel more happy. They are all colourful and bright and should help liven up the space.

“What would be really great would be if the children started to pick their favourite characters from those on display.”

One of the four new murals for the library

The entrance to Town Hall and Library at the Crown Centre

One of the new murals for the childrens section of Stourbridge library

Artist Natalie Perry, left, and library assistant Sophie Norton with the four new murals
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**FOCUS ON BLACKHEATH & ROWLEY REGIS**

**Traffic measures begin after ten year campaign**

WORK has begun on a £75,000 traffic calming scheme in Rowley Regis after concerned residents launched a petition.

Almost 150 people called for action as part of a ten year campaign to get the improvements implemented along Harvest Road. Work began on Monday and improvements include new signage and speed bumps as well as an illuminated sign which will activate during school run periods to warn motorists. Two new cycle lanes will also be implemented.

Lee Bromley, who lives on the road and started the petition, said: “This is a victory in a very long running battle. I first became involved around ten years ago after my son Kurt was knocked over on the road when he was just eight.

“There have been several accidents since then and the road is just very dangerous. You can basically take for granted that there will be at least a few a year.”

Earlier this year a car left the carriage way and ended up on its roof in a garden.

Mr Bromley added: “There have been petitions to introduce road safety measures before, but it never went anywhere. It does feel as though the accidents are becoming more commonplace and I think that was what gave it the final push.”

All of the signatures on the petition are from residents just on Harvest Road, according to Mr Bromley, but he says that the problem extends further.

“We did not get signatures from the nearby Brickhouse Estate but I do have plans to work on getting the same measures for nearby roads,” Mr Bromley said. “These measures will go some way to solving the problem but they will need to be extended to those roads to solve it completely.”

Mr Bromley said although residents have been warned there will be disruption he believed it will be worth it.

“Even if it saves just one life it will be worth it,” he said.

Councillor Susan Reeves, who lives on Harvest Road, said: “It is about time these measures were implemented. They are much needed and much wanted.”

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**Hundreds attend MP’s jobs fair**

**APPROX 400 people** flocked to the Black Loves and Rowley Regis Jobs and Skills Fair.

The event was organised by MP James Morris and was held at the Zion Christian Centre in Halesowen.

The fair saw 25 organisation showcasing jobs, apprenticeships and training opportunities including national companies. Careers advice was available from the Black Country Skills Factory and Connexions.

Mr Morris said: “Even though local unemployment continues to fall, we still need to do everything possible to help people in Halesowen and Rowley Regis to find work and to gain the skills and qualifications they need.

“I spoke to all of the companies and knew how impressed they were with the quality of the people at the jobs and skills fair.”

**Poppy Day at memorial**

**A REMEMBRANCE Sunday service** will be held in Rowley Regis.

The service will take place at Rowley Regis War Memorial at Powke Lane Cemetery at 10.45 am with a parade from Highgate Street Fire Station in Cradley Heath beforehand.

It is crunch time work at the cemetery, those attending are asked not to park cars at the cemetery grounds between 10.15am and 12.15pm to ensure there is standing room.

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**Look no hands – Barry Smith, AKA Barry Schmit, of the Black Country Accordion Club**

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Council boss furious that public views brushed aside

THE leader of Sandwell Council has hit out at a ‘ludicrous’ decision by officers to choose a revamp scheme for Birchley Island not favoured by many motorists.

Councillor Darren Cooper criticised the council officers’ option last week, as he deferred the overhaul of the heavily congested road at Oldbury for plans to be re-examined.

Plans for the island were put out to consultation in recent months with four options put forward. More than 7,000 people responded through questionnaires and Facebook.

Hamburger
Councillor officers had recommended a two-way ‘hamburger’ island be installed at the congestion hotspot. But more than half of public views were in favour of a different option, costing £12.9m, which would create a traffic junction similar to that at Burnt Tree on the Dudley and Sandwell border.

The council’s preferred option would involve Wolverhampton Road being extended on a new roadway through the roundabout to create a two-way ‘hamburger’ island, which could cost around £12.7m.

Councillor Cooper said: “I pulled the report because I am not happy with the fact that we had consultations on four options and the option that was the favourite was not the one that was recommended.”

“I have therefore instructed the chief executive of the council to look into why this option was recommended. The decision has been deferred pending the chief executive reporting back to me. It is ludicrous and I will not accept it. The chief executive needs to explain why this option was recommended. What is the point of a consultation otherwise?”

Motorists and business owners had called for improvements to roundabout bust at Oldbury, near junction two of the M5. The scheme preferred by most motorists was dismissed by of ficers who claimed it would fail to halt traffic jams.

Economy chief Councillor Ian Jones added: “The report has been deferred while we take another look at the information we have and the cost ben efit analysis. More than 50 per cent wanted one option and the other op tion was then recommended.”

“The consultation with the public costs just £554 for a project that will cost more than £12m. We are looking at an important scheme affecting more than 80,000 drivers each day. We also realise that the council option selected was not aligned with what the public said and we need to look at why that was.”

Roadshow gathers family stories of war

FAMILIES are being invited to share and discover the weekend at the Great War Roadshow at the Dudley Archives.

It is being hosted by Dudley Council and The Black Country Living Museum.

The roadshow will feature displays, costumed characters, life stories, photographs and souvenirs from the period and all relating to people from Dudley borough. People are also being asked to bring in their own First World War pictures, life stories, photographs and souvenirs to share their stories with war historians.

A programme of captivating Great War talks will be given at the event taking place on Saturday, from 10am to 4pm, at the centre in Tipton Road, next to The Black Country Living Museum.

Police to sell off Steelhouse Lane station

THE £30 million revamp of the West Midlands Police headquarters is set to be completed by September 2016.

Now the 3,000-strong staff have already been re-loved from Lloyd House in Birmingham city centre in preparation for the building work that is scheduled to start in January.

Phased
The redevelopment of the building is due to take 87 weeks to complete. The phased return of employees will be in November of next year.

The final phase of the refurbishment will see completion of the police station within Lloyd House that will replace the landmark Steelhouse Lane station, retaining that building for sale a report to the force’s Strategic Policing and Crime Board revealed.

The exact cost of the revamp, which will be a fixed price contract, is expected to be finalised shortly but it could be £31.5 million.

Meanwhile, West Midlands Police insists that it remains business as usual despite staff who normally work in Lloyd House being distributed between a variety of temporary accommodation within the city.

Shake-up may see changes to bin collections

RUBBISH bins will be collected over four days instead of five as part of a shake-up of workers’ hours being considered by officers in Sandwell.

S砜, which runs bins, green waste and recycling collections in the borough, has written to staff to outline proposals.

In the letter issued to staff, employees have been told they would cease to work on Mondays as part of a drive to create a ‘better work-life balance’.

Staff would continue to work a 37-hour week under the plan, but this would be over four days from Tuesday to Friday.

In a letter to staff, John Mason, Serco’s general contract manager, said there would have to be a ‘total re-route and more efficient working’ in the department.

The union Unite are in discussions over the changes.

Talks
Sandwell Councillor Maria Crompton, who is in charge of highways for the authority, confirmed talks had been held with staff.

But she reiterated that no final decision had been taken over staff working conditions or changes to deliveries at this stage.

One worker, who did not wish to be named, said: “We have been speaking to the union and they have their concerns. 

“I’m concerned for my job and what is going to happen in the future if we go to four days a week.”
Group campaigning to save Hippodrome miss key deadline

CAMPAIGNERS have missed a deadline to lodge fresh plans to run Dudley Hippodrome.

The Friends of Dudley Hippodrome were hoping to lodge a fresh business plan to run the landmark theatre and were vying with a developer who wants to turn it into a £8 million entertainment venue.

Both groups were told to have their plans submitted to Dudley Council by October 31. The developer, ROK Group, has done so but the friends organisation had not, claiming council bosses didn’t give them access to the theatre quick enough.

Members of the Friends of Dudley Hippodrome also say that officials from the local authority would only give them restricted access once inside. They say they are hoping to now get a business plan to the council this week but admit it won’t be complete.

Dudley Council said work to evaluate the ROK Group proposal is underway. Both groups were given a day’s access to the venue earlier this month.

Friends chairman Gordon Downing said they were disappointed not to be allowed into the theatre’s basement, where they hope to hold gigs. Mr Downing said: “It was the main area that we wanted to look at.” Group member Gaz Sayers added: “We have been asking for access for ages and it was only in the last few days we have got it and it was very restricted.”

Dudley regeneration boss Councillor Judy Foster said: “We have been working with the friends group for around two and half years and given them ample opportunity to submit a realistic business plan.

“Last week we also gave members access to parts of the building that were safe, however, some parts are too dangerous to venture into because of asbestos.

“However, we cannot allow this issue to drag on, which is costing the tax-payer considerable amounts of money in allowing the building to deteriorate further.”

Two Tories make move to Labour

TWO Dudley councillors who switched allegiance to Labour said they felt the Conservative government was “out of touch with the needs of working people”.

Councillors Cheryl Billingham and Glenis Simms last week announced their defection. The pair, who have been councillors for three years, were met outside Dudley Council House by Labour’s Transport Shadow Secretary Mary Creagh MP.

Kingwinford North and Wall Heath’s Councillor Billingham said: “The Conservative Party is out of touch with the concerns of ordinary people in Dudley. We have always worked (but) with a red rosette.”

By Andrew Turton

Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, November 6, 2014

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 chronicle
Fond farewell to our dear mom
Sylvie, proud to be an Aston Wench

Our Mom, Sylvie Chinn nee Perry, was always singing.
Whatever she was doing she’d sing, but the times I remember best were when she sang on a Sunday along with ‘Two Way Family Favourites’ on the Light Programme.

Mom would be in the kitchen getting the roast ready for dinner and we’d hear her beautiful voice joining in with Sarah Vaughan, her great favourite, Tony Bennett, Nat King Cole, Billy Eckstine and others.

Songs played a big part in her life. One of her earliest memories was of sitting in the big shelter in her yard in Whitehouse Street, Aston, with her mom and dad and neighbours, and joining in the sing-songs that kept up their spirits as the bombs pounded down on working-class Birmingham. Pregnant with me, Our Mom was only four when the bombing started. Like so many others she was fetched back home during the Peace War.

And then in the late summer of 1940, the Blitz began. Our Mom remembered one particular night of fear when Our Nan and Grennald, Arthur Perry, grabbed her in her night-clothes, held her in their arms and with everyone else in their yard rushed down the middle of Whitehouse Street to the big underground shelter of Powell and Hamner’s.

When me and Our Kid, Darryl, were youngsters and we listened to such stories we found it hard to believe that there could be any happiness or fun during such terrible times. Yet there was. Our Aunt Winnie was one of Nan’s younger sisters and she was very close with Our Mom. Winnie used to titter about sending Mom to fetch her sand from the bomb pecks so that she could wet it and rub it on her legs. Then she’d get a black pencil and put a line down the back of each of her calves.

That way when she went dancing she looked like she had stockings on. There was a problem, though: when she jitterbugged the chaps would throw her around, her freck would go up and you could see the whites of her legs above her knees.

Space

Mom spent a lot of time with Our Winnie because when Our Nan married, she and Grennald got a house in the same street as Our Mom. Granny Wood. Granny had 12 children and it was very difficult finding space for them all to sleep in a small, two-bedroomed back-to-back which downstairs only had one room and a tiny scullery. So with Nan having a spare bedroom just across the street at 7 back of 6, she took in Winnie who used to sleep in the double bed in the attic with Mom. Mom always emphasised to us that she was fortunate to grow up knowing that she had the love of her Mom and Dad, grandparents, aunt, uncles and cousins and to live in a street filled with love. At the heart of that love the inspirational Granny Wood. Mom was always proud to be a backstreet Brummie and an Aston wench, even though she had moved away when she married Dad at eighteen. And although her house had been long gone and there was an open space where her old yard was, Mom always saw it in her mind.

She was proud to come out of Whitehouse Street. Mom’s wish was for us to take her back to Aston when she died. And we did. We took her down her street and past her old yard. We remembered her life at Aston Parish Church and the cortège stopped at the Holte End of her beloved Aston Villa on its way to Perry Barr Crematorium. I know this. I am proud to be the son of a proud Aston wench.

BY PROFESSOR CARL CHINN

MEMORY LANE

Our Mom is sixth from the left on the second row when this school photo was taken at St Mary’s School in 1957.

Our next evening starts at 6pm on 11th November 2014 at Village Hotel, Castlegate Drive, Dudley, DY1 4TB

Anna Sharkey, CEO, Adoption Focus said: “This partnership is an excellent development for adopters across the region which will increase opportunities for children in need. Working across different sectors will utilise the considerable skills and expertise of all staff involved in adoption.”

For more information see adoptionblackcountry.co.uk or call 0800 073 0597.
Blizzard warning as Slava’s Snowshow rolls into theatre

BIRMINGHAM is braced for a Blizzard when Slava’s Snowshow rolls into Birmingham Hippodrome on Wednesday, November 12, for a five-day stay.

It is a unique production designed for the entire family. It is a combination of clowning and visual spectacle that invites audiences to enter a dream-like world, in which a cobweb envelops the audience and one tiny piece of paper begins a stunning Blizzard. This production is celebrating the 20th anniversary of its UK debut. Its third visit to Birmingham marks the beginning of its new UK tour and a Christmas season at London’s Royal Festival Hall following three previous sell-outs. The show has now been seen by more than three million people in 30 countries.

Slava’s Snowshow is performed by a world-renowned company of clowns formed by Russian clown prince Slava Polunin, who was influenced by artists such as Chaplin, Marcel Marceau and great Russian clown Leonid Kharitonov. Slav and his company have taken clowning to a new level.

Other theatre highlights include: Philip Glass opera In the Waking, directed by Penny Capp and adapted from Shakespeare’s Othello, and great Russian clown Mabel and made her as star of the group.

Mr Mrs Compton have performed together since before the Yuletide in a Christmas Carol in 2012, but this will be the first time the couple take the lead together in a Creedy Heat Amateur Operatic Society show.

They married at Himley Hall in July this year. Mack & Mabel will run at Brierley Hill Civic Hall from November 11 to 15. Tickets are £14 and can be bought from the box office on 0121 585 7380.

Newly-weds Adam and Liz Compton get ready to play opposite each other in Mack & Mabel!
**SUNDAY’S TV NOVEMBER 9**

### Choices

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**Note:** The schedule includes a variety of shows such as news, dramas, and reality TV. For more information, please visit the respective channels or websites.
**Paying a fitting tribute to our fallen war heroes**

**Monday**

**How Rich Are You?**

Channel 4, 9pm

Unless those winning Lottery numbers paid off, you’re the brains behind an unscrupulous business, for most of us, it’s too tight to mention. However, while many are struggling to make ends meet, others are richer than we thought, and some families are the envy of society. It’s all a question of relativity, and one man’s attempt to put things in context is Richard Bacon. This offbeat special highlights where each of us are in the great money map of Britain – and what that position means. Meanwhile, the police have been officially declared the most unequal society in Europe. Bacon, the experts and the studio audience examine the consequences of the income divide.

**Tuesday**

**The Nation’s Favourite Queen Song**

ITV, 8pm

Some groups can be dismissed with the phrase ‘when you’ve heard one, you’ve heard them all’, but not Queen. From the anarcho-punk We Will Rock You to the disco-influenced Another One Bites the Dust via the completely bonkers We Will Rock You, the operatic Bohemian Rhapsody and the frankly indescribable Bicycle Race, their back catalogue is nothing if not eclectic. It’s one of the reasons they managed to rack up no less than 50 top 30 hits, and are still attracting new fans more than 25 years after Freddie Mercury’s death, and which of their tracks is the nation’s favourite? This countrywide appeal is to find out at a bumper evening of fundraising fun in support of Children in Need, which is the year’s biggest ever live event.

**Wednesday**

**Broadmoor**

ITV, 9pm

Let’s make a bones about it – the first part of this documentary made for rather shocking viewing, and this concluding part doesn’t get much easier. Then again, that’s why before now cameramen haven’t been allowed in the most famous high-security hospital in the world. In tonight’s final instalment, one camera describes his life as ‘satanic’ and ‘insoluble with his abusive childhood, while another is finally considered well enough to leave Broadmoor after spending over a decade there. Meanwhile, the cameras follow patients taking part in a group drugs counselling session and the nursing staff are on some vital training of their own. They’re getting special training in managing small-scale riots flicked out with helmets and shields. Plus, it’s explained how a new hospital is being built nearby to replace the old institution, so we may never see Broadmoor in this light again.

**Thursday**

**The Fall**

BBC2, 9pm

It’s been just over a year since we last saw serial killer Paul Spector, and those of us who were hooked on the first series have been eagerly awaiting the second run to find out what he’s been up to since. Actually, not that much because the drama picks up just 10 days after Spector was seen taking his wife and children away from their Belfast home. However, he has changed dramatically for Jamie Dornan, the actor who plays him; he’s been cast in the eagerly awaited Fifty Shades of Grey movie, which is set to turn him into a major star on both sides of the Atlantic. He’s sure to be running from fans before long, rather than the police. Not that Spector appears to be panicking, although he does have lots of losers ends to lie up in Belfast, especially as his final victim is alive. Gibson likes to help her remember her attacker, but it’s hearing how a face from his past is assisting the police that prompts Spector into drastic – and terrifying – action.

**Friday**

**Children in Need 2014**

BBC1, 7.30pm

Terry Wogan and Tess Daly kick off another bumper evening of fundraising fun in support of disadvantaged children across the UK. The cast of West End hit Charlie and the Chocolate Factory gets the party started before the action moves to Albert Square for a musical performance by the EastEnders stars. There’s also a treat for Doctor Who fans with an exclusive clip. At 8pm, Bruce Forsyth is reunited with Tess Daly to host a junior version of Strictly Come Dancing, and the Children’s Choir sees 2,000 young voices singing in unison across the nation. By 8.30pm One Direction make their first appearance of the evening, and there’s plenty more to come before things wrap up at 11am.

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£69.50

Children under 12

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£9.95 per person

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For a family of 12

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Children under 12

£400

For a family of 12

£99

Children under 12

£400

For a family of 12

£99

Children under 12

£400

For a family of 12

£99

Children under 12

£400

For a family of 12
**BRAIN GYM**

**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.

**Cryptic Clues:**

**Across**
1. Its catch is intended to be unharmed (8-3)
2. Single made in marriage (9)
3. Put the crowd on stage to entertain (4,3,4)
4. Nosey graduate with a spear (7)
5. Be of use back in Australia vacationing (5)
6. Damaged when a heavy object was dropped (9)
7. A team’s incidental remarks (6)
8. A game of bridge (7)
9. Precious stone lies around in Ireland (7-4)
10. Prohibition where sales are sold (3)
11. Very many at the post office (3)
12. Young lady (5-2-2)
13. Great fear, almost, to make a mistake (3,8)
14. Not a single-minded initial into being (6)
15. Every side allowing its catch is intended (6,3)
16. A poet I obtain a drug from (6)
17. Gently push George initially into being naked (5)
18. Not a professional’s song (5)
19. Fatal? (6,3)
20. Every side allowing no half-measures? (6)
21. Not a professional’s article (5)
22. Put the crowd on stage to entertain (4,3,4)
23. A team’s incidental remarks (6)
24. A game of bridge (7)
25. Precious stone lies around in Ireland (7-4)
26. Prohibition where sales are sold (3)

**Down**
1. Australian missile (9)
2. Sheep (3)
3. Remark (11)
4. Ulster (7)
5. Aid (4,7)
6. Respect (6)
7. Positions (4,2,5)
8. Expectations; 7 graffiti; 8 Edinburgh; 9 220; 10 Alexander.
9. Niner: SQUEALING
10. 3697
11. 124468
12. 13697
13. 124468
14. 13697
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18. 13697
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26. 13697

**Quick Clues:**

**Across**
1. Australian missile (9)
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**Down**
1. Sphere (3)
2. Weird (5)
3. Rose (6)
4. Glance (7)
5. Line (5)
6. Tie (6)
7. Guide (5)
8. Look at (3)

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**Double Crossword**

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

**Cryptic Clues:**

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2. Single made in marriage (9)
3. Put the crowd on stage to entertain (4,3,4)
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5. Line (5)
6. Tie (6)
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8. Look at (3)

**Sudoku**

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

**Last Week’s Solutions:**

**Codeword:**

**Across:**
1. In which ocean are the Wake Islands?
2. Which former Spurs star died in December 1993?
3. In which country was gin first produced?
4. Which Russian billionaire bought Chelsea Football Club in 2003?
5. During whose reign was the name Saxe-Coburg-Gotha changed to Windsor?

**Down:**
1. In which year was the US Declaration of Independence issued?
2. Which former Spurs star died in December 1993?
3. In which ocean are the Wake Islands?
4. Which Russian billionaire bought Chelsea Football Club in 2003?
5. During whose reign was the name Saxe-Coburg-Gotha changed to Windsor?
Five-bedroom home is at head of cul-de-sac

A FIVE-BEDROOM detached house at the head of a cul-de-sac, The Lawley, Halesowen, is for sale through Hicks Hadley at £279,950.

With double glazing and gas central heating it has an entrance hall with laminate floor, a lounge, large dining kitchen and patio doors to conservatory, utility room, cloakroom, bedroom one with wardrobes, bedroom two with laminate flooring, L-shaped bedroom three, four/four study and bedroom five with a storage cup. There is a bathroom and a garage, driveway and gardens. Contact Hicks Hadley on 01562 510440 or visit www.hickshadley.com

House has an apartment and a swimming pool

THIS detached house includes a stunning first floor open plan apartment and a swimming pool.

This property in Oldnall Road, Kidderminster, is for sale through Morris & Co at £745,000.

It has two offices and a large games/hobbies room. A spiral staircase leads up to the flat, with open plan living/kitchen with appliances and double bedroom on suits with hydrotherapy shower cubicle. There is also a large reception hall, WC, superb lounge with marble fireplace, an impressive conservatory, sitting room, breakfast kitchen with central island, breakfast bar, great size lounge, double glazing, open plan lounge/kitchen and diner with patio doors, 2 double bedrooms, brand new bathroom with shower, downstairs WC and cloakroom, large pristine rear garden with open views.

For info, contact Allan Morris & Co on 01562 747755 or visit www.allan-morris.co.uk

Contact Alliance Morris & Co on 0121 585 6667 for further details.
The NX 300h has technology and refinement in spades but it’s up against stiff competition.

This is more of a case of what isn’t new, because the NX is fresh off the drawing board as a little brother to the much-respected RX. If the RX 400h hybrid was the father of socially-acceptable SUVs, the NX 300h is a not-so-distant cousin.

The styling is as sharp as a supermodel’s face, and you’ll probably either love it or hate it. That’s what Lexus wants, because you can’t please everybody and it’s better to please some people a lot than fade into the background. The NX is no shrinking violet, as long as you avoid silver. There’s a completely new colour option that layers ordinary paint over a highly compressed layer of flake to create a deeper, more kris-

tuous shine. Even in white the difference is obvious – and deliciously premium.

The drive is impressively refined, with supple suspension, decent body control and super-smooth response from the hybrid powertrain. It’s not that hard to accelerate gently away using just the electric motor, but on the other hand the outright performance is nothing Usain Bolt would get excited about. There’s no two ways about it – it’s pretty pedestrian. At least the seats are worth a postcard home. Big, perfectly supportive and highly adjustable, the only caveat is for drivers who like their seat back very upright, at which point the forward-leaning anti-whiplash headrests become a pain.

The styling is as sharp as a supermodel’s face, and you’ll probably either love it or hate it. That’s what Lexus wants, because you can’t please everybody and it’s better to please some people a lot than fade into the background. The NX is no shrinking violet, as long as you avoid silver. There’s a completely new colour option that layers ordinary paint over a highly compressed layer of flake to create a deeper, more kris-

exas. But check this out for a practical feature – the bottle holder in the centre console has a high-friction base so you can open twist-cap drinks with one hand. Very neat.

There’s also an induction charging pad that needs no wires to charge a compatible handset. You’re basically driving the future.

For the most part the NX is high quality, especially the leathers. There are one or two small bits of Toyota-spec plastic but they’re easy to ignore. The touch-pad computer interface is actually more intuitive and convenient than you might initially give it credit for, too. The drive is impressively refined, with supple suspension, decent body control and super-smooth response from the hybrid powertrain. It’s not that hard to accelerate gently away using just the electric motor, but on the other hand the outright performance is nothing Usain Bolt would get excited about. There’s no two ways about it – it’s pretty pedestrian. At least the seats are worth a postcard home. Big, perfectly supportive and highly adjustable, the only caveat is for drivers who like their seat back very upright, at which point the forward-leaning anti-whiplash headrests become a pain.

The NX has stiff opposition from its German arch-enemies, but it’s more than good enough to win fans at the mid-range Luxury price of £34,495. Classic FM-smooth hybrid drive is a big selling point and the NX is fresh off the drawing board as a little brother to the much-respected RX. If the RX 400h is a much-respected RX, the NX is a clever car, and a lot of people should appreciate its comfort, gadgets and generally premium feel. This deserves to be the car that boosts Lexus UK sales to the next level.

This car summed up in a single word: Advanced. If this car was an animal: It would be a chimpanzee. It’s intelligent, versatile and well put-together.
Meriva has real appeal for family car buyers

By David Banner

It used to be so difficult. You wanted a vehicle with decent economy that could do the family duties, yet had something about it when you pressed the throttle pedal. Trying to square those requirements for a reasonable budget could tie even the most knowledgeable car enthusiast in knots.

These days things are a whole lot easier. If you want to know how easy, just go to a Vauxhall dealer and cajole them into lending you a Meriva 1.6 CDTI diesel. It’s a car that’s been steadily improved over the course of its lifetime, but replacing the old 1.7-litre diesel lump with a smaller but more modern, powerful and economical engine has given this particular Meriva real appeal for family buyers.

Developing a healthy 136hp, this Euro6-compliant motor serves up a supersized 320Nm of torque at just 2,000rpm, which lends it a hugely muscular feel. In fact this Meriva will get to 60mph in just 9.9 seconds and Vauxhall has worked at improving the quality of the six-speed manual gearbox so that changes are slicker and gear engagement more reassuring. Refinement at speed is a notable strong point, with the engine only really becoming vocal at around 4,000rpm, at which point you will have probably upshifted anyway.

Chassis dynamics have never really been a Meriva high point. The steering in the Meriva is accurate but doesn’t feel really synthetic in feel. Nevertheless, the car generally feels very substantial and reassuring to drive, with plenty of grip and safe, predictable handling. Ride quality is firm but the advantage of this is that body roll is very well controlled.

This facelifted second generation Meriva gets a revised grille, but the chrome accents that frame the front fog lamps aren’t so obvious. The headlights seem to have soaked up much of the budget and now feature an ‘eagle-eye’ graphic. For the first time, LED daytime running lights and LED tail lights are available as an option. If you’re in the mood to tick options boxes, you can also pay extra for some 18-inch alloy wheels.

The Meriva still differentiates itself from its many rivals via its rear-hinged back doors. The advantage of this design comes when entering and exiting the vehicle as the doors open to an angle of almost 90 degrees and you can step straight out unhindered. It also helps parents when they’re strapping the kids in or lifting child car seats because there’s no door in the way to manoeuvre around. The interior itself is based around the FlexSpace seating system which allows the rear seats to fold down and slide individually. Splitting the cabin on the plusher models is the FlexRail, a pair of metal runners between the front seats that various modular storage bins and arm rests can be clipped to and slid along. It’s all very clever but when those who have a thing for plastic quality might feel that some parts of the Meriva’s cabin – especially rearwards from the front seats – shows clear signs of cost-cutting. Still, that’s the case with many of its rivals. It goes with the territory at this price point.

Variations

Whereas you used to have legions of trim level variations to waste through in order to find the Meriva you wanted, with this 1.6-litre CDTI, things are a whole lot more straightforward. You either pay just over £18,000 and buy the S trim or you pay just over £21,000 and bag yourself the SE specification. The S isn’t badly finished with an ESP-plus electronic stability control system, front airbags, an electric parking brake, a CD / MP3 CD player / stereo radio with USB and AUX-in socket, electric front windows, electrically adjustable and heated door mirrors, remote central deadlocking, front side airbags and door-to-door illumination.

Go for the up-spec SE version and you’ll find refinements such as a panoramic glass sunroof, 17-inch alloy wheels, folding seatback trays and under-seat drawers, a trip computer, cruise control, curtain airbags, leather trim for the steering wheel and gear shifter and heating for both the seats and the wheel.

There are many MPV or SUV owners who have looked at the cost of petrol and diesel derivatives of the same car; done the calculations and decided that based on how many miles they do, they’d never justify the additional expense of the diesel variant. So they buy the petrol model and soon come to realise that the torque deficit you get with entry-level petrol engines requires you to flog them really hard to make progress. They look at their economy figures and then realise the error of their ways. They should have bought a car like this Meriva 1.6 CDTI.

Emissions are also kept well in check at just 116g/km CO₂, which, like the economy figure, is even better than the lowly 1.3-litre CDTI diesel engine you can also have fitted in your Meriva.

Residual values ought to be strong as well, with many buyers being attracted to the Meriva range’s best and most economical powerplant.
By Graham Breeze

Vauxhall this week unveiled the brand’s most significant car in years with the arrival of a new Corsa.

The supermini is already the third best selling car in Britain but Vauxhall are clearly unhappy to be trailing behind Ford’s Fiesta and have come up with a real option.

I’ve long been boring friends and work colleagues about the virtues of Ford’s amazing 1.0 litre EcoBoost so today I’m feeling a little smug that Vauxhall has also recognised its strengths and come up with a genuine rival with a one-litre, three cylinder engine.

You can choose from either 89bhp or 113bhp engines – the 113 being the quickest option available – with improved shift quality and providing greater overall efficiency.

The new Corsa is the first small Vauxhall to be available with the new six-speed, torque converter automatic transmission giving an increased number of ratios.

The new Corsa has a heated front screen – a first for Vauxhall – and £450 will give you an advanced parking system, complete with rear view cameras and side blind spot alerts.

Without testing the model it’s hard to explain just how impressive the drive is. It’s quiet around town or when being asked to perform and amazing technology means it pulls surprisingly well to reach top speeds.

There’s enough room in the back for three passengers, though you would not be comfortable over long journeys, and the 285 litre boot is big enough for most things but not the golf clubs. The 60-40 split rear seats don’t fold completely flat either.

The outgoing Corsa has been a sales phenomenon for Vauxhall and has been the company’s best-selling car for many years, vying with Fiesta for the UK’s Number One spot and topping sales charts in Scotland and Northern Ireland outright.

In its last full year, 84,000 were sold, and the UK is now the lead market for Corsa by a large margin – Germany was the second biggest market in 2013 with around 50,000 sales.

Make no mistake this fourth generation Corsa is a big deal for Vauxhall and a fortune has been invested to ensure it becomes the company’s most important player. Friends and colleagues beware! I’m going to be preaching about the amazing three cylinder 1.0 litre Corsa engine for a very long time.
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The Crown Jewels and Thames Dinner Cruise
Two days departing May 17 and September 20

PRICE FROM £169

This two-day break combines a visit to the Tower of London, one of the city’s most fascinating sights, with a dinner cruise - the perfect way to enjoy spectacular views of some of the capital’s most famous attractions.

The world heritage sight of the Tower of London is steeped in the past and gives an insight into hundreds of years of fascinating history. Join one of the Yeoman Warders for a guided tour and hear tales of intrigue, imprisonment and execution.

Take a look at the Royal Armouries exhibition in the White Tower which includes the body armour worn by Henry VIII; stroll round the medieval palace; learn about the legend of the famous ravens, and of course marvel at the priceless and truly breathtaking Crown Jewels.

Tower Pier is the joining point for the evening cruise on the River Thames with a hot two-course buffet dinner and a glass of wine included.

Cruise past such sights as St Paul’s Cathedral, the stunning replica of Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre and the famous Millennium Bridge before reaching the London Eye situated opposite the Houses of Parliament and Big Ben. Heading back down river Canary Wharf and historic Greenwich are seen before disembarking back at Tower Pier.

Anton and Erin’s Christmas Cracker at the Royal Albert Hall
Two days departing December 21

PRICE FROM £129

• Return coach travel
• Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
• Ticket in the choir (upgrades offered)
• Short panoramic London sightseeing tour
• Services of a tour manager
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

New Year London Theatre
Three days departing December 30

PRICE FROM £249.95

• Return coach travel
• Two nights bed and breakfast accommodation at an outer London hotel
• Dinner and after dinner disco in the hotel on New Year’s Eve
• Standard priced ticket for the evening performance of a choice of West End shows on December 30 (with coach transfer ticket upgrades offered)
• Services of a coach driver/ tour representative
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Omega Short Breaks (ABTA Y5914)

London by Rail
Two days various weekend departure dates

PRICE FROM £119.95

• Return standard class rail travel (upgrade offered)
• Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation at a choice of four-star central London hotels
• Free time in London
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Three-day option also offered from £169.95

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782, ATOL 6081)

Self-drive London Theatre breaks
Two days various weekend departure dates

PRICE FROM £89.95

• Return flights
• Bed and breakfast accommodation at the three-star Mayfair or Metropole hotel in St Helier
• Return airport to hotel transfers in Jersey
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Middom Holidays (ABTA V5010, ATOL 0752)

Call the Midwife
Two days departing May 16, Jul 25, Oct 3

PRICE FROM £125

• Return coach travel
• Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
• Visit with entrance to London’s Dockyard in Chatham, including a 90-minute guided Call the Midwife tour
• Visit to Canterbury
• Services of a tour manager
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

In Search of the Northern Lights
Evening excursion departing January 21, February 16 and 18

PRICE FROM £199.95

• Pre-flight illustrated presentation by expert astronomers
• Flight in search of the Northern Lights of 3-3½ hours
• Services of the astronomers on board
• Light refreshments on board
• Services of a tour manager

Organised by Omega Holidays (ABTA V4782, ATOL 6081)

Bletchley Park The Secrets of War
Two days departing May 23 and October 3

PRICE FROM £119

• Return coach travel
• Overnight half-board accommodation
• Visit to Bletchley Park
• Free time in Oxford
• Services of a tour manager
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

Jersey
Four to eight days
Departures January to December 2015

PRICE FROM £285

• Return flights
• Bed and breakfast accommodation at the three-star Mayfair or Metropole hotel in St Helier
• Return airport to hotel transfers in Jersey
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Special offers for bookings made before March 31 - see brochure for details

Organised by Middom Holidays (ABTA V5010, ATOL 0752)

Paris by Eurostar
Four days various departure dates 2015

PRICE FROM £279

• Return standard class seat on Eurostar
• Return rail connection to London (selected dates)
• Return coach transfers overseas
• Three nights bed and breakfast accommodation
• Guided sightseeing tours of Paris by day and night
• Visits to Versailles and Montmartre
• Services of a tour manager
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally
Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744)

André Rieu and the Johann Strauss Orchestra in Prague
Four days departing May 21

PRICE FROM £529

• Return coach travel and Channel crossings
• Three nights bed and breakfast accommodation
• Category 3 ticket to see André Rieu and The Johann Strauss Orchestra at the O2 Arena in Prague (ticket upgrade offered)
• Guided tours of Seville and the Alhambra Palace in Granada
• Visits to Cordoba and Ronda
• Services of a tour manager
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally
Organised by Newmarket Air holidays (ABTA V7812, ATOL 2325)

Classical Spain
Seven days various departure dates 2015

PRICE FROM £539

• Return flights
• Six nights bed and breakfast accommodation
• Guided tours of Seville and the Alhambra Palace in Granada
• Visits to Cordoba and Ronda
• Services of a tour manager
• Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

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Burton go for Old Hales to take points

OLD Halesonians Hockey Club Men’s 1st XI suffered a heavy defeat against Old Halesonians XI suffered a heavy defeat against Old Halesonians XI suffered a heavy defeat against Old Halesonians.

The second half was a period to forget for Old Hales as they were torn apart by the Burton counter-attack.

Several quick goals left Hales 5-1 down, and facing little chance of making a comeback.

Paul Woodall finally got a consolation goal for Old Hales, but the sides were also suffering with injury woes towards the closing periods. 

Hales welcomed table-toppers Shrewsbury to Ormiston Forge at the weekend.

Old Hales started brightly and soon took the lead thanks to a goal from Joe Thorne. A second goal was soon added thanks to a short corner being well finished by Dan Millar.

Shrewsbury, who realised their unbeaten start to the season was slipping away, started to apply pressure and scored two goals to make the score even at half time.

In an even second half where both teams had chances to score, it was Shrewsbury who took home the three points with a goal in the final seconds from a short corner.

In all Old Hales can be proud of their performances.

Other Results:
Dudley Ladies 7 OHHC Ladies 1sts 0
Walton 0 OHHC 2nds 0
Goalcorers: Charles Palmer (3), Sam Kirby, Tom Bolton

Otton 0 OHHC 4ths 0
OHHC 5ths 0 Stratford 0

Taylor leads his side to a sweet victory

Old Halesonians 68 Bournville 8

SKIPPER Rich Taylor led his team out for a must win game.

Hales immediately took the game to the visitors and stamped authority on the match. After two minutes Hales infringed to allow the visitors a penalty and earl y lead 0-3.

Winger Luke Smith found full back Chris Hooper out wide who бог the defence for the first try which he converted.

Centre Carl Robinson picked up the ball from Fitzgerald 10 yards inside the Bournville half and ran through several would-be tacklers for the second try, converted by Hooper.

On 12 minutes winger Warren Oliver fed fellow winger Luke Smith for his first try of the day.

The next score came from scrum Half Nathan Jones who grabbed the all important fourth, and bonus point try.

Bournville replied when their No.10 launched the perfect kick out wide for his scrum half, Jones, and fed through every pair of hands to winger Smith who took the ball under the posts for his second try which was converted by Hooper.

The second half started as the first had finished with fly-half Gareth Bowen sailing through for his try from 20 yards out.

Hooper again converted.

On 48 minutes James Mitchell replaced Luke Smith on the wing and on a minute later Hales were reduced to 14 as Callum Young received a yellow card.

Towards the end of the game Hales were awarded a penalty which was converted by Hooper, and Tom Bolton claimed the final try.

Rugby

Villa U-21s 2 Wolves U-21s 1

WOLVES Under-21s saw Burton go for Old Hales to take points

A goal in the first minute from Burton set the tone for the game.

GORNAL Athletic 3
Study 2

GORNAL Athletic overturned a two-goal deficit against a strong Study side to progress to the second round of the FA Vase.

Study, who had been on top for most of the match, looked as if they had done enough to claim their place in the draw for the next round when striker Josh McKenzie added the second goal of his brace on 70 minutes.

He had given the Walsall outfit the lead from the penalty spot on 23 minutes.

However, the introduction of Grant Joshua and Tom Piggott provided the Peacocks with the boost they needed to claw their way back in the final quarter.

Ross Love stunned the visitors with two goals in as many minutes, with a superb 15-yard strike on 77 minutes, and a close range header on 79 minutes.

Gornal’s turnaround was completed when substitute Piggott hit an11-yard screamer in the last minute.

Berahino is backed for call-up

ALBION keeper Ben Foster has ended team-mate Saido Berahino for an England call-up this week

Foster is expected to be named in Roy Hodgson’s squad to face Slovenia and Scotland and he is backing in-form striker Berahino to join him.

Foster said: “Without a doubt, Saido should be in. He’s got a great shout of being in. He’s got a great shout of being in. He’s got a great shout of being in. We’re quite lucky with him there.”

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His general work rate is fantastic.
**Evens on Heathens making it in 2015**

**Leicester Albion 1 Alyn 0**

**FORGET about the quality, just count the points**

That was the clear message from the Albion camp after another priceless Premier League victory.

And more than 3,000 noisy travelling fans at the King Power Stadium seemed happy to agree.

There is no instant fix to the kind of problems that beset the club and the dressing room last term.

Irvine has, instead, opted for a back-to-basics approach to repairing the damage.

**Football**

And although there was nothing on Saturday to get the visiting supporters off their seats with unabashed excitement, there was enough on show against a limited Foxes side to generate a contented smile or two.

On Saturday they proved they have re-established the desire and togetherness to grind out a tight game and cash in on any slice of fortune that comes their way, such as the comical Keshane Cambiaso own goal that decided a tight game.

**Added Inscriptions/Reregings**

Such are the baby steps Irvine and Co are taking towards a restoration of order at the Hawthorns.

And at present, supporters who feared for the immediate future of the club in spring are buying into the plan.

The garden is far from rosy and Irvine would have arrived at the King Power Stadium with some familiar worries playing on his mind.

Events on the field would have done little to ease his concerns. The decision to omit Brown Ideye from the matchday 18 threw into clear focus niggle doubts among Baggies staff about the Nigeria international’s adaptation to life in England.

Albion are not a club who can afford a £10m record signing to fail to contribute in the longer term and, privately, heads are being scratched.

But on SaturdayLeicester did everything within their limited powers to cancel out Cambiaso’s moment of misfortune, only to find Albion too resilient for them with Le-scott pulling the strings in an understated manner at the heart of defence.

Cambiaso proved to be the key figure as he netted at the wrong end.

**Tividale knocked for six**

**Tividale** were denied a mouth-watering Birmingham Senior Cup tie with Wolves as Nuneaton eased to a 2-0 victory in this first-round clash.

And it was three goals in five minutes just before the break that did the damage, handing the Conference club a four-goal lead at half-time.

Adam Walker opened the scoring with an excellent volley on 14 minutes with Ross Smith adding a second 12 minutes later. The home side reduced the arrears when Leigh Downing fired in a former Walsall left-back James Wren in the 34th minute.

A trip on James Armon resulted in the Town player picking himself to score from the spot four minutes from half-time and further goals from Walker and Dane Griffiths ended Tividale’s hopes.

The second half was more even, although Walker forced goalkeeper Gage into a couple of saves.

And the home side managed to have the final say when Lewis Taylor-Boyes turned and fired home 17 minutes from time to seal a 6-0 win.

**Walsall**

**We can finish top — Edwards**

DAVE EDWARDS believes Wolves can finish the season second after likening them to the ‘Swansea of the Championship’.

“We think we have enough to be promoted in the top two,” he said. “Everyone in the dressing room believes we can do it. There isn’t one team we fear or think are better than us.”

**FA Trophy**

**Glover is trading blows with world champ**

**World champion Scott Quigg** is sparring with a world champion as he prepares to take on former European No 1 Esham Pickering at Walsall Town Hall later this month.

Glover travelled to Joe Gallagher’s gym in Bolton to put WBA super bantamweight title folder through his paces in the training ring, colours Craig Birch.

Scott Quigg is getting ready for the fourth defence of his crown against Hidorni Otake on November 22, with Glover set for battle the following Saturday.

**The ‘Swansea of the Championship’**

The ‘Swansea of the Championship’ that decided a rabid game.

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