A CAMPAIGN for donations of food and clothes to give to homeless people ahead of Christmas and the cold winter months has been launched.

Halesowen North’s councillor Stuart Henley is appealing for donations from the public.

He said: “There seems to be more homeless people on the streets. I have seen a couple of homeless people in Halesowen town centre.

He is appealing for food and drinks to give to homeless people and tinned food to hand out to food banks.

I am appealing for noodles, hot drinks with sachets and warm clothes,” he said.

Councillor Henley carries out this initiative throughout the year but feels it is particularly important ahead of Christmas.

He added: “I have tried to rehouse people, but some people are stuck in their ways and prefer to stay homeless.

“We need to do what we can to help people out.”

Arrange

Councillor Henley is asking people to contact him to arrange for the donations to be collected and dropped off where they can do most good.

“With people having clear outs and Christmas coming, I am hoping to collect items,” said Councillor Henley.

“I am quite happy to pick up donated items but I would ask people to get in touch and phone me up.”

He added that the campaign was growing in importance. Statistics from the Government show that in Autumn 2016, there were 4,134 people estimated to be sleeping rough on any night in the UK.

Rough sleeping increased by 15 per cent from 2015 to 2016, and has gone up by 134 per cent since 2010.

“This campaign is about helping people who are less fortunate,” he said.

To contact Councillor Henley, call 07967142367 or email him at Cllr.Stuart.Henley@dundumbe.org.uk

SHOPS

Town getting lit up with festive display

CASH has been granted to pay for Christmas lights which will be seen Halesowen lit up with a festive glow.

Around £2,000 was set aside by the Halesowen Community Forum for the festive decorations.

The solar-powered lights will be installed in Long Lane. Residents and businesses are also being asked to sponsor the lights. The lights will be unveiled on November 28.

GOVERNMENT

Free housing for rough sleepers

HOMELESS drug addicts in the West Midlands could be given free houses under a new Government-backed scheme.

West Midlands Mayor Andy Street has announced a bid for the region to lead a radical new trial to combat rough sleeping.

Known as Housing First, it would see a major investment in properties so homeless people can be given a place to live.

INSIDE

POP LEGEND’S DIAMOND DAYS

PAGE 23
Only black superintendent has retired

He has been an officer since 1985. Supt Fraser said: “One of the proudest moments in my life was getting on my uniform for the first time: the look of pride on my family’s faces will never leave me. I’ve lost track of the amount of times people have come up to me in the street to shake my hand or say ‘it’s good to see a black police officer here.’”

“People who are not white shouldn’t be such a rarity in policing. The service really does need and value difference. ‘Anyone who cares about their communities should look at joining the police, there is no point standing on the outside looking in when you could make a real difference.’

Since joining West Midlands Police in 2003, Keith has worked in Birmingham, Stechfordbridge, Walsall and Wolverhampton.

He offered words of advice for any potential officers saying: ‘Being yourself is really important because it’s what you bring is an individual to policing that matters and is most effective. The public relate to you better and the police service definitely benefits.’

Arrests are made in response to crime wave

ABRESTHWAITE have been making targeted arrests in Halesowen following a crime wave in the town, it has been revealed.

Warnings were issued earlier this month about a spike in crime and police have launched a crackdown on culprits.

Police have revealed arrests have been carried out after reports of drug dealing and burglaries.

Halesowen police sergeant Debra Rowbotham told the latest Halesowen Community Forum that ‘some successful arrests’ have been made.

Residents were invited to the meeting to air their views as a result of the rising crime.

Complaining

Halesowen North councillor Karen Shakespeare said: “Residents are complaining about drug dealing and burglaries and the police said they had made some successful arrests and they are keeping a focus on the area at the meeting.

 Fellow councillor Hilary Bills also revealed earlier this month that there was a spate of cars being stolen off drive ways.

Anyone with information for police is urged to call them on 101.

Extra show for wizard Wagner

AN extra performance of a panto has been announced following what organisers described ‘incredible demand’ for the show.

There will be a matinee showing of The Wizard Of Oz when it is staged in aid of Mary Stevens Hospice at Brierley Hill Civic Hall in January.

The Stourbridge hospice has organised the family show, which features Wagner from TV’s The X Factor, and Marvel’s Black Country Witch.

The show was originally due to run only on January 23 and 24 evenings but a matinee has been added on January 24 due to public demand.

Tickets for the matinee, £10, are available at bhillcivic.co.uk website or by calling (01384) 533891.

Single decker hits station bus shelter

DUDLEY Bus Station was cordoned off after a bus has struck a shelter on Monday but luckily no one was injured in the incident. Travellers were evacuated from Dudley Bus Station at Fisher Street following the accident involving a National Express.
Lorry collision victim was trainee GP in city

A WOMAN cyclist who died after her bike was involved in a collision with a lorry at a busy junction in central Birmingham has been named as a doctor at the city’s children’s hospital.

The incident happened at the junction of Edgbaston Road and Pershore Road in Birmingham at around 4pm on Tuesday.

Emergency services were called but 32-year-old Suzanne Bull was pronounced dead at the scene.

The lorry driver stopped at the scene and is assisting police with investigations.

West Midlands Police are appealing for witnesses to the incident.

Sergeant Alan Wood, from the force’s Collision Investigation Unit, said: “This investigation is in its early stages and we are trying to establish exactly what happened.

“We are appealing to anyone who witnessed the collision who hasn’t yet spoken to us to get in touch.

“Our thoughts are with the family of the woman who lost her life. We have specialist officers supporting them at this difficult time.”

Ms Bull, who was from Nottingsgamshire, had completed her Medical degree at the University of Birmingham and had recently been working at Birmingham Children’s Hospital as part of her GP training.

A statement with information is urged to call police on 101.

Call to demolish offices sooner rather than later

Nadine Foster – died in hospital

A SPEEDING learner driver from Steadmore, who was over the drink limit, has been convicted of killing a young mother.

Joseph Chance looked emotionally as jurors unanimously convicted him of causing the death of Nadine Foster by dangerous driving in April 2016.

The 25-year-old was found guilty on Tuesday following a trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

Chance and friend Dylan Stringer were driving along Oldswinford’s Hagley Road in a Renault Clio when the fatal crash occurred.

Former Dudley College student Nadine Foster, who was a front seat pas-

College’s new teachers start work

College’s new teachers start work

The new team at Halesowen College line-up for the camera on the college campus

A PLANNING boss has called for rapid action to demolish an office block in Halesowen.

Work to bring down Premier House in Birmingham Street was due to begin this month but developers can start at any time over the next five years.

Councillor Andrea Goddard, who chairs Dudley Council’s planning committee, wants to see the demolition take place as quickly as possible, as the move could pave the way for development.

She says the site falls victim to anti-social-behaviour and delaying the demolition would impact on the community.

A planning application for the work was approved by Dudley Council in July. It means businesses based at the prime site near the town centre have been tasked with finding alternative premises.

Landlord Khooraz Omidvar said all the businesses had been aware that plans could go forward for demolition and that he would be supporting them in finding alternative locations.

Welcome

Councillor Goddard said: “The company behind the development said they wanted to see work commence in October and finish by mid-November.

“I welcome the development, there has been a lot of issues in the area with anti-social-behaviour. Hopefully a new development on the site will stop that.

“The company said they want to see the work start in October and will be finished by November.

“Within the planning policy, you have got five years for the start. Over five years, an application will have to be passed by planning again to be approved.”

She added: “I want to see the demolition take place quickly rather than wait, otherwise we are clinging onto something we don’t need.”

A council report into the development said: “The applicant advises that demolition would commence in October, to enable redevelopment.”

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CAMPAIGNERS trying to revitalise Dudley Hippodrome fear the council is "playing a game" in talks over the lease.

Steve Daniels, from Black Country Hippodrome group, which is attempting to revive the landmark venue, said he was "disappointed" with Dudley Council.

The group claims they were rushed into submitting a report on funding opportunities after they requested the five-year lease be extended. Members have been in discussions with council officials about the Hippodrome.

Black Country Hippodrome was handed keys to the building with a five-year lease and time to show their bid to revive the venue was realistic.

The council has said it will consider a request to extend the lease by 20 years but has asked for a report on progress.

Mr Daniels believed they should have been given longer as they were only handed the keys in December.

**Motives**

The disagreement threatens to create fresh tension over the landmark building on Castle Hill, which the council had wanted to knock down prior to the rescue bid. Plans to demolish it and create an open public area remain in the background if the revamp fails through.

Mr Daniels said: "I am worried about what their motives are. Are they playing a game by which they say they are giving us a chance but really they are not? We are working hard to make it happen but obstacles come up daily. If people have got ulterior motives it won’t happen."

Minor works have been carried out at the former venue, which was last used as a theatre in the 1960s. Black Country Hippodrome needs around to raise £3 million.

"Bear hugs all round at final farewell"

Bromleys say farewell to the Big Sleuths, which will now be sold to help the children’s hospital. Pic: @TheBigSleuth

There were plenty of bear hugs as crowds turned out to say a fond farewell to the Big Sleuths who have become familiar faces in the city.

The farewells weekend saw hundreds of people gather in Birmingham city centre to catch a final glimpse of the colourful bears, which are being auctioned off in aid of Birmingham Children’s Hospital.

All 101 bears lined the steps of Eastside Park next to Millennium Park last weekend. The fundraising event also saw dozens of craft and food stalls set up along with face painting and other entertainment on offer for families.

So far, the Big Sleuth project has raised more than £15,000 for Birmingham Children’s Hospital through the sales of tickets, with thousands more expected from merchandise, donations and The Big Sleuth Raffle – where purchasers stand to win a 3ft paint-your-own bear.

Louise McCathie, director of fundraising at Birmingham Children’s Hospital, said: “We will be so sad to see the bears prowl away but are delighted we were able to give the giant sleuths one final farewell before their departure.

Now the bears will be prepared for the grand auction being hosted by Streeth.shop-based Fieldings Auctioneers at Birmingham’s Thinktank Science Museum today (Thursday).

**Manufacturers are urged to boost security**

CAR crime in the West Midlands has rocketed over 12 months and the figures have prompted the region’s police and crime commissioner to blame manufacturers for failing to protect customers.

The rise is part of a series of sharp increases in transport-related crime across the region, including a 29 per cent spike on trains and at railway stations.

Thefts of vehicles has increased in the West Midlands by more than 40 per cent. Figures released this week show there were 5,930 vehicle thefts in 2016, up from 4,161 in 2013.

Commissioner David Jamieson has called for ‘tough police action’ to reduce the number of vehicle thefts. He has also written to leading manufacturers urging them to improve security measures.

Mr Jamieson said: “The rise in vehicle thefts is concerning. It shows crime is rising not falling as the Government insists.

**Minister**

“I have been raising this issue with West Midlands Police to ensure a more robust response and I raised it with the Policing Minister too.

In addition to recruiting officers to tackle crime, I have called on leading manufacturers to bring in measures to prevent vehicles being stolen.

As well as tough police action, it is important manufacturers take responsibility to ensure their vehicles are made more robust.

Manufacturers are failing in their duties to protect their customers. The Government should face up to their responsibilities and ensure the expensive vehicles they sell are not as vulnerable to hacking and theft.

“Many have long warranties, manufacturers should ensure vehicles are protected for the life of the vehicles they sell.”
Motorist in chase had taken cocaine

A MOTORIST led police on a high speed chase for 18 minutes had taken cocaine and was not insured, a court was told.

Richard Everill, of previous good character, was ordered to stop by a police patrol which spotted his BMW being driven on Manor Road, Oldbury, at 2.15am on July 22, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The 25-year-old, who had taken cocaine, consistently drove at around 20mph above the limit, occasionally on the wrong side of the road, and failed to give way at junctions and roundabouts on wet roads, explained Mr Edward Souility, prosecuting.

Police twice laid stingers in his path without halting his progress before a third finally brought him to a standstill.

Mr Richard Davenport, defending, said: “The only explanation he can give is he had taken cocaine. He is not an addict but has problems that led him into financial difficulties. He was terrified because he had not renewed his car insurance.”

Everill from Red Brick Close, Credley Heath, admitted dangerous driving, having no insurance and failing to stop. He was given a 10-month jail sentence suspended for two years with a 12-month driving ban. He was also ordered to do 200 hours unpaid work and pay £690 in fines and costs.

Magistrates court is put on the market

THE former Sandwell Magistrates Court site on Oldbury Ringway has been put up for sale as a potential development site.

The court building closed in September last year as a result of Government cost-cutting. The one-acre site has been put on the market as a freehold building and land by commercial property agents GVA.

AN MOT testing firm in the Black Country has secured its future taking possession of one of its sites.

Drive In Autocentres has long been known for MOT testing and tyre servicing within the Black Country. For more than 25 years it has operated from its depot in Blackheath and Halesowen, Barclays Bank has now assisted Drive In by funding its acquisition of the premises in Blackheath.

Drive In used Hawkins Hatton Corporate Lawyers, based in Dudley, to assist it through the legal process and to negotiate all commercial aspects of the acquisition.

Trevor Kelleher, managing director of Drive In, said: “Having secured the Blackheath premises it means we will now have an ever more secure base to continue expanding and providing a service second to none within the Black Country.”

Chris Perrins, business manager at Barclays Bank, said: “It is always good to see a SME business continue to thrive and with the ever-expanding number of cars on the road, it is nice to know that we have customers who do their best to service the needs of the general public.”

Risk

The hospital’s own investigations into what was going wrong was ‘inadequate’, creating a risk of further harm to babies, the report by the Maternity Quality Improvement Board said.

Mr Wake, who joined the trust as chief executive after the period of concern, accepted it was a ‘large number’ of serious incidents. But she insisted following a rigorous staff training. Extra midwives had also been recruited.

So far this year there have been two serious incidents, which is seen as a major improvement on previous years. She said: “I now feel confident if there is anything wrong we have the right processes and systems to tell us early.”

A HOSPITAL is safe for mothers to have their babies, its boss has insisted following a damning report – as she apologised to women who received poor care.

Expectant mothers should be assured action had been taken at Dudley’s Russells Hall Hospital to address serious concerns over maternity care, Dudley Group NHS Trust chief executive Diane Wake said.

She was speaking following the release of a report that outlined a series of failures within the maternity unit, where 43 serious incidents were reported over a 20-month period, including the death of a baby and five incidents of avoidable harm.

An investigation was launched by NHS England due to the sheer scale of serious incidents reported between April 2014 and December 2015 – more than any other maternity unit in the West Midlands.

Failings flagged up included ‘babies’ heart rates being wrongly monitored, staff being slow to react to urgent situations and not recognising mothers’ conditions deteriorating.

A COUNCIL’S deputy chief executive is leaving his post to take up the top job at another authority.

Dudley Council’s deputy chief executive and strategic director for people Tony Oakman will leave at the end of January to become chief executive of Bolton Council.

Mr Oakman joined Dudley Council in March 2015 as strategic director for people. He said he would be sad to be leaving the authority, but delighted to be taking on his new role.

“I’m extremely proud of what we’re achieving here in Dudley and I’m proud to be leaving the authority in a better place,” he said.

Council leader Patrick Harley, who represents Kingswinford South, said: “Tony has made a big contribution to moving the council forward and delivering more efficient and effective services and we wish him all the best in his new role.”
Well at least you get what you want for anniversary gift

More saying I Do to self marriages

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

Feisty Scottish Tory leader Ruth Davidson wants to take the fight to Jeremy Corbyn

Jeremy Corbyn – still plenty of scope for backbench problems to confront him

Calculating to put the fear of God into the Corbynites. How would Labour claim to speak for diversity and inclusivity when their leader was male, pale and staid but the new Tory leader was a young Scottish lass in a same-sex relationship? Davidson ticks boxes, scares the socialists and is 30 years younger than Mr Corbyn.

CORBYN has proclaimed Labour is now the mainstream political party. But he should beware. There are plenty of orthodox non-left wing Labour MPs and activists who deplore the threats of the Momentum faction to get rid of those Members who do not toe the party line. So there remains plenty of scope for backbench problems to confront Corbyn.

Let me say at the outset that there is nothing remotely funny about ramblers being chased and bitten by free-ranging pigs in the New Forest a few days ago. The pigs were said to be “out for trouble, like a gang of teenagers.” But the quote that made me smile came from the bitten walker who explained the background: “I had been warned there had been some friction between the pigs and the ponies.” Anyone else thinking of Animal Farm?

Plain English department. Uniper, the company demolishing an old power station in Shropshire, says it will keep the local council and residents fully informed. One councillor responded: “It is extremely encouraging to hear of Uniper’s commitment to undertake proactive stakeholder communications.” Seriously, does anyone actually talk like this, going forward?

Snacks at school?

Let’s just roll with it

CAN you imagine the outrage when Greggs put up the prices of its sausage rolls last week?

It could add food to the fuel of bosses at Shirley Manor Primary in Bradford, however. It has banned the savoury snacks, along with pork pies and pepperoni sticks from school lunchboxes.

It has even gone so far as asking children to reveal the contents of their packed lunch before being allowed to tuck in. One has visions of an I’m A Celebrity... contestant showing the interior of their mouths to prove they’ve eaten the live cockroach for a bush tucker trial.

The school says it is to encourage healthy eating and a more physical lifestyle. But if any prohibited items are discovered, the packed lunch can be taken away. How can that be good for them?

The move has been branded ridiculous by parents, who say the school should stick to teaching the children. They add the decision-makers do not take into account fussy eaters and claim they, more than any school, should know what their child likes and doesn’t like.

Plain and simple, in my opinion. Surely a healthy appetite just doesn’t mean eating food that is supposedly good for you.

The problem I suspect, is more a health and safety issue. You see, when I was at school, eating up to just 10 minutes of our lunch period. The rest of the time, like at other breaks, we were running around the playground, letting off steam, burning off calories.

Surely Advantage the Children should be allowed to do.

But with today’s health and safety rules, they are scared to let children play and run around. It is a good way for them to keep fit and against obesity and a sedentary lifestyle – if they can.

It is a sad day when you have to worry about the effects of music on a child’s health.

It has even gone so far as asking parents, to take the fight to Jeremy Corbyn.

A CROWD of supporters chant Jeremy Corbyn’s name and he is hailed as the next prime minister. Theresa May has a cough, and it’s time to resign. I guess that’s the key to success for you.

TALKING to someone isn’t it amazing that, at a time when we have more channels than ever before, that there really is so little worth watching?

There are only two programmes I would have enjoyed, they need to ban handball the ball, and all that nonsense that they call rugby.

I can say I hope she uses plenty of anaesthetic.

THE latest development in matrimony is self-marriage. Described as “a symbolic and feminist act,” it brings all the benefits of a traditional wedding (pretty frock, bridesmaids, big party, etc) without the complication of a partner.

The bride simply pledges to love, cherish and respect you. The marriage then becomes necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

And if the aim of guns-for-all is to create a militia, then simple logic says the people must be permitted not only shotguns and sporting rifles but military-grade weapons like the ones unleashed by Stephen Paddock.

There is really no point in us Brits engaging the US gun lobby in America’s guns debate. We think they are bonkers. They think we are wimps. After every massacre, the response of thousands of Americans is always the same. Buy more guns. About 30,000 Americans are killed by guns every year and yet still in millions of US hearts beats the notion that guns make you safer.

Over the past 40 years the number of guns owned by US citizens has doubled to more than 300 million. It is believed there are now more guns in the United States than people.

N OTHING in life is simple. London’s mayor Sadiq Khan plans to create zones where all solid fuels, including wood used in trendy log burners, are banned. And who can argue with that? In a huge city like London, there are clean alternatives such as gas and electricity. But the capital is also famous for its pizza parlours. And how can you bake the perfect pizza without the traditional wood-fired oven? So what began as a common sense scheme to clean up the Great British Kitchen has become a battle of the wits.

If the Conservatives are looking for new inspiration, or for a new leader, they must surely look North, Ruth Davidson, the feisty Scottish Tory leader, is a bundle of energy with a sharp sense of humour. She wants to take the fight to Jeremy Corbyn and I cannot name anyone more calculated to put the fear of God into the Corbynites.

How would Labour claim to speak for diversity and inclusivity when their leader was male, pale and staid but the new Tory leader was a young Scottish lass in a same-sex relationship? Davidson ticks boxes, scares the socialists and is 30 years younger than Mr Corbyn.

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Problems ahead with monthly benefit

WHilst not wanting to join the argument about Universal Credit being introduced to replace other benefits, I feel that the one big problem is moving the payments from fortnightly to monthly.

When I worked at a large company there was a move to change wages from weekly in cash to monthly paid into a bank account, this was done on a gradual basis over a long period with help in the form of advances to help staff over the transition.

Now these were well paid people who were not on work-related benefits as they did not exist then but, even so, some found the first couple of months a struggle.

Therefore, it is no surprise that people who are on a low income, only just managing, cannot change easily to getting nothing for a month and then one big payment which they have to budget with.

Having to make the choice of something for the kids or paying the rent cannot be easy.

Most of the programmes on television give the impression of people who have no culture of managing money, rather they spend it like kids with pocket money.

I know these are always extreme cases just to wind the rest of us up but surely it must be seen that the money is better given out in manageable amounts.

As to large numbers being behind with their rents, it is time this was looked at again and at least in the case of social housing, which is being supported by taxpayers, the rent should be deducted at source.

Ron Williams
Brierley Hill

Many will be left bankrupt

The Bank of England continues to predict interest rate rises, because inflation is running ahead of wage rises.

This would mean a ‘double whammy’ for those buying their own homes, an increase in mortgage payments and in any credit card payments.

I fail to see how those who are ‘just about managing’ will be able to afford this.

The Bank of England has also made clear there will be no more buying of bank shares to counter a surge of bad debt. The banks must ensure enough reserves to deal with another downturn.

This means large numbers of ordinary people facing bankruptcy.

Yet I have not heard a word from either of the two main party leaders about this.

MR D POULTON
Wolverhampton

Behind our backs

I am writing on behalf of myself and the other residents of School Street, Pensnett. There are two plots of land in School Street; a few months ago builders applied to buy land and build on this land. Dudley Council planning department also made clear there will be no prevention of overdevelopment and effects on existing residents – privacy, parking, wildlife being affected, including (supposedly) protected bats, also seven beautiful well-established silver birch trees being torn out, to name but a few of the reasons.

The builders reapplied and this time the application was handled in Bristol. Unfortunately the Bristol planning department approved it! The people who approved it don’t even live here! What’s angered us all in School Street is that we found out by chance, this was all done behind our backs.

Lee Thomas
Pensnett

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
Dudley Chronicle, Chronicle editorial, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL
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Code of Practice: Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can.

All letters are used at the discretion of the Editor. Publication of a letter in no way constitutes endorsement by the Chronicle of its contents.

I HAVE been watching the Invictus Games. I am writing on behalf of myself and the other residents of School Street, Pensnett. There are two plots of land in School Street; a few months ago builders applied to buy land and build on this land. Dudley Council planning department also made clear there will be no prevention of overdevelopment and effects on existing residents – privacy, parking, wildlife being affected, including (supposedly) protected bats, also seven beautiful well-established silver birch trees being torn out, to name but a few of the reasons.

The builders reapplied and this time the application was handled in Bristol. Unbelievably the Bristol planning department approved it! The people who approved it don’t even live here! What’s angered us all in School Street is that we found out by chance, this was all done behind our backs.

Lee Thomas
Pensnett

Admire Invictus and Harry

I HAVE been watching the Invictus Games. It makes me feel ashamed when I mean about a cold or my achings 71 year-old home.

I saw men and women with no arms or legs, young people coming together from all over the world who competed alongside other ex-soldiers.

There were no winners or losers, everyone one of those people made me realise how lucky I am. I think I have problems but those great men and women are a far better person than I will ever be.

I hope the Invictus Games goes on to become big as the Olympics, the marathon and the Tour de France. These courageous men and women never gave up .But they rose above it and thanks to the great young man Prince Harry they have put the Invictus Games on the map.

My heart and my admiration goes out to them.

Keith Parton
Wolverhampton

LETTERS
Raids find £15k worth of illegal tobacco and alcohol

TRADING standards seized more than £15,000 of illegal tobacco and counterfeit vodka during raids across Sandwell.

More than 150,000 illegal cigarettes and packets of rolling tobacco, and four bottles of vodka, were confiscated in the operations held across Sandwell.

Sandwell Council’s leader Steve Eling warned shop owners risk losing their license if caught out. Meanwhile Bob Charnley, trading standards and licensing manager at Sandwell, warned illegal tobacco sales encourages children and young adults to smoke.

A sniffer dog was used during the operations held in Rowley Regis and West Bromwich.

Concrete slabs of illegal tobacco were found hidden inside the four shops - with hiding places including behind a fuse box, a false wall and in crisp boxes.

The raids were carried out in a joint intelligence-led operation between Sandwell trading standards and West Midlands Police as part of the annual Safer 6 campaign which takes place each year in Sandwell aimed at improving the borough.

The shops are now being investigated by trading standards and face criminal prosecution which could result in an unlimited fine and 10 years imprisonment.

Bob Charnley, Sandwell trading standards and licensing manager, said: “People who deal in illegal tobacco are more likely to encourage others, especially children and young adults, to smoke. All tobacco is harmful but the illegal tobacco market and in particular the availability of cheap cigarettes makes it harder for smokers to quit.”

To contact Trading Standards, call the Confidential Fakes Hotline on 0300 3032636 or visit sandwell.gov.uk/tradingstandards website.

A LORRY driver got more than he bargained for when he got caught under a notorious low bridge.

The Home Bargains driver tore off the roof of his lorry under the bridge, which is close to Sandwell and Dudley Railway Station, on Sunday afternoon.

The lorry was stranded along Bromford Road in Oldbury between Fountain Lane and Brandon Way at 1.50pm.

Passers-by caught the snap of the lorry trapped beneath the bridge. West Midlands Police and West Midlands Fire Service were called to the scene, though the driver got out of the lorry before they arrived. Secondcitylee who tweeted the images said: “Not a good day for #Homebargains.”

No injuries were reported.

A spokesman for West Midlands fire service said: “We were called to the scene by police at 12.55pm on Sunday. No one was trapped or injured. We sent out our technical rescue crew to ensure the structural safety of the bridge and alerted Network Rail who then attended the scene.” Fire crews were still at the scene at 3pm.

Despite a large ‘low bridge’ sign and a warning not to drive vehicles higher than 4.4 metres under the bridge, it is not the first time unsuspecting drivers have been caught out. In September 2016 a lorry was trapped, blocking the road to traffic, whilst earlier that year in May, trains and traffic were delayed as another driver caught his HGV under the bridge.

Gin and jazz at pub’s three day festival

A REAL ale pub is branching out by staging a three-day gin and jazz event next month.

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More speed cameras if funds found

SPEED enforcement cameras could be rolled out across the Black Country following a successful trial in other areas.

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson is in talks with councils in Dudley, Walsall, Sandwell and Wolverhampton to see if they are willing to part fund the scheme. It follows a pilot in Birmingham and Solihull, which police say has led to a marked reduction in speeding.

Combined with mobile units and smart motorway cameras, the average speed cameras issued £8 million in fines over the trial period, which is due to continue until February.

There are currently 160 mobile camera sites across the West Midlands.

A report to the force’s Strategic Crime and Policing board noted a drastic increase in recorded offences in the first two months the cameras went live. The number of offences detected rose from 4,000 in July to 12,000 in August and around 8,500 in September. However, the report shows that by October the number of offences had fallen ‘back to normality’ at around the 4,500 mark.

Mr Jamieson, an advocate of average speed cameras, said: “Speed is one of the biggest causes of deaths on the road and one of the biggest issues that local people raise with us.”

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Killer Barley’s threats were ignored — claim

KILLER Aaron Barley, who murdered Tracey Wilkinson and her son Pierce, threatened to kill the Stourbridge mother just three days before stabbing them — but support workers ‘ignored’ the warning, it has been claimed.

Mrs Wilkinson, aged 50, reportedly told volunteers about death threats from Aaron Barley, 24, just days before he stabbed her and her 13-year-old son to death in their home on March 30.

But support workers at the Atlantic House Recovery Centre, on Dudley Road, Stourbridge, did not inform police according to a national newspaper report. It is alleged the incident was just one of four cases of concerning behaviour that support workers did not pass on.

Barley also expressed a desire to kill in front of volunteers at Atlantic House, according to The Times. One volunteer said they were worried about his attitude to women and another was left thinking he either wanted to ‘kill a copper or a prison officer’.

Robust

Change, Grow, Live, the charity that runs Atlantic House, said managers would have immediately informed police if they had heard about the threats.

A centre spokesman confirmed it had ‘a robust policy for reporting to the police violent intent, threats or an indication to commit a crime’. They said: ‘If a member of staff, volunteer or service user raised concern we would report this to the police immediately.

It added that if information was kept back it was ‘outside our control’.

Tracey Wilkinson — it is claimed that she reported threats made by Barley to escalate to police and ‘no concern was ever raised or reported to Atlantic House Recovery Centre about Aaron Barley’.

Barley’s former foster mother read violent threats on his Facebook page in which he wrote about ‘taking down’ his family and reported this to West Midlands Police.

Detective Superintendent Tom Chisholm, head of the West Midlands Police homicide investigation team, and a detective with 22 years experience, said after the trial: ‘It is the most shocking case I have ever dealt with because of the unpredictable level of violence. There was no build up to it. It was completely unexpected and it is very unusual for there to be no clear motive for a crime of this magnitude.’

On March 30 Barley lay in wait armed with a knife in the back garden of their Greyhound Lane home until Mr Wilkinson took the family dog for a walk, crept upstairs where he stabbed Mrs Wilkinson and her son.

He ambushed Mr Wilkinson, then stole the family Land Rover Discovery which he crashed in nearby Norton Road when chased by police.

Det Supt Chisholm added: ‘It is incredible that we deal with an incident that has such a massive impact both on the victims’ family, the wider community and officers that investigated it.’

Pierce Wilkinson — the 13-year-old schoolboy was killed by Aaron Barley, who has been found guilty of his murder. Barley is alleged to have stabbed Pierce to death outside his primary school in Hasbury, near Stourbridge, after a run in with him and his classmates.

It has been claimed that Barley, a former foster child of Mrs Wilkinson, was known to have been aggressive and had previously threatened to kill the family.

The trial, which ended on Wednesday, was told that one of the Wilkinson family’s cars was stolen while they were away in the Lake District with Mrs Wilkinson’s sister.

Mr Wilkinson took the family dog for a walk and crept up the stairs when he returned to find Mrs Wilkinson and Pierce murdered.

Detective Superintendent Tom Chisholm said: ‘Any suggestion that Pierce was targeted is not supported by any of the evidence heard in this case. The family was the focal point of his violent and twisted world. This is not a case of family rivalry but one of pure savagery and sadism.

‘This case is a huge shock to everyone and we have no doubt that this case will remain with us for a very long time to come.’

Mistress Wilkinson and her son.

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**Wedding Fair**

22nd October

Newfields banqueting suite is holding its first ever wedding fair on 22nd October. There will be plenty to look at and sample. There will be two bridal catwalk shows with TDR outlet and welcome drinks on arrival. So please come down and have a look at Halesowen’s best kept secret.

Doors open at 10am until 4pm

**Newfield Banqueting Suite**

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Telephone: 0121 550 1454

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**Don’t you just love them, big and small?**

**Animal Crackers Competition**

WELL it is obvious how much we all love our pets. This is the third week pictures have flooded in in response to our Animal Crackers competition and our basket of hopefuls just keeps growing and growing.

From cute and cheeky to athletic we have had a vast range of entries. It is going to be a difficult job for you readers to judge but we hope you are enjoying seeing the pictures!

But we still want more. Send us a picture of your beloved pet and as well as the chance to see your pet in print, you could also win a £100 cash prize.

It can be any animal as long as it is a pet belonging to you or a member of your family.

Our Chronicle judges are simply looking for interesting pictures. We will select 10 of our favourite pictures and then it is up to you readers to decide on the winner.

To enter email the images to sue.attwater@expressandstar.co.uk with your name and details, including where you are from and a bit of information about your pet.

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**A HIDDEN GEM**

Newfield’s Banqueting Suite is perhaps one of the best kept secrets in Halesowen, being tucked away behind a hedge and tall trees halfway up Furnace Hill and opposite The Earl’s High School many local residents are unaware of its’ existence.

Newfield’s banqueting suite comprises the original house built in the mid 19th century and formerly owned by a member of the Somers family, plus a “modern” extension erected in the 1930’s.

From the extensive car park a few steps lead to double doors opening onto the welcoming reception foyer, to the right of which is the well appointed and tastefully decorated Lounge Bar which can comfortably seat up to 50. Again from the foyer but to the left and through double doors lies the function room which is light and airy with a solid wooden parquet floor and a stage. This room can accommodate up to 90 diners in a traditional table plan or 80 with round tables. For less formal occasions such as buffets the maximum room capacity is 120.

It is ideal for Wedding receptions, Birthday and Anniversary celebrations, concerts and seminars.

The recent appointment of Matt Eades of Thinking Food to provide the catering will ensure all aspects of service are of the highest standard. Matt has over 25 years experience in the catering sector and is particularly skilled in larger functions having worked for prestigious Golf Clubs and similar establishments, and he is equally comfortable with providing traditional fare or innovative menus for those with a more adventurous taste.

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**Compasition entries keep flooding in**

Olaf the rabbit with his friend Anya
Barney in full flight after a tennis ball
Mia enjoys ripping up a party hat

Hamster Wilbur peeps out
Kevin likes to be nosey
Dougall just loves walks
Jasmine the toe nibbler
Clergy are appointed canons of cathedral

FOUR vicars have been appointed honorary canons in recognition of their work in both the Worcester diocese and the wider church.

They were chosen by the Bishop of Worcester and will form a bridge between the diocese and Worcester Cathedral, where they were installed in their new roles.

Jan Humphries, lay minister in Gornal and Wednesley; the Reverend Sue Oliver, vicar of St Mark’s Church in Pennetts; Reverend Alex Vaccaro, associate priest in the Kidderminster Ismere team; and Reverend Rob Hall, rector of the Halas Team in Halesowen, were appointed.

The bishop, the Rt Rev Dr John Inge, said: “These people who have given and continue to give outstanding service to the church in the Diocese of Worcester. They will be great ambassadors for the cathedral in the area and vice versa.”

Mr Oliver said: “I am so very humbled and thankful for this invitation to be installed as an honorary canon at Worcester Cathedral, the place where I was ordained priest and love so much.”

Mr Hall added: “I have known and loved Worcester Cathedral since first visiting it as a 12-year-old boy from Stourbridge.”

Thousands of vehicles seized in crackdown

POLICE have seized more than 11,500 cars from uninsured drivers in the West Midlands over the last 12 months, figures have revealed.

The vehicles were recovered from roads across the region and can be impounded or destroyed under current police powers. It comes as the force launched a clampdown on uninsured drivers.

According to figures revealed in a report to the region’s Strategic Policing and Crime board, West Midlands Police (WMP) seized 11,500 cars in 2016/17.

The figure includes 208 vehicles that were seized in one week alone in October 2016, and comes ahead of the force’s No Insurance Week of Action, which is due to start on Monday.

The report says that 47 per cent of the vehicles recovered for no insurance had been spot checked by traffic or motorway patrol officers.

The region’s Police and Crime Commissioner, David Jamieson, introduced powers to seize and destroy uninsured vehicles when he was a road safety minister in 2003.

He said: “This was in answer to the menace of uninsured drivers, who are often in untaxed and unsafe vehicles.

Majority

“I know that the vast majority of law-abiding motorists will welcome this action by West Midlands Police as they are sick of paying the price for uninsured drivers.”

WMP works closely with the Motor Insurance Bureau (MIB) to tackle uninsured drivers.

The MIB shares its database of uninsured vehicles on a weekly basis, which enables police forces to target enforcement against vehicles that are known to be uninsured.

The force says that although it doesn’t have the resources to investigate a vehicle every time it flags up on an automatic number plate recognition camera, officers do have the power to seize and destroy vehicles that are stopped.

Earlier this month the MIB revealed that accidents involving uninsured drivers have increased for the first time since 2004.

Over the last year claims have gone up by 10 per cent to reach 12,000.

The rise bucked the trend of a steady decrease in claims every year from 2004-2016.

Ashton West, chief executive at the MIB, said: “The figures highlight the devastating impact of uninsured driving on communi-

ties and families.

Mayor visits 50th firm

THE Mayor of Dudley has reached the halfway mark in his pledge to visit 100 businesses in the borough during his year in office.

Councillor Dave Tyler’s visit to The Alan Nuttall Partnership was the 50th business he has seen so far. Coun-
ciller Tyler said: “We are lucky to have so many vibrant, ambitious businesses in the borough and it has been fasci-
nating visiting them to find out more about their work.”
Fundraiser Blind Dave Heeley’s inspirational story of amazing deeds is being made into a film

THE cameras are well and truly rolling now on 7 Days – a film about the Black Country’s own Blind Dave Heeley. Dave is the first blind man to complete seven marathons in seven continents in seven days. This year, those of his great achievements, will be told in the 40-minute film due to be released later this year.

A recent weekend of filming saw young Charlie Boswell make his acting debut as the schoolboy Dave. Uploading the movie blog, Film Revolution Films wrote: “We had another productive weekend of filming and managed to film a lot of the young Dave scenes. We had a great cast including Charlie Boswell, playing Dave.

“Charlie had never acted before, but just like the real Dave, he’s an Albion super fan and keen runner. So, this meant that Charlie really just had to be himself on camera.

“But, it was important for us to create an environment that would allow him to feel relaxed and comfortable. Our producer Nigel Martin Davoy did an outstanding job as usual, ensuring that everything went without a major hiccup. Releasing new images of filming, the blog continues: “Charlie proved to be a natural in front of the camera and was a joy to work with. We of course have to give a big thanks to Charlie’s mum, Sam for her support during the shoot.

“Also working with us for the first time was Jane Campion Hoye, who plays Dave’s Mum. Jane gave us a beautifully subtle but emotional performance. Playing the part of Dave’s dad was Carl Wharton, who last worked with us on Evolution. Carl is an outstanding screen actor who really inhabits his role.”

There has also been more scenes shot involving the older Dave alias Jack Lane. This time he was working opposite actress Sarah Mannors who is known for her roles in Doctors and Casualty.

Dave, who discovered he was going blind at the age of 10, has told of his pride about the film. The 59-year-old’s achievements include finishing the gruelling Escape from Alcatraz swim, running 10 marathons in 10 days from John O’Groats to Land’s End and a 700-mile week-long bike ride between Zurich and Birmingham.

This year he is running each of the seven marathons but also have flash my sight.”

He said: “I feel quite privileged and fortunate to do it. When the book came out I still had my eyes and I wanted to make sure that any response then it could be turned into a film about the Black Coun-

Heeley’s inspirational story of amazing deeds, will be told in the 40-minute film due to be released later this year. "It will inspire many. His story will show it is not about what you can’t do – it’s about what you can do."

“Film Revolution Films have teamed up with South and City College Birmingham on the film. Film Revolution Films was set up by award winning film-makers and digital artists, Ian and Dominic Heeley, with the aim of creating high and innovative projects. Ian and Dominic originally studied art, photography and 3D design at college and have since gone on to gain their first experiences working within a film crew after a job interview at a local pub led to a chance meeting with a BBC set designer who took an interest in their budding script writing and film-making aspirations. Why not visit our local award winning showroom

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Kidnapped model defends book deal

Chloe Ayling – offered ‘a few thousands’ for her story

MODEL Chloe Ayling has defended profiting from her alleged kidnapping ordeal – involving two Polish brothers based in the Black Country – after being paid for television interviews and writing a book.

The 20-year-old claims she was snatched, drugged and held hostage for six days by a group called Black Death after being lured to a fake modelling shoot in Milan in July.

But she has attracted criticism for the way she has handled herself in the media since the incident, with some claiming she was a publicity stunt.

Spooking on ITV’s Good Morning Britain, 20-year-old mother-of-one insisted that the truth would be revealed when those accused of being involved in her abduction appear in court. She revealed that she will be getting a ‘few thousand pounds’ in a book deal and that she was also paid for some interviews.

Alleged captor, Lukasz Herba, 30, who was living in Tividale, is to be extradited to Italy but plans to appeal the ruling. Both deny knowingly taking part in a crime.

Mr Thompson added: “I would appeal to those who are concerned about things happening in their area to immediately contact us directly or through Crimestoppers.”

Shake-up of bus services is on way due to congestion

A MAJOR shake-up of bus services across Dudley borough could be on the way.

National Express said changes to timetables may be needed due to the level of congestion on the roads. An online consultation has been launched to help transport experts with the first major review of bus services in Dudley for almost a decade.

Congestion has increased on the busiest routes, leading to longer journey times, particularly on Birmingham New Road, says the bus firm.

National Express said the last major review of bus services in Dudley took place in 2008.

Patterns of demand have changed and we may need to change the bus network to reflect this,” said a spokesman. “We are working closely with Transport for West Midlands, Dudley Council and other stakeholders to review the network of bus services in and around Dudley to ensure that it meets today’s and future needs. We’re considering all routes within Dudley borough, as well as some services in Sandwell, Wolverhampton and Birmingham.”

Visit www.nxbus.co.uk/west-midlands/information/service-changes

Spooky treats on witch trail at park

A MONTH-long Spooky Spectacular allows children to follow clues among life-sized sweets to find a gingerbread house at West Midlands Safari Park.

However, the wicked witch who resides in the house on the Trick or Treat Trail at the attraction may either give them a treat or a trick. This year’s festival also sees the return of Dino Quest with a whole new adventure.

Head entertainments officer Matt Nock said: “We are all so excited about Halloween this year, especially the addition of our new gingerbread house and resident witch.”

Opening hours will be extended until 9pm on weekends and the October half-term holiday.

Guests are encouraged to dress up. Spooky Spectacular is included in the standard admission of £23 for adults and £18 for children aged three-to-15 years and £21 for concessions.

Co-op hits £460m for half year sales

STRONG financial results for the first half of the year have been unveiled by Central England Co-op.

Across its 400 stores, including Dudley, West Bromwich, Oldbury and Great Barr, the business saw sales rise 2.6 per cent to £460.2 million. Trading profit of £11.5m was better than expected but still £1m less than at the same point last year due to improved staff pay and other costs. The Co-op also distributed £2.4m among the members, workforce and the community.

The Central England Co-op employs 8,000 people. It opened five food stores and four funeral homes, rezoning 25 sites during the first six months of the year, as part of £19.2m investment. Chief executive Martin Csatho said: “We are encouraged by our progress.”

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Spooky treats on
witch trail at park

A MONTH-long Spooky Spectacular allows children to follow clues among life-sized sweets to find a gingerbread house at West Midlands Safari Park.

However, the wicked witch who resides in the house on the Trick or Treat Trail at the attraction may either give them a treat or a trick. This year’s festival also sees the return of Dino Quest with a whole new adventure.

Head entertainments officer Matt Nock said: “We are all so excited about Halloween this year, especially the addition of our new gingerbread house and resident witch.”

Opening hours will be extended until 9pm on weekends and the October half-term holiday.

Guests are encouraged to dress up. Spooky Spectacular is included in the standard admission of £23 for adults and £18 for children aged three-to-15 years and £21 for concessions.
A MENTAL health trust spent almost £4 million on temporary staff over the last 12 months. Figures have revealed a total of £3.9 million was paid out on agency workers by the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust in the year to October. But the trust said the amount was down from £5.5 million when £8.5 million was spent on temporary staff. The spend is in line with the NHS agency cap, which health organisations should not go above.

Bosses at the trust, which provides mental health services to children and adults in the two boroughs, said they had been working hard to reduce agency spend in recent years. A greater focus was now put on recruitment and using bank staff and that was credited for getting the figure down.

A spokesman for the Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership Trust, said: “We have reduced agency spend since 2015/16 from £8.5 million down to £4.8m in 2016/17. We are on target to meet the NHS Improvement agency figure for this year of £6.5 million down to £4.8 million paid out on agency workers by the trust.

“Agency costs and meet the NHS target.”

NHS bosses have moved to cut the amount being spent on temporary workers.

A SCHOOL has been given the green light to build an early years facility after receiving a grant of more than £400,000.

Grant helps school to build for early years

AN ARTIST from Dudley who has captured Morecambe and Wise and Dusty Springfield on canvas is putting his work on show.

The display at the Wyre Forest Gallery at Bewdley Museum is part of the Worcestershire town’s literary and music festival.

People engaged in everyday work is the the fascination for portrait painter Keith Turley and Bewdley Festival organisers have arranged for the free admission exhibition, entitled A Fair Day’s Work, to run until October 29.

Keith, 68, from Wall Heath, is a member of the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists and Dudley Society of Artists and is also president of the Birmingham Arts Circle.

Although this will be his first exhibition in Worcestershire his work is well-known as he has carried out numerous prestigious commissions, including paintings of Leslie Philips, Morecambe and Wise, Norman Wisdom, Tommy Cooper and Dusty Springfield. He has also illustrated books about the Only Fools and Horses and the Dad’s Army television series and the Carry On films.

Keith prefers human subjects, often working on a large scale and showing people in work environments.

He said: “There are 28 works on show in the exhibition. I am very honoured to have been asked to take part as the county is not short of artists and it is a privilege to be staging this exhibition. Much of my work has a strong Black Country flavour with the Chainmakers inspired by the Black Country Living Museum and a glassworker from The Red House Glass Cone. There are also other Black Country linked paintings. They are quite large, some five feet high, and not the sort people hang on their walls.

He will be talking about his work at the museum on October 14, 17, 19, 21, 22, 24, 28 and 29.

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Adult social care recruitment drive

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"Transforming services for the most vulnerable in our community and ensuring they are treated with respect, care and kindness is a top priority for us at the council," explains Councillor Nicolas Barlow, Dudley Council's cabinet member for adult social care.

It’s this commitment to improving services that is the driving force behind the council’s recent recruitment campaign, which will see the authority employ dozens of new staff to help meet the increasing demands on adult social care and reduce pressures on the NHS.

Over the next few weeks the authority is seeking to recruit dedicated, passionate and caring people who all share the same ambition, to change the lives of people across Dudley borough for the better.

A number of fixed term posts are being advertised in various positions, including home care assistants, assistant care co-ordinators and a team assistant.

A full list of more than 60 full time equivalent adult social care jobs including occupational therapists, social and senior social workers, support workers and night sitters can be found at www.dudley.gov.uk/ascjobs

Dedicated

The new staff will work within a number of new teams, which will be dedicated to reducing delayed transfer of care, improving the way people move through the system, giving greater opportunity to provide crisis support within a person’s home and improving the success of preventative services, which are designed to help people remain independent within their own home.

Funding for the new recruits will come from Dudley Council’s one-off grant of £13.9 million, awarded by the government earlier this year as part of a national £2billion improved better care fund.

Councillor Barlow continues: “We are an authority that is forward thinking and dedicated to doing what we can to help people change their lives for the better.”

“We can use this funding to significantly boost our numbers of staff and to create specialised teams to work in areas where we know we need to provide more support.

“It’s essential we act now to ensure we can meet the growing demands on services now and in the future.

“This funding is to help improve the performance of the Urgent Care system, specifically by Reducing Delayed Transfers of Care (DTOC). Dudley Council is putting every effort into achieving this with NHS partners.”

In this first year, the council has committed £7 million of its improved better care fund grant. It will be used to launch the council’s emergency response team, which will help people who have gone to the hospital’s accident and emergency department and need urgent social care support, to return home and prevent an unnecessary admission into hospital.

The team will provide support in the home, give guidance on self care and introduce assisted technology where necessary. This is expected to prevent hundreds of hospital admissions.

Money will also be invested in a community response team to support the West Midlands Ambulance Service when responding to emergency call outs.

A team of social care and health workers will be able to offer crisis support to people to help them stay in their own home.

Needs

Another measure will offer a full assessment to people in need of 24-hour support and will take place away from a hospital setting.

This will give people time to recover and allow staff to gather evidence and build a picture of the person’s needs in order to help them, and their family or carers, determine how they should be cared for long term.

Nearly half a million pounds will be spent developing a new approach to how we move and transfer people in their home. Traditionally two members of staff would be needed to operate existing equipment but this new approach will see new aids being introduced, which will only need one social care worker or the individual alone to operate them, freeing up staff time to carry out other duties.

The final measure will be to introduce length of stay targets to reduce delays of hospital discharges for people who are medically fit to return home.

Senior Occupational Therapist Jennifer Robbins talks options with Mrs Marjorie Hill and Maria Perks

Dudley’s Home Care Service received a good rating from the Care Quality Commission

HELP SHAPE OUR SERVICE

ADULT SOCIAL CARE

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**Assistant Care Coordinators**

Full time, £20,661 to £22,658 per annum (+ enhancement for weekend/bank holiday working)

**Team Assistant**

Full time, £18,070 to 20,138 per annum

The duration of these posts are minimum 12 months fixed term from start date with the opportunity of extending the contract up to March 2019 or March 2020 subject to funding

Application deadline: 29 October 2017

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Halesowen Chronicle
Thursday, October 12, 2017

All-Stars are turning out at charity match

DUDLEY Town Football Club will again clash with Wolves All-Stars to raise funds for charities.

The teams will go head-to-head at The Dell Stadium in Brierley Hill for the first time since Wolves ‘thrashed’ the Dudley boys 6-0.

There is more than just pride at stake this year as the sides are hoping to raise more than last year’s total of £900 for the children’s ward at Russells Hall Hospital and the Mayor of Dudley’s charities – Dudley Mind, Dudley Alzheimer’s and the YMCA Empty Rooms project.

Mayor Councillor Dave Tyler said: “It’s always a great event and the more crowds we can get the better. We’re hoping to get a couple of ex-Albion players down as well.”

The mayor said he was prepared to dig out his soccer boots. “I have got a pair of football boots but I won’t be doing much running,” he said. “I might kick off and I might pass it a few times but I’m certainly not going to work a sweat up.”

It was former player and artist Jody Craddock leading the Wolves to a comfortable win under the wing of Wolves All-Stars manager Mel Eves last year.

Former player Eves has been in charge of the All-Stars charity team since 1997. Tickets for the match, which kicks off at 2.30pm on November 19, cost £5 adults and £3 children and OAPs. Call 07412 046050.
MORGAN Bridgens didn’t think twice when he saw his friend fall into the canal. By the time he got to five-year-old William Smith he had gone under the water and could have drowned had it not been for his actions.

Ten-year-old Morgan described how he managed to pull William to safety from the Black Country canal just in time. His mother Carly Smart said she was immensely proud of her son’s life-saving actions.

The drama happened as the pair were playing on a rope swing on the banks on Stourbridge Canal off Longboat Lane in Wordsley. After the rope swing broke William wandered off to get another stick with the hope of fixing it.

**Arms**

But Morgan suddenly heard a ‘big splash’ and went running down a set of steps to where the noise came from. When he got to the bottom he saw Will in the water and was sinking under the surface. Morgan got onto his stomach on the canal path, outstretched his arms and pulled his friend out of the canal.

Carly, 30, a mother-of-three from Wordsley, said: “Morgan panicked at first and didn’t know what to do. He told me ‘I had to get him out, mom’. He saw Will go under two or three times. When Will went under again, Morgan got him by the arms and pulled him out.

“I didn’t know what had happened when Morgan came back home. Morgan sat there all quiet and I knew something was wrong. When he told me I was hysterical. I said ‘have you got him out?’ and he said Will had gone back to his house. I went down to Will’s mum’s straight away. They only live a few doors down. Will was a bit shook up but he was fine, he was recovering and was in the bath.”

Morgan and William both attend Brook Primary in Wordsley. Carly’s youngest son Rio, five, is in William’s class, which is how the boys know each other. Carly added: “I’m really proud of Morgan. He has received lots of praise for his actions and it has opened his eyes.”

She said she wanted to highlight he had intervened as a warning to parents about the dangers of canals that criss-cross the Black Country.

Morgan Bridgens pulled William Smith to safety after he plunged into the canal.
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**Saturday 14th October**
- 9.00am-6.00pm

**Sunday 15th October**
- 10.30am-4.30pm

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<th>TOTAL CLEARANCE PRICE</th>
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<td>2 SETS ONLY</td>
<td>The Henley Latest Design Glass Table + 4 Matching Chairs White on Black</td>
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<th>UNBEATABLE PRICES 3 DAYS ONLY</th>
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<tr>
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**LOTS MORE AVAILABLE - ALL REDUCED**

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<td>The Balmoral Extending Table Super Oalk + 4 Matching Chairs CRAZY PRICE</td>
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<td>The Francesca 3 Seater Sofa + 2 Matching Recliner Chairs</td>
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**WEEKEND SPECIAL DEAL**

**THE CORONA RANGE OF SOLID WOOD DINING FURNITURE WEEKEND SPECIAL**

| Triple 3 Door Wardrobe £249 | Large Wide Sideboard £155 | Oblong Long TV Unit £65 |
| Large Dressing Table £109 | Nest of 3 Tables £50 | Coffee Table with Drawers £59.50 |
| Large Wide Sideboard £155 | Oblong Long TV Unit £65 | Coffee Table with Drawers £59.50 |

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**UNBEATABLE PRICES 3 DAYS ONLY**

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**TOTAL CLEARANCE PRICE**

**SAVE 50%**

| The Kelly Full Double Frame and Superb Mattress | £199 |
| The Minnesota Luxury Recliner Sofas 3 Seater Recliner + 2 Seater Recliner Black on Brown | £299 |
| The Zen 3/4 Size Small Double Frame | £499 |
| The Henley Latest Design Glass Table + 4 Matching Chairs White on Black | £699 |

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**TOTAL CLEARANCE PRICE**

**SAVE 40%**

| The Kelly Full Double Frame and Superb Mattress | £299 |
| The Minnesota Luxury Recliner Sofas 3 Seater Recliner + 2 Seater Recliner Black on Brown | £399 |
| The Zen 3/4 Size Small Double Frame | £599 |
| The Henley Latest Design Glass Table + 4 Matching Chairs White on Black | £899 |

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**TOTAL CLEARANCE PRICE**

**SAVE 50%**

| The Kelly Full Double Frame and Superb Mattress | £299 |
| The Minnesota Luxury Recliner Sofas 3 Seater Recliner + 2 Seater Recliner Black on Brown | £399 |
| The Zen 3/4 Size Small Double Frame | £599 |
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**TOTAL CLEARANCE PRICE**

**SAVE 40%**

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| The Henley Latest Design Glass Table + 4 Matching Chairs White on Black | £899 |

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Get down and get with Slade Alive!

THINK of Slade and most folks conjure images of outrageously 1970s gear or hear perennial festivewear Merry Xmas Everybody.

What many forget is just what a great rock ‘n’ roll band the Black Country hit-makers were.

To prove that point, the group’s classic album Slade Alive! has been reissued by BMG as a handsome hardback cover CD with 28-page booklet or, for the retro groovers, 180g vinyl with six-page 12 inch booklet.

Marking the 45th anniversary of its original release, this seven-track blast from the past shows a band at their most comfortable performing live.

Energy

Famously recorded for just £600 in a London recording studio in front of an invited audience of fans, the album still resonates with raw energy.

Noddy Holder rules the roost, joking with fans that he has to find the right key before unleashing that famous Black Country roar, while the formidable rhythm section of Jim Lea and Don Powell keep up a stomping bluesy dable rhythm section of Jim Lea and Don Powell before unleashing that famous key before unleashing that famous famous classic album Slade Alive!

"Get down and get with it", the name of Slade's first release, was their debut hit. With six-page 12 inch booklet.

Aladdin, Birmingham Hippodrome

It felt like the festive season had come early to the Hippodrome when Birmingham Royal Ballet treated audiences to its spectacular and magical production of the most famous tale from the One Thousand And One Nights.

The story of Aladdin and his magic lamp is familiar from pantomime and Disney. This production created by Birmingham Royal Ballet’s director David Bintley – originally for the National Ballet of Japan – put awe and wonder back into an over-familiar story.

Blending Middle Eastern and Chinese iconography, Dick Bird’s sets were magnificent, suggesting a sumptuous palace, huge cave and the night sky for a flying carpet ride. We were treated to a Chinese Lion dance, streaming dragon and the flash bang appearances of the floating genie, or as these spirits are properly called, djinn.

In Thursday’s performance Lachlan Monaghan was a powerful but light-hearted Aladdin and Yao Qian Shang as delicate as a lotus blossom as the Princess. Delightful comedy was provided by Marion Tat (the company’s assistant director) as Aladdin’s concerned mother. Max Maslen was a blue blur as the whirling djinn, spinning and leaping with almost supernatural power. This djinn was a real tonic.

The ensemble performed Bintley’s delightful choreography, its romance and cheeky humour with aplomb. The combination of spectacle and the sinfonia’s performance of a majestic score by Carl Davis was all you could wish for, with or without a lamp. The BRB return to Birmingham Hippodrome with Christmas favourite The Nutcracker, November 24 to December 13.

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TURKEY & TINSEL

Fri 24 to Mon 27 Nov

Your break includes
✓ 3 nights DBB at the Grand Burstin Hotel, Folkestone (incl. Traditional Christmas Dinner & Entertainment)
✓ Excursion to Windsor & Ascot
✓ Return coach travel from Dudley, Halesowen & Stourbridge

SAVE £10 PER PERSON

£149

Just Go Holidays

08432 244 217

ISLE OF WIGHT

ROYALS & RAILS

Mon 20 to Thu 23 Nov

Your break includes
✓ 3 nights DBB at the Hollers Hotel, Shanklin
✓ 2 Days in Windsor
✓ Happy hour before dinner every evening
✓ Entertainment on two nights
✓ Afternoon tea, coffee and cake on one day
✓ Afternoon bingo on one day
✓ Excursions to Godshill & Sandown
✓ Optional excursion to Newport & Ryde (£19)
✓ Return coach travel from Dudley, Halesowen & Stourbridge

SAVE £19 PER PERSON

£150

Just Go Holidays

08432 244 217

3 Day Break

£119

4 Day Break

£155

4 Day Break

£189

Get down and get with Slade Alive!

Making 80s as popular now as it was then

The Wedding Singer, Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton

It’s odd when you hear the era in which you considered yourself to be young described as ‘retro’.

It feels as if you are ancient and that the kids of today see the 1980’s in the same way as you saw the 1940’s.

But, judging by the audience reaction to Nick Waterston’s production of The Wedding Singer at the Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, it seems the ‘80’s is as popular now as it was then.

Starring the quirky but cute Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore at her most delightful, the 1998 movie version of The Wedding Singer was a massive hit and naturally lent itself to becoming a musical theatre show.

This is not a jukebox show however, but a full-on musical theatre production complete with an original score, a witty script and high-energy dance routines.

And, the simple storyline flows evenly in between the songs to offer a fresh take on entertaining production.

It’s the tale of Robbie, a New Jersey wedding singer and wannabe rock star, whose usually excitable daughter, Ivy, breaks up with her boyfriend and he is jilted at the altar.

For those expecting the film version, the score may be a little bit of a disappointment.

It’s the tale of Robbie, a New Jersey wedding singer and wannabe rock star, whose usually excitable daughter, Ivy, breaks up with her boyfriend and he is jilted at the altar.

The ensemble performed Bintley’s delightfull choreography, its romance and cheeky humour with aplomb. The combination of spectacle and the sinfonia’s performance of a majestic score by Carl Davis was all you could wish for, with or without a lamp. The BRB return to Birmingham Hippodrome with Christmas favourite The Nutcracker, November 24 to December 13.

LEON BURAKOWSKI

This djinn was a tonic in spectacular ballet

Tzu-Chao Chou as the Djinn of the Lamp in Aladdin

Pic: Bill Cooper

THEATRE REVIEWS

Folkestone & Hythe

Thursday, October 12, 2017
NEW CLASSES

**NEW**

PILATES
Beginners @ The Oakfield Centre:
Fri 3 Nov. 11:05-12:05. 7wks. £59.40#

IMPROVERS:
Wed 1 Nov. 18.30-19.30. 7wks. £40.50#

THURSDAYS:
Wed 1 Nov. 18.30-19.30. 7wks. £40.50#

WAR POETRY WORKSHOP
Thurs 16 Nov. 18.30-21.00. 1 wk. £17.15#

LANGUAGES

FRANCE
Beginners: Mon. 30 Oct. 19.00-20.00. 6wks. £34.20#

ITALIAN
Beginners: Mon 30 Oct. 19.00-20.00. 6wks. £34.20#

SPANISH
Beginners: Mon 30 Oct. 19.00-20.00. 6wks. £34.20#

BEGINNERS:
Sun 26 Nov. 15.00-16.00. 4wks. £30.40#

**(NEW)**

ARTS AND CRAFTS

HANDBRADES

SEWING FOR PLEASURE
Tues 31 Oct. 09.30-11.30. 6wks. £41.40#

PATCHWORK SUITABLE FOR ALL LEVELS
Wed 1 Nov. 14.30-16.30. 6wks. £41.40#

UPHOLSTERY & FABRIC
Wed 1 Nov. 12.00-14.00. 6wks. £41.40#

SEWING MADE SIMPLE SUITABLE FOR ALL LEVELS
Thurs 2 Nov. 18.00-20.00. 6wks. £41.40#

MUSIC

PLAY THE GUITAR FOR CHILDREN (8YRS+)
Beginners: Mon 30 Oct. 17.45-18.45. 6wks. ***

Intermediate: Thurs 2 Nov. 17.45-18.45. 6wks. ***

*** Please contact Student Services for prices

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WORDSLEY PRESCHOOL / PLAYGROUP

From 2 years, nappy facilities.
2-3 year old funded places available.
All day, morning and afternoon sessions.
Lunch club available. Good Ofsted report.
Qualified and DBS checked staff.
Tel. 01384 918740

Situated in new premises with secure outside play area.
How to help children learn to look after their things

1. Get them into a routine to help them remember to put their stuff away in or out of the house.

2. Put a checklist above their backpacks or even just inside it, to remind them what goes inside.

3. Make sure there’s a natural consequence for losing something – replacing an item with their own money.

4. Don’t bail children out if they lose things. “It seems the easy option because you’ve shown them you’re a sucker. That’s not a good lesson, and you’re not helping them to be responsible,” explains Suzie.

5. Label everything with their full name, if you don’t have an argument or tears,” says Suzie. “But what you will have is more losses, because why should they ever learn if you’re always going to bail them out? They’re always going to look to you to help because you’ve shown them you’re a sucker.”

6. Explain value to young children, and play games where they buy things with pretend money.

7. By the time children go to secondary school, they should be fully responsible for their possessions. “They should realise you had to pay for it and if they lose it they have to pay for it,” says Suzie.

8. Don’t bail children out if they lose things. “It seems the easy option because you don’t have an argument or tears,” says Suzie.

9. Come up with ideas to make sure they don’t lose things, or have them stolen.

10. Young children can’t be expected to be responsible when they’re little, but they can expect you to teach them responsibility. That’s a good lesson, and you’re not helping them to be responsible.”

11. Teach them how to look after their possessions in the same way you teach them responsibility.

12. Rewards can be used if a child is struggling with not losing things and doesn’t lose anything for a certain period.

13. Remember children are much less likely to lose something when they’ve paid for it themselves.

By Lisa Salmon

If you’re sick of your child losing their possessions, try some of these tips to help them understand value and learn to look after things.

DARA O’Briain loves the unusual, the quirky, the absurd – and demonstrated in his first children’s book, Beyond The Sky, about the weird and wonderful world of space.

Unlike other comedians who have written books for children – David Walliams, Russell Brand, Julian Clary and Adrian Edmondson spring to mind – Dara has followed a different course, amusing nine-to-12-year-olds and curious adults with this dip-in treat of fabulous facts which should have the kids – and adults – laughing out loud.

“Did you know, for instance, that the European country astronauts always recognised at night was Belgium because it had a law that every road must be lit at night?”

Or that Russian astronauts used to urinate on their trans- fer bus tyres, before boarding their rockets.

“These, and a host of other interesting facts about space, planets, astronauts and the stars, are featured in the book. Dara, 45, who is currently writing material for a forthcoming mammoth stand-up tour, says he didn’t try the space material out on his own kids.

“I never even thought of doing it for the same reason I don’t try out new material on my wife. As a comedy performer you don’t try out your jokes on the person nearest to you, because it wears them down and puts tension in the house.

“The book may at first sight seem a lighthearted look at space, but the fast-talking Irishman is a heavyweight when it comes to science. He studied mathematical physics at University College Dublin and yet gave up the chance of an academic career for stand-up comedy, which then expanded into TV presenting, hosting topical panel shows like Mock The Week and The Apprentice: You’re Fired!

“So, why didn’t he choose a scientific career?”

“It was the sheer thrill of performance,” he muses. “It turned out, to my surprise, that I was a trouper, I wanted to be in front of an audience, which was a major surprise to me, because I wasn’t a class clown or anything.

“I stood in front of an audience at university doing debating and the laughs just created a surge inside. Suddenly the dialogue felt good and created a rush. I still feel that now, but it takes more effort – three to six months of writing a two-hour show, but it’s a more substantial kind of a feeling now.

“I still get fidgety sitting in a theatre, and think I’d rather be in front of this crowd than in this crowd. That’s a performer’s thing.”

He may be reaching out to young people with this book, but he’s given talks on stand-gazing at schools, including his own children’s school, so he’s fairly familiar with his audience.

Switching from writing for children to writing for adults wasn’t too arduous, he reflects.

“I went straight from the book to writing a grown-up stand-up show. That’s a gear change. But when you start gigging, you have time to do other things - and I was a kids’ TV presenter for a couple of years.

“The stand-up tour material is getting there, slowly, he says. He will feature Brexit although he’s steering clear of Trump and North Korea, he says.

“When you’re writing a stand-up show, you’re writing for a two-hour tour. The same show will finish in Oslo in 2019 or in Melbourne in 2020. You can’t do this week’s Trump story. The subjects have to be strong enough to withstand being told 150 times.

“Jokes which are funny the first 10 times may become boring by the 61st time. It’s amazing how much stuff you shelf over the course of a tour.”

He’s hoping to do another series of BBC Two’s Star-gazing next year and is hosting another Robot Wars, but won’t be doing another version of The Apprentice: You’re Fired! I did five years and I’m very happy to hand it over to someone else. It was a fun show to do, but you can interview enough people in shiny suits who want to be on The Apprentice, and I think I had my fill with like them.

Beyond The Sky by Dara O’Briain is published by Scholastic, priced £12.99.
Welcome to the all new Britt Brewery at The Britannia Inn, the first Brewery in Rowley Village for 100 years.

At The Britt we like to make you feel right at home, think comfy chairs and sofas, open fires and a warm and welcoming environment.

Run by a CAMRA award winning landlord and his team, The Britt offers 10 real ales and 6 real ciders as well as an extensive gin menu.

The kitchen is open Mon-Fri 12-2pm and 5 -9pm and Sat 12-9pm serving a range of locally sourced sausages, delicious pies and traditional faggots as well as tasty burgers. A full home cooked Sunday lunch is available between 12.30pm with a choice of 3 meats and heaps of delicious veggie, served with lashings of gravy.

If that’s not enough to encourage you to visit, try out our entertainment offering which includes a DJ every Friday and live music every Saturday.

So...what are you waiting for?

Pop in for a pint or 2, sit by the fire and enjoy the all new Britt Brewery at the Britannia Inn.

To keep up to date with what’s new at The Britt, visit our Facebook page @thebrittbrewery

Cheers to all our old and new clients...
Evergreen singer Neil Diamond will return to Birmingham to headline the city’s Arena tonight and Genting Arena on Sunday. The star is celebrating his 50th anniversary, having last played Birmingham when he headlined the Genting Arena in 2015.

Having sold more than 130 million albums worldwide, Neil has an enviable back catalogue that includes Sweet Caroline, Cracklin’ Rosie, Love on the Rocks and Forever in Blue Jeans.

Neil is delighted to be back on the road after taking a couple of years out from his regular touring work. This is my usual schedule. Every two or three years I go out there. But the reaction to this one has been a little different. We’ve put 50 cities on sale and the response has been way high. It’s been very heartening to me. I’ve been doing this 50 years and to have an audience that’s out there and anxious and enthusiastic is exciting.”

He didn’t imagine he’d have made it this far. Neil is all too aware that rock’n’roll careers seldom last into their 50th year and when he started out artists tended to just have two or three records. After that, they were bombed out by their record company and it was on to the next. He’s not the only one who’s lasted the course, however. Nobody imagined The Rolling Stones would still be singing Satisfaction 50 years later.

ENDURING

But Neil was part of a generation that also included other enduring stars, such as Mick Jagger, Paul McCartney, Bob Dylan and Brian Wilson. Before then, artists didn’t have long careers – with very few exceptions.

Neil has a vast catalogue of work from which to choose when he is playing live. He usually finds the opening song and if that gets him excited, the rest of the show writes itself. There are ups and downs, valleys, left turns, quiet moments and bombastic moments. “You just keep adding songs and work from the song before it. Eventually you get to a point after two hours where you think, ‘OK, let’s wrap it.’”

However, it’s not all blockbuster tunes. Neil is keen to find space for newer cuts so that he can keep the show exciting for him and the rest of the band. He’s also played songs by Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell and more.

But it’s tunes like Sweet Caroline that the fans want – and it’s a tune he’s played more than 1,500 times live. Neil’s other ultra-popular songs are Cherry Cherry, Cracklin’ Rose, I Am I Said, Brother’s Love Travelling Salvation Show, Beautiful Noise, Holy Holy, Forever in Blue Jeans, America and You Don’t Bring Me Flowers.

I want to create a list of songs that I haven’t done before. ‘If You Go Away’ is as definite candidate. ‘Suzanne’ is a definite candidate. I have a list, but I want to keep some of them surprises. There will be a bunch of additions to the set list. Hopefully they’ll all be accepted by people. If they are, we’ll keep doing them.”

The veteran songwriter is making the most of his 50th anniversary and a career-spanning box set features 50 hand-picked songs from his career.

Neil has begun his career as a Brill Building songwriter and wrote for Jay and the Americans, The Monkees and other stars. He was the brains behind I’m a Believer and A Little Bit Me, a Little Bit You, among many others. Stars flocked to play his music, with his work covered by musicians including Elvis Presley, Frank Sinatra, Johnny Cash and UB40, who turned his 1968 song Red Red Wine into a Number One in 1983.

While Neil has influenced many other stars, he was shaped by artists from a different era. He loved Lonnie Donegan’s Rock Island Line, The Everly Brothers’ Bye Bye Love, The Rolling Stones’ Satisfaction, Peter Paul and Mary’s Blowin’ In The Wind and Ritchie Valens’ La Bamba.

During those early years, Neil had “no real thought of becoming a singer. He wanted to go to medical school to become a scientist. However, he decided he wasn’t smart enough for that and instead he dropped out of New York University after his junior year to take a job on Tin Pan Alley. He was paid $50 a week and it took eight years to write his first hit, Solitary Man, in 1966.

Despite his brilliance, he’s never found it particularly easy to write a hit. He told an interviewer recently: “You would think that after all these years of writing I would have learnt to do it quickly and gracefully and easily, but it doesn’t seem to work that way. Every song is different, so it doesn’t help me very much to have had years of experience. It’s hard work, and it’s not getting any easier.”

But all right, nobody told me it was gonna be easy. And so what? I’m a ditch-digger when I’m writing songs. My back hurts? Who cares? I gotta get that ditch dug deep and strong and it’s gotta serve its purpose. There are no short cuts. That’s what it is. But I’ve been doing it a long time now. I can’t find another way to make a living.”

For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.
Vryll have licence to thrill in psychedelic triple bill

Gig of the week is a rare foray into the West Midlands for Liverpool’s fast rising psychedelic rockers The Vryll Society. The band who shared bills with Blossoms, The Coral and The Kooks recently released a single, Shadow Of A Wave, and the swaggering indie pop quartet have picked up a big following on Merseyside. They will be headlining a formidable triple bill at Wolverhampton’s Newhampton Arts Centre next Thursday (October 19) warming up or the Ritual Union festival on Oxford’s Cowley Road the following Saturday.

Also at this feast of psychedelia near Molineux will be Swedens Josefin Ohlen + The Liberation and Sheffield heavy psych outfit Baba Naga. Little Mix will be giving a shout out to their exes at the Genting Arena tomorrow (Friday) before returning in November. That night rock fans may prefer Birmingham’s Broken Witt Rebels at the Slade Rooms in Wolverhampton or 68 Guns out fit The Alarm at Birmingham O2 Academy. Young Pilgrims bring their brassy grooves to Wolverhampton’s Arena Theatre on Saturday but it will be Brass In Pocket at the Symphony Hall on Sunday when Chrissie Hynde brings The Pretenders. Or end the weekend at Bilston for some Hocus Pocus with Dutch rockers Focus at the Robin 2.

Major gigs at the Symphony Hall include soul singer Michael Kiwanuka In My Own Land alongside Within Temptation and Marc Almond (Tuesday) and folk/rockers The Waterboys (next Thursday).

Bedlam looks at healing through arts

The healing power of art comes under the spotlight in Bedlam, Birmingham’s third arts and mental health festival, which starts on Tuesday.

Shaped by people who have experienced mental ill health, the festival celebrates arts and wellbeing and is being held at venues across the city, chiefly Birmingham Repertory Theatre and the Mac in Cannon Hill Park.

The three-week festival features performance poet, Lemn Sissay, pictured, performing his one-man play Something Dark (October 24, Mac); poetry and dance event Kahaani (Oct 27, Mac); Birmingham actress Olivia Winteringham looks at love and grief and how the state of our minds can affect how we remember in Delightful (Oct 26-28, Birmingham Rep).

Charming family show The Girl and the Giraffe (Oct 24-26, Mac) uses puppets explore wellbeing and friendship from a child’s perspective in matinee performances. A Wellbeing Discovery Day (Oct 22, Rep) will offer yoga, meditation, Tai Chi and a range of mindfulness activities for all ages.

Festival organiser Steve Ball, an associate director at The Rep, said: “Evidence shows that the arts can have a positive impact on wellbeing yet there have been too few opportunities for people affected by mental ill health to engage with the arts. We hope that this festival will change that.”

“Our inaugural festival in 2013 attracted 1,650 participants and audience members and increased to 2,408 in 2015. With the addition of new partners and venues the 2017 festival promises to be bigger than ever.” Visit www.birmingham-rep.co.uk website.

Halloween comes early to the Grand

Get into the Halloween spirit early when mirth and the macabre merge in The Addams Family musical, staged at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday (October 18-21). Contact Dance Company have been working with Wolverhampton’s Mosaic Disability Theatre on dance duets being performed tomorrow (Friday), matinee and evening performances, in Two Fold at Wolverhampton’s Arena Theatre.

Lucy Suggate brings physical expression to the electronic music of James Holden in Pilgrim at the Hippodrome’s Patrick Centre venue on October 20.
SATURDAY’S TV OCTOBER 14

FANTASTIC CARVING DAY 7 DAYS A WEEK

They always say never judge a book by its cover so we decided to check out The Park Lane Tavern in Collie Gate, and I have to say what was on offer in there was a total surprise.

They also don’t forget their mini dinners with ‘Kids Eat Free’ Monday to Saturday between 5pm and 6pm and during school holidays it’s All Day Monday to Saturday.

But it doesn’t stop them also having a full main menu consisting of the classic favourites such as sausages, mixed grill, burgers and fish and chips, where the fish would not be out of place in any issue of Moby Dick. To finish is there very tempting dessert menu, that if you have room for one of the meals you get at the Park Lane Tavern.

Then if that’s not enough choice for you you can also choose for the breakfast which is served Friday, Saturday and Sunday 8.30am until 11.00am. Their breakfast is a buffet style ‘All you can eat’ with enough choice to satisfy any diner from eggs 2 ways, bacon, sausage, mushrooms, baked beans, hash browns, black pudding, grilled fresh tomatoes, toast & fried bread. There’s even jam for your toast if you still not full after all that.

Half Price Monday

They also host special evenings like their ‘Half Price Monday’ which has proven to be very popular, and why not, already reasonably priced selected main meals off their main menu (which includes steaks) at half price served between 5pm and 8pm every Monday. Also their psychic evenings where for £15 you get a reading from a medium, and for those believers amongst you that must be a barrier. You get a very friendly feeling when you enter The Park Lane Tavern and that’s mostly down to the staff. Happy to see you and always keep a keen eye. They have a lot of regular customers and it’s been known for a customer’s drink to be poured and waiting for them before they reach the bar, you don’t see that at many places nowadays.

There are no airs or graces at The Park Lane Tavern, you get delicious food at great prices served by happy staff in a comfortable environment. No wonder this place has people returning time after time.
choicE

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. 7.35 Match of the Day.
(R) 8.00 The Andrew Marr Show. 19.00 Sunday Morning Live. 11.00 Regional
News.
6.00 BBC News; Weather. 1.15 Homes Under the Hammer. (R) 2.30 Mock the
Week. No Nothing. (R) 3.45 Escape to the Country. (R) 4.00 Pointless. 4.15 Songs
of Praise. 4.50 Eisteddfod for Kids? (R) 5.50 BBC News.
6.05 Regional Programme.
6.15 Country. (R) Elite Horses with
Winfred Susan in Place. Involving air and
british Prince as well as being the current
royal prince also now unwittingly creates
a complex dynamic between the couple,
but when tragedy strikes, personal and
political sacrifices must be made. Last in
the series.

BBC2

7.00 Gardener's World. (R) 8.05 The
Joy of British Gardens. (R) 8.45 Countryfile.
(R) 9.00 Saturday Kitchen Best Bites.
11.00 My House is My Castle. (R) 11.15
My Life as a Plate. (R) 12.05 Midsomer
Mystery. 1.00 Film: The World’s Fastest
Indian. (R) 2005 Fact-based drama,
costarring Anthony Hopkins. 3.00instrument
Unplugged. (R) 4.00 Count. 5.00
Food (R).
7.00 Top Gear. Chris Harris and Matt
LeBlanc compete in a race across the
African peninsular, pitting a Bugatti Chiron
against an assortment of other vehicles
– with murder on the agenda. Rory Field
creates a life-size arcade game to put city
cars to the test, and Tim Temple takes a
ride on the Top Gear Track in a Toyota
GT86. (R)
7.00 Russia with Simon Reeve. 
The adventure embarks on a journey across the
world’s largest country, taking him from the
snow-capped volcanoes of the far east
towards some of the remotest parts of the
country. The journey is through the
Mongol Empire and to Siberia. (R)
8.00 Dragons Den. Entrepreneurial
business making ideas for a
wealth of startlingly different
elderly, protein shake bottles and
green tea cakes for the panel.
Presented by Evan Davis.
9.00 Louis Theroux: Dark State –
Trafficking Sex. Louis explores the
sex trade in Houston, examining how
the city has become a
hotspot for people
trafficking and uncovering
the explosive truth about
prostitution and pimps.
10.00 Climate Change. Stanley
Franklin sets out to
head his bar, but faces some
hard obstacles. Totally
backs out on meeting his
supplier and does makes
demand of Paris and Lucas
after a job goes wrong.
10.30 Midsomer Murders. James
Acar, Tom Allen, Eryn James
and Olivia Colman star in
Clue: Country House Crime.
11.20 Film; Leave to Remand. (R)
The British lawyer faces a
dilemma as the accusations
turned recognitions are
chill claim refugees states
approaches. Drama. Starring Maxine
Peake. 12.30 Dawn.
12.30 S4C. 1.45 This Is S4C.

ITV

6.00 CITY. 6.15 Strictly Takes
You. (R) 6.45 Kenan with.
7.45 Endemol’s Crazy Railway.
8.00 ITV News; Weather.
8.30 Emmerdale. (R) 9.00
Emmerdale. 9.30 The Chase.
10.00 Coronation Street. 10.30
The Weakest Link. 11.00
ITV News; Weather.

CHANNEL 4

6.20 Kevin Can Wait. 6.45 Kevin
Can Wait. (R) 7.20 Everybody Loves
Raymond. 7.35 Endemol’s Looney
Tunes. 8.00 The 100.
8.30 Flash. 9.00 Flash. 9.30
Sunday Night at the Movies.
10.00 Jeremy Clarkson. 10.45
Easy Food. (R) 11.00 The
Simmons. 11.30 The Simpsons.
12.00 Alan Carr: Chatty Man.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Miss Scarlet & The Duke.
(R) 6.45 Poppy. 6.55 Wisp.
7.00 Peep Show. 7.10 Bedtime
Ballet. 7.25 Fermin Sans. 7.40
Clyde, the Little White Van. 7.50
Pillow. 8.00 BMC and the
Monster Machines. 8.30 Noddy’s
Toys. 8.45 Noddy’s
9.00 Ben and Holly’s Little Kingdom.
9.20 Shimmer and Shine. 9.35
Shogun.

BBC Four

7.00 Only Connect. 7.30 University
Challenge. 8.00 The Revolution
Staring Up History.
7.00 Jamie: 10 Things.
8.00 South: Dublin at the Races.
9.10 Doctors: Dublin. 12.00
Midsomer Dream.


Digital

4.25 The Pure Hell of St Trinian’s.
5.45 Film: The King’s Speech.
7.30 The Simpsons. (R)
9.00 Film: The Bourne (1989).
12.30 Film: The French
Revolution: The Floreal.


Christmas Menus - Now Available Ask staff for more details or visit our website at www.theparklanetavern.net.
I was one of the biggest boxing matches of my generation – a clash of generations between an up-and-coming fighter and one of the sport’s greatest-ever champions.

Back in April, Anthony Joshua fought Wladimir Klitschko for the IBF, WBA and IBF heavyweight titles in front of 90,000 fans at Wembley Stadium.

It was the largest-ever attendance for a boxing bout in British soil and the biggest for a heavyweight title fight anywhere in the world since ‘The Long Count Fight between Gene Tunney and Jack Dempsey in Chicago in 1927.

For once, the hype wasn’t anti-climax. After a tense and cautious first few rounds, ‘AJ’ came out and barged ‘Dr Steelhammer’ to the canvas in the fifth.

However, the 41-year-old Ukrainian rose up and dominated his younger opponent for the remainder of the round, before battering him and earning his own knockdown in round six.

The next few rounds were again cautious, both men wary of each other, until a reinvigorated Joshua knocked him down for a second time in the round, before the referee stopped the fight.

This documentary follows Joshua in the final hours leading up to the heavyweight fight.

It also provides an intimate insight into the young champion at home the night before and in his dressing room as the clock ticked down to the opening bell.

The programme also features a look at the career of the Wladimir fighter, who turned 28 on Sunday.

As an amateur, Joshua represented Britain at the 2012 Olympics, winning a gold medal in the super-heavyweight division.

He is also the second boxer, after Joe Frazier, to win a world heavyweight title whilst still reigning as an Olympic champion at the top weight.

As a result, thousands on the autistic spectrum struggled through their childhoods and teenagers, attempting to make sense of a world they saw differently to other people. Packham was in his 40s and already a famous face before he was diagnosed as having Asperger’s syndrome, which causes him to struggle in social situations and find human relationships difficult. He candidly discusses his situation in this moving documentary, which also features testimony from his long-term partner, who described him as sometimes ‘being like an alien’. Packham also learns more about treatments, and wonders whether he would ever want to be cured.

When the naturalist was a lad, autism was a mystery to society, and completely unknown to others. It certainly wasn’t something that was discussed openly, either at home or in the media.

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British police trying to catch drivers under the influence.

The programme also features a look at the career of the Wladimir fighter, who turned 28 on Sunday.

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Organised by Omega Holidays plc,
www.omega-holidays.com/YDV254
Quote Code:YDV254

LAST WEEK’S SOLUTION:

Across
Double Crossword

No.451

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 - Across: 6 Recipes; 7 Flats; 9 Cover; 10 Straits; 11 Cluster; 13 Rebound; 15 Matter; 16 Breach; 17 Bairn; 20 Red. Quick - Across: 6 Common; 7 Cluster; 8 Growths; 11 Samovar; 13 Counter; 15 Equity; 16 Absent; 17 Vaunt; 20 Fun.

Quick Clues:

Across
1. A pure one in the common market, perhaps (5)
2. Senior citizen (5)
3. Reference (8)
4. Accounts book (8)
5. Beyond reach (12)
6. Wickard (7)
7. Observe (4)
8. Not easily angered (4-8)
9. A politician's essay about love (4)
10. A man responsible for arranging publication (8)
11. Descend on fire (8)
12. Not a man - it's an abnormal individual (8)
13. Descend on fire (8)
14. State encouraging one to let the matter rest (7)
15. Try to please? (7)
16. Tangle (12)
17. Tangle (12)
18. Higher (5)
19. Injurious (7)
20. Stiff (8)
21. Abandoned port (4)

Down
1. Clamber (8)
2. Foundation (5)
3. Bless (7)
4. Baby (6)
5. Cries (4)
6. A word meaning 'people's headwear' (3-6,3)
7. A spot of shrill (8)
8. As a afterthought (5)
9. Observation (4)
10. Not a man - it's an abnormal individual (8)
11. Observe (4)
12. Clamber (8)
13. Confess (5)
14. Narrow band (6)
15. A politician's essay about love (4)
16. Tree (6)
17. Tangle (12)
18. Wasted away (8)
19. Plug (7)
20. Narrow band (6)
21. Deduce (6)
22. Risk (7)
23. Parched (4)
24. Wicked (7)

Quick Clues:

Across
1. The Spanish manuscript may have many leaves (4)
2. Left to tackle anything not tied out (8)
3. Coming to a similar conclusion (7)
4. Can't be right (5)
5. Cricketer's ideal, coveted by musicians (7.5)
6. Descend on fire (8)
7. Didn't dare that it's an abnormal appetite (8)
8. A colourless individual (6)
9. Maintains the cargo is in them (5)
10. Observe (4)
11. Cricketer's ideal, coveted by musicians (7.5)
12. Not a man responsible for arranging publication (8)
13. Descend on fire (8)
14. State encouraging one to let the matter rest (7)
15. Try to please? (7)
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Sudoku

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

Last Week’s Crossword Solutions:

1. Who scored the only goal in Terry Venables's first match as England manager?
2. Who's wife was Frances Nisbet?
3. What did IA Richards and CK Ogden devise?
4. What type of animal is the dik-dik?
5. What is the unit of currency of South Africa?
6. Which country was ruled by dictator Kim Il-Sung?
7. Johann Strauss II;
8. The Spanish manuscript may have many leaves (4)
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Last week’s solutions:

Quiz:

Niner:
Declaring

StarReader Travel

Return coach travel from Dudley

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It’s Spain – with a capital Mmm

RAUCOUS, sometimes riotous, a tour of Madrid’s tapas bars is as worthwhile as seeing powerhouse art gallery Museo del Prado and the colonnaded Plaza Mayor.

The loud-mouthed, boisterous city may not lay claim to its own dish, but you’ll find restaurants, bars and delis serving some of the best regional Spanish food. Try cevica (cured beef) from Leon, mojama (salt-cured tuna) from Cadiz and sherry from Jerez.

According to a survey by Booking.com, 75 per cent of global travellers are likely to choose a location renowned for its great food and drink for their next destination. More than a third say food is what they remember most vividly about a place. For a true taste of Madrid, these are the foodie experiences you must sample.

Get your fill of history. Where: Botin

Dining in this rickety four-floor warren of a restaurant is sampling a slice of history.Founded in 1725, it’s been named the world’s oldest restaurant by The Guinness Book of Records. A dapper waiter slices Iberico ham in the reception, while the original wood-burning oven slow roasts about 50 piglets a day. The tender pork dish is a classic and features on ice and fried churros are all beautifully displayed. Many people come here simply to snap photos and gaze up at the curling wrought iron roof. Prices reflect the venue’s popularity

Lunch like a local. Where: Prada a Topo

Specialising in preserved figs, peppers and meats priced, wood-panelled restaurant is a favourite with Madrilenos – especially for late lunch. Although not always Instagram-worthy, the generous, belly-stretching dishes are superb – particularly the salt-crusted, thin-sliced buttery steak with zozopiere figs and fries

Book a guided tapas crawl. Where: around the city centre

An unspoken code governs the etiquette of tapas dining in Madrid, which can be intimidating for the uninitiated. Menus (if any) will generally be Spanish chalk-scribbles on blackboards, and getting an order in requires deft elbow manoeuvres to secure a space at the bar.

Let someone else do all the hard work by booking a food tour. Yorkshire lass Jo Wivel moved to Spain many years ago to follow her passion for flamenco, and now runs the excellent Insider’s Madrid (insidersmadrid.com).

Book a bespoke tour with Jo and she’ll show you all the best spots, including La Venencia, where grumpy staff serve sherry in a magical space stacked with wooden casks, and Emma Cocina (opposite the San Miguel market), a rare place to find salads in the city.

A three-hour tour with all you can eat and drink in four stops costs from £144 per person (minimum two people). Discounts apply for bigger groups. Jo might even treat you to an impromptu dance performance!

Where to stay – Only YOU Atocha.

Charming and breezily stylish, this young, energetic hotel sums up the spirit of Madrid. The 206 rooms are compact but filled with everything the millennial traveller might need. The real star is the SEPTIMA rooftop bar.

SARAH MARSHALL
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**Five-bed home new to the market**

WEDNESFIELD

£350,000

New to the property market, this five-bedroomed detached house in Barbel Drive, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, is a highly deceptively spacious property. It is for sale through Connells at £350,000 with no chain.

Internally it has an entrance hall, downstairs cloakroom/WC, lounge, dining room, study/play room, kitchen diner and utility room.

To the first floor there are five bedrooms, a master en suite and a family bathroom.

Outside is off road parking to the front, a double garage and a generous panel enclosed rear garden.

Contact Connells on 01902 710 170.

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**Apartment’s location convenient for amenities**

BRIERLEY HILL

£79,950

Flat 5, 70 High Street, Brierley Hill, Dudley is a first floor apartment situated in the centre of Pensnett, being convenient for shops, services and commuter links.

It is for sale through DB Roberts & Partners at £79,950.

The property is well presented and has spacious living accommodation that briefly comprises an entrance hall, a living room, a fitted kitchen, two bedrooms and a family bathroom.

Outside there are communal gardens and a garage providing secure storage and parking.

Internal viewing is essential to fully appreciate.

For further information, or to book that all important viewing, contact DB Roberts & Partners on 01902 427257 or visit www.dbroberts.co.uk

**FIVE-BED HOME NEW TO THE MARKET**

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Crossland X fills more practical needs

By Ian Donaldson

Vauxhall is keen to tell you what its new Crossland X is not – and it’s not a mildly macho four-wheel drive for people with adventurous tastes. No, that task is filled in the range by the nearly-as-new Mokka X, a mere finger’s length longer, but aimed at different buyers.

The Crossland X is as more down to earth machine (literally; it lacks the Mokka’s rock defying ground clearance and 4WD availability) and is aimed at filling the more practical needs of its buyers. And these, Vauxhall thinks, will be either younger couples who need the Crossland’s space for people and their bits and bobs or older types who relish the car’s raised seating and the way it makes for easier entry and exit as the joints begin to creak a little.

Family-friendly

Either group will be taking on a car that looks crispily neat outside and in and starts at a family-friendly £16,555 – although Vauxhall is following the industry trend and offers only a single colour (blue) that doesn’t mean another £50 for metallic paint. The range tops out at £21,380, heading a line up that borrows heavily from the Peugeot group for the bits you can’t see, from body platform to engines and gearboxes.

That deal was struck years before the recent takeover of Vauxhall by the Peugeot empire and there’s another joint venture due later this year with the larger Grandland X, which shares bits with the French firm’s 3008. It’s no surprise that Vauxhall is keen to ramp up its offerings in the SUV part of the market, growing at a phenomenal pace as buyers shun the more traditional small hatchback. They’ll enjoy the sense of space in the Crossland X, with loads of headroom (57.3mpg combined and 123g/km CO2) and useful increase in the already generous boot space (1,255 litres with the rear seat folded flat).

The top-of-the-line petrol engine is the 1.2-litre Turbo with 128bhp (55.4mpg combined; 116g/km CO2) and six-speed manual transmission. The line-up also includes two turbocharged diesel engines, including the 1.6 with 118bhp (70.6mpg combined; 105g/km CO2) and a top speed of 116mph. Standard kit across the range includes climate control, alloy wheels, cruise control and LED daytime running lights. Depending on grade or options, your Crossland X can park itself without the driver touching the steering wheel (which can be heated) and will beat winter frosts with a heated windscreen.

Opt for Vauxhall’s OnStar system and your car becomes a wi-fi hotspot, with the chance to hook up seven mobile devices. So the kids will stay silently glued to their iPads in the back.

The way the car feels on the road depends greatly on what’s under the bonnet. They all share a ride that prefers smoother roads and turns a bit sharp on bad ones and the likely most popular, the 110 horsepower petrol lacks sparkle when provoked, although 45mpg on the test route was some compensation.

The more powerful 128bhp petrol model was very much livelier (and its six-speed gearbox sweeter) and returned an identical 45mpg. It felt a transformed vehicle.

More economical (58mpg on test) was the more powerful of the diesel Crosslands, which felt as swift as the better petrol and makes sense for the business user (a minority of buyers here) who won’t mind the higher purchase price.

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IN Tom Brown's School Days, the protagonist observed: "It's very odd how almost all English boys love danger; you can get ten to join a game, or climb a tree, or swim a stream, when there's a chance of breaking their limbs or getting drowned."

He is referring to Tom's adventures with Scud, George and Flashman who would have been very different had their teachers heeded the latest advice from experts at Newcastle University.

Writing for the British Medical Journal, Prof Al-lyson Pollock and Graham Kirkwood have called for scrums and tackles to be banned from school playing fields, saying that most injuries in youth rugby are caused by collisions during the game.

Calling for the Government to step in, Professors Pollock and Kirkwood say ministers should "put the interests of the child before those of corporate professional rugby unions."

But Dominic Bradburn, director of sport at Oswestry School, is unconvinced.

Dangers
"You can't take tackling out of the game, it would ruin it," says Mr Bradburn, who has played the sport for Shrewsbury RFC.

Phil Jeffries, who coaches youngsters at Bridgnorth Rugby Club, says that taking tackling out of the junior game could actually make it more dangerous when children get older. "I think there's always merit in re-looking at sport and understanding the dangers involved," he says.

"My personal view is that what we need to do is teach kids the correct techniques to scrummage and tackle, and give them the experience of this at a slower rate when they are small."

"If you take the tackling and scrumming out of the game at school level, by the time they reach the age of 18 they will have no experience of it, and I think you will get a lot more injuries than you do now."

Mr Jeffries, who is 42, first started playing the game when he was eight years old. He says that in 34 years he has suffered from concussion twice, despite playing the position of flanker where his head is particularly exposed to risk.

"I would imagine the risk of leg breaks in football is far greater," he says, although he does add that head injuries can be much more serious.

He points out that much has changed in the way rugby is taught to youngsters in recent years. "The data on specifically whether playing rugby or other contact sports in school increases your risk of dementia is not as robust yet due to a lack of large prospective studies," she says.

There are also many who argue that the health benefits of getting youngsters involved with sport outweigh any risks from concussion.

Prof Pollock and Kirkwood say that under United Nations conventions, governments have a duty to protect children from risks of injury. But brain injury expert Dr Alan Carson believes experts should think very hard before bringing in rules which could mean fewer children want to take part in sport.

"The health crisis facing Britain’s children is not concussion, but obesity and lack of exercise," he says.

Mr Jeffries says that taking tackling out of the junior game would deny youngsters the opportunity to get some much-needed exercise.

"We have got 300 kids in our junior teams, and when you have boys that age there is a lot of testosterone," he says.

"At the age of 11 and 12, they need to run around and be active. From the age of nine, when they are told they can tackle, all they want to do is tackle. It just smacks of the nanny state."
Vipers touch down at rugby club

STOURBRIDGE Rugby Club is to host another oval ball sport as the Black Country Vipers American Football team has signed up to play at Stourbridge on a field that has been vacated by the rugby club at the end of the rugby season.

Talks have been ongoing for several months, with both sides expressing excitement at the prospect of gridiron being played at the rugby club.

Rugby club chairman Robin Edwards said: “There's a synergy between our two sports that will provide excellent opportunities for young players from both clubs. With the American Football season running from April to September, it is an excellent fit with our rugby season.”

Ian Jewkes, CEO and general manager of Black Country Vipers, said: “The move provides us with excellent playing and training facilities, as well as the opportunity for players from both clubs to try out a different sport.”

Taster sessions for 13-18-year-olds take place from October 15, November 19 and December 10 from 2-4pm. For more information visit www.blackcountryvipers.com

Stourbridge race away from Blaydon

Blaydon RFC 11 Stourbridge RFC 40

STOURBRIDGE avoided a bogey side they last played in March 2012 during a relegation season. This was also a game that Stour – featuring Geordie made good Neil Mitchell – needed to win to assure their promotion hopes.

The hosts had won only a single game – at home against Otley – and were not at the races here despite taking the lead with a John McAtee penalty.

It took just four minutes for Joe Heatley, playing in his third different starting position of the season to score his seventh try. Chris Scott added the extras. Moments later Josh Trinham went down after a nasty head clash and was replaced by Nick David who was to see out the rest of the match. Blaydon hit back with a try of their own on the half hour mark through Nathan Bailey.

Shortly before half-time Blaydon found themselves a man down after persistent offside calls and Stour took a 14-8 lead with the award of a penalty try.

Blaydon started the second half well with a three-point penalty after 51 minutes by replacement fly half Ryan Foreman only for Dan Rumble to chalk up another valuable try six minutes later. Afafu Haisila added the extras.

Blaydon ralled for a spell but, on 71, Nick David added a bonus point try, the extras added. The floodgates opened and replacement hooker Sam Wilkes added his name to the scoreheet and Haisila’s last-minute selfconverted try put the icing on the cake.

Problem encounter as Eggington loses out in title defence

SAM Eggington was beaten in the first defence of his European title on Saturday afternoon.

The Stourbridge fighter, only the week before winning the English Writers’ Club Young Boxer of the Year, was outpointed by Mohamed Mimoune for the welterweight crown.

The 23-year-old was the victor with a John Whyman penalty.

Halesowen Town 2 Hednesford Town 1

HALESOWEN followed up their win in the No.9 Derby by ending Hednesford Town’s three-game winning streak on Tuesday night.

Two first-half goals proved enough for Yelz to record back-back wins for the first time this season.

The hosts took a 31st minute lead through an own goal when John McAtee’s shot struck unlucky defender James Mutton, leaving goalkeeper Jose Vega straddled as the ball nestled in the net. It was 2-0 just five minutes later when Vega failed to gather above his head, allowing Daniel Udoh, hero of the win over Glassboys, to convert from a wide angle.

Hednesford gradually began to dominate and pulled a goal back after 63 minutes when substitute Jordan Graham latched onto a forward ball and cut inside to hit a low shot past Dan Platt.

Stourbridge 1 Halesowen Town 2

HALESOWEN threw the form book out of the window to win the No 9 derby against the odds on Saturday.

Stourbridge looked the odds-on favourites for victory against their local rivals, with Gary Hackett’s men having made an impressive start to the Evo-Stik Premier Division campaign and Yeats, before the game, lying rock-bottom.

But the visitors ran out winners in front of 2,306 spectators at the War Memorial Ground in Ambleve.

The tense atmosphere gave way to crowd trouble from a small section of fans, with two flares being thrown onto the pitch during the game.

Halesowen’s game plan was to catch Stourbridge on the counter-attack, and it paid off with two well-taken goals from striker Daniel Udoh, firstly on seven minutes and then just before the interval.

Stourbridge found the net on 63 minutes to drop themselves back into the contest when Ryan Rowe deflected in a Leon Broadhurst free-kick taken right on the edge of the box.

Players celebrate the first goal with Daniel Udoh

Halesowen players celebrate their win with fans at the end of the game

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Race meeting could be last for Heathens

CRADLEY race what could be their last ever league meeting when they race Eastbourne at Wolverhampton next Monday (7.30).

Club bosses have confirmed they cannot guarantee the team will be at the tapes for 2018 until they know how many dates Wolves need.

That appears to rule out any home meetings at Birmingham next season with crowds significantly lower for Heathens meetings.

The Heathens’ season will round off at Monmore the following week, October 23 with the famous P.A.S.T Golden Hammer individual, with a line-up that Patchett believes is one of the strongest to date.

“We want to end the season on a high over the next two Mondays at Wolverhampton, starting with Eastbourne,” said co-promoter Gary Patchett.

“We desperately tried to squeeze this fixture into our schedule prior to the cut-off date but there was no space available and denied us a very late charge at the play-offs.

“But you have to play with the hand you’re dealt with and just because there’s nothing riding on it as such, it’s still a very important meeting.”

“There’s no hiding from the fact that this has been an unusually disappoint- ing year for the Heathens and it’s im- portant to go out on some sort of a high.

“And while we dearly hope to face the case, who knows, it could be the last league meeting for Cradley.”

Reece seals place in championships

BLACK Country Triathletes did themselves proud at the Oulton Park Autumn Duathlon in Cheshire.

The morning Sprint involved a 5km run, 25km ride and a 5km run and was a qualifier for the European Duathlon Championships in October 2018 in Ibiza.

Reece Ashwood was first home in 1:43:28, in an automatic qualifying third place in the 17-18 age group.

In the afternoon’s Standard Distance Race, the English National Championship race for this distance, a 10km run, 40km bike and 5km run, Rob Kennard brought home the bronze medal, third in the 50-54 age group in 1:53:15.

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