400 extra places to be created at schools

Dudley Council is facing a growing demand for school places and education boss Councillor Tim Crumpton has now given the go-ahead for proposals for 210 extra places at Stourbridge Town Centre Primary School in Dudley.

Under the plans bosses will also create an additional 100 places for King Mill Primary in Stourbridge and 70 for Kate’s Hill Primary School. They would be available in September 2015.

Demand

The plans come as officers predict a surge in demand for primary school places over the next three years and they want to ensure there are enough available spaces in the borough’s schools.

They are predicting demand for an additional 1,000 spaces.

Council officers are also considering providing extra spaces at Hob Green Primary in Netherton, Howley Grange Primary School in Halesowen and Netherton Primary School on next year.

Councillor Crumpton said: “Dudley is continuing to experience a consistent increase in the numbers of young people aged 4-10.

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**DERELICT chapel given second life**

A DERELICT chapel which shut thirty years ago after its owner set to be given a new lease of life as a venue for civil ceremonies.

Lye and Wollescote Chapel was built in 1878. But following closure in 1984 its listed building has fallen into a state of disrepair.

Local groups have been given the opportunity to purchase the sale of the building from Dudley Council to charity the West Midlands Historic Buildings Trust. £1 million in funding has been secured to bring it back into use.

A planning application was lodged last month and this week planning officers recommended it be approved when members of the development control committee met.

Councillor Trevor Smith from the trust, said: “Our aim is to secure a use for the historic building – the idea of using it for civil ceremonies is excellent as it will secure the building’s future for the long-term. “There is a great amount of beauty about the building and it is much-loved in the community. We did a number of open sessions with the public when putting together the plans and we found people were upset about the building being closed and concerned about its future. Our work will retain the features of the chapel and we hope it will please those living nearby.”

Under the plans, the Gothic-style chapel will consist of a waiting lobby and two reception areas. There was to be a wedding ceremony room and a table for staff. A car park with 20 spaces would be provided, as well as improved disabled access.

**Bid to cut council places by a third is scrapped**

PROPOSALS to cut the number of councillors serving Dudley by a third has been scrapped after claims other authorities would have to follow suit.

Of the 72 councillors have seats on Dudley Council, that’s three per ward. Opposition councillors tabled motions to cut this to 48 in a bid to save money.

Conservatives wanted the number of electors in the borough reduced to one every four years in a bid to save around £300,000. A third of the borough’s council- lours are elected at each election to serve four years, roughly in local elections in three years out affair.

But Dudley’s Labour admin- istration voted against the idea saying that the authority needed to keep in step with other councils in the Black Country.

**FATAL crash driver’s bail is extended**

A 22-year-old man arrested after a woman was killed when hit by car at a bus stop has had his bail extended.

Former Stourbridge stude- nt Rebecca McManus, aged 21, of Harborne Road, Oldbury, died at the scene on Halesowen Road West in Smethwick from multiple inju- ries on May 31.

A motorist was arrested on suspicion of causing death by dangerous driving. He was then released on bail pending further in- vestigation.

Last week police said his bail had been extended as investigations continue.

Miss McManus had at- tended King Edward VI Col- lege in Stourbridge before enroling at the University of East Anglia in Norwich for an English literature with creative writing degree course.

She also worked as a pub- lisher assistant at Unichink Books.

**DERELICT chapel given second life**

A DUDLEY MP Ian Austin with sport leaders Julie Robbins, Ryan Smith and Yasmin Winton from the Black Country Be- active Partnership and part funded by Sport England, is being launched this summer.

The scheme puts the focus on particular areas to encourage people to get involved in sports.

The Dudley launch was held at the town’s Priory Park and featured tennis, a penalty shootout against Wolves mascot Wolfie.

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Alcoholic guilty of arson at derelict pub

A 38-year-old man has been found guilty of setting fire to a derelict pub, which put the lives of nearby residents at risk.

Simon Glazzard denied starting the blaze at the Blue Bell Inn, Wall Heath, on August 29 last year.

But a jury of four men and eight women last night found him guilty of one count of arson, recklessly as to whether life was endangered.

The 38-year-old, who had been living in a nearby flat, went to the old railway line in Wombourne, showed no emotion as the verdict was read. He will be sentenced for the offence, along with other counts of arson he has already admitted, at a hearing on July 25.

The other counts relate to September last year when Glazzard set fire to four cars in the Wall Heath area using his cigarette lighter.

Glazzard gave evidence admitting he had been outside the pub on the evening but de- nied he had started the fire.

He told the jury he had been sitting on a wall outside the pub drinking a bottle of cider and had gone to the side of the building to urinate against a wall and remained there to finish the fire.

Glazzard also claimed he had seen two youths ‘measuring up’ near his flat but admitted they had only seen Glazzard outside the pub at the time.

The court was told Glazzard had a previous conviction for arson at a supermarket in 2002.

Glazzard had avoided residents’ suspicions after being seen hanging around the pub in Allston Street.

He was seen going into back of the pub, building a small fire before a short time before flames were seen.

Fire fighters told the court the fire at the pub had been ‘serious’ and there had been concerns about a major gas main and the risk of the fire spreading to a house.

Drink and drugs death

A MAN found on the floor of his home died from a combination of alcohol and drugs.

Simon Bowen, aged 39, ofMonday Street, Wombourne, had a history of depression and drinking. Dudley Coroner’s Court was told. A post mortem examination found a single wound through the heart.

A doctor who had examined the worker had a combination of multiple fractures and dislocations in his right hand and span in his system after his body was found at his home on January 22.

Senior Coroner Robin Lapthorn said: “I am satisfied on balance, the cause of death was due to the effects of drugs and alcohol.”

Derelict schools, a closed foundry and former college sites are among the target areas for new homes unveiled by Dudley Council.

Council officers have identified locations for 16,127 homes in the borough by 2028 to help tackle a housing crisis.

In a development strategy released for public consultation by Alex Ross, next 12 years, officers have identified space for a further 10,971 homes, including 1,477 in Wombourne, Halesowen and Dudley town centres.

A total of 1,511 homes has been allocated for Stourbridge and Bromley Hill. The main focus will be on housing former industrial land along the canal network and close to town centres.

The Longlands Campus of Birmingham Metropolitan College could hold 34 homes. The former Lloyds foundry in Brentall Lane, Bromley Hill, could be turned into an estate for 40 dwellings. The former Stourbridge Crystal Works, off Stour Street in Wednesdale, could provide space for 12 homes. In an area covering Dudley town centre to Brierley Hill, officers believe 1,358 homes could be built.

This includes the site of Dudley Guest Hospital, where there is room for 172 properties. Development proposals are already being put together.

Recently vacated Dudley Council office buildings at Cloughattsf of House, Old Bovers Green Road, could provide space for 36 homes and the Real Stockholders site in Pennant Road could be turned into an estate for 135 homes.

Meanwhile, a total of 1,407 homes could be built in an area called the Jewellery Line, a corridor of land following the railway line between Birmingham and Wrexham, which includes 1,037 in Stourbridge town centre.

A total of 24 homes have been earmarked for the former Holt Farm Primary School, 140 at Cadell’s Works, 25 for Springfields and 10 for Surfleet Works in Pearson Street, Lye.

A SECONDO excavation has been launched at a famous glass-making site after an earlier attempt uncovered the remains of two historic glass houses, council bosses, including Ambleside History Society, have today launched a conservation at Ambleside’s Glasshouse College earlier this year.

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An attempt to revive him by a passing motorist was unsuccessful.

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**The Best of Peter Rhodes**

In theory, six penalty points for using a mobile phone while driving, as proposed by Whitehall last week, will be a huge deterrent. In real life, what sort of deterrent will it take to make drivers take you other road users seriously when texting while driving – in a convertible with the hood down? Old as brass which, strangely enough, was the colour of her hair.

AH, the wisdom of age. An 85-year-old granny in Brighton has become one of the oldest British drivers to be convicted, fined and banned for driving over the limit. Does she express remorse? Does she say young people to be warned by her example? Does she even apologise? Nah. Granny tells the world: “I can have one drink and it’s transmitted by chips.”

I HATE to be a party-pooper amid all the champagne corks popping and tears of joy over the vote to appoint women bishops. But, seriously, does anyone believe that women have real power, Parliament, the law, the armed forces, the City and most professions, are at the forefront of the Black Country Living Museum’s plans to increase due to fund investment at the Tipton Road site. Around 45,000 visitors passed through the museum’s famous fish and ships and its pub, The Bottle and Glass. Museum direct and chief executive Andrew Lovett said problems with high running costs at the attraction had been ‘fixed’ and he was confident visitor numbers would rise.

But museum bosses say they are optimistic as this was much better than losses of £1,000,000 the previous year.

Target Bosses have set a target of 350,000 visitors in 2014 to break-even and aim to earn more income through the museum’s famous fish and ships and its pub, The Bottle and Glass.

**By Andrew Turton**

**£4 million each year. To do this in 2014 we need to welcome a little over 250,000 visitors. It’s what many businesses would call their break-even point.**

The museum revealed it made a loss of £15,491 but this was an enormous positive improvement on the year before.

“Costs were too high,” said Mr Lovett. “And although we have fixed that issue, we want to attract an ever-increasing number of visitors and to earn more income from things like our fish and chips shop, baker’s, pub and our gift shop, so that we can invest in the site and continue to provide a really special visit.”

Museum bosses say they were also helped after Government ministers and pro-proposals to change the school curriculum that could have been a result in the fall in the number of school bookings. Proosals have been tabled to create a schools’ reception centre at the museum.

**Teacher of the year award**

A EDUCATOR from Dudley has been praised for her outstanding contribution to her community named Teacher of the Year for the Midlands. Miss Farmer had suffered a sub- 10%OFF

**HUGILY popular sub-editor who worked at the Express & Star for 16 years has died. Emma Fairley, 45, worked on the Wolverhampton Museum was previously the newspaper’s features editor.**

Her head had suddenly been taken seriously all the week before while fishing with her partner, Stan Talbot, 63, to mark her birthday. Mr Talbot, of Ham- mersworth, said: “She had just found the biggest carp either of us had ever seen. She’d sometimes say ‘come and help me with this’ but this time she said she wasn’t feeling well. Then she collapsed.”

Miss Farmer had suffered a sub-arachnoid haemorrhage, a type of stroke. She underwent emergency surgery but nothing more could be done to save her. Mr Talbot, a builder, paid tribute to his partner of two years. He said: “Emma loved life and she loved people.”

Miss Farmer was a keen athlete in her youth, competing in hurdling. She grew up in East Riding in Yorkshire, one of four sisters, three of whom have parents Colin and Pat. She joined the Express & Star in 1998, after working for the Press Association.

**LARGEST FUNDRAISER**

The funeral at Streetly Crematorium is tomorrow (Friday), 11.15am.

**Tributes are paid to popular journalist**

**Who’s the belle of the ball?**

For a PUB and chip shop to boost museum funds

**Dudley Chronicle Thursday, July 24, 2014**

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Ambulance driver is spared roads ban

The 31-year-old, who works as an ambulance driver for Lifesaving Medical UK, was stopped by an officer. He had immediately apologised for the offence.

Risk

Woodend, of Greenway Road, avoided guilty to one charge of driving in excess of the 50mph speed limit at last week’s hearing. He received three points, a £50 fine and ordered to pay £60 costs and a £50 victim surcharge.

The court was told he already had three points on his licence and was at risk of being banned. Mr Geoff Murphy, prosecuting, said: “A PCSO was on duty along the road carrying out speed checks. At around 11am his attention was attracted by a blue Astra car. He took a reading with a laser device which showed the car travelling at a speed of 90mph. The PCSO gave the information to a colleague on patrol further up the road and the defendant was stopped.”

Mr Michael Trevor, defending Woodend, said: “My client knows he has been stupid. Visibility on the day was excellent and this is not a road where there is likely to be many pedestrians around.

“He is frontline ambulance driver, a public servant responding to both emergency and non-emergency calls. To be able to continue that public service he needs to still be in a position to drive.”

Magistrates said Woodend should have known better but agreed not to ban him so he could continue his work.

Major new funding boost for canal project

Plans for a canal-side visitor attraction in Dudley have been given a further £100,000 boost.

Dudley Canal Trust is celebrating after receiving the latest grant from The Garfield Weston Foundation.

The money will go towards financing a new visitor and heritage centre.

Construction of the building is set to start before the end of the year and the Todd’s New Road, will house a new visitor centre called The Portal.

This will provide facilities for schools, community groups and the public to discover the Black Country’s canal heritage.

Bothers said total cost of the redevelopment project is expected to be £3 million and it is hoped that the building will be open next Easter.

Mike Daley, Chair of the Project Steering Group for the Portal Project, said: “This latest grant will make a vital difference to the project.

“This latest donation to our project, from the Garfield Weston Foundation, is a vital addition to our fundraising,” he said. “The Portal would simply not be possible without our generous funders.”

The Portal will enhance the connection between the west end of the Black Country and the canal network. It will be the home of the Black Country Living Museum, giving visitors to the area a chance to learn about both sides.

Dudley Canal Trust was established in 1970 to preserve the network of underground canal tunnels beneath Dudley and the £3m project will also see new linking bridge linking the canalside attraction to the Black Country Living Museum.

Perfect time for head to bow out

The tea room at Bag and Brierley Hill High has started.

The 99 calls MORE people than ever are phoning 999 in the West Midlands, official figures showed yesterday are implementing an action plan to cope.

Training was cancelled and staff holidays restricted as ambulance staff moved to cope with the “massive increase” in demand.

Sudden surge in 999 calls

Since taking on the role she has boosted.

Pupils Ellie Kovaks and Naomi Broni-Phillipwirth gifts for retiring headteacher Lucy Griffiths at Jesson’s Primary School.

After more than 20 years at the helm of a growing primary school, Lucy Griffiths is retiring 21 years after joining Jesson’s Primary School in Dudley as headteacher.

Since taking on the role she has overseen the growth of the school in School Street from 500 to 900 pupils and the building of new classrooms and playground.

She came to the school, which is more than 150 years old, after a three-year spell as deputy at Priory Primary School in Dudley.

On looking back over her time at Jesson’s, Mrs Griffiths, who lives in Kinver, said: “We encourage all our children to learn a music instrument, I think it is good because it provides them with confidence to perform and the mind set to always improve and not give up — skills they can take on into their lives. That has been important to me, as well as the academic success of the children and the progression of the school.”

Helen George takes over as acting head before Sarah Lee will become acting head in January.
D-Day veteran was a man who did his duty. MARK ANDREWS looks back on the life of Len Whitehouse

A D-Day veteran who helped lay the first aircraft landing strip in Normandy has died on his 94th birthday.

Len Whitehouse, who lived in Bilston, died at his Wolverhampton home following a short illness.

He was a 21-year-old driver serving with the Royal Army Service Corps when he landed on Gold Beach in Normandy at 8am on June 6, 1944.

Daughter Sue Cadman, aged 63, said her father drove a truck off his landing craft directly onto the beach as the invasion began.

“He always said he never got his word in,” she said.

He joined the Royal British Legion, and started going into schools telling the children about his experiences.

He returned to Normandy again for the 65th anniversary commemorations in 2004, and again in 2009 for the 65th anniversary of D-Day.

In a recent interview, Mr Whitehouse said he thought the World War II experience is one that should be remembered.

He was a very nice man, we all enjoyed his company. He always seemed to be a very gentle man, a quiet man, he was always friendly and nice to know. He’s done his duty and he had a good innings.”

Mr Whitehouse was born in Regent Street, Wednesbury, the youngest of five children.

Prior to the war he had worked as a centre lathe turner at Rolls Engineering in Tipton.

He met future wife Cath while walking along Owen Street, Tipton, with his friends, and romance blossomed at the do’s and dudens youth club which met at Bloomfield Methodist Church.

The couple were married for 68 years before Cath’s death four years ago.

As well as daughter Sue and son Les, now 71, he also leaves three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and one great-great grandson Harry.

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Byline

John Prescott adorns Len’s military medals

Len Whitehouse as a young soldier in the war

Len addresses a Remembrance service at Tipton

Len would tell poppies or roses to celebrate St George’s Day at Asda, Tipton

The old soldier who never forgot
Partisan politics just not good enough

I WRITE with some disquiet about the piece in The Chronicle (17 July) ascribed to our MP Chris Kelly. This and recent ramblings by our representative in Westminster increasingly resemble little more than repetition of key Tory election messages. That is not good enough, and a party as rich with business funds as the Conservatives should be able to fund it’s own material.

I understood our MP was in place to represent all constituents. I understand our local newspapers would provide a reasonable degree of balance and maybe even a touch of fairness to matters. My reading of the messages of other MPs in the borough, including those of Margot James, tends to be much less partisan.

In this partisan drive, we are to suppose Labour was responsible for a worldwide recession and that honest hard working public sector staff should be condemned for seeking a fair deal while the gap between the rich and the ordinary has grown even more in the last four years.

RICHARD GREEN
Dudley

Dogs are not only pets at risk

DOGS die very quickly in hot cars and should not be left inside them even for very short periods. Opening a window a few inches is not sufficient.

Other animals suffer, too. Rabbits must not be left in a hutch in the glaring sun or inside a vehicle’s garage or shed. They need a cool, shady place where the air circulates and where they are able to move freely. A hot rabbit can be kept cool by applying cold water gently to its ears.

Should your rabbit become listless or go limp, get it to a vet immediately.

Rabbits must be checked daily throughout summer months for signs of stress. Smaller animals, like hamsters, rats and gerbils, can be kept cool by opening windows and closing curtains, as long as not pointing it directly at them, refreshing water and providing a frozen water bottle, wrapped in a towel so that it cannot be chewed.

KATE POWLER
Animal Aid

Chocolate bars and computers don’t mix

PETER Rhodes reports ‘Cabinet Minister Francis Maude says older people must get digitally engaged and start using the internet, or risk losing access to government services’ (17 July).

He then reveals that a savvy work colleague was quoted as saying ‘At £500 when using the computer when using it to purchase a computer, the money promptly vanished in a criminal gang’s account. He suggests digitally engaged actually means “robbed”.

He has enlightened me of the brazen intention to soon implement this shameful attack on the senior citizen, yes I did mean senile, as some think of us.

Over the years things that started out as optional became compulsory by law. It has already started.

I bought four packs of Cadbury’s Wispa bars, which say ‘one in eight wins a chocolate bar’. One said ‘Joyful Jubilations! You’ve won a free chocolate bar!’ and tells you to visit cadbury.co.uk and enter a code to see which chocolate bar you’ve won.

But you need a computer (£150 or more) and a printer (£90). I’m no financial whizz but did not find this very ‘joyful’.

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Our window and conservatory advisors are available in our showrooms weekdays from 9.00am to 5.30pm and Saturdays from 9.00am to 4.00pm. At Rydale we feel that it is very important to see products on display before you make your final decision to purchase. We invite you to come into our showrooms to view all our products available, the showrooms are here for you the customer. At Rydale we do not take any deposits or stag payments, you only pay when the installation is completed. Rydale has been a trusted brand in our area for over 27 years. If you give you a guarantee we will always be here to honour it. Can this be said of any other company in the area? Rydale was a Solly Duty service on all products including free delivery.
Don’t be disappointed - choose Choices Windows

COMMERCIAL FEATURE

The home improvement market is changing and the demand for more choice in colour and suitability of PVC-U doors and windows is growing.

Fashionable additions such as orangeries are increasingly desirable, as more people look for ways to improve their home.

"We offer A-rated energy-efficient windows and doors which can help save up to £250 from heating bills in the first year alone. They not only reflect heat back into the house, but also retain heat from solar gain," explains Nathan.

"Our commitment extends beyond the manufacturing process to the design and installation of doors, windows, conservatories and other home improvement services," explains Nathan.

"We are so grateful to Nathan and his team for transforming our home something we had looked forward to," remarked Rick. "Karen kept us ahead in the style stakes, Nathan is ever aware of the latest designs, materials and colours on offer, and stresses to make these available to his customers."

"Many people are now opting for stylish coloured PVC-U, influenced by fashion trends. National Toll house, sage green, gloss black grey and silverado have all been very popular this year," comments Karen.

"One immensely satisfied customer is Rick Houghton. Having been recommended to Choices windows by colleagues at work he employed us to carry out extensive work at his home. He is keen to share his experiences and commend the team involved.

"Every stage of the process was excellently planned and we received nothing but the best service from start to finish. The business was very outstanding and we were so impressed that we handed over our keys and went on holiday whilst the work was being carried out."

"Rick and his family were absolutely thrilled and utterly delighted with the results on their return.

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"The old sayings are always the best - after a low price is long forgotten, poor quality long remains."

Hannah Wardle, age 21, was such a vital volunteer that she’s got a paid job with We Love Carers in Brierley Hill

WHEN Hannah Wardle started volunteering at a charity it had a big impact on her. She marvelled how much she had gained.

"I couldn’t believe it when I was offered the apprentice position. It’s my first paid job and it feels really good to know that they want and trust me," Lorraine Stockton, project manager at We Love Carers, said: “Hannah is fantastic. She’s given us 100 per cent commitment and is utterly reliable. We’ve actually changed the way we run our coffee shop because of her suggestions.”

Dudley Council for Voluntary Service (DCVS) and Dudley Council are looking for 100 organisations to pledge volunteering opportunities for young people. See volunteeringcounts.org.uk/young-pledge-100-campaign.

To view the Choices website click onto www.choiceswindows.co.uk or call in and see our new refurbished showroom and factory on Sedgley Road West, Tipton, DY4 8DQ.
I recently stood up in the House of Commons to urge MP’s to work harder to commit to long term targets and now aim to improve the quality of education in this country.

For a long time I have been saying that we need to make education and skills our number one priority. It’s the only way well attract the new investment and new industries on which our prosperity will depend in the future. That’s why I’m campaigning for better schools, better skills and better jobs.

I highlighted the fantastic success of the likes of El- lowes Hall, which has seen a tremendous improvement in standards. Other schools in Dudley are improving too but international rankings currently put Britain behind the likes of Estonia, Poland and the Czech Republic on basic skills.

In Dudley, long term youth unemployment is twice the national average. Germany has three times as many apprentices as the UK. Across the country the number of young apprentices has fallen. We need radical solutions to deal with these disappointing trends. This includes setting aside Government funds to subsidise the cost of sending bright and talented school pupils to high performing private schools.

Another way of making sure Dudley and the whole area has a bright future is to increase technical qualifications. This is why Dudley Advances, the new manufacturing and technology centre, has been opened by Dudley college, is as important as I’m calling on the Government to provide apprenticeships as part of their public spending programme and to introduce new Technical Degrees. This gold standard vocational qualification that would allow students to learn on the job as an apprentice alongside university, allowing them to earn a wage while studying.

Alongside a new Technical Baccalaureate for 16-19 year olds, this would provide a clear path for those wishing to specialise in the vocational skills our economy needs.

Donations have rolled in from around the world since we announced our Bert Russell Memorial Walk. On August 6 I will be climbing Ben Nevis together with the Mayor’s Consort Councillor Adam Aston, the Deputy Mayor Councillor Steve Waltho and Armed Forces Champion Councillor Dave Tyler in memory of Dudley hero Bert Russell’s work as a volunteer fire fighter in support of charity fundraisers. It’s the longest walk I’ve ever tried, so I have been fitting in training around my local and Parliamentary duties. I’m really looking forward to the challenge.

We have heard from relatives of Bert’s now living in Australia and from MPs in Scotland who are keen to re- connect links between Dudley and Fort William, near Ben Nevis that Bert originally helped establish. Half of the funds we raise will go to the Mayor’s charities, Action Heart and Guide Dogs, with the remainder split equally between the Children’s Unit at Russells Hall, the Royal British Legion, and Black Country Past Aid to support local ambulance services. If you would like to support these great causes, you can do so at www.bertRusselmemorial-alwcb.co.uk

Anyone who was brought up in Dudley like I was has been celebrating our first ever official Black Country Day. Thousands of people across the region got together to mark the occasion commemorating local achievements, celebrating traditions and proudly flying the new flag. Designed by school girl Grace Shepp- ard, over Dudley Castle.

I’ve always said Dudley has great potential for tourism, so it was great to see attractions such as the Black Country Living Mu-seum playing host to some of these events. Stone Street Square looked fantastic in red, white and black, as hundreds flocked to market stalls and sideshows. Hundreds more threw their own events. I’m delighted that these celebrations will be continued in future years.

Black Country Day’s success says everything about the friendliness and com- munity spirit of our area. It shows what we can achieve when we all come together as a community. I have never been more proud to be from the Black Country.
A ONCE failing school in Dudley has pulled itself out of special measures to be rated ‘good’ by education watchdogs for the first time.

Priory Primary School received a glowing report from Ofsted this month. It came two years after a series of failings at the school which landed it in special measures.

But now inspectors say the strong recovery means the school is ‘on track to be outstanding’.

Areas such as teaching, the behaviour of pupils and leadership were all praised.

Headteacher Jill Bennett said: “We are delighted with the incredible turn around we have managed to make in just two years and that is testament to a lot of hard work. We now have a team of enthusiastic teaching staff, pupils who are excited about learning and an extremely supportive set of governors. We will continue to work to drive standards even higher.”

In the report, inspectors said: “The children are proud of their school and speak highly of it. The children have really bought into the idea of turning their school around.”

Priory pupils are proud to win praise.

A SOCIAL worker and a member of the local community are being asked to avoid ‘rip-off’ websites that charge them or free health insurance cards.

British citizens are entitled to European Health Insurance Cards (EHIC) that let them get state healthcare at a reduced cost or sometimes for free in other European Union countries.

It is free to apply for them but there are websites that charge people a fee. Some charge around £24.99.

But Adrian Bailey, MP for West Bromwich West, stressed that people did not need to pay.

He said he was aware that the number of applications for EHICs increase considerably in the summer but that there were ‘some ruthless websites’ who are taking advantage of holidaymakers by charging a fee for the free cards.

Mr Bailey said: “I am pleased to learn that the Government has been working with Google to take action to stamp out these websites who mislead the public and charge for this free service as well as other Government services.

Often people are charged because they are directed through to these websites via an advertisement and then this becomes part of the holiday package when in fact there should be no charge at all.

“I understand Google has already taken action against a number of these websites. It does seem that there are some people who are always prepared to rip-off the public whenever the opportunity arises and the Government needs to drive standards even higher.”

Information about how to apply for an EHIC can be found on www.gov.uk/european-health-insurance-card or calling 0800 303 1230.

HOLIDAYMAKERS are being warned to avoid ‘rip-off’ websites that charge them or free health insurance cards.

By Daniel Wainwright

A SERVICE for people with disabilities has been hailed as the best service in the UK for improving people’s skills and confidence and helping them gain employment.

The Queens Cross Network received the accolade for supporting disabled people across the borough to help run support services themselves, through the disability user-led organisation Disability In Action, at the Dudley centre. These include a reception meet and greet service, a peer support advice service and a café.

The Queens Cross Network has been busily at work since 2014, when it first became aware of Danni’s plight after her death had since had a major impact on the school and community.

“It has hit everyone at the school really hard,” said the 38-year-old from Forest Road, Dudley.

“It was good to see everyone come together.”

By Daniel Wainwright

Children’s Hospital before she died received treatment at BirminghamBone Cancer.

On right now!

DOZENS of people turned out for a charity event in memory of 14-year-old Danni Barrowes from Lower Gornal, who died after a battle with bone cancer.

The popular teenager had received treatment at Birmingham Children’s Hospital before she died on July 5.

Friends Ryan Cherrington, aged 18, and Josh Webb, 17, who attended the same school as Danni, decided to take part in a charity head shave and hope to have raised over £1,000.

Ryan’s mother Samantha Cherrington said she had first become aware of Danni’s plight after her own daughter Abby, 15, struck up a friendship with her and Danni’s death had since had a major impact on the school and community.

“The school is now planning to hold various fundraisers in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust,” Ryan said and family set up a Facebook page in her memory that has been inundated with hundreds of messages and tributes.

At the Bulls Head, from left, teenagers Josh Webb and Ryan Cherrington take part in a sponsored headshave for West Bromwich West, making your home the place to be!
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Long hours are not productive

A BRIERLEY HILL lawyer has called for an end to the ‘burning the midnight oil’ cul-
ture in the workplace, saying it is hamper-
ing productivity.

Hannah Scott, an employment lawyer at
Waldron’s in Brierley Hill, said a new survey showed that almost half of UK managers work an extra day of unpaid overtime each week. The survey by the Institute for Lead-
ership and Management follows changes to the law which give Britain’s workforce the right to ask for flexible working hours, rather than just parents and carers.

Miss Scott said: “There is a burning the midnight oil culture here in the UK where those chained to their desk for the longest
midnight oil culture here in the UK where
those chained to their desk for the longest
hours are less productive than many of our Euro-

A GROU P supporting the families of pre-
mature and poorly babies has celebrated its
fifth anniversary.

Dudley Bliss has supported more than 50
families and is run by volunteers.

Group members have supported families
at Dudley’s Russells Hall Hospital neonatal
unit by giving gifts and cards at Christmas,
Mother’s Day and Father’s Day, and during
visits to give support to families.

It celebrated with a party at Stourbridge
Children’s Centre featuring a special Dud-
ley Bliss cake. More than 30 children re-
ceived a gift of a book. The party was part
funded by the proceeds of a Father’s Day
fun day and raffle organised by the group,
Mother’s Day and Father’s Day, and during
visits to give support to families.

“Whilst my commitment is to our mem-
ers and families, it is nice to receive some
recognition.”

Dudley Bliss holds monthly get-togethers for families who have had babies on any neo-

A PUB closed for four months is set to re-open af-
fter undergoing a major re-

WEST Midlands Police is set to launch a summer sports
programme across the Black Country for people aged be-
tween 10 and 20.

The Sportivate initiative, which has been organised by
officers in Wolverhampton, will run for six weeks and in-
cludes boxing, dancing and sailing among other sports.

It is funded by Sport England and runs with the help of
the Wolverhampton Amateur Boxing Club, Sonia Webb
Academy of Dance and Himley Hall Sailing Club.

People of all abilities and experience are invited to take
part.

Limited free transport will be available to and from the
clubs, with a number of pick up points stationed across
Wolverhampton.

For information on how to join visit www.facebook.com/
wolverhamptonpolice

THE boss of an online clothes busi-
ness who sold counterfeit designer brands via internet auction site eBay

Mr Tony Watkin, prosecuting, said: “He had been trading for around eight months and said
G-Star and other brands came from supplier
Clever Ugly Clothing. He said he never con-
tacted the original brand owners but said it had been part of his future plans to do that.”

Mr Philip Morris, defending, said the fake items had been a ‘small’ part of the business.

Brown and the company were found guilty by magistrates on four counts of possessing and
selling counterfeit goods after a three-day trial
Brown was sentenced to a six-week sus-
pended prison sentence and the company to a two-year conditional discharge.

Brown was also told to repay £54,000, £4,000 costs and an £80 victim surcharge. The company must pay £4,000 costs and a £15 surcharge.

"Whilst my commitment is to our mem-
ers and families, it is nice to receive some
recognition.”

Dudley Bliss holds monthly get-togethers for families who have had babies on any neo-

Parent volunteers Joanne Weston, of Stourbridge, and Stacey Tyler-Crisp, of Quarry Bank
hated or premature babies themselves.

Stacey, who recently won the Mayor’s
awards, in Brierley Hill, said: “I love my volunteering
to support my colleagues who work in the neo-

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Dudley Chronicle
Thursday, July 24, 2014

FOR many, a shed is just somewhere to store tools. For Paul Slim in Stourbridge, however, his shed means national acclaim, a TV show and possibly a £1,000 cash prize.

His shed is to be featured in Amazing Spaces: Shed of the Year — a three-part Channel 4 programme presented by George Clarke which starts tonight.

Film buff Mr Slim, aged 37, kitted out his shed with a home cinema, complete with a huge screen and surround sound.

Called Reelwood, the shed is nominated in the ‘unique shed’ category and also contains a movie collection and memorabilia.

The project took around three months and £15,000 to complete. It’s fitted with four sofas and a 119-inch screen, a 3D projector and 11.2 surround sound. Mr Slim, who used to run the Movie Junction store in Stourbridge, did a lot of the work himself.

The shed can hold 20 people and has a lobby where Mr Slim stores his collection of 3,000 DVDs and Blu-Rays.

The winner will receive a plaque, £1000 worth of sponsor Cuprinol products and a crown for their shed. Paul Slim with George Clarke

Suction solution
is this the answer for you?

A CUTTING-EDGE development to help resolve the stability problems faced by thousands of denture wearers is being offered by the Denture Clinic.

Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS(Eng), GCIOB(0375), who heads the team at his North Street practice in Dudley, and other clinics across the region, says the invention has the potential to resolve all-too-common denture stability issues.

Prosthetics are held in place by tiny valve-operated suction devices which are built into the prescription. A clever diaphragm principle, triggered by bite pressure on patients’ gums, creates a ‘sucking’ vacuum between the soft-tissue mouth lining and the prosthetic.

Steven, whose clinic attracts patients from as far as Spain, the Isle of Skye and the Isle of Anglesey, adds: “The denture revolution is evolving at a frightening pace.

“In recent times we have seen, what I can describe only as strident steps forward, with implant-retained overdentures, ‘teeth-in-a-day’ implant procedures and suction solution dentures, all coming into mainstream dentistry.

“We also have clever injection moulding technology which allows excellent fitting outcomes and our clinical solutions have never been so appealing.

“Implant dentistry as a resolve for stabilisation issues is not suitable for everyone, neither is it all patients’ first preference, but the Ultra Suction prosthetics offer yet another possibility.

“The beauty of this affordable technology is that it can deliver for the right patient excellent denture retainer qualities without the invasive clinical procedures required for implant work. We have always endeavoured to be on the very cusp of clinical development and this is another ‘tool’ in our commitment to ever try to deliver results which are greater than patient expectations.

“Lower dentures can often be troublesome as stability is compromised by shrinking gums and bone erosion — it’s all part of the ageing process. Ill-fitting dentures create painful friction problems on gums and not least, be a source of compromised chewing and embarrassment.”

Reduction

Steven adds: “The device can be mounted on upper or lower teeth and because of its efficiency allows us to consider a reduction in the size of the acrylic ‘plate’ which can result in improved speech and taste.”

Typically, Denture Clinic patients will be assigned more than three-and-a-half clinical hours surgery time in achieving the best possible outcome.

Dentures have traditionally never been associated with cosmetic makeovers, “but our high-quality prosthetics have quite literally taken years off some of our patients,” says Steven. “Can dentures look glamorous? Emphatically, yes — we have taken years off the appearance of some of our patients.”

For appointments at all clinics call
0800 0285185

The Denture Clinic
5 North Street, Dudley
West Midlands, DY2 7DT

Other clinics located at:
Wolverhampton, Bearwood & Kidderminster
www.denture-clinic.co.uk email: info@denture-clinic.co.uk

Ann’s smile puts her in top gear

WILLENHALL’S Ann Skitt retrieves her bike from the garage, deftly fixes a slipped chain, and is ready “to go anywhere.”

A young-at-heart 75-year-old, she oozes charisma and charm, still goes to the gym “when she needs to shed a few pounds” and is the life and soul of the party at her local Young At Heart Club where she is a volunteer worker.

“It’s hard to imagine that his retired assembly worker could ever be knocked back. But failing teeth “became an embarrassment,” she recalls. Recently she was fitted with implant-retained dentures, inspired by a newspaper article on Steven Burchell’s work at the Denture Clinic.

She says: “You don’t realise how having bad teeth can affect you until you have treatment like this and you get the confidence back. The whole shape of my mouth has changed — I could not have wished for better treatment. My care was first class and Steven has become like family to us.”

The Ultra Suction system is available for both top and lower dentures, enables the construction of a plateless top denture and can be successfully used in reline work

For Paul Slim’s amazing Reelwood Shed in Stourbridge, which is up for an Amazing Spaces ‘Oscar’

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Paul Slim with George Clarke

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Many fireplaces/stoves on display
Two 29ft minarets and a domed roof will not be built on top of a mosque in Halesowen after hundreds of objections from residents.

The plans by Muslim leaders to extend The Baitul Ghausor Mosque on Long Lane have been thrown out by Dudley Council but a mosque spokesman said they now intend to appeal.

More than 225 residents signed a petition opposing the plans, saying the minarets and dome would be out of keeping with the building, a former Methodist church.

Dudley Council has refused planning permission for the minarets and dome, saying work would be ‘highly inappropriate and immensely damaging’ to the building.

‘Mosque leaders hit back at the complaints, saying all they wanted were the symbols of an Islamic mosque and described them as being the equivalent of a church spire. They will appeal against the council decision.

The Ahmadiyya Mosque was opened at the former Methodist Church two years ago and in May applied for planning permission to add a central dome and minarets.

Halesowen North Councillor Karen Shakespeare said: ‘I had a lot of residents contact me and I fully supported them. I am really pleased it has been refused.’

If it doesn’t affect their worship and I hope they won’t appeal because they are keen to work as part of the community. I hope they understand now that it is not something the community feel is right for the area.

However, Im Muhammad Ashraf from The Ahmadiyya Muslim Association, which is behind the application, said he believes the plans were opposed by residents who misunderstood Islam.

Dr Ashraf claims that hatred towards the religion is more of a reason than the effects on the landscape of the minarets and dome. He said: ‘The local people don’t know the facts. Islam is a peaceful religion and the Muslims here are peace loving people. We do a lot for the community. We are appealing. All we are asking for is the symbols of our community, they are the symbols of an Islamic mosque, just like a church spire. I think the application has not been assessed properly by the council.’

Lorraine Reeves leaves Holly Hall Academy in Dudley

A SCHOOL in Dudley has said farewell to a teacher who has retired after 28 years.

Lorraine Reeves leaves Holly Hall Academy in Dudley. Mrs Reeves, aged 69, was a teacher of health, social care and psychology at the school. She started her career as a textile teacher.

She was also senior assistant principal at the academy on Scotts Green Close.

Mrs Reeves said: ‘I am sad to be leaving but looking forward to retirement.

‘I will really miss the staff and the pupils. There is such a community spirit here, it is such a lovely place to work.’

Pupils said their goodbyes at an end of year assembly and staff organised a farewell party.

Teachers retire after 28 years

Streets were flooded due to heavy rain.

HEAVY rain flooded many parts of Dudley, causing some streets to become impassable.

A man hole cover was dislodged by flooding on Pensnett Road, Brierley Hill. Motorists said the water was two feet deep.

A stretch of the Bridgnorth Road at Steunton was also flooded.

In Dudley Heath part of a brick wall collapsed, forcing closure of a public footpath.

Despite the downpours, people did talk to the streets for the Halesowen Victorian Fair on Saturday. Chairman for the fair’s steering group Tony Billingham said: ‘The event went well but the rain definitely affected the number of people who came this year.’

Organisers of the Brickhouse Festival in Rowley Regis were forced to call off their event due to heavy rain.

Mosque to appeal over planning refusal for minarets and dome

From ration books and air raids to dancing and bingo playing – there was plenty of wartime spirit on show at the Black Country Living Museum’s 70th weekend.

Thousands made their way to the attraction wearing fancy dress to celebrate the Second World War, including military uniforms, trilby hats and overalls and head scarves.

Families braved stormy weather to enjoy a feast of entertainment at the event, which is now in its fourth year.

There were air raid sirens, search lights and military checkpoints as well as the chance to buy memorabilia and enjoy musical entertainment.

Museum spokeswoman Laura Walden said: ‘The weekend was absolutely brilliant, despite the stormy weather – they really showed the blitz spirit.’

The museum in Tipton Road is launching its commemorative First World War summer season featuring special events.

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, July 24, 2014
Japan

Japan – an ancient culture of emperors, fierce shoguns, samurais and brutal martial arts. Yet it’s also a place of gentle geishas, colourful kimonos, exquisite garden design and Zen Buddhism.

The tour covers three of Japan’s capitals, both past and present: Tokyo, Kyoto and Nara.

There’s the chance to ride on a high speed bullet train past iconic Mt. Fuji, a trip by aerial gondola to see the Owakudani ‘Boiling Valley’ and the option to stay at a typical Japanese inn, bathe in a hot spring, and see the spot where the first atom bomb was detonated.

In Tokyo see its most fascinating districts, including the shopping and entertainment mecca of Ginza and the Akihabara electronic town – home to one of the first stores devoted to personal robots. Then to the north of the city there’s the scenic area Nikko National Park, relatively unknown outside Japan. Surrounded by breathtaking lakes, waterfalls, forests and hot springs, a visit is made to one of the country’s most extraordinary shrines – dedicated to one of its great Shogun warriors.

Kyoto, still considered to be its cultural heart has carefully retained far more of historical Japan than any other major city. With exquisite shrines, temples, Zen gardens and traditional handicrafts, the city is an absolute treasure-trove.

Nara, Japan’s first capital, dates back to the eighth century. Here, traditional culture first took root and is famous for its great Buddhist monuments including a large bronze buddha as well as time-honoured festivals.

Hiroshima is forever destined to be synonymous with the world’s first use of an atomic bomb and a visit is made to the Peace Memorial Park and museum, with the shattered remains of the nearby dome marking the epicentre of the blast.

On this holiday of a lifetime prepare for wonderful service, the world’s greatest people and be immersed in this extraordinary culture of contrasts, where the neon lights and gadgetry of huge futuristic cities live side by side with ancient shrines and hot spas.

A LOT has changed since Jackie Quinton, Meg Pottinger and Sue Greenaway started at Dudley Building Society.

Meg and Jackie were at school together at Rowley Regis Grammar and Sue attended nearby at Dudley Girls High.

Meg, of Gornal, said: “When we first started things were very different, everything was written down. Now all we have to do is put it into the computer and press a button, however, I still find myself using the old system from time to time.

“I love the daily contact with our customers, getting to know them and making sure we meet their expectations.”

“When people come in they will often wait for me and Jackie. Quite often we have looked after their accounts for a lot of their life and they have brought members of the family to the branch too.

Friend and colleague Jackie, of Cradley Heath, added: “Time has really flown by it only seems like yesterday that we started.”

Sue, who works at the Brierley Hill branch, said she recalled the days when calculations were done manually. “This whole society will be wearing something ruby as a tribute to their colleagues who have given such lengthy service.

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Repercussions of war felt across the region

RAILWAY stations across the nation were bustling with activity.

Thousands of part-time soldiers departing for their annual camp jostled with day-trippers making the most of the Bank Holiday weekend.

Life continued as normal in towns and villages around Staffordshire and the Black Country. On Saturday, August 1, 1914, throngs of people lined the streets in many towns to cheer the Territorials on their way, some units travelling by train while others were marching to camp.

There was a particularly large turnout in Wolverhampton where the men of the Royal Army Medical Corps were setting off on an 86-mile march to St Asaph in North Wales.

The soldiers left their Drill Hall in Stafford Street just after 4pm. Also in the parade were Ambulance wagons, members of the Army Cyclist Corps and others. They rested in Tong in Shropshire, 10 miles away, that evening. Next night they had reached Bletchley, near Market Drayton. But they would go no further. In the early hours, orders arrived to turn around and return to base.

The following day, Tuesday, August 4, at precisely 11pm, came the news that Britain was at war with Germany. Already in St Asaph were around 920 men of the Walsall Territorials who had been given a hearty send-off on Sunday morning from the Drill Hall in Whittins Street.

Also in Wales were 1,000 men of the 6th South Staffordshires, who had arrived that afternoon. Within 12 hours they were packing their kit bags and tents to return. The order had reached the camp at 2am. They arrived at Wolverhampton High Level station at 9.20am on Monday.

The Worcestershire Regiments, whose strongest corps was the 7th Battalion, which included 240 men from Dudley and 130 from Oldbury, were at camp in Minheath, Somerset when they were recalled.

With war looking ever likely, the Government had held talks with the main railway companies and arrangements put in place for a takeover by the State in the case of emergency. Many trains due to have been used for Bank Holiday Monday excursions had been commandeered for troops.

Call-up papers began to arrive at police stations across the region for officers who were Army and Naval reservists. The Territorials, so recently recalled from camp, were at their Drill Halls on Tuesday for medical inspections and exercises.

Recruitment posters and newspaper advertisements began to appear calling on men with specific trades to enlist and large crowds of young men besieged the recruiting office in Broad Street, Wolverhampton.

Britain was at war and from Bridgnorth to Brownhills, Stafford to Smethwick, the repercussions were already being felt.
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Working Together to Promote the F.A.S.T Stroke Awareness Message

A local Kingswinford based charity has joined forces once again with Cradley Heath Speedway to promote the charities stroke awareness message.

Dudley Stroke Association, based at the Pensnett Estate in Kingswinford, have supported the speedway team for a number of years and will be promoting their F.A.S.T Stroke Awareness message at the 2014 Golden Hammer.

The meeting takes place on Tuesday 29th July at Monmore Green Stadium in Wolverhampton starting at 7.30pm and gives people attending the meeting an ideal opportunity to hear of all the good work done by the charity in the borough.

Awareness

Dudley Stroke Association are a local independent charity providing advice, support, and information to people after a stroke as well as raising awareness into its effects and prevention.

Their Family & Carer Support Worker contacts people newly diagnosed with a stroke and offer them and their families’ support which includes hospital or home visits, telephone contact or putting people in touch with other agencies.

Everyone who has a stroke is entitled to a review 6 weeks, 6 months and 12 months after their stroke and Dudley Clinical Commissioning Groups has asked Dudley Stroke Association to carry these out on their behalf.

 Longer term support is offered via telephone or home visits and through the activities they run including Family and Carer Support groups, exercise after stroke groups including a weekly exercise group at The Dell Stadium using the track and outdoor gym equipment, coffee mornings and support groups for people who may have communication difficulties following their stroke.

The Self Management Programme delivered by Dudley Stroke Association is specifically for people after a stroke and their carers, runs for 6 weeks and helps people develop strategies in living their life after a stroke.

Can you help spread the importance of the FAST message? Dudley Public Health has provided funding to put the FAST message onto sports kits. The Association will come out to your groups and talk about stroke and the work they do, if you are involved in a sports team or would like to help them raise awareness then contact the Association for more details.

For more information about the work Dudley Stroke Association do or how they can help you, please contact them on 01384 271982 or email mail@dudleystrokeassociation.org.uk or visit our website www.dudleystrokeassociation.org.uk

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Dame Janet in South African play

ACCLAIMED Johannesburg-born actress Dame Janet, who is appearing at Birmingham Hippodrome along with South African actor Shayne Anthony in Shakespear and Maim, written and directed by Lara Foot. The production in the Rep Studio from October 16 to November 1 will pair Dame Janet, who was nominated for an Oscar in 1971 for her role as the Tsarina in Nicholas and Alexandra, with the 26-year-old actor who played a radical prisoner in Mandela biopic Long Walk to Freedom.

Set in South Africa as sport preaches the 2010 World Cup, it charts the relationship between an elderly widow and the grandson of her former servant. Call 0211 236 4450.

Satellite rockers come in to land

PROGRESSIVE rock band Apocalyptica will be playing Wolverhampton’s Slade Rooms on September 25.

Birmingham heavy metal veterans Ramboz will be playing their first Midlands appearance at Stoke Regent Theatre before its Brum stint from December 9 to January 3.

THE WICKED

I WILL never be able to watch The Wizard of Oz in the same way again. Judy Garland and her pals can follow their Yellow Brick Road from here to eternity now, I feel deceived.

The star of the musical, Elphaba, was played on press night by understudy Demi Alexander – and what a performance she gave. She seamlessly transformed from ‘freak’ to heroine, with the 26-year-old, already celebrated actress, with the 26-year-old, already celebrated actress, managing to turn provisionally good to bad with ease. Her singing, her acting, her sheer presence on stage, made her a wonderful, almost frightening spectre.

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There are some great hi-tech effects, choreography is superb and the costume is flamboyant. But it is also a clever story entwined with the Wizard of Oz that we know and love, reflecting the plot of the film yet ultimately leaving the audience dangling from the tale they thought they knew. The star of the musical, Elphaba was played on press night by understudy Demi Alexander – and what a performance she gave. She seamlessly transformed from ‘freak’ to heroine, with the 26-year-old, already celebrated actress, managing to turn provisionally good to bad with ease. Her singing, her acting, her sheer presence on stage, made her a wonderful, almost frightening spectre.

Wicked is a captivating musical. It has all the magic (no pun intended) that you would expect from such a top-notch West End show.

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The musical focuses on the relationship between Elphaba and Glinda. The two ‘witches’ were rightly rewarded with a standing ovation.

Wicked is spellbinding. An excellent cast, solid score (no pun intended) that you would expect from such a top-notch West End show.

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**MONDAY**

**On Hostile Ground**, Channel 4, 9.15pm

A geologist tries to prevent a huge landslide from swallowing New Orleans as the city prepares for a Mardi Gras parade. He has a tough time convincing the festival-goers of the danger that threatens them, with many doubting his judgement because he failed to predict a deadly earthquake in the past. Action adventure starring John Corbett, Jessica Steen, Britannia Daniel and Andrew Kraulis. (2000)

**TUESDAY**

**Look Again**, Channel 5, 9.30pm

A woman survives an encounter in her room with a malicious intruder, who makes her promise he is the real killer. Thriller, starring Morena Baccarin. (2011)

**WEDNESDAY**

**Polar Storm**, Channel 5, 9.30pm

A comet collides with Earth, causing a devastating series of quakes, floods and volcanic eruptions. However, when the dust has settled, it turns out worse is to come. The impact has pushed the planet off its axis, and if a team of scientists cannot put it right, the crust will shift, wiping out all life. Disaster thriller, starring Jack Coleman and Tyler Johnston. (2009)

**THURSDAY**

**Black Widow**, Channel 5, 9.30pm

Photographer Anastasia becomes suspicious when her wealthy male friend gets engaged. But as she tries to dig up some dirt on his fiancée, she realises her love rival may actually be a murderer, who has married in a series of rich men and killed them to claim the inheritance. Thriller, starring Elizabeth Berkley. (1998)

**FRIDAY**

**Infamous**, BBC2, 10.05pm

What The Singer Takes It All

Channel 4, 9pm

It’s the last episode of the series, so will its producers do something a bit different with the format? Sadly, no – instead, we can expect the same sort of person involved as we’ve seen for the past few weeks. So much luck. A London lass with seemingly thousands of items of clothing, none of which makes her happy. She’s got a holiday it’s time coming up and is determined to look like a million dollars while standing out from the crowd. She ain’t gonna convert to vintage – yet. But you can bet that host Owen Pistor will have persuaded her to try something at least 25 years old before the closing credits roll.

**TUESDAY**

**CSI: Crime Scene Investigation**, Channel 5, 9pm

A seedy motel, a series of nasty but mysterious murders and a suspect who is clearly totally ill... Are the members of Las Vegas’s premier crime-solving team entering into Alfred Hitchcock territory around the outline of the pizazz, Dior? IF You’ll have to wait and see if the finale involves a bikini dressed up as his mother, but the case comes to an end, slicing off its collective head. They’re called to the Sky View motel after the bodies of Richard and Anne Smith are found there. They become the fourth victims in the space of three months, and the person responsible leads the team on a very grisly trail.

**WEDNESDAY**

**This Old Thing; The Vintage Clothes Show**, Channel 4, 9pm

It’s the last episode of the series, so will its producers do something a bit different with the format? Sadly, no – instead, we can expect the same sort of person involved as we’ve seen for the past four weeks. So much luck. A London lass with seemingly thousands of items of clothing, none of which makes her happy. She’s got a holiday it’s time coming up and is determined to look like a million dollars while standing out from the crowd. She ain’t gonna convert to vintage – yet. But you can bet that host Owen Pistor will have persuaded her to try something at least 25 years old before the closing credits roll.

**THURSDAY**

**Autopsy: The Last Hours of Karen Carpenter**, Channel 4, 9pm

In case you didn’t notice, the late 70s were the decade in which Karen Carpenter, one of the two members of the brother-and-sister singing sensation The Carpenters, fell to her death. The song at the end of the show like ‘Daydream Believer’ was a hit, and their manager had instructed them to make a major comeback. The discovery of a hellish palette of drugs and a suicide note, but the only thing that makes The Carpenters relevant in the 21st century is that Karen’s unnatural death is the subject of this documentary. It’s well worth a watch.
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£249,995

Ingatestone Drive

A substantial, particularly "unsold" detached interwar family residence of character for modernisation with many period features set in extensive gardens with tremendous potential. The gas centrally heated accommodation provides, canopied porch, imposing reception hall, (lofty ceiling heights & original paneling/floristry), sitting room with bay (original fireplace), through living room, kitchen with bay, understairs store, lobby (tradesman entrance) with further store & separate toilet. Gallery landing, three double bedrooms, bathroom, Garages. EPC Rating: F. SEDGLEY OFFICE 01902 880888

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WOODSETTON

Tipton Road

A successful conversion with many features, this VERY WELL PRESENTED, RATHER CHARMING, THREE BEDROOM DETACHED COTTAGE is full of character and is purported in part to date back approximately 250 years. The most surprising accommodation has both gas central heating and double glazing (vast majority of units) to comprise : IMPRESSIVE LARGE BREAKFAST KITCHEN with a fine range of units, Sitting Room, Spacious Living Room with formal dining area, Three Good Bedrooms, Bathroom and Attic Room currently being used as a second bedroom. Offers in the region of £269,950

£249,995

Sedgley

Southerndown Road, Brownswall Estate

An attractive, substantial, pin-ended & UPVC double glazed detached family residence with delightful gardens, latterly landscaped and extended. Accommodation includes; entrance hall, reception hall, large lounge, dining room, conservatory, fitted kitchen, family size bathroom, separate cloakroom/WC, 20'2" garage, and Staffordshire or Cotswold stone fronting throughout. Three double bedrooms, bathroom to rear (solicitors to confirm access).

Offers in the region of £293,950

£249,995
An elegant detached Edwardian residence of character for modernisation with many fine upvc period features, and offering tremendous potential over three floors. Agents would particularly emphasize: boarded/tilled/panelled ground floor, lounge, reception room, hallway, staircase, landing, bathroom, and five bedrooms (not tested). Subject to EPC and any associated offers, should be of appeal and be sold to a property lover or developer.

**Offers in the region of £189,950**

<u>BRAEMAR CLOSE, NORTHWAY</u>
<br>NO UPWARD CHAIN. A uPVC double glazed and 'starte home' set in cul-de-sac. Accommodation includes: entrance porch, reception hall, fitted kitchen, two reception rooms, double bedroom, family bathroom, and UPVC double glazed gable feature window. EPC Rating: D. SEDGLEY OFFICE: 01902 880888

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Venga just one of Kia’s models to up its game

By Sharon Walters

Kia’s good-looking and roomy supermini MPV isn’t quite there yet in terms of cabin quality but it isn’t far off. Aspects of the interior feel really classyy and the folding rear seats work well.

The 1.4-litre CRDI diesel isn’t the Venga’s best unit but it delivers 63mpg economy with the aid of a standard ISG system.

As car buyers we like our preconceptions. Without them how could we possibly make sense of the monumental range of choice we’re faced with?

There are just too many cars out there and it’s really useful if we can dismiss some of them out of hand based on what we think we know about the companies that make them. Now get ready for the bad news, if you don’t occasionally revise these prejudices towards certain makes or models, you might end up missing out in a big way. For example and like it or not, anybody looking for a small family car with a diesel engine should at least consider the Kia Venga 1.4 CRDI.

If you’re thinking that Kia makes basic, cheap cars that fall below the quality standards set but the big name brands, you’ve just proven the point about revising those preconceptions from time to time. Much to the consternation of Ford, Vauxhall, Volkswagen and the other companies that UK car buyers graduate towards by default, Kia has come good on the up.

We’ve seen a concerted effort by the Korean firm to up its game and compete on an equal footing with the big players. The Venga is a supermini MPV and prime evidence of the progress that has been made. It’s built on Kia’s new K2 platform and meets tough quality standards and designed to European tastes for sale on the European market. As Europeans and with Kia having gone to all this trouble, we really should give it a chance.

It’s the diesel Venga we’re concerned with here, a model that will be crucial to the car’s success in its intended European heartland. The engine is a 1.4-litre CRDI common-rail injection unit with 88bhp at 4,000rpm and 160Nm of torque between 1,750 and 2,750rpm.

Acceleration from 0-60mph takes 14.2 seconds which is far from lively but the engine gives up its power in a smooth manner with good flexibility. It’s not the most refined unit, filling the cabin with boom when pushed hard and coming over a little coarse on part throttle.

The actual handling of the Venga is worthy of praise with the well-weighted steering provoking crisp responses.

Roundabouts

Don’t expect anything too dynamic because this is a taller vehicle with a conventional supermini layout and the height of the doors does make it difficult for pedestrians to get in corners through a bit of body roll. The chunky steering wheel feels good in the hands and the drum brakes provide good stopping power and the instrument illumination offers good visibility, although the A-pillars do obstruct your view on roundabouts. The ride is comfortable, the suspension absorbing bumps in its stride. The driver feels very at home in the urban streets where most owners will spend their time.

The cabin is what it’s all about here and the Venga is certainly roomy with plenty of legroom and a boot of 440-litres. The car comes in a single five-door bodystyle with six-speed gearboxes for the type of icing on the cake that many buyers will appreciate with the 60:40 split rear seats.

The Venga is also a practical unit with the boot area being extended to accommodate their luggage and the rear seats drop to create a flat load floor even before you get involved in folding the tier boot floor, even before you get involved in folding the rear seats down. The engine is a 1.4-litre CRDI that will be crucial to the car’s success in its intended Euro- speedelling.

The highlights of this are the folding rear seats. The 1.4 CRDI diesel returns close to 63mpg on the combined cycle with emissions of 117g/km. This doesn’t make the cleanest car in the sector but it comes close.

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Don’t expect anything too dynamic because this is a taller vehicle with a conventional supermini layout and the height of the doors does make it difficult for pedestrians to get in corners through a bit of body roll. The chunky steering wheel feels good in the hands and the drum brakes provide good stopping power and the instrument illumination offers good visibility, although the A-pillars do obstruct your view on roundabouts. The ride is comfortable, the suspension absorbing bumps in its stride. The driver feels very at home in the urban streets where most owners will spend their time.

The cabin is what it’s all about here and the Venga is certainly roomy with plenty of legroom and a boot of 440-litres. The car comes in a single five-door bodystyle with six-speed gearboxes for the type of icing on the cake that many buyers will appreciate with the 60:40 split rear seats.

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Octavia’s winning formula

By James Parker

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IN-FORM Steve Worrall is in bullish mood as he prepares for the prestigious F.A.S.T Golden Hammer.

The flying Cradley star will enter the showpiece event at Monmore Green next Tuesday amongst the favourites after a spectacular start to the campaign. Worrall has proved something of a revelation since joining the Heathens in 2014, establishing himself as a dominant force at National League level.

However, he will face arduous still-fest of the season at Monmore Green as the likes of Lewis Blackbird, Kyle Newman and Ashley Birks contend for Hammer glory. Having got in some strong showings previously in the event, Worrall is desperate to finally reach the top of the rostrum.

Although he realises he will face a tough challenge, he is confident he can emerge victorious in what is set to be a blockbuster meeting.

Said Worrall: “It’s a meeting I’d love to win now I’m a Cradley rider, and I can’t wait.

“I’ve ridden in it before and always been there or thereabouts, but this time I’d love to go one better.

“It’s a great meeting to be involved in, and there’s always been a great crowd when I’ve been there in the past so I’m sure this year will be no different.

“Tone Birks and Ashley Birks will be there for sure and you can’t discount Ashley – he’s still got it and he’s in great shape for the event.

“I know what I can do, especially around Monmore Green, and I’ll be going in there to win this thing.”

Speaking to Skelmersdale United on Easter Monday. They finish with a trip to Skelmersdale United on April 25.

STOURBRIDGE Running Club had a great night at Worcester’s Timberhonger 10k race, held in Bromsgrove.

First over the line in the 10k race was Kevin Burke with a time of 38.52. Robert Colman was next with a time of 40.29. Alison Hunt followed with a time of 40.41.

Joan Clarke was the second female over the line for her category with a time of 45.38. The club also had runners at the lesser known Timberhonger 10k race, held in Bromsgrove.

Kevin Burke was first for the club with a time of 45.53. He was closely followed by Colin Downey (49.40) and Adam Crompton who had a Personal Best time of 52.50.

STOURBRIDGE Running Club is hosting its first Beer Mile Race. The club will be using the historic Cinder athletic track which lies under the cricket and football pitches and gives the War memorial Athletics ground back one of its original purposes – for a couple of evenings at least.

The event is strictly limited to 60 places over two evenings of Wednesday day August 20 or 27.

Entry is open to all over 18 not just club members but its strictly first come first served.

Entry to the Beer Mile Racer Draw: Oliver Roynon.

The impressive Danny Glover finished second-half brace from 17-year-old Louis Downes as the Neil Kitich’s star, who won the world championship three years ago.

The Californian super star, who won the world title in 1996, made 326 appearances for Cradley in a glittering career which saw him notch well over 3,000 points in the Dudley Wood era.

Hamill, aged 44, is now the USA team boss and flies to the UK this week to lead his country into the World Cup action on Saturday.

But on Sunday night (8pm) he will roll back the years when he appears at a special event at the Copthorne Hotel, Brierley Hill, alongside TV and radio broadcaster Nigel Pearson and a host of former Heathens riders as well as members of the current side.

He said: “I’m so excited by this event and I can’t wait to catch up with all my buddies from the good old days at Cradley.

“I can’t thank Cradley enough for inviting me along and it’s going to be a fun evening. I’m bringing some guests from the USA team too, so I look forward to seeing everyone.

“Seats at £10 are still available from Cradley’s club shop.”

Tonev and Luna miss out on tour

ALIKSANDAR Tonev and Antonio Luna were left despairing of having Villa after being left out of the squad for the tour of the USA.

Villa boss Paul Lambert has decided to leave the duo out of the travelling party for the trip to Texas as he looks to move last summer’s signings out.

Left-back Luna is being strongly linked with a move to Italian side Verona having fallen down the pecking order at Villa Park, with German Richardson, Enda Stevens and Boyce all ahead of him in the battle to battle it out for the full-back berth.

Tonev also looks to be on his way out of the club after failing to impress following his move from Lecce Pozen last summer.

Temperatures get a light heated in the goalless pre-season match between Harriers and Pitmen.

HEDNESFORD Town 0

KIDDERMINSTER HARRIERS 0

HEDNESFORD Town held firm to side Kidderminster Harriers to a goalless draw in a soggy Rays Park.

New signing Steve Rogan missed a glorious chance for Hednesford on the half-hour mark, side-footing wide from Paul McConnell’s knockdown.

Harriers winger Marvin Johnson should have scored shortly afterwards but dragged his shot wide.

McConna headed over from a corner just before the break and Tom Thorley went close again for the hosts before Johnson was denied by Dan Crane.

The impressive Danny Glover forced Jasbir Singh into a smart save with three minutes left and, with the last kick, substitute Alex Melbourne threw himself at a clearance only to see the ball fall inches wide.

In other matches, Dan Copeland and Lonnie F.A.S.T Golden Hammer Draw: Oliver Greenwood (Cradley), Lewis Blackbird (Eastbourne / Peterborough), Danny Phillips (Cradley), James Saward (Covet), Kyle Newman (Poole / Plymouth), Ashley Birks (Sunderhouse), Steve Worrall (Cradley / Swindon / Edinburgh), Jon Armstrong (Stoke), Max Clagg (Cradley / Leicester), Tom Perry (Cradley / Wolverhampton), Nathan Greaves (Cradley / Swindon), Simon Lambert (Wellingborough), Matt Williams (Cradley / Scunthorpe), Liam Carr (Buxton), Dan Greenwood (Covet) and Roy Condon.
Sports Desk 01902 319531

Be patient with Ideye, Anichebe tells fans

VICTOR ANICHEBE says Albion fans should forget about Brown Ideye’s £10m price tag.

The Nigeria striker signed to the Baggies from Dynamo Kiev for a club-record fee on Friday.

However, his fellow countryman Anichebe has pleaded for fans to be patient with the hitman.

Anichebe, a close friend of Ideye since their days in the youth set-up with the Super Eagles, said: “I don’t think the fans should expect too much, too soon from him.

“They should forget about the price tag.

ALBION have smashed their transfer record to land Nigerian international striker Ideye Brown.

The 25-year-old Dynamo Kiev star has signed a three-year deal, plus a further year’s option, in the club’s favour, that will cost the Baggies £10m. Clarke will be our powerhouse, says Jackett

KENNY JACKETT says Leon Clarke could be Albion’s powerhouse in the Championship.

Clarke took his tally to four goals in three games after a first-half brace in last week’s 3-1 win against Bohemians.

His replacement Nouha Dicko scored the other as Wolves returned home with a 100 per cent record from three friendlies. And the head coach has been pleased with Clarke, who looks more muscular than last season. Jackett said: “Clarke is looking sharp – he has a lot of experience and I think in the number nine or number 10 role, that type of power is needed in the Championship.”

For Clarke to score in every game is good and Nouha got a very unusual goal in the second half with some power and some perseverance. For those forwards to get goals early in pre-season builds them up.

He can adapt to different ways of playing and flexibility is always good.

Judging from what the gaffer said, I think he sees Brown as someone who can run in behind and that’s something that we do really need.

‘Saidy’ (Herino) offers that, as did Vdys (Mato) Vydra) last season, and both need it.

‘Brown coming here means we will have different ways to play and if we can bring a couple more quality players like this, I’m sure this season will be a lot better than last season.”

Wolves’ boss Jackett has a lot of faith in Leon Clarke, right, seen with team mate Danny Batth

Yeltz hit by first loss in months

HALSWORTH tasted defeat for the second time against Rombaches, as Sam Pearson took Matt Sangster’s place in goal, and Mark Danks replaced Aaron Griffin, who could only get a spot on the bench.

It was the Wulfs who got the better of the start with a converted penalty in the 20th minute. They doubled their lead on the 40th minute, as Wulfsians broke away and the poor conditions allowed them to kill a bit a shot, which Pearson failed to deal with as he watched the ball rollunder his arms into the net.

Halsowen gave themselves a lifeline in the 70th minute, as Chris Lait’s powerful effort was saved by the Wulfs keeper.

Wolves gain Wisdom

ALBION have agreed a season-long loan deal for Liverpool’s young right-back Andy Wisdom.

The arrival of the 21-year-old defender follows Saturday’s record-breaking signing of international striker Brown Ideye.

Wisdom steps up to the Premier League opportunity offered by Albion after his impressive efforts last season on loan to Derby.

The deal for Wisdom – which would appear to trump Alan Hutton’s hopes of forcing Villa to let him go to The Hawthorns – was confirmed by Liverpool boss Brendan Rodgers after the full-back featured in his team’s pre-season game at Preston on Saturday.

Rodgers said: “Andy is going to loan on to West Brom. He had a very successful period at Derby last year, he did very well under Steve McClaren.

“When we saw the opportunity to go there last year, we made sure he got the chance in a top division club. It’s an excellent club and West Brom are an excellent club. West Brom have been a rising club for the last few years.”

Kenny Jackett believes Edwards can be a real goal-threat in the Championship.

Hitman spot for Edwards

WOLVE’S midfield Ed Edwards has given a licence to thrill after being told he will only play in an advanced role from now on.

The Wales international has previously been used in midfield positions.

However, Kenny Jackett believes Edwards can be a real goal-threat in the Championship.