METRO BOOST IS ‘GAME CHANGER’

Report by Peter Madeley

A £250 million boost for local transport, extending the Midland Metro route to Dudley and Merry Hill, has been hailed as a ‘game changer’ by the borough’s council leader.

It followed the Prime Minister’s announcement of plans for better transport links across the West Midlands in a bid to create thousands of jobs.

Dudley Council leader Councillor Patrick Harley hailed the decision as ‘a real game changer’ for the borough, saying it would create thousands of jobs locally.

On a visit to Birmingham on Monday Theresa May said she hoped to see further falls in unemployment across the region as a result of the scheme. Despite unemployment continuing to fall in recent months, the regional rate is still among the highest in the UK at 5.5 per cent.

Mrs May also said she was ‘optimistic’ that the region would be handed more powers under a second devolution deal.

The PM visited the EEF Technology Hub to meet apprentices with Chancellor Philip Hammond, Business Secretary Greg Clark and West Midlands Mayor Andy Street.

The announcement means Dudley and Brierley Hill will be connected to the rail network for the first time since the 1960s.

Dudley Council chief executive Sarah Nor- man took to social media to say: “This will be a massive boost to Dudley town and Brierley Hill with the Dudley section open in 2022. Brierley Hill in 2023. It will unlock over 30,000 new homes and 860,000m² of commercial floor space, accommodating nearly 35,000 jobs.”

The £250m transport boost is seen as the first move in a second devolution deal for the region, which the West Midlands Combined Authority has been pushing for.

Mrs May said: “We are already seeing, in the combined authority, in the Mayor, the difference that having that devolution can bring.”

A CAR enthusiast watched in horror as a stolen 24-ton JCB digger wrecked his restored BMW. The 96-plate BMW was saved from a scrapyard just three months ago and had since been restored.

Tyler Hambly, 25, has been left devastated after a thief ran over his pride and joy on Sunday evening. Mr Hambly, who lives on the Doglions Meadow estate in Netherton, said: “About half past six there was a massive noise outside my home. “As I’ve looked out the window a stolen digger from the site nearby drove over my car. I was stood there thinking this can’t be happening.”

It was about 20 to 30 seconds, it pushed the car, it was like he actually aimed for it. He pushed it about 20ft up the road and then crushed the end of it.

The mechanic who works in Cradley Heath added: “I’m massive into my cars and I restore old stuff and this I have just saved from the scrapyard. I bought it in August and I have spent the last three months fixing it all up.”

The 24-ton vehicle, being used by builders working on the housing estate, smashed through a fence and then into the restored BMW. Following the incident a GoFundMe page was set up in a bid to raise money for the mechanic.

Police arrested a 38-year-old man from Wolverhampton.

Dudley College wants to offer degree apprenticeships to meet the needs of local firms.

The college has revealed it wants to start training facilities that respond directly to the needs of local industry.

Organisers from Dudley and South Staffordshire branch of the Campaign for Real Ale have chosen to celebrate the achievements of the former theatre director who found fame in Hollywood during the 1930s with such classic movies as Frankenstein, The Bride of Frankenstein and The Invisi- ble Man.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of his death.

The ‘Monster’ prowled the streets to publicise the fair, running from 5.30pm to 11pm today (Thursday), noon to 11pm on Friday and noon until the beer runs out on Saturday. There will be more than 80 real ales.

The event supports Dudley branch of Prostate Cancer UK and The Samaritans.

‘GAME CHANGER’

STOLEN DIGGER CRUSHES MECHANIC’S RESTORED CAR

“‘This can’t be happening’ – Tyler Hambly with his BMW badly damaged in Netherton by a digger stolen from a nearby building site.
Thousands flock to lights fantastic

CHRISTMAS is officially here for revellers as thousands gathered to watch dazzling festive light switch-ons.

Merry Hill Shopping Centre, Halesowen and Blackheath got lit up as hundreds braved the cold to enjoy live entertainment and festivities.

Pop band The Vamps brought the house down when they gave a special concert for adoring Black Country fans at Merry Hill in Dudley on Saturday night.

The band performed an exclusive show for 600 lucky fans at the shopping centre before flicking the switch on the Christmas lights. This followed performances by X Factor singer Fleur East, Union J and Danny Bearden.

Vamps frontman Brad Simpson, from Birmingham, said: “It is always great to perform back in the Midlands, we are happy to be here and are looking forward to bringing Christmas in with the crowd.

“It was great to meet our fans before the show too, it really makes you appreciate how much your music can help others or just how much they enjoy it.”

Bob Pickersall, marketing manager for Merry Hill, said: “It was great to welcome The Vamps, they can be a real inspiration to the young people here.”

Christmas arrived in Halesowen as hundreds flocked to Somers Square in Halesowen to see the decorations sparked into life by Romsey army veteran David Watson, who won gold at the Invictus Games.

Another special guest was X Factor and Celebrity Big Brother star Stevi Ritchie.

Doreen returns to meet market pals

SHE is known as ‘a Lazy Cow’ but kind-hearted Doreen Tipton was born to bring love and laughter to traders and shoppers at Brierley Hill Market.

Doreen, who started out life as a “business woman”, was the star of her own TV show on Welsh television.

Doreen, who started out life as a TV presenter, was the star of her own TV show on Welsh television.

Doreen – Walsall actress Gill Jordan – is touring new show Doreen: Rose of the Yam-Yam before she takes up residence at Wolverhampton’s Grand Theatre for panto-Jack and the Beanstalk. She won the best newcomer panto award for her role as The Lady Empress in Aladdin, the Grand’s previous pantomime. She has also been performing in pantomime shows around the country, including a recent role as a fairy godmother in Sleeping Beauty.

A PENSIONER died after falling through a rotten staircase at his Black Country home and suffocating when landing face down, an inquest heard.

Police officers discovered 67-year-old Mervyn Parkes’ body in his Cradley home after his cousin reported him missing.

They entered the property on Hillcrest Avenue on October 31 where he was found face down, Black Country Coroners’ Court was told.

Assistant coroner Laura Nash said his cause of death was accidental.

She commented how officers had described his house as being in an unkempt condition.

Mr Parkes had been using a set of step ladders as a result of a broken staircase.

The inquest heard.

A two-man force made their way into the Black Bear pub in Deepdale during the early hours of Sunday, November 12.

They pushed their way into the pub after the owner went to investigate a noise. One of the men is believed to have threatened the man with a gun, while the other held a za-plied wire.

The man was severely assaulted, tied with wire and put into a cabinet, before the men made off with a quantity of cash between £40 and £44.

Police are continuing to investigate.

Carol singers at fair

ST Chad’s Roman Catholic Church in Sedgley is holding is Christmas fair in the parish hall, off High Holborn, on Saturday, December 2, from 12 noon to 2pm.

The choir from St Chad’s RC Primary School will be singing carols.

Doreen signs copies of her DVD at Brierly Hill market with butcher Bruce Hodgkiss from Halesowen

Cannabis is found during crackdown on illicit cigs

A CANNABIS farm was discovered in Dudley during a crackdown on the sale of illegal tobacco.

A haul of more than 50,000 illegal or counterfeit cigarettes, as well as a surprise find of around 1,000 cannabis plants, were seized during raids by Dudley Council’s trading standards team and West Midlands Police using trained tobacco detection dogs.

In the joint operation, the raids were carried out at a number of properties in Dudley, Brierley Hill and Halesowen, along with a routine inspection in Stourbridge.

At three properties they discovered tobacco, while at the Dudley premises three floors of cannabis plants were found.

Councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: “Through joint operations with partners and our own investigations we are working hard to stop the sale of illegal cigarettes. While our day of action was targeted at finding illegal tobacco, at one of the properties a large number of cannabis plants were found, which the police are investigating.

Selling illegal tobacco is a crime and offenders need to know that they will face consequences. While all smoking is harmful, illegal tobacco is sold at low prices and without necessary health warnings which makes it easier for young smokers to get hooked.”

Police plea on violent robbery

POLICE are investigating a vicious crime last week when a 64-year-old man was tied up with wire and attacked during a robbery at a Lower Gornal pub.

Two masked men forced their way into the Black Bear pub in Deepdale during the early hours of Sunday, November 12.

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Police are continuing to investigate and anyone with information is asked to call police on 101.
Officer used a taxi to pursue crooks

A POLICE officer nabbed a burglary suspect, while another suspect was arrested at gunpoint during an incident in Stourbridge.

The officer had been deployed to a burglary in Park Street when the drama unfolded at 10.15pm on Saturday.

West Midlands Police said an officer made his way through the front door of the property and into a corridor where the man fled to face a wall. The officer, who police believe is believed to be a gun runner, was tracked.

The officer commanded a taxi to follow them.

He led to her deploying the electro-shock weapon when one of the gang failed to comply with her instructions, while more officers arrived and arrested two other suspects.

An hour later, armed police arrested another suspect at gunpoint on Stourbridge High Street.

Officers are currently searching for the firearm and have examined a vehicle that was recovered, while specialist teams are carrying out searches.

Chief inspector Jack Hadley praised the female officer and said: “The officer demonstrated outstanding courage and professionalism to single-handedly pursue these armed suspects in the correct manner. I am extremely impressed with her dogged commitment and tenacity.”

A man aged 19 was arrested on suspicion of possessing a firearm with intent to cause four or five offences.

Another man, aged 21, was arrested on suspicion of burglary, while a third, aged 17 and from Stourbridge, was held on suspicion of burglary and carrying a bladed weapon. The fourth, a 17-year-old girl, was arrested on suspicion of burglary.

All four were being questioned by police. Witnesses to the incidents are asked to contact police on 101 or Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Netherton mother Nadine Pimmer, who cares for her son Ryan, said he was lucky to survive the horror crash.

She said: “I think that must have been the worst day of my life on the day of the crash. I got a knock on the door at 6.10am by a police liaison officer who asked if I was Ryan Pimmer’s mum. They arrived before you get behind the wheel.

‘THINK before you get behind the wheel. Think of all the lives you could ruin.’

Those are the words a mother whose son was lucky to survive a crash which left him in a three-week coma.

Nadine Pimmer, from Netherton, has issued the stark warning after her son Ryan, 22, suffered life-changing injuries following the crash earlier this year.

His friend, who was driving, was sent to prison for dangerous driving.

The 52-year-old mother, who now has to care for Ryan full-time, said: ‘My message to drivers should be considered.

‘Think of all the lives you will ruin. It is not just the people in the car but their family and friends.’

Her messages comes as part of Road Safety Week, organised by charity Brake, which aims to promote awareness of road safety.

Ryan was a passenger in a car driven by Timo thy Pascall, who was doing speeds of 80mph in a 30 limit on the wrong side of the road before the crash in Halesowen Road, Netherton, on March 19 around 2am.

The car – a stolen black Corsa – was travelling so fast it smashed a telegraph pole off the base before crashing into a canal.

Bleeding

Fellow passengers Lauren Lunn and Courtney Miller were seriously hurt while Pascall himself escaped injury.

Ryan was in hospital for six weeks after being airlifted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham with emergency surgery to an artery in his heart, which had been ripped and he suffered a fractured skull and a bleed on his brain. He ruptured his bladder, broke his collar bone, femur and arm, damaged his pelvis and suffered bleeding to the lungs.

Ryan was found in a wheelchair after he came out of hospital, but his condition gradually improved, and he moved to a walking frame and now is on crutches.

Nadine says her son will recover from the accident but he will never be the same again. He has to quit his job as a result of his injuries.

But the officer was not giving up, on hearing from police that the gang had escaped in a car she commandeered a taxi to follow them.

The led to her deploying the electro-shock weapon when one of the gang failed to comply with her instructions, while more officers arrived and arrested two other suspects.

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Further delays as lights remain

TEMPORARY three-way traffic lights are to remain in place at the junction of High Street and Old Oak, with drivers warned to expect delays.

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Motorists will also not be able to turn right into Tansey Green Road from this week, with water works taking place. Traffic will be diverted via Drodndale Road.

Pushchair was struck by lorry

A TODDLER was fortunate to escape with just a bump to her head after her pram was struck by a lorry in Dudley on Monday afternoon.

The accident happened on the A461 Duncan Edwards Way in Dudley.

An ambulance spokeswoman said: “When call assessors in our control room received 999 calls reporting a collision between a pushchair and a lorry on the road, they feared the worst. Whilst ambulance crews were attending to the parents injuries, they took the decision to attend the child and make sure they were safe.”

“Chil dren’s Hospital with her mum.”

Couches to be moved to Dudley

AN MP has organised a careers fair in Stourbridge. Margaret James will host the event at the Glasshouse College on Thursday, November 30.

It is part of the Stourbridge MP’s Rising Aspirations programme.

The event will take place from 9.30pm to 6pm. Businesses interested to attend include Barclays, Jaguar Land Rover, Virgin Media, Dudley NHS Group, Dudley Council and West Midlands Ambulance Service.

To attend email margaret.james.mp@parliament.uk or call (01384) 370574.

Time limit for online park consultations

TIME is running out for borough residents who use Stebbin Park to submit their consultation about the future of the park.

Following first phase agreement by the heritage lottery fund, Dudley Council is now looking at developing a master plan for the park.

The online questionnaire can be found at www.dudley.gov.uk and should be completed by midday on Thursday, November 30.
Has Your Double Glazing Steamed up?

Established for over a decade Cloudy2Clear windows have become a leading company for glass replacement. Issues with double glazing can often be gradual and may only be noticed during a clear sunny day or during the winter. A failed glass unit may no longer provide you with the protection you need or be energy efficient. Why not spend a few minutes checking your home to see if you have any failed double glazing?

If you act now you can avoid these problems.

Now, you may think you need to replace the whole window including the frames and all the hardware, however Cloudy2Clear have come up with a simple and cost saving solution… Just replace the glass!!

If you see condensation in your windows just visit our website or give us a call on 0800 61 21 118. We will send out our highly experienced engineers for a free no obligation quote. A Cloudy2Clear quote takes an average no longer than 20 minutes. Once the quote is completed, we will sit down with you and explain the problem and tell you how we can fix it. With years of experience Cloudy2Clear have a wealth of knowledge and are recognised as a Which Trusted Trader, plus our work is backed by an industry leading 25 year guarantee.

Cloudy2Clear also replace faulty locks handles and hinges on all windows and doors.

Your friendly local Cloudy2Clear specialist is Brian Stanley and he services Walsall & the surrounding areas.

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118.

Grass is cut and weeds go in council green boost

COUNCIL bosses are set to pump £350,000 into green care over the next two years, giving a boost to parks and open spaces.

Dudley Council has invested £350,000 this financial year which was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Cabinet member Karen Shakespeare, cabinet member for environmental services, said the move is to reverse cuts which were made under the last administration, run by Labour.

She said: “We are investing £150,000 this financial year which will allow us to reinstate grass cutting at 125 sites and focus on weed removal on our highways. We are proposing a package of measures totalling £350,000 next financial year to improve maintenance of our parks and open spaces.

“We have listened to our residents and this proposed programme will improve overall standards of green care maintenance, restoring community pride and making the borough a more attractive, appealing place to live.”

In September, it was revealed that the local authority had slashed its budget for grasss-cutting services by £50,000 to make savings. But this move was reversing that saving.

A Dudley Council report highlighted how, for an urban authority, the Dudley borough is “enriched with green space”.

Around 38 square miles of green space exists in the borough. Around 30 per cent of this is made up of parks, nature reserves and open space looked after by the council’s Green Care team. Among areas improved is grassland in a cul-de-sac on the Northway in Sedgley.

Woman sees off bogus salesmen

An elderly woman whacked a pair of bogus salesmen in her home after she suspected they were trying to trick their way into her house.

Two people approached the property on Fullbrook Road, in The Delves, trying to sell gold, but having seen the woman question the culprits she rebuffed them with her stick when one of the suspects put his foot in the doorway.

Stourbridge Police said it was now investigating after the woman reported the incident to them. It happened at around 2.30pm on November 13. Neighbourhood officers have been out in the area looking for witnesses.

Anyone with information which could help the inquiry should call police on 101.

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COUNCIL News

£284k raised at seized car auction

TWENTY three BMWs and 17 Audis were among 180 seized vehicles which have been sold at auction by West Midlands Police.

The council received £284,480 for the force and included one vehicle sold for £135,700.

Not all cars seized by the police were sold at auction with 4,740 left for sent for crushing this year.

In total, 8,091 have been seized from the roads in 2017, most for being uninsured.

The seized vehicles are part of a crackdown by police on uninsured drivers and uninsured commercial drivers over the past 12 months.

Moorhouse and Delaney on bill

COMEDIANS Justin Moorhouse and Gary Delaney will be performing in the next Live At The Apollo, Castle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire.

The host will be Dudley rising star Mike Delves, trying to sell gold, but having seen the woman question the culprits she rebuffed them with her stick when one of the suspects put his foot in the doorway.

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A ROBBER who threatened a taxi driver with a knife in Dudley before attacking police officers who tracked him down has been jailed for 11 years.

Khaleel Hart demanded £80 from the driver after being dropped off in Maple Road, Wyrley Nest, a court heard.

The attack happened on February 1 this year on the estate in Dudley. Police were alerted to the robbery following an emergency call.

Within an hour police officers were able to trace the 25-year-old rubber, at the Station Hotel, Castle Hill. When they arrived, police say Hart became aggressive. A court was told that during a struggle he assaulted four officers before he was taken into custody.

Detective Constable Dave Laver, of West Midlands Police, said he welcomed the sentence.

He also praised the victims' bravery in calling police with a good description, enabling the arrest to happen so soon after.

He said: “This was a horrifying experience for the taxi driver. He was simply going about his normal line of work. Officers were able to quickly establish where Hart may be and were able to arrest him within an hour.”

Substantial

“We remain committed to tackling crime involving weapons. This substantial sentence should serve as a strong warning about the risks of carrying a weapon.”

Andrew Hockedy who took part in the 999-mile cycle ride charity challenge despite three ops

A FUNDRAISER used pedal power to raise cash for charity after taking part in a gruelling bike ride from Land’s End to John O’Groats.

Car dealership boss Andrew Hockedy swapped the driver’s seat for the saddle as he completed the 999-mile cycle ride.

It proved a tough challenge as he took part despite having three operations – two knee replacements and a double hip replacement – in the last 18 months.

Mr Hockedy, who is the managing director of the Steourbridge and Wolverhampton Volkswagen dealerships, was raising cash for Marie Curie Cancer Care. The 55-year-old finished the ride in nine days raising £5,200.

He said: “I did the ride for the first time when I was 50 and I’ve had a number of operations since then. But the toughest part was having to rough it in a tent.”

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Art price is manic Mund for collector

WE’VE all been there at some time or other. You put a few quid away each month, with the thought of a little treat or egg, and then the mid-life crisis beckons.

It’s just the way life goes. One minute you don’t have £360m to spend, and the next you find yourself with a picture on a picture for the dining room instead.

Well that’s what seems to have happened for one person at least. Last week, a tidy and not particularly attractive painting that might be by Leonardo da Vinci, fetched a staggering 450 million dollars at Christie’s in New York. That’s £360 million in today’s money.

Now, I’m the first to admit I know nothing about fine art. What do I know about the masters, I’m a card-carrying philistine, The Mona Lisa? Yes. I don’t know the difference between the Mona Lisa and the Mona Lisa painting. But you do that’s not the point, the point is, people will pay a fortune for some old paint on a canvas.

Salvador Mund, or somebody of the world art business, I mean.

It’s better than I can do, but I think you get the point. What differentiates that from, say, the Pompeii paintings that Turner produced for £360m is not known.

Some years ago, I saw the celebrated paintings of Dudley by JMW Turner, which used to hang in the city’s art gallery before it closed. I suppose I ought to say what an uplifting and enriching experience it was, but to be honest I thought they were rubbish.

I certainly prefer the work of Black Country artist, and all-round nice guy, Graham Colbourne. But while Turner’s works are priceless treasures, Graham donates his to local charities. Yet even among those in the know, the £360m picture painting has received a distinctly lukewarm reaction.

Jason Farago, of the New York Times is of the opinion, that Turner’s work is essentially distinguished religious picture from a turn-of-the-19th-century artist, put through a wringer of restorers.

What does interest me, though, is that in 1958 the same picture sold for £45, just under a grand when you allow for inflation. Back then, it was worth about £250, which would work out by Da Vinci, so the inflated price is roughly about 10 times the price of any merit it might possess.

Which is just as well, because if I wanted to buy my own, I would not be crossing the Atlantic with my cheque book. I would cut the print out of the catalogue, and head down to Wilko for a frame.

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Sometimes best to leave smartphone in your pocket

Adrian Edmondson – and which Shakespearean role will be next for him?

Paramedic: No need to shame notewriter

Barbara Burt receives the following message on her ambulance:

“Hello, I’m a Paramedic working in Wolverhampton. I found this message on your ambulance:

“A really long Greek play by someone I’ve never heard of. I’ve got as pare£ 360 million knocking about, and would cut the print out of the catalogue,ing the Atlantic with my cheque book. I think it’s better than I can do, but most things would cut the print out of the catalogue,ing the Atlantic with my cheque book. I think it’s better than I can do, but most things would

We’ve all been there at some time or other. You put a few quid away each month, with the thought of a little treat or egg, and then the mid-life crisis beckons.

It’s just the way life goes. One minute you don’t have £360m to spend, and the next you find yourself with a picture on a picture for the dining room instead.

Well that’s what seems to have happened for one person at least. Last week, a tidy and not particularly attractive painting that might be by Leonardo da Vinci, fetched a staggering 450 million dollars at Christie’s in New York. That’s £360 million in today’s money.

Now, I’m the first to admit I know nothing about fine art. What do I know about the masters, I’m a card-carrying philistine, The Mona Lisa? Yes. I don’t know the difference between the Mona Lisa and the Mona Lisa painting. But you do that’s not the point, the point is, people will pay a fortune for some old paint on a canvas.

Salvador Mund, or somebody of the world art business, I mean.

It’s better than I can do, but I think you get the point. What differentiates that from, say, the Pompeii paintings that Turner produced for £360m is not known.

Some years ago, I saw the celebrated paintings of Dudley by JMW Turner, which used to hang in the city’s art gallery before it closed. I suppose I ought to say what an uplifting and enriching experience it was, but to be honest I thought they were rubbish.

I certainly prefer the work of Black Country artist, and all-round nice guy, Graham Colbourne. But while Turner’s works are priceless treasures, Graham donates his to local charities. Yet even among those in the know, the £360m picture painting has received a distinctly lukewarm reaction.

Jason Farago, of the New York Times is of the opinion, that Turner’s work is essentially distinguished religious picture from a turn-of-the-19th-century artist, put through a wringer of restorers.

What does interest me, though, is that in 1958 the same picture sold for £45, just under a grand when you allow for inflation. Back then, it was worth about £250, which would work out by Da Vinci, so the inflated price is roughly about 10 times the price of any merit it might possess.

Which is just as well, because if I wanted to buy my own, I would not be crossing the Atlantic with my cheque book. I would cut the print out of the catalogue, and head down to Wilko for a frame.

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Don’t set up NHS boss as the fall guy

AFTER being on the edge of crisis during the summer, we have to hope that the National Health Service will be able to cope in the coming winter. We have to hope that the NHS will be protected from major outbreaks of flu and the winter vomiting virus. We have to hope that the NHS will not suffer too much from staff shortages as many foreign staff decide to leave Britain or not apply as a result of the uncertainty about Brexit.

We have to hope that the NHS will be able to cope with the problems caused by bed blocking as a result of social care being underfunded.

Spare a thought for Simon Stevens, the NHS Chief Executive, who has been told that he is to be held personally responsible for NHS performance but who does not have any power to decide the amount of money it receives.

In June 2016 the country voted to leave the EU. Many people were motivated by the claim that we would be able to give an extra £350 million a week to the NHS.

We have to insist that the Government gives Simon Stevens and the NHS the money it deserves instead of setting him up as a fall guy.

R Taberner
Tividale

Museums in muddle over plans

I just wish we could be told the truth about the Brooke Robinson Collection.

All we have received so far are cryptic and contradictory news items released by the council and the Brooke Robinson Trust.

The whole basis of the argument for moving Dudley Museum was to sell off the museum building in St James’s Road to generate funds after severe Government cuts. Now there seems to be plans to reopen the building in St James’s Road and display the Brooke Robinson Collection.

The trust seems to be very active in re-ordering its court and also an art museum.

To do this required an act of Parliament, the Brooke Robinson Museum Charity Scheme Confirmation Act 1919. Under a deed of covenant the trustees and Dudley Council would maintain the exhibits and display them for the people of Dudley. So for all Mr Robinson gave to Dudley borough he asked only for space for his collection to be displayed, which it was before being shut away until 1981 when it was found a home in the art gallery.

Ron Gwilliams
Brierley Hill

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

EMAIL
dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Code of Practice: Our policy is to correct errors as soon as we can. The Chronicles adheres to the Editors’ Code of Practice, which can be seen at www.ipso.co.uk. If you are unhappy with the accuracy of a story, write to The Editor, Chronicles, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

WHEN hospitals, the police, local authorities or other offices of the State are involved in an inquest, they often have legal representation funded by the public purse.

Yet the family suffering a bereavement, sometimes in the most terrible circumstances, is likely to be refused the same publicly-funded legal aid.

Without professional support at a coroner’s hearing, distressed relatives are often have legal representation funded by the public purse.

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Confiscated cash used to support credit union

CASH confiscated from loan sharks will be used to reward people who save through a credit union in Dudley.

Castle & Crystal Credit Union, supported by Dudley Council, has launched the scheme to encourage people to start saving this festive period while also making them aware of the dangers of loan sharks.

The first 50 people to join the credit union will receive a £25 saving boost into their account. The cash will come from the proceeds of convictions in Dudley and Wolverhampton, where loan sharks have been prosecuted under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

By David Cosgrove

TV star Lisa Riley meets a bunny at Dudley Zoo before appearing in Grand pantomime Jack and the Beanstalk

Dudley Zoo and Wolverhampton Grand Theatre have announced the signing of a sponsorship deal which will continue their partnership to promote the Black Country’s annual family pantomime.

The zoo’s sponsorship of the panto will continue for a further two years. It means the zoo will continue to have its annual family pantomime.

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Panto stars including Lisa Riley visited some of the animals cared for under the shadow of Dudley Castle.

Grand associate director Vicky Price said: “We’re absolutely thrilled that Dudley Zoological Gardens will continue to collaborate with us. Both venues provide magical experiences for children and their families.”

By David Cosgrove

The scheme is only available for residents living in the wards of Upper Gornal and Woodsetton, Coseley, Kingswinford, Wall Heath and Wordsley. It has been backed by the England Illegal Money Lending Team.

Councillor Peter Miller, cabinet member for health and wellbeing, said: “Loan sharks target low-income and desperate families, preying on struggling individuals and exploiting them for personal financial gain.

“We are committed to ensuring people in need have an alternative to loan sharks and illegal lenders in their local community.”

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Community backs Chris funeral fund

A COMMUNITY has come together to raise money for the funeral of young Dudley father Chris Brookes, who died after falling from a bridge over Wolverhampton ring road.

More than 100 people attended an event held at Meadow Road Youth & Venture Site in Wren’s Nest, Dudley.

Chris, aged 22, who died on October 28, has left behind a three-year-old daughter, Layla-Jade, and pregnant girlfriend Sarah Jayne Collins, 23, who is expecting their son Chris Junior in January.

Sarah, from Oldbury, said: “I think it is amazing how many people came out. It is overwhelming, Chris would be proud.”

A football tournament, tombola and a bounce castle for children were among the activities held during the community event on Saturday. The day was held to raise money for Chris’ funeral, which is on November 29.

Chris’ mother Pauline Room, 47, from Netherton, was taken back by the amount of people who turned up to support their family.

She said: “I didn’t know Chris knew so many people to be honest. The day has been held in memory of Chris and to raise funds for his funeral. All the community have helped put it to it.”

A fundraising page was set up in the wake of his death to support his family. The target was £3,000, but it has been held in memory of Chris and to raise funds for his funeral. All the community have helped put it to it.

A fundraising page was set up in the wake of his death to support his family. The target was £3,000, but it had surpassed a week and now stands at more than £4,300.

An inquest opened last week heard Mr Brookes left his friends after a night out and was taken back by the amount of people who turned up to support their family.

Mr Brookes has been held in memory of Chris and to raise funds for his funeral. All the community have helped put it to it.

HUNDREDS of Santas will part in an annual town charity fun run to help people with sight loss when the Santa Run returns to West Park in Wolverhampton on December 3.

People can run, walk, jog or even skip their way around the course. Adults and children over 12 will be given a Santa suit to wear on the day, and under 12s get a Santa hat.

The event has been organised by the Sedgley-based Beacon Centre and RNIB. The run is on from 10.30am-12.30pm. Entry is £10 for adults and children over 12, £5 for younger children with under 5s free. Visit beaconvision.org website for further details.
There was a lot of business to get through at the November 13 meeting at the Community Centre, High Street, Kingswinford. The Federation report emphasised the Christmas celebration in St Thomas’s Church, Stourbridge on December 9. Enid issued a reminder that new committee members would be needed. Dawn Hampton was thanked for the pot plant she provided for the chairman’s table, which she donated as a raffle prize. The collection box was put out for those who wished to donate in lieu of cards.

The Kingswinford Strummers gave an enjoyable performance. Chris Moy gave a talk on foreign travel, taking place in Derbyshire. The bowling season was concluded with a series of friendly matches against the Sons of Rest. Glynis Allen will receive the trophy for winning this season’s guild bowling championship.

Members were so enthralled by the Victorian Evening at Haddin Hill House that interest was expressed in the December 7 Christmas candlelight night.

Speaker for the evening was Peter Gleave, a local historian whose subject was Dudley Hippodrome. Peter’s talk, accompanied by slides and old films, made members feel very nostalgic, and keen to join in many old songs performed by past stars. At the conclusion members were most enthusiastic in showing their appreciation.

Raffle prizes went to Brenda Adkins and June Lees.
VC war hero’s grave is the last to be repaired

THE grave of a Zulu War hero will be one of the last to be restored by The Victoria Cross Trust due to lack of funding.

Colour Sergeant Anthony Booth’s grave at St Michael’s Church, in Brierley Hill, was initially thought to have been attacked by vandals in August this year.

More than £3,000 was raised in just a few days to help fund the restoration of it after an appeal was launched by the trust, which relies solely on donations.

It was later revealed that the grave may have been accidentally damaged during churchyard maintenance by Dudley Council.

The damage was discovered by Zulu War historian John Graham, who had visited the grave to take photographs, and it reported it to the VC Trust.

Sgt Anthony Booth

Now trust bosses state it will be their last restoration project due to ‘lack of financial support’.

It comes as permission was granted by the Diocese of Worcester for work to be carried out.

Gary Stapleton, trust chief executive, said: “We will be suspending any further work for the time being – the funds are just not there.

“We run the museum to raise the funds and despite operating in profit is it just not enough to start planning large restoration projects.

“It is annoying that rewards were put forward but then not put into the project, the crowdfunding page was a great effort but it seems the majority of that came about from the belief that it may have been criminal damage.

“This will be the last project for the time being until we have some Government funding or a kind benefactor.”

Sergeant Booth was awarded the VC for saving 50 men by giving them covering fire during a retreat.

Police car rammed in 17-mile pursuit

A THUG rammed a police car during a 17-mile high-speed chase in a stolen van while swigging beer at the wheel, a court heard.

By John Scott

The 40-year-old was swigging beer from a bottle as he drove, according to a police officer, said Mike Forna Corner, prosecuting.

Scott crashed the van into a car near Enville and Enville Green, then the defendant, who had two passengers in the van, crossed a central reservation of the road and drove the wrong way down the opposite carriageway.

Police tried to stop Scott in Duncan Edwards Way, Dudley, but he rammed one of the police cars. The van finally stopped in Cinder Bank.

Scott refused to take a breath test. He had 21 previous convictions involving 52 separate offences to his name.

Mr Daniel White, defending, conceded: “He has had difficulties with drink and drugs.”

Scott from Severn Road, Galley Gate, admitted dangerous driving and failing to answer bail.

Judge Barry Berlin told him: “This was an utterly shocking piece of driving that put the police, other road users, your passengers and yourself at risk.”

Scott will also face a five-year driving ban on his release.

Volunteers needed

We need more – that’s the message from Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust as it marks the recruitment of its 200th volunteer.

The Volunteer Service has been building up a team of volunteers in the past 13 months, which include Sandwell, City and Bowley Regis Hospital, as well as Leasowe Intermediate Care Centre.

The service aims to reach a target of 460 recruits by next September. Liza Gill, volunteers co-ordinator, said: “We have a varied range of roles for volunteers within the trust and we intend on increasing their presence across all sites over the coming months. There will also be an opportunity for volunteers at the Midland Metropolitan Hospital, when it opens in 2019.Call 0121 507 4505 for further details.

Insurance industry professional in court over 13 false claims

AN insurance worker who used her industry knowledge to defraud companies out of more than £19,000 has avoided jail.

Rachel Shoer, aged 42, from Century Way, Halesowen, used fake names to set-up false insurance policies. She made 13 fraudulent claims over seven years, Wolverhampton Crown Court was told.

Investigators from the City of London Police discovered that Shoer followed a pattern of taking out a policy with a different insurer every year under a different name.

She admitted that because of her terrible claims history under her real name she was unable to take out home insurance and used false details to ensure she could receive insurance cover. Between 2009 and 2016, Shoer’s fraudulent claims included multiple times where she used original pictures from her own wedding and 40th birthday to make claims on an engagement ring.

She had held a range of positions working in the insurance industry, and worked as an underwriter for an insurer during the time she was making the claims.

Shoer was given a 15-month sentence, suspended for two years, and a 20-hour community order after she pleaded guilty to making numerous false claims.

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Dave hits right chord to back appeal

IN the words of that famous song, ‘It’s Christmasmaaaan’, and now Slade guitarist is following on from those heady days of his band’s domination of the festive season, by backing our Feed a Family This Christmas appeal.

Dave said he would be backing the Express & Star and Chronicle’s festive appeal to support the region’s vulnerable at Christmas.

The 71-year-old added: “Anything to do with a good cause like this, I’m happy to support. It’s really good that the paper is doing this.”

We are collecting donations of non-perishable food which will be handed to food banks and other charitable organisations across the region.

Readers can donate festive food, as well as basics. Non-food items such as toiletries, baby supplies, new socks and small presents are also welcome.

Good causes set to benefit are The Shepherd Ministry, the Black Country Food Bank, the Smethwick Food Bank, Walsall North Food Bank and Cannock and District Food Bank.

The appeal will also support the Haven, which helps women and children affected by domestic violence.

THE drop-off points:

- Express & Star Wolverhampton, 51-53 Queen Street, WV1 1ED
- Express & Star Cannock/Walsall office, Queen Square, Cannock WS11 1EA
- Oldbury office, Black Country House. Rounds Green Road, Oldbury, B69 2DG
- Midcounties Co-operative Food Store Codsall, 28-32 Wood Lane/Bakers Way, Codsall WV8 1DB
- Donations dropped off at those will go to The Well.

THE DROP-OFF POINTS:

- Waitrose Wolverhampton, Penn Road, WV2 4NJ
- The Well (Home of Wolverhampton Food Bank), Wolverhampton
- The Good Shepherd Ministry, the Black Country Food Bank, the Smethwick Food Bank, Walsall North Food Bank and Cannock and District Food Bank.

The appeal will also support The Haven, which helps women and children affected by domestic violence.
Firm is fined £390k after welder crushed by cylinder

A firm has been fined £390,000 and told to pay £24,000 costs after a welder was crushed by a 2.8 ton cylinder.

Andrew King was known to be doing a potentially dangerous job when disaster struck but The Angle Ring Company had not prepared a risk assessment for it, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

The 36-year-old was using a propane lamp to weld plates onto the cylinder when it tipped forward and fell on him at the firm’s Tipton works on November 11 2014. It fractured his left leg in three places and lacerated the right leg. The injuries could have been worse if a post had not inadvertently halted the cylinder and prevented its full weight landing on him.

Mr King, who had worked at the firm for four years, said: “I shouted for help and felt blood inside by welder visor.”

He was off work for nine months and is still suffering psychologically.

Warned

The cylinder had to be rotated and rested on two sets of wheel rotators, which were not secured. There was a known danger of it moving forward but Mr King had not been warned about the possibility, said Mr Harpreet Sandhu, on behalf of the Health and Safety Executive.

He said: “There should’ve been a site specific risk assessment for this hazardous work. The risk was known and the ramifications were foreseeable.”

Anti-crop devices have since been installed by the steel bending firm.

The firm, which had a previous health and safety breach conviction, pleaded guilty to failing to ensure the health and welfare of an employee.

Judge Barry Berlin said: “Mr King could have been killed.”

It’s beginning to look a lot like Christmas

CHRISTMAS has arrived at The Summerhouse pub’s colourful display with landlords Phil and Karen Kennedy.

Karen explained that the East Midlands Children’s Heart Care Association, based at Glenfield Hospital had helped her family.

Thousands of LED bulbs go into the display at the pub that Karen runs off Gospel End Road to see the fantastic array of lights.

Karen runs the pub with husband Phil, 54. They have a son James, 15, and daughter Zoe, 11.

“They bring a bit of Christmas spirit to the community and everybody appreciates them which makes it worthwhile doing,” she said. “The Christmas lights are quite famous in the area and it seems to be getting bigger every year.”

The theme of the display this year illustrates a child going to bed on Christmas Eve. It features Disney characters and a Christmas tree.

Karen, who has run the pub for three years, said it had a tradition of an extravagant display stretching back before the their arrival but she felt it had to continue.

American pianist and the road with Rea

American pianist Mike Garson, famed for his work on David Bowie’s Aladdin Sane album, will be paying tribute to Bowie at Birmingham’s O2 Institute on Saturday.

The New Yorker will be playing the Aladdin Sane album in full plus other Bowie favourites with special guests Steve Harley – one of Bowie’s ’70 contemporaries – and Gaby Moreno.

Meanwhile, after beating pancreatic cancer and overcoming a stroke temporaries – and Gaby Moreno.

Steve Harley – one of Bowie’s 70 concert at Birmingham Symphony Hall on Wednesday, November 29.

Bowie favourites with special guests

Home for Christmas is back with his aortic cancer and overcoming a stroke temporaries – and Gaby Moreno.

The husky-voiced Teesider famous for his work on David Bowie’s famed for his work on David Bowie’s...
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Thursday, November 23, 2017
Depeche Mode, Arena Birmingham
WHAT a strange long road it’s been for Depeche Mode, from perky 80s synth kids to gnarly rock gods of the 21st century, and their army of fans has kept on growing. With the Brum mega-venue full to capacity and covering quite an age range, it’s a testament to the dark melodic appeal of the Mode that they still feel vital and current whilst many of their ’80s contemporaries rely on the nostalgia circuit.

The original Essex trio of singer Dave Gahan, singer-guitarist Martin L Gore and keyboardist Andy Fletcher have been augmented into a five-piece band, who put on a performance that packed a punch, if let down somewhat by the staging.

Earlier, homecoming heroes Superfood impressed with funky grooves (as heard on new album Babylon) and got the joint jump-started with Double Dutch. New York trio Sunflower Bean’s neo-psychadelic swirl has an irresistible allure. They’re still in the Mode that they still feel vital and current. With the Brum mega-venue full to capacity and covering quite an age range, it’s a testament to the dark melodic appeal of the Mode that they still feel vital and current whilst many of their ’80s contemporaries rely on the nostalgia circuit.

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Leona Burakowski
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Why Anton’s in the mood for singing

We start with a moment described perfectly accurately and unashamedly on YouTube as this: Ruth Langsford rides Anton

Du Beke.

For those just back from a long holiday in Outer Mongolia, we’ll recap. At the start of the month, Strictly’s Anton Du Beke unexpectedly found himself pinned to the ground beneath the boot of a perfect manouevre by Singapore-born presenter. And then she sort of wriggled a bit. And shimmered. Jeez.

“I was watching Fred Astaire when I was young, I wanted to be like him but I didn’t think I’ve got this. And you wait for the ground to arrive at your backside.”

Anton thought it was a hoot when it happened – and still does.

“Was he horrified when the two of them went down? Not to be honest. The jump was made – it wasn’t her fault. Everything goes into slow motion when things like that happen.

“You think: ‘I’ve got this, I’ll just adjust’. Then it’s ‘Jesus, I don’t think I’ve got this. And you wait for the ground to arrive at your backside.’”

Anton thought it was a hoot when it happened – and still does.

“It was hilarious. It was one of the funniest moments ever on strictly. The crowd went mad.”

We have more to talk about, however, like Anton’s forthcoming tour and his decision to try to emulate his Rat Pack heroes like Frank and Sammy D.

Anton, TV’s most sanitised man, is The Entertainer. And in addition to tripping the light fantastic on Strictly, he’s been recording a debut album in the studio, From The Top.

PASSION

“I’m so excited to announce my debut album. It’s been a passion project of mine for years to be able to do something like this.

“I hope people enjoy it. I’ve loved every second of it. There’s some old songs. Some new songs. And definitely some songs you can dance to.”

It features classics like Putting On The Ritz, Fly Me To The Moon, Don’t Rain On My Parade and It’s The Most Wonderful Time Of The Year.

“I think Anthony thought it was a hoot when it happened – and still does.

“It was one of those things. It wasn’t her fault. Everything goes into slow motion when things like that happen.

“You think: ‘I’ve got this, I’ll just adjust’. Then it’s ‘Jesus, I don’t think I’ve got this. And you wait for the ground to arrive at your backside.’”

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So does Anton want to follow in those footsteps? Does he want to be linking his own walls with a bunch of silver, gold and platinum discs? You bet he does.

“I hope it goes absolutely massive. I hope I get a platinum disc and people say it’s incredible. But we’ll have to wait and see whether that actually happens, we’ll have to wait and see. I love it so much that I want other people to love it.

“This type of big band music is still being done and has stood the test of time. We’ll have to wait and see in the future what still gets repeated in the same way from today’s era. The songs I’ve re-recorded are great in their own right. The hard bit for me was choosing what to leave out.”

In the final analysis, making people happy is what The Entertainer is all about. And he plans to keep dancing for as long as possible. “For now, I still love dancing. Doing the paso doble and samba and ripping my trousers off – I live for those moments. Or dancing with Nadiya and doing a beautiful foxtrot while Seal is singing: those are the moments you live for.”

Andy Richardson

● For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.
Christmas cracker of a ballet is a traditional treat

Birmingham Royal Ballet’s annual festive treat, The Nutcracker, opens at Birmingham Hippodrome tomorrow night (Friday).

Sir Peter Wright’s magical production runs until December 13 and has been an annual seasonal tradition since the company moved from London and took on the city’s name more than 25 years ago.

This world-acclaimed production with its classic story of an incredible Christmas journey, features glorious dancing and instantly recognisable romantic music from Tchaikovsky.

Join Clara as she is swept into an enchanting winter wonderland of swirling snowflakes, a handsome prince, wicked rats and a Sugar Plum Fairy. It is spectacular with lavish costumes and monumental sets, and amazing effects including a Christmas tree that grows before your eyes and Clara’s flight on the back of a swan to a magical land.

The Nutcracker has captured the hearts and imaginations of generation after generation of theatre-goers, becoming an annual fixture at the Hippodrome, which is Birmingham Royal Ballet’s home theatre. In fact, Christmas in Birmingham just wouldn’t be the same without it.

In this most festive of ballets 60 dancers and a full orchestra – the Royal Ballet Sinfonia – combine to make the perfect Christmas treat for the entire family. This production with exquisite designs by John Macfarlane is acclaimed as one of the best in the world.

Birmingham Rep is set for a paw-some festive season with The Hundred and One Dalmatians on stage from Thursday 21 November to Sunday 24 December.

Debbie Isitt’s adaptation of the family favourite story by Dodie Smith, which was turned into an animated classic by Disney, is brought to life on stage with puppetry devised by director Tessa Walker and designer Jamie Vartan.

Former Birmingham student Gloria Onitiri, above, makes her Rep debut as wicked Cruella de Vil.

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On 25-26 November there is a Christmas Craft Market and Teenage Market the chance to buy a unique handmade gifts and enjoy seasonal entertainment, this a joint event with the White House Cone.

Santa will coming to Cone 9 and 10 and 16-23 December to book to see him call (01384) 815571

The museum shop and on site studios offer the chance to buy a distinctive locally made gifts and you can take a break from shopping in the Red Cone Coffee House.

It’s a Cruella winter at the Rep

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Meet Santa, receive a gift, do a craft and follow a trail
Pre-book tickets essential

Open 10am to 3pm Monday to Friday - 11am to 4pm Saturday & Sundays

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Advertisement feature

Grease is still the one that you want

Grease is the word at Wolverhampton Grand where the latest tour of the much-loved rock ‘n’ roll musical arrives on Monday and will run until Saturday, December 2.

Tom Parker, pictured, formerly of boy band The Wanted, is making his musical theatre debut as Danny Zuko, the role made famous in the movie by the young John Travolta.

Danielle Hope, who was Dorothy in The Wizard of Oz at the London Palladium after winning BBC TV’s Over The Rainbow, will step into Olivia Newton-John’s high heel shoes as Sandy.

Wisecracking Rizzo will be played by EastEnders and The Bill star Louise Lytton, one of the youngest Strictly Come Dancing competitors in 2006. George Olrey is Teen Angel/Vince Fontaine.

Jim Jacobs and Warren Casey’s musical, set in an American high school during the rock ‘n’ roll era, features such songs as You’re The One That I Want, Summer Nights, Greased Lightning and Hopelessly Devoted To You.

It has been choreographed by Arlene Phillips and directed by David Gilmore, who was also at the helm for stage versions of Happy Days and Footloose.

This production opened in the West End, where it had a six year run, and has toured ever since.

Rag’N’Bone Man is only Human at Civic

One of the breakout stars of 2017, Rag ‘N’ Bone Man, has sold out the Civic Hall on Monday for his first Wolverhampton gig. Without doubt 2017 has been his year, emerging from the Brighton music scene, his debut album has been a huge hit worldwide, containing the international hit Human, which went to Number 1 on iTunes in more than 40 countries.

The harmonious sound of America’s folk rockers Fleet Foxes can be heard at the Civic tomorrow night (Friday), whilst punk veterans Sham 69 are at the Slade Rooms. There’s a sell-out again at the venue on Saturday for former leading members of The Beautiful South, Paul Heaton and Jacqui Abbott.

Highlights at the Robin 2 in Bilston include ‘80s duo China Crisis on Sunday and former Zombies frontman Colin Blunstone on Monday.

It’s a Cruella winter at the Rep

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Highlights at the Robin 2 in Bilston include ‘80s duo China Crisis on Sunday and former Zombies frontman Colin Blunstone on Monday.
Joe Orton Laid Bare (BBC2, 9pm)

Documentary exploring the wit, work and world of Joe Orton, the Leicester-born playwright and author whose flourishing literary career was cut short when he was killed by his boyfriend Kenneth Halliwell in 1967. Fifty years after his demise, this film charts Orton’s meteoric rise to fame following his imprisonment in 1962 for defiling library books. Orton believed his sentence was unduly harsh, and had more to do with the fact he was homosexual than the crime itself, but his time in prison allowed him to crystallise his distinctive worldview. Here, excerpts from his published works can be seen alongside personal charts Orton’s meteoric rise to fame following his imprisonment in 1962 for defiling library books. Orton believed his sentence was unduly harsh, and had more to do with the fact he was homosexual than the crime itself, but his time in prison allowed him to crystallise his distinctive worldview. Here, excerpts from his published works can be seen alongside personal

Joe Orton: ‘Passodoblathon’. As ever, though, the pressures of public life were immense. As 1960s celebrity status approached, Orton was faced with a series of challenges, including the annual Blackpool Tower visit, which he found especially daunting. Despite the pressures, Orton continued to pursue his passion for theatre and writing, leaving behind a body of work that continues to captivate audiences today. His legacy is a testament to his unique talent and enduring legacy.
Guy Martin vs the Robocar (Channel 4, 9pm)

According to predictions, in just over 10-years’-time, half of all new cars sold will be electric and 15 per cent of them will be self-driving. But where does that leave Guy Martin? In this documentary, he tries to get to grips with autonomous vehicles by building his own robotic Ford Transit in his shed, where he discovers that the hardest part is replicating human thought.

So, he trawls to Budapest and the US to learn more about artificial intelligence and the morality tests the software engineers must grapple with, such as should a self-driving car save its passenger or a pedestrian in an emergency scenario.

And in the ultimate test, Guy takes to the track to become the first person to pit his driving skills against an AI race car.

SUNDAY’S TV NOVEMBER 26

**CHANNEL 4**

7.55 Fraser (R) (2.5) Fraser, (R) 9.00 Sunday Brunch, 12.00 Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Live, 12.30 Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Live, 1.00 Formula 1 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix Review. In depth analysis of this afternoon’s race. 4.45 axed with Guy Martin at Challenge. 5.35 Channel 4 News.

8.05 The Maze in Black 3 (2012) An alien criminal escapes from a prison on the moon and goes back in time on a mission of revenge, changing the course of history. Agent K of the top-secret Earth Defence organization follows him back to 1965 and joins forces with a younger version of his mentor Agent J to set things right. Sci-fi adventure, with Taylor Kitsch and Johnny Depp.

8.50 Coastal Railways with Julie Walters. New series. The actresses travels around the UK coast by train, beginning by boarding the Famous Jacobite steam train for a trip along Scotland’s West Highland Railway. Featuring in the Harry Potter movies. Along the way, Julie chats to the drivers, and blends up railway lines, and meets a traditional Scottish storyteller on the Isle of Skye.

9.00 Guy Martin vs the Robocar. Presented examiner the world of self-driving cars, attempting to build one of his own in his shed. It’s the most ambitious project to date. In Budapest for a ride in a completely autonomous car, the driver being tested on public roads for the first time. It’s then that he heads to Silverstone, to take on a computer-controlled driver.


11.00 Road Race Britain: Caught on Camera. (R) (2.00) Channel 4. 11.30 Tonight’s budget. (R) 1.45 ITV Highlights.

12.00 BBC News.

**ITV**

6.00 City-Side. 6.10 Bottom Knocker Street. (R) 6.30 Bottom Knocker Street. (R) 6.35 News. 6.40 Street Adventures. A Llyn Peninsula, North Wales. 6.50 A Year in the Life of a Supermarket. (R) 7.00 Great British Baking Show. (R) 7.05 Young Guns. (R) 7.10 The Nightly Smartphone Show. (R) 7.15 The Repair Shop. (R) 7.25 The Repair Shop. (R) 7.40 News. 7.55 Film: Pirates of the Caribbean: At World’s End. (R) 8.00 Coastal Railways with Julie Walters. New series. The actresses travels around the UK coast by train, beginning by boarding the Famous Jacobite steam train for a trip along Scotland’s West Highland Railway.

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Paul looks to serve up a tasty treat in new series

MONDAY
A Perfect Christmas, Channel 5, 3.45pm
As Christmas draws near, executive chef and TV personality Tom Aikens heads to York, where he strolls into a trendy bakery to see if they can nail his Christmas baking challenge.

Tuesday
The Christmas Switch, Channel 5, 2pm
A hustler is asked to magically swap bodies with a dejected baker in return for either a million dollars or having all his past sins forgiven. He chooses the money but he watches the other man using his body to do good deeds, he begins to reconsider what is important in his life.

Wednesday
A Bride for Christmas, Channel 5, 11.45am
A woman awakes from serious injuries after breaking off her third failed engagement, only to run into a man who seems perfect for her a month before Christmas. However, she does not realise he has made a bet with his friends that he can persuade a Christmas. However, she does not realise he has made a bet with his friends that he can persuade

Thursday
Seventh Son, Channel 5, 9pm
Fantasy adventure, starring Ben Barnes and Jeff Bridges. As tablespoons ofalcohol, a brave young man sets out to change Paul to bake a pistachio and rose petal moulard. Which does he choose, of course, with customary parodies.

Friday
Jamie and Jimmy's Friday Night Feast
Jamie Oliver and Jimmy Doherty join Panella Strocchi at her candle shop to make her a sumptuous sausage with a difference. With her help, the duo create a dish fit for a Mayfair dinner party.

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Paul Hollywood: A Baker’s Life, Monday, Channel 4, 8pm
**BRAIN GYM**

**No.457**

**Codeword**

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

**Cryptic Clues:**

**Across**

1. The old boy with the only perfume going out of date (11)
2. Colour for brother to possess (5)
3. Enthusiastic applause for egg production? (7)
4. Corrects me on rising to conclusions (6)
5. Officer doesn’t need the Spanish punctuation mark (5)
6. Retains more offensive order (7)
7. The bird presumably had something to sing about in the morning (11)
8. Insect on trial in international sport (4,7)
9. Wishing success before tomorrow? (4,3)
10. Song in really rich style (5)
11. State in the smallest degree (5)
12. Lie is wrong, certainly, but gives relief easily? (7)
13. Zodiacaal sign not revealed to office workers (11)

**Down**

1. Besides (11)
2. Horseman’s iron (7)
3. Granted (6)
4. Anoint (5)
5. Temporary (7)
6. Find loophole (6)
7. Very inefficient (11)
8. Beête (5)
9. Supple (5)
10. Flippancy (6)
11. Permanent (11)
12. Strength (5)
13. Uproar (7)
14. Decree (5)
15. Enterprise (11)
16. Supple (5)
17. Decree (5)
18. Elan (5)
19. Standing (5)
20. Characteristic (5)
21. Daydream (7)
22. Act (11)
23. Labours (5)
24. Rendering (7)
25. Acquiesce (6)
26. Standing (5)

**Quick Clues:**

**Across**

1. Besides (11)
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6. Find loophole (6)
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18. Elan (5)
19. Standing (5)
20. Characteristic (5)
21. Daydream (7)
22. Act (11)
23. Labours (5)
24. Rendering (7)
25. Acquiesce (6)
26. Standing (5)

**Down**

1. Combine (5)
2. Flood (7)
3. Set at work (6)
4. Strength (5)
5. Delight (7)
6. Operate (7)
7. Letters (8)
8. Simple (7)
9. Smart (7)
10. Talents (7)
11. Smart (11)
12. Talents (11)
13. Tapper (7)
14. Protege (7)
15. David (7)
16. Rake (7)
17. Standing (7)
18. Bondage (5)
19. Interest (7)
20. Thin (7)
21. Out of date (7)
22. Talents (7)
23. Tapper (7)
24. Protege (7)
25. David (7)

**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.

**Double Crossword**

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

- **Cryptic Clues:**
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  - Enthusiastic applause for egg production? (7)
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  - Insect on trial in international sport (4,7)
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  - Rendering (7)
  - Acquiesce (6)
  - Standing (5)

**Quiz**

1. Which disorder is also called word blindness?
2. What is a dunlin?
3. In which children’s TV series would you find Alderney and Tobermory?
4. Which singer was born Declan McManus?
5. Which US President was assassinated in Buffalo?
6. To which family does the lovebird belong?
7. Which Vicar of Dibley star posed nude for the Hays Ofﬁce?
8. Which art-form was regulated in the US by the Hays Ofﬁce?
9. Of what is Ceres the largest known example?
10. According to Arthurian legend, who was Sir Galahad’s father?
11. Which city was Arnold Schwarzenegger born in?
12. Which French sculptor, who was born in 1935, gave a French painter?
13. Which French author, who was born in 1901, gave a French author?
14. Which singer was born Declan McManus?
15. Which US President was assassinated in Buffalo?
16. To which family does the lovebird belong?
17. Which French author, who was born in 1901, gave a French author?
18. Which French sculptor, who was born in 1935, gave a French painter?
19. Which French author, who was born in 1901, gave a French author?
20. Which French sculptor, who was born in 1935, gave a French painter?

**Niner**

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

**Last week’s solutions:**

**Quiz:**
1. Benjamin Franklin; 2 Luxembourg; 3 Propaganda; 4 Polish; 5 J Edgar Hoover; 6 Aaron; 7 Muskrat; 8 One; 9 California; 10 George Eliot.

**Niner:**
1. METAPHORS

**Double Crossword**

**Across**

1. Besides (11)
2. Combine (5)
3. Flood (7)
4. Set at work (6)
5. Strength (5)
6. Delight (7)
7. Letters (8)
8. Simple (7)
9. Smart (7)
10. Talents (7)
11. Smart (11)
12. Talents (11)
13. Tapper (7)
14. Protege (7)
15. David (7)
16. Rake (7)
17. Standing (7)
18. Bondage (5)
19. Interest (7)
20. Thin (7)
21. Out of date (7)
22. Talents (7)
23. Tapper (7)
24. Protege (7)
25. David (7)

**Down**

1. Combine (5)
2. Flood (7)
3. Set at work (6)
4. Strength (5)
5. Delight (7)
6. Operate (7)
7. Letters (8)
8. Simple (7)
9. Smart (7)
10. Talents (7)
11. Smart (11)
12. Talents (11)
13. Tapper (7)
14. Protege (7)
15. David (7)
16. Rake (7)
17. Standing (7)
18. Bondage (5)
19. Interest (7)
20. Thin (7)
21. Out of date (7)
22. Talents (7)
23. Tapper (7)
24. Protege (7)
25. David (7)

**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.

**Quick Clues:**

**Across**

1. Besides (11)
2. Horseman’s iron (7)
3. Granted (6)
4. Anoint (5)
5. Temporary (7)
6. Find loophole (6)
7. Very inefficient (11)
8. Beête (5)
9. Supple (5)
10. Flippancy (6)
11. Permanent (11)
12. Strength (5)
13. Uproar (7)
14. Decree (5)
15. Enterprise (11)
16. Supple (5)
17. Decree (5)
18. Elan (5)
19. Standing (5)
20. Characteristic (5)
21. Daydream (7)
22. Act (11)
23. Labours (5)
24. Rendering (7)
25. Acquiesce (6)

**Down**

1. Combine (5)
2. Flood (7)
3. Set at work (6)
4. Strength (5)
5. Delight (7)
6. Operate (7)
7. Letters (8)
8. Simple (7)
9. Smart (7)
10. Talents (7)
11. Smart (11)
12. Talents (11)
13. Tapper (7)
14. Protege (7)
15. David (7)
16. Rake (7)
17. Standing (7)
18. Bondage (5)
19. Interest (7)
20. Thin (7)
21. Out of date (7)
22. Talents (7)
23. Tapper (7)
24. Protege (7)
25. David (7)
Friends reunited for special birthday

WE have been friends since middle school, sharing the joys and tribulations of teenage years and later weddings and children. And now we were all sharing a special birthday! For a few years now we had abandoned present buying for birthdays and Christmas and just arranged a meal or break away. And this weekend it was a special one.

We were staying at the five-star St David’s Hotel and Spa which has a prominent position on Cardiff Bay’s waterfront and it’s a stone’s throw from the city centre. The hotel is striking with its glass fronted structure on the edge of the bay. Across the Severn Estuary we could see where we planned to spend our evening at Michelin-starred Restaurant James Sommerin in Penarth.

The restaurant is in a prime position on the seafront with contemporary and chic décor, including the use of Welsh slate, and crisp white table covers.

PRIVATE

There is also a private dining room and Chef’s table. There is a huge window from the main restaurant to the kitchen, where you watch the chefs at work.

In a short amount of time James has amassed an array of accolades and just two days after our visit the restaurant won four Rosettes at The AA Hospitality Awards 2017.

Proud of his Welsh heritage James, who runs the restaurant with his wife Louise, uses the finest ingredients, locally sourced where possible. The food was exquisite.

We went for the six-course tasting menu including matching wines. The options for the evening were the six courses, nine courses and also the Surprise Menu when you leave your dining experience in James’ hands. It is then a bespoke menu.

Each course was expertly presented and a lovely touch was that the chefs including the man himself came to our table to run through the dishes.

The six courses started with beetroot, feta and pine-nut; followed by venison with carrot, tarragon and spices; guinea fowl with sweetcorn, truffle and potato. For dessert there was pear with cinnamon, flapJack and hazelnut and apple with puff pastry, caramel and vanilla.

After the meal, it was back to our hotel which is set on Cardiff Bay’s waterfront.

Our rooms with balconies had views across the estuary and it was wonderful to watch the boats and yachts sailing by.

Relaxation was certainly the name of the weekend with Marina Spa being most inviting with relaxation pools, hydrotherapy multi jet marine pools, a sauna, gym, treatment rooms and a relaxation suite, whilst enjoying the beautiful views overlooking Cardiff Bay.

The hotel restaurant is beautiful and airy with lovely neutral and teal shades and floor-to-floor windows with panoramic views across the bay.

The Admiral St David draws inspiration from the eclectic food culture and bold flavours of Australasia and Asia-Pacific, while looking closer to home for the best of seasonal Welsh produce.

After breakfast at the Admiral we wandered around Cardiff Bay which used to be known as Tiger Bay. It has been transformed with the Giant Wheel, restaurants and bars and the Senedd – home to the Welsh Government. Next door is the Wales Millennium Centre. There is also the Norwegian Church which Roald Dahl had attended as a child and is now Cafe Norsk.

LISA BAILEY
Double-fronted cottage with open views is spacious

An attractive double-fronted end of terrace cottage, Woodbine Cottage, 73 Stourbridge Road, Hagley, lies has deceptively spacious accommodation.

Being well maintained and improved, it is for sale through Wakeman Chartered Surveyors and Estate Agents at £325,000.

The property is an attractive residence occupying a pleasant and convenient location with splendid open views to the front to Wychbury. It is conveniently placed for amenities, with shopping in Hagley village together with access to Stourbridge, surrounding centres and Midland link motorways.

It has double glazing and gas central heating.

A spokesman for the selling agents said: “An internal inspection of the property is recommended in order that it may be fully appreciated.”

In more detail it has an entrance hallway with a quarry tiled floor. The lounge has a brick fireplace, a beamed ceiling and a staircase leading to the first floor, plus a cellar off.

The dining room has an attractive fireplace and the kitchen includes an island unit, timber working surfaces, part tiled walls, a New World gas range, an integrated washing machine, a dishwasher, fridge and freezer. The kitchen also features a beamed ceiling and tiled flooring and has two sets of twin doors to the rear garden. There is a rear lobby with floor tiling and a cloakroom/WC with tiled flooring.

Upstairs, front facing bedroom one has a fireplace and a built-in cupboard, plus an en-suite shower room. Bedroom two has a fireplace and again is positioned to the front of this charming home. Bedroom three is positioned to the rear.

The bathroom has a rolled top bath, a pedestal wash hand basin, low level WC, a towel rail style radiator, tiled flooring and part tiling to the walls.

Outside, there is parking to the side of the property plus a stone chipping driveway providing car parking. The gardens are easily maintained to both the front and rear. They incorporate lawn, borders, shrubs, a paved patio, a decking area and artificial grass in the rear garden.

KEY FEATURES
Double fronted terraced cottage
Splendid views to Wychbury
Well maintained & improved
3 bedrooms
Bathroom & en-suite

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY
AGENT: Wakeman
TEL: 01384 459999
EMAIL: dudley@wakeman-online.com

HAGLEY £325,000
A superbly-presented detached property

DUDLEY
£329,950

A wonderfully presented detached property in Hillmeads Drive, Dudley, lies in the popular Oakham area of town.

It is for sale through Taylors at £329,950.

This good-sized family home benefits from gas central heating and double glazing.

Its accommodation briefly comprises of a spacious entrance hall, a well-appointed living room, a dining room, a breakfast kitchen, a study, a guest WC, a utility, four bedrooms, an en-suite to the master, a family bathroom, a fantastic enclosed rear garden, a double garage and there is a driveway to the front.

Contact the selling agents, Taylors, at their local branch office on 01902 880888.

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UNMIS S A BLE - DON’ TMIS SO UT

WHERE UNRIVALLED LIVING BEGINS

CGI of The Allington 2 bedroom home at Woodlands. Photographs of typical Kier Living showhome interiors. Elevations and finishes may vary. *Available on selected plots reserved 32nd December 2017 subject to terms and conditions. Carpets only available on plots 172 and 208. **Help to buy available upon request subject to terms and conditions.
SEDGLEY, Off Wolverhampton Road
- SEDGLEY BESPOKE PROPERTY WITH THE WOW FACTOR WHICH RARELY COMES ON SALE!
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED FAMILY HOME within Kingswinford’s old quarter, with a LARGE, BEAUTIFULLY LAID OUT REAR GARDEN, BLOCK PAVED DRIVEWAY, GARAGE and offering a GENEROUS layout including THREE LARGE BEDROOMS Master with EN-SUITE and walk in wardrobe. EPC D
- £239,950

KINGSWINFORD, Cross Street
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED FAMILY HOME within Kingswinford’s old quarter, with a LARGE, BEAUTIFULLY LAID OUT REAR GARDEN, BLOCK PAVED DRIVEWAY, GARAGE and offering a GENEROUS layout including THREE LARGE BEDROOMS Master with EN-SUITE and walk in wardrobe. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £184,950

GORNAL, Louise Street
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED FAMILY HOME with FOUR DOUBLE BEDROOMS well located in the heart of this ever popular village close to local shops and aIDE OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT. A BEAUTIFULLY LAYED OUT REAR GARDEN with PATIO and flowerbeds. EPC D
- £199,950

LOWER GORNAL, Wood Road
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £155,000

SEDGLEY, Warren Drive, Norwest
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £149,950

WOODSETTON, Wren Street
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £174,950

KINGSWINFORD, Lydgate Road
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £155,000

KINGSWINFORD, Rose Avenue
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £149,950

DUDLEY, Ripley Grove
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- WAS £150,000, NOW £147,000

NEW

KINGSWINFORD, Stands Hills Road
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £149,950

WOMBORNE, Planks Lane
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £145,000

DUDLEY, Holly Grove
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £145,000

GORNAL, Louise Street
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £134,950

TIPPS, Volmer Avenue, Fowlers
- A DECEPTIVE MODERN LITE DETACHED property located in the popular area of LOWER GORNAL in Dudley. Benefiting from a GARAGE and driveway along with a largeガルAGE and off road parking to rear. EPC D
- Offers in the region of £114,950

MINE SEARCH AVALABLE
- MINE SEARCH AVAILABLE EPC TBA SEDGLEY

NEW
Family home is much bigger than it looks

OLDbury
£204,950

This deceptively spacious three-bedroomed semi-detached house in Kendal Rise, Oldbury, lies in a sought-after residential area.

It is for sale through Tom Giles at £204,950 with no chain.

It is in a quiet, yet convenient location within walking distance of shops, schools and recreational facilities.

With majority double glazing and gas central heating, it has an entrance hall and cloakroom/WC, a lounge and dining room, kitchen and side veranda, three bedrooms and a shower room.

There is also a garage and parking space and established gardens to the front and rear.

Contact Tom Giles on 0121 552 6171.

Very flexible accommodation on offer at this semi-detached

EDGBASTON
£324,950

This superb three-bedroomed semi-detached house in City Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, has flexible living space and is ideal as a long-term family home.

Located close to the city centre and commuter links, it is for sale through loveyourpostcode.com at £324,950.

The property has a ample parking for several vehicles and is on a corner plot with a garage and further parking space. It has a generous hallway, a living room with a feature fireplace and unique bay window adding real character. The second living room is bathed in light from the double doors, while a conservatory has views and access to the garden. The kitchen has space for a table.

Contact loveyourpostcode.com on 0800 862 0870.

0121 233 5046  www.sdlauctions.co.uk
CHARNWOOD AVENUE,
• A beautiful ‘dormer’ house
• Sedgley location
• Four bedrooms
• Full of potential
Price £279,950
EPC rating: F

LARCH GROVE
• A beautifully presented David Payne modern FOUR BEDROOM detached property in an enviable and quiet cul-de-sac in Sedgley, having spacious and inviting accommodation, including a modern kitchen, utility, downstairs wc, lounge and dining room.
• EPC rating: C
Price £259,950

THORNLEIGH Lower Gornal
• A beautifully presented modern TWO bedroom DETACHED bungalow with a DETACHED GARAGE, situated in an enviable location in Lower Gornal. Offered with no upward chain
• Price £225,000
• EPC rating: D

CEDARWOOD ROAD
• A detached Bungalow
• Two bedrooms
• Office space/study area
• Conservatory to the rear
• Price £184,950
• EPC rating: D

LARcH GROVE
• A beautifully presented ‘David Payne’ modern FOUR BEDROOM detached property in an enviable cul-de-sac in Sedgley, having spacious and inviting accommodation, including a modern kitchen, utility, downstairs wc, lounge and dining room.
• Price £259,950
• EPC rating: C

STICKLEY LANE
• TWO bed end-terrace
• Modern kitchen
• Price £109,950
• EPC rating: E

HARTLAND ROAD
• Excellent size detached
• TWO reception rooms
• South facing rear garden
• Price £199,950
• EPC rating: D

MOAT ROAD Tipton
• Three bed semi-detached
• Luxury dining kitchen
• Price £144,950
• EPC rating: E

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MOAT ROAD Tipton
• Three bed semi-detached
• Luxury dining kitchen
• Price £144,950
• EPC rating: E
AUCTION - 12TH DECEMBER 2017

51 TURLS HILL ROAD, SEDGLEY, DY3 1HQ
Ripe for refurbishment - generous corner plot, Two Reception, Kitchen, Four Beds, Bathroom, Gas CH, Garage, Outbuilding. Epc: TBA.
Guide £110,000 / £115,000.
Viewing: Friday & Saturday, 24th & 25th November @ 9.45 a.m.

LAWLEY ROAD, BILSTON, WV14 0NB
Guide £115,000 / £120,000.

62 COTON ROAD, PENN, WV4 5AT
Attractive individual Bungalow - some modernisation needed, 18t Entrance Hall, Lounge, Dining Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, Bathroom, Gas CH, Basement Stores, Garage, terraced Garden. Epc: TBA.
Guide £145,000.
Viewing: Friday & Saturday, 24th & 25th November @ 11.00 a.m.

Stunning modern property is packed with appeal

This stunning modern four-bedroomed detached family home in Kirkpatrick Drive, Wordsley, lies in a quiet cul-de-sac. It is for sale through Hunters at £280,000.

Outside there is a low-maintenance private rear garden, driveway and garage to the rear. To the front of the property there is a lawn with a decorative shrub border, a path leading to the front door and a gate providing access to the rear garden.

The attractive entrance hall has stairs to the first floor and a storage cupboard and the cloakroom/WC off. The lounge has a bay window to the front, an electric fire and double doors to the dining room, which in turn has doors to the garden.

The kitchen/breakfast room has a gas hob with stainless steel cooker hood over, space for a fridge/freezer, plumbing for a washing machine and dishwasher, recess spotlights and a window to the rear.
Contact Hunters on 01384 443331 or visit www.hunters.com
This two-bed apartment is ideal for many buyers

EARLS KEEP
£119,950

A well presented and well proportioned two-bedroom modern first floor flat in Garrick Close, Earls Keep, Dudley, is for sale through Wakeman at £119,950 with no chain.

Having gas central heating and double glazing, it is an ideal buy as an investment or for those wanting to downsize, or for a first-time buyer.

It has a communal entrance hall, an entrance hall, living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom one with en-suite, bedroom two, a spacious bathroom, communal gardens and two allocated parking spaces.

This home lies in a popular and established residential area, convenient for Dudley and with a wide range of amenities readily available.

In more detail the home has a video entry phone system.

Call 01384 459999.

Well-presented and large family home

STOURBRIDGE
£375,000

Relatively new to the property market, this beautifully presented and rather large, detached family home in Belfry Drive, Wollaston, Stourbridge, is for sale through Taylors at £375,000.

With gas central heating and double glazing, its accommodation briefly comprises of an entrance hall, a guest cloakroom/WC, a sitting room, a dining room, a family breakfast kitchen, a utility, four bedrooms (master with an en-suite) and house bathroom.

The home lies in an end position with an additional parking space, a double width block paved drive, a garage and a lovely enclosed level rear garden.

Contact Taylors on 01384 395555.
Sporty CX-3 from Mazda also practical family car

By John Griffiths

In a world which seems to have a surfeit of compact SUV-styled cars, daring to be different is the best way to survive.

It was inevitable, really, that with so many models to choose from someone would go further than pumping up a hatchback – and the honours fell to Mazda with the introduction of a GT Sport model as the new flagship of its CX-3 range.

It adds sports trim and extra equipment to add further appeal to what is already one of the best-handling cars in its class. It comes with the most powerful engine options, too.

The result is the sort of tour, rewarding drive you’d expect from a hot hatchback combined with the practicality, raised seating and good visibility – the criteria which has inspired the British motorists’ love affair with SUV looks, even though few go the whole hog and demand more expensive to run four wheel drive.

Limited

The demand for these cars continues to run well ahead of the market average, so Mazda’s decision to produce a stand-out flagship model is a sound one even though numbers will be limited to 500.

The test car was a GT Sport powered by a 2.0 litre, 125Ps petrol engine driving the front wheels via a six speed gearbox (there is an auto option).

While not the most powerful 2.0 litre around, it does have 240Nm of torque and in a car this size that’s plenty for lively, real world performance without getting noisy or feeling strained. The 0 to 62mph is a fraction in a brisk nine seconds.

That’s balanced by official (laboratory tested) average fuel consumption of 47.9mpg and a CO2 of 137g/km.

Most drivers should be able to achieve something reasonably near that average: the test car returned almost 40mpg on a 90-minute test run along mainly bumpy country roads, with frequent gear changes, as I exploited its

The electric power steering is nicely weighted to give driver feedback through the new steering wheel, with remote buttons for thumb/ finger operation of functions from audio to cruise control.

Mazda is a driver-focussed brand, with its ‘SKYACTIV’ technology not only producing highly efficient engines but also extending to the body and chassis. It concentrates on producing a lighter but stronger structure, aiding fuel economy while contributing to its sharp handling.

Braking is effective, too, with ventilated discs all round.

The test car was priced at £22,895 and came with premium features such as heated nappa leather seats, and a sporty aerodynamic kit including modest bumper extensions, front side and rear aridam skirts with subtle silver inserts, and a black roof spoiler.

It also comes with a premium Bose sound system, electric windows and mirrors, LED lights, automatic lights and wipers, climate control, cruise control and a central colour touchscreen to control audio, navigation and full connectively functions.

It also came with a head-up display (showing speed and current speed limit) which means the driver doesn’t need to look away from the road, and a reversing camera.

It also distinguishes itself with larger (18-inch) tyres with lower profile tyres.

The CX-3’s cabin is well designed for people, with standard fitments such as multiple airbags and electronic safety aids.

The GT Sport offers a class-leading driving experience and with its added sporty looks will add to its appeal to the enthusiast

The GT Sport offers a class-leading driving experience and with its added sporty looks will add to its appeal to the enthusiast

Isuzu reveals special Huntsman package for D-Max pick-up

Isuzu has revealed the Huntsman Accessory Pack for its D-Max pick-up truck.

The optional extra costs £5,995 and is targeted at hunters, in particular with its lockable, out-of-sight storage for firearms. There’s also extra bed space for dog boxes and other equipment.

Only available for the Utah Double Cab, it also comes with a covered bed, aluminium under guard and rear differential protector, and a protective mat set.

Styling changes come in the form of 18-inch black alloy wheels with Pirelli all-terrain tyres and de-chroming of parts such as the wing mirrors and door handles, which are now black.

The 1.9-litre diesel engine can be specified with either the manual or automatic gearbox,

with three paint options of green, black and grey.

For an extra £1,000, buyers can option the Huntsman Plus Pack, which adds a Pedders off-road suspension kit. Customers can also choose from various optional extras, including bespoke Huntsman leather upholstery and a selection of dog boxes.

Standard equipment on the Isuzu D-Max includes a high-mounted towbar with a 3.5-tonne capacity, a one-tonne payload limit and full four-wheel-drive.

As standard the D-Max Utah Double Cab starts at £23,149, which increases to £31,144 for the Huntsman Accessory Pack and £32,144 for the Huntsman Plus Pack. Both are available to order now.
**ROAD TEST**

**SPORT Touches but a family lugger**

By Ian Donaldson

Years before Peugeot bought Vauxhall earlier this year the two companies had been working together behind the scenes – on the car you’re now looking at, for one. Or looking at it if you had X-ray eyes. For the new Vauxhall Grandland X appears nothing like Peugeot’s recent 3008 but beneath their unalike metalwork is more or less the same car.

Same platform (the really expensive bit to design), same engines and same factory – they’re both built in France. Starting from pretty well the same price too: £22,495 Peugeot plays £22,310 Vauxhall.

**Booming**

So why would Vauxhall bother? Well, the SUV market has gone daft for new models in recent years and the Grandland X is predicted to be the company’s second biggest seller to private buyers, behind only the Corsa.

With a recent downturn in new car sales only one area is still booming. Yes, you’ve guessed; it’s the medium-sized SUV market where the Grandland X now appears.

As well as taking on the sister-under-the-skin Peugeot 3008 the Grandland X is up against the formidable Nissan Qashqai, the biggest seller by far and confidently expected to stay so many uses of the word ‘sporty’ in the press presentation you soon lost count.

Oh, and the creases on the side let you feel speed and acceleration, according to its designer. And the front is upright and proud. Don’t you just love designer-speak.

Judge for yourself, of course, but you might agree the end result is a car that looks neat and modern and hides quite nicely its purpose in life, to transport a growing family and their luggage in some comfort and at not too high a price.

**Talking prices**

The Grandland X starts with Tech Line trim from the already mentioned £22,310, with 1.2 litre 128 bhp petrol engine, moves through SE (£22,485) and Sport Nav (£24,595) to the ultimate version, Elite Nav which starts at £26,660.

Engine choices are currently limited to the 1.2 litre petrol and a 1.6 litre with the same bhp but much more pulling power, as is the way with diesels. Automatic transmissions are optional with either. Vauxhall thinks most buyers will take the petrol model, but with much better promised economy at 70.6mpg average and 104g/km.

Take a dearer diesel and those figures are 117mpg and 11.8 seconds – much the same as the petrol model, but with much better promised economy at 70.6mpg average and less pollution too, with 104g/km.

**In the car**

Whenever engine you choose there’s quite a bit of car to pull along, measuring 4,477mm long. A benefit is a boot that takes 514 litres with the rear seats in place and a more than useful 1,652 with them folded.

The car looks neat and modern and does its job well in transporting a growing family and their luggage in some comfort and at not too high a price.

But you must open a door and slip behind the wheel to discover the biggest difference between the Peugeot and Vauxhall approach to family motoring with dashboards that show divergent design philosophies.

Where the Peugeot is an exercise in button denying modernity the Grandland X looks more conventionally smart, with less pressing of fingers on screens and more physical contact with switches. And all the better for it, I’d say, as you try to adjust the radio to knock the cabin temperature down a degree or two. Out on the road the Grandland X feels anything but sporty, the petrol engine doing its best and staying quietly in the background but a long way from inspiring you to take the long way home.

Should you encounter slippery roads on the way there’s an option of IntelliGrip traction control that does its best to mimic four-wheel drive by managing the power going to the front wheels; there won’t be a 4x4 because the customers don’t want it, says Vauxhall.

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Countryman is capturing followers

By Graham Breeze

If you are old enough to remember the arrival of the original Mini you probably detect the new-look Countryman but a new generation of buyers is snapping up the latest model.

The iconic Mini brand captured the hearts of millions but there was always a hint of controversy when a Countryman version was introduced. After all that wasn’t what the Mini was all about.

Fuel rationing after the Suez crisis prompted the arrival of small cars such as Morris Mini Minor and Austin Seven in 1959. It was 1961 before it became Austin Mini and 1969 before Mini became a stand-alone brand – the very year I bought my first vehicle, a second-hand Mini Van.

Mini broke the motoring mould with a transverse-engine, front wheel drive layout and incredibly compact dimensions. It revolutionised the small car market and became the best-selling British car in history.

We simply loved the Mini brand, but all good things come to an end and by 2000 the affair was over and production stopped. That was until BMW relaunched in 2001 with larger dimensions and a controversial pallet of personalisation options.

It may not have met with universal approval from original Mini lovers but the new model has attracted a generation of new buyers with BMW chasing a leading place in the SUV sector where Nissan Qashqai and SEAT Ateca rule the roost.

The line-up of petrol and diesel engines is shared with the rest of the Mini range, and most models of the Countryman are available with four-wheel drive and an automatic gearbox. Now there’s even a plug-in hybrid version available and all-electric on the horizon.

As someone who drove Mini as a company car for many years I was a sceptic until I got behind the wheel of the Countryman but have to say I was quickly won over. The new model is obviously bigger but it’s also a lot more expensive.

Extras

The F60 Cooper D A14 Countryman on test was priced at £26,655 but a raft of extras pushed that up to £36,740 – slightly more than the £35,000 I parted with back in 1969.

These extras included the media pack with navigation and Connected, Bluetooth, 18-inch alloys, leather steering wheel, heated seats, automatic air conditioning, LED foglights, a larger fuel tank, run flat tyres, electric door mirrors, powered boot lid, chrome interior and sun protection glass.

You also have to pay extra for roof lining, picnic bench and the sliding rear seat bench. One of the neatest features is the protective padded covering which drops down when you use the boot – perfect for stopping those annoying scratches caused by cases or the golf bag.

The Countryman really is a practical family car with all the benefits of BMW quality inside a stunning cabin – the hybrid is auto as standard. In addition Mini’s A14 four-wheel drive is available as an option across the range, although it’s standard on the high-performance JCW model and the hybrid.

Wider tracking on this car helps improve handling and the A14 is as sure-footed as any Mini I have ever driven with a choice of driving modes ensuring an option to suit all driver needs. The ride was a bit harder than expected but motorway cruising proved a real joy. This Countryman could well be the most controversial model to wear the famous badge but it’s finding a whole new group of enthusiastic followers.
Kid’s updated flagship premium SUV

By Carmel Stewart

Driving a Kia in Korea is a sure-fire way to fit in with the thousands of drivers rushing in and out of Seoul every day, as the vast majority show great brand loyalty by driving home-grown vehicles. Many commuters favour the Kia Ray – a boxy little commuter special made solely for the Korean market.

The other end of the spectrum is the flagship Sorento SUV which puts Kia into the premium sector alongside the likes of the Audi Q5 and the Volvo XC90.

First introduced here in 2002, it does not have a huge road presence in the UK but is, nevertheless, always on the verge of breaking into the big time. A quality seven-seater, all-wheel-drive with a 2,500kg towing capacity, it is well able to hold its own among the Volvos and Land Rovers on the school run and rural rough stuff.

It has gone through a few incarnations over the years with the third-generation model being added in 2014. Each time sales have far exceeded expectations.

The new Sorento is what is called a ‘product enhancement model’ as it is based on the 2014 version but with a host of changes.

As with all Kias, its production has been overseen by two key players. Designer and president, Peter Schreyer, joined Kia in 2006 from Audi where he was responsible for the sleek and instantly recognisable Audi TT, among other vehicles. His designs have established a Kia family look and a more European set-up in terms of suspension, steering, and handling.

The new Sorento is due in the UK towards the end of this year. Pricing is expected to be in the £30,000 to £40,000 bracket if previous levels are anything to go by.

The Sorento is a quality seven-seater SUV which puts Kia into the premium sector alongside of this year. Engineering expert, Albert Biermann, who previously worked on BMW’s 8 Series, is responsible for the new Sorento’s engine.

Driving a Kia in Korea is a sure-fire way to fit in with the thousands of drivers rushing in and out of Seoul every day, as the vast majority show great brand loyalty by driving home-grown vehicles.

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Knockout night with boxing champ Fury

BOXING fans can enjoy a knockout night as Tyson Fury makes his debut appearance in Wolverhampton for an audience with fans.
The ‘Turkey & Tinsel with Tyson’ takes place on December 13 at the Ramada Park Hall Hotel. The former unified heavyweight champion of the world will share his personal story – live and unscripted on stage, interviewed by Gareth A Davis.
He will answer questions from the audience, with the festive evening also featuring a mix of top entertainment, red carpet drinks reception, memorabilia auction and Christmas meal.
Tickets start at £55, rising to £85 for a silver package and £150 for gold, which includes a picture with Fury. For the full VIP experience at £200 guests can also enjoy a VIP meet and greet, a prime table location and a signed glove.
Fundraising will be in aid of Foundation DB set up by Wolves captain Danny Batth. Tickets are being sold at www.tysonfury.eventbrite.co.uk

Pitching in for work on new 3G surface

A NEW 3G pitch is to be launched at Dudley’s Dell Stadium. The modern playing surface will replace the existing 18-year-old artificial grass pitch.
The work, part of Dudley council’s playing pitch strategy, began on Monday and should take around 12 weeks to complete. The project was developed in partnership with Sport England and the Football Association.

The £600,000 cost will be made up of £550,000 funding through The FA, The Football Foundation and £150,000 from Dudley Council.

Existing users of the facility have been temporarily relocated to other sites in the borough that the Saturday morning ParkRun has been suspended for the duration of the works.

This investment is in addition to the council’s commitment to invest £22m in wider leisure service which includes plans for a new leisure centre in Dudley, as well as refurbishing and modernising the existing leisure centres in Halesowen and Stirchley.

Booking enquiries should be made to Steve Gay, area manager, at steve.gay@dudley.gov.uk

Ex-Walsall boss Chris Nicholl tells of memory fears

FORMER Walsall manager and Villa captain Chris Nicholl has said he no longer remembers where he lives—due to brain damage caused by years of heading footballs.

The 71-year-old, who still lives in the West Midlands, has said his condition is continuing to get worse. The Northern Ireland international won two League Cups with Villa in the 1970s, famously netting a long-range stunner in the 1977 final against Everton.

After he retired from playing, Nicholl led Walsall to promotion from Division Three in 1993 during a three-year stint as manager.

He spoke to former England striker Alan Shearer as part of a BBC documentary investigating links between dementia and heading footballs.

Shearer said: “I am brain-damaged from heading footballs. My memory is in trouble. Everyone forgets regular things, where your keys are. But when you forget where you live, that’s different. I’ve had that for the last four or five years, it is definitely getting worse. It bothers me.”

Degenerative

Nicholl is among a string of former pros— including Albion legend Jeff Astle— to have been struck down after their playing days have ended.

Astle died in 2002 aged just 59 from chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), a degenerative brain disease caused by heading. His family have been campaigning for years to get the Football Association and FIFA to conduct research into heading.

Shearer, who made his top-flight debut as a teenager under Nicholl at Southampton, said: “It was tough to see the way Chris is now, because he gave me my debut.

“She had me heading 100 or 150 balls a day to improve, but he did it for the right reasons.”

Shearer, 47, had scans and tests to examine how heading the ball had affected him, amid fears he has sustained long-term damage.

The results were revealed on the show, Alan Shearer, Dementia, Football and Me, which was first shown on

Greats turn out for former team-mate

MIDLAND footballing greats came together to help raise funds for former Albion and Villa goalkeeper Derek Dudley, who is suffering from a terminal illness. The 47-year-old contracted a serious liver condition and it was his final wish to bring former friends from the footballing world together for a final game.

It was staged on Sunday at Sutton Coldfield Town FC’s home ground where a number of former players were watched by a large crowd.

Dudley, who spent four years at Villa, lives in Bagley with his wife Helen and children Daniel, 13, and Elizabeth, 11.

His bucket list includes having a nice meal with his children and getting the ‘lads’ together for one last game.

He was joined by members of Villa’s 1982 European Cup winning side including Peter Withe, Tony Morley and Gordon Cowans as well former Baggies team-mates including Daryl Burgess and Darren Bradley.

When his football career ended, Derek became a teacher, including a spell at The Brades Lodge school in Tividale.

Sporting Feature

By David Cosgrove

BBC1 on Sunday, November 12 at 10.30pm and is available on the BBC Player. The Match of the Day pundit said: “Nowhere near enough research has been done. The authorities have been very reluctant to find out any answers. They have swept it under the carpet, which is not good enough.”

Experts suspected heading footballs may cause brain damage and dementia for decades but a firm link was not made until the inquest into Astle’s death.

A coroner found he died from a form of dementia called CTE, known as boxer’s brain, caused by heading footballs.

In the 15 years since, neither the Football Association nor international body FIFA have funded any meaningful research into the dangers of heading footballs. FA medical director Charlotte Cowie said the FA were looking to study former professional footballers to get results as quickly as possible.”

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**Glassboys fail to make up ground**

Shaw Lane 3 Stourbridge 1

STOURLBRIDGE had a torrid time at Shaw Lane as their attempts to gain ground on their fellow Evo-Stik Premier promotion chasers came to nothing.

Glassboys were without the suspendedStuart Pickard and Aaron Forex and things were always going to be difficult against the managerless South Yorkshire side.

Things could have possibly been different had the home side been reduced to 10 men after Ryan Quilter made contact with Kyle Perry’s face in an off-the-ball incident on 10 minutes.

But Quilter escaped with a yellow and things got worse for Stourbridge 1 minute later when Paul McGinn brought down Chib Chilaka in the penalty area and Spencer Harris converted the penalty.

The Glassboys’ defence could do little about Harris’s strike for his second of the season on 25 minutes, a raspering drive beyond goalkeeper Matt Gould.

Alex Byrne almost made it three just before half-time, but saw his shot go just over the bar. Luke Shearer had Stourbridge’s first shot of the game just after the break, but Jon Stewart in the Shaw Lane goal saved well.

On 56 minutes it was three as Byrne was given time and space on the edge of the area and delivered a cross on to the head of unmarked Chilaka who easily scored.

Set piece drama then was a 15-minute delay to find a replacement assistant referee.

“This seemed to do Stourbridge good as shortly after Luke Renbow got a goal back with an excellent volley, continuing his good form since returning to Ambleside.”

**Marathon gentleman of Verona**

THERE was more cross country action for Dudley Kingswinford Running Club as a small group travelled to Bullwell Hall, Nottingham, for the Midlands 7k and the men’s 5k for the ladies.

Away from the league action this was more of a cup game for the blue hoops.

In a competition open to entrants from the Midlands region DK were racing against the likes of Notts AC, Hermitage Harriers, Ilkeston RC and Leek AC along the usual Black Country heavyweights of Tipton Harriers and Wolverhampton & Bilston.

With six to count as a team for the men and four for the ladies it was a disappointing turnout with both genders failing to field a full team. Those that did run were able to take part as individuals.

The ladies were off first over a five-mile, three-lap course around relatively flat and dry parkland. After chasing the leaders Helen Trowan finished 14th in 35.49 and Hannah McGuire came home in 40.45 in 35th place.

The men raced over a seven-mile course over four laps. Dave Norman was first back for the club in 87th place in 43.38. Graham Wildgoose was 119th in 50.42. Andy Bevan 129th in 52.25 and Richard Jones stopped the clock in 52.39 to take 130th.

Roger Beddard took part in the Verona Marathon with his sights set on a 3-hour finish. Whether he would make it. Emergency treatment on a hamstring injury and a late fitness test were two things he had to do to be fit. And he did – in 4:36.15.

**Lasting memorial to cricketing greats**

A LASTING memorial commemorating the lives of much-loved cricketing father and son has been unveiled.

The bronze busts of Worcestershire County Cricket Club captain and son Basill and Damian Hirst were unveiled by Naomi and Tracey D’Oliveira, widows of the two who died in an accident.

“Excitement was building up as to who it could be,” said one of the leading members, the professor of the club.

“The previous year they had been there to see a young boy play for the county.”

With interest rising by the day it was a tremendous moment.

The club has been up and running for the last three years and the new captain was present.

More details are expected to be released as to the fate of the club.

**Spaniard in the works for title bout**

RICKY Summers has vowed to take out his frustration on new opponent Ronaldo Goncalo this weekend.

The Tipton light heavyweight was set to face Coventry’s Lee Sherriff for the vacant Midlands Area Light Heavyweight Title on Saturday but illness forced his opponent to withdraw and will now face Spanish opposition at the top of BCB Promotions’ show at the Imperial Banqueting Suite, Bleten.

The 30-year-old knows patience is a virtue after waiting for his chance to battle Frank Bugioni for the British Title last time out. That fight was postponed for a number of months after Bugioni, who went on to claim a points victory, suffered a cut in sparring.

“Summers though, frustrated by Sherriff’s late pull-out, is ready to put in a career-best performance against Goncalo next weekend.”

“The only word to sum it up is frustration,” he explained. “I’m ready to take my frustrations out on him and blow him out the water.”

Meanwhile Rowley Regis’ Jason Welborn lines up for his 20th bout having seen his year stalled since a one-sided points victory over the unbeaten Marcus Morrison live on Sky in March.

Success at Morrison’s expense earned him the WBC International Silver middleweight title and he’s also been a Midlands champion at two weights. Two attempts to claim British honours were unsuccessful but Welborn is not giving up on his dream of getting his hands on a Lonsdale belt. Black Country boys James Beech Jr and debutant Antony Woolery also feature. Tickets are £35, or £49 on the night, via the boxers on Facebook or at iboxingtickets.com

**Yeltz on course to make rapid rise for Lions**

THE North Midlands Cup games allow coaching staffs to gain a level of experimentation within a competitive match scenario.

One thing became obvious after the opening moments of this game, however, is that it meant something to both teams, who were certainly going for it.

In the opening quarter Old Hales had scored two tries and were looking comfortable in the lead at 12-0.

But Qualter escaped with a yellow and things got worse for DK in the first 15 minutes of the second half as Old Hales scored a try and converted.

‘Edging’ DK were slowly edging back into the game, and should have probably closed the gap but for poor handling. On 24 minutes they were on the scoreboard as Trevis set up Nic Adams with a clear run to the corner.

But Hales hit back, with a converted try follow ing a lineout in the Wanderers corner.

Things got worse for DK when Old Hales took a full seven points following a pushover try, with what proved to be the last play of the half.

Things did not get better for DK in the first 15 minutes of the second half as Old Hales scored a try to stretch their lead to 0-15.

DK were denied five points when Connor Jones knocked on, but did score through Arran Hudson, with the conversion attempt from Sam Vaughan striking the crossbar.

The momentum of the game was changing and Trevis sprouted clear for a try, converted, and Jones saw the defence part to allow him to score under the posts – 31-24.

With five minutes to go and both sides in the contest, Trevis was injured by a bad tackle, ending the game on a sour note.

DK 24 Old Halesianos 31

**The solid bronze busts, which have been three years in the design and manufacture, were created by renowned sports sculptor John Beddard at a cost of almost £15,000 most of which was covered from a sponsored walk from Worcester to Cardiff in 2014.**