Precinct

But the road is re-opening to all traffic, which the counci l say will improve access to the town centre including the Churchill shopping precinct.

It will also allow businesses to make the most of passing trade after eight new parking spaces have been created.

Businesses in King Street. Roy Jevons, who has run a newsagents there for 33 years, said shops had lost "the impulsive buyer" since cars had been stopped from driving in a loop around Flood Street car parks to the rear of King Street.

"Hopefully in the New Year we will be seeing the benefits of the road re-opening," Mr Jevons added.

New venue for concert

DUDLEY Town Hall has been chosen for health and safety reasons due to an internal structural problem — meaning a major Christ mas concert has had to be moved at the last minute.

The Gentlemen Song stars' Christmas concert on Saturday is being relocated at Brierley Hill Civic Hall. Tickets already bought for the 7.30pm concert will be valid at the new venue but those who have moved will receive a 10 per cent re-imbursal.

A MAIN route through Dudley town centre will open to two-way traffic next week for the first time in 15 years.

A £650,000 project in King Street aimed at boosting visitor numbers and trade is nearing an end.

Only buses and taxis had been able to use the route and motorists wishing to drive from one side of King Street to the other were diverted in a loop around Flood Street car parks to the rear of King Street.

"The impulsive buyer" since cars had been stopped from

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Parking fines have ‘desired effect’

HUNDREDS of fines have been issued to drivers who parked badly at railway stations in Sandwell and Dudley.

During eight weeks, 205 fines of £100 were issued at Sandwell and Dudley, 198 at Rowley Regis and 135 at Steeplechase Junction. The fines are reduced to £60 if paid within 14 days.

Councillor Roger Horton, who chairs the committee for Sandwell and Dudley, said: “Although tickets are still being issued, and despite a small rise in weeks six and seven of the scheme, the overall steady reduction in numbers shows the message is getting through.

“We are glad the campaign is having the desired effect and making people think about parking more considerately.”

Stephen Rhodes, Centro director of operations, said: “Shortage of spaces at Sandwell and Dudley station next year will add to the 374 spaces because they are some of the busiest stations on the network.

He said demand for parking was being addressed by our park expansion work. Work is underway to add 960 spaces to the existing 882 at Rowley Regis, while 242 will be added to the 780 at Steeplechase Junction. A re-design is also due at Sandwell and Dudley station next year to add to the 374 spaces.

Taxpayers face bill for new tip rubbish

TENS of thousands of pounds has been spent clearing up after fly-tippers in Dudley borough during the past two years.

Sites in Quarry Bank, Kingswinford, Cradley and Halesowen were among those most targeted by people dumping waste.

Figures released under the Freedom of Information Act show Dudley Council was forced to pay £49,395 in 2013/14 to clear up rubbish and £10,255 in 2012/13.

Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: “The council worked hard to track down and prosecute the fly-tippers.

“The council said the top five hot-spots where the most money was spent were: Mears Coppice, Quarry Bank; Lapal Lane South, Halesowen; Holtbeach Lane, Kingswinford; Hollow Street, Dudley and Foxcote Lane in Cradley.

Cost

Councillor Ahmed added: “The cost of staff time clearing up fly-tipping and then disposing of the waste over the last two years was just over £60,000, which we hope illustrates to people what a serious offence this is.

“With the help of the community, we have carried out prosecutions where we are able to identify the offenders so we would urge people who witness fly-tipping, or have any information about incidents in the borough, to contact Dudley Council Plus on 0800 555 2345.

“We will not hesitate to prosecute people through the courts for this kind of anti-social behaviour.”

In September, the council took action after rubbish was left strewn across land at Chase Drove, north of Sandwell residents and Abdul Qadus, chairman of Lye Community Centre, called for the site to be cleaned up. But Mr Qadus said more rubbish had since been dumped, including car seats and a mattress.

Landlady Lyndsey Morris celebrating the refit at the Old Bull’s Head in Lower Gornal

A traditional pub in Lower Gornal has re-opened its doors to become a ‘shrine to real ale’.

The Old Bull’s Head, in Redhall Road, has been closed for six weeks during which a six-figure transformation has taken place.

It is owned by Black Country Inn, which runs 23 pubs across the Black Country and Birmingham, and runs the neighbouring brewery.

Company director Angus Mc-Meeking said they have refurbished the pub but kept its traditions alive.

“We did the refurbishment so that we could get the pub back into shape,” he said.

“Everything that is now in the pub is completely brand new but we have kept it as traditional looking as possible.”

Black Country Inn took over the pub in 2004 from Enterprise Inns. A brewery has been on the site since 1834.

Landlady Lyndsey Morris said: “We will be running ‘towns’ to show off the brewery.

“The pub will be a shrine to real ale from the Black Country.”

NHS patients give Trust good report

A HEALTH trust which serves for patients which a mental health condition has been ranked highly.

Dudley and Walsall Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust scored among the top 20 per cent trusts in the country for patients experiences.

Patients rating their experience as ‘good or very good’ in the Care Quality Commission Community Mental Health Survey. In the same survey, 75 per cent of patients who responded reported that they felt that they were treated with dignity and respect.

Also, the survey showed that 62 per cent of patients said that they felt their health or social care worker listened to them carefully.

Results from the National Mental Health Inpatient Survey were also positive, according to trust bosses.

The trust scored significantly higher than the national average for patients feeling welcome on the ward, hospital cleanliness and being listened to by psychiatrists and nurses.

Significant improvements from last year’s survey were in access to out-of-hours phone contact, activities and the quality of hospital food.

New Old Bull is shrine to ale

More than 200 homes will be built on one of a handful of sites which was given planning permission.

Sandwell Council has approved the scheme for the Dollerton Road site which had been a location for French logistics firm Norbert Dentressangle.

A total of 218 homes — houses and apartments — and a retail and development will be built.

It comes after Sandwell announced last year that they would be working with the business to the East Mid-lands with the loss of 140 jobs.

Helix demolition

A DISUSED stationary factor-y will be demolished as its owners seek planning permis-sion for the site. More than 700 were employed at the Helix plant in Engine Lane at its height. The factory closed down eight years ago.

Dudley Council has given approval for demolition.
Birthday celebrations for little Daisy-Mae

Daisy-Mae Little celebrates her first birthday

SHE was the ‘girl who couldn’t wait’. Daisy-Mae Little came into the world three-and-a-half months early.

Weighing just 1lb and 13 oz, the tiny youngster spent 13 weeks in hospital with her proud parents Wayne and Jennifer, from Stourbridge, by her side.

Now their brave daughter, who captured the hearts of thousands of people across the globe, celebrated her first birthday.

And on Saturday night fundraising event in Dudley’s Westone Centre was in aid to raise money for the hospital where she received specialist neo-natal care.

Since leaving New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton and going home with her family to Pennett, she has ‘come on leaps and bounds’, her parents say.

To celebrate her birthday, the family went to the SeaSide Centre in Birmingham for the day.

Mr Little said: “I wasn’t sure what it was going to be like as a day out because it developed forms although it’s first birthday she really is only like an eight-and-a-half month baby. But she absolutely loved it because it was so visual.

“She really liked the jelly fish because they were in bright colourful tubes in the display.

“The day was such a contrast to where we were 12 months ago when we were in the hospital and not thinking about the next day. We were just living minute by minute, hour by hour because we didn’t know what was going to happen. She’s doing really well now and coming on leaps and bounds every day.”

Mr Little, a firefighter for West Midlands Fire Service, has been chronicling his daughter’s story on Facebook. Daisy-Mae’s page has more than 23,000 followers.

**Queues as new Lidl store opens**

LIDL Supermarkets opened their brand new store on Stourbridge Lane, Kingswinford, last week.

Shoppers were waiting outside before it was officially opened by Deputy Mayor of Dudley, Steve Waltho...

Other councilors including Councillor Patrick Harley, leader of the Conservative Group and the Conservative Spokesperson for Policy were also in attendance.

**Curious**

Mr Harley said: “People were queuing before the shop opened so there were obviously curious to see what’s inside.

“It is a great sign of the growing confidence of the economy in Dudley.”

The supermarket, which replaced a furniture ware house, has created 35 new jobs for the area.

Lidl currently has 600 stores across the UK and has 13,000 employees.

It is the first Lidl to build in the UK, selling freshly baked bread, rolls and pastries through out the day.

**Best birthday present**

Carillion’s Paul Rowton returns ‘Old Teddy’ to four-year-old Daisy Jewkes and her mum Nicola.

Daisy Jewkes was left devastated when her teddy bear flew out of the car before her family travelled along the M5.

Little Daisy thought the little brown bear was going forever after dropping it from the back seat of her car. She was found and put back on the dashboard.

But it got away again when driving on the M5 and was replaced by a ‘new’ teddy.

Daisy’s mum Nicola, who works as a receptionist at the hospital where she received specialist neo-natal care, said: “I couldn’t believe it, and neither could Daisy. She was completely over-whelmed, her face lit up when she got the bear back in the hand. She was crying her eyes out. Despite her having other bears, it was ‘old teddy’ she wanted.”

David Smith, a manager at Carillion, washed the bear before arranging for Daisy to collect it. The little girl has written a letter of thanks to the company.

**Conversion on cue at church**

The English Defence League is planning to return to Dudley in protest to the grant planning permission for a new mosque.

The far-right protest group is planning a demonstration on the town on February 7, according to one of its Facebook pages.

West Midlands MEP and Dudley councillor Bill Etheridge has asked the group to cancel its plans and leave the building.

“Groups like the EDL have nothing constructive to offer and was given a list to deme

**MP is in festive mood at new shop opening**

MP is in festive mood at new shop opening

**News in Brief**

PLANS to turn a former ice cream parlour into a church group will plan now that almost 100 members, has almost 100 members, PLANS to turn a former New gym to open December 31, boasting more..."
A VIETNAMESE gardener caught up in a former Dudley town centre crime wave has been struck down by a four-year and four month jail sentence.

Police uncovered a huge haul of cannabis and cash in a raid on a disused hardware store in Wolverhampton, which had been dominated by one individual. 

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard that officers discovered more than 500 plants being grown on the premises, explained Mr David Less, prosecuting.

Tui Tran from the premises as police arrived and was chased into a nearby alleyway where help was called by officers. A second suspect was also detained at the scene and due to appear in court on February 6.

Mr Less said: “A very substantial amount of drugs were being grown and it is estimated that one harvest would have produced 20 kilos of cannabis.

Police reckoned that with three crops a year the farm could have culminated up to £500,000 worth of the drug.

Mr Simon Hanns, defending 30-year-old illegal immigrant Tran, said he had been smuggled into the UK from Vietnam but now wanted to return home as quickly as possible.

Mr Hanns said: “He was promot- ed £2,000 for looking after the plants but received nothing because the enterprise was rummaged by the police. Now he has been left to carry the can.”

Tran admitted being involved in the production of cannabis.

Return of checks on speed near to schools

A SPEEDWATCH scheme is returning to Dudley this week with a special focus on speeding around schools in the borough.

Volunteers were due to be out in force to record the speeds of drivers in busy areas of the borough.

Councillor Hemmings said he did not want to re-veal the location of the next speed-check so as not to tip drivers off but said he would welcome volunteers.

The latest speedcheck took place on Tuesday in Stourbridge.

Walsall’s Councillor Derek Hemmings said: “We will be putting our focus on schools in the bor-ough – this is a potent weapon as some of the results we have seen already are abso- lutely horrendous.”

What we are looking for is drivers carefully using their phones as well as not wearing seat belts.

The main concern is the speeding we are seeing drivers reach in school areas as well as their behaviour.”

He said that there had been reports of one of the lollipop lady in the area getting hit by a car when she stopped the traffic.

He added: “It is not uncommon in the way they drive but the way they act, which just isn’t.”

Write way to sharpen skills

BUDDING writers of the future will be able to sharpen their skills at an event this week.

Writing West Midlands is hosting a writing workshop for young writers at Wolverhampton Art Gallery on Saturday.

The session is for young-sters aged between 10 and 16 who are keen to develop their writing skills.

The cost is £5 but places are limited.

People can book by visiting writingwestmidlands.org or by emailing writingwestmidlands.org

Right to rent law

A new law requiring land-lords to check tenants have the right to live in the UK is coming into force.

Country before the rest of Europe.

The company’s products are now stocked -a s some of the results we have already are absolutely horrendous. “When you talk about British products abroad you see we have this amazing brand. People trust the products we export,” he added.

Top of the chocs abroad

Louis Barnett, from Kinver, has found success abroad with his chocolate business.

The 23-year-old from Kinver started his chocolate company at the age of 12.

His chocolate company at the age of 12.

The company’s products are now stocked in the United States and exports to places such as the United Arab Emirates, Mexico plus several Euro- pean countries.

Mr Barnett said export was a huge part of his business and he believed more Brit- ish firms should take advantage of this country’s good reputation. “When you talk about British products abroad you see we have this amazing brand. People trust the products we export,” he added.

Illegal immigrant ‘left to carry can’
**Frivolous 999 calls lead to warning**

WEST Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust has launched a campaign asking people to question whether their injury is serious enough to call 999.

Pre-hospital staff are asking people to use the emergency number wisely. Audio clips will be released of real-life inappropriate calls, showing when it’s not appropriate to call 999.

Jenny Cocks, emergency operations centre commander in Brierley Hill, said: “When you call 999 the questions that we ask are very important to be able to get the right help, to the right people, as quickly as possible.

**Forget**

“We receive about 3,000 calls a day but unfortunately not all of these are appropriate for the ambulance service. Sometimes people do forget that 999 is for life threatening injuries and illnesses, if you call 999 we also have to deal with verbal abuse and hoax calls which is disappointing when all they want is to be helped.

“While we’re dealing with these cases, vital services are not available to deal with a genuine life-threatening emergency.”

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**Pair are in court after student dies**

TWO men have appeared in court charged with causing the death by dangerous driving of university student Rebecca McManus, of Oldbury, at a bus stop on Hagley Road West.

Sukhinder Mannan, of Halesowen, and Ininderjit Singh, of Wolverhampton, appeared at Sandwell Magistrates Court last week.

Former King Edward VI College Miss McManus died at the scene in Bearwood on May 31. A friend, also 21, was seriously hurt.

Both men are charged with causing death by dangerous driving and causing serious injury.

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**Adjourned**

Singh 29, of Cranbourne Avenue, Ettingshall, is also accused of driving a vehicle that failed to stop after a road accident. Mannan, 31, of Roundhills Road, is separately charged with failing to provide a blood sample following the crash.

Proceedings were adjourned and the men will appear at Wolverhampton Crown Court on February 24.

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**Drivers are being asked to think carefully about where they park in Dudley as the icy weather takes hold**

Gritting crews are out in force already as the temperature drops sharply. crews went out twice in November and there are further trips planned.

Dudley Council say despite the weather the gritting crews are being forced away from smaller streets and side roads - because of bad parking.

Now, highway boss Councillor Khurshid Ahmed is urging people to think before they park to ensure gritters have full access to streets, keeping them clear as the days get colder.

The cabinet member for transport said: “The gritting crews work all hours of the day and night in order to keep the majority of Dudley borough roads as far as possible for people to use.

Lorry

“There have been a number of roads where gritting vehicles have not been able to enter as badly parked vehicles blocked access. This has created difficulties in mau-

nouevring a heavy lorry carrying several tonnes of grit. I hope that residents will work with us and will be considerate when parking so that the roads can be gritted and disruption can be minimised, during the bad weather.”

In November crews used around 400 tonnes of grit per run. They will continue to monitor weather and respond when necessary.

Residens can keep up to date with news and information about the weather, including snow and ice updates, by visiting the council’s Weather page online at www.dudley.gov.uk

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**Lawnlessness of the car users comes under fire**

THE judge who granted the Black Country injunction against boy racers said there appeared to be ‘complete lawlessness’ in the four boroughs over the issue.

Birmingham Civil Justice Centre heard this week how the injunction was sought because the police didn’t have ‘sufficient resources’ to prosecute, mak- ing it difficult to bring car drivers to ‘book’. A three-year order ban- ning the practice was granted in an effort to eradicate it from the streets. The Black Country new joint Cannock District Council which sought a similar in- jiction in 2012.

Mr Joseph Giret QC, rep- resenting Wolverhampton, Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell councils, said: “Police have the suf- ficient wherewithal to bring everyone involved in car turning to book.”

— He emerged in the hearing that there had been 31 acci- ents in the Black Country as a result of car turning and that as recent as No- 

ember 13 there had been seven. The Black Coun- try Route in Bilston and Monley; Birmingham New Road on the border of Wol- vershampton and Dudley Flood Street Car Park in Dudley had been hotspot.

More than 100 witness statements from residents across the area were sub- mitted as part of the appli- cation.

Michael said: “She did a lot of knitting and reading but she’s settling in to her new home well.”

Pharmacy needs to be discussed

SUNDAY: The first of the Dudley Health and Wellbeing Board next week.

The meeting will take place at Royal Community Centre at Cross Walks on Tuesday from 3 to 5pm.

The meeting will be at- tended by local GPs, health commissioners, the police, county council, coun- cillors and members of the voluntary sector. Plans for the board’s next meeting, including a needs assessment, which sets out pharmacy services, will be discussed.

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**Two hurt in car accident**

TWO men were taken to hospital after a crash on Tipton Road, Dudley, last Thursday morning.

Ambulance crews were called to an accident in- volving a car and a lorry where a man and a woman in the car were taken to Wolverhampton and Dudley hospitals. A three-year-old boy also in the vehicle was checked over by paramedics but did not need treatment.

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**News in Brief**

**Dudley Chronicle Thursday, December 11, 2014**

**FOR SCHOOL STUDENT, SEE PAGE 4**

**FREE PARKING**

**N**ot all parents paid for the parking fines at the Borough this Saturday and next Saturday, Councillor Khurshid Ahmed said: “We are doing all we can to help local people and busi- nesses during the festive sea- son.”

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**Frivolous 999 calls lead to warning**

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**THEME: Common Cold**

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**FRIDAY - 1PM TO 3PM**

**NIGHT SHANDLES**

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The Archbishop of Canterbury has come under fire for dabbling every dubious joke, what is left of the summer wine. The idea who he is, mind.

A Christmas card which listed 10 reasons by Santa Claus must Justin Wainwright has been the hit of the season, with the region’s newspapers reporting every time a new one appeared.

The reasons listed included: “He has a serial record for breaking and entering, and ‘He only knows the best businesses.’”

One indignant complainant, who signed “aunt Gill”, another said it was “beyond fantastic” and another said it was a “vileifying and stigmatising the poor for corporate gain.”

Oh, do get over yourselves, please. Of course such stereotyping is unfair, and the card probably is in bad taste, but if we start directing such anger at every dubious joke, what is left for the real serious stuff?

What are we going to ban next? Irish jokes? Mother-in-law snapshots? Benny out of Crossroads?

Let’s face it, Black Country humour is based almost entirely on unfair and outdated stereotypes about flat-capped simpations with funny accents, and we love them.

And earnest po-faced people who use such pompous phraseology to illustrate the corporate gain” is invariably the safe political shaming of any perceived prejudices against ordinary people who do not share their supposed enlightened attitudes. If they met a real Black Country person they would decide it is not for him uncool and politically incorrect to use the ways of the modern metropolitan Barnet.

Well, you’ve gotten lost, as we say in the Black Country. MEANWHILE, the Archbishop has also suggested we should do our Christmas shopping at charity shops. No doubt, most will be nodding sagely in agreement, thinking this is an excellent piece of advice. Their wives may need a little more convincing.

Oh, and if you didn’t know Fagley is this year’s winner of I’m A Celebrity. It’s not the bloke off the telly of the Summer Wine. It’s no idea who he is, mind.

It’s been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are “shabby, stupid, and ugly” has been the hit of the town.

The reason cited for the rise in the Black Country after a spate of serious injury was “a lack of dog fighting.” And, says the RSPCA, the region has seen “less than the national fair share” of cases.

Ian Briggs, chief inspector with the RSPCA special operations unit, has been working on dog fighting cases for 15 years and is in no doubt it will go on.

“Since 2006, the West Midlands has had a steady flow of dog fighting cases,” he said. “There have definitely been dog fights held in Wolverhampton and other areas of the Black Country as well.”

One high profile case, in 2008, saw Stephen Wood from Walsall convicted of having four pit bull dogs for the purpose of training them for fighting.

Abandoned

In 2010, a dog was abandoned on the ring road in Dudley. The dog had been found dead under a paving slab in Chaucer Road, Walsall in January, while a blinding Staffordshire bull terrier called Honey lived in a Walsall Tyler and exhausted in Pipers Road, Walsall, after being badly injured by the owner.

A two-year-old female Staffie-type was found dazing on a top with a dog, and a dog named Rocky suffering from ‘the worst case of neglect’ ever seen by local vets was rescued from Churchill Road in Bentley. Elsewhere, a dead Staffordshire bull terrier was found in a box in Newhall Road, Rowley Regis, while a dead 일 bull terrier covered in blood was dumped on a busy street in Smethwick.

Concerns have also been raised that thugs are training fighting dogs in Black Country parks. Paws of bark have been ripped off trees in King George V playing fields in Walsall and in Bearwood Park.

Other concerns relate to stray horses, often left to fend for themselves on roads and scrubland, chained to trees and stakes in all weathers. Sometimes, they are left to die.

Horses have been found dead, in poor condition and even literally frozen to their spot by chains around their necks in the winter. There is also the illegal act of fly-grazing, leaving horses to graze on someone else’s land.

Sandwell councillor Ian Jones said: “There have been cases of horses frozen to the spot by their chains. We have had fly-grazed horses choking on their chains and have had to be rescued.”

Horses can also create problems for pedestrians and drivers if they escape and make their way onto footpaths and roads.

Since 2011, more than 460 horses have been removed from public highways in Dudley alone, with the council spending £100,000 on removing them.

This year alone, horses have been removed by police after they wandered on to grassland in Wolverhampton and were agitated by traffic. The animals were herded onto the forecourt of a petrol station in Wolverhampton Road East, Sedgley.

In February, two caused a stir when they were seen near the ring road on Popin Road in Wolverhampton.

The most recent action in Dudley was taken in October when two horses were seized from council-owned land off Rhydlwyn Road in Newhall. The council also posted enforcement notices, warning anyone who may have horses on council-owned land that their animals may be impounded.

Tethered

In Sandwell, more than 100 horses have been removed by the council in the past three years, and the authority has spent tens of thousands of pounds on bailiffs to enforce the policy.

Pat McFadden, Wolverhampton South East MP says existing legislation does not go far enough, and that authorities do not get sufficient support from the government.

He claimed horses were being found dead tethered to posts, or were left in such bad condition they had to be put down.

However, Councillor Jones said that healthy horses impounded in Sandwell will not be put to sleep, instead being found new homes and even being used by riding schools.

Gemma Stanford, of the British Horse Society, said: “There have been cases of horses frozen to the spot by their chains. We have had fly-grazed horses choking on their chains and have had to be rescued.”

There are cases of horses frozen to the spot by their chains. We have had fly-grazed horses choking on their chains and have had to be rescued.

It’s as if we’re getting out of cruel sport
On way to becoming 51st state

WHY have we gone Amer
ica crazy? We are hearing more and more American customs slowly coming into everyday use and no one is challenging the introduction of these matters.

We now have commissioners, CBIs, mayors, primary elections for a local MP, Halloween and Trick or Treat. We have heard politicians talking about a ‘senate’. I have heard in TV sales using the word ‘fall’ for autumn sales. TV series are now being called autumn.

Now we are hearing Thanksgiving in TV advertising we are having Black Friday.

I suspect that before too long our politicians will be calling senators the prime minister a president and so on and so forth.

Are we that involved with America that we have to take and use their customs and sayings? Come on Britain, please wake up and see why we are going American crazy?

So why are we to become the 51st state before it is too late. If not, wake up and say our customs and sayings? Come on Britain do not become American.

Why are we now being called senators? I have heard in TV advertising we are having ‘Black Friday’. Yes, people will be working at weekends. How on earth can we do this to go on?

Every citizen in this country who has suspicions of anyone living near them where this could be happening should report it to the police. They should be fired and the slave masters put behind bars for a very long time. How can earth can we allow this to go on?

B WHITEHOUSE

Kingwinford

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, December 11, 2014

7

Brierley Hill

Christmas is not just for Christmas

BE – the letters regarding ‘Songs of Praise’.

I thank God for the people who through the ages have written lovely words and music, for the wonderful hymns we sing today.

As for church attendance decreasing? Churches are always ready to welcome you at any time of the year, not just for baptising, weddings or funerals.

Sometimes we get a false congregation for these services, but do they come again?

The reason? Sunday shopping, football, boot sales, etc., seem to come first.

Thousands signed for the mosque not to be built in Dudley, who, probably think their faith is Of E, or whatever, but do support their own churches.

So when the few elderly people who do attend have passed away, there will be more Christian churches closing.

Come on all Christians, live a Christian life, teach your children, put God first, not worldly goods and pleasures.

Jesus said ‘Love your God first, then love your neighbour as yourself’. We now have communities where children are not worthy goods and pleasures. Jesus said ‘Love your God first, then love your neighbour as yourself’.

These two commandments cover all of the Ten Commandments we were taught earlier in the Bible.

To end my letter, you are all welcome to come along and sing with us, those wonderful ‘Hymns of Praise’.

V MALPASS

Wall Heath

Merry Hill congestion

ON reading about ‘Merry Hill’ traffic, it isn’t only this time of year that there are traffic problems in and around the shopping centre.

Pennant Road into Brierley Hill is a disaster, what with no non-offices.

Then they make High Street, Bredgmoor, one-way from the bridge, causing traffic problems in Hickman Road. It used to be a quiet road.

The people who design these road systems don’t live anywhere near to them.

The only road to Round Oak is through a council estate where children are prone to the dangers posed by more traffic.

Traffic lights are everywhere in the borough, causing more havoc.

M HAYES

Kingswinford

Slaves in the 21st Century

SLAVERY in modern Brit
ain is a national scandal.

There are an estimated 13,000 slaves in Britain today. There should be a council where children are prone to the dangers posed by more traffic.

Every citizen in this country who has suspicions of anyone living near them where this could be happening should report it to the police. They should be fired and the slave masters put behind bars for a very long time. How can earth can we allow this to go on?

B WHITEHOUSE

Kingwinford

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

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Sometimes we get a false congregation for these services, but do they come again?

The reason? Sunday shopping, football, boot sales, etc., seem to come first.

Thousands signed for the mosque not to be built in Dudley, who, probably think their faith is Of E, or whatever, but do support their own churches.

So when the few elderly people who do attend have passed away, there will be more Christian churches closing.

Come on all Christians, live a Christian life, teach your children, put God first, not worldly goods and pleasures.

Jesus said ‘Love your God first, then love your neighbour as yourself’. We now have communities where children are not worthy goods and pleasures. Jesus said ‘Love your God first, then love your neighbour as yourself’.

These two commandments cover all of the Ten Commandments we were taught earlier in the Bible.

To end my letter, you are all welcome to come along and sing with us, those wonderful ‘Hymns of Praise’.

V MALPASS

Wall Heath

Merry Hill congestion

ON reading about ‘Merry Hill’ traffic, it isn’t only this time of year that there are traffic problems in and around the shopping centre.

Pennant Road into Brierley Hill is a disaster, what with no non-offices.

Then they make High Street, Bredgmoor, one-way from the bridge, causing traffic problems in Hickman Road. It used to be a quiet road.

The people who design these road systems don’t live anywhere near to them.

The only road to Round Oak is through a council estate where children are prone to the dangers posed by more traffic.

Traffic lights are everywhere in the borough, causing more havoc.

M HAYES

Kingswinford

Slaves in the 21st Century

SLAVERY in modern Brit
ain is a national scandal.

There are an estimated 13,000 slaves in Britain today. There should be a council where children are prone to the dangers posed by more traffic.

Every citizen in this country who has suspicions of anyone living near them where this could be happening should report it to the police. They should be fired and the slave masters put behind bars for a very long time. How can earth can we allow this to go on?

B WHITEHOUSE

Kingwinford

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle, Chronicle Editor, 31-33 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

Email

Dudley.chron@ expressandstar.co.uk

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dudley Chronicle

Thursday, December 11, 2014

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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7

Brierley Hill

Christmas is not just for Christmas

BE – the letters regarding ‘Songs of Praise’.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dudley Chronicle
A natural history of Christmas
Wolverhampton Women’s Luncheon Club

THERE were 80 members present at the November 20 meeting at The Lindens, Tottonhall Road, together with 13 guests and the speaker Dr Michael Leach. After welcoming everyone, the chairman asked for a short silence in memory of Margaret Arnold, a past member, who died recently. She then said Grace. The menu was celery and asparagus soup, roast turkey with trimmings, Christmas pudding with brandy sauce, tea or coffee with mint and mince pies.

After the lunch, Susan introduced Dr Leach, a zoologist, full-time wildlife author and photographer. The title of his talk was “The Natural History of Christmas”. He said there is not sufficient evidence to guess with any accuracy the year of Jesus’ birth, although it seems it was somewhere between 7 BC and 4 AD.

He said the modern Christmas started with the Victorians and explained the origins of mistletoe and the yule log and the introduction of mince pies, turkeys and Brussels sprouts.

He concluded by referring to the “The Twelve days of Christmas”, Suzanne Morgan gave the vote of thanks. The AGM will be held on Wednesday, January 28. Only paid up members should attend. The money for the next luncheon will be cream of asparagus soup, pork in red wine, lemon sponge and custard.

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GREAT Wyrley Towns­
women’s Guild presented an old­time variety concert at Great Wyrley Methodist Church.

It was staged to raise funds for their chosen charity, which this year is Amara children’s hospice.

Popular guest gives an enthralling talk

Dudley South Ladies Luncheon Club

THE club enjoyed an excellent November lunch at the Kingfisher Hotel, Wall Heath. This was followed by a popular return visit from Sue Clegg whose talk “Water­borne in the Grenadines” enthralled members for 45 minutes.

Sue is a retired policewoman who is an expert on finger printing. She received a Gold Award from the Duke of Edinburgh in 1979 and when she retired she was interviewed successfully along with other Gold achievers to form a team of six.

They were trained and sent out to the Caribbean islands to join award winners selected from other countries in order to promote and introduce young people to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

The team found themselves “water­horses” on the “Grenadine Star” sailing out to the Grenadines with basic supplies in their back­packs and two dinghies.

On arrival, they all ran into the blue sea and invited the young people to join them. No one followed. Not one youngster could swim. Eventually the team took them to an uninhabited island for a 24­hour survival test which ended in helping rescue survivors from an air crash.

This flight between islands had ended in disaster but as a result the youngsters achieved their Duke of Edinburgh award. Sue now travels throughout the world promoting the award scheme.

popular good ship lollipop

Sue Clegg has been a member of the Women’s Luncheon Club since its inception when she was introduced by a member. She has worked tirelessly for the club and is a driving force.

The visit from Sue Clegg was particularly memorable as she related her experience to the club members. She followed this with a humorous and engaging talk about the Grenadines.

She was introduced by the chairman, Mary Jones, who said that Sue was the perfect person to talk about the Grenadines as she had visited them on a number of occasions.

The club thanked her for her talk and for her kind words about the club.

Christmas Opening Times:
24th to 28th December Closed
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31st December 10am-3pm
1st January Closed
2nd January Normal Opening Times Apply

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29th & 30th December 10am-4pm
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Civic leaders attack UKIP over identity protest

UKIP has been accused of misleading the public over the threat posed by a Birmingham and Black Country combined authority.

The party’s West Midlands MEP Bill Etheridge called on bosses at Dudley Council to delay work on the deal until the plan’s implications had been fully discussed.

Mr Etheridge, who is also a councillor for Dudley, said local people had not been given the chance to express their views.

The scheme will see Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton councils team up with Birmingham on issues which cross their borders.

Bosses have stressed the move will not see councils merge or lead to the creation of a Greater Birmingham.

Protected

Newly appointed Dudley Council leader Peter Lowe has slammed UKIP’s claims that a combined authority would damage local democracy and threaten the Black Country’s identity.

Speaking during Dudley Council’s full council meeting, he said: “Let’s get one thing straight. The Black Country’s identity will be protected. Dudley will be protected. Each and everyone of our diverse communities will be protected.

“The interesting thing is, UKIP know it, but they have deliberately misled those people up there in the public gallery - shame on them.

“Council leaders in the five districts want to set up a combined authority to take on powers which may be devolved from London.

“About 30 people gathered outside the council offices before the meeting to take part in a UKIP-led protest called Hands Off Birmingham and Hands off the Black Country.

“Sedgley-based Mr Etheridge, who will be his party’s candidate in Dudley North at next year’s General Election and is a West Midlands MEP, argued that there was more to the plan than just working together.

“This is changing the way local government works in the West Midlands and there will be people protesting across the region. We don’t have to go down that route. Let’s set the example and have an open debate.

“Other councillors slammed the UKIP group for failing to turn up to a meeting of party leaders.

“Conservative group leader Patrick Harley said: “If you had been sensible you would have found out what this is not about. It is not about Greater Birmingham. It is about joint working in the Black Country.”

“Councillor Darren Cooper, Labour leader of Sandwell Council, said: “I cannot see what it is that UKIP are opposed to. No-one is going to lose their identity. We will not become part of any Greater Birmingham.

“This is about councils working together on matters that go across local authority boundaries. That’s all.”

UKIP organised a protest over fears that Brum could dominate the Black Country.
DUDSTON School has been taken out of special measures by Ofsted, with inspectors saying it’s making “rapid improvements”.

Congratulations to Head Teacher Ben Stittman, his staff, the governors, parents, pupils and everyone else who has helped keep their promise to get the school out of special measures in a year. I am sure the school will continue to improve in the future.

This improvement shows that with the right leader- ships in Dudley can do just as well as those anywhere else, which is so important because we have to make education and skills our number one priority to attract the new investment and new industries on which our prosperity will depend.

Last week’s Autumn Statement just proved that David Cameron and George Osborne have failed every test and broken every promise they’ve made on the economy.

They promised we’d all be in this together but then they gave millionaires a huge tax cut.

They promised people would be better off but long term youth unemployment remain- ment in Dudley is twice the national average and local people are now £1,650 a year worse off.

They promised to balance the books, but with tax reve- nues down because wages are falling they are nowhere near keeping this promise either.

The Tories just don’t understand the fundamen- tal link between the living standards of everyday work- ing people in Dudley and Britain’s ability to deal with the deficit.

George Osborne has now borrowed a staggering £2trn billion more than he planned and the economy is set to slow down next year after forecasts for wages have been revised down again. Yet the Chancellor still tries to claim that the economy is fixed and his plan is working. How out of touch can you get?

What we need is a plan that supports people in Dud- ley as well as the economy as a whole. I want a fairer min- imum wage, more free child- care for working parents, an end to the bedroom tax and cuts to business rates for small firms.

In just two weeks over a thousand people have backed my campaign to keep Dudley Police Station open to the public.

Now local former police officers are speaking up on the issue too. Roger Bagley, a former Superintendent in Dudley Police, told me that “a town the size of Dudley must ensure that staff are working flat out at house and shift is satisfactory”.

Trust must ensure that staff are working flat out, that’s open to the public.

“a town the size of Dudley has a police station that’s open to the public. It’s part of having a strong, visible police presence in the town to deter crime and give the public confidence in the police. That’s why this campa- ign is so important.”

I completely agree. People with frontline experience of policing in Dudley are backing my campaign because those cuts will mean fewer police on the streets, fewer

Dudley North Labour MP Ian Austin takes the stand in our weekly Chronicle column that gives our local representatives the chance to air their views

“This improvement shows that with the right leadership schools in Dudley can do just as well as those anywhere else”

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Dudley Chronicle Thursday, December 11, 2014

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WORCESTER BOSCH SPECIALIST WORCESTER BOSCH SPECIALIST WORCESTER BOSCH
The best present you can give the NHS is your blood

SOME 4,000 blood donations are needed across the West Midlands over Christmas, health chiefs have revealed.

A campaign has now been launched to encourage people to give blood in the coming weeks.

This year, as Christmas Day and Boxing Day fall ahead of a weekend, there are worries that fewer donors than usual will get around to making life saving donations.

Across the West Midlands there are over 50,000 registered blood donors.

In total, around 210,000 whole blood donations and 12,500 platelet donations will be needed across England and North Wales over the coming six weeks to help ensure hospitals have the stocks they need to treat patients. Last year one in five donors missed their appointments – putting NHS Blood and Transplant’s critical operation under unnecessary pressure.

By Simon Stone

Shailish Mistry, deputy marketing manager at NHS Blood and Transplant said: “At a time when everyone is thinking about the perfect gift for their loved ones, some people will be relying on one gift that really matters – the gift of blood.

“Improve”

“We’re asking new and regular donors in the West Midlands to give blood this December. The gift of a single blood donation can save or improve up to three lives.

“Don’t worry if you’ve never given blood before, now is a great time to sign up and start giving to help save lives this Christmas and beyond.”

Health chiefs say every blood donation is vital, but over winter months there is a particular need to ensure supplies of rarer blood groups. In particular, O Rh negative, the universal blood group, is always in demand and A Rh negative, B Rh negative and AB Rh negative are the other rare groups most vulnerable to shortfall.

A single blood donation can save or improve up to three lives while every platelet donation helps up to three adults or 12 children.

As blood has a shelf life of 35 days and platelets have a shelf life of seven days, it is essential that stocks are continually maintained throughout the year, including during the festive period.

Officials also say it is important blood donations represent the country’s diverse population. Some rare blood groups and some blood disorders are more common among ethnic communities.

To book an appointment or to find out where your nearest session is being held visit www.blood.co.uk or call 0300 123 2323.

A SECOND wave of major housing, transport and job creation schemes across the Black Country are set to get the green light in February.

The news comes after the first schemes under the area’s £158 million Government-backed Growth Deal were given the go-ahead, with work due to start on many of them in the next few months.

Now the rest of the schemes, part of a £450 million investment in a Black Country ‘renewal zone’, are also set for approval. It will mean dates are set for work to start on all the schemes, with set targets for when they are due to be completed and the benefits the area should expect.

The first wave was signed off last Wednesday by the joint committee of the Local Enterprise Partnership, made up of leaders of the four Black Country councils. It includes major expansion at Halesowen and Dudley colleges, further investment in Walsall’s Gosford housing project and the improvements to the Civic Halls and Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton.

The second wave is set to be signed off in February. The move was agreed in principle at last week’s meeting and paves the way for the organisation to meet its target of having the programme ready to start on April 1 next year.

One of the biggest schemes is the widening of Junction 10 of the M6 at Walsall.
A FORMER Dudley Grammar School boy who went on to be one of the founding pioneers of the Shropshire Star, John Beck, has died at the age of 83.

Mr Beck, of Condover near Shrewsbury, retired in 1981 after a journalistic career of nearly 33 years with the Midland News Association, during which he worked on several different titles including the Chronicle.

His interests in retirement included photography and foreign travel. He had a lifelong love of classical music, and also wrote an autobiography called "Perhaps I’m Really Mervyn Davenport," the story behind the title going back to the day of his birth in 1931.

School

"Mrs Beck had gone in a nursing home in Tipton. The lady in the next bed had a little boy on the same day called Mervyn Davenport," said John’s widow, Jean Mary Beck.

Both, John’s family and Mervyn’s family moved away from Tipton into the area, going on to the same school. As a teenager, when he was playing up a bit, mum Beck used to say “I think they gave me the wrong baby at that nursing home. You must be Mervyn Davenport.” And that stuck.”

The book largely focused on his childhood and early years of journalism, which were broken by a spell of National Service. John and Mervyn married in 1968 but had known each other from an early age. “We lived next door to each other when I was aged three in Woodbottom, just outside Sedgley. My maiden name is Spicer,” she said.

The couple had sons Christopher and Michael, both of whom predeceased them.

“In the last three years I have lost all three men in my life,” said Mrs Beck. John had had a stroke last year and went to the Vicarage Care Home in Bayston Hill and died there.

Pioneer journalist has died aged 83
Panto magic for lights switch-on at Brierley Hill

It’s Christmas, oh yes it is with panto cast members Sylv Hickling, Rebecca Thome, Zara Rose and Holly Bagnall

FESTIVE cheer arrived in Brierley Hill with the big Christmas lights switch-on.

The Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Dudley, Councillor Steve Waltho and his wife Jayne were on hand to hit the switch with the help of some other than Father Christmas himself.

Hundreds turned out including the cast of Brierley Hill Musical Theatre Company’s production of Dick Whittington in full costume to help out with the festivities.

Mrs Greenwell, from the company, said: “It was such a brilliant night and a great event that we love to take part in every year. There was a fantastic turnout and it really brings the community together.”

The theatre company has been a regular feature at the Brierley Hill switch-on for the past four years.

“The cast had a lot of fun,” Mrs Greenwell, who lives in Kingswinford, said. “They performed some of the songs from the show and also a few popular hits, which people loved.”

Mrs Greenwell was also joined by students from The Bromley Pennett Primary School, where she works.

“The kids had so much fun,” she added. “They had been rehearsing since September and did a brilliant job.”

The company’s production of Dick Whittington opens on January 10 and runs until the 17th.

Councillor Waltho said: “It was a brilliant community event with a fantastic turnout. The pantomime cast and the children’s choir were great and I think people really enjoyed it.

“It was a brilliant start to Christmas for the people of Brierley Hill.”

Tickets for the panto at Brierley Hill Civic Hall can be bought on 0945 605 8995 or online at www.bhmtc.co.uk

Visit your Morrisons Kingswinford today!
Young readers booked their place to win final

PUPILS at a school in Stourbridge have proven themselves the best with books after winning a quiz on what they had read.

Youngsters in Years 5 and 6 represented The Ridge Primary School, Wollaston, in the annual Primary School Book Quiz. They saw off six other primary schools in three heats for Stourbridge before six pupils from The Ridge went on to compete in the final. Other finalists were The Glynne Primary School, Kingswinford, and Newfield Park Primary, Halesowen.

After they proved their knowledge and teamwork skills, the Wollaston pupils bagged themselves the win.

Headteacher Mrs Deb Hudson, said: “I am incredibly proud of our students. They worked very hard to learn as much as they could to win the contest.”

The rounds were hosted by the School Library Service, which helps to promote reading in schools across the Dudley borough and requested that students studied six books and their authors.

During the heats and final they were asked very detailed questions about each book and author, meaning they needed to know each book inside out.

Mrs Hudson added: “They were all so extremely dedicated. They stayed after school once a week to have a study group on the books with a teacher. Both parents and teachers have been so supportive. Now they have role models in the school, hopefully their win will encourage more of our students to read.”

The pupils were each awarded an individual medal, books, a bag and a trophy to take back to the school.

Book a prize — the winning team of youngsters from The Ridge Primary School with their trophy and medals
**Group call for better weekend rail service**

CAMPAIGNERS are demanding action on overcrowded trains during weekend services through the Black Country, particularly during the run up to Christmas as Birmingham attracts millions of visitors to its German Christmas market.

Members of the Stourbridge Line User Group say train operators should be looking to ease crowding on trains.

The group has approached train operator London Midland calling for them to add more carriages during and after the run up to Christmas and New Year.

Operator London Midland said many of its trains have already been lengthened to allow for more passengers at weekends — a move the group want to see extended into the New Year.

User group chairman Rob Hebron said demand was outstripping supply and called on train operators to act.

“It’s bad enough that weekday commuters have to put up with overcrowded trains but at weekends the frequency of trains on the Stourbridge line is not good enough, neither are trains with two carriages,” he said.

“London Midland is promoting the service of up to six trains an hour to Birmingham on billboards which only applies Mondays to Saturdays.”

Group member Bob Randie added: “Trains have been reported ‘full and standing’ on the London Midland website but anyone passing by Tyseley sidings can often see vehicles sat idle at weekends.”

London Midland spokesman Francis Thomas said: “We are experiencing high levels of demand on the Stourbridge line at weekends. This is being driven by the Christmas markets at Worcester and Birmingham. We have been responding to this by lengthening as many trains as we can at weekends.”

**A plea at Christmas**

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**Housing group launch a £500k social fund**

A COST-SAVINGS programme at the Black Country Housing Group (BCHG) is to raise £500,000 over three years for community projects and new social enterprises.

Chief executive Amanda Tomlinson said that £165,000 a year was being identified by staff at the not-for-profit organisation, which employs around 200 people.

Blackheath-based BCHG will use the funds in the local community to fund apprenticeships for young people and build skills through its ‘Young Blood’ initiative. This aims to double the proportion of younger people in the housing group’s workforce, under the age of 25, from five per cent to 10 per cent by 2017.

BCHG also intends to create two social enterprises, to support local community projects and fund local job clubs, as well as a hardship fund for vulnerable customers.

BCHG, now in its 40th year, operates primarily in Dudley and Sandwell but also has homes in Birmingham and Walsall. It currently provides more than 2,000 homes and supports more than 13,000 people with employment advice, care, support and home improvements. It has contracts with local authorities to provide home improvement and maintenance work as well as running care homes.

Amanda Tomlinson, who took over the £13 million a year business as chief executive a year ago, said surpluses were reinvested into the business to fund growth. It has just secured £1.2 million of private sector lending to fund new housebuilding – around 200 new homes – and the creation of two care homes in the Dudley area for 130 people with dementia.

**Investing in skills for youth — Black Country Housing Group chief Amanda Tomlinson with apprentices**
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Glimpse into past at Black Country mansion

IT was Sedgley’s own Downton Abbey – a mansion built for the family owners of an iron empire making everything from chains, anchors and nails.

Eliza and Thomas Tinsley, of the hugely successful Eliza Tinsley firm now based in Wednesbury, had The Limes built on the grounds of a former pub in Sedgley-Upper Gornal 163 years ago.

Over the years the building has been used by the Catholic Church, local councils and even became the headquarters of the Auxiliary Fire Service during the Second World War.

Thirty years after Eliza Tinsley died, the house was taken over by three other illustrious figures – Henry Fowler, an iron and coal master from Bilston, William Arthur Foster, a solicitor, and finally Eliza Gibbons, widow of John Lloyd Gibbons of Ellowes Hall.

Eliza Tinsley - matriarch of the chain making iron master family

“Also used to pass the building every day whilst taking my children to school which was my only real association with the building.

“When I saw there were moves to restore it I made enquiries and started to compile the history of the building which is how I became involved.”

Mr Jones was just one of many budding historians who contributed to the information board.

Converted

Although the building has now been converted into flats Mr Jones said he is pleased with it.

“I think the developers did a wonderful job,” Mr Jones said. “Other than the demolition of the outbuildings to make room for some extra buildings, the building itself remains identical to the way it would have looked in Eliza Tinsley’s day.”

“It really is one of the last remaining important buildings in Sedgley and I think it is wonderful that it has been preserved for the future.”

Eliza Gibbons, widow of John Lloyd Gibbons of Ellowes Hall.

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Eliza Gibbons, widow of John Lloyd Gibbons of Ellowes Hall.
A MOTHER and son who lived in them had been robbed in a bid to cash in on the rent they had been fined.

The 59-year-old woman and 22-year-old man from Brierley Hill pleaded not guilty to the robbery but were convicted last Tuesday. They were each found guilty of robbery and theft. The man was sentenced to five years in prison. The woman will be sentenced later.

A SECONDARY school has been taken out of special measures – one year after its new headteacher vowed to drive up standards.

Dormston School, in Mill Bank, Sedgley, does still require improvement but Ofsted removed the school from special measures.

The school’s annual report said the behaviour of pupils as Headteacher Ben Stitchman said he would take the school out of special measures on his appointment last September.

Buoyed by the latest Ofsted report, he is now targeting further improvements before inspectors return in two years.

He said: “We are pleased that the school has been removed from special measures. We recognise and feel the report is a fair reflection of improvements made over the past year and we will continue to work to become outstanding as quickly as possible. Our next target is to make sure our exam results in the summer are as high as we expect from a good school.”

The key difference has been the change in expectations of children, who also said they have improved. Their attendance and behaviour has got better.

The report followed an inspection on November 15 and 19. It said Mr Stitchman had been “highly effective in re-establishing the school to live with high expectations. It said the behaviour of students was good and they had responded well to the headteacher’s appointments.”

The inspectors said teaching had improved but was not consistently good. The progress of pupils was also still not good enough, according to the report, which put it down to a “legacy underachievement” new being addressed.

Mr Stitchman added: “We don’t see this as a quick fix, this is the first step along the way to becoming a very good school.”

Dudley North MP Ian Austin welcomed the Ofsted report. He said: “This is a huge step in the right direction. Mr Stitchman, his colleagues and the school governors have kept their promise to get the school out of special measures in this time frame and I am sure the school will continue to improve in the future.”

Injured woman is taken to hospital

It’s Blue Suede pews at mission

AN elderly woman was taken to hospital after being struck by a car in Stourbridge.

The woman was taken to Dudley’s Russelle Hall Hospital following the incident that happened in Highridge Road, Stourbridge.

The driver of the car, a woman, was unhurt.

While following the accident the vehicle also went through the barrier at Gage Hangs Well pub.

News reports say the woman was taken to hospital after being struck by a car in Stourbridge.

This is the first image released by architects showing the Warwick Manufacturing Group’s Very Light Rail Hub in Dudley.

An artist’s impression of the Warwick Manufacturing Group’s Very Light Rail Hub in Dudley.

Bus fare increases across the Black Country have been condemned by councillors.

National Express West Midlands announced last week that fares are set to increase by five per cent on January 2.

For example, adult single tickets from Walsall to Dudley will cost £2.20.

But Wolverhampton councillor Ian Clamory, who is also a member of transport body Centro, said the hike would not be enough.

“I’m looking forward to doing my financial return that National Express present, they more than meet their particular targets and I am sorry to see that they haven’t taken that into consideration,” he added.

If people were buses a person’s only form of transport, they would have to struggle to come up with the extra cash for fares.

He concluded that the increase could also have any other detrimental effect, it people turn to their own transport instead.

“It will lead to greater congestion on the roads, certainly during the rush hours,” he said. “Instead of attracting people to use public transport it could have the opposite effect.”

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Hundreds take on fun events to raise vital funds for charities

Tis the season for Santas to get running boots on

HUNDREDS of people braved the elements to enjoy some festive fun and raise money for a host of good causes.

Crowds of people donned their Father Christmas costumes to take part in annual Santa Runs in Walsall, Tettenhall and Stourbridge over the weekend.

On Saturday, the festive run took place at Tettenhall College, then on Sunday there were runs held at Walsall Arboretum and Mary Stevens Park in Stourbridge.

At Tettenhall, pupils, as well as family and friends, took part in the mile long run around the school grounds to raise money for Compton Hospice’s Journey Appeal for bereaved families.

Deb Liddle, librarian and charity organiser at the school, said: “It started off just a way for pupils to get involved with charity work and it has been going on for three years, getting bigger each year.

“We have done some fundraising but we specifically wanted to do the Santa Run for the hospice because not many people know about it, especially the Journey Appeal, which does great work for bereaved families.

“The event was also attended by Vicki Wootton and Simon Cater from the Compton Hospice.

“Miss Wootton said: “We found out a month ago that the school had chosen to do it for Compton Hospice.

“The service helps so many families through bereavement so any money raised is fantastic.”

Mr Cater said: “The Santa Run has always been very successful and for Tettenhall College to support the hospice is absolutely fantastic. We need to raise over £6 million a year just to keep the doors open, most of which is donated by the local community.

“Events like this are great because it all adds up and goes towards the final pot. We are so appreciative.”

Councillor Andrew Wynne, who joined in with the race, said: “I think it is a wonderful cause.

“Gathered it will raise lots of money for the charity and the turnout was absolutely fantastic. It is particularly good fun for the kids, too.”

At Walsall, more than 250 people, young and old, gathered for the run, which raised cash for Acorns.

Shujea Khatun, major events officer at Acorns, said: “It was a fantastic spectacle to see so many Santas in one place and wonderful to see so many friends and families having a brilliant time while raising money.

“A big thank you to everyone who took part – the atmosphere was magical and it feels like Christmas has well and truly arrived. Shujea added: “Acorns relies on fundraising and donations for the majority of its income so events like the Santa Run have a real impact. It’s not only a great way of having fun but it also helps us carry on our work.

“The event was supported by Western Power Distribution which means all monies raised will go directly towards funding the £8 million plus a year it costs to run the three Acorns hospices.

Hundreds of people also turned out for the 5km run in Stourbridge, which raised money for Mary Stevens Hospice.

By Charlie Benton

COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

Dudley Chronicle
Thursday, December 11, 2014

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Limbering up for the Acorns Hospice fun run

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COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

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From Striking Santa and Angels who read all about it – the modern take on the festive story

FROM a disillusioned Father Christmas to a James Bond parody of saving a kidnapped Santa, Nicholas and the Birth of Jesus told from the perspective of a sheep – the traditional school nativity has evolved as the years have gone by.

And at least one Black Country school has dispensed with it altogether. St Mark’s, Dudley, although stressed it was still keeping the spirit of Christmas alive.

The only school that responded to an Express & Star survey and said it was not doing a nativity play was Ocker Hill Academy in Tipton.

The junior school’s principal Adam Keeton said: “Do, do do a play. The last few years we have hosted a Christmas carol concert at our local church, St Marks.”

“Do help raise funds for the church at the same time. We like to think we are keeping the true spirit of Christmas alive.”

Some have brought in plays such as Santa’s On Strike, by Andrew Ospring.

The play features a disheartened Father Christmas who thinks children no longer deserve presents. But then he gets shown pictures of family life to persuade him Christmas is still a time of giving.

Says that doing a nativity play was Ocker Hill Academy in Tipton.

“Here at Vickers the moment has come to hit the road and show the true meaning of Christmas still alive and well, despite claims made in survey.”

By Dan Wainwright

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, December 11, 2014

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Children at Villiers Primary, Bilton, in their nativity play. Head Duncan Cocker said he was surprised by the Netmums polls results

By Dan Wainwright

IS there really no room at the inn for a traditional nativity? That’s the conclusion of users of a parent website who believe just a third of schools still put on a Christmas play focusing on the birth of Jesus.

Political correctness in a multicultural society has been blamed. But an investigation by The Chronicle’s sister publication The Express & Star found that, in the West Midlands at least, the true meaning of Christmas is alive and well in schools.

Dozens of primary schools in Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall, Sandwell and Staffordshire were contacted asking for details of their Christmas concerts.

And all but one that replied includes a traditional nativity as part of it – albeit some with a more modern take featuring a striking and disillusioned Father Christmas, angels learning of the birth of Christ from a newspaper and stories told from the perspective of a sheep.

“Space man”

According to Netmums, just a third of UK schools now put on the traditional nativity play.

The survey found aliens, recycling bins, Lord Sugar-style ‘Lord Christmas’, Elvis, footballers, a lobster, a napkin, carrots, snowmen and a spaceman in a nativity.

Around 67 per cent claim an updated nativity and six in eight have dropped the Christian references.

That is not the case in the Black Country and school administrators said they had the permissions of all the pupils involved in the various different versions of the nativity, including schools who had performed it as a whole school, others who took it from the perspective of a sheep, and some who took a part of the nativity and put it on by themselves.

According to the website Out Of The Ark, where the plays are sold, it is ‘a straightforward but original nativity play told from the perspective of a curious sheep’.

Duncan Cocker, headteacher at Villiers Primary School in Bilton, was surprised by the survey results. He said: “I did wonder when I saw the figure about one third doing the nativity whether that meant it was only a small minority and the others were just not putting it down on paper.”

“Our reception Christmas production is entitled The Haunty Fairy. The story highlights the true spirit of Christmas and also the concept of nativity. Children are being taken on a journey through the children’s marvellous setting, singing and dancing skills.”

“The children are involved in this wonderful performance.”

Claregate Primary School is also doing nativity plays and carols. Headteacher Mick Murphy said: “The children at Claregate are performing Christmas songs for parents of nursery children, an early years nativity, a Key Stage One nativity and the school choir perform a Christmas carol concert.”

“We also have a visit from Santa and the parents and teachers association pay for a Christmas pantomime for years one to six and entertainment for nursery and reception children.”

St Luke’s Primary School in Blackenhall is doing a performance called Pricky Hay which is a musical based on the nativity. Children in years three to six are participating in an evening Christmas Concert where the children sing traditional carols and Christmas songs, read poems and readings from the bible which are all based on the nativity. Russell Hall Primary School is doing traditional nativities.

And Anne Ellidge from Emmanuel School, Walsall, said children had plenty of tradition in their plays too.

She said: “We are staging a Christmas play, involving all classes. It is based around the Russian traditional tale of Babushka, who tended the wise men on their journey to Bethlehem.”

“They invited her to travel with them, but she had too much laundry to do. She said she would catch them up later. But she was too late, as she still searched for the Christ child, and when she sees a baby, leaves a toy, just in case.”

“As part of the production we will do a tradition nativity, carols, and have a snowflake dance, Russian folk dance, dancing ‘stomp’, and of course some songs.”

“Quite separate from the play, we also take Christmas out into the community. The key stage two classes sing carols at Walsall Centre for the Blind, key stage one do a little performance for the Afro-Caribbean Community Association lunch club for elderly people, and the choir sing carols at a care home.”

Topics

Netherton Primary School staged two traditional nativities – one in school and one at a church. But headteacher Andrew Rushton said there was another aspect to this year’s Christmas concert. He said: “We are also holding a First World War concert, following this term’s topics which have all been based on the Great War.”

St James School in Oldbury is putting on A Wriggly Nativity, which is designed for children to be able to move about while singing instead of sitting still.

St John’s Primary in Tipton is putting on a nativity but also doing Aladdin as a Christmassy pantomime.

None of the schools who responded to the E&F said they were removing the Christian references. Siobhan Freegard co-founder of Netmums said its survey of 2,000 parents across the country had found cases where school Christmas plays incorporated references to the Muslim festival Eid, the Jewish Hanukkah and Hindu Diwali.

Siobhan Freegard co-founder of Netmums, said: “Do they know it’s Christmas?” At some schools, it seems not.

While the UK is a diverse and multicultural society and it’s right children learn about all religions and cultures, many parents feel the traditional nativity is being pushed aside.”

True meaning of Christmas still alive and well, despite claims made in survey traditional nativity play remains stable in schools

By Dan Wainwright

Dudley Chronicle Thursday, December 11, 2014

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Hey Ewe tells the story from a sheep’s perspective

Angels Express is a modern nativity for infants

Santas on Strike has an optional ‘nativity scene’

COUNTDOWN TO CHRISTMAS

From Striking Santa and Angels who read all about it – the modern take on the festive story
Duty calls for all

armchair marines

a beautiful county
One-way door policy as pub now open until 3am

A WOLVERHAMPTON city centre pub has been granted an extension to its licensing hours.

The Royal London, Wulfruna Street says it will operate a one-way door policy for the extra hour it can remain open. The pub applied for a variation to its existing licence so it could stay open until 3am, seven days a week.

Its previous licence was for 9am to 1am Monday to Wednesday, as well as Sunday, and from 9am to 2am Thursday to Saturday.

As the pub falls within the city’s Cumulative Impact Zone which means the applicants, Stonegate Pub Company, had to convince the city council’s licensing sub-committee the changes would not add to crime and public nuisance.

A hearing on December 3 solicitor Clare Eames, representing Stonegate, argued that by allowing the pub to stay open later, and stopping entry to new patrons at 2am, they would be preventing potential nuisance behaviour as there would only be one ‘dispersal’.

Positive

With an earlier closing time, patrons leave the pub and continue to other pubs, resulting in two dispersals during the night.

She said manager Donna Boden, who is the chairman of Pullwatch and on the board of directors for the City Centre BID, runs the premises ‘very strictly and very robustly’ and had had a very positive impact on crime and disorder in the area and on how the pub operates.

Councillor Les Claymore asked what the pub’s policy was concerning anti-social behaviour and how it dealt with customers who were drunk or on drugs.

“We have a very strict ID policy, door staff four nights a week, and intoxicated people were asked to leave.

Sub-committee chair Councillor Brian Dowe said it had been easy for the committee to make its mind up.

The Royal London, Wulfruna Street

STANDING in more than 11 acres in Lower Penn, it is one of Wolverhampton’s most expensive homes – and said to be the finest example of the work of an eccentric army major-turned-architect.

Springhill Lane house The Ridge-way, built by architect Major Kenneth Hutchinson Smith, has an asking price of £2.5m and is the most expensive residential property on the market in Wolverhampton.

Major Smith built several properties in a similar style throughout the West Midlands during the 1920s and 1930s, inspired by his own personal vision of what the perfect home should look like. The Tudor-style house includes seven bedrooms, a reception and dining hall, and a cinema room and gardens.

The Ridgeway also includes herringbone brickwork, stone fireplaces and special features, being partly based on the 15th Century Weddon Houses of the southern counties.

Believing homes should be built ‘the old-fashioned way’, Major Smith worked with bricklayers who used reclaimed bricks and lime mortar, wood carvers, and carpenters who worked without modern tools to create his homes.

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A cool £2.5 million price tag – The Ridgeway is the most expensive residential property on the market in the city

GREAT DEALS FOR CHRISTMAS

MUSICIANS from their fantastic orchestra also join in the fun on stage, along with The Fabulous Vegas Showgirls who add a touch of glamour to proceedings.

With an abundance of class and style they take you on a trip back in time to vintage 60’s Las Vegas style at the coolest Christmas Party of the year.

Tickets for the 7.30pm show are available from the Box Office at www.wolvescivic.co.uk or 01902 550 671 or www.ratpack.biz

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THE RAT PACK AT CHRISTMAS AT WULFRUN HALL, WOLVERHAMPTON - TUESDAY, 23RD DECEMBER 2014

It’s fun all the way as the “Purveyors of Cool” come to Wulfrun Hall in Wolverhampton on Tuesday, 23rd December with a traditional show featuring The Greatest Music of the 20th Century. Wonderful memories of the stars were woven from Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr. in a fabulous production, now in their 12th year that continues to be successful all over the world. Their all action show is totally live both musically and vocally with every song an absolute classic – Come Fly with Me, Under the Stars, My Way, Sings Me Home, That’s Amore, Mad, the Knife, Swing and many more of Santa’s Festival Yuletide favourites.

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Seann to be wild with comic as long as he goes to right city

Cinders already a success

PANTO season is with us once again and this year at Wolverhampton’s Grand Theatre it’s Cinderella, which is set to be a box office record.

The show stars camp comic Julian Clary, Holly oaks’ Joe Tracini, former X Factor finalist Nikki Evans and 18-year-old debutant Alice Baker as Cinders.

As he prepared for his role as Dandini, Clary explained his love of pantomime.

“It is a true art form, something that is very different from anything else I do but at the same time one of the most enjoyable. For it to work the cast has to really feed off each other and bring the audience into play. You always get so many unexpected things happening in the panto world.”

Grand Theatre chief executive Peter Cutchins said audience expectations could expect to see “a truly spectacular family pantomime” run until January 18.

Wulfrun

With support with Mark Simmons, the comic says he is enjoying the tour as far entitled Seann Walsh: 28, ahead of a date at Wolverhampton’s Wulfrun Hall on Thursday, December 19. He promises this time he will turn up – and at the right venue, too. Recently Walsh was forced to call off a show, and apologises, when he arrived in Harford instead of Hertford.

And the last time in Wolverhampton, he says he was too ill to perform, though saddened on regardless.

“I had to sit down the comedy panel show Virtually Famous – on which he is a captain – have been recommissioned. It’s all happening for Seann Walsh at the minute. The floppy-haired funnyman is on tour with a date to come in Wolverhampton. His debut DVD Seann To Be Wild has been released and two more series of the comedy panel show Virtually Famous – on which he is a captain – have been recommissioned. All this on top of a sell out run at the Edinburgh Fringe. He really is living the dream.

“Stand-up was what I always wanted to do, since watching the likes of Whoopi. Line Is It Anyways? as kid, said Walsh. It has earned him a Leicester Mercury Comedian of the Year Award, a Chortle Best Breakthrough Act nominee and an award as Best Comper.

The last pantomime was Snow White and the Seven Dwarves with Linda Lusardi. Tickets for next year’s panto go on sale from 2pm, area available on 0870 320 7000 or at www.wolves civic.co.uk website.

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Dudley Chronicle
Thursday, December 11, 2014

10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live. 11.30 James Martin: Home. 12.00 The X Factor: Semi-Finals.
12.30 America's Got Talent. 13.00 The Brown Sugar Christmas Special. 13.30 The Big Bang Theory.
14.15 My Crazy Christmas Obsession. 14.30 The X Factor. 15.00 Dino Dan: Treks Adventures.
15.15 Film: Let Me In. 15.45 Regional Programme; Regional Programme. 16.00 Secrets of the Castle with Ruth, Barbra Streisand. 16.15 Foyle's War.
17.00 Christmas Update. 17.15 Film: You've Been Framed! (2010) Horror.
17.30 Film: The Christmas Bunny. 17.45 Yuletide Stories. 18.00 Regional Programme; Regional Programme.
18.15 Film: My Crazy Christmas Obsession. 18.30 Film: The Big Bang Theory. 18.45 The Cube: Celebrity Special 12.30 2011. 19.00 The Brown Sugar Christmas Special. 19.15 Film: The First Snow.
19.30 Documentary. 19.45 Film: Christmas Comes to their Neighbours.
20.00 Regional Programme; Regional Programme. 20.15 The X Factor. 20.30 Film: The Mechanic. (2011)
20.45 Regional Programme; Regional Programme. 21.00 Film: The Brown Sugar Christmas Special. 21.15 Film: Christmas Comes to their Neighbours.
21.30 Regional Programme; Regional Programme. 22.00 The Big Bang Theory. 22.15 Film: Horrible Henry. (R).
22.30 Film: Famous. (1939) Comedy. 23.00 Film: Christmas Comes to their Neighbours.

3.40 BBC2

12.15 Film: You've Been Framed! (2010) Horror. 12.30 Film: Christmas Comes to their Neighbours.
12.45 Regional Programme; Regional Programme. 13.00 Film: Christmas Comes to their Neighbours.
14.00 Windows: The Creation of Microsoft. 14.15 Film: Let Me In. 14.30 Regional Programme; Regional Programme.
15.30 Film: The Christmas Bunny. 15.45 Yuletide Stories. 16.00 Secrets of the Castle with Ruth, Barbra Streisand. 16.15 Foyle's War.
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22.30 Film: Famous. (1939) Comedy. 23.00 Film: Christmas Comes to their Neighbours.

4.00 Simon Cowell

The X Factor (ITV, 8.30pm)

Dermot O'Leary, while Simon Cowell, Cheryl, Mel B and Louis have the lives of their remaining acts battling it out in the final to decide who has the right stuff to walk away with the prize money. Not the 2014 sing-off when we saw Peter Kay's workstation...
Gary Lineker

Sports Personality of the Year 2014

1.50

The Adventurer (R)

ITV

1.50

ITV

The American Football Show.

7.00

 ITV

The Jay Leno Show.

1.50

ITV

The Early Show.

2.00

BBC3

Great British Bake Off.

1.50

BBC1

How I Met Your Mother.

7.00

 ITV

7.00

BBC1

The Big Bang Theory.

7.30

 ITV

Everybody Loves Raymond.

7.30

BBC1

The X Factor.

8.00

 ITV

Columbo: Forgotten Lady.

7.00

BBC1

Columbo: Forgotten Lady.

8.00

 ITV

Columbo: Forgotten Lady.

9.00

 BBC

The American Football Show.

6.00

 ITV

The American Football Show.

7.30

 ITV

7.30

BBC1

The American Football Show.

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The American Football Show.

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The American Football Show.

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The American Football Show.
**FILM CHOICES**

**MONDAY**

The Real St Nick, Channel 5, 7pm

An injured man is brought into hospital dressed as Father Christmas, and when he comes round, he claims to really be Santa, landing himself in the psychiatric ward. Romantic comedy, with Tomy DeVito and Cadell Harris. (2012)

**TUESDAY**

Harts of the City and The Order of the Phoenix, ITV, 7.30pm

The young wizard struggles to convince his fellow planet flooded. A web-footed mutant mariner helps a young wizard. Which?

Shoot 'Em Up, Channel 5, 10.50pm

and Monica Bellucci. (2007)

In the future, environmental disasters have left the planet flooded. A web-footed mutant mariner helps a young wizard.

Gambon and Alan Rickman. (2007)

Father Christmas decides it is time to hang up his hat reserved for other people, until one talks over a fateful evening.

**WEDNESDAY**

The Bandit of Sherwood Forest, Channel 4, 2.35am

The son of Robin Hood reunites his father’s merry men to carry out a rescue mission at the request of the Queen Mother. Swashbuckling adventure, starring Cornel Wlilel and Aline Louise. (1946)

The Missing has been the most terrifying series of 2014. Poor Tony (James Nesbitt), who is forced to track down his son – who is less than enthusiastic about donning the famed red suit, throwing the future of the festive season into doubt. Factual comedy, starring Kelsey Grammer, Charles Durning and Elaine Hendrix. (2002)

**THURSDAY**

Law & Order, Channel 5, 11.40pm

Father Christmas decides it is time to hang up his hat reserved for other people, until one talks over a fateful evening.

Black Mirror: White Christmas, Channel 4, 9pm

Charlie Brooker’s dark drama series may seem like the perfect choice to be given a Christmas special. However, there is a proud tradition of TV channels scarifying us at Christmas. It’s just that Brooker tends to do it via bleak visions of our future rather than ghost stories. This feature-length instalment brings us three parts for the price of one, as in a remote, snowy outpost, charismatic Matt (Med Misir Jon Hamm) and sarcastic Potter (Pilate Swall) swap tales about their lives on the outside world.

**FRIDAY**

Shoot ‘Em Up, Channel 5, 10.50pm

A gun-toting mysterious stranger delivers a baby, which he is forced to protect from a horde of heavily armed villains. Entering the aid of a prostitute, he sets out to discover why the child has been marked for death. Action adventure, starring Clive Owen, Paul Giampatti and Monica Bellucci. (2007)

**BEST OF THE REST**

**MONDAY**

Bette Midler: One Night Only, Monday, ITV, 8pm

**TUESDAY**

Bette Midler: One Night Only, Monday, ITV, 8pm

**WEDNESDAY**

Surprise Surprise, ITV, 9pm

**THURSDAY**

George Clarke’s Amazing Spaces Channel 4, 9pm

Architect George Clarke loves this series – it brings him into contact with some amazingly inventive souls who have dreamed up some mind-boggling projects, and usually on a budget. George ventures off the series with some builds with a Christmas theme. He’s off to visit a 150-year-old tin church, one of the earliest takes on flat-pack construction in the country. His mate Will Haddrill takes a tour of another chapel, although this one has been transformed into a luxury home. The guys then help the UK’s only female ice carver create a winter wonderland ice bar in Liverpool before looking back at their favourite builds of the series over drinks in Joe Bird’s Shed of the Year-winning construction.

**FRIDAY**

Text Santa, ITV, 8pm

The festive fundraising extravaganza returns, with the evening’s presenting duo – Ant and Dec – joined by such famous faces to raise money for six charities. Highlights include George Clooney making a surprise visit to Downton Abbey, the residents of Coronation Street appearing in a comedy sketch with a Tex Sintwa twist, and Ant and Dec hosting a Kyle Tucker Trial for an unsuspecting celebrity while serenaded by a choir of former jungle contestants. The Birds of a Feather stars also got involved, the Cube welcomes some unexpected visitors and there are appearances by the casts of Mr Selfridge and Emmerdale, plus plenty of live music throughout the show.

Jonathan Rose born the 25th annual British Comedy Awards, host a variety of Brunel’s Tardis’ a mix-up in the running order of the show, their is a wealth of comedic talent up at stake.

Among them is Joe Wilkinson, who is the co-writer with Matt Barry for the hit film The Death of Stalin, co-directed with Andy Arnold, it’s his first ever award nomination, and he is generally you go, “Right, I’ve done it. I like a bargain joint of string.”

After his routine was over he was asked if he wanted to do it again in the coming weeks.

“I thought, ‘Oh, I hadn’t really thought about doing it again’. So I did it a few months later, and then someone else booked me and I just sort of kept going.”

People kept booking me and I have no idea of the final gig. I’ve almost forgotten the laugh. “So I sort of carried on just doing what I do, I hadn’t had a five-point plan. I still sort of sing it if it’s honest.”

Back to the Awards, and the fact Will Fernell was工作总结 at last year’s bash, there’s no surprise to find him in the running for Best Comedy Film. However, in case you’re wondering why your favourite film or film from last September 2014 missed out in the running this year, there’s a good reason. programmes or performances must have had their first transmission in the calendar year 2013 and September 22, 2014 on terrestrial, cable, satellite or digital channels.

Special awards include The Writers’ Guild of British Broadcast Award: Outstanding Achievement in Comedy: Lifetime Achievement in Comedy (the Python team may be in the running for their O2 gig), and The King George of Comedy. Kidding.

Asking Bex recently proved to be a speech gem on Never Mind the Buzzcocks, but will she manage to escape the likes of Bridget Christie, dram.*

Viewers should expect the unexpected, the unplanned and the silly as some of the nation’s favorite stars pick up their awards.

That remains to be seen, but one thing is for certain; as this year saw Ricky Gervais, Steve Coogan, Matt Le Blanc, Poppy Miller and Alan Rickman. (2007)

The young wizard struggles to convince his fellow planet flooded. A web-footed mutant mariner helps a woman and an orphan girl search for a mythical haven of dry land – but in the process has to fend off a villainous crew of nicotine-addicted pirates. Sci-fi adventure, starring Kevin Costner, Dennis Hopper, Joann Tippie and Rick Aviles. (1995)

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In a one-hued evening, that’s sure to leave him rather hot under the collar, thanks to all the questions they have got lined up for him.

**PICK OF THE WEEK**

Jonathan is dishing out the gags and the gongs

**MONDAY**

Bette Midler: One Night Only, Monday, ITV, 8pm

It’s hard to believe that The Divine Miss M is a year away from celebrating her 70th birthday. She still only works 9 to 5, and when she’s not... my heart was weakening, he explained. I’ll like to say that she... said it all in a big plan, but I wasn’t really... Sort of wanted to take this hand at comedy, but thought it was a club reserved for other people, until one talked over a fateful evening.

“My local pub was putting on open mic stand-ups right, so I went and did the first one. I got nothing, but... anything, and it was genuinely to go, “Right, I’ve done it. I like a bargain joint of string.”

After his routine was over he was asked if he wanted to do it again in the coming weeks.

“I thought, ‘Oh, I hadn’t really thought about doing it again’. So I did it a few months later, and then someone else booked me and I just sort of kept going.”

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The young wizard struggles to convince his fellow planet flooded. A web-footed mutant mariner helps a woman and an orphan girl search for a mythical haven of dry land – but in the process has to fend off a villainous crew of nicotine-addicted pirates. Sci-fi adventure, starring Kev...
BRAIN GYM
No.303

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.

Double Crossword

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

Cryptic Clues:

Across
1. The Sahara Express (5,5)
2. Learner gets horribly sore, because he’s been beaten (5)
3. French brass-hat sounds warlike (7)
4. Marks of sovereignty in various respects (8)
5. This is used for shooting slow-moving creature (4)
6. Furiously take one’s leave of French settlement (6)
7. Robber gang is in front of it (6)
8. A way of acquiring goods that sounds more expensive (4-8)
9. See 17 Across
10. One of the key players (7)
11. Curses a shot that has gone astray (5)
12. A storm seen to disturb a grampus (3-7)

Down
1. The social distinction of dramatic characters, we hear (5)
2. Record the hour, but make no progress (6)
3. Make flexible part of a gun carriage (6)
4. A combination of artist and engineer is seldom found (4)
5. Indulged in some inspiration? (7)
6. Union policy, maybe, shut down the store (4-4)
7. Lines in illuminated letters? (5,5)
8. Beware when the guard has gone forth! (5,3)
9. Concern about horse for slaughter (4)
10. Name the man who’s very narrowly elected (6)
11. See 20 Down
12. He takes part on a set assignment (4-3)

Quick Clues:

Across
1. Recover (10)
2. Mountain ash (5)
3. Case (7)
4. Awe (8)
5. Door (4)
6. Shoot (7)
7. Impel (6)
8. Run (8)
9. Sole (4)
10. Unbound (8)
11. Structure (6)
12. Throw out (5)
13. Be idle (4)

Down
1. Oarsman (5)
2. Persuade (8)
3. Preserve (6)
4. Down (4)
5. Shoot (7)
6. Voluntary (10)
7. Done wrong (10)
8. Unconcerned (8)
9. Transfer (7)
10. Unworried (8)
11. Persuade (8)
12. Preserve (6)
13. Unconcerned (8)
14. Transfer (7)
15. Unworried (8)

Quiz

1. Which German Nazi was known as the Butcher of Lyon? 2. By which name do we know the aquatic rodent Castor fiber? 3. Which fictional hero was created by Baroness Orczy? 4. Whose convalescent visit gave Bogus its Regis? 5. Which fabric causes the lung disease byssinosis?

Last week’s solutions:

Quick: 1 76 years; 2 Post scriptum; 3 Everton; 4: William Burroughs; 5 Felicity Kendall; 6: Henrik Ibsen; 7: Jamaica: 8 Denis Healey; 9: Greece; 10 Leicestershire.

Niner: PITEOUSLY

Last week’s Crossword solutions

CRYPTIC - Across 6 Capital; 7 Share; 9 Act; 10 Crosswind; 12 Charge-hands; 15 Cheval-glass; 17 Hair style; 19 For; 21 Bees; 23 Horizon; Down 1 Clock; 2 Pig; 3 Pair; 4 Show cause; 5 Grenade; 6 As well; 7 Surviving; 13 Relative; 14 Phrases; 16 Donor; 18 Lead; 20 Bit; QUICK - Across 6 Preceded; 7 Talent; 9 Howe; 10 Edinburgh; 12 Pennington; 15 Indifferent; 17 Architect; 19 Tie; 20 Steer; 22 Penalty; Down 1 Order; 2 Answer; 3 See 3 Across; 4 See 16 Down; 5 Use; 7 See 8 Down; 8 See 4 Across; 9 See 17 Across; 10 See 21 Across.

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.

1322 gives an animal, 57796 gives a bird, 5346678 gives a fish.

Source: The Newspaper Society - Consumer Catalyst 2014

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- **Rear Garden**

**Knowle Hill Road, Dudley**
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- **Energy Rating:** G

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**£550 pcm**
- **Three bed semi**
- **Double glazing and GCH**
- **Fitted kitchen**
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**Durham Road, Wednesbury**
- **EPC:** D

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**£550 pcm**
- **Twobed semi**
- **Fitted kitchen with appliances**
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- **Gas centrally heated**
- **Off road parking**

**Booth Road, Wednesbury**
- **EPC:** TBC

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**£525 pcm**
- **Twobed apartment**
- **Double glazed accommodation**
- **Fully fitted kitchen**
- **Open plan lounge with Juliet balcony**

**Willenhall Road, Wolverhampton**
- **EPC:** C

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**£495 pcm**
- **Twobed end terraced**
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- **ORP**

**Factory Road, Tipton**
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**£475 pcm**
- **Twobed first floor apartment**
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- **Double glazed**
- **Separate dining kitchen with appliances**

**Ferguson Drive, Tipton**
- **EPC:** C

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**£425 pcm**
- **Twobed ground floor flat**
- **Unfurnished**
- **GCH and DG**

**Knowle Hill Road, Dudley**
- **EPC:** C

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**£375 pcm**
- **One bed apartment**
- **Unfurnished**
- **Fully fitted kitchen**
- **Allocated parking**
- **Bathroom with bath/shower facilities**

**Ferguson Drive, Tipton**
- **EPC:** C

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  - Credit checks
  - Inventory - First check
  - A security deposit equivalent to 1 week's rent is required

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**£425 pcm**
- **Two bed ground floor flat**
- **Bathroom with bath and shower**
- **Rear Garden**

**Knowle Hill Road, Dudley**
- **EPC:** C

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**£375 pcm**
- **One bed apartment**
- **Unfurnished**
- **Fully fitted kitchen**

**Factory Road, Tipton**
- **EPC:** C

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**£550 pcm**
- **Three bed semi**
- **Double glazing and GCH**
- **Fitted kitchen**
- **Bathroom with shower**

**Durham Road, Wednesbury**
- **EPC:** D

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**£550 pcm**
- **Twobed semi**
- **Fully fitted kitchen with appliances**

**Booth Road, Wednesbury**
- **EPC:** TBC

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**£525 pcm**
- **Twobed apartment**
- **Double glazed**
- **Fully fitted kitchen**

**Willenhall Road, Wolverhampton**
- **EPC:** C
Five-bed semi has had major improvements

Three-storey Victorian home has six bedrooms
It looks good in a cheeky, proper modern way and its little engine lives under the boot floor, to intrigue the techies among us; both features giving the new Twingo a slightly modern way and its little engine back to life.

The success of its baby may even have surprised its parent, for no right-hand drive was ever offered. Didn’t stop some British buying, and loving, the left-handed model, whose comparative narrowness helped a helmsman sitting on the wrong side of the car.

Twingo II arrived in 2007, was available with UK-sided steering and sold tolerably well, despite losing its charm and looking like any number of other small family hatchers.

Now comes Twingo III and Renault has found its small car mojo again, with added practicality thanks to a decision to put the engine at the back.

That move pays off in several ways, from allowing a stretched passenger cabin despite being shorter overall and with four passenger doors for the first time, to letting the front wheels turn much more sharply, for a turning circle that will make drivers chuckle the first time they make a U-turn on a narrow country road.

Other car makers stick to the usual front engine, front-wheel drive formula because it makes the familiar throb of other three-cylinder power units and, allied to crisp gearbox and light steering, soon had this driver smiling at the brio of this little charmer.

It makes the familiar throb of other three-cylinder power units and, allied to crisp gearbox and light steering, soon had this driver smiling at the brio of this little charmer.

The more powerful version was no more quicker but felt cornerier and the gear change and steering were less user friendly.

It did, however, record 46mpg on the briskly driven test route compared to a disappointing 40mpg of the smaller engine version of the original, rear-engined cutie you see now and at a tip of the test car includes cruise control, air conditioning and smartphone compatibility at a fingertip stretch. The top Dynamique trim of the test car includes cruise control, alloy wheels and air conditioning.

Renault has found its small car mojo again, with added practicality thanks to a bold decision to switch ends for the engine.

By Ian Donaldson
Great used cars and more

It’s obviously always a good thing to find lots of cars and plenty of choice when visiting a used car dealership. The Car Lot can offer you all this and a whole lot more.

Established in 1995, The Car Lot is owned by business partners Neil Foxall and Keith Arnold who joined forces with the aim of providing high quality used cars at affordable prices. They opened for business at their first site in Old Hill in November 1995 and expanded just two years later by buying a workshop on the Waterside Industrial Estate in Dudley.

In 2002, with the business thriving, they purchased the premises in Netherton where they operate today. In 2006 Neil and Keith purchased a building across the road, and a new workshop, MOT centre and tyre bay was created. This meant that they were able to convert the workshop facility at the dealership into an indoor car showroom where a selection of vehicles is displayed.

Proton arrived in 2007 and very soon after taking on the franchise The Car Lot was acknowledged by Proton as one of its top performing UK dealerships. Impressive, all-new models are on the way from Proton in 2015 which promises to be a great year for the Malaysian manufacturer as it will be offering some outstanding new models at exceptional, value for money prices.

As a Proton main dealer this company has supplied new cars to customers through the Motability scheme. As an established Motability dealer, The Car Lot is able to supply ex-Motability vehicles that have been superbly maintained.

There’s an enormous choice of used cars displayed covering every market sector, all of which have been prepared to an impressively high standard having been subject to an HPi vehicle history check, safety inspections, a full service and when needed, an MOT. What’s more, all come with reassuring AA warranty guaranteeing high standards. Prices are extremely competitive and finance can be arranged for most customers, even for those who may have struggled to find finance facilities.

Neil Foxall says: “We take great pride in our preparation and after-sales care, and place an emphasis on delivering customer satisfaction. This has enabled us to build up an enviable reputation over the years, and as a result, we’ve managed to attain great customer loyalty with many of our sales arriving through repeat business and word of mouth recommendation.”

Neil continues: “Our skilled technicians can maintain and repair any make or model of car. They have the facilities to perform all work to a high level and access to the best diagnostic systems to track and correct faults quickly. A considerable number of local company fleet customers rely on us to keep their fleets where they belong, on the road.

If you’re looking for great savings on quality used cars, or need your current vehicle maintained, why not pay The Car Lot a visit. The Car Lot is at 205-215 Halesowen Road, Netherton, Dudley DY2 8PU. They’re open from 9.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday, on Saturday from 9.00am to 6.00pm while on Sundays the car sales department is open between 10.00am and 4.00pm. Call 01384 241222 or visit www.carlotmotors.co.uk to find out more.

Ho, ho, ho! Santa back in town at Halesowen Autos

Why not pay Santa a visit at Halesowen Motors and whilst you are there, take a look at the great choice of quality used cars available? Or you could just say ‘Bah humbug’ to Santa and buy a quality used car instead.

Halesowen Autos aims to offer the best quality and lowest priced used cars on the market this winter. They have a superb selection of used vehicles on offer and when visiting Halesowen Autos, you are always guaranteed great value for money.

Their friendly sales team have over 20-years of experience in the motor trade. They are open most days for viewing, test drives or just some friendly advice. There is no high pressure selling and they guarantee a test drive with no obligation to buy.

Halesowen Autos pride themselves on the presentation of their cars. All their vehicles are prepared to the highest standards. You can also part exchange any vehicle, even if it is of greater value.

Halesowen Autos are a licensed credit broker, so if you require finance to assist with the purchase of your car, then they can offer you a range of competitively priced packages at great interest rates that can be tailored to your specific circumstances. All their vehicles are HPI and VOSA checked for outstanding finance, accident history and mileage discrepancies.

A comprehensive warranty is available on most cars and AA, RAC or any independent inspection are welcome. Delivery is also available in the UK for a reasonable charge.

Why not call into Halesowen Autos this winter and take a look at the great selection of cars they have on offer? You can find them at 1 Cross Street, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4RT or, for further information, telephone them on 0121 501 3840.

You can also visit their website at www.halesowenautos.co.uk

Finance example: Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 CDTI, Cash Price £4995. Deposit £300. Amount of credit £4695. Fixed interest rate 6.25%. Flat rate 12% APR. 48 Payments of £122.28 (£30.50 per week) Total amount payable £6169.44 (Excludes £150 Document fee and £150 Completion fee. Subject to status)

Merry Christmas from Halesowen Autos

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04/06 Kia Sportage 2.0 Diesel
£4995 / £35 Per Week

06/08 Saab 9-3 Vector Sport DTH Diesel
£5995 / £35 Per Week

08/08 Suzuki SX4 1.6 GLX
£5995 / £32 Per Week

09/09 Vauxhall Corsa 1.3CDTI Diesel
£4995 / £30 Per Week

04/09 Audi A4 Sport 1.9 TDI / 130 Automatic
£4995 / £29 Per Week

01/07 Ford Fusion 1.4 TDCi Plus Diesel
£4995 / £27 Per Week

01/09 Suzuki Kizashi 1.8 Expression Automatic
£4995 / £26 Per Week

06/08 Vauxhall Tigra 1.4i 16v Exclusive Hard
£4995 / £25 Per Week

08/08 Nissan Micra 1.2 16V (Thplow) Acenta
£3995 / £23 Per Week

08/08 Kia Picanto 1.1 LS
£3995 / £17 Per Week

07/05 Ford KA 1.3 Climate
£3995 / £17 Per Week

06/08 Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 SXI Diesel
£4995 / £35 Per Week

08/08 Volkswagen Polo 1.2 E
£4995 / £24 Per Week

08/08 Saab 9-3 Vector Sport DTH Diesel
£5995 / £35 Per Week

08/08 Suzuki SX4 1.6 GLX
£5995 / £32 Per Week

09/09 Citroen Xsara Picasso 1.6 HDi
£4995 / £32 Per Week

07/07 Suzuki Swift 1.3 GL one owner
£3995 / £22 Per Week

04/05 Nissan Micra 1.2 16V (Thplow) Acenta
£3995 / £18 Per Week

07/07 Kia Picanto 1.1 ES
£3995 / £17 Per Week

05/05 Vauxhall Vectra 1.9 CDTI Club
£3995 / £22 Per Week

06/56 Kia Sportage XS2.0 Diesel
£4995 / £35 Per Week

08/08 Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 SXI Diesel
£4995 / £35 Per Week

08/08 Suzuki SX4 1.6 GLX
£5995 / £32 Per Week

09/09 Vauxhall Corsa 1.3 CD Ti Diesel
£4995 / £30 Per Week

07/07 Suzuki Swift 1.3 GL one owner
£3995 / £22 Per Week

04/05 Audi A4 Sport 1.9 TDI / 130 Automatic
£4995 / £29 Per Week

01/07 Ford Fusion 1.4 TDCi Plus Diesel
£4995 / £27 Per Week

09/03 Toyota Avensis 1.8 T2
£3995 / £26 Per Week

07/05 Vauxhall Vectra 1.9CDTi Diesel
£3995 / £18 Per Week

06/56 Fiat Panda 1.4
£3995 / £26 Per Week

07/07 Ford KA 1.3 Climate
£3995 / £22 Per Week

05/05 Vauxhall Vectra 1.9CDTi Diesel
£3995 / £18 Per Week

08/08 Vauxhall Tigra 1.4i 16v Exclusive Hard
£4995 / £25 Per Week

06/56 Rover 45 1.8 CVT Club SE Automatic
£2195 / £12 Per Week

Financing example: Vauxhall Corsa 1.3CDTi, Cash Price £4995. Deposit £300. Amount of credit £4695. Fixed interest rate 6.25%. Flat rate 12% APR. 48 Payments £122.28 (£30.50 per week) Total amount payable £6169.44 (Excludes £150 Document fee and £150 Completion fee. Subject to status)
Zafira hits the spot for Dudley care firm

When it came to replacing their three Ford Galaxy MPVs, Quest Day Care, owned and run by Diane and Paul Thompson, wanted to continue to emphasise their ‘green’ focus within the business and so looked to find the best vehicle to meet their needs. They found that vehicle in the form of the Vauxhall Zafira Tourer from Dudley Motor Company.

Quest Day Care work closely with Dudley Social Services in the care of people with learning difficulties. Their vehicles are an integral part of their service and they provide for the local community and the three new seven-seater Zafira models have been an instant success providing a 25 per cent saving in fuel costs while only emitting 109 gms/km of CO2. The care centre do a significant amount of travelling each year so these savings both in fuel and emissions are very important to the business.

Paul added: “The new Vauxhall Zafira Tourers are proving a great success, so much so that when we come to replace other vehicles in our fleet, the Zafira Tourer is likely to be top of our wish list.”

Diane and Paul’s business is an ideal example of how local companies like Dudley Motor Company work with businesses in their community to find winning solutions. You can find Dudley Motor Company on Trindle Road, Dudley, West Midlands, DY2 7AY or for further information telephone 01384 454100.

Newcomer

Dudley is set to tighten its already strong grip on the MPV segment with the all-new Zafira Tourer. The newcomer, which is positioned above the current Zafira in the Vauxhall line-up, has set new standards in flexibility and innovation.

The all-new model builds on the chart-topping success of the well-proven Zafira, while offering improved cabin space, upgraded materials and even greater levels of innovation from the upgraded Flexifit seating arrangement.

With class-leading levels of luxury and prices starting at just £13,130 (more than £1,200 less than the Ford S-Max), ZafiraTourer has set new standards in flexibility and innovation.

01384 454100.
www.dudleymotorco.co.uk
DUDLEY MOTOR COMPANY
(Trindle Road, Dudley, DY2 7AY)

IT’S FREEZING OUTSIDE SO COME AND GET A WINTER WARMER DEAL AT DUDLEY MOTOR COMPANY THIS WEEKEND!

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<thead>
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DUDLEY MOTOR COMPANY
01384 454100
www.dudleymotorco.co.uk
(Trindle Road, Dudley, DY2 7AY)
PRO-TECH PAVERS are looking for a hard working bricklayer/lay to join our team. You will be responsible for laying block paving, kerbs, various bottom works, street works, and all related work. Opportunities are available on a local contract. To apply send a CV to 01384 456664.

STEEL DEFENDERS LTD are looking for metal workers. We are a family run business based in the Telford area. We supply a wide range of quality steel products at competitive prices. To apply send a CV to 01902 317878 • www.expressandstar.com/classifiedads

STUART ABBOTT AT HOME & WORK is looking for work to keep contracting. Trade work preferred. To apply send a CV to 07736 898611

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FIAT PUNTO 1.4 ACTIVE 2007, 5 door, silver, £400 ono. 07958 051263.

FORD FIESTA 1.4TDCi 2000, 3dr, black, £650 ono. 07974 480508.

FIAT PUNTO 1.4 ACTIVE 2007, 5 door, silver, £400 ono. 07958 051263.

FIAT PANDA 1.2 2007, 5 door, lady owner, £6,500. 07977 458066.

FIAT PUNTO 1.4 ACTIVE 2007, 5 door, silver, £400 ono. 07958 051263.

FORD FOCUS 1.6 TDCi 2009, 3dr, silver, long MoT, FSH, very good condition, only 67k, PAS, CD, CL, low Ins, long 250,000 miles, very good condition, £650 ono. 07974 480508.

PEUGEOT 308 1.2 2007, 5 door, lady owner, £6,000. 07759 494096.

NISSAN PRIMERA 2001, 5 door, lady owner, £7,500. 07943 772541.

FORD FOCUS 2.0 ST 2005, 5 door, £6,995. 07790 930223.

FORD C-MAX 2007, 5 door, £6,500. 07884 334818.

JAGUAR XJ 2006, 60 reg, £2,995. 07756 510999.

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KAREN medium build, blonde hair 5’6 3/4 rocks, nice girl. GOOD, living and caring, and looking for a suitable male, Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 415460

BARBARA 39 slim sports figure, smart, energetic young lady enjoys time with friends. Text Only 006 503 3555 Box No: 415461

SALLY 30’s large ladyful girl, seeks a suitable male. She is a young, loving lady with a great sense of humour. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 414977

JULIE single parent attractive lady in early 30’s, looking for a compatible loving companion. Cooking a cozy meal in, nights in. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 414977

JANE petite female who enjoys golf, shops, cooks, enjoys evenings in. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 413250

JENNIFER 32 medium and toned. Call if you want nudes fun. Text Only 006 503 3555 Box No: 415075

GOOD looking professional lady 56, enjoys the arts, country pursuits. She is compatible, genuine and looking for a good things in life. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 415075

ENTS 52 bored housewife wants no strings attached or a good old fashioned chat. Text Only 006 503 3555 Box No: 415075

ANGIE 34’s medium build, likes to have fun, going out, the arts. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 415075

JOHN 40’s tall, athletic, loves the outdoors and cooking. He is genuine and single. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 414078

JOHN 40’s tall, athletic, loves the outdoors and cooking. He is genuine and single. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 414078

George 60’s seeks Asian/ Oriental female for no strings attached, fun. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 414157

Robert 55, 6”4, slim, 30’s, blue eyes, medium build, seeks a nice and friendly lady. Te: 006 503 3555 Box No: 414157

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Tividale square two goal lead to share spoils

M Drayton 2 Tividale 0

TIVIDALE ended a run of four straight league Evo-Stik Division One South defeats but squandered a two-goal lead at Market Drayton.

Despite plenty of Tividale possession and looking threatening, the first chance on 10 minutes fell to Market Drayton as Aidan Haughton fired wide and six minutes later it was Michael O’Reilly’s turn to shoot wide.

Tividale’s first clear chance came when a Boquern Ekhame effort was saved by Drayton keeper Daniel Road. Tividale went agonisingly close on 30 minutes when a Ebanks header from a Zac Foster cross came back off the crossbar.

Then Drayton’s early substitute Joe Donaldson struck the bar with the goal at his mercy. Tividale had another great chance to take the lead when a Chris Fields shot was deflected over the line by Karl Edwards but it was ruled offside.

The visitors opened the scoring on 37 minutes when Edwards pounced on a Danny Ashton cross into the near post and gave Road no chance. On the stroke of half-time they should have extended their lead when David Bullis ran straight through the Drayton back line only to have his shot brilliantly blocked by Road. The ball fell nicely to Ashton with an open goal in front of him and he took a touch but then shot wide of the post.

Drayton had the second half’s first effort on goal when a Cohen Bramall free-kick was parried by Price but William Whieldon failed to control the rebound and he blazed over.

On 57 minutes a Foster free-kick was met by the head of Edwards but again Road saved well. Tividale doubled their lead on the hour when Ebanks got his reward for his hard work up front when he latched onto a poor Drayton clearance and beat Road with his shot.

Six minutes later Drayton halved the deficit when a Tividale error let in Jordan Johnson and he made no mistake when left one on one with Price.

Drayton now had the momentum and poured men forward while Tividale were struggling to keep the ball out of their own half and on 76 minutes came the inevitability. Tividale failed to clear and a Whieldon cross was headed home by James Askey.

Gravese coming back to Heathens

CRADLEY fans’ favourite Nathan Gravese has agreed a deal which will see him back at the club for a third successful season in 2015.

Gravese was unveiled as the club’s second signing for their move to Perry Barr in front of a packed audience at the Heathens Children’s Christmas Party at Cradley Heath Liberal Club.

And his appearance in front of the youngsters went down well after he made the journey from his South Yorkshire base to meet fans.

Gravese is already prepping for the 2015 campaign and says he “can’t wait to be back with the Heathens for a shot at a hat-trick of league titles.”

He said: “I would never really want to leave Cradley – who would? I want a third straight league title.

“They’re a massive club with great fans and they’re definitely the best club in the National League so I’m delighted.

“Last season I know I improved my average and I know I’ve come on a lot since the club signing for the club, but I want to make sure that I improve even further in 2015. It’s a tough self as much as I can and 2015 is going to be a big year for me.”

Morgan is facing an FA charge

WOLVES chairman Steve Morgan faces an FA charge if he is found guilty of insulting referee Mike Jones.

The Molineux chief remonstrated with Jones following a series of controversial decisions in the 2-1 defeat to Birmingham City on Saturday.

Following the game, Jones alleged ‘his language and/or attitude’ during the match were abusive and/or insulting and/or improper.

Jones had to be escorted off the pitch at the end of the game with a furious Morgan venting his frustration at the official.Wolves are – indirectly – involved in another FA charge with the police investigation into the Millwall fight in the middle of a potential error.
Canavan makes the difference for Glassboys

**Football**

DREW Canavan won a close game for Glassboys with a wonderful free-kick but it was no more than the Glassboys deserved.

They edged a close game against the league leaders and defended well when they needed to as well as always looking threatening.

Stourbridge, who had lost their last two-Evo-Stik Premier league games, attacked from the start, George Bowerman sending an early warning. But further seeing his shot well saved by Martin Pea.

Stourbridge 1 Skelmorlde 0

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