Parking fees rise for staff at hospital

PARKING charges for staff at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley will increase up to one per cent. But bosses say any cost increases will be outweighed by savings realised on fuel, insurance and their own wages.

Monthly passes at Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley will increase to a maximum of £19.50 from July 1, up from £19. The budget will be spent offering staff anything from a salary sacrifice scheme where the charges are taken automatically from their wages.

Finance chiefs say they will pay a maximum of £72.27 if they sign up — as cash will be saved against tax and national insurance. But they admit the prices have not been increased to bring in more money.

More than 1,000 parking tickets were handed out to patients, staff and visitors at Russells Hall in less than a year. It followed a clampdown by car park attendants after complaints about motorists blocking the path of ambulances.

Chief executive of the Dudley and West Midlands Hospitals Foundation Trust Paula Clark said: “They have seen an increase in the staff car park tax payments from a maximum of £19.50 per month, but a reduction in the actual amount paid by staff via savings against tax and national insurance.”

Delays alert over repairs

REPAIR work will start next week on a motorway bridge near Halesowen which was the scene of a fatal lorry crash.

The engineering works will be carried out on Cartera Lane bridge close to junction three of the M5 to repair damage to the bridge caused in the crash.

Motorists were warned to expect delays as the works programme begins.

The work will start on Monday between 8am and 6am for a fortnight.
**Hippodrome support passes 2,000**

CAMPAGNERS fighting to save £10 million redevelopment at the hall have had their hopes raised by a donation from Dudley's biggest business.

Since the campaign launched, several thousands of pounds have been raised and the Local Government Association has declared its approval of the plans. The careers director of estates, Steve Johnson, looks at the gardens.

A SPECIALIST department at Dudley's main hospital is being given a £1 million revamp to help improve patient care.

The inside of the impressive Dudley Evolve building in Tower Street is a hive of activity with classrooms starting to take shape and electrical fittings being installed. The new machines replace BMIs and will be fitted.

The old fire engine doors, which has been covered in a water-proof wrapping, is being con-

The building, which stands in Castle Hill, near Dudley Zoo and opposite The Station Hotel, could be torn down as part of the £10 million masterplan transform-

Dudley Council is behind the plans, which have been promoted to investors and raised funds for the campaign. Mr Fitzpatrick says he was delighted that more and more people had signed the petition and hoped this would give more weight to their argument with Dudley's new Labour-controlled council.

It is great that we have reached 2,000 signatures and we are still going strong because we want to ensure we don’t lose momentum,”

The judge also imposed a curfew between 8pm and 7am until the end of July.

More than 2,000 people have now signed a petition urging councillors to reverse proposals for the landmark site.

The new facility ensures that there should be something done,”

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**News in brief**

**Sadness as park party is finished**

DANCE groups say the loss of the Park Party in the Park is a "devastating" blow to the community and one less opportunity for everyone to reach out to boost trade. Organizer Bob Parrott, assistant to the Black Country Events Ltd, staged the last event at Mary Stevens Park, Norton, recently.

**Sponsorship needed for the Natasha Hanell School of Dance**

The News spent all of its working life in the pottery industry in Netherton, West Midlands and Worcestershire.

**There is an admission charge for two members.**

**Guidance offer for Olympic fun**

COMMUNITY groups are being offered guidance that will help them organise Olympic-themed events.

Groups who are staging Olympic-themed events can apply for guidance and information about event planning. The council has successfully registers with London 2012 to receive up to a £250 grant.

**Give your views**

DUDLEY people can have their say on the future of the council's heathcare at a meeting on June 14 hosted by the Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group at the Concert Hall from 11am.

**PLANS for a cafe**

A COTTAGE garden with a tropical twist will be delighting visitors in the Black Country when it opens to the public.

Retired transport manager Peter Bridgens will be welcoming people to his 13 Lansdowne Road, Hulbert Green, home on May 20 and June 24.

The garden, which features many rare and unusual plants, has been designed by the 65 year-old and planted by his friend Mr Matthew King.

Mr Bridgens said: "The garden is only two years old but I’ve tried to make it look mature with the plants I have chosen."

It’s a suburban cottage garden with a tropical twist."

Among the plants in the garden are the passion fruit, buddleia agrostos, stewartia, Schizandra, blackberry, zone and there are also water features. Mr Bridgens said he spent a lot of time in the garden after suffering a heart attack three years ago.

He said he was looking forward to welcoming visitors to the two open days running from 2.30pm until 5.30pm.

They are being held as part of the National Gardens Scheme, which raises money for charity.

**Tropical twist to garden**

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Olympic torch to blaze a trail across the borough

DUDLEY: JUNE 30, ARRIVAL TIME – 4.20pm

WHETHER travelling by land, water or rail, the Olympic Torch is sure of a bos'kin Black Country welcome on its arrival in Dudley.

Visitors will be able to see the torchbearers from several vantage points as they pound through the streets on June 30.

The flame will travel at a sedate pace on a narrowboat from the Dudley Canal Trust, off Birmingham New Road through to the Black Country Living Museum, where it will make part of its journey on a tram.

Organisers hope to create a carnival atmosphere in Dudley when the flame comes to town.

Torchbearers have won the opportunity to carry the Olympic flame through Dudley. Many were expected for their work in the community or for charity. The torchbearers include Dudley people.

The torch will arrive at the north of the borough in Colesley at around 4.20pm.

Torchbearers will have already taken the flame through Wolverhampton before juggling Birmingham New Road into Dudley.

Handover

The official handover will take place on Birmingham New Road at its junction with Shaw Road before it heads into Dudley borough. Pupils and staff from The Cooley School, and Specialist Sports College, are expected to gather to cheer the torch on its way.

As the torchbearers continue down Birmingham New Road, past the former Beards Industries site on the left hand side of the road, the route then swings down past the North Priory estate and on towards the entrance to the Dudley Canal Trust.

The venue is the first focal point for the relay through Dudley as the flame takes a unique journey on a narrowboat through the tunnels, lighting the dim, watery passageways, many of which date back to the 18th century.

The Olympic flame will be travelling on a narrowboat through the borough

Exsport canal survivors will then guide the narrowboat to moor at the trust’s link with the Black Country Living Museum. The spectacle will be watched by 1,000 lucky people who have won free tickets from a draw held by the museum.

Visitors are invited to enter into the spirit of the day and dress in early 1900s costume.

Torchbearers continue through the museum taking in sights such as the Bottle and Glass Inn. The flame will then hop on board a traditional tram for the final part of its journey through the museum. Museum director Andre Lovett said: “It feels so proud to welcome the Olympic Torch to Black Country Living Museum.”

Visitors will then bid a fond farewell to the flame as it exits out on to the Tipton Road.

People will line the street as the torch passes the site for the new £6 million Dudley Archives and up towards the Castlegate island at the foot of Castle Hill.

It will then round the corner in the shadow of Dudley Castle and down Birmingham Road past the Castlegate retail park towards Biscuit Tree.

And that is where the flame will leave Dudley.

The Simone Diamond Jubilee River Pageant

Sat 2nd - Sun 3rd June 2012 — £125.00 pp

This year the Queen will be celebrating 60 years as Monarch and we will be in London to be part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the planned Thames River Pageant on Sunday 3rd June 2012 where one of the largest flotillas ever assembled will muster on the River Thames including an enormous display of both, wooden launches and steam vessels. A the flotilla passes London Bridge a Formal Sun Salute will be sounded, the Queens vessel will continue followed by 6000, creating a never to be forgotten sight - few seats now remaining

HOLIDAYS IN UK & EUROPE

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Cancer mother taunted by jobs

A MOTHER battling cancer was reduced to tears by a gang of teenage yobs who mocked her bald head when she went out for the first time after undergoing chemotherapy.

Kim Palmer-Young had gone to the Tissue Express, in Kildareminster, when four teenagers pointed at and taunted her.

The 51-year-old nursery manager was diagnosed with Hodgkin Lymphoma in her neck last year and has endured three gruelling chemotherapy sessions.

Her diagnosis was a double-blow to her four children who lost their father Mick to a brain haemorrhage in 2009, aged 49.

Mrs Palmer-Young had plugged up the courage to step out for the first time after undergoing the treatment when she was taunted by the gang.

She said the experience had been a “real low point” and had set back her fight against the cancer.

After the taunts she fled from the store in tears and has been too distraught to leave the house since.

Support group

A MEETING of Stourbridge’s Bereavement Support group will take place on Thursday, May 31.

The group’s next meeting will run from 2pm until 5pm at St James’s Church Hall, Belbry Drive, Wollaston.

Don’t miss Peter Rhodes every Friday in your Express & Star

Do not hallucinate.
It’s MORE than 30 years since Michael “Gerry” Byrne was made redundant as the last bus conductor in Stourbridge – but he has returned to the new bus station as a VIP. Mr Byrne, now 94, was back at the, £7 million, ultra-modern version – alongside a government minister.

Mr Byrne met Justine Greening, transport secretary, who officially opened the Stourbridge Interchange, which links the bus terminal to the Stourbridge Town rail station. The father-of-eight, who now has 11 grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, said: “I was a Midland Red conductor for 35 years from 1946.”

He added: “Then I was a conductor under West Midlands Passenger Transport until I was made redundant in 1979. By then I was the last conductor on the buses locally.

“They were lovely days – there was more companionship and I used to ride into the countryside to places like Ludlow, Bridgnorth and Worcester.

“I used to ride my bike to the old Stourbridge bus station ready for the first bus at 5.10am, work until 1pm and then come back at 4.30pm for another four hours.

“I wanted the overtime because I had such a big family and I turned down a job as an inspector because I was earning more money than they did.”

He also described the new interchange as “lovely”.

The opening ceremony had a poignant ring because Counsellor Angus Adams, who was chairman of Centre and a driving force behind the building of the new station, died suddenly aged 67 in April.

Miss Greening said: “It’s a fantastic new bus station for Stourbridge. It’s wonderful to see just how many people have come together to work to make this thing happen and I would also like to pay tribute to Angus Adams for the work he did.

“I know that he really pushed this forward and I think that’s why this would be a fitting tribute to him.”

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Rail line is off to 1940s

VISITORS can step back in time to the 1940s when the Severn Valley Railway hosts two heritage weekends.

Previous events have attracted hundreds of visitors to the Wilmcote station, near Stratford-upon-Avon, but this time it is all about the railway.

The weekend events will be held on June 23 and 24 and June 30 and July 1.

Hairdresser Dale Wooldridge has won a top styling award

A HAIRDRESSER at a Kidderminster salon has proved she can make the cut after winning a top prize.

Dale Wooldridge, aged 23, who works at Andrea Beers in Mill Street, impressed the judges with her cutting and colouring skills.

She created an alternative look and won Reflections Training Academy’s NVQ Level II Hairdresser of the Year gold award. Miss Wooldridge, who lives in Marlpool, said she was “a complete surprise” when her name was read out as the winner.

“If I put a lot of effort in to it and it paid off. It’s really nice to have my hard work recognised,” she said.

£1.5m funding cuts will hit budgets at colleges

HALESWEN College’s funding has been slashed by around £1.5m and Kidderminster College’s by £440,000, but jobs are unlikely to be axed as a result.

Meanwhile, Stafford College does face job losses after Government funding cuts of £2.5 million but Stourbridge College has won an extra £900,000 after a student campaign.

The mixed picture continues at Dudley College where principal Lewis Williams says funding is “broadly the same” as last year.

Keith Bates, principal of Halesowen College, said: “We’ve had a reduction of funding in the region of £1 million for next year but we had planned for that.

“We delivered an operating surplus last year of £2.6 million so this is manageable.”

Andy Dobson, principal at Kidderminster College, said: “We have a cut of £440,000 in funding for the coming year but that is not as significant as at some colleges and we will manage our finances.

“We don’t anticipate any redundancies, although money will be tight and we may choose not to sub-contract certain items and there may be a reduction in part-time staff we take on.”

Mr Dobson said the college made 12 voluntarily redundant last year.

The Dudley Centre for Equality requires new trustees across the Black Country needs new trustees for its board.

Anyone interested is invited to call 01384 461616 or email admin@cdf.org.uk.

Equality trustees wanted

A DUDLEY organisation which promotes equality for ethnic minority communities across the Black Country needs new trustees.

The Dudley Centre for Equality requires a team of trustees and hopes to fill its four vacancies by the end of summer.

Anyone interested is invited to call 01384 461616 or email admin@cdf.org.uk.
A Black Country grandmother will lace up her walking boots for a five-day trek across the Sahara Desert to raise more than £1,000 for charity.

Sarah Hollies, of Wollaston, will set out on the epic journey on November 4 and is training to build up her stamina for the challenge.

The London Midland worker decided on the trip to help Breakthrough Breast Cancer charity but wanted to go somewhere different than usual walking challenges. The 52-year-old will be joined on the trek by an old school friend, who now lives in Majorca.

She is being supported by her family and friends and has already raised nearly £1,000. Sarah has paid for the trip herself, and has already completed walks of more than 16-miles.

To sponsor Sarah take a look at her website at www.justgiving.co/sarah-sahara-

Sarah sets sights on Sahara

Sarah Hollies, of Wollaston, prepares for her trek across the Sahara

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Did you know that, 80% of our customers are retired?

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PREPARATIONS are gathering pace for a carnival that is expected to attract thousands to a Midland town.

Bewdley Carnival will be on June 16 starting at 1pm with the traditional procession starting in Hereford Park, Clowbury Road, before making its way through the centre of the town ending at the carnival field in Stourport Road.

The parade will be led by carnival princesses Lauren Watkin, 13, Libby Hawkeswells, 9, Kayla Botfield, 9, and Daisy Hughes, 5. Entertainment will put on with the main event being a fire stunt spectacular.

Details are drawn up

DETAILED designs are being drawn up for a £20 million retail development, creating up to 500 jobs, on the site of an outbuild located in Dudley.

Residents were able to give their views on the scheme for Falcon House in The Minories at a consultation event.

Now their responses are being used for a planning application which is due to be submitted in the summer.

If approved, work on the scheme, which is one of two proposed supermarkets in the town centre, will get under way in 2014.

Plans for a supermarket on the site of Cavendish House in Trindle Road have already been lodged with council chiefs.

Falcon House is in the New Mill Gate area of the town, which Dudley Council has said is keen to see redeveloped. It is currently only used as offices by the council, which has a short-term lease.

Under the plans the building, which dates back to the 1990s, would be knocked down by owner Commercial Estates Group. A retail development is expected to be anchored by a foodstore.

The proposals were praised by shoppers during the consultation event held in March.

Around 300 people viewed the plans, which went on public display for two days.

Spokeswoman for Commercial Estates Group Rebekah Parack said: “We’re going through consultation responses and finalising details of the scheme.”

Developers say the revamp will help to bring more people into the town centre and boost other regeneration projects.

Meanwhile a planning application for the Cavendish House scheme was lodged with council chiefs.

The office block, which has been empty for four years, will be demolished and a supermarket, creating 500 jobs, will be built in its place.

Residents have been calling for vandalised Cavendish House to be knocked down for some time, labelling it an “eyesore”. Many of the windows are boarded up or broken.

Town is set for carnival

Bishop adds his voice to campaign over VAT
Government is to blame

THIS Coalition Government is entirely to blame for their poor showing at the recent poll in my opinion and no doubt thousands of others. It is not a united party and to put things bluntly it was not what the majority of voters, Tory or Liberal wanted after a General Election.

The promises made to voters at the time have as usual not been kept, i.e. a cut in immigration, a repeal of the hated Human Rights Act which is exploited beyond belief by criminals, terrorists and anybody else who see us as a soft touch and goes away with it.

People as a whole are too difficult to please, but when voting time comes around as these May elections have proved these broken election promises play a major part in the final outcome when votes are counted, it’s just the way it is.

I’m 78 years old and I cannot argue that government must change and change now if it wants to stay in power.

SQUEEZERS RUIN THE LOAVES FOR EVERYONE

FOR A long time I have been angered by the loaves I buy at my local supermarket, which when opened are torn and unattractive.

The store tells me they can do nothing about it. The reason is plain when you see people squeezing loaves so they can be put into the trolley.

The people who squeeze the bread clearly still live in the past when the local baker mixed his own dough, lit his coal-fired, brick oven and judged when the bread was ready. That’s how it was when I was a child.

Those statically controlled fan ovens with no cool corners or hot spaces by each bus stand, as these May elections have proved these broken election promises play a major part in the final outcome when votes are counted, it’s just the way it is.

THE new toilets at Stourbridge are too small. The Dressing Rooms

THE new toilets at Stourbridge inter change are not very big.

Instead of all the open space by each bus stand, they could have made the toilets bigger.

It’s a good job I’m small. If a large person went in they would get stuck. It was waste of money they have spent on the inter changes.

PAULA DAVIES,

Bathroom Magic

If you are fed up with unsightly pipework and plumbing fixtures, fitted furniture offers you an integrated, co-ordinated and uncluttered look as well as providing plentiful storage for all of your bathroom products - turning your bathroom into a place of order and tranquility.

In recent years the bathroom market has been flooded with inexpensive imported white furniture. This is usually false economy as within a short time it needs to be replaced again. Bathroom Magic only uses high quality furniture from established and trusted names such as Vanity Hall, Atlanta, Ellis, Roper Rhodes and RZ and is confident that there is a style, size and budget to please everyone. Modular units are also available to create a stunning look for your new room.

If you are feeling inspired and are looking for good quality at affordable prices give Bathroom Magic a try, you just might like what you find...

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TOILETS ARE TOO SMALL

THE new toilets at Stourbridge interchange are not very big.

Instead of all the open space by each bus stand, they could have made the toilets bigger.

It’s a good job I’m small. If a large person went in they would get stuck. It was waste of money they have spent on the inter changes.

PAULA DAVIES,

Norton

Call to all veterans to celebrate forces day

ONCE again Dudley Council is delighted to be holding Armed Forces Day at Himley Hall on Sunday July 1. This great event sponsored which celebrates the HM Armed Forces Veterans Badges and I'm appealing to served in the armed forces at any time, to get in touch with Personnel and Veterans Agency, Norcross, Thornbury via email SPVA-Veterans-Badges@mod.uk

Delight at losing the control of council

LIKE most Council tax payers I have a long memory.

The Dressing Rooms

MASSIVE MARQUEE SALE WEEKEND

Mother of the Bride

Prom Dresses

Occasion Wear

Hat & Fascinators

Wedding Dresses

ALL HALF PRICE OR LESS

“One-Off Sale Never to be Repeated”

Sat 19th May 9.30am-5pm

Sun 20th May 11am-4pm

At The Dressing Rooms

24 Manor Lane

Halesowen, B62 9BY

0121 423 2777

The Dressing Rooms

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0121 423 2777
Pioneer North was star in the world of aviation

John Dudley North CBE

North (hatless) by the pioneering all-metal Boulton & Paul Bolton in 1922

JOHN Dudley North was one of the great pioneers of British aviation.

Not as well known as those who gave their names to famous aircraft companies like Geoffrey De Havilland, Frederick Handley Page and Richard Fairey, nevertheless he wielded as much influence over one particular company as any of them, the local aircraft builder, Boulton Paul Aircraft.

North began an apprenticeship in marine engineering, but in 1911 joined the infant aircraft maker, The Aeronautical Syndicate at Hendon.

When that folded he moved next door to Graham White Aviation, and soon became chief engineer. One of the aircraft he designed there was the first British aircraft to loop the loop, and his Type 10 Charsan set a World Record in 1913, by lifting 50 people aloft on the power of its 120 hp engine.

In 1915, aged just 22, he came to the Midlands, helping set up aircraft production lines at Austin Motors and starting up its design office.

Luke Austin, Boulton & Paul, a Norwich joinery company, was brought into aircraft manufacturing with government orders. It soon decided to start their own design office, and recruited North as chief engineer.

For more than 50 years he was to be its dominate influence, retiring as chairman. He pioneered the use of metal in aircraft structures, which led to Boulton & Paul being trusted with the design and construction of the largest aircraft ever made in this country, the R.101 Airship.

As aircraft speeds increased he led the way in producing fully enclosed power operated gun turrets for his Overstrand bomber.

He bought the rights to a French electro-hydraulic turret which would arm the famous Defiant fighter and form the basis for the aviation work on which the company thrives to this day.

In 1934 the aircraft department of Boulton & Paul was sold off, and became Boulton Paul Aircraft Ltd. A factory was built on a green-field site at Pendeford, and 600 Norfolk workers moved to Wolverhampton.

It built nearly 2,000 aircraft at Pendeford, and more than 20,000 Boulton Paul gun turrets armed Allied aircraft during the Second World War.

The electro-hydraulic technology of the turrets was applied to the design of power control units which were increasingly used in jet aircraft, and the company was at the forefront in designing electronic fly-by-wire controls, as used in Concord and modern combat aircraft and airliners.

He oversaw the merger of his company with that of his great friend George Dowty. The firm which, after a series of take-overs, became Moog Aerospace.

North was a self taught man with a brilliant mind, who absorbed scientific knowledge and was able to apply it to practical engineering solutions.

He loved cricket and alpines and cultivated a fine alpine garden at his Bridgnorth home.

North died in 1988; he was awarded a CBE, but it is difficult to understand why he never received the knighthood he deserved, for honing the cutting edge of British aviation for 55 years.

North shows Sir Archiebald Sinclair turret parts in 1942

A 50 years service award in 1967 is presented by his friend George Dowty, with Mrs North
**Theatre group in a race against time over store**

Drive in to see Grease

**Steph Woodbine and Matt Meredith from Westfield Merry Hill concierge team are all ready to cruise to the drive-in movie.**

**THE WORD is the classic 70s film Grease is coming to the big screen at Dudley’s Merry Hill shopping centre.**

A drive-in movie event will take place on May 31 proceeds from which will aid Merry Hill’s charity. The charity helps 400 disabled or ill children in Dudley to have fun and make friends. People need to head to P2 car park outside Debenhams to watch the film. To gain entry and free popcorn to the retro night out, simply buy a programme at the concierge desk in the centre. The gates open at 7pm and the film will begin promptly at 9pm.

**Marketing manager Kelly Reed said: “We can’t wait to see everyone having a blast and singing along to all the Grease classics.”**

**A DUDLEY theatre group is looking for a new props store because its current unit is about to be demolished.**

Dudley Little Theatre, created in 1947, is appealing for help to find new premises before the end of the month. At the present they are using a site in Pelham Street, Wolverhampton.

But it is being knocked down as part of a new housing development.

If no-one comes forward before May 31, the group will have nowhere to keep its stock of furniture which is vital for their productions.

“We desperately need someone to come forward and help us. We are an amateur group and it is not viable for us to pay anything like commercial prices for rent.”

Anyone who can help should call the theatre group on 01384 259267 or 07711 491867.

**“Outstanding kitchen, thoughtfully designed, excellent service”**

Mrs Anderson, Hagley Green

They gave us our perfect kitchen, a great local company.” Sandra Donnelly, Kingswinford

“A major project completed on time without any problems” Gill McKenzie, Cockhill

“We must have changed our minds a dozen times, they happily made the changes – and without any extra costs” Jeni & Tony Kingston, Tettenhall

“Our beautiful, top of the range ovens, were supplied at better than internet prices, delivered, installed and fully guaranteed” Mrs & Mr Griffiths, Halesowen

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Mrs Anderson, Hagley Green

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**Halesowen Chronicle, Thursday, May 17 2012 Page 11**

www.expressandstar.com/free-editions
**Customers left in limbo as bridal shop shuts up**

The sudden closure of a dress shop has left brides-to-be and school students preparing for their proms without dresses for their big days.

Orders had been placed months in advance with Marion Vaughan Bridal Studio, Lower High Street, Stourbridge.

But worried customers said they were stunned when they arrived at the store to see the shelves and racks stripped.

They say they have made repeated calls to the shop in a bid to get an answer.

Liz Brewerton, aged 53, ordered her daughter’s prom dress, which had still not arrived with just three days to go. She paid deposits and other costs of £140 for the emerald dress in February ahead of settling a £275 bill upon delivery.

Mrs Brewerton, of Wordsley, said she had received an email from the firm which said Marion Vaughan Bridal Studio Ltd had “ceased trading”.

She said the email stated the firm offered its sincere apologies for any inconvenience and said it would be transferring her deposit back to her bank account.

Liz’s 16-year-old daughter Laura, a pupil at Summerhill School, Kingswinford, had looked at a number of dresses at different stores before settling on her dream design.

Greg Chapman and his bride-to-be Jacqueline Dunn placed a £65 deposit on February 11 to order a £200 wedding dress which would take up to 12 weeks to arrive.

No-one from Marion Vaughan Bridal Studio Ltd was available for comment.

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**Musical with family ties**

KINVER Light Operatic Society is staging its version of the classic Rodgers and Hammerstein musical *Sound of Music*.

The musical runs at the Edgelforth Theatre, Kinver until May 19 with nightly performances and a matinee on Saturday. The family connection goes further than the fictional Von Trapps, with relatives of different generations on stage together.

Bella Moreton, aged eight, stars as Gretl Von Trapp, while her mum, Cathy Moreton, plays Sister Sophia. Millie Brown, 10, plays Brigitta Von Trapp – and her brother, Joe Brown, is Nazi soldier Rolf. Ellie Woodward, 12, plays Louisa Von Trapp, with her mother, Rachel Woodward, in a nun.

For tickets call 01384 836963.
Fans are given a say in building future for Yeltz

Supporters have secured a seat on the board of Halesowen football club which is fighting back a year after almost going under financially.

Halesowen Town Football Club’s new owner Steve Lynch granted a request by fans’ group, the Yeltz Trust, to have a representative on the board.

Former team chairman Gary Willetts has taken up the role and says ground improvements are a priority. Mr Willetts commended the new owner for stabilising the club and allowing fans to have a voice.

“It is amazing to think where we have come in the last 12 months because the club had basically gone this time last year,” he said.

“Steve has put the day-to-day running into the hands of a committee made up of people from all around this club and it is working well. Anything supporters want to say now they can come to me and it is raised with the committee – at least there is a discussion now.”

He says the club, which plays at The Grove stadium, Old Houns Lane, is now looking to making improvements around the ground. They want to update the press area, the dressing rooms and the pitch.

The Yeltz Trust held its first Community Day recently to build relations with the town. Police shoot-out contests, live music and exhibition matches were among the events organised at the ground.

Construction can be a lark

Two pairs of nesting skylarks have delayed construction of a new £250,000 hockey pitch.

The birds have been nesting above the site in Stirnup, leading wildlife experts to stay away from the area until the nesting season. Construction cannot begin until young fledge.

A new, all-weather pitch to be built at Stirnup Sport and Social Club in Kinwynn.

SOMERSET

5 day trip £166!

It’s true! You can now have a fantastic 5-day coach trip to the village of Street in glorious Somerset for a special one-off price this July.

There’s no hidden charges...just an unbeatable offer! Here’s the full details...

• Mon: You’ll arrive at the hotel late afternoon. Settle-in and look forward to a dinner and a spot of entertainment.
• Tue: A trip to the historic market town of Glastonbury. This afternoon we also visit Wells - England’s smallest City with one of the most exciting cathedrals in Europe.
• Wed: Full day out to the beautiful city of Bath. Thur: Today is free to explore Street and we travel home on Friday.

The Wessex Hotel, Street 

Right in the village centre of Street, one of the highest Street with shops, cozy pubs and tea rooms on your doorstep. Good Food, All 50 guest rooms have full facilities. Lift. Regular evening entertainment. Patios and Garden. You must be quick - we’re limited to one coach at this ‘silly’ price!

Departure Mon 19th June £166

Price includes: 4 nights D/B/B plus trips out as shown

BIDEFORD

4 day trip £144!

It’s true! You can now have a fantastic 4-day coach trip to Bideford and glorious North Devon for a special one-off price! Don’t look for any ‘catches’ there aren’t any! Here’s the full details...

Fri: We arrive this afternoon at the lovely Durrant House hotel Bideford for 4 nights D/B/B basis and days out on Saturday and Sunday.
Sat: We visit two picturesque coastal fishing villages. Appledore and Ilfracombe.
Sun: We go to Exmoor National Park stopping at the twin villages of Lynton and Lynmouth. Included in this is a ride on the unique water operated cliff railway dating back to 1890.
Mon: We travel home on a last, hearty breakfast. Durrant House Hotel, Bideford

Modern, spacious hotel of 3 star standard with two restaurants, bars, and a large ballroom offering something different for every evening.

Specialist Offer. Fri 31st July £144

Price includes: 3 days D/B/B plus trips out as shown plus FREE use of your Devon Cream Tea at Canal Tea Rooms Included

IRELAND

5 day coach holiday £196

It’s true! You can now you can have a wonderful 5 day coach trip to Co. Waterford for only £196! Starting in a lovely hotel on the coast in Co. Waterford, you’ll enjoy your time spend in prestigious, Cork and Blarney (ALL FREE trips)...and it’s all for just 196...There’s no hidden charges, absolutely no catches!

Day 1: Join our coach this morning on a leisurely journey to Fishguard and board the 2.30pm Ferry to Rosslare in Ireland. Crossing the East Channel at 3.30pm and then it’s about 1½ hours drive to our hotel in the harboar town of Dungarvan in Co. Waterford.
Day 2: 3 Trips out include Kilkenny City, Cork and Blarney
Day 3: Today is left free so you can explore Dungarvan itself at your own pace
Day 4: Leave for home after breakfast
 Included in the price are all the excursions and trips out to Lawlers Hotel, Dungarvan

In the heart of this historic town. 94 bedrooms with Private Bathrooms. Comfortable location.

Departures Mon 9th July & 6th August £196

All Buses serviced including: Balsall Heath, Ferrol, Worcester

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Halesowen U13s with the trophy and members of the Yeltz Trust and Yeltz Athletic

Lakes

Fantastic Mini Break for £89

It’s true! You can now have a fantastic mini break in the Lake District for just £89! Staying in a lovely 3 star hotel, you’ll enjoy a train ride through the Leven Valley and a cruise on Lake Windermere...and it’s all for just £89...

There’s no hidden charges...just an unbeatable offer! Here’s the full details...

Join our coach on Sunday morning for a leisurely journey to the Lake District. Once in Coniston, our first stop is in the charming village of Cartmel. We’ll spend a leisurely hour or so here, then go on to our lovely 3 star hotel in Windermere...

Shap Wells Hotel

A beautiful location on the rhetoric wooded valley in the Shap Fells surrounded by mountain streams. We arrive with time to settle-in and freshen-up before dinner.

Monday: enjoy a hearty breakfast prior to a special day in the Lake District. First we board a steam train for a short ride through the beautiful scenery of the Leven Valley, then a two minute cruise on Lake Windermere to Bowness. A few hours free time here then go on to Grassmere before we depart the Lakes for home.

Price includes: Coach, hotel, dinner, full breakfast and entrance to the Shap Fells.

Departures Sun 24th June & 9th Sep £89

Blackpool

Illuminations

4 star Break £79

A fantastic short break - see the famous Lights and the Lake District and stay at the Hilton Blackpool hotel with full breakfast - just £79

Day 1 Sunday: Meet your coach on Sunday morning for our leisurely journey up to Blackpool. We arrive at your hotel late afternoon with time to settle-in before a light evening meal.

After dinner (around 7.30pm) your coach will be waiting to take you on a tour of the famous Golden Mile. The least traffic is on Sunday evenings so it’s a good time to enjoy the Lights.

We return to the hotel later this evening - and you could always enjoy a nightout or two in the hotel bar - or try one of the many other hotels just outside on the Promenade.

Day 1 Monday: Wake to a hearty breakfast (or something lighter, there’s plenty of options) then we go up to the Lake District where you’ll have time to yourself in Bowness and Ambleside before we leave the Lakes for home - arriving back early evening.

We stay at the Hilton Hotel Blackpool **** Located on North Promenade, this is a fine, modern hotel with bar, restaurant, indoor pool. All guest rooms with full modern facilities. Lift to all floors.

Day 1 Monday: Meet your coach on Sunday morning for a leisurely journey to the Lake District. Once in Coniston, our first stop is in the charming village of Cartmel. We’ll spend a leisurely hour or so here, then go on to our lovely 3 star hotel in Windermere...

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Price includes: Coach, hotel, dinner, full breakfast and entrance to the Lake District.

Departures Sun 3rd September £89

Palace Shows

Royal Jewels

During the summer opening of Buckingham Palace this year there will be a spectacular exhibition of the Royal Family’s Diamonds to mark the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee.

This sparkling showcase of diamonds features a series of fantastic jewels that has been used to decorate regalia, bought for personal use or simply inherited in the passing down of gifts from previous generations of Royals. This exhibition is a must-see!!

Join our 2 day coach break...

Join our coach on Sunday morning for a leisurely journey to the Lake District. Once in Coniston, our first stop is in the charming village of Cartmel. We’ll spend a leisurely hour or so here, then go on to our lovely 3 star hotel in Windermere...

Monday: After breakfast we leave the hotel for our private coach trip to Buckingham Palace. The fabulously luxurious State Rooms are lavishly furnished with some of the greatest treasures from the Royal Collection PLUS this year only, there’s a special display of the Royal Jewels.

After the Palace we board the coach for Covent Garden - a real shoppers paradise those famous street entertainers. We leave London for home late afternoon.

Price includes: coach travel, hotel, full breakfast and entrance to Buckingham Palace. Single Sup £20

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Film matinees at hall

A NEW series of matinee film screenings at Stourbridge Town Hall has been announced.

The screening on June 11 will be the multi-Oscar winning silent movie The Artist, with 1957 classic The Prince and The Showgirl a week later. All films are screened at the Wollaston Suite and start at 1.30pm. Admission is £3. To book visit www.dudley.gov.uk

CHORISTERS will take part in a mass performance at Dudley Concert Hall for charity next month.

Male choirs from Warley, Cradley Heath and Kingswinford will be among seven groups performing on June 30 from 7pm.

There will also be performances from soloist Louise Goode and the Holborne Brass Ensemble. Proceeds will be split between Burnaid and the Midland Air Ambulance. Tickets cost £12. For information call 0121 502 5330.

Singing to raise notes

Killer punch barber fails in appeal over sentence

A BARBER who killed a father with a single punch as his fiancee and young daughter looked on outside a Dudley off-licence has lost an appeal against his sentence.

Marcus Hutton suffered a blow to the head when he was hit by Delroy Hines in a fracas in Priory Road on July 9. Mr Hutton, of Priory Road, died in hospital after being placed on a life support machine.

Father-of-four Hines, aged 36, pleaded guilty at Wolverhampton Crown Court to the manslaughter of 30-year-old Mr Hutton. He was jailed for five years by Judge John Warner at Wolverhampton Crown Court in December.

Hines of Upper Gornal and who had an “appalling” criminal record of “using violence to solve a problem” — had left the scene then returned a few minutes later to pick up his hat before leaving again, the Court of Appeal in London heard.

Mr Hutton was walking to his home in Dudley with his partner and nine-year-old daughter — and took exception to Hines looking at his partner’s bottom, judges were told. Lawyers representing Hines, of Upper Gornal, last week unsuccessfully attempted to persuade three appeal judges the sentence was too long.

Judge Goldststein accepted Hines had shown “genuine remorse” but added: “He has, simply but unfortunately, an unhappy tendency to use violence as a way of solving a problem.”

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Reunion to mark 100th Baggeridge anniversary

Memories of a former colliery that employed thousands of men from the Black Country and Staffordshire will be recalled to mark its 100th birthday.

A cafe owner at a beauty spot on the land where the Baggeridge pit used to stand is inviting former miners to a reunion to mark the centenary of their old colliery swinging into full-time production.

The mine, near Sedgley, opened in 1912 and closed down 56 years later in 1968. It was later turned into the Baggeridge Country Park attraction.

Now David Daly, who owns the Baggeridge Tea Shop, is organising a special event on May 26 to commemorate the old pit and the people who worked there.

He is inviting ex-employees of the colliery, their families and tea shop regulars and is putting on a free buffet for them from midday to 2pm.

There will also be live music played by regulars at the cafe. Mr Daly is also urging anyone with old photographs of the mine or its

Annual charity clay

An annual clay shoot for Mary Stevens Hospice in Stourbridge will be held on June 16. The event, the sixth to be held, will take place at the Cross Guns Shooting Ground in Kinver and is suitable for beginners and professionals alike.

The recommended party size is four to six people. The individual cost is £13 for 20 clays. Call 01384 377778.

A worker in the Baggeridge pit, once the deepest coal mine in the...
Young and old turn out for big run in the sun

THE SUN was shining for runners as they pulled on their trainers to take part in a long-standing race. Around 120 keen runners from clubs around the region took part in the Cobra Classic 10k from the Old Halsowmen's sports ground, Wassell Groves, near Hagley, at the weekend.

Cobra Running and Triathlon Club hosted the event, and organisers said they were delighted with the turnout.

Dozens of young and old took part in a mini fun run which was held just before the main event. Among them was Cobra club member Scott Taylor who took his daughter Orlaith, aged five, and six-year-old son Noah to the event. “I thought it would be a good event to take part in, and the weather is good, so I bought the kids down with me,” he said.

Members of Halesowen Athletics and Cycling Club lined up at the start ready for the off alongside members of other clubs including Dudley Kingswinford.

Runner Caroline Lambert, 44, said: “We always try to support our local races, and this is one of the good ones. The weather is good, it is tough though.”

They strode out from the grounds at 10.50am on the route which takes in the scenic countryside around Hagley and Halesowen.

Running
Winner of the men’s race was Daniel Robinson of Birmingham Running and Triathlon Club in 36.22mins with Stourbridge Running Club member Louise Collins the first woman home in a time of 43.42mins.

Fun run winner was Lilly Higgins, 12, from Stourbridge, who is a member of Halesowen Athletics and Cycling Club.

Race director Chris Pearson said: “We have had a good turnout this year, and we are pleased so many come out to support the race.”

Help us to manage demand for our A&E services during Jubilee holiday time

Research shows one in three of all people who go to A&E could be treated elsewhere in the community.

- Your local pharmacist offers accessible, confidential advice, care and treatment for minor ailments and advises whether or not you need to see a GP.
- Call NHS Direct for confidential nurse-led telephone advice 24 hours a day. Tel: 0845 46 47. Or online at www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
- Dudley Walk-in Centre, Holly Hall Clinic, Stourbridge Road is available 8am-8pm, 365 days a year for minor illness and injuries. Tel: 0330 123 9225
- Contact your GP for medical problems, or, for GP out of hours service, telephone your GP and follow the recorded advice.

Top from left, Les Woods, Caroline Lambert, Sam Love, Andy Jones, Marion Bailey, Adrian Low, front, Grace Taylor, Olivia Taylor, Kharis Flora and Lily Higgins.
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12 oz Ribeye Steaks ............................................................................ £6.00 lb = £11.33 kilo
Whole Boneless Fresh Pork Loin ....................................................... £1.98 lb = £3.96 kilo take 2 £1.89 lb = £3.95 kilo
Ruleless or Rind On
Whole Pork Draft .................................................................................. £1.89 lb = £4.39 kilo
Whole Bone In Pork Loin .................................................................... £1.89 lb = £3.73 kilo
Whole Boneless Pork Leg .................................................................... £1.89 lb = £3.69 kilo
Whole Boneless Horse Shoe Gammons ................................................ £1.79 lb = £3.59 kilo
Sil Rindless Short Back Bacon ............................................................. £8.00 per pack
English Lamb Steaks (Minted/Plain) ................................................... £8.99 lb = £12.99 kilo English
Sil Lamb Loin Chops ............................................................................ £8.99 lb = £12.99 kilo English
Sil Extra Lean Diced Scottish Beef ....................................................... £7.99 lb
Sil Scottish Feather & Blade Braising Steaks ........................................ £6.99 per pack

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• 2lb Rump Steaks  • 2lb Lamb Loin Chops
• 2lb Pork Steaks  • 2lb Pork Sausage  • 2lb Short Back Bacon

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Companies need more cash support Cable told MANUFACTURERS in the Midlands need more financial support to help growth, according to firm owners who have met the Business Secretary Vince Cable.

Directors Kevin O’Toole and Laura Lovys, of Dudley firm Eurocraft Enclos-
sures travelled to Westminster for talks with the Government minister.

The talks were organised by Dudley North MP Ian Austin who wanted to highlight the issue with the ministers to help boost support from business. Eurocraft, which employs more than 100 people from its site in Cinder Bank, Netherton, added that the company is profitable, its opportunities for further growth and job creation are restricted by the lack of available finance.

The firm designs, manufactures and supplies telecommunications housings for companies such as BT and Virgin and recently won contracts abroad of international competitors.

Firm managing director, Kevin O’Toole, said: “Eurocraft is typical of many small and medium enterprise companies who need access to affordable finance options.”

Mr Austin, who spoke of the firm’s experiences in the House of Commons, added: “Getting the banks lending again is vital if supporting firms and getting the economy moving again.”

A CRITICALLY-acclaimed international composer was left wheelchair bound after a Dudley hospital failed to diagnose his fractured spine.

Andrew Downes was admitted to Russells Hall Hospital, Dudley, after falling over at home in October 2009. The 61-year-old has composed music for orchestras across the world, TV and radio.

He was admitted to hospital com-
plaining of severe back pain and was given morphine.

But the hospital diagnosed a urinary infection and failed to send him for an X-ray which would have shown his fractured spine.

As a result of the delay he lost all feeling in both legs after developing a complete spinal cord injury, lawyers from Irwin Mitchell, representing Mr Downes, said.

He was then taken for scans which confirmed the fractures to his spine.

Failing Mr Downes, from Hagley, near Stourbridge, said: “To be walking around one day, and then unable to move little more than 24 hours later was beyond belief.”

The hospital trust has accepted responsibility for failing to diagnose his injury and an undisclosed finan-
cial settlement has been made.

He went back to work just 10 months after the fall but said he is devastated he cannot run around with his three young grandchildren. The father-of-two will require a lifetime of care and help to live as independently as possible.

He had suffered from back pain and a fused spine for many years.

Paula Clark, chief executive of The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, admitted there were “lessons to be learned.”

She said: “We would like to offer our sincere apologies to Mr Andrew Downes for failing to diagnose his injury.

“The care we provided fell below the standard he should have expected.”
A CONSTRUCTION firm has been given the go-ahead to move its base to Stourbridge despite objections from neighbours.

Kendrick Construction Group will relocate from Wallall to new headquarters in Hagley Road.

The move to the former Westhill Clinic site was welcomed last week by Dudley Council planning chiefs who approved the application. Householders had objected – fearing the development would create noise and disturbance and claiming it is too close to existing properties in the area.

But development control committee chairman Councillor Colin Wilson said: “In my opinion this is a high quality design that fits in well with the surroundings.

“F inally, to anything to go by, I welcome Kendrick to Stourbridge – it is the town’s gain and Wallall’s loss. I.

Resident Nigel Joyce, speaking on behalf of 12 ob jectors, called the plans “unaccept abl e” and told the meeting: “This developmen t pays little regard to adjacent residents. There could be noise and early morning starts in what is a quiet residential area.”

He added people in Westhill Court were concerned their properties would be overlooked.

Res anders from the firm said around 38 staff would be transferred to the site full-time, over seeing other employees.

The company, which dates back to 1880, employs around 100 people.

Dive into swimming club

STOURBRIDGE Swimming Club is looking for new members.

Children aged six and over can be signed up for sessions with the club which trains at venues including Dudley and Stourbridge leisure centres.

Call up coach Stew Nicklin on 07834 608178 or get in contact through the club’s website, which is www.stourswim.co.uk for more details.

STOURBRIDGE: Stourbridge Swimming Club is looking for new members.

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Departures most weekends

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FROM £109.95 (Saturday Night)

The self-drive break is for one evening staying either on the Friday night or Saturday night in a four-star hotel. You will see the evening performance: for Friday night you will have a top price ticket and for Saturday evening there is a choice of price bands. Stay extra nights for a manageable supplement (subject to availability).

* The “from” price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details. Single room supplements apply.

FROM £139.95 (Saturday Night)
Nicole Kidman will star in film of debut novel

HOLLYWOOD superstar Nicole Kidman will star in the new film adaptation of a Dudley author’s debut novel. Before I Go To Sleep will go into production later this year.

Other stars including Cate Blanchett and Angelina Jolie were rumoured to be in the running for a part in the film, which is based on the best-selling book by Steve Watson, of Stourbridge. It will be produced by Ridley Scott and written by Rowan Joffe, whose previous successes include Brighton Rock and The American starring George Clooney.

The makers will head to the Cannes Film Festival this week to start promoting the project.

Mr Watson started writing the book as a hobby while working as an audiology specialist and now admits he may never return to his old job.

The book shot to number one in the Sunday Times paperback chart after being chosen by Richard Madeley and Judy Finnigan for their Book Club.

The 39-year-old, who writes under the name SJ Watson, has won a host of awards including the Galaxy Best Crime/Thriller gong, beating Ian Rankin and Martina Cole.

The novel tells the story of a woman who wakes up to find she does not recognise her life and she is married to a complete stranger.

The tale is inspired by amnesia cases Mr Watson encountered while working at St Thomas Hospital in London.

Mr Watson said: “I still can’t quite believe what’s happening.”

Traditional skills on offer

VISITORS to the Black Country Living Museum will be able to hone their skills in making everything from rag rugs to faggots.

The spring heritage skills workshops are divided into the themes of arts and crafts, traditional food and drink, historical buildings and monuments and historical artefacts.

The first in the series started this week, and students interested in textiles will enjoy the historical artefacts course “Understanding Historical Clothing” on May 22. On June 21 Barbara Tyler will demonstrate the skills of rag rug making.

Then, on June 23, Julie Tonkin, a leading canal artist, will pass on her know-how to students, including spider web embroidery, crochet and making twisted pearl necklaces.

Booking is essential on 0121 520 9054.

Flower festival at church

LADY COBHAM, of Hagley Hall, will officially open a flower festival at St Saviour’s Church, Hagley, at 11am on June 2 to celebrate the jubilee. The festival, staged by Hagley Mothers’ Union, will be open from 10.30am to 4pm and, on June 4 and 5, visitors can view it from 11am to 4pm. It also coincides with the centenaries of the union and scouting in Hagley.

Julie Tonkin will be passing on her know-how at the museum

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Everything But The Kitchen Sink!
PERSONAL details of neighbours who complained to the Environment Agency about a 40ft rubbish pile near their homes were mistakenly sent to the refuse firm ahead of a court case.

Names, addresses and telephone numbers were not removed from documents handed to Refuse Derived Fuel Ltd and its directors as required. Around 22 people were complained to the agency about the firm, based in Moor Street, Brierley Hill, have been affected by the incident.

Environment Agency officials said they had called each individual personally to apologise for the breach.

Brierley Hill councillor Rachel Harris said people would be “concerned” to hear of the incident. “I think that it is very regrettable and I do not want it to put people off coming forward to complain in the future,” she said.

“The Environment Agency have declared a breach of the Data Protection Act.” RDF Ltd sheds and drum solid waste, turning the household rubbish and industrial refuse into fuel.

Environment Agency spokesperson Jessica Campbell, said as part of the court process they served evidence to the firm. “Personal details of complainants should have been removed from the evidence before it was released, but unfortunately this did not happen,” she said.

Delicts acting for the agency had brought High Court proceedings against Refuse Derived Fuel Ltd, also known as RDF Ltd.

Call to ‘opt in’ to net porn

A MIDLAND MP has called for greater protection for youngsters surfing the internet.

Mark Garnier, MP for Wyre Forest, took part in a cross-party parliamentary inquiry into online child protection, which concluded Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and the Government need to do more to keep children safe.

A filter was recommended so people have to “opt in” to access adult material.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Michael Evans, and his consort, Sue Greenaway, at the launch of Stirbridge magician John Milner’s new book.

COPYIES of Stirbridge magician John Milner’s book have been lifted UNESCO Regrettably, it featured his late father Gerald Milner’s letters to his wife, Eva.

The book, subtitled Gerald Milner’s War Letters to Eva from a Desert Rat, sets the letters against a backdrop of the history of the combat in North Africa and later Italy and first-hand accounts of life as a soldier.
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Grand audience love all that razzle dazzle

Chicago, Wolverhampton Grand

THIS was razzle dazzle on a Grand scale and the audience loved it.

After the cast left the stage the packed theatre carried on clapping along as the band played its sassy tunes. This musical tells of murder and corruption and it certainly would be a crime to miss it.

If you are fan of the TV soap you will feel quite at home. Look through the cast list and you will recognise quite a few names. Set in the roaring 1920s, it features nightclub singer Rosie Hart (Ali Bastian), Toyah Wilcox who plays her lover and along with Coll Block rival, double-murderess Velma Kelly (Tanya Dorgen: Coronation Street), they plot to keep from death row with the help of prison matron, Mama Morton (played that night by Genevieve Nicole, understudy for Bernie Nolan) and smooth-talking lawyer, Billy Flynn (Stefan Booth: EastEnders).

This just goes to prove that these ‘soap’ performers are not short on talent both in the singing and dancing departments, in fact some of the dance routines left the audience feeling breathless. Chicago is at the Grand to Saturday.

Sue Attwater

Young soul singer makes it sound so very easy

Michael Kiwanuka, Wulfish Hall

CONSIDERING he is a new kid on the block, singer-songwriter Michael Kiwanuka looks as at ease on stage as any veteran of the folk-acoustic circuit.

His smooth soulful voice, easy manner and versatile use of music styles gives him the look of someone who has been doing this most of his life.

Kiwanuka evolves an early Motown sound in songs such as Tell Me a Tale, Rust and I’ll Get Along from his new album Home Again. He slips easily into tunes with a reggae flavour and even adds country with Always Waiting.

Kiwanuka is an excellent interpreter with a chameleonic voice that has the ability to move between genres while keeping his distinctive soulfulness. He swaps guitars to easily move from acoustic to a jazz funk then to a heavier beat reminiscent of Santana.

He is at his best singing with just his acoustic guitar, such as Home Again, where he displays a quality bringing to mind the great Ray Charles.

Danny Farragher

Essential Ireland

Essence of Ireland

Wolverhampton Grand

DANCE, song and story form a heart-warming tale of the love and linkage through love letters that linked through the centuries the two brothers, the bigger brother River and his younger brother Dance but this potted history of Ireland told through the story-telling, singing and playing of Frontman God Gruham.

He weaved in and out of the superb dance routines led by Rosa Logan and Lianne Stubbs whose precision and skills, mixed with delicate ballet moves, were mesmerising.

They were backed by an athletic group who used every inch of the stage while radiating enthusiasm. Thisucked in the audience to join in clapping and singing familiar favourites including Tell Me Ma, Wild Rover, Danny Boy and many more.

Danny Farragher

Double Blur

BRITPOP stars Blur have two warm up gigs at Wolverhampton Civic Hall on August 5 and 6 before their big reunion gig in Hyde Park.

They will play in each (plus £3.50 booking fee) and available from Sum local U.S. Air Force base. The Last Dance For Me.

It runs from May 28 to June 2 with matinees on Wednesday and Saturday. Tickets range from £10.50 to £13.50 with concessions available.

Hannah Frederick and AJ Dean in the nostalgic musical Save The Last Dance For Me

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OFF BY HEART: SHAKESPEARE

BBC2, 9pm

Following on from the 2009 poetry recital contest Off by Heart BBC2, the documentary follows regional engagement with the language, memory, performance and Shakespeare Schools Festival, organisers, working with the Romeo and Juliet, Henry V and Twelfth Night.

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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. Russian friends? (8)
2. Arms or legs (5)
3. How an engraver may make a good impression? (4)
4. Jot (4)
5. They may come between players (4)
6. Sphere of vision (7)
7. Do they mean (6)
8. It's something to take to (6)
9. One better (7)
10. Possibly respects appearances (6)
11. Game that many take to (5)
12. Possible example (7)
13. The extent of a course, for what it's worth (2,3,2,2,4)
14. A capital fellow (8)
15. Blackroom man? (4)
16. Depart later in jumble (2,5,2)
17. Its obvious it's flat (5)
18. It's something to build on (4)
19. Guiding line about two similar points (8)

Down
1. Russian friends? (8)
2. Nourish (7)
3. The stone archaeologists treat so cryptically (7)
4. Make a speedy apology? (7,6)
5. Trouble with rent may come as a big blow (7)
6. Jottish sixthry about (7)
7. It indicates area, in a manner of speaking (8)
8. Maintains there's a bit of body in the bears (7)
9. Sweet and affectionate worker? (7)
10. The nest of the layers depends on them (8)
11. One better (7)
12. Noise or disturbance can be wearing (8)

Quick Clues:

Across
1. Amaze (8)
2. Brushe (6)
3. Harbour (4)
4. Item of houseery (8)
5. Concur (5)
6. How an engraver may make a good impression? (4)
7. Give the show away (5,5,5)
8. Category (8)
9. Jet (5)
10. Issue (7)
11. Arse or legs (5)
12. Look for (4)
13. Blushed (6)

Down
1. Temporary substitute (7)
2. Ingredient of porridge (7)
3. Avoid committing oneself (3,2,3,5)
4. Flower (7)
5. Stabbing weapons (7)
6. Sacred beetle (6)
7. Prisoner (7)
8. Fancy (7)
9. Cell (7)
10. Building (7)
11. Eminent (7)

Sudoku

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

Last week's solutions:

Cryptic Crosswords
Quick Crosswords
Codeword
Sudoku
Word Search
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Convenient for all amenities including schooling, shops and public transport services, the home in Strathern Drive, Hurst Hill, offers superb views and spacious accommodation with central heating and accommodation. On the ground floor is a cloakroom with low-flush WC and wall-mounted wash hand basin, laundryette with single drainer stainless steel sink with base units, roll-edge work surface and plumbing for automatic washing machine and garage.

On the first floor the lounge is 16ft by 12ft and the dining kitchen – 16ft by 8ft – has a stainless steel sink, base units with roll edge work surfaces, built-in oven with four ring gas hob, wall cupboards and patio door to the rear garden.

On the second floor are three bedrooms and a bathroom with panelled bath with shower fitting, low flush WC and potential wash hand basin.

Outside the rear garden has a paved patio area, lawn area and rear access.

Call Skitts on 01902 686888 for details.
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A deceptive three bedroom mid terrace property offering VACANT POSSESSION, also benefits from two reception rooms, kitchen, wc and bathroom. Low maintenance rear garden.

Shelton Lane, Halesowen

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VACANT POSSESSION Semi detached property comprising of porch, lounge, kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. Driveway, garage, front and rear gardens. Double glazing.

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Offers Over £130,000 Three bedroom semi detached property, no upward chain, lounge/diner, conservatory, kitchen, first floor bathroom, double glazing and central heating, rear garden and driveway.

Oldbury Road, Rowley Regis

£185,000

Four bedroom detached bungalow on a generous plot, kitchen, lounge, conservatory, bathroom, wc, driveway, parking, garage, double glazing and central heating. Extensive rear garden. No chain.

Shenstone Valley Road, Halesowen

£160,000

Traditional semi detached house in cul-de-sac location. Lounge/diner, conservatory, kitchen, three bedrooms, separate wc, shower room and double glazing and central heating. No chain.

Crendon Road, Rowley Regis

£150,000

Three bedroom extended semi detached property comprising extended lounge, conservatory, kitchen, dining room, utility, bathroom, double glazing and central heating. Driveway and landscaped rear garden.

Cherry Orchard Crescent, Halesowen

£230,000

Offers Over £180,000 Three bedroom semi detached lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility, bathroom, driveway, garage, extensive rear garden, decked patio area, double glazing and central heating.

Fieldfare Close, Bradley Heath

£230,000

Four bedroom detached property comprising lounge/dining room, conservatory, kitchen, utility, double garage, en-suite and family bathroom. Double glazing, central heating and no chain.

Duke Street, Rowley Regis

£150,000

Offers Over £240,000 Five bedroom detached comprising breakfast kitchen, lounge, dining room, first floor bathroom, en-suite to main bedroom, further shower room, double glazing, central heating and garage.

Bournes Hill, Halesowen

Three bedroom semi detached property, entrance hallway, downstairs shower room, utility, reception room suitable for study/playroom or guest room, lounge/diner, conservatory, kitchen, first floor shower room, driveway, rear garden, double glazing and central heating.

Offers Over £150,000

Hillbrow Crescent, Halesowen

Semi detached property comprising lounge open to dining area, kitchen, three bedrooms and bathroom. Driveway to fore and rear garden. Double glazing and central heating.

£150,000

Lodgefield Road, Halesowen

Three bedroom detached comprising lounge, dining room, kitchen, utility, wc, first floor bathroom and separate shower, double glazing, central heating, driveway and rear garden with garage.

£180,000
By Sharon Walters

Big Cat looking set to stay ahead of the field

EXECUTIVE express is a phrase often used to describe a fast, luxury salon used to wait business- men, celebrities and royalty from meeting to meeting. Jaguar has always been there with the top of the range German marques, but the latest version of the multi-award winning XJ salon is set to best the best in this exclusive class.

The ultimate XJ has a top speed of 174mph and a 0 to 60mph sprint time of a fantastic four and a half seconds. And it does it in style without any sacrifices in terms of comfort or outlook, aimed at well-heeled owners.

The fastest Jaguar salon in history comes in at a cool £94,000, but for that you get a car which is distinctively styled, standing apart from its stablemates, and capable of hitting 60mph in just 4.7 seconds.

Nervous

In conditions wet enough to make me nervous on the motorway trip to Jaguar’s Warwickshire test track, the XJ performed superbly – reaching 60mph on the straight and braking so rapidly I almost slide forward under the seat belt.

I was in the executive armchair in the rear, with a professional test driver in front. From this perspective the car is very little different in terms of quiet, comfortable progress until the driver pressed the “sport” button (sharpening up throttle response and reconfiguring the six-speed automatic) gearbox, and the “dynamic” button which stiffens up the suspension.

The push-back in the seat acceleration is impressive, and even after the 60mph mark comes up in 4.7 seconds there is little to do but sit up, the digi continuing to climb rapidly until well past 140mph.

Access to the test track’s straight comes via a 180-degree right hander, taken at about 70mph. While I could do little to prevent the building of force from pushing my upper body to one side, the car clung to the line as if it was on rails, with no hint of under or oversteer.

It was equally stable under what equated to emergency braking at the end of the straight.

The ultimate XJ varies little from the standard luxury saloon, but visible differences include a small “lip” spoiler at the rear, an aerodynamic splitter at the front and new, 20-in alloy wheels. Behind them are the larger brake discs, with exclusive red calipers.

This is the “sport” pack available and an option on other XJ models. Only the supercharged 5.0-litre car comes with the option of the “speed” pack, which essentially means Jaguar has tweaked the standard electronic speed limiter (set at 130mph on other versions) and added new soft grain leather sports seats and upgraded interior trim.

The XJ “speed” also has a distinctive black mesh grille and some of its instruments had to be recalibrated, such as the tyre pressure monitoring system to take account of the heat generated by high speed driving.

It’s a heady mixture: a car which more than holds its own in the world of sophisticated, luxury saloons yet outperforms many rivals classed as sports cars. It’s a class-leading car which has already given Britain’s export trade a boost, and shown that Jaguar is not afraid to take on its competitors head-on.

Your essential guide to the world of motoring compiled by Motoring Editor Sharon Walters
Toyota putting an end to the distance anxiety

**PRIUS Plug-in**, which reaches showrooms in July, offers all the familiar virtues of Prius and quite a few more. It is powered by a full hybrid powertrain, but thanks to new, rechargeable lithium-ion battery technology, it can cover longer distances and reach higher speeds on electric power alone.

Seamlessly

Once the charge in the battery is used, the car switches seamlessly to its hybrid system, so there’s no need for anxiety about distances.

As a result, Prius Plug-in achieves a new low benchmark in its class for official CO2 emissions, 49 g/km.

Recharging the battery is simple and speedy, using a power point linked to a standard supply, or a street charging point. Prius Plug-in comes with a charging set, including 5m of cabling, stored beneath the boot floor.

Prius Plug-in has LED daytime running lights and headlamps; Toyota Touch and Go Plus with touchscreen controls, satellite navigation, voice recognition, rear-view camera and advanced Bluetooth, a DAB digital tuner, eight-speaker JBL sound system, rain-sensing wipers and cruise control.

Leather

Heated front seats, 15-inch alloy wheels with wheel caps and leather steering wheel trim are also included.

Black leather upholstery (£1,500) and rear privacy glass (£270) are available as options, together with a Protection Pack (rear parking sensors and boot liner) and a Style Pack (exterior chrome trim elements), both at £360.

Four exterior colours make up the palette for Prius Plug-in, led by Sky Blue (metallic), a new shade exclusive to the model. Tyred Silver and Novus Grey metallics and White Pearl Pearlescent are also available.

In the cabin the upholstery is Minowa black fabric with optional Setana black leather.

The on-the-road price for Prius Plug-in is £32,895, but this falls to £27,895 with the benefit of the £5,000 Government grant available on new vehicle purchases, provided through the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV).
Snags

"A few snags occurred," says Foster. "But not many. When we went over large bumps the rear hatchback would fly out. Nothing major." The first real problem was when we were about halfway around the 3,500-mile expedition. ‘“The rear door would jam in the sand and our driver, the head of the Rover team, pulled away in two-wheel-drive and the car stayed on the support plates,’ he adds.

‘“We were about 100 miles into the desert with about 100 miles to go, our support stopped,’ he says. ‘There was a Touareg guide with me who knew a rough road ahead that I had not been forewarned of.’

‘“When we got to Dirkou there happened to be a French official with a four-wheel-drive vehicle that had been on another expedition the previous day and he had his oven wide open. He welded both Rovers’ rear axle support plates – just took the axles off and welded them. That was probably the most noticeable problem we encountered,’ says Foster.

Prototype 106 is an almost living reminder of a time when adventure was real adventure. Long before satellite phones and GPS technology or satellite phones, this humble, untested off-roader was on its way to becoming a true icon of the off-road world, a testament to the ingenuity and perseverance of those who dared to explore.

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PHONE 01299 824482.

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£850.

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WANTED: 3dr". Excellent. 01902 657722.

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FIAT PANDA
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FORD TRANSIT
2004, 51 plate, MoT Nov.

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£1,100.

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£1,100.

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PEUGEOT 3008
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RENAULT LAGUNA 1.8, petrol, £3,350.

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ROVER 25
£850.

ROSS Fitzgerald
1.0 diesel, 53 reg,£1,200.

FIAT PANDA
£1,100.

RENAULT MODUS 1.2, petrol, £3,350.

RENAULT MEGANE 1.6, petrol, £3,350.

RENAULT CLIO
Dynamic 1.2, £2,850.

RENAULT CLIO
Dynamic 1.2, £2,850.

RENAULT CLIO
Dynamique 1.2, £2,850.

FINISH AS NEW AUTO LIGHTS/ APPROVED ALARM/ IMMOBILISER, EXCELLENT CONDITION, 11k.

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WEST Bromwich Albion stalwart Dave Matthews has hung up his kitbag for the last time.

After 51 years, Matthews – one of Albion’s longest-serving employees – has announced his retirement.

Health reasons have prompted the 66-year-old to decide. For the past year he has been off work battling cancer and was very briefly told it was in remission.

But tests have revealed fresh problems that doctors have said it would be unwise to return to work.

“I can’t keep going on forever and the club needed to know where it stands, said Matthews. “Until this heart problem is sorted out, I don’t know what the future holds. With Roy (Hodgson) going and a new manager coming in, it seemed like as good a time as any.”

The father-of-two, from Halesowen, Halesowen, began at Albion the age of 15.

As a keen gardener he hoped for a job as a groundsman, but the only vacancy going was in the washroom. He began scrubbing boots and washing Teddy Takara’s before working his way up to become kit manager.

With more than 900 people attending Matthews’ 50th anniversary dinner in March last year. It was a tremendous day,” he said.

Matthews said he could recognise the boots of every player he worked with.

Davies called it quits

Albion’s kitman Dave Matthews is retiring after 51 years with the club.

Baggies fans revel in a afternoon of pride

Halesowen Chronicle, Thursday, May 17 2012

Roberts is dug out by defeat

Graham Dorrans volleys home to put the Baggies 2-1 up against Arsenal

SO it’s farewell to Albion’s finest soccer in the Premier League era.

The Hawthorns roared in an afternoon of pride and delight.

The club have compiled a list of the best campaign in their Premier League history, from Steve Madeley.

And even a defeat to Arsenal that owed much to calamity keeper Marton Fulop could not dampen the mood of celebration.

It was the best campaign statistically as Hodgson’s men ended in 10th position. And it was the best year in terms of absorbing memories as Hodgson establishes the club as a stable Premier League presence before finally taking his leave to answer a higher calling.

In the toast to Albion’s most famous Premier League goal, Graham Dorrans volleys home to put the Baggies 2-1 up against Arsenal

The shell-shocked keeper fluffed a two-fisted punch from a van Persie corner and Koscielny bundled home the loose ball.

That sent the Gunners fans into raptures but they were silenced just seven minutes later when one of a series of corners from Szczesny’s net.

Fulop for ArseneWenger’s side to regain the lead.

And they threatened to push away.

It was a spirited effort from the Baggies but they were silenced just seven minutes later when one of a series of corners from Szczesny’s net.

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But Arsenal regained their composure impressively after that and might have drawn level when Benayoun volleyed high and wide at the far post.

And parity was restored on the half-hour when Fulop had another moment to forget.

The initial mistake was from Youssef Mulumbu, who was robbed by Alex Song 10 yards from goal. He found Andre Santos, whose powerful low shot bent late but still crept in disappointingly for Albion at Fulop’s near post.

It took another huge helping hand from Fulop for Arsene Wenger’s side to regain the lead.

The shell-shocked keeper fluffed a two-fisted punch from a van Persie corner and Koscielny bundled home the loose ball.

The batters might have levied moments later when one of a series of corners from Dorrans found the head of Jonas Olsson, whose goal-bound effort was cleared off the line by Robin van Persie. And they threatened again when substitute Keith Andrews unleashed a 20-yard shot that Szczesny did well to push away.

It was a spirited effort from the Baggies that showed how badly they wanted to give their departing goalkeepers a fitting send-off.

And it left a nervous Wenger and his retiring No.2 Pat Rice parsing the touchline anxiously as their side chased down third place and a guaranteed spot in next season’s Champions League.

The announcement of five added minutes did little to improve their mood.

Neither did a chance for Albion’s Billy Jones in stoppage time, with the full-back denied by a fine challenge by Kieran Gibbs.

Albion could not find another equaliser, but the final result did little to dampen the spirits on a day of pride and celebration.
New boss is gamble, concedes Morgan

CLARKS have unveiled their new manager – with Steve Morgan admitting the appointment is a big gamble.

But Morgan has insisted the former Norway international will prove a hit in the Malvern hot-seat.

The multi-millionaire believes his choice, who won five Danish Superliga titles in six years at Copenhagen, is a risk that can pay off handsomely.

“It’s always a gamble – of course it is – when you appoint any new manager,” said Morgan.

“But we don’t believe that just because he’s not well-known in England, that it’s a problem.

“We have just promoted the Champions League, he has won lots of allcomers as a player and as a manager, and of course he will have money to spend.”

Wolves are planning two back-to-back appointments under the new boss.

They want to have a European-style sporting director – called a football development director – and an assistant coach, who will be Solbakken’s long-term assistant Bala Mwangi.

Solbakken confirmed: “I trust the guys already here will bring what we need but I want to add one or two new people.”

“But it’s too early to say who I will bring.”

Solbakken was forced to refer to playing in 2001 when he had a cardiac arrest on the training pitch when he was at Copenhagen, but insists he is fit – and said he would win a race against journalists 10 times out of 10.

Tipton job

WOLVES have unveiled little-known Norwegian Stale Solbakken as their new manager – with Steve Morgan admitting the appointment is a big gamble.

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Long lands Tipton job

TIPTON TOWN have moved to name Ian Long as their new boss after Craig Morgan had revealed he was moving to name Ian Long as their new boss.

The Board feel the key to success is continuity and a club with great tradition and with great fans. They want to have a Euro-

Albion sign off

Hodgson told Baggies fans they “deserve” another season in the Premier League.

The new England manager was given a rousing send-off after the final game of the season as his side clinched a first ever top-half finish in the Premier League despite losing 2-0 to Arsenal on Sunday.

Hodgson, who took up his new role on Monday and announced his Euro 2012 squad two days later, addressed supporters after the final whistle and told them: “It’s been a fantastic season, a fantastic result and we’ve proved we can compete with the very best.”

The game also marked a final appearance in Baggies colours for Paul Scharner, who thanked fans with a specially-printed T-shirt.

He has revealed that Sunday’s appearance as a substitute was his last for the club after two years. “It was very emotional,” he said.

Priorities

Meanwhile, Albion hero Darren Moore has urged the Baggies to make keeping Ben Foster and Jonas Olsson their top summer priorities.

The ex-Hartshorn defender believes his former club should pull out all the stops to keep the key duo before committing funds to new signings.

Foster’s season-long loan from Birmingham has ended with Bluu now hoping for a summer auction for his serv-

And Olsson is entering the final year of his contract, leaving Albion with a major decision over his future if they fail to agree an extended deal. Moore said: “If Albion are looking to move forward then the likes of Ben Foster and Jonas Olsson have to remain at the club.

“If they are going to improve as a team then they really have to be looking to keep hold of those players.

“Of course they will be looking to add to the team with the right players, however well a season has gone for you.

“But they have to be looking to add to their current squad and not replacing key players from it."

Hodgson said Rico Ferdi-

Awards

BIRMINGHAM Brummies claimed maximum points at struggling Belle Vue to move up to sixth in Elite League table.

The Brummies won 57-33, taking advantage of home No.1 Rory Schlein’s injury and subsequent withdrawal with an injury to Montalvo.

Josh Auty top-scored with 17 for the Selco Brummies.

The Chronicle, a Midland publication, printed on May 17, 2012.

Whiley and Shuker at Tour de Nantes

BRUNNIES Brummies bow out at Tour de Nantes, losing 51-53 to struggling Belle Vue in a hotly-contested match.

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