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Darlaston & Wednesbury Life

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Welcome to the Aug/Sept issue of the Darlaston & Wednesbury Life magazine.

I've just completed a challenge for Pancreatic Cancer UK, which was to walk 60 miles in June – or to do two miles a day.

Two miles doesn't sound a lot, but when you sit down most of the day (yes, I know, it's alright for some!) it's not as easy as it sounds.

I didn't want to just accumulate a number of steps, so I actually did a two mile walk every day – even while on holiday in Croatia. How's that for commitment?

It's amazing how good you feel afterwards, even on the odd day when it rained, there was a feeling of achievement. Not just the walking and getting fit, but knowing you've raised a few quid for a good cause.

Pancreatic Cancer is one of the worst types you can get as there are virtually no symptoms until it's too late.

I know a couple of people who have fallen victim to it, so the thought of them got me off my backside every day and I'll do it again next year. Maybe some of you could join me.

There are a few events coming up in the next few weeks and as someone who helps to organise one of them, I know how much hard work goes on in the background, so please, if you are able, please support them and help to keep them going.

Like most people, I was shocked and saddened by the tragic death of the ex-Wolves player Diogo (not Diego!) Jota.

I never met the guy, but his age, the fact that he had only got married to his childhood sweetheart two weeks before the accident and to leave three young children without a father is just heartbreaking.

My father lost his dad in a farming accident when he was just 8 years old. He also had four younger siblings. There was no Universal Credit, oh and there was a war on. I can't imagine how they managed, but they did and Diogo's family will get through this as they have to, as we all have to in tough times.

Due to the increasing cost of print, more than ever, our advertisers are vitally important to the continuation of this magazine. Please have a look at their adverts and if you do purchase anything from them, **PLEASE TELL THEM YOU SAW THE ADVERT IN THE DARLASTON & WEDNESBURY LIFE MAGAZINE!**

The next issue will cover October and November and will be out on 2nd October so if you want to be in it, please contact me by 1st September.

Enjoy your read!

Simon



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News In Brief



Model Rail Club Look for New Home

After nearly 20 years in Albert Street Wednesbury West Bromwich Model Rail Club are looking for new premises. We would like to maintain our presence in Wednesbury and stay as close as possible to our current location, with the good local transport connections.

This would allowing us to maintain our links in the community whilst we continue to work on the scale model of Wednesbury town station and surrounding area. Ideally we would like ground floor premises of around 1000 square feet plus kitchen and toilet facilities, but are open to alternative suggestions.

The club has nearly 40 members of all ages currently meeting on Monday and Thursday evenings 6 until 8.30, Wednesday and Saturday mornings 9 until 12 with some additional adhoc social events organised. There are O,OO and N gauge club layouts available for running during all sessions, and a large collection of electronic and paper modelling and railway media available.

For further details information please contact David on: **07397 286049**.

Darlaston Local History Society

Darlaston local history society has met at Slater Street Methodist church for more than 10 years.

However, we have just received sad news the Methodist Circuit is closing Slater Street Methodist Church and Church Hall on the last day of August 2025. A sad day for Darlaston as we are now losing our last Methodist church in Darlaston. The church has been there for over 100 years.

So now the society has to move out along with all our archives.

However, we have been rescued by Darlaston Town Hall who have offered us a new base. With grateful thanks to Sharon and the All Active Club who manage the Town Hall. So to start our new season, our first meeting will be on Thursday 25th September at 7.30. Our guest speaker will be Keith Hodgkins to give a presentation on the Railways of the Black Country.

All are welcome to this meeting.

We do have a membership fee if you wish to join the society but visitors are charged two pounds on the evening.

So, with the town hall being the new home of Darlaston Local History Society we hope we can continue and welcome past and new members.



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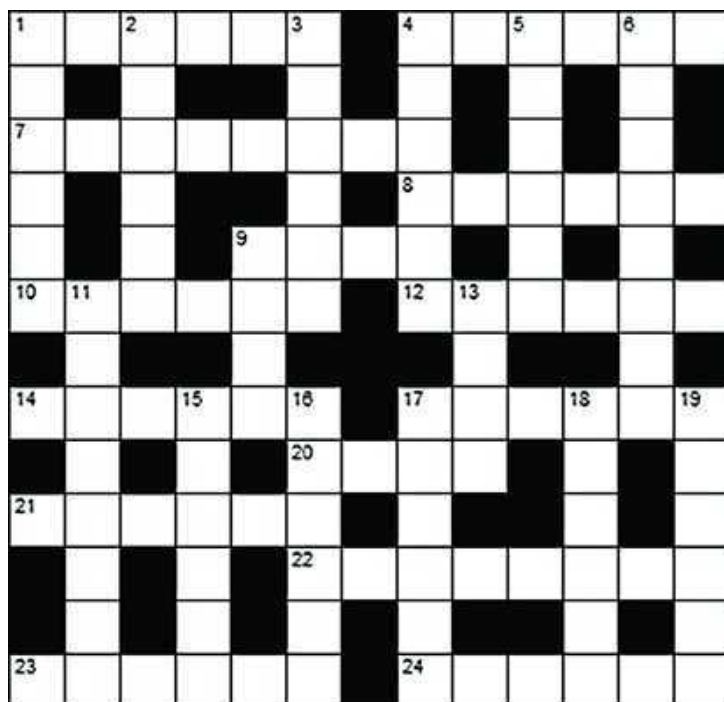
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Crossword

Please see answers
on page 31



Across

- 1 Prejudiced (6)
- 4 Whiten, decolour (6)
- 7 Maritime, used on the ocean (8)
- 8 Rhododendron-like shrub (6)
- 9 Particle (4)
- 10 Shortcrust, flaky or puff _____ (6)
- 12 Every twelve months (6)
- 14 Socially awkward (6)
- 17 Daredevil (6)
- 20 Ruffian, thug (4)
- 21 Ceramic artist (6)
- 22 Items of jewellery (8)
- 23 People who look after others (6)
- 24 Abrupt (6)

Down

- 1 Church official (6)
- 2 Warning devices (6)
- 3 Delicate, fragile (6)
- 4 Married to two people at the same time (6)
- 5 Mistake in print (6)
- 6 Shrub with waxy scented flowers (8)
- 9 Bowed structure (4)
- 11 Large South American snake (8)
- 13 Welsh name (4)
- 15 Oxen and cows (6)
- 16 The act of leaving a place (6)
- 17 _____ dancing, type of folk dancing. (6)
- 18 Stretched out the body or neck to see better (6)
- 19 Toxic substance (6)

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George Rose Park Community Hub Moving forward from strength to strength

Since our last article informing of the set up and work of George Rose Park Community Hub, we have moved forward at quite a pace and even though we have a lot more to do we welcome the support and views of our local community in this exciting venture.

Our programme of support has given individuals the opportunity to meet new people and engage in social activities as well as addressing health and wellbeing with our exercise classes and gardening club.

Our money, benefits and support sessions, designed to help you to apply for council services such as blue badges, new bins, and more, has been widely used and well received and now meets regularly on the last Friday of each month. So, whether you need help getting support, or advice on anything else, we will do all we can to help.

Due to its success, we are also now looking at introducing a second monthly session of benefits advice, details of which will be announced shortly.

Take a look at the range of activities delivered by the Hub since its inception:

The work has begun on the Hub Garden with the support of the Gardening Club





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Saturday 16th August

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Participatory workshops

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Join us for activities in our ever-expanding programme:

- **Mondays 1.00-2.30pm**
Park Walk (all ages welcome)
- **Tuesdays 2.00-4.00pm**
Chat and Craft (held on the last Tuesday of each month)
- **Tuesdays 7pm**
Local Residents Meeting with Councillors (held on the first Tuesday of each month)
- **Wednesday 6.00-8.00pm**
Evening Park Walk (all ages welcome)
- **Thursday 11am-12noon**
Tai Chi (all ages and abilities welcome)
- **Fridays 10-12noon**
Benefits support sessions (held on the last Friday of every month)

We are looking to the future and the thoughts, wants and needs of our community are important to us. If you wish to get involved or share your thoughts you can do so by emailing on georgerosehub@outlook.com or follow us on our social media pages.



Work on our community notice board has ensured that the community is kept informed on what is happening in the Hub and locally



Facebook: George Rose Park Community Hub Darlaston
Instagram: georgerosehub

George Rose Park Community Hub
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Rotary Club of Wednesbury

What superb weather we enjoyed on Carnival Day when again our event went off very successfully.

The heat may have kept the attendance down somewhat but this did not detract from the performances of all the Arena acts, highlighted by the Shirley Pipe Band, who impressively entertained us all.



Hopefully all the stallholders were happy but, of course, on the stalls where cakes were on sale we were sorry that the high temperature made some melt!

We can now look ahead and start planning for next years' Carnival which will be held on **Saturday 11th July 2026.**

Having taken over from Ben Willmore, new President Peter Hughes opened the Carnival and then had the pleasure of thanking both entertainers and stallholders



Outgoing President, Ben Willmore and new President, Peter Hughes



Kickstarts receiving a prize for the best stall

alike for helping to make the day hopefully a good experience for all who attended.

At Rotary we are always looking for new ideas and maybe improvements for the Carnival – if anyone has such, please let us know either through social media or by contacting our Carnival Stalls co-ordinator, Heather Nightingale on **07879 407754.**

All nine of our schools who requested have now had visits from the Birds of Prey,





Secretary, Keith Williams, President Peter Hughes,
Membership services, Jas Singh



provide by the Falconry Centre at Hagley and we understand, besides being hopefully educational, these have been memorable and exciting experiences for all the children.

The Club has also provided the transport for a large party of children and teachers, from



Junior VP, Luke Giles and President Elect, Terry Fitzgerald



the SEND Department at Wodensborough Ormiston Academy, to visit the RAF Cosford Museum, which proved a great day out for all.

Our thanks again to the support we enjoy from Riverside Housing and, of course, from Editor, Simon Archer, who continues to include our Reports in the excellent Darlaston & Wednesbury Life Magazine.

Mike Warner
Rotary Club of Wednesbury

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News in Brief

Tesco Willenhall



Claire Wakeley, the Community Champion at **Tesco Willenhall**, has had a busy few months helping groups and individuals around the area.

Those who have benefitted from their generosity include; **Corpus Christi** under 15's football team with raffle

The Munch Box

prizes, **Mattesley Court, Residential Home** were given a gift card for their 1940's day, **Willenhall Chart Centre** were given a gift card, **St Giles Church** a gift card for their strawberry tea, **Munch Box** received a Gift card.

Other beneficiaries include, **Creswell Lions, Bilston Outreach, Parent & Caring, Wood Green Academy, Manor Hospital, The Ashmore Inn** and many more.

Tesco also run a scheme called **Stronger Starts Blue tokens**, where local community groups and charities are encouraged to apply to be selected as one of the three participants

Tesco colleagues can help select



Parent & Caring

those needing a little help in the local area and when shop, they are given a blue token, to pop in the box by the checkouts and vote for their favourite children's and young people's group to receive a grant.



Willenhall Rotary donated easter eggs to pass on to schools

Application form and guidance for more information and to apply visit the **Tesco Stronger Starts** - tescostrongerstarts.org.uk - it's a great opportunity for local charities to win money

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We have also had some charities in store doing bucket collections; **The Staffordshire Regiment Association, Little Paws Cat Rescue, ARC Cat Rescue**

Clare says, "It's an absolute pleasure being the Community Champion at the Tesco Willenhall I have the full support off the Management Team. I meet so many wonderful people raising money for their causes.



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New Season Preview at FC Darlaston



Last season FC Darlaston broke multiple in house records, to cement their highest ever finish in the West Midlands Regional League Premier Division only falling short by 8 points to crowned champions Telford Town who were a formidable outfit throughout. FC Darlaston played 28 games winning 20 drawing 5 and tasting defeat just 3 times leaving a 12 point gap between them and 3rd place - a fantastic achievement for the step7 football club who have clear ambitions to move up through the ranks judging by their recent and ongoing ground development at the ELR Homecare Stadium 69 Hall Street, Darlaston, WS10 8NW, locally known as The Rec.

The Boltmakers success throughout last season didn't go unnoticed by local non-league football enthusiasts which saw more and more new faces showing support week by week. There has been a real surge of interest since the arrival of the clubs current Chairman Michael Greatrex who clearly holds a lot of passion for the football club and the surrounding community it serves.

In the short time since Michael took over, the changes and upgrades locals have seen are a clear indication of his commitment to the cause and it's fantastic to see the venue being so heavily used.

In previous years FC Darlaston have struggled in the division and it seems no coincidence that their 2 best finishes in 23/24 & 24/25 came immediately after the return of current manager Nick Lewis who led the Boltmakers in their promotion winning campaign into the division back in 2018/19.

Michael says, "I'm not going to pretend to know everything about non-league as I only started following since coming to FC Darlaston, but I've definitely got the bug for it now. It's absolutely fantastic and I urge all local football fans to get involved and support where possible. It's very affordable, the excitement before every game is real, the passion is real, the mistakes you may see are human and it all mingles together to make a great afternoon of real football. I've only known Nick a short time but we have quickly formed a great friendship and I've got to say considering him, his staff and the team are all working class lads, the way they conduct themselves when representing FC Darlaston is always in a very professional manner so hats off to everyone of them."

The Boltmakers were unfortunate to be so close but so far away from gaining promotion to Midland Football League Div1 (Step 6) last season and there's a real sense of excitement, expectation and anticipation building at the club for the coming season. Training and pre-season is going well and new faces and signings can be seen around the ground including coaching staff.

The youth that represent the club, look up to the first team and regularly enjoy cheering them on with friends, parents and grandparents alike and there's a real community spirited bond being created here in Darlaston.

Nick Lewis says, "Overall since re-joining the club we have been on quite a high and won the majority of our games but have to feel disappointed at some of the things we have let slip during that time with results in some games, but this has definitely been a learning curve and put us in a better position for the upcoming season, pre-season has gone well and we have recruited some good people and players to help us push forward. The club on a whole is a pleasure to be a part of and is only going in one direction it's my job to make sure the first team match that ambition and deliver. We have a great facility and are looked after in all aspects so we would like to reward that by putting some silverware within our clubhouse. Our chairman and volunteers have been second to none, we would love more volunteers and more supporters to get behind us and the club."



The youth section is now moving in the right direction to give a pathway inside the club and can see the coaches and managers really putting in the hard yards for the players in our younger teams. We cannot wait for the season to kick off and hope to hit the ground running, but we know there will be challenges along the way to get what we want to achieve."

The club has recently achieved 1 star England Football Accreditation and offers lots of activities for sports enthusiasts in the area from coaching sessions to football camps. They have very good relationships with multiple local schools in the area and are constantly looking to find ways of getting children involved to help promote social engagement, active healthier lifestyles, better wellbeing and a sense of belonging such as their recent youth team signing day which saw upwards of 300 people attend the venue.

After a brief chat with one of the youth managers, he explained when Michael first shared his vision for the club at an early committee meeting he wanted to see The Rec being developed and used as it should be for Darlaston's residents and set his sights on a realistic aim of first team football at step 5 (currently step 7).



UP THE BOLTMAKERS!



Clare 07853 603310

Monday 6pm

Tuesday 9am

St Luke's Church

Oldbury Street

Wednesbury WS10 0QJ

Lesley 07545 263348

Tuesday 9.15am, 10.45am,

5.30pm & 7pm

Darlaston Sports & Social Club

The Leys

Darlaston WS10 8DP

Wednesday 9am & 10.30am

Friday 9am

Saturday 9am & 10.30am

All Saints Church

Walsall Road

Darlaston WS10 9LA

slimmingworld.co.uk

Heidi 07972 530778

Wednesday 5.30pm

Saturday 8am & 9.30am

The Wesley Centre

Spring Head

Wednesbury WS10 9AD

Karlton 07594 142666

Thursday 5.30pm

The Magic Lantern - Function Room

Cavendish Road Bloxwich

Walsall WS2 7HR

Saturday 9am

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West Bromwich B71 2AU

Jenny 07751 259593

Thursday 9am, 10.30am,

5.30pm & 7pm

St Bart's Church Hall

Bottom Church Hill Little Hill

Wednesbury WS10 9DF

Saturday 8.30am

West Bromwich Leisure Centre

Studio 2, Moor Street

West Bromwich B70 7AZ

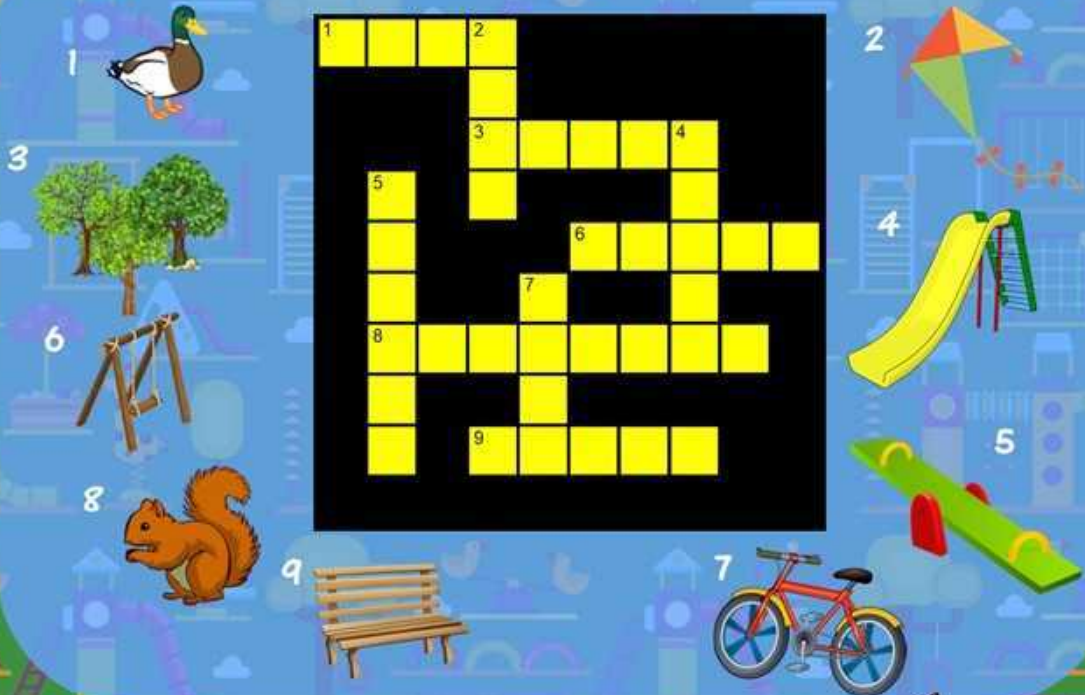
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Kids' Page

ACROSS

Can you solve our park crossword?

DOWN



Everyone is tangled up. Who does the dog belong to? AND WHO OWNS THE TRUCK?



Puzzle Solution

Antonia Bance MP

An Update from the Member of Parliament for Tipton & Wednesbury

This July marks a year since I was elected as your MP for Tipton, Wednesbury, and Coseley — and what a year it's been! I've tackled casework and supported community projects. It has been busy, rewarding, and a privilege every step of the way.

This month reminded me how lucky I am to represent a proud and welcoming community. It is filled with good people doing great things.



I was thrilled to attend the launch of the Unity Brew Community Café in Tipton. This brilliant new space brings people together for a chat, a cuppa, and support when it's needed most. Places like this are the heart of our neighbourhoods. The volunteers behind it deserve our thanks.

I also joined the fantastic Leisurely Pedal Group, who cycle through the Black Country's green spaces at a relaxed pace. It was joyful to see how cycling builds confidence, brings people together, and reconnects us with



our lovely local canals and trails.

The energy continued at the Wednesbury Carnival, where I chatted with residents,

supported local stalls, and enjoyed the music and fun. Events like this show what makes our towns vibrant — community groups, family fun, and a strong sense of place.



Working for You in Parliament

Alongside my work in the constituency, I've been active in Westminster, speaking up for our communities:

I spoke on a debate to honour the Cradley Heath chainmakers and Matchgirls, ensuring the role of women workers in our industrial past is recognised. Their fight for fair pay helped shape today's workplace.

I spoke in Parliament about parental and carers' leave. I shared stories from local families who struggle to take time off due to the cost of living. I argued for a system that truly supports working-class families — like the HGV driver in Tipton who couldn't afford to be with his newborn baby.

I celebrated Black Country Day in Parliament by paying tribute to the spirit, humour, and resilience of our towns. And yes, I'm still working through your votes on the best orange chips in the Black Country!



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Showtime Community Productions are on the Move

Showtime is a Charity Incorporated Organisation established in 2019 and has been entertaining us local folk since 2022. Their creativity and imagination have taken us on magical adventures down rabbit holes, meeting pirates, Superhero's of Sandwell and making sure heroines have a happy ending, at an annual fairytale pantomime that delights audiences of all ages.

After producing four fantastic annual pantomimes at Wednesbury Town Hall and having been given the title *"the biggest panto*

comes together and is appreciated, we know we've done the right thing for the community."

Darlaston Town Hall, only a bus ride away from Wednesbury, will host their next annual pantomime in January 2026.

The Trustees explained *"As soon as we saw Darlaston Town Hall we knew it would be an ideal place to perform the panto and possibly other shows. The facilities are perfect for theatre style performances and benefit us, as well as our audiences."*



in Sandwell", Showtime, have had to relocate due to rising hire costs in Sandwell.

"It is a shame as it all began in Wednesbury and it is upsetting that we have had to relocate. With Sandwell not having a proper performing venue we had no option. This is something we lack as a community and forces us out of the area." The Chair commented.

During panto week Showtime has transformed Wednesbury Town Hall into a useable space to present the panto, hiring in extra sound, lighting and staging from local professionals to create the panto atmosphere and magic. In January 2025 a whopping 1500 people came to see 'Cinderella' over 7 performances, which included 2 free school performances. This benefited children of all ages and abilities giving them an opportunity to experience theatre, some for the first time.

"It takes a lot of hard work and commitment during the year to create and build such full-scale entertaining shows, including all the legalities, paperwork, administration and planning. We are all volunteers and bring this show together for our community."

The Trustees added. *"People don't see the extent that we go to, to make it all work, but when it all*

Showtime, now with a new venue, new facilities, a talented new cast and a new look for their 5th pantomime birthday, look set to bring us a fabulous pantomime adventure once more, in January 2026, at Darlaston Town Hall.

Tickets will be on sale in September for their Pantomime Spectacular, Aladdin, which, in true Showtime style will raise the bar higher than before and bring us a truly amazing amateur pantomime to professional standards.

"With this venue, opportunities have opened up to us that we didn't have before. It has brought excitement to members of Showtime as we plan for a stunning show full of music, comedy and magic, at the lowest possible cost to our community". The Chair highlighted.

With tickets held at last year's price of £7.50, we just can't wait to see what Showtime will come up with this time. Showtime has shown that community is at the heart of their work and hopes they will have continuing support from the Wednesbury people as well as from their new home in Darlaston. Let's hope the magic of this live theatre will live on in our community for years to come.

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Crossword Answers

From page 10



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