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Legal team to challenge Paris Mayo sentence

ROSS GAZETTE REPORTER LAWYERS are preparing an appeal in the case of a young woman jailed for a minimum 12 years for killing her newborn baby at the age of 15 at her Ross home.

Paris Mayo was convicted of murder aged 19 in June 2023 after a trial at Worcester Crown Court.

Late in the case, the judge told the jury they could con-

sider an alternative charge of infanticide - when the balance of a woman's mind is impaired by giving birth.

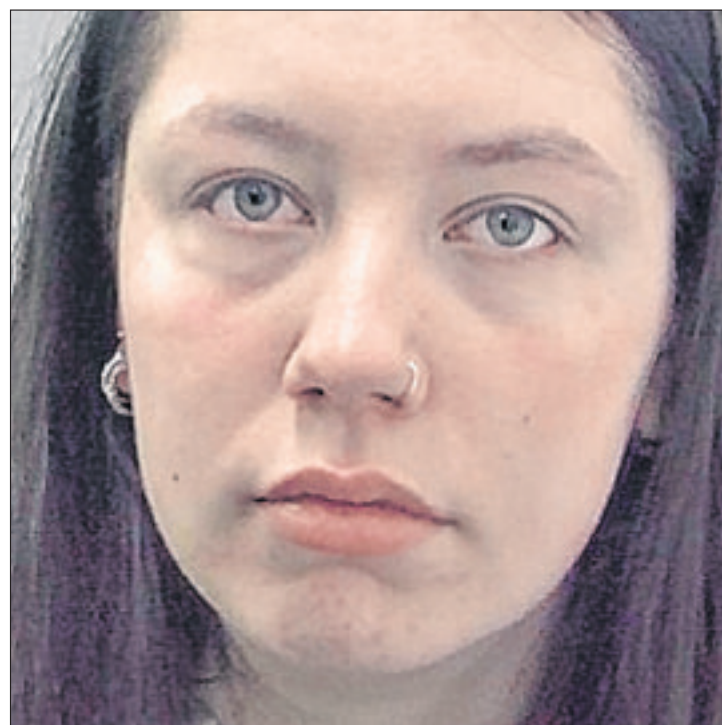
But the jury heard no specific medical or legal evidence about infanticide - which Mayo wasn't charged with by police or prosecutors or asked to plead to - and convicted her of murder, which she denied.

The former John Kyrle High School pupil was jailed for a

minimum of 12 years.

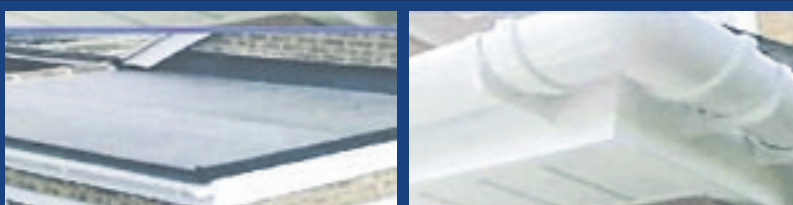
The sentencing of the 19-year-old, who was living with her mother in Ruardean at the time of the trial, sparked widespread criticism from justice experts and women's campaigners, including former chief inspector of probation and ex-chairman of the Youth Justice Board, Professor Rod Morgan.

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Paris Mayo is serving a minimum 12 years behind bars

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DVSA provides no comment on bus service



Lugg Valley bus service

THE government agency which checks buses' roadworthiness has declined to say whether it gave a negative inspection on a Herefordshire bus operator whose services stopped abruptly this week.

Herefordshire Council said had been notified by Lugg Valley Travel that it would no longer operate bus routes in the county "with immediate effect".

The council said it then "worked tirelessly to ensure all of these routes are covered by other operators".

Several people have alleged online that the move was prompted by a negative inspection of the company's bus fleet by the government's Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) the day before.

An agency spokesperson said: "DVSA's priority is to protect everyone from unsafe vehicles and drivers."

"DVSA is unable to comment on, or confirm, any ongoing investigations."

Historic nursing home now under new ownership



The Weir Nursing Home is now under the ownership of Ashberry Healthcare

ASHBERRY Healthcare, the award-winning care home providers behind Holmer Court, have taken ownership of The Weir nursing home in Swainshill, a grade II listed Georgian mansion nestled within the scenic Weir Gardens.

The 34-bed home, which will continue to be open to the public, is renowned for its long-standing care and community atmosphere.

The new ownership comes after David Kingham's retirement, following an impressive 30 years at the helm. Ashberry Healthcare, known for its high standards of care across their local homes, will bring their expertise to The Weir.

Nigel Denny, CEO of Ashberry Healthcare, expressed excitement about joining the local community, stating: "We look forward to building on the legacy of The Weir and fostering a sense of place, friendship, and belonging."

Insurance company takes over accounts

HAZELTON Mountford, Worcester's privately-owned Chartered Insurance Brokers, has announced the acquisition of White Knight Group's customer book of business.

The deal marks the second acquisition in the last five years for the firm, whose sights are set on steady growth across the region.

The new Lydney-based business is the third location for the brokerage, with their Headquarters in Bank Street, Worcester and a well-established office in Eveham, serving The Vale and The Cotswolds.

Hazelton Mountford's reputation for expertise in general commercial, property, haulage and transport and not-for-profit

insurance has led to the expansion of the company through ambitious plans over the last few years, allowing the business to be agile in its approach to insurance solutions.

Group managing director, Gordon Hazelton, confirmed: "The team are proud to announce the most recent acquisition, allowing us to move forward into 2025 with strength and an enviable ability to provide solutions across multiple regions. Our new Lydney base, led by existing team member Michelle Howells, will serve the Forest of Dean and beyond."

Michelle continues to manage accounts from the Lydney office and explains: "It will be business as usual for our clients, with no need to worry. We're looking to



Director Simeon Chapman, group managing director Gordon Hazelton, account executive Michelle Howells from the new Lydney office and director Jake Mountford

consolidate and then grow our presence in the area over the coming years, and I'm here to support that plan."

Hazelton Mountford is a leading, privately owned independent provider of business insurance, private clients insurance, and a

tenant referencing service. As a chartered broker, the firm tells customers it delivers "tailored insurance solutions with expertise and integrity, ensuring all its clients receive a personal service with peace of mind in an ever-changing world".

The Luke Littler effect helps save darts league

STAFF REPORTER

THE YOUNGEST world darts champion at the age of 17, Luke "The Nuke" Littler, has made an impact on the sport and here in Ross-on-Wye, a darts league has a lot to thank the teenager for writes Will Luker.

The Ross Darts League could have folded during the pandemic says player Richard Acton, but what Littler has achieved was exactly what the league needed.

Playing in teams at many pubs in and around the town such as the Kings Arms and Crown & Sceptre to name a couple, the completion of the World Darts Championships earlier this month does not mean the darts' year is over.

More competitions are incoming and more chances for people to be inspired by darts, especially young players.

Richard says that between the ages 18 and 21 there has been an increased turnout wanting to play darts, quite clearly evidence that Littler's successes are having a big impact.

"I've changed my way of playing, focusing on the best way to score points like Luke 'The Nuke', Richard said.

"He is so good for darts and I was drawn in during the days of Eric Bristow but this has created a great change for the sport.

"Individual players are coming together to enjoy darts more and what Littler has done is massive for us as the Ross League nearly folded during COVID but he has given us a massive boost," Richard adds.

"The competition is what makes it great to be a part of



Darts players in Ross (Photo: Cecilia Whiteway)

at pubs and when you pick up a trophy it means a lot. The youngsters are coming and like Littler they dream big."

Cecilia Whiteway, also involved with the League, gets stuck in with the ladies' singles and overall feels proud at how Luke Littler has progressed.

"I just love throwing darts, Cecilia said. "Luke Littler has certainly had an impact on our young players as one of our youngest players has joined Darts Academy over in the Forest of Dean.

"Our League is just fun and we

have seen more people interested especially people who used to play before the pandemic and have now returned."

Cecilia adds: "Luke Littler has brought a new spark to the darts scene and I just like the social side darts brings to people to get a chance and be competitive."

Teenage darts sensation Luke Littler celebrated his 18th birthday last week and told fans he would spend the day playing an online football game.

Littler created history just weeks ago at the age of 17 by becoming the youngest world

champion when he beat Michael van Gerwen in the Alexandra Palace final to cap a first year on the PDC Tour where he also won the Premier League and the Grand Slam of Darts.

Littler has earned over £1.6million in prize money from his achievements at the oche - a figure that has been dwarfed by his income from sponsorship deals with high-profile brands.

He has almost single-handedly dragged darts into the mainstream since he burst on to the scene at the 2024 World Championship.