

The Forester



Incorporating Dean Forest Mercury, Dean Forest Guardian and Lydney Observer

January 29, 2025

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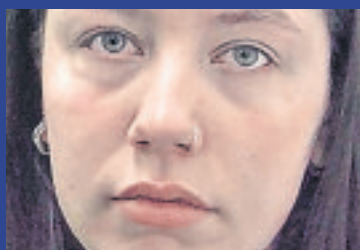
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Paris Mayo appeal planned

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Green light for Newent FC expansion

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FLY-TIPPING CLAMPDOWN

STAFF REPORTER

ANYONE caught fly-tipping in the Forest of Dean could find themselves on the sharp end of a massive fine as the Forest of Dean Council begins a clamp down on those illegally dumping rubbish in the Forest.

The maximum amount those caught fly-tipping could be fined is set to increase from £400 to £1,000 while those who drop litter or graffiti face a penalty that has increased from £150 to £500.

The maximum for breaching the household waste duty of care will also increase from £400 to £600, following a change in the laws introduced by the government

The council says these fixed penalty notices are appropriate for small scale fly-tipping but larger scale deposits will continue to be dealt with by the courts where in some cases unlimited fines can be set.

● Full story: Page 4



Waste that was illegally dumped near Westbury, Picture: Forest Council.

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NHS offers community health and blood pressure check service

A COMMUNITY blood pressure and health check is being offered by NHS Gloucestershire from February, as its Outreach Vaccination and Health team tours the county.

On Monday, February 24, residents can get checked in the Candi Cafe, on Market Street, Cinderford, between 11am and 2pm.

It is part of the NHS 'Know your Numbers' campaign, which urges everyone, particularly those aged 40 and over, to get a blood pressure check and make healthy lifestyle changes, or take medicines, if needed to help bring their blood pressure down.

Oonagh Wilson, Clinical Lead, Community Outreach Vaccination and Health team, said: "The only way to find out if your blood pressure is high is to have your blood pressure checked. All adults over 40 years old are advised to have their blood pressure checked at least every five years. Getting this done is easy and could save your life."

The Outreach Vacci-

nation and Health team delivered more than 1,250 blood pressure checks at community drop-in events in 2023/24, with almost 150 of those referred to their GP.

The team will also chat to residents about changes they can make to their lifestyle, such as stopping smoking, improving their diet or increased exercise.

The tour of Gloucestershire begins February 4 in Cheltenham, and will also visit Brimscombe, Kingwood, North Nibley, and Cheltenham in the days and weeks following.

The NHS says high blood pressure is a major cause of heart attacks and stroke, and around one in three adults have high blood pressure. Many residents don't know they have high blood pressure, as it often doesn't have any symptoms until it's too late.

Aside from the community drop-in events, residents can access a blood pressure check at a local pharmacy or GP surgery.

More information can be found by visiting the NHS website.

Insurance brokers purchase customer book

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 Evesham, 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



Director Simeon Chapman, group managing director Gordon Hazelton, account executive Michelle Howells from the new Lydney office and director Jake Mountford announce the recent acquisition of White Knight Group's customer book of business.

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

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clients insurance, and a tenant referencing service. As a chartered broker, the firm 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.

For more about Hazelton Mountford call the team on 01905 611 951 or visit: www.hazeltonmountford.co.uk.

Anger over changes to firefighters' shifts

LDRS REPORTER

MORE than 70 firefighters have raised concerns about plans to change their shift patterns and there are fears it could force staff out of the service.

Gloucestershire County Council's Cabinet voted last month to change firefighters' shifts from nine hour days and 15 hour nights, to 11 hour days and 13 hour nights for wholtime community fire stations.

However, the decision was called in by opposition councillors who wanted the move postponed in order to hear the firefighters' concerns.

Members of the fire and rescue scrutiny committee received some 79 emails days before their meeting highlighting concerns over the impact the changes would have on their lives.

Some 25 firefighters attended the fire and rescue scrutiny committee meeting on January 10 in opposition to the changes. And the Fire Brigades Union says they will do "everything in their power" to challenge the changes.

During the meeting, chairman Jeremy Hilton (LD, Kingsholm and Wotton), who was among those who signed the call-in let-



Chief fire officer Mark Preece.

ter, said his committee's recommendations were not relayed to the Cabinet meeting held on December 4.

"It could be argued other members of the Cabinet were unaware of the recommendations of the scrutiny committee which took place on December 2 two days before."

"We thought having had all that evidence in written form it would be reasonable to defer a decision until the committee had time to properly consider the issues being raised."

ing from 12 hour days and 12 hour days to 11 hour days and 13 hour nights."

Cllr Bernie Fisher (LD, St Paul's and Swindon) raised concerns over the idea of reviewing the changes six months after the changes.

"It's a bit like throwing you off the back of the boat and saying, 'fancy learning to swim'?"

"It's a ridiculous statement to review it six months in, because you are not going to go back then."

Chief Fire Officer Mark Preece told the meeting he accepts it is not a popular move.

However, he said they do need to move the service forward in a number of ways and they will be mindful of firefighters' views.

"Subject to the decision being approved or not today, we would engage in further conversations with our members of staff to actually ascertain on an individual level the impact of that decision," he said.

"We have followed the principles of good consultation to the letter."

The committee rejected the grounds of the call-in by three votes in favour and four against with Labour and Liberal Democrats in favour and Conservatives against.



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