

# ON THE WEB

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## MOST READ

- 1 Dozens of students sent home over trainers
- 2 Shock as wasps nest bursts through ceiling of Wednesfield home
- 3 Fears over man 'forced into car against his will'
- 4 Biker seriously injured in Dudley crash
- 5 Boy, 13, sexually abused young bullying victim

## ONLINE POLL RESULTS

Do you get on with your neighbours?

**50%** **50%**

of readers said yes said no

Is it time to pull the plug on X Factor?

## TOP COMMENTED

Lorry drivers caught on phones in campaign backed by grieving Staffordshire mother  
 "Why not have an incentive via Crimestoppers for people to forward photographs of drivers using phones?"  
 Stephen Sutton's proud legacy to live on in new scholarships  
 "Still an unbelievable story. God bless you!"

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## VIDEO CHOICE

Police have released harrowing footage of the moment a driver killed a woman in a crash in Birmingham, as they warn over the dangers of speeding.



**NATIVE MONSTER**  
 Entertainment Unleashed

Looking for something to do this month? Check out our extensive listings by using our what's on calendar.

For more details and other events across the region visit [nativemonster.com](http://nativemonster.com)

**Weekend**  
 Upstairs, downstairs:  
 Service resumes at Downton Abbey - this Saturday

# Average Briton's sleep pattern is a nightmare

The average time the British go to sleep is 10.43pm – with computers and smartphones being the biggest culprits for keeping most of us awake.

But the majority of us fail to get a really good night's sleep, with the average amount of shut-eye lasting just six hours and 28 minutes.

Three out of 10 householders believe they would be more productive at work if their boss allowed them to have a nap, the report found.

The Fine Bedding Company polled 2,000 British adults to paint an accurate picture of the nation's sleeping habits as part of its big Sleepentember campaign.

The nation's addiction to technology like smartphones and tablet computers is the

## STATS TO COUNT LIKE SHEEP IN BID TO FALL ASLEEP

54 per cent say sleep is routinely interrupted by a trip to the toilet  
 30 per cent complain a partner's snoring regularly spoils their sleep  
 30 per cent blame lack of sleep on being too hot or too cold

More than 25 per cent say anxiety keeps them awake at night  
 56 per cent aren't satisfied with the amount of sleep they get  
 81 per cent say a good night's sleep is more important than food



main reason most Brits admit they don't get enough sleep.

Half of those polled – exactly 50 per cent – admit the last thing they put down before finally turning out the light is a computer or smartphone. Sara Wadsworth, Fine Bed-

ding Company spokeswoman, said: "Brits aren't getting enough sleep.

"We were astonished with the huge majority of Brits admitting they love sleep but so many claiming they don't get enough sleep at night, that Britain doesn't go to

bed earlier on a week night. Having said that, it seems even when we are under the duvet there are too many distractions – particularly due to us keeping tabs on Facebook through our smartphones and tablets – to get a decent night's sleep.

### Snoring

"And when it's not Facebook it's our snoring husbands and wives who are to blame. "It seems that Britain is having a nightmare with its sleep patterns on a nightly basis," she added.

"Maybe if Brits changed their duvets according to the seasons, not like half of the UK that don't, then we could eliminate one of the main reasons for a disturbed night's sleep."

Site will have larger chapel with extra seating to host services

# Work starts on £1.3m crematorium revamp

Report by Charlie Benton  
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## WORK has started on a £1.3million project to revamp and expand a crematorium in the Black Country.

Rowley Regis Crematorium, in Powke Lane, was first opened in 1962. Now it is being updated to enable it to accommodate larger groups of mourners.

The project will see the site's chapel double in size to provide more than 100 seats for families and friends attending funeral services.

Architects Martin Critchell are working in conjunction with local funeral directors and Sandwell Council's bereavement services on the design for the modernisation.

Work will also focus on creating a new entrance, improved toilet facilities, additional car parking spaces, improvements to the interior and exterior of the building and a new waiting area for families.

Wolverhampton-based Interclass Plc has secured the contract to complete the modernisation of the crematorium.

Director and general manager Don Ward said: "Our team will be working closely with council staff throughout this project to ensure that we respect the sensitive nature of the site so that disruption to funeral services is kept to a minimum." Councillor Mahboob Hussain, Sandwell Council's deputy leader, said: "We are always looking at new ways of making improvements to frontline services and the work at Rowley Regis Crematorium is just one of a number that have been made.

### Bereaved

"The work at Rowley Regis follows the expansion of Sandwell Valley Crematorium and there have been other big improvements in service including combining our coroners, bereavement and registration service into a single service to support family more readily.

"We're also developing a digital autopsy centre at Sandwell Valley Crematorium to offer non-invasive post mortems to bereaved families across the West Midlands."

Sandwell Council said the crematorium will continue to be open for business for the majority of the seven months of the work.

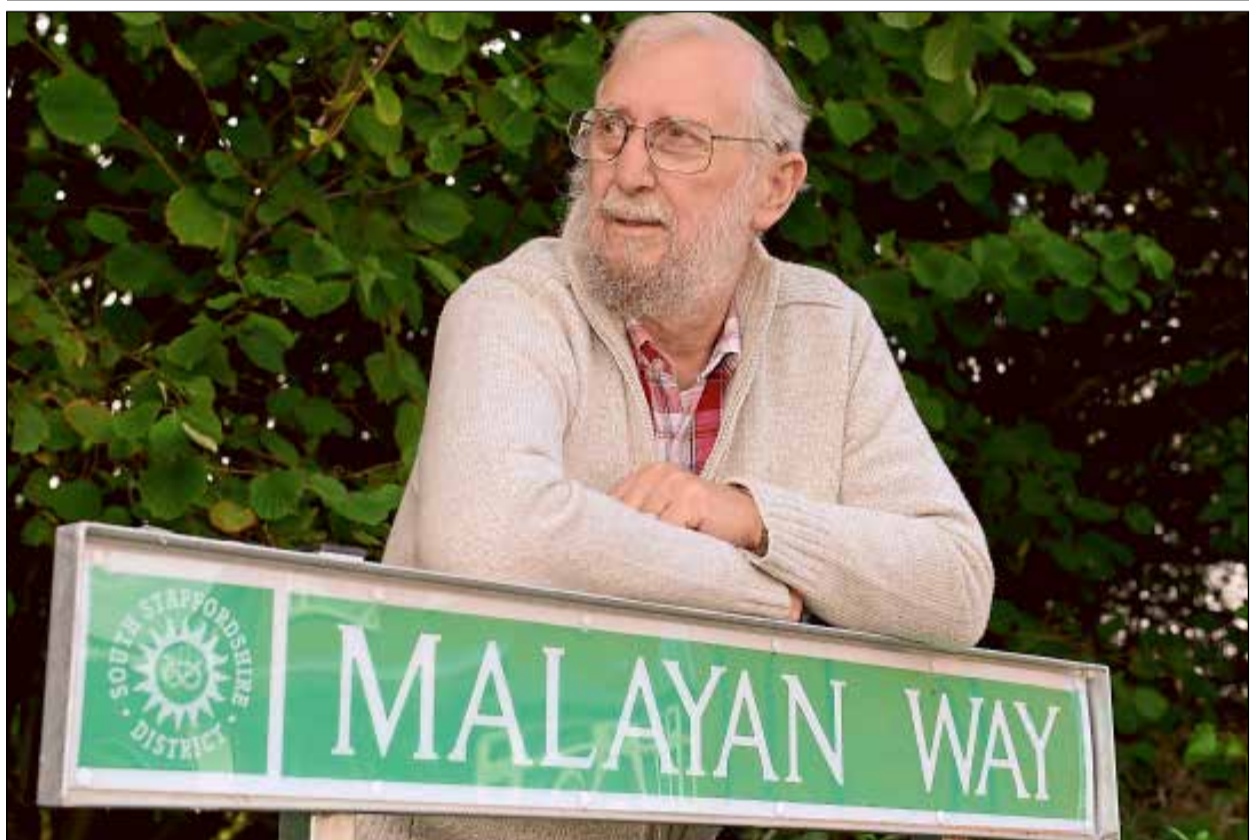
As part of the improvements to the Sandwell Valley Crematorium in West Bromwich, a £1.2m centre – allowing post-mortem examinations to be carried out without the need for surgery, using 3D scanners to confirm cause of death – is being planned.

It is hoped that the new centre will make the process less traumatic for bereaved families, who would be able to request a digital autopsy when a post-mortem is required.

The site would also be used by pathologists to quickly and accurately determine cause of death. The centre is being funded by iGene, which will also train and support pathologists to use the new technology.

The new centre will open in October. Among the other improvements to the Sandwell Valley site is a memorial garden.

## Street sign marks 60 years of friendship



Featherstone resident Trevor Nicholls with the new Malayan Way road sign which has been put up in the village

# Village remembers Malaysian link

There's more than 6,500 miles between them, but a new street sign honours a Staffordshire village's 60-year bond with teachers from Malaysia.

The Malayan Way sign has been put up at the former site of the Malayan Teacher Training College in Featherstone, which existed from 1955 until 1964.

Trevor Nicholls, member of the Featherstone and Brinsford Parish Council, said it remained a special place for the Malayan students who had studied there.

The parish council worked with the South Staffordshire District Council to have the section of East Road, near Featherstone village, renamed.

In 1955, the Government offered the site to Malaya to be turned into a teaching college, with the first students arriving in August that year. At that stage, the Malay states were still protectorates of the UK.

By Kimberley Crayton-Brown  
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Named 'Old Brinsfordians' after the site became known as Brinsford Lodge, the former students still meet up once a month in Malaysia to reminisce, and have kept in touch with friends in Featherstone who they visit regularly.

Mr Nicholls said their next visit to the Staffordshire town is planned for some time next year.

Students would spend two years at the campus studying, he said, with 150 in each group.

Mr Nicholls said: "The students were frequently seen about Featherstone making use of the shops, post office, local Methodist Church and, occasionally, the pub – the Red, White and Blue – although this was officially out of bounds."

"Talking to the now-retired teachers, they tell us that the two years they spent at Brinsford Lodge were the happiest times of their lives."

After the teaching college was closed the building was taken over by the then Wolverhampton Polytechnic, but has since been demolished and only the concrete building bases remain.

Mr Nicholls added: "When they come back they are just like teenagers, they dash around and find the bit that was their hut for two years. They really enjoy themselves."

Working on a local farm at the time, Mr Nicholls knew some of the teachers as they attended the Methodist Church with him, and some were even baptised there.

Mr Nicholls said they had sent photos of the new sign to their friends in Malaysia who were 'very pleased'.

# Poorer mothers-to-be need more help

More needs to be done to help poor women through pregnancy, experts have said, after new research found that they have a worse experience than better-off mothers-to-be.

Researchers from Oxford University analysed the 2010 National Maternity Survey, which included findings from 5,300 women who had given birth in England.

The study, published in BJOG: An International Journal of Obstetrics And Gy-

naecology, found that the most deprived women were 60 per cent less likely to have received any antenatal care when compared to the richest women.

These women were also 38 per cent less likely to have been seen by a health worker in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy and 47 per cent less likely to report being able to see a health worker as early as they desired in their pregnancy.

And poorer women were more likely to

report that they were not treated respectfully by health workers or spoken to in a way that they could understand during antenatal care and labour.

Study co-author professor Marian Knight said: "The findings from our analysis suggest that several factors may collectively contribute towards poorer maternal outcomes amongst women from the lowest socio-economic groups. These include unplanned pregnancy, no antenatal care or

late engagement with antenatal services, transfer during labour, higher Caesarean section rates and poorer communication with healthcare professionals."

Dr David Richmond, president of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, said more consultants and midwives are needed.

"Pregnancy can be a worrying time and we need to make sure all women are accessing the right help and support," he said.