

PLANNING

Axe for service station?

A SERVICE station could be demolished and rebuilt.

Euro Garages Ltd has asked Bury Council for permission to knock down Kirkhams Garage in Bury Old Road, Whitefield, and replace it with a modern building.

Six new parking places would be created for disabled drivers.

The council is aiming to reach a decision by September 13.

AUCTION

Hush-hush sale of art

OXJAM Bury is launching a four-week silent art auction at the town's Art Museum at 11.30am on Saturday August 17.

Visitors can bid for their own piece of art or original work by local and international artists. Visit www.oxjambury.co.uk or email oxjam.bury@gmail.com

TEST



DRIVER'S SEAT
Jodie Allen and David Coupe

Inequality? I'll have no truck with it!

■ Pass means teenage Jodie is set to join the lorry-driving elite

By DAVID THOMSON
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A RAMSBOTTOM teenager is "driving" the dream.

Nineteen-year-old Jodie Allen has become one of the youngest female lorry drivers in the country.

She has just passed her LGV C+E driving test — joining an elite and select group of women who can drive vehicles up to 44 tonnes.

Jodie works in administration and credit control for her family's ISM waste management company in Ramsbottom, and has harboured a desire to drive lorries for a long time.

She has grown up watching her father John, uncle Peter and then elder brother Paul, aged 24, drive for the business.

So, she decided to join the boys.

The teenager, who is 5ft 6in, said: "It is something that I always wanted to do.

"I didn't think being a girl could stop me. My older brother now has to let his little sister drive his 40 tonne truck.

"None of my girlfriends drive lorries and it is a real talking point when people ask what I do for a living. But, for me, it is something that I love and have grown up around with the family business."

Jodie took her LGV C in August last year and then went onto pass her C+E. She was instructed by David Coupe, director at Atherton-based Transport Training Academy and colleague Kevin Higgins.

Mr Coupe said: "In my 13 years teaching LGV drivers, I have not taught any female LGV C+E drivers. Jodie picked it up so quickly; she gained both her C and C+E in less than a year.

"Jodie took only 26 hours of driving lessons to gain her

LGV C+E, which is exceptional. We knew after around six hours of instructing her she could do it. As far as we know she is definitely one of the youngest, if not the youngest female to pass at this level. We are immensely proud to have helped her on her way."

It is believed that there are only five per cent of HGV Class 1 drivers under the age of 25 in the UK, both male and female. Of this figure, those who are female is negligible. Jodie's dad John said: "Jodie has worked with us here at ISM for since leaving school.

"She has watched us all drive the vehicles and obviously thought she may as well give it a go herself.

"We have always encouraged her and we're delighted that she wants to continue to be involved in our family business."

Jodie now goes out driving larger vehicles for ISM as well as helping to run the busy office on site.

CHARITY

Hospice seeks collection volunteers

BURY Hospice is short of volunteers to collect donations at Tesco supermarkets over the next six weeks.

Its fundraising team is looking for people who can spare two hours or more to

help with collections. They take place at Tesco in Bury at: noon to 2pm on Monday, August 19; 10am to 4pm on Wednesday, August 21; and noon to 4pm on Thursday, August 22.

A collection will also be held from 10am to 4pm on Friday, September 6 at Tesco in Prestwich.

Anyone wishing to volunteer can call the hospice's fundraising team on 0161 797 1748.

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