

Lines down

MORE than 2,000 people around Catteshall, Farncombe, Hindhead, Haslemere and Hydestile were cut off from their phones and the internet on Wednesday.

A BT spokesman said a fault in a fibre cable running between Godalming and Guildford had caused the problem.

Engineers put in 200 metres of new fibre cable, and the properties were back online after midnight on Thursday. The spokesman apologised for any inconvenience caused.

A fault also knocked out power to 586 homes and businesses in parts of Farncombe, Holloway Hill, Frith Hill and Busbridge from 9am on Wednesday.

A spokesman for Southern Electric said electricity was restored to about 200 premises by 11.30am and the problem was resolved completely by the early evening.

Report on speed watch

ELSTEAD community speed-watch has released its report from the first session.

Checks in the 30mph Millford and Thursley roads showed the average speed was 39.4mph, which resulted in 159 first warning letters and three final warnings.

Member Michael Organe said: "The number of speeding vehicles recorded is the highest of the 33 Speed Watch schemes operating in the area, a doubtful distinction for drivers passing through Elstead. The police will be carrying out their own operations in Elstead in the next few weeks."

Perfect picture

GODALMING Photographic Club's annual exhibition opened at the town's museum on Tuesday.

The show, which run until July 31, includes views of the area, human and animal portraits, pictures of exotic places and photos with a sense of humour.

This is the 28th annual exhibition for the club, which began in 1980 and meets weekly at Broadwater Community Centre from September to June.

Godalming Museum is open on Tuesday to Saturday from 10am to 5pm, and admission is free.

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Cyclist was not visible to driver

by Joanna Till

A CYCLIST who died after being hit by a car in Hindhead did not have any lights on his bike, an inquest heard on Tuesday.

Ganesan Selvaraj died instantly from multiple injuries when he was struck by a black Seat Ibiza at about 10.25pm on December 5 last year.

The 27-year-old was wearing a miner's lamp on his head, but Woking Coroner's Court heard the batteries were 'severely depleted' and probably insufficient to illuminate him to oncoming traffic.

The inquest was also told the high-visibility jacket, which he had bought the day before to make sure drivers could see him, was virtually useless in the dark winter evening.

Mr Selvaraj had arrived in the UK under the highly-skilled migrant programme in July last year, after graduating from the RVS College of Engineering in Tamil Nadu with a first class honours degree in computer science.

He was living with best friend Vijayan Subramanian in Farncombe, and after trying for months looking for employment as a software engineer he had ended up taking a job as a checkout assistant at the Total garage in Hindhead.

On the day he died, the court heard, Mr Selvaraj had worked from 2pm to 10pm at the petrol station on Portsmouth Road.

CCTV footage showed him wheeling his Apollo pedal cycle across the forecourt, still dressed in his dark blue trousers, black shoes and black jacket, pulling his high-visibility vest over his head.

Mr Subramanian told the coroner his friend had bought the jacket the day before he died, specifically so that drivers could see him as he cycled from Hindhead to Haslemere to catch the train home to Farncombe.

"He always wore a helmet," Mr Subramanian said. "He was very careful, he wanted to be safe."

Mr Selvaraj was cycling down the A287 Hindhead Road towards Haslemere when he was hit by the black Seat Ibiza overtaking a white Renault Clio in the 50mph stretch near the junction with Nutcombe Lane.

Driver Stephen Hill told the police he checked the road ahead carefully before he pulled out, and had not seen Mr Selvaraj cycling towards him.

"There was this almighty bang, the windscreen imploded and the roof came down," he said, in a statement read to the court.

"I stopped immediately and

realised we had collided with a cyclist. Parts of the bike, were embedded in the car."

Investigating officer PC Jane Luck told the coroner that Mr Selvaraj had a lamp strapped to his head, but no lights on his bike.

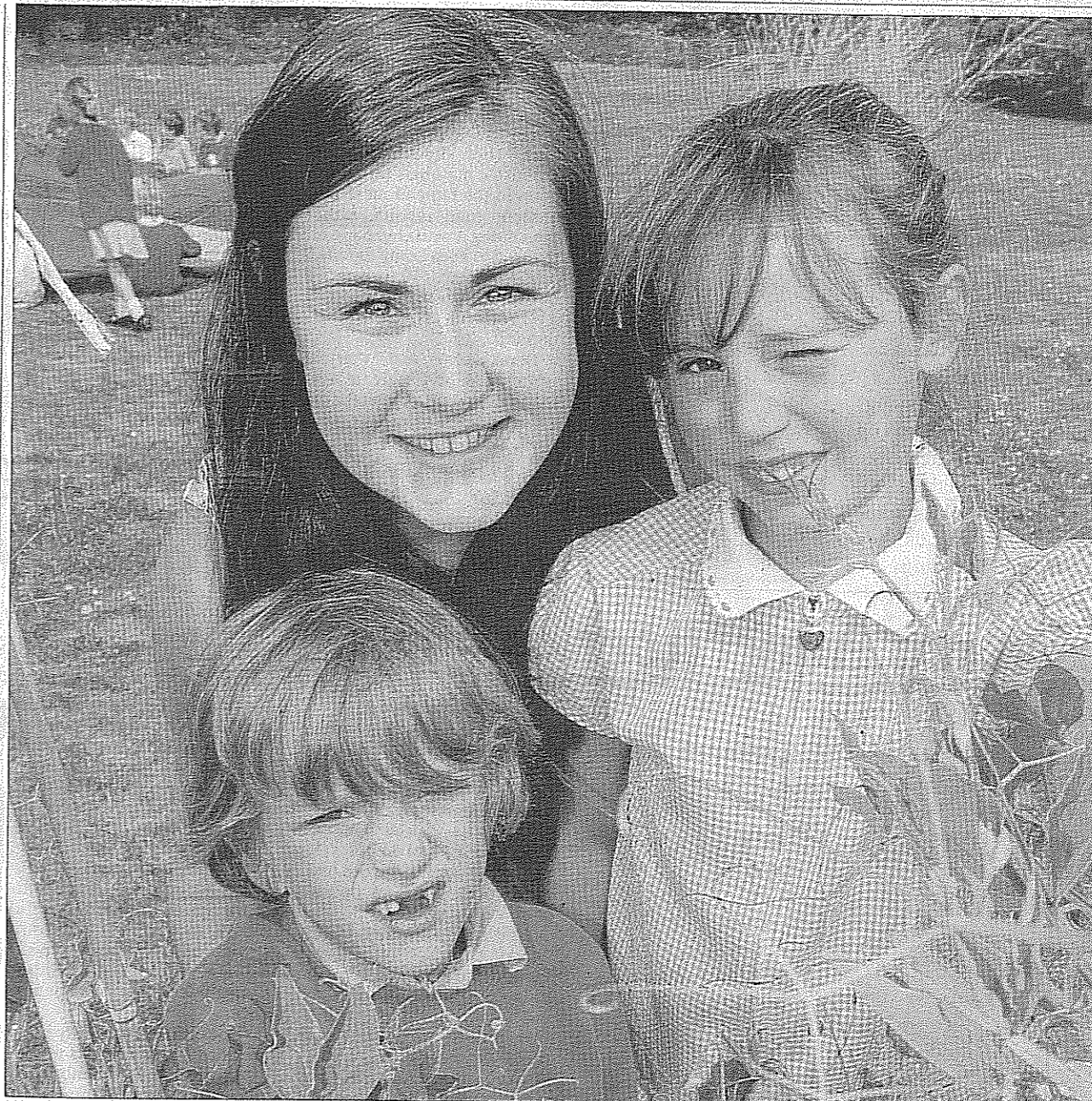
She said his reflectors and high-visibility jacket would only have been visible when they were lit by another source of light, and said it was a dark winter night with only one streetlight giving off a 'minimal' beam.

In addition, she said the batteries in the lamp strapped to his head were in a 'very depleted state,' and that even if it was switched on the beam would probably not have been strong enough for oncoming drivers to see him.

"Dipped beam headlights cover a distance of about 25m, which means a driver would have needed to be that distance from Mr Selvaraj for them to pick out his jacket," she added.

"If the Seat Ibiza was travelling at about 50mph and the cyclist was going 20 to 25mph, it would have given the driver less than a second to react and avoid the collision."

Surrey coroner Michael Burgess said he was satisfied the death had been an accident and expressed his condolences to Mr Selvaraj's family and best friend.



Busbridge Infant School pupils Alexander, 7, and Abi, 7, with Emma Hardy from Godalming College. Picture: Steve Porter.

Exploring the world through science

YEAR 2 pupils were able to learn more about the world around them during a special morning of science activities on Monday organised by childcare students at Godalming College.

The children, from Busbridge Infant School, enjoyed four workshops set up

by the sixth formers that covered topics including floating and sinking, the life cycle of a flower, insects and volcanic eruptions.

Twenty-six pupils took part in the activities, and the morning ended with parachute games in the early year's outdoor classroom.

"The students really enjoyed teaching the young pupils," said Philippa Cahill, head of early years. "It was great to see everyone so engrossed in practical science. The lessons, which link to the national curriculum, have proved so popular that the other Year 2s who could not attend the college's

workshops have also been following the same experiments with their class teacher."

After completing the two-year national diploma in childcare and education at Godalming College, many students choose to follow a teacher training qualification at university.

Campaign to reduce speed in residential roads to 20mph

A NEW speed campaign has been launched in Godalming in memory of lifelong volunteer Sheila Mitchell.

Members of Twenty's Plenty For Us are aiming to persuade the county council to implement a 20mph speed limit on residential roads throughout the entire town rather than just in isolated zones.

Arterial roads would not be affected by the scheme, which campaigners said would mean a typical journey would only take a few seconds longer.

ing the number of fatal car crashes, the scheme aims to reduce pollution and traffic noise, and encourage people to walk or cycle rather than relying on their car.

Cllr Penny Rivers, who is organising the campaign along with Cherry Allan of national cycling campaign CTC, professional Bikeability instructor Julie Rand and Kathy Smyth of Friends of the Earth will be handing out leaflets at The Big Lunch on The Burys and Latimer Road on Sunday.

be making a series of presentations to the town and borough councils in the hope of attracting support before making a formal approach to Surrey.

"This campaign has been bubbling under the surface for some time now, and Mrs Mitchell's sad death was the catalyst to make us take action," Cllr Rivers said.

"If implemented, Twenty's Plenty would have a significant impact on the community of Godalming and make it a safer, healthier and happier place for all of us."

Rod King, of the national Twenty's Plenty For Us organisation, said the lower speed limit would have a negligible effect on journey times.

"Even though the speed limit is 30mph, in reality the average speed is much lower because people constantly have to slow down and stop for obstructions," he said.

"Research shows us that drivers tend to speed up between those obstacles because they think it makes them arrive faster, when really

waiting at the next obstacle.

"Implementing a 20mph limit would add probably a few seconds on to a journey, but we would say many more people would be arriving safely."

South West Surrey MP Jeremy Hunt has also announced his support for the scheme.

"All of us, myself included, have got to learn to drive more slowly," the 43-year-old culture, media and sport secretary said. "Twenty mile per hour limits would certainly help, so I

Cherry, Julie and Kathy and launched this campaign.

"I hope that these statistics will encourage drivers to reconsider their speed on residential roads and that local residents will get behind the campaign."

One in every 40 pedestrians hit by a car travelling less than 20mph dies. This increases to one in five when a vehicle is travelling at 30mph, and at 40mph the fatality rate is 90%, with just one in 10 victims surviving.

Peasmarsh, was cycling along Meadow towards Godalming shortly before 4pm on June 2 when she was hit by a car as she turned right into Wey Court.

An air ambulance rushed Mrs Mitchell to Kings College Hospital in London, but doctors were unable to save her and she was pronounced dead a few hours later.

Mrs Mitchell was the fifth person in 16 years to be killed in a crash on Meadow, a stretch of road only three-