

## news

### sunday

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## sunday

### MISSING TEEN'S BODY IS FOUND

FLOODED BRITAIN GRIM DISCOVERY BY HOVERCRAFT  
RESCUERS POLICE CHIEF WARNS:  
DO NOT GO OUT TODAY

By SIMON WRIGHT & KATE MANSEY  
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Mitchell Taylor

A TEENAGER about to start university was last night feared to be the third victim of the devastating floods swamping Britain.

A body, thought to be that of Mitchell Taylor, 19, was recovered by Italian volunteer rescuers from 10 feet of flood water covering playing fields in Tewkesbury, Glos.

Yesterday's grim find ends a seven-day wait for the barman's family, who had not seen him since a night out last Saturday.

It follows the deaths of Bramwell Lane, 64, and his son Chris, 27, on Thursday. They were pumping out floodwater from the cellar of Tewkesbury Rugby Club when they were overcome by fumes.

Last night police urged people to stay at home as more torrential downpours were expected.

Forecasters predicted six to nine hours of heavy rain in Gloucestershire and Worcestershire overnight.

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Rescue workers (pic: Roland Leon)

As the crisis continued, police asked motorists not to travel unless the journey was absolutely necessary. Supt Alex Drummond, of Gloucestershire Police, said: "We're now appealing for people to help us this weekend by avoiding non-essential journeys and staying at home where possible."

Last night Mitchell's mother Jane, 44, was too distressed to talk about his death. He has three older brothers - Ross, who was with Mitchell the night he vanished, Andrew and Anthony.

Neighbour Susan McCabe said: "Jane is in pieces - she has been fearing the worst for days now and this is a terrible time for her."

"Mitchell is a lovely young man. He was due to go to Leicester University to study arts and drama in September and he was working at the local pub to get some money together before he went."

"Everyone takes a short cut across those playing fields. The trouble is that when it floods in Tewkesbury the water rises very quickly there."

Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue spokesman Tally Giampa paid tribute to the Italian rescuers who located the partly-submerged body. The four-man crew, who speak little English, drove to Tewkesbury from Turin on Wednesday to help rescue efforts.

Mr Giampa said: "They are here as volunteers and their help has been greatly appreciated."

When the rain eventually stops, the clear-up is estimated to cost a staggering £5billion. Prime Minister Gordon Brown visited victims last week and pledged an extra £200million to boost defences.

Meanwhile the bogus fire chief who duped flood victims in Tewkesbury as he directed rescue efforts has been leading a fantasy life in his home city of Liverpool, it emerged last night.

Brian Jennings, 49, who was arrested last Wednesday, allegedly tricked neighbours into believing he worked for the fire brigade.

Neighbour Jean Smith, 47 said: "He told he was a fireman and I felt proud as punch that we had a public service worker on our block."

But it did strike me that he was never clean shaven."

Another neighbour said: "One day he had a nail in the tyre of his Ford Fiesta and I advised him to go to a local dealer. But he told me, 'I don't need to bother because I am in the fire service and they will look after me!'"

Another resident said: "He was too old to be a fireman. They need to be able to lift people, don't they?"

Police and fire crews broke down his door with a battering ram and took away computers and a video recorder. "The commotion frightened the life out of us," said Jean.

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