



Actor opens new teaching office

A famous television actor-turned-teacher has visited Norwich to help launch a new office for supply teachers. Step Teachers, an agency which provides supply teachers for primary through to further education, officially opened its new office in Norwich yesterday with guest of honour

London's Burning actor, Ben Onwukwe, pictured above, who is a supply teacher for Step. Ben, best known for playing Stuart 'Recall' McKenzie, said: "In between acting jobs, I love teaching drama to kids and I have worked with Step Teachers now for many years. "Their excellent quality of service and passion for education means I always call them when I have a few weeks off."

The Norwich office in the Royal Business Centre, in Bank Plain, is Step Teachers' first branch outside its London head office. The business is run by brothers Marios and George Georgiou. Marios said: "We are delighted to be opening our office in Norwich... It's wonderful to finally be able to put a face to the names of so many people that we have been working with over the years."

PHOTO: STEVE ADAMS

Jury in murder trial set to be sent out today

The jury in the murder trial of Gordon Hilditch is set to be sent out today to consider its verdict - after the defence and prosecution summed up their cases.

Gordon Hilditch, 33, pictured, is charged with the murder of Stuart Middleton, 41, who was found dead in his flat in Paragon Place, Norwich, on July 6 last year.



Mr Middleton suffered more than 87 injuries and died after suffering a severe blow to his abdomen.

The court has been told that construction worker Hilditch, also of Paragon Place, visited Mr Middleton's flat believing he had stolen his bike and a drill. A fight then ensued.

Hilditch denies murder and said he fought with Mr Middleton in self-defence to try to make him drop a knife. He denies another

charge of wounding relating to a samurai sword attack on Mr Middleton's friend.

At court yesterday, John Farmer, prosecuting, said that Hilditch was an "arrogant, vicious bully", who had lied in court about what happened.

Mr Farmer said: "The prosecution case is that Hilditch beat Stuart Middleton to death.

"Whether he intended to or not, we say that, when you look at the collection of injuries Mr Middleton suffered - the stomach injury and fractured face and ribs - it's beyond reason that a man could inflict that upon another man without intending him to suffer really serious harm."

Mr Farmer said after Hilditch beat up Mr Middleton in the afternoon, he returned to the deceased's flat later that night to "finish him off".

But in summing up for the defence, Graham

Parkins said CCTV footage had emerged within the last 24 hours that showed Hilditch at a petrol station on that night, which meant the Crown's case that the fatal blow to Mr Middleton occurred on this return visit could not be right.

Mr Parkins said paramedics called to the deceased's flat after midnight found Mr Middleton's body to be cold.

He added: "That means the prosecution's claim that Hilditch had "finished him off" just before midnight could not be correct.

Mr Parkins said both Hilditch and Mr Middleton had immense quantities of alcohol in their blood.

Hilditch previously said in court: "Mr Middleton died as a result of my actions but I did not murder him."

The trial continues.

David Bale david.bale2@archant.co.uk

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