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March 2015

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Editor's Comment



CONGRATULATIONS to members of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council on their new Community Day initiative to find our local "super heroes."

Extension approved

A CROFT resident has won planning permission for a two-storey home extension, despite opposition from the parish council.

Borough planning chiefs gave the go-ahead for the extension in Kenyon Lane, Croft despite being told the extension would normally be considered of disproportionate size.

Croft parish council had argued the extension would amount to overdevelopment of the site.

An officer's report stated that although the proposal would result in the property being increased in size by more than a third, there was an existing planning consent, dating from 2012, which although slightly smaller in terms of footprint was more bulky in design.

The new proposal would be comfortably contained within the residential curtilage of the house and would not appear unduly prominent.

It is a great way to say thank you to those who "go the extra mile" in our local communities and add to the fun of the occasion.

I look forward to seeing plenty of super heroes in action on the day and reporting on their good work.

Community Day is a great way for local organisations to get their messages out - I just hope this year, with local and national elections in the offing, it doesn't become a political jamboree.

The political battlefields are going to get pretty messy in the coming weeks and I am sure most people don't want political propaganda getting in the way of a great community event.

It would be great to see all the local politicians working together for the good of the community

and no attempts for political points scoring.

Here at Culcheth Life we are proud to remain politically independent and as with our various other publications, we always try our best to support and work with those who have the best interests of our communities at heart.

We always take the stance of urging people to vote for the person they think best to represent the local community, whether it be on the local or national map.

What we don't want is people not turning up at the ballot box because they are sick and tired of all the political mud slinging, which unfortunately tends to happen at elections.

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Lottery boost for historic church

FUNDRAISERS at Winwick's historic St Oswald's Church have taken another step towards the restoration of the building.

They have received a "first round pass" from the Heritage Lottery Fund for work on the South Aisle roof, which is badly infested with death watch beetle.

A first round pass means the project meets Heritage Lottery Fund criteria and that the lottery fund

believes it has potential to deliver high quality benefits and value for money.

The application was in competition with other projects, so a first-round pass is an endorsement of the outline proposals.

The project now has up to two years to submit fully developed proposals to compete for a firm award.

The project aims to complete the £800,000 restoration work already done to make the final part of the roof safe.

This latest funding will also allow construction of a stage and the creation of a museum for community use.

Development funding of £46,600 has been awarded to help the church to progress its plans to apply for a full grant at a later date.

John Watkin, chairman of the

church's building committee said: "Whilst the project aims to carry out essential conservation work on this medieval church, an important part of it is to facilitate community involvement.

"The benefits will be that the church will become a venue for local organisations who require a stage and seating for about 150 people. It is envisaged that the museum will become a centre for educational talks and workshops for the general public.

"We as members of the Parochial Church Council are delighted that the Heritage Lottery Fund has given

us this support and we intend to provide the village with a place for live entertainment, public meetings and an educational centre based upon our museum."

The present Grade 1 Listed church is more than 700 years old and an earlier building was recorded in the Domesday Book.

Cllr Mike Matthews, a member of Winwick Parish Council, said he was delighted with the award.

"The fact that we as a wider community now have the prospect of a fully equipped performance space and museum is a major enhancement to the community."



The Rector, the Rev June Steventon in front of the church

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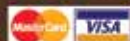
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Search for community 'super hero'

CULCHETH and Glazebury Parish Council have announced details of the village's annual Community Day which will include the search for a local "super hero."

The popular event held on the village green raises money for good causes, and attracts hundreds of visitors every year. This year's event is scheduled for Bank Holiday Monday May 4.

As in previous years, the Day will have a "theme". This year, parish councillors have unveiled a "superhero" theme, which will permeate through much of the entertainment. Entertainers will appear on the village green with featured performances designed to entertain young and old alike.

Visitors, particularly children, will be encouraged to come in costume as their favourite superhero.

There will also be the usual favourites - Trumble the Clown (pictured above) will entertain young children; fairground rides will be located in the village centre; there will be a pet show; a cake baking competition and the veteran car/motorcycle and tractor display. Schools will have the opportunity to take part in an art competition.

This year's event will have added attractions - as well as the popular "Sudden Impact" ride, which will be located on the Sainsburys car park, visitors will have the opportunity to

take a ride on the "Culcheth Eye" as a large ferris wheel will be sited on the village green itself, giving attendees the chance to see the village from above!

The Grenadier Guards will also have a unique stall on the Common.

In keeping with the "superhero" theme, local councillors will be launching a competition for locals to "Nominate Your Local Superhero", giving villagers the opportunity to recognise the charitable and community-based work undertaken by many volunteers throughout the community.

More details on how nominations can be made will be announced soon in the village magazine and local library.

Councillor Matt Smith said: "Community Day has undergone something of a refresh in the past couple of years. With new features and attractions, it has once again become an event not to be missed. Dozens of worthwhile organisations have signed up to take part and help to raise money for their charity.

"Like always, there will be something for all the family this year - whether its entertainment from classic acts like Trumble the Clown, or one of our new and exciting superhero-themed performers, we warmly invite everyone to make sure Culcheth Community Day is on



your calendar for May 4th. It's not to be missed!"

Councillor Chris Vobe added: "A superhero theme was something that parish councillors couldn't resist, and our plans for the Day give the opportunity for everyone to get involved in a variety of ways. Whether you are part of the generation who grew up in the golden age of Marvel comics,

or a fan of the modern wave of superhero movies, dust off your web-slingers, fire up the Batmobile and join us on the village green for what promises to be another successful day. Remember to keep a look out for our fantastic centrepiece - a ferris wheel that we've christened The Culcheth Eye!"

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Family left without a wheelie bin

A CULCHETH family was told they would be left without a black wheelie bin for 10 weeks after council workmen took away their existing bin because it was too big. Borough councillor Sue Bland stepped in and got the "waiting time" reduced to three weeks.

But she said: "Apparently the council had run out of black bins. But it seemed stupid to take away the old bin knowing that it could not be replaced immediately.

"This was quite a large family and needed a bin. They were told they would have to make do with binsacks."

The council has, for some time, been replacing old, larger bins with new standard-size bins because the old bins are considered too heavy when full. Usually, they replace the old bin on the same day.

But because of a shortage of bins, the Culcheth family were told they would have to use sacks for up to 10 weeks.

Cllr Bland said: "The family took the matter up with me and I raised it with the Town Hall. As a result I was told the new bin would arrive in three weeks.

"But I cannot understand why the old bin was taken when a replacement wasn't immediately available. They have been used for years and no-one has complained that they were too big or too heavy."

A council spokesperson said: "Over the last 12 months we have been removing the larger wheeled bins, on a recommendation from the Health and Safety Executive, due to their weight and the issue that they often fall off the back

of the bin wagon when emptied, causing a potential hazard to our operatives.

"We have been exchanging the bins area by area. When we remove a larger bin we inform the resident in advance and provide them with a replacement bin on the day. We also give them the opportunity to apply for a second black bin at the same time.

"If a black refuse bin is lost or stolen the current delivery time is three weeks and we take up to three bags of refuse on collection day until the bin is delivered. We would encourage any residents who want extra help managing their waste and recycling to contact the team on 01925 443322."



Glazebury play area set to open in spring



A NEW play area in Glazebury is set to open in the spring.

It will feature a community orchard, climbing and seating areas made from boulders and logs, a willow dome, den-building areas, vegetable growing areas, wildlife-friendly hedges, trees and wildflowers.

A new footpath has been funded and installed by Eric Wright Civil Engineering into the play area to improve accessibility to the space, and residents have planted wildflower bulbs along it.

The latest improvements are part of a project to transform land provided to Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council by Bents Garden and Home into a natural, interactive play area and community space for Glazebury residents.

The project has been organised and coordinated by Glazebury Community Play Area committee with support from The Mersey Forest. It has been supported by a range of local partners, including Cory Environmental Trust in Britain through the Landfill Communities Fund and Big Tree Plant funding through The Mersey Forest.

Graham Borg, group chair and local resident said: "The team from Eric Wright have been really supportive and now that the paths are complete, the next step is to install new access gates with the help of United Utilities. This is another big step towards opening the play area this spring."

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Residents urged save public

VILLAGERS are being urged to turn out in force at a public meeting which will decide the future of public footpaths which have been ploughed over by a local farmer.

The designated footpaths are on land behind the barn conversion on Withington Avenue.

Warrington Borough Council successfully applied designated footpath status on the public footpaths - but now landowners Peel Estates have appealed against the decision.

The footpaths were ploughed over by the tenant farmer but Warrington Borough Council, supported by local residents, successfully applied for them to become designated footpaths and a public right of way.

Now Peel Estates are bidding to have the decision overturned.

Local resident Janet Evans said: "These paths have been really well walked for many years by local residents.

"The main thing is to let people know that a battle is actually going on with Peel Estates.

"Most local residents will be totally unaware!

"We need as many local people there as possible to show their support. Peel Estates will be represented by barristers and there is a risk we could lose these paths if people don't show their support for them."

The public meeting takes place at Cucheth Sports Club, Charnock Road (the old Daten Club) on April 14 starting 10am.



to join battle to c footpaths



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- Weeding should start in earnest! Weeding now will save you so much time later on in the year
- Lawns should be swept and raked before having their first cut and then given a spring feed towards the end of the month
- If tender bulbs produce new shoots quickly, protect them with fleece or mulch until the weather has improved
- Early spring is an ideal time to plant herbaceous perennials e.g. Geraniums and Oriental Poppies
- This is the best month to plant strawberries to get them established in their first season
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Village 'cut off' after 7.30pm

VILLAGERS at Croft who don't have a car are cut-off from the world after 7.30pm because of cuts in bus services.

A number of residents turned up at the monthly meeting of the parish council to complain about the problem.

Cllr Les Hoyle (pictured) said: "There was considerable anger. You need a car to live in Croft these days. People think we have been singled out for these cuts. I have no doubt there are problems elsewhere too – but after 7.30pm we have got nothing.

"You can't go into town to the cinema, you can't go shopping of an evening. You can't even get to

Culcheth."

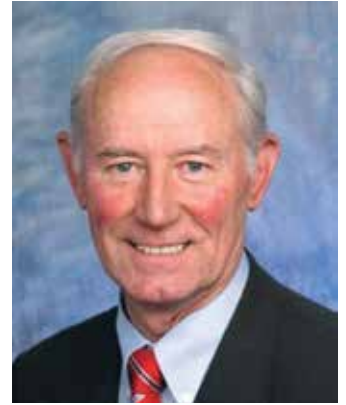
The parish council is to raise the issue with Network Warrington and residents are to organise a protest petition to the borough council.

Croft has also been cut-off from broadband and electricity services.

Broadband – which is never good in the village – went down completely for two days.

Parts of the village also suffered an electricity blackout, with some properties relying on generators for nearly a week.

The parish council has complained to BT and Scottish Power.



Pioneering approach will help pupils learn about end of life care

A FORWARD-thinking project run by St. Rocco's Hospice will help year six pupils at St Lewis Primary School in Croft learn about living and dying well, and highlight the role that hospices play in end of life care.

Twenty year six pupils from the school will take part in Roc ON!, which sees St. Rocco's break boundaries by addressing issues around death and dying that are often taboo – especially when it comes to children.

The pupils will visit the hospice once a week until the end of March, taking part in creative craft sessions with patients, and learning more about their lives and wishes.

Patients and carers will also benefit from the project, giving

them space to talk about their experiences.

Jan Temenos is leading the project at St. Rocco's Hospice, after implementing similar approaches in the south of England.

She said: "By developing connections between the hospice and local schools and inviting honest and open dialogue, the approach aims to address myth and fear, to raise awareness about death and dying, and to promote a better understanding of palliative care.

The children will learn to consider not only what it might mean to die well but also, how to live as well as possible with difficult conditions."

John Garratt is one of the St. Rocco's Day Unit patients taking part in the project. Diagnosed with terminal lung cancer in 2013, he said his own experiences of talking to his grandchildren about his illness prompted him to get involved.

He added: "I found it difficult myself to explain what was happening, so being able to put children at ease around the subject is really important. St. Rocco's has changed my life, so I'm happy to help in any way I can."

Roc ON! will work with other schools in Warrington throughout 2015, and is part of the Hospice's plans to reach out into the community during their 30th anniversary year and beyond.



Above: Jan Temenos, St. Rocco's Hospice School Project Lead and John Garratt a patient at St. Rocco's launching the Roc On Initiative and below, pupils from St Lewis Primary School, who are taking part in the initiative.

Mini-roundabout may solve traffic problems

A MINI-roundabout may be provided in the centre of Croft – when funding permits.

Highways chiefs have carried out a desktop survey, following requests from Croft Parish Council, and believe a mini-roundabout would ease traffic problems outside the Horseshoe Inn at the junction of Smithy Brow, Lord Street and Smithy Lane.

The parish council has been calling for action about increasing traffic problems in the village for some time and put forward the idea of a mini-roundabout at the busy junction.

Cllr Les Hoyle said: "The traffic can be very busy at peak periods, with people travelling to work at Risley, Birchwood and Warrington.

"A mini-roundabout shouldn't cost much – it only needs to be painted on the road. But although the highways people think it would be helpful, it still has to be funded. We hope it can be done this year."

In the meantime the parish council is arranging a meeting with residents and local police to discuss traffic issues in the village.

The perennial problem of speeding traffic using Dam Lane to avoid the junction by the Horseshoe is again causing concern.



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1. Make sure that you utilise tax allowances for both partners/spouses in the household. This may mean transferring income generating assets. For example, transferring an asset which generates income of £1,000 pa from a higher rate taxpayer to their spouse who has no income, will save £400 pa.
2. Maximise pension contributions – for every £800 contribution you make £1,000 will go into your pension pot and if you're a higher rate tax payer you will receive a

further £200 tax relief. The annual maximum amount of contributions qualifying for tax relief is £40,000 for 2014/15 but if you didn't utilise your annual allowances in previous tax years you may be able to make more contributions this year.

- The pension rules changes that are being introduced on 6th April 2015 will make it much easier to access your pension pot once you retire making pension contributions a more attractive tax saving option than ever before.
3. Make tax efficient investments – the New Individual Savings Accounts (NISAs) have an annual limit of £15,000 from which any income is tax free. Other investments (available through most financial advisers) offer very generous tax breaks – with income tax relief rates between 30% and 50% of the amount invested. These type of

investments fall within, amongst others, Venture Capital Trusts and Enterprise Investment schemes.

What should you do next?

We recommend that you first look at what income and gains you have generated for 2014/15. Then contact Sarah Salton of Styles & co on 01925 761 600 to arrange a consultation to find out which tax planning opportunities are best for you.



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A life in Wellington boots

WHEN members of Croft WI heard the talk at their meeting was to be entitled "My Life in Wellingtons" they presumed it would be about gardening. However, they were surprised to learn that speaker Margaret Emsley would be talking about her career as a civil engineer and the wellingtons had been worn visiting construction sites.

From an early age Margaret had been interested in the unseen mechanics of building works, unusual for a girl at that time, and when a civil engineer cousin explained the intricacies of his job, Margaret decided that was the career she wanted. On leaving school career advisors tried to dissuade her from pursuing her dream, as they felt her qualifications would have been better suited to being a teacher and engineering was no profession for a woman! But after gaining the necessary qualifications, Margaret went on to become a full time civil engineer.

Her job involved travelling all over the country working on roads, bridges, nuclear power stations, large buildings and even sewers. There were occasions when she encountered male opposition to working for a female site boss, but these were rare. Site operatives swearing, risqué calendars and the like were all taken in her stride and her experiences such as falling into water logged foundations and male/female site toilet arrangements were hilarious.

After many years in her profession, Margaret decided to go into academia and after gaining even higher qualifications, including a doctorate, she is now a lecturer at Manchester University. But she has never regretted taking "an exciting, dynamic and tremendously satisfying job."

President Doreen Clare thanked Margaret for an extremely enlightening and interesting talk.

The competition was won by Barbara Taylor with Marion Lord second and Joan Johnson third.

Accountants now able to provide probate services



THE law on protected legal services has recently been changed and some chartered accountants are now able to provide probate services which were previously the exclusive domain of solicitors.

Culcheth's Hunter Healey have recently secured authorisation from The Institute of Chartered Accountants (ICAEW) to provide this service and are one of the first firms in the area to gain accreditation.

Dealing with valuation of the estate, making the necessary tax returns to HMRC and dealing with ultimate distribution of the assets among the beneficiaries in accordance with a will - where present - are all areas in which accountants are well versed.

Chartered accountants have a wealth of experience on valuation matters and may be able to complete probate tax returns in a more tax efficient manner.

An accountant will already have an in depth knowledge of existing clients' financial affairs and if they have a business, will be familiar with the nature of it and any plans they may have for succession.

An accountant may already be dealing with a wide range of a client's personal financial matters which may include estate and tax planning as well as trust management.

Dealing with probate on death is a natural extension to this service, as the accountant will have the underlying information about a client's financial affairs readily available which should allow cost and efficiency savings.

The use of a trusted adviser to administer the estate of the deceased may provide comfort to the bereaved at a difficult time.

Accountants accredited to undertake probate work may only accept instruction in respect of non-contentious probate work and if a dispute arises in respect of the validity or terms of a will, the matter would be referred to a qualified solicitor.

Hunter Healey are able to provide probate services to both existing clients and new introductions. For further information call 01925 767222 or emailinfo@hunterhealey.co.uk

Folk stars to appear in concert

AN opportunity to see and hear internationally renowned folk artists in Culcheth comes with a concert organized by the local Rotary Club on Friday, March 27.

Popular recording artist Bram Taylor will be appearing at Culcheth Sports Club, along with Nick Peake and Dave Howard, who also have established reputations as solo performers in their own right.

Bram Taylor is famed for his rich voice, engaging stage presence and entertaining sense of humour.

He plays guitar and duet concertina and can sing solo and acappella and has appeared at folk festivals, clubs, art centres and other concert venues in the UK, USA, Canada and Europe.

The concert will be informal, with bar available, and all profits will go to charitable causes.

Tickets, at £8.50 a head can be obtained from behind the bar at the club or from Rotary Club members. Contact Bob Connop on 01925 765194 or email bobconnop@talktalk.net).



Rotary gives aid to Indian girls education

ROTARY club members from Culcheth are giving aid to an innovative girls school project in India.

The Pardada Pardadi girls school project provides about 1,300 young women with a broad education which enables them to move on to further education and acquire a wide variety of skills.

The Rotary club has been assisted by other volunteer organisations who have contributed music and

dance training, medical care, maths and English teaching, health and hygiene training, teacher training, call centre etiquette, goods distribution and many other skills.

The school has a waiting list in excess of 4,000, such is the demand for women's education.

The school is now recognised as a senior secondary school by the Uttar Pradesh Board, enabling it to include sciences in its curriculum.

Businesses employing 125 people, have been set up to help finance the school.

These include textiles, leading to embroidery and manufacture of men's suit bags, the recycling of textile materials into sanitary ware and the formation of a call centre.

This education has enabled more than 1,500 local village women to work co-operatively making incense sticks and soap and selling buffalo milk.

Rotary club spokesman Bernard Groom said: "This is one of many successful international Rotary initiatives, which, when aided by other organizations have helped people to improve their quality of life."

Anyone interested in joining Rotary should call Bernard Groom on 01925 733893, or email bernardmgroom@gmail.com

The club meets at Birchwood Golf Club at 7pm each Tuesday.

Resident wins planning appeal

A CULCHETH resident has won a planning battle after the borough council refused his application for permission to build a single storey extension to his bungalow home in Cawley Avenue.

The application was turned down in October last year but, following an appeal, Louise Nurser, a Government-appointed inspector has ruled that the development can go ahead.

She said the main issue was the effect of the extension's roof design would have on the character of the bungalow and the area.

Bungalows in the area had a variety of roof forms and this lack of uniformity contributed positively to the interest and distinctive characteristics of the area. The scheme would add interest to the bungalow and not harm the character of the area, she decided.

Trees may have to be felled

THREE mature trees may need to be felled on Croft Park, the annual survey for insurance purposes has revealed.

Members of the parish council are to visit the park along with an arboriculturist to get advice before the trees are removed. One is believed to be reaching the stage where it could become dangerous.

There are about 40 trees in the park – and any that are removed will be replaced.

Police chief invited

CHESHIRE'S Police and Crime Commissioner, John Dwyer, has been invited to attend a meeting of Croft Parish Council to discuss traffic issues in the village.

Members of the council are annoyed because they have been informed by the police that 20mph speed limits cannot be enforced.

Charities receive £1,400 from Christmas 'post'

LOCAL charities benefitted to the tune of £1,400 from the Christmas postal service run by Churches Together in Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft.

Now organisers want to thank the volunteers who ran the service and residents who made use of it.

Churches Together spokesperson Delia Caswell said: "We would like to thank everyone who helped and everybody who used the service. We raised a significant amount of money for local charities."

The service has been running for several years at Christmas. Users "post" their letters at the local churches, volunteers then sort the mail and then others deliver it around the streets of the three villages. Users pay 20p per letter – and the envelope is stamped "Churches Together."

Clare's event at The Village Club

FUNDRAISERS would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who attended an event at the Village Club in Culcheth in memory of local mum Clare Monroe.

The night was a great success and featured solo singers Stewart Waldron, Marcus and Penny Black who ensured the dancing went on until the early hours.

A special thank you to the brilliant sponsors DJ Ian Simpson and the generosity of people who made kind donations on the night, all proceeds made on the night will be donated to a trust fund set up for Clare's children by her father Michael.



Culcheth mum to trek to the Inca's 'lost city'

A CULCHETH mother is preparing for the challenge of a lifetime – climbing a 7,970 ft mountain in the Andes – to raise funds for Girlguiding.

Justine Doyle, a Guiding leader with the 3rd Culcheth (Newchurch) Guides is to trek to the 15th century Inca city of Machu Picchu in Peru in October.

She hopes to raise £4,000.

Justine has visited Peru several times on business but this visit, along with 25 other Girlguiding members and supporters, will be her first as a trekker.

She said: "I never had the opportunity to see Machu Picchu.

"The three day trek covering 26 miles will be the biggest challenge for me, but I have no doubt that the sight at the end of it will make it all worthwhile."

The challenging trek will take in well-known landmarks such as Dead Women's Pass and the Sun Gate.

Sometimes described as "The Lost City of the Incas", Machu Picchu was built around 1450 at the height of the Inca Empire. It was abandoned about 100 years later as a result of the Spanish conquest.

It is considered important archaeologically because was never found by the Spanish and so survived the destruction wrought by them on most other Inca sites.

Justine decided to take on the challenge for Girlguiding because, having three daughters aged 14, 9 and 7, all of who have experienced the opportunities which Girlguiding offers, felt it right to help give those opportunities to other girls and young women.

The money she raises could support 50 disabled girls and young women to attend a camp with their friends, along with their carer or buddy, through Girlguiding's fund for members with disabilities.

Anyone who wants to support Justine can do so by visiting <https://www.justgiving.com/Justine-Doyle>



Our pictures show top: Justine (centre) receiving an award to recognise five years of volunteering for Girlguiding and right: Rebecca Leech, aged 13 and Melissa McAreevey, aged 12, making Peruvian necklaces at a special meeting run by Justine.

Fundraising for the Culcheth Centre

TWO special events have been organised to raise money for new chairs and tables at the Culcheth Centre in Jackson Avenue.

On Saturday, March 14, there will be a bring and buy sale with bacon butties at 11.30am to 2pm and on Friday, April 17 there will be a social evening, with an entertainer and hot pot supper, starting at 7.30pm.

Tickets for the social evening are available at £5 from Cllr Sue Bland on 01925 766641 and from Pat Walsh on 01925 764876 or from any committee member.

Carnival grant

CROFT Parish Council has agreed to pay a grant of £550 towards the cost of Croft Carnival, which takes place on Saturday, July 4, this year.

Magic of the Western Isles

SPEAKER Morag Burton took members of Newchurch WI on a fascinating voyage around the islands of Scotland.

Her talk "The Magic of the Western Isles" began with a detour to Shetland and Orkney with the emphasis on bird life and history.

Photo slides, Morag's own paintings and recorded bird calls introduced members to the fulmars, puffins guillemots and bad-tempered great skuas.

There were pictures of the old buildings of Orkney, from the Stone Age through Pictish times to the rule of the Vikings and the more recent Italian Chapel built by prisoners of war.

Morag then moved her talk south west to the Hebrides and described the building of nearly 100 lighthouses from Harris down to Islay. She had photos and paintings of the Cuillin range in Skye, beautiful beaches, old castles and new whisky distilleries.

She was sad about the depopulation of many islands but hopeful about the whisky industry in Islay and the road bridge from Skye to the mainland. After Nora Cooper's vote of thanks, Morag judged the month's competition - Something Tartan. She chose Doreen Procter as winner, with Irene Bromilow and Olive Lee coming second and third.

The meeting was told that on April 21 there will be a trip to Media City. After tea served by Val Eddowes and Lesley Lloyd, the meeting ended with a quiz.

The March speaker will be Josie Morris and her topic "Let's Make Chocolate". The competition will be "a Chocolate Box".

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HS2: What will the true impact be?

Written by V. Barlow,
Head of Courtyard Homes.



HS2 talk is a burning issue in **Culcheth** at the moment. Residents are naturally concerned that the proposed new rail route will have a negative impact on our village and its nearby neighbours of **Croft, Glazebrook, Glazebury, Lowton, Golborne, Rixton, Hollins Green and Kenyon**. Residents of these communities understandably feel unsettled as they wonder whether there will be a negative impact on the value of the area in general, and most importantly on their individual homes.

Clients frequently ask the following questions: Will I be able to sell my home if I am in close proximity of the proposed line? **Will my house be worth less as a consequence?** Will prospective buyers be able to get a mortgage? Will I hear the noise of the train from my house? Will the line cause damage to the foundations of my house? **Can I get compensation?**

The simple truth is there are no exact answers at the moment as we simply do not know yet whether the line will even go ahead. But I urge every client who raises this issue not to let something that is still very much at the proposal stage get in the way of plans to sell their home.

Of course, if you are looking to buy and sell in

these areas there is no getting away from the issue of HS2: the proposed plans and the proximity of the line, if it is to be built, will appear on Solicitors search results. As always, adopting the 'honesty is the best policy' approach is important from the outset. But until a final decision is reached – which could take many years - the simple and safest option is to give potential buyers the facts and then let them make their own decision.

Meanwhile, some properties will become subject to compulsory purchase orders and compensation may well be on offer if this applies to you. For homes in the vicinity of the line some mortgage providers can be wary of providing lending against such properties, but **Courtyard has been reassured that none of our clients have failed to secure a mortgage** since the news of the proposed rail link was made public, nor have we lost any sales as a direct consequence of the proposed route.

In fact, we have had many sales proceed to completion with buyers fully aware of the proposed line's proximity to their new home – but for the majority of buyers this hasn't caused any real concerns at all.

Let's face it: houses are bought and sold every day near train lines, under flightpaths and along the route of the Eurostar - in my professional opinion the impact on property sales and prices if the link goes ahead might not be half as bad as people fear.

Of course, I'm sure we would all like to see the proposal scrapped; it certainly appears to be **good news** that the chief executive of HS2, David Higgins, told MPs the spur, which would cost £1 billion alone, **'no longer makes sense'**. And he said it would now be reconsidered. At present there is no confirmed date for a decision, but it is expected to be before the next general election.

So, if you are looking to sell your home or indeed buy a property (before an announcement is made) and are unsure of its distance to the proposed line, then please feel free to contact Courtyard or myself and we can arrange a search to be conducted and attain some legal advice for you



Have you seen the signs?



If you have a property question, email the team on ask@courtyardhomes.co.uk and we will endeavour to answer some of them here each month.