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February 2016

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IT is good to hear from Cheshire Constabulary that police officers and PCSOs are spending more time in Culcheth now than they did before the new policing system, which caused so much concern locally, came into force.

Senior police officers and the Police and Crime Commissioner always said it would be the case and now they have produced the data to prove it.

We have always had faith in our police and, indeed, national statistics seem to suggest that Cheshire Police are ahead of the game when it comes to tackling crime and, at the same time, cutting costs. We cannot complain at getting a better service for a lower cost than people in other areas enjoy.

But we must confess to being puzzled at one aspect of the new service.

In an age when it is possible to speak and have instant visual contact with the crew of the International Space Station, as it whizzes around the planet at about 17,000 mph, 250 miles high, and when an average primary school pupil can keep in touch with his or her parents (and, seemingly, hundreds of friends as well!), why is it necessary for police officers and PCSOs to travel in Warrington every morning to be briefed and then repeat the journey at the end of their shift to be de-briefed?

We accept that local officers are spending more time in Culcheth –

and that is good. But surely they could spend even more time if some way could be found to brief them without taking them, even briefly, off their patch?

Deadline for the March issue of Culcheth Life is February 16

Parking scheme to go ahead

A £15,000 scheme to provide off-road parking in Heswall Avenue, Culcheth is to go-ahead after the borough council's area board approved funding.

In addition, a £3,000 scheme to provide dropped kerbs in Wellfield Road, Culcheth, was approved.



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£10,000 grant buys club new tractor

CULCHETH Sports Club has won a £10,000 grant from the Premier League and the FA Facilities Fund – enabling the club to purchase a new tractor, with multiple attachments, to improve maintenance of its grounds.

The fund provides grants towards developing new or refurbished grassroots football facilities and

the new tractor replace equipment which was around 30 years old. Culcheth Sports Club worked in



partnership with the Lancashire FA to secure the grant.

The Premier League and The FA Facilities Fund is funded by the Premier League, The FA, and the Government, via Sport England.

It is delivered by the Football Foundation, the country's largest sports charity. Since it was launched in 2000, the Foundation has awarded around 14,000 grants worth more than £540 million towards improving grassroots sport, which it has used to attract additional partnership funding of more than £777 million – over £1.3bn of investment into the grassroots game.

Stuart Nightingale, chairman of the club's football section, Dagen FC, said: "This new equipment will enable us to maintain the pitches and help us to attract new players and to secure the club for a good number of years."

Paul Thorogood, chief executive of the Football Foundation, said: "I am delighted that a grant from the Premier League and The FA Facilities Fund has enabled Culcheth Sports Club to purchase much needed, state of the art pitch maintenance equipment. This development will provide a real boost to football in the local area."



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HS2 threatens years of disruption for villages

THE villages of Culcheth and Croft are facing years of disruption over the uncertain future of the proposed route for HS2 says local businessman Paul Taylor.

No decision has yet been reached on the high speed Golborne Link, which would pass through Culcheth Linear Park, destroying over 700 local jobs, and threatening the future of the communities it passes.

However, a representative of HS2 made it clear at a recent consultation meeting at Warrington town hall that it is intended that it will go ahead, despite reassurances given to many including local MPs that it would be cancelled.

It was also made clear at the

meeting that there might be some small adjustments to the route. The HS2 representative admitted that this would mean moving the line away from some communities but closer to others- but would not comment further.

The line to Crewe will go ahead and be built by 2027, and the line north to Manchester and Golborne will be completed by 2033.

Mr Taylor, from the under threat Taylor Business Park, said: "Construction will bring severe disruption, and the line when

completed will bring no benefits to the area.

"The decision on the Golborne Link is being delayed in part at least so it can be integrated into proposals for the so-called "HS3", a line from Liverpool to Manchester, Manchester Airport, and Leeds. These are being planned by Transport for the North.

"A possible route would be along the existing Chat Moss line which runs through Newton-le-Willows station and along the back of the golf course in Culcheth.

"This line could connect to the Golborne Link to provide a route from Liverpool to London and also to Manchester Airport.

Mr Taylor added: "The threat to Culcheth and the surrounding area from HS2 is still very real and in addition we are threatened by the possible HS3 proposals as well."

Local councillor Chris Vobe has added his voice to growing concerns adding: "The sudden suggestion by HS2 Ltd that the "spur" which runs through our eastern villages may yet go ahead will be greeted by resounding dismay by people in Culcheth and Croft.

"HS2 Ltd have implied that the "spur" may be moved towards Croft village, to avoid the Linear Park and the Business Park, putting a cloud of uncertainty over exactly where will be affected and what the impact on Croft will be.

"The Conservative Party have already delayed their final announcement on the route. Now

we are told that we will have to wait until autumn this year before the Secretary of State makes clear his plans. This delay and uncertainty goes beyond even the blight which currently afflicts homes on the proposed route - there is now a real and serious danger to the future of Croft village.

"As a local councillor, I am not prepared to simply sit back in silence while this blight hangs over us. It is callous of HS2 Ltd to suggest that the "spur" could be moved yet fail to give us any insight into what is being considered and which areas of our village are being sacrificed by the Conservatives.

"I will be asking the Leader of Warrington Borough Council to join me in writing to the Secretary of State for Transport, and demand that he provides clarity over their plans for Croft. The Conservatives are putting our homes and our futures in jeopardy by drip-feeding us hints and intimations in place of fact and certainty."

Culcheth and District Rail Action Group (CADRAG) was represented at the meeting and we will continue to oppose these proposals vigorously.

The group continues to need support from the community and will be holding an open meeting in the near future to inform the public, and they welcome anyone wanting to become actively involved in the campaign. Any one interested in offering support should contact Frank Allen on 01925 76 5017.



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The Sport Relief Mile is back

CULCHETH is to complete its third Sport Relief Mile on Sunday, March 20 and needs local people to take part.

They can walk or run to raise life-changing money for this year's Sport Relief, taking part in one, three and six mile runs, starting from 10am.

Setting off from Culcheth Primary School, the runners will pass through Crow Wood and then be able to enjoy entertainment laid on back at the school.

There will be bouncy castles, fairground rides, food stalls and much more - there will be something for everyone.

Headteacher Amanda Dodd said: "The Sport Relief Mile in Culcheth is here and it's your time to walk or run yourself proud.

"From little ones with their mums and dads, to runners up against the clock, there's something for everyone to make themselves feel proud on this special day."

Sport Relief is back from Friday to Sunday March 18-20 and there are more ways than ever to take part, change lives and feel proud.

People can get sponsored to enter an event at the Sport Relief Games or fundraise with friends and family at home, work or school and by doing so they'll help people living incredibly tough lives.

In fact, half of all the money raised by the public is spent right here at home in the UK, with the other half used to make a difference in the world's poorest communities.

Culcheth people can enter at www.sportrelief.com

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Amy to fly to US for life-changing operation

A SIX-year-old Culcheth girl will fly to the United States in April to undergo a life-changing operation – thanks to the efforts of local fundraisers.

Amy Hepburn, a pupil at St Lewis Primary School, in Croft, was born 10 weeks premature and during her first weeks in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit she suffered an infection which damaged parts of her brain, including the areas which affect her motor skills.

This has left Amy with Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy and makes her completely dependent on others for all everyday tasks.

Dad Gavin Hepburn said: "This makes life very tough for Amy and you might think that she would be quiet and reclusive.

"But happily, this is far from the case. Amy is the brightest and most positive girl you could meet.

"She tries her best to take part in everything and works incredibly hard not only in school but with her various therapies and exercises.

She never complains and is very caring about how everyone else is doing. Almost everyone that she meets is amazed at her positive attitude."

A fundraising Burns Night ball at Leigh Golf Club was attended by nearly 100 people.

Other fundraisers have included Amy's sister, Hanna, doing a sponsored cycle ride with her classmates and her teacher doing a sponsored parachute jump.

A large number of people are doing the Yorkshire Three Peaks Challenge in March and a quiz night is being organised in Culcheth.

The fundraising target is £50,000 – and about half has already been raised.

Mr Hepburn added: "The operation is scheduled for April

14. We will stay for a month in America and the operation alone costs £40,000, plus flights and accommodation in the US."

Amy has already had various therapies in the UK, but her parents now believe the biggest difference to her quality of life could be achieved by the operation that can

only be carried out in America.

She will then still require months or even years of physiotherapy but it is hoped Amy will see improvements in feeding, talking, motor skills, learning, mobility, general development and less pain. Any of these improvements will give Amy a brighter future.



Early snowdrops go on show

RETIRED nurseryman John Bent has more than 1009 varieties of snowdrop in his garden at Glazebury – and for three weeks from February 14 you can see them on a Sunday afternoon.

Mr Bent opens his Weeping Ash Garden, next to Bent's Garden Centre, in Warrington, every year to show off his snowdrops and other winter flowering shrubs and plants.

But because of the mild weather, the snowdrops have flowered early this year so Mr Bent brought forward his opening days.

His first opening was on January 31, rather than mid-February. But if you were caught napping by the early date, the garden will still be open on Sundays February 14, 21 and 28.



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Council bids to tackle

TOWN Hall chiefs at Warrington have launched an urgent investigation into possible ways of helping villagers hit by flooding over the Christmas period.

Flood water pouring from farm land off Heath Lane, Croft, following heavy rain, affected a number of houses and also flooded the road.

It was repeat of similar, more serious, flooding around the Christmas period in 2012 which led

to the borough council carrying out drainage improvement work.

Warrington North MP Helen Jones and local councillors Chris Vobe and Matt Smith have been liaising with residents and council chiefs.

Cllr Vobe said: “Although a

Gardens of the North West - including Culcheth!

PHOTOGRAPHER Fiona Lea’s talk “Gardens of the North West” at the monthly meeting of Newchurch WI revealed that some of her favourite gardens are in Culcheth!

She illustrated her talk with many beautiful pictures and explained how photography had been a passion for her since childhood.

She started with family holiday slides and moved on to wildlife, including close-ups of insects.

Once she had her own garden she took part in garden open days and joined a photographic group where she learned a great deal.

Eventually she became confident enough to sell her images online.

Fiona showed members some of her favourite gardens - some of which were in Culcheth - and passed on useful tips to her audience.

She concluded her talk with a quick quiz and was thanked by Sue Kennerley.

Later she judged a competition “Garden Wildlife” and chose Marjorie Pugh as winner, followed by Ann Langridge and Kath Hanley.

President Doreen Procter welcomed one new member and thanked Kath Hanley for the flowers on the president’s table.

The Spring Coffee morning will be on March 16 and following the success of last year’s will again feature a chocolate tombola.

A trip to Trentham Gardens is being arranged by Anne Burns on May 3.

Hunt is on for per

BENTS Garden & Home’s search for the very best in nature photography is back on.

The popular and highly sought after competition is perfect for anyone with a passion for photography and an eye for the perfect picture.

Once again, Bents is looking for images of nature which capture the beauty of our surroundings, from

gardens and flowers to landscapes and wildlife. The winning entry, as voted for by customers, will receive £50 worth of Bents vouchers and a framed copy of their image.

Matthew Bent, Managing Director at Bents Garden & Home, said: “We always have an incredible response to this competition with some fantastic entries making shortlisting a very tricky task. Once again we’re

Picture by: Raymond Pownall



e flooding problems

number of improvements were made to the drainage network after floods several years ago, households are still affected by water running off the farmland at the rear of their homes.

"The water is not only flooding domestic properties, but also the public highway.

"Helen, Matt and I are committed to working with residents to find a solution to these problems.

"It cannot be acceptable that residents in this part of the village are continuously hit by flooding due to inadequate drainage from the farmland behind their homes.

"The level of flooding we saw at Christmas also impacted upon the highway. Although the law does not allow us to force land owners to improve their drainage when properties are affected, we are now exploring what can be done in light of the impact on the public road network.

"We are also supporting residents in their efforts to bid for funding from the Government's flood protection scheme. We have ensured that senior environment officers at the Town Hall are involved in this issue and making it a top priority."



perfect nature photo

looking for as many photographs as possible covering anything from wide, panoramic landscapes to close up shots showing the intricate beauty of plants and flowers or animal shots which we always love looking at."

The closing date for the competition is Monday, February 29 and 20 short-listed entries will be displayed in the Centre and on

Facebook throughout March where customers will be able to vote for their favourite image with the winning entry announced in early April.

Entry forms are available from customer services or entries can be made online at www.bents.co.uk/photography-Competition-2016/4401/



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Heavy vehicle ban would cause 'traffic chaos'

PLANS to ban heavy good vehicles from a busy road at Lowton could cause "traffic chaos" in the quiet village of Croft, according to MP Helen Jones.

She has joined forces with Croft councillor Chris Vobe and Culcheth and Glazebury councillor Matt Smith to oppose the proposals being considered by Wigan Borough Council.

The plan is to "de-prime" Winwick Lane in Lowton where local residents have been complaining about HGVs using the road as a "cut through" to the East Lancashire Road after leaving the M6.

Winwick Lane runs through Croft before crossing the borough boundary into Lowton.

The Warrington North MP and the two councillors fear "de-priming" would mean heavy lorries would still leave the M6 at Junction 22 but instead of using Winwick Lane could divert through Croft village instead.

Cllr Vobe said: "Although we sympathise with the noise and the problems residents in Lowton have experienced due to the high volume of heavy good vehicles using Winwick Lane, it remains a primary route.

"If large vehicles are barred from using the lane, and the motorway is

busy, they will clearly divert through Croft to access the East Lancs.

"This has the potential to cause traffic chaos in our village. Many of the roads the HGVs would use are narrow and do not have pavements - they are totally unsuitable for this type of traffic. Our highway infrastructure cannot cope with an increase of this type of traffic through our village, and the disruption to residents' lives and amenities will be devastating."

Cllr Vobe said he would work with villagers to oppose the proposals.

Ms Jones said: "The 'de-priming' of Winwick Lane will cause more problems than it solves.

"We do not want to see large

numbers of HGVs being re-routed through Croft. Shifting the problem is not an acceptable solution and I am not

prepared to support any scheme which detrimentally affects residents of Warrington North."

The MP is urging Warrington Borough Council to oppose Wigan's proposals.



Play area facelift to go ahead?

LONG-awaited investment in a children's play area at Mee Brow - half-way between Culcheth and Glazebury - looks set to go ahead after the proposal was given the "green light" for inclusion in the borough council's capital investment programme.

A complete refurbishment of the play area and equipment seems on the cards.

Cllr Chris Vobe has been campaigning for a "substantial" investment from the council to regenerate the playing field at Eden Avenue for several months.

He has met with council chief executive Steven Broomhead and lead member for Culture, Leisure and Sport Kate Hannon to make the case on behalf of residents.

Now, after a meeting between councillors and officers, the project looks set to come to life.

Cllr Vobe said: "Mee Brow has often 'fallen between the cracks' as far as the council is concerned, because of its location between Culcheth and Glazebury. I have always been determined, however, that residents here should benefit from the same high quality services and amenities that are afforded to everyone.

"When local councillors consulted with residents, they told us that their biggest priority for investment was the play area and sports facilities on Eden Avenue - they are simply not fit for purpose anymore!

Cllr Matt Smith and I visited the site with young people from the area, and they spoke to us passionately about what needed to be improved and how much residents would benefit from up to date equipment and provision.

"We have been very forthright and determined in our campaign, and have simply not let the matter drop with the council. Now, it appears that our lobbying has been successful.

"Once the project is placed in the council's capital programme, the next stage will be to consider a range of designs and consult with local people on the specifics - what kind of equipment they would like to see installed, which design they prefer."

Guides receive D of E awards

A SPECIAL presentation evening was held at The Village Club, Culcheth to celebrate the successful completion of Bronze, Silver and Gold Duke of Edinburgh Awards by members of Girlguiding, Culcheth District.

Julie Bell, regional chief commissioner and Bekky Ashmore, assistant regional commissioner, presented the awards.

County commissioner Rachel Aldus presented a special award to Jessica Burke, leader with 7th Culcheth Senior Section, to mark 10 years of continuous volunteering.

Special thanks were given to Simon and Pam Ogunlana from Challenge Expeditions who had supported the girls through the expedition phase of the awards.

Those who have successfully

completed their Gold Award will also receive an invitation to St James' Palace to receive a certificate from a member of the Royal Family.

Anyone interested in volunteering with Girlguiding or who would like to join the senior section should visit www.girlguiding.org.uk/joinus



CULCHETH & GLAZEBURY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

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Community Day 2016 – “Outer space: Fact and fiction”

On Monday 2nd May, our villages will once again enjoy another Community Day. Plans are already under way and this year's theme has been selected. To tie in with British astronaut Tim Peake's visit to the International Space Station, the return of Star Wars to our cinema screens, and the upcoming 50th anniversary of Star Trek, this year's event will revolve around Outer Space – Fact and Fiction. The Parish Council will be working with local schools and community groups to make the day another memorable occasion, whilst also raising money for good causes and local charities. Community Day will see a mix of “old favourites” – including the popular “Sudden Impact” ride – as well as new attractions to tie in with the “outer space” theme. There will be opportunities to come in costume, as well as model making and artwork competitions. We hope that Community Day will, once again, offer something for everyone. As the Parish Council firms up the plans for the event over the coming weeks, we welcome any input and suggestions that residents would like to put forward. As always, if you'd like to get involved with the preparations for the event itself, please don't hesitate to get in touch with the Clerk to the Council, who will put you in touch with the relevant Councillor.

Protecting our Village Green

The Parish Council has recently funded the installation of new “knee rails” around the village green in Culcheth. By the time you read this article, work should have begun on putting the new rails in place. The objective of this scheme is to ensure that access to the common is restricted and our valuable open spaces are protected as best they can be from the prospect of any incursions by members of the travelling community. The new rails will not impact upon any of the organise events which take place annually on the village green.

Budget setting - No rise in your precept

The Parish Council has unanimously agreed our Budget priorities for the year ahead. As you may know, just like the Borough Council, we are obliged to set a legal budget and ensure that a responsible and considered approach is taken to the way that your Parish precept (the money you pay as part of your Council tax bill which is overseen by the Parish Council) is spent. Councillors continue to liaise with residents on the kinds of things that we fund, or part-fund, locally. Any expenditure made by the Parish Council goes towards local projects and initiatives, for the betterment of our villages. We are delighted to inform resident that there will be no increase in the amount of money you pay to the Parish Council in your Council tax this year. We will continue to strive to provide good value for money and a high standard of service for local people.

HS2 update

Your Parish Councillors have recently reaffirmed their commitment to oppose the HS2 “spur” which the Government has indicated may run through our villages. A recent briefing by representatives from HS2 Ltd indicated that the “spur” is likely to go ahead, with no precise confirmation so far on the route that it will take. We await an announcement from the Government Minister on the details. In the meantime, Councillors continue to meet regularly and maintain a dialogue with households or business premises who may be affected by the plans. We have also arranged to meet with CADRAG, the local action group who represent our village in discussions with HS2 Ltd. The Parish Council will be supporting CADRAG and ensuring that strong representations are made on behalf of our community. When firm information is released by Government, we will of course keep residents apprised.

Speed activated signs

The Parish Council has completed negotiations with the police and are now in a position to proceed with the ordering and installation of two “speed activated signs” for the parish. These signs are being installed as a direct result of the feedback that has been given by local residents about speeding traffic and form part of our efforts to reduce inconsiderate and dangerous driving on our village roads. The Parish Council has worked with the police and Borough Council officers to progress this initiative and Cllrs Chris Vobe and Matt Smith have visited key locations throughout Culcheth and Glazebury with officers to identify where the signs (which are the “moveable” type) can be sited. We look forward to monitoring the effectiveness of the signs after installation is complete.

And last but not least.. as this is the first Parish Council report of 2016, may we take this opportunity to wish all residents in Culcheth and Glazebury a very Happy New Year!



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Scout group seeks leaders

SCOUTING isn't just for boys and girls – it's for adults too.
 That's the message from the 3rd Warrington East (1st Culcheth) Scout Group, who are on the look out for new recruits – particularly leaders.
 A spokesperson for the group said: "As leaders we give the young people a fantastic opportunity to have fun and adventure while gaining lifelong skills, making friends, developing self-confidence and in time becoming excellent role models for the next generation.
 "Just think – we can achieve all this for an hour or two a week or less."
 Anyone interested in joining the group should contact the group leader, Christine, on 077297 84121 or emailing gsl@istculchethscouts.org.uk

Memories of warmer weather

MEMBERS of Croft WI enjoyed being reminded of warmer weather and summer holidays when Morag Burton gave a presentation on "The Magic of the Western Isles".
 Morag provided interesting information about Shetland, the Orkneys, Outer and Inner Hebrides and the many small islands within these groups, including their history and varied bird and wildlife.
 The islands are renowned for their birdlife and the presentation included Morag's beautiful paintings of some of these, along with sound effects of their haunting cries.
 The human population on some of the islands has tended to decline over the years, starting after the Highland Clearances between 1770 and 1870. Others have thrived, due to the success of the malt whiskey distilleries, which attract tourists from all over the world, especially during the "Whiskey Festivals".
 Data and stunning photographs showing the many archaeological sites, lighthouses, castles and stately homes on the islands were enjoyed by members and a vote of thanks for an enjoyable evening was given by Barbara Taylor.
 The competition was won by Pam Schofield, with Doreena Ellam second and Jan Shearer third.
 The next meeting will be February 17 when Tod Bulmer will talk about "Changes to Farming, including Food Retailing".
 Diary Dates: March 15, Busy Bakers – Bread Making; March 21, Group Meeting – Memorial Hall.

Culcheth plans to celebrate Queen's 90th birthday

CULCHETH people are going to get a chance to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday – on St George's Day.
 The Queen's actual birthday is on April 21, but the event at the Culcheth Centre, in Jackson Avenue, will be on the nearest Saturday, April 23 which is St George's Day.
 The double celebration will take place in the afternoon and will probably take the form of an afternoon tea, although final details have yet to be arranged.
 Cllr Sue Bland said: "The event will give us an opportunity to celebrate the Queen's actual birthday and St George's Day at the same time, in advance of her official birthday in June."
 Fundraisers at the Culcheth Centre have been busy raising money for some time to purchase new, lightweight furniture and have now raised £2,700.
 The next fundraising event will be on Friday, February 19 when there will be a hotpot and apple pie supper with entertainment.
 Cllr Bland said: "We are already looking at lightweight furniture which can be more easily moved by older people."
 *The Queen's official birthday is in June and she is to hold a "street party" in The Mall, attended by 10,000 guests.

Police spending more time on the beat

THE new neighbourhood policing system introduced last July has resulted in police officers spending more time in Culcheth and Glazebury.

This assurance was given by local police commander Chief Inspector Peter Shaw when he met with members of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council, in company with Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner John Dwyer.

The new system had caused considerable controversy in Culcheth and elsewhere with claims that police officers and PCSOs were spending time travelling back and to for headquarters briefing sessions when they had previously been "on the beat".

But Mr Dwyer and Chief Insp Shaw said they believed the new system would improve the police service to the people of Cheshire generally.

The system had been introduced in July and was reviewed in November.

It would continue to be reviewed this year.

They answered questions from councillors and residents about how the new service impacted on the local area.

After the meeting, councillors Paul Campbell and Keith Bland issued a joint statement in which they praised

the information given by the police which, they said, would greatly help councillors answer any concerns residents might have about the service they were getting from the police.

"We were happy to hear the Commissioner confirm that Risley Police Station will not be closing and that it was his intention to spread out the use of local police posts such as the one we now have at the Scout Centre in Culcheth.

"We were also happy to have the Chief Inspector confirm that recent data showed that officers were now spending more time in our villages since the new system had been put

in place. This is great news for the residents of Culcheth and Glazebury and we fully support the great efforts being put in by the men and women of Cheshire Constabulary on our behalf."



Pupils plant orchard in school grounds



PUPILS at Croft Primary School have planted a new orchard – with a little help from the Mayor and Mayoress of Warrington and the Mersey Forest.

Apple and pear trees have been planted at the school, together with flowering bulbs and a stretch of hedge to provide a windbreak for the orchard.

More than 30 pupils and teachers were joined by Cllr Geoff and Mrs Jean Settle and a team from the Mersey Forest.

Head teacher Anne Mains said: "The orchard the children have planted is our latest step in improving opportunities to learn outdoors - an important part of our curriculum. We hope to start Forest School sessions in our grounds in Spring. The sessions help to improve children's confidence, interpersonal skills and knowledge of the natural world. Our new trees will enhance our growing area; we are looking forward to our first harvest of fruit!"

The school had additional support from Bents Home and Garden, from Glazebury, who provided the bulbs and TCS UK who have helped to fund the trees that were planted.

Cllr Settle said: "It was great to see the kids getting involved with the planting day – they really enjoyed it and the new trees are a great addition to the growing area."

The trees are part of a Mersey Forest initiative that has seen more than nine million new trees planted to date.



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Controversial Labour councillor to stand down

CONTROVERSIAL councillor Chris Vobe is not to seek re-election in the May elections.

He is stepping down from Warrington Borough Council, from Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council, where he is chairman, and from Croft Parish Council.

The decision surprised many local people as it was widely thought the 26-year-old former Culcheth High School student saw his long term future in politics – possibly even following in the footsteps of his mother, the Warrington North MP Helen Jones.

In a prepared statement, Cllr Vobe said: "It has been both a pleasure and a privilege to represent the residents of Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft since May 2012. To be afforded this opportunity, and to have the support of the community that I grew up in and which I love dearly is something which I have never taken for granted.

"I have never taken the support of local people for granted and am honoured that so many put their trust and faith in me. I have strived to be out and about in the community every week since I was elected, speaking with families and individuals to make sure, wherever they live, their needs and priorities are heard.

"I am proud to have a strong record of delivering investment locally, and have enjoyed seeing so many local projects flourish from

initial ideas through to completion.

"Over the past few weeks, I have been humbled by the many messages of support I have had from residents, pledging their support and encouraging me to seek a second term on Warrington Borough Council. After a great deal of reflection and soul-searching, I have decided that, due to a wide variety of other commitments which are placing increasing demands on my time, I will not be standing at the forthcoming elections in May.

"I have always said that I would not undertake this role unless I could fulfil it, and all the obligations that come with it, to the full. It would be wrong of me to commit to the task if I could not guarantee that I would be able to maximise my efforts.

"I will continue to represent my residents fully over the coming months, and offer my sincerest thanks to everyone who has given me support and encouragement during my time on the Council.

"Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft really are home to the most special of people, and I hope you will continue to be well-represented at the Town Hall in the future."

A spokesperson from Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft Labour Party said: "Elected with unprecedented support in 2012, Chris Vobe has been a tremendous advocate

for our community over the past four years. He has campaigned tenaciously for local people and carved out a reputation as one of the most out-spoken and determined

representatives in our town. He has delivered for all corners of our community and will be recognised for his dedication and drive by so many people in our villages."





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WI entertains guests to lunch

GUESTS from Glazebury and Newchurch were invited to Culcheth WI's annual festive lunch.

President Joan Jarvis welcomed the guests and thanked the committee and other people who had supported her in her recent bereavement.

After a hot pot lunch, followed by fruit tarts, the entertainment was provided by "Concert", a female trio consisting of pianist Jo, and singers Barbara and Sue. They sang songs from the shows and films and also provided laughter the hilarious poem "Matilda."

The raffle prizes were the pretty plants that decorated the tables.

Birthdays this month are: Eileen Williams, Margaret Fletcher, Marian Simpson, Frances Robinson, Barbara Worthington, Maura Appleby and Dorothy Sandford.

The February Meeting, in the Parish Hall, is on February 16 at 2pm when the speaker will be Robert Holgate with "Insight into Wood Carving".

Visitors and new members are very welcome.

"Murder, Moscow and Per Una"

SPEAKER at the monthly meeting of Glazebrook WI was Sheila Walsh, with an informative and amusing talk entitled "Murder Moscow and Per Una."

She described a river boat trip to St Petersburg, with mention of Rasputin actions and murder, the cruise and Moscow and her various attempts to try to wear her Per Una evening dress.

Plans for celebrating Glazebrook WI's 70th birthday later this year were discussed.

A celebratory lunch in April, with possible entertainment, is planned after which members aim to carry on for more successful years.

There are also plans for a visit to Manchester Town Hall and to enter a team in the county quiz.

The meeting was opened by the president, Margaret Hornby.

Luncheon club

A GROUP of volunteers has stepped in to make sure the Tuesday luncheon club at Culcheth Royal British Legion Club keeps going.

The volunteers provide tea and coffee and organise games and other activities while lunches, at £4-a-head are provided by the legion.

Anyone interested in attending should call Cllr Sue Bland on 01925 766641.

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Victoria Barlow
Head of Courtyard Homes

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