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life

Your Community Magazine

Issue 186 September 2016

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**Beautiful
gardens on show**

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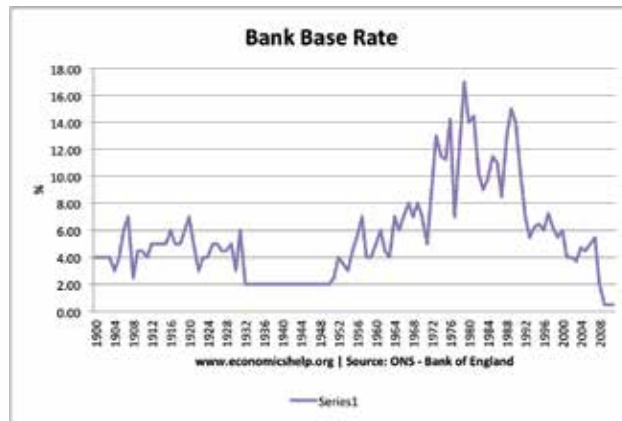
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Negative Interest Rates?

On 4th August the Bank of England announced they would be reducing the base rate of interest to 0.25%. There are many people I have spoken to over the last 4-5 years whom have told me that interest rates will have to rise, and soon. The fact is they don't have to. The question more likely is can they go lower or even negative? Well, yes they could. There are some banks in Europe where you have to pay to put your money into an account. But I don't think it's likely that rates will go negative. But I think that we are possibly in for interest rates at these kind of levels well into the next decade in my opinion. The graph below shows what interest rates have been over the last 100 years.



Don Wernham,
Financial Planner



Consider this though, why should anybody get a return on their money up to the government guarantee - currently £75000? You see if the bank fails, the money is safeguarded by the government, so you are not taking any risk. And on the basis that you only get a return on the money that you risk - no matter how small your appetite for risk actually is. The fact is that in this case the money is not at risk. It is true that the bank takes your money and either lends it, or invests it. But then it is the bank that is taking the risk, not you. I was told to think about this scenario back in January 2011 by a leading fund manager, who said mark my words one day this will come into effect in the UK.

I think that day is closer now!

Disclaimer - Please note views are my own and do not constitute advice

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Editor's comment

IT would be difficult to criticise the emergency services for the response that followed reports that a man had apparently been seen jumping into the Manchester Ship Canal at Stockton Heath Swing Bridge.

Police, fire and ambulance services turned out to the incident, including swift water specialists from the fire service and the police helicopter. Ellesmere Road and Egerton Street, Stockton Heath, had to be closed to traffic. The cost to the public purse must have been significant.

But emergency services cannot do otherwise than respond in a big way to this kind of incident. The hue and cry that would follow if someone died when there had been no visible sign of activity by the emergency services would be enormous.

All of which underlines the gross irresponsibility of the unknown individual who jumped into the canal and, apparently, was later seen by some onlookers to climb out again and walk away without any regard to the chaos he had caused.

Also without any concern for the consequences should a genuine emergency occur elsewhere while the emergency services were looking for him.

A police spokesman later described his actions as reckless and pointed out that he had given no thought to the dangers he posed, not only to himself, but to the emergency services

who had gone in search of him.

Had he been found he would have been "strongly advised about his actions" he said.

We think he needed rather more than strong advice. On the assumption he was not in need of psychiatric treatment, a period in the cells would have done him no harm. And then a bill for the cost of the "rescue" operation.

WHERE will Stockton Heath's new post office be?

At the time of writing, we still did not know, despite a public consultation held by The Post Office on proposals to move it to Walton Road ending on August 9. A decision, we were told, was likely within four weeks.

One thing was certain, however. The existing post office in London Road is to become a restaurant and bar. Planners have approved the change of use and the scheme will result in a complete renovation of the building.

The changes have not been greeted with universal approval. Many residents think Stockton Heath is already well served with places to eat and drink. Others are unhappy about an essential service like the post office moving out of the village centre.

If, as seems likely, the service moves into the P&S Supermarket in



Walton Road, it will certainly be in a less convenient location for many people. But on the other hand, it will apparently be open seven days a week – six days offering a full service and with selected postal services available on Sundays from the store's retail counter.

Sadly, it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain post offices in small towns and villages – indeed even the central post office in Warrington is under threat with plans announced to move it into the WH Smith store in Golden Square. Increasing use of email and mobile 'phones has resulted in a massive decline in the use of "snail mail."

This being the case, the fact that Stockton Heath is to get a new post office at all should perhaps be welcomed



Picture for illustration purposes only

Firefighters in swan rescue drama

FIREFIGHTERS played an important part in the rescue of a swan entangled in a fishing line and hook.

The RSPCA called in the fire and rescue service after the swan was discovered in distress on Appleton Reservoir.

Two fire engines and the fire service boat were sent to the scene.

Fire Service swift water technicians went into the water to help move the swan to the side of the reservoir to have the line and hook, which was in its beak, removed.



Laskey Farm.

Beautiful gardens on show for charity

A NUMBER of gardens were opened up to help raise thousands of pounds for charity as part of the National Garden Scheme (NGS).

They included Laskey Farm at Thelwall and Dingle Farm at Appleton. Thelwall couple Howard and Wendy Platt, who open up their gardens each year for the NGS charity have had another record breaking fund-raising year.

During their main National Garden Scheme (NGS) Open Garden weekend

Howard and Wendy welcomed 578 visitors who paid £4,111.70, which included donations from Lymm Artists, Christine Purslow's plants and Frances' pottery.

They have also had visits from a number of groups through the year who contributed a further £985.40 making a total of £5,067.10 raised for the NGS gardens charity

The couple also held an extra open garden day in July in memory of Howard's former work colleague Bill Spencer which raised £2,600 in aid of

the St Rocco's Hospice

Howard said: "This gives a grand total of £7,667.10 which we think is a fantastic result.

"A huge thank you to all of our friends who gave up their time to bake and serve cakes, man the gates, tidy up etc it could not happen without them!"

Dingle Fram Tea Rooms also opened up their gardens over several weekends in July, attracting hundreds of visitors who enjoyed the colourful gardens which include a duck pond.

There was a hive of activity from busy bees.

Since its foundation, the National Gardens Scheme has donated over £45 million to nominated beneficiaries, of which nearly £23 million has been donated within the last ten years.

Charities to benefit include amongst many others, MacMillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK and the Carers Trust.



Laskey Farm.



Tree house fun at Laskey Farm.



Laskey Farm.



Busy bees at Dingle Farm.



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Wolves' stars take a break – to play cricket



Brad Dwyer in full swing.



Jack Hughes lets fly.

Pictures by Bob Brough

WARRINGTON Wolves players took an afternoon off from training to play cricket at Grappenhall's Broad Lane ground.

A six-a-side tournament took place involving four teams – two made up of Wolves' players, one of Wolves' staff and one from Grappenhall's Under 19s team. The full Wolves 1st team squad took part in the event which attracted a large number of spectators.

Sadly rain stopped play before an overall winner could be decided as the Wolves backs were geared up to take on Grappenhall's Under 19s in the final.



Toby King watched by Ashton Sims.



Director Mike Lomax.



Chris Sandow goes for a boundary.



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Advertiser's announcement



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As you enter the snow igloo there are ice sculptures and tables also made of ice, where you may sit and sample some traditional hot berry juice. No journey to Lapland would be complete without experiencing a traditional sleigh ride pulled by either a team of huskies or Santa's faithful

reindeer. Yet where will you find Santa Claus?

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Lunch will be available throughout the day and the menu usually includes soup, baked potatoes with either a meat or vegetarian filling, pasta and a sweet dessert of pancakes and jam.

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Hotel's gala ball raises over £3,000 for cancer charity



A SUMMER gala ball and charity auction held at The Park Royal Hotel in Stretton raised £3,205 in aid of local children's cancer charity The Joshua Tree.

The charity auction included prizes of a one week in a luxury villa in Rhodes, a polo experience day, tickets to Chester races and a private cocktail party in your own home.

The Gala Ball was supported by members of The Park Royal Hotel and Leisure Club who chose the children's cancer charity after meeting with The Joshua Tree's fundraising manager Sara Wheeler and finding out about the work that the charity does in supporting local families affected by childhood cancer.

Leisure Manager Amanda Gray, said: "The Gala Ball was such a great fundraising event in which I would like to thank all The Park Royal Members who came along and supported us and more importantly for their generosity and support during the evening. When it came to the auction there were one or two episodes of nail biting experiences which was fun to see and amazing that all the proceeds were for The Joshua Tree. A special thanks also to The Park Royal Social Committee Members who assisted with making the event happen."

The Joshua Tree currently supports around 65 families across the North West living with the life changing experience of childhood cancer.

The charity was established in 2006 after the founders' son, Joshua Hill was diagnosed with leukaemia.

His parents Lynda and David set up The Joshua Tree to make sure that other families affected by childhood cancer were able to access local support and share their experiences.

Old farm building can be extended

PLANNING chiefs have approved proposals for a single-storey rear extension to a locally listed building at Walton – despite objections from Walton Parish Council.

The plan at Grange Green Manor involves part of a former farmhouse and outbuildings in the Green Belt. It has been extended previously but this is to be demolished to make way for the new development, which will provide an enlarged kitchen, dining, living room and toilet and utility room.

Parish councillors objected because the original consent for conversion of the farmhouse did not permit development beyond the footprint of the original building. They argued that the proposals was not in keeping with that constraint and represented a further intrusion into the Green Belt.

But planning officers argued the increased floor space would be within guidelines and the increase in the size of the building would not be disproportionate.

Sending food to the needy

ROTARY club members joined forces with charity group Stop Hunger Now at Thelwall's Chaegeley School to pack nutritious, dehydrated meals for sending to Third World countries.

The event – which attracted 500 volunteers from churches, charities and businesses – was part of a national initiative to pack 100,000 meals containing rice, soy, vegetables and other ingredients containing essential vitamins.

Mayor of Warrington Faisal Rashid joined the volunteers. The meals are now on their way to school children in Kenya – youngsters who might otherwise go without.



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Money Column

By Margaret Black

Qualifying for new State pension

Who can claim new State Pension?

How many qualifying years you will need?

How much new State Pension can you get?

The importance of your National Insurance record

This information relates to a man born on or after 6 April 1951 or a woman born on or after 6 April 1953



David Watkinson and Margaret Black

The earliest you are able to claim new State Pension is when you reach State Pension age and is based on your National Insurance record. National Insurance contributions or credits held on your National Insurance record before 6 April 2016 will be counted towards your new State Pension.

You will need at least 35 years on your National Insurance record to qualify for a full new State Pension and you will usually need at least ten years to qualify for some new State Pension. Please note that the qualifying years do not need to be consecutive, i.e. running one after the other.

In any qualifying year, you will have a National Insurance record if you:

- have worked and paid National Insurance contributions
- you have received National Insurance credits due to unemployment, sickness or you were a parent or carer, or
- if you paid voluntary National Insurance contributions
- If you have lived or worked abroad you may still qualify for some new State Pension.
- For women, you may also qualify if you've paid married women's or widow's reduced rate contributions.

The full amount of new State Pension will be £155.65 a week

Under the new system, from April 2016, the actual amount you should receive will depend upon your National Insurance record. You could receive a "higher" or "lower" amount.

If you have made National Insurance contributions or received credits before 6 April 2016 and reach State Pension age on or after 6 April 2016, 35 qualifying years may not give you the full amount of new State Pension.

This is a fairly complex matter, however, if you wish to learn more about your personal circumstances please find the relevant links below

Check your National Insurance record - GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/check-national-insurance-record>

New State pension - how it's calculated - GOV.UK

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Stockton Heath Festival hailed resounding success



THIS year's Stockton Heath Festival has been hailed a "resounding success" by its new director.

Reflecting on this year's highly successful event, festival director David Craggs said: "This was my first year as festival director and with all the support I received from the committee of volunteers and the local community the festival proved to be a resounding success"

"The weather was very kind and the community were treated to a packed programme of over 50 events held around Stockton Heath. There were events for all ages and tastes including performances of "A Midsummer Night's Dream", Abba Tribute band and performances by local bands, choirs and dancers.

"The art exhibition held in St Thomas' Church enabled local talent to exhibit their artistic work and this year their were record entries. Thanks to Helen Dutton for her excellent organisation.

This year's scarecrow competition based on the theme "Alice in Wonderland" was well supported by local traders with the winning entry by Maddock Funeral Directors with the White Rabbit.

"A record number of traders and caterers treated the community with a very wide range of goods and food and trade was brisk and is always a popular part of the festival," added David.

The festival was originally conceived by Tudor Pole, now the honorary president, nine years ago.

Even Tudor cannot believe how the festival has grown and still upholding the Charity ethos of developing arts and culture in the community.

Next year's festival will be held from June 29 to July 2 and already preparations are well in hand to celebrate the 10th festival which will hopefully be enjoyed and supported by the whole community.



Restaurant awning plan under scrutiny

PLANNING chiefs are to visit a Stockton Heath restaurant which wants to erect a retractable awning over its outdoor eating area before deciding whether it can go ahead.

Members of the borough council's development management committee want to satisfy themselves that the awning, with sliding glass front and sides, will be compatible with neighbouring businesses and the general street scene.

The proposal is at Ego in Walton Road, Stockton Heath.

Nearly 150 people have written letters supporting the scheme but Stockton Heath Parish Council has lodged an objection on the grounds the design and appearance of the structure will impact on the overall visual amenity of the street scene.

They point out the property sits directly on the border of the London Road Conservation Area.

Four other objections have also been received – including one from neighbouring business Costello's Bar.

Planning officers are recommending the scheme be approved.



Five-year-old house can be demolished

AN ultra-modern house, complete with its own swimming pool and created only five years ago by converting a former office building, can be demolished to make way for four new detached houses, planning chiefs have decided.

The house – Moonacre – in Cliffe Lane, Grappenhall is owned by property developer Robert Foden.

Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council opposed the scheme – but the borough council's development management committee decided the project would result in an improvement of the site.

The parish council argued that the site was within the Green Belt and the existing permission for it to be converted from offices to one dwelling should not be altered.

Two other objections from nearby residents concerned that the proposal would result in four driveways from a 60mph road and would exacerbate existing traffic, road safety and parking issues.

Total square footage of the four new houses would exceed that of the dwelling to be demolished, they argued.



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How to play Pokemon Go – and stay within the law!

CULT mobile game Pokémon Go, which uses “augmented reality” to allow players to use their smartphones to hunt and capture cartoon monsters or Pokemon characters in the real world, has left the streets filled with people staring at their phone screens.

But the huge and very rapid growth in game players is causing problems – and as a result, Stockton Heath law firm FDR Law has put together a guide for both players and the owners of businesses and properties in which the Pokemon may be lurking.

Just because a Pokémon appears on a piece of land, the normal laws of privacy don't cease to exist. It's trespassing, and the owner has grounds to call the police. While common sense would suggest that, if they have directed people to a place that happens to be someone's property, Nintendo would be responsible in this instance, legally,

they're probably not. It's likely that there's a clause in the terms and conditions that states that players don't break local law to play the game.

They should make sure they have permission from any property owner before they go hunting!

While some firms are rumoured to be seeking to turn their restaurants into Pokémon gyms, businesses are entitled to determine their own terms and conditions when permitting any person to enter their premises. It would logically follow that a business or shop could therefore stop users of Pokémon Go from entering if they are not valid customers. To be safe, they should always check with the staff before playing.

Despite the game beginning with a warning that users should take care while using the app, there's always a chance that someone will get injured. The question then is: whose fault is

it and who is liable? The law states that an occupier (or owner) of any premises could potentially be held liable for a player's injury as the law imposes a general duty upon them to ensure that people are not foreseeably injured while on their property. A player could argue that it was foreseeable that the premises would be frequented by gamers distracted by their hunting activities. However, a business owner would potentially succeed in arguing there was a contributory fault on part of the gamer which could serve to defeat a gamer's entire claim.

The most effective steps a business could take to protect itself are either to put up clear signage highlighting the risks of playing Pokémon Go on its premises or to prevent players from entering in the first place. This has happened in other countries, such as the US.

Obviously there are certain places that it's better not to look for Pokémon; some are legally off-limits, some are unsafe; others are simply inappropriate. Also, it should go without saying that people shouldn't search for Pokémon while driving. They could be issued with a £100 fixed penalty notice and three penalty points. If the offence was serious enough to go court, they could be banned and get a maximum fine of £1,000.

A number of employers have banned employees from playing the game at work, with a number of companies who provide staff with Smartphones blocking the app. FDR

advises that employers should make it clear to employees that the game should not be played on work devices or during work hours.

Criminals have already been using Lures, a means of bringing Pokémon and other players together.

Unfortunately, there's nothing to be done legally to prevent it from happening. Pokémon Go may be dressed up as a game but in essence it's another social media platform. In that respect, we'd recommend people to deploy the same sense of online safety as they would with any other social network. The app states that children must be 13 years of age or over to apply.

The app asks for personal information such as your child's date of birth and email address. Parents or guardians have the right to contact the creators to stop them from using their personal information. The game also aims to bring people together; therefore strangers meeting face to face, FDR advises children are always accompanied by an adult when playing the game.

The key with Pokémon Go is for both players and property owners to apply common sense. The game does not provide players with immunity from the law, nor does it give property owners the absolute right to punish any minor infringement of privacy. It's important to understand the spirit of the game and treat players accordingly.

For further information please contact a member of the team at FDR Law on 01925 230000

Mayor's record-breaking charity fundraising



Cllr Dean with Captain Becky Ward, of the Salvation Army, and District Scout Commissioner Martin Belton.

OUTGOING Mayor of Knutsford Tony Dean raised a record-breaking amount of £12,155.28 for his chosen charities – Knutsford District Scouts and The Salvation Army.

Over a period of 12 months he raised money with a treasure hunt, a golf tournament, competitions at the town's Christmas Market, a pub quiz and the highlight of the year, the Mayor's Charity Ball.

Cllr Dean said: “I'm astounded by the wealth of support and generosity of the businesses and people of Knutsford and beyond.

“My thanks and appreciation go out to all those who joined me at my events, to those who gave up their time to sell raffle tickets and to the numerous businesses who so generously provided sponsorship and prizes to ensure the success of each event.”

The Mayor's final event was “An Evening of Song” with the Mancunian Singers at Knutsford Methodist Church.

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What's on in the villages

September 13
STOCKTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
Sandy Lane Centre, Stockton Heath. 7.30pm

September 20
APPLETON PARISH COUNCIL
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road 7.30pm

September 15
GRAPPENHALL & THELWALL PARISH COUNCIL
Council Offices, Bellhouse Lane. 7.30pm

September 22
LIVE AT ST WILFRID'S
Kathryn Rudge (soprano) and Duncan Glenday (piano) with a programme of operatic arias and songs from the shows.

Every Saturday & Sunday
GRAPPENHALL HEYS WALLED GARDEN
Witherwin Avenue, Grappenhall Heys, WA4 3DS.
Café open from 10am-5pm serving teas, coffee, home-made cakes and savouries.

Every Monday
COFFEE TIME, St Mary Magdalene's Church, Appleton, 9-11am.
COUNTRY DANCING CLUB
St Thomas' Primary School, Parkgate Road, Stockton Heath.
8-10pm. Details: 01925 262356

BRIDGE CLUB
Belong Warrington, Loushers Lane 7.20pm. Details 01925 262534

LADIES' FRIENDSHIP CLUB
The Quays Community Centre, Thelwall New Road, Thelwall.
8pm. Details: 01925 264099

HIGH LEGH BRIDGE CLUB
Village Hall, 7-10pm. Rubber, Duplicate and Chicago played. Details: Audrey Greaves 0161 904 0120

Every second Monday
PARK (APPLETON) WI
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 7.30pm

Second and fourth Monday
WARRINGTON ART GROUP
Bellhouse Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane, Grappenhall. 7-9pm.

Every third Monday
NATIONAL VEGETABLE SOCIETY
Cheshire District meeting
Grappenhall Ex-Servicemen's Club, Chester Road, Grappenhall. 8pm. Details: 01925 265773.

Every fourth Monday
MARLFIELD WI
Grappenhall Community Library, Albert Road, Grappenhall. 7.30pm

Every Tuesday
COFFEE MORNING
St Cross Church, Appleton Thorn. All welcome.
10am-12 noon

PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY
Quays Community Centre, Thelwall New Road, Thelwall. 7.30pm.
Contact: 01925 757582.

COFFEE MORNING
Appleton Independent Methodist Church
Appleton Parish Hall, 10am-12 noon

Every second Tuesday
STOCKTON HEATH LIONS CLUB
London Bridge Inn, 8pm
Contact: Grahamclisse58@outlook.com.
Tel 01925 262669

BOOK CLUB
Bizzie Beans Coffee House, Bridge Lane, Appleton
11am-12 noon

Every Wednesday
APPLETON HALL BADMINTON CLUB
September - July at Hall Drive, Appleton.
7.30-10pm. Details: 01925 262356

Every first Wednesday
WALTON WI
St John's Church Community Hall. 7.30pm
Details: 01925 604384

STOCKTON HEATH PROBUS CLUB
Warrington Sports Club, Walton Lea Road, Higher Walton. Details: 01925 268540

Every third Wednesday
HIGHER WALTON WI, St John's Community Hall,
7.45pm. Details 01925 262001.

Every fourth Wednesday
ALZHEIMER'S SOCIETY
Support Group, Brampton Lodge Day Centre, Bridge Lane, Appleton. 6.30-8.30pm

Every Thursday
THE SILVER QUAYS Senior Citizen's Club
The Quays Community Centre, Thelwall New Road, Thelwall. Details: 01925 753474.

BRIDGE CLUB
Belong Warrington, Loushers Lane 7.20pm.
Details 01925 262534

Every second Thursday
STRETTON WI
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 2.30pm.

GRAPPENHALL PROBUS CLUB
Grappenhall Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane, 10am. Details: 01925 264427.

Every third Thursday
NORTH EAST CHESHIRE FLOWER CLUB
Warrington Golf Club, London Road, Appleton. WA4 5HR 2pm Details: 01925 740419

GRAPPENHALL WI
Grappenhall Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane 2.15pm

Every Friday
APPLETOTS TODDLER GROUP
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road.
9.45-11.30am. Details: 01925 268153.

To list your event call Village Life on
01925 623632



National Trust hits out over science park plan



THE National Trust has criticised proposals for a logistics and science park on Green Belt land adjoining historic Dunham Massey Hall.

They claim the 75-hectare "world class science and advanced manufacturing park" would pose a threat to the beautiful Dunham Massey Estate, which draws half a million visitors a year.

Knutsford-based Tatton Estates Management (TEM) has put forward the proposals for the development which it calls the Cheshire Gateway.

A spokesman for the Trust said: "It is the view of the National Trust that the site being promoted as the Cheshire Gateway should be retained as Green Belt.

"The trust considers that the Cheshire Gateway proposals have failed to recognise the implications and significances of the nearby Dunham Massey Estate.

"It is particularly of concern that consideration has not been given to the impact of the proposals upon heritage assets and especially the wider setting of Dunham.

"The land put forward for allocation forms part of the wider setting of the Dunham Massey Estate which is held by the trust 'forever, for everyone' and its removal from the Green Belt would be a threat to the special significances of the land that it manages on behalf of the nation."

An action group, the Stop the Cheshire Gateway Group, also wants the plans to be thrown out.

They point to the fact that Cheshire already has well established science establishment at Alderley Park, which has spare capacity.

They believed the Cheshire Gateway project would destroy the unique character of the area.

But a spokesman for TEM said the arguments being put forward against the development were "grossly inaccurate".

While the site was currently within the Green Belt it was far from being green fields because of the A56, the A556, electricity pylons and ongoing engineering work on the new £200 million A556.

There was a need for extra science facilities in Cheshire, to complement those at Holmes Chapel, Jodrell Bank, Daresbury and Alderley Park.

"Cheshire Gateway, alongside other key infrastructure projects including the Atlantic Gateway and the £60 million announced to expand Citylabs in Manchester City Centre, will, with local support, help achieve not only economic growth but potentially major innovations such as life-saving discoveries, whilst also creating 2,500 jobs of all types for local people including importantly the next generation."

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David Mowat
Member of Parliament for Warrington South
www.davidmowat.org

Produced by David Mowat MP, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

£10,000 grant pays for new toilets

WORK will start soon on improved toilets at Moberley Victory Hall after a £10,000 grant was secured from the Big Lottery Fund.

The existing toilets will be re-sited and fully accessible toilets provided to enable disabled people to use them.

Built in 1921 - to mark victory in World War One - the hall requires considerable work to bring it up to present day standards.

Baby-changing facilities will also be included in the project.

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