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January 2017

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Editor's Comment



THE jury is still out on whether or not Culcheth Library and a number of others across the borough should close or be radically changed in some way to enable them to continue serving their local communities.

By jury, we mean Warrington Borough Council, who have pledged to consider all representations received during the consultation carried out by library operators LiveWire, including those attached to a 10,000 strong "save our libraries" petition.

We must, certainly at this stage, take the council's word for it that the matter will receive proper consideration and that the consultation was not just an exercise in preparing the public for bad news. We are sure people do not become councillors to close down libraries.

But there are worrying features about the whole affair. How can it be that a library in a highly literate community like Culcheth is one of

the ones apparently most at risk of closure?

How can it be that despite the furore over the proposals, the 10,000 petition and repeated "use them or lose them" calls from campaigners, there has been no increase in the number of people actually using the libraries?

The petition is the largest we can recall ever being raised in the borough, so presumably there is a genuine desire among a significant proportion of the population - including many in Culcheth - to keep the library service we enjoy today. But where are they?

Was the petition signed by

people who will, when accosted by a campaigner in the street, sign rather than appear some kind of Philistine, but don't have the time to actually read a book?

Perhaps they signed because, although they personally are far too busy watching television or using their mobiles and computers, they think there are other people out there who do still need books?

One thing is clear. Even if the current campaign results in some kind of temporary reprieve for our libraries, we will still lose them eventually if we do not use them.

So if you have read this far, get out there, visit Culcheth Library, borrow a book, and read it!

Garden room refused

PLANS for a subterranean garden room at a house in Sandfield Crescent, Glazebury, have been refused by borough council planning chiefs.



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Residents still concerned about HS2

MORE than 60 concerned residents attended the recent CADRAG public meeting held in the village recently to discuss the proposed changes to HS2 and its impact on Culcheth.

The changes, announced by Chris Grayling in November, were discussed and it was evident that all those who attended were still "very concerned", says event organiser Frank Allen, Chair of CADRAG.

Although the change to the route to avoid the Taylor Business Park and the Culcheth Linear Park were welcomed by most, it was noted that this now affected other properties and businesses. However, the HS2 Golborne Link is still seen as unnecessary, expensive, and hugely damaging to the Warrington area both environmentally and economically.

There was unanimous support for the programme proposed by CADRAG which was:

1. To continue to oppose the Golborne Link and support the alternative, to upgrade the West Coast Main Line, which will have less adverse impact and provide many additional economic benefits

to Warrington and the surrounding area.

2. To enter into discussions with HS2 over the next two years regarding refinements to the route to reduce as far as possible the impact if it does go ahead.

3. To prepare for petitioning the Houses of Parliament regarding the Hybrid Bill, expected from 2019 onwards, if a satisfactory position has not been reached by then.

There was also general agreement that it was essential that the community's elected representatives - particularly local Councillors - took a leading role in these discussions and preparations.

Mr Allen said: "The local community will need to mobilise all its resources for this fight if we are to succeed. As well as campaigners, we will need experts to assist in the various discussions and to provide supporting information and analysis. This will

include engineers and people who understand the West Coast Main Line, and in the future, lawyers and financial experts. If we cannot find volunteers with relevant expertise, it is likely this will require funding, and so people who can help with fundraising will also be needed."

CADRAG, the Culcheth And District Rail Action Group, was founded in 2013 to fight the impact of the rail proposals on the local community.

If anyone can help with this in any way, please contact Frank Allen, Chair of CADRAG, on 01925 765017.



Frank Allen.



Culcheth Linear Park.



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Chairman thanks poppy sellers

VOLUNTEERS who gave up their time to sell poppies in and around Culcheth have been thanked by the chairman of Culcheth Village Club.

Paul Campbell said: "At an event at the club I met with some of the local people supporting the hard work carried out by the Culcheth and District Royal British Legion poppy sellers.

"Yet again this year the club is proud to support the great work being done by all our members and the British Legion members at our club in selling poppies throughout the area.

"The work they do is amazing. The money they raise is not only

a fantastic amount which goes to support the Legion in its work, but through that the support for service personnel and their families,



(left to right) Chris Bibby, Lewis Smith, Warren Bibby, club chairman Paul Campbell, Les Styles.

current and retired, goes from strength to strength.

"I'm sure that the local British legion Branch would not mind me saying a big thank you to everyone who donated - your support is very much appreciated."

New dental care practice opens in Culcheth

BHAWANI'S Dental Care is a brand new dental practice now open in Culcheth and situated close to the CPS Centre. Centrally located in newly refurbished and very modern premises it offers all the modern treatment facilities available that today's woman or man might need or want and this is delivered in a very safe and highly effective manner.

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Christine's 90th birthday surprise

A RESIDENT at Holcroft Grange care home in Culcheth, celebrated her 90th birthday with a surprise spa visit and afternoon tea organised by staff at the home on Jackson Avenue.

Christine Adams and her daughter Heather were whisked away to local day spa, Spa Beautiful, where staff gave up their time to pamper Christine on her special day. While there, Christine took pleasure in a range of beauty treatments, which included a facial, massage and manicure.

After receiving a pampering fit for a queen, Christine and her daughter were treated to afternoon tea in the spa's tea rooms where they enjoyed a delicious assortment

of cakes and sandwiches.

Born in 1926, Christine worked in domestic science at Manchester High School for Girls. She married John Adams in 1949, and the couple lived together in Urmston until he passed away and soon after Christine moved to Holcroft Grange. While her hobbies include reading and visiting tearooms, Christine particularly enjoys spending time with her family and friends, which includes her daughter, three grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Shirley Paton, Home Manager at the Croftwood Care-run Holcroft Grange said: "It was a pleasure to be able to arrange this surprise for Christine on her birthday. She

is a lovely lady who loves a good chat over a cup of tea, and we are delighted that she enjoyed the visit to Spa Beautiful and the tea rooms. We wish Christine many happy returns and would like to say a big thank you to everyone at Spa Beautiful who helped make Christine's birthday extra special."



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Village to lose its last bank

CULCHETH is to lose its last remaining bank.

Only weeks after Barclays closed their branch in the village, NatWest has announced that it is to close its doors on May 31.

Earlier, the TSB closed down in Culcheth.

Warrington North MP Helen Jones – who lives in Culcheth – has expressed her concern at the closure.

She said: "Over the years Culcheth has lost a TSB branch and a Barclay's branch - now NatWest will be closing. I do think this represents a real concern.

"I recognise that more people are using online and telephone services but this is not appropriate for everyone.

"Culcheth has a significant elderly

population who are not as skilled in the use of new technologies and may find the alternatives to a branch setting difficult. People often find that interacting face to face with bank staff is the best way to deal with their queries and concerns.

"There is also likely to be a problem with the reduction in the number of cash points in the village.

"The loss of the cash point in Croft had a major effect on local businesses and there is a danger that Culcheth is going the same way."

The closure is the latest in a series involving various banks across Warrington.

All give the same explanation – that people's banking habits are changing and fewer and fewer people are visiting branches.



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English Karate Academy returns to Culcheth with purpose built Dojo

The English Karate Academy has now returned to Culcheth with the opening of a purpose built karate Dojo, situated in the Warehouse Studios, Glaziers Lane, Culcheth.

The karate club prides itself on its family friendly atmosphere. Family classes are suitable from age 4+ and mean that parents can train with their children in the same class.

The Fox Cubs karate classes are suitable for ages 4-9 years and are adapted to make karate both challenging and fun for younger children to achieve. These classes are great for improving children's fitness, concentration and confidence.

Pre-School Fox Cub classes are coming soon in term time for children aged 3-5.

Karate classes are £5 per class. New beginners are welcome to train in any of the weekly classes.

Chief Instructor Sensei Gary Foxwell 7th Dan Black Belt had been practicing and teaching karate for over 30 years and has competed around the world winning numerous British & European titles. He is currently the regional coach for the WUKO Great Britain Karate Team.

Sensei Gary says, "We are very excited to be opening the new Culcheth Dojo, the state of the art facilities will benefit all of our students

and we look forward to producing many future black belts!"

The English Karate Academy competition squad recently represented England at the WUKF World Karate Championships in

Dublin 2016.

The club also has classes in Leigh, Lowton, Hindly and Atherton areas.

For more details Call Sensei Gary - 07747 055793 or visit www.englishkarateacademy.com



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Christmas festival set t

THIS year's Culcheth and Glazebury Christmas Market has been hailed a great success - and planning is already underway for next year's event which is set to be even bigger and better.

Taylor Business Park were extremely proud to have been the main sponsor and MD Paul Taylor says despite the freezing weather it attracted the largest turnout the village had ever seen.

Paul said: "The free stalls for local businesses were a great opportunity for them to show their wares and make locals aware of the variety of retailers that we have here in our village. It's a perfect opportunity to get your Christmas shopping done early and to enjoy some German sausages, beer and mulled wine in the process!

"It was a fantastic atmosphere and it was great to see the community pulling together to make it all work. My hat goes off to the organisers, borough council and

parish council who managed to get it all up and running at such short notice.

"I'm extremely pleased to say we'll be doing it again next year in November and this time it'll be even bigger and better than before.

"We'll be approaching some of the more prominent and well known local businesses and giving them an opportunity to get their names visible on the day with some great sponsorship opportunities.

"An ice rink would be the icing on the cake and we're already working on organising that for the next event as well as many other ideas that have been suggested by the community since the event," added Paul.



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Simon Bax, Plant Area Specialist

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- Tender vegetables can be started from seed in a heated greenhouse
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Question mark still hangs over the library

A QUESTION mark still hangs over the future of Culcheth Library following the delivery of a 10,000-strong petition to the borough council opposing the closure of any libraries in Warrington.

The council's response was to indicate they would "fully digest" the findings of the consultation that was carried out with the public

before making the findings public. Culcheth Library is only one of a number threatened because of declining use. But it also faces

the problem of being housed in a building said to be in a deteriorating condition.

Petition organiser Dina Kingsnorth-Baird made an impassioned plea to council members to reconsider and revisit library operator Live Wire's proposed changes to services across the borough.

She expressed concern about the consultation which, she claimed, did not provide enough information for it to be considered sufficient for a decision to be made. The ideas and input it encourage were limited by bias and poor quality.

Even so a huge number of people fed in some great ideas, informed by proper and balanced information, for the future of the borough's libraries. And it resulted in more than 10,000 people signing the petition – one of the biggest petitions ever presented in

the town.

The message was clear. The proposals should be rejected and the council should work with the public for the future of all the libraries.

Cllr Tony Higgins, the borough's lead member for culture and leisure, said that the council would take time to fully digest, process and understand fully the findings of the report and consultation and only then would they make it openly available.

He welcomed the petition and thanked the organisers and those who had signed the petitions for giving the cause heart. He was himself an advocate for libraries – and people should understand that the issue was not a "done deal."

All councils were struggling to cope with the unprecedented cuts the Government had imposed upon them, he added.

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Being the only sixth form college on the east side of Warrington, Birchwood College has an excellent reputation evidenced by outstanding results, with each student being supported through to either the next stage of their academic journey, or into employment.

They also recognise the need for holistic development and offer students an extensive enrichment programme filled with academic and social activities. This is combined with advice and guidance from staff who really care, ensuring that students are ready for the challenges after further education.

Find out more by visiting their Open Evening on January 19, 6-8pm



Golf women are national champions

THE women's team at Culcheth-based Leigh Golf Club have been crowned National Champions.

They were one of four women's teams to travel to Spain to take part in the finals of the Mail on Sunday National Golf Club classic.

After a closely-fought match in the semi-final against Burntisland Golf House, in Fife – the 10th oldest golf club in the world - they

defeated the other finalist, Bude and North Cornwall, relatively easily 4-1.

The Leigh team attributed their success to team spirit and the five members of the team all played well. But they also acknowledged the part played by other club players who contributed to victories in earlier rounds.



Seven players who took part in the competition including team captain Mhairi Ferrol, Nikki Martin, Rachel Higson, Heather Pirrie, Joanne Lennox Warburton, Penny Moorfield and Tracey Sherwood.

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Principal, Mike Hill commented "As a designated Sixth Form College, Carmel specialises in the education of young people aged 16-19 so we can rightly claim to be experts in our field. As an Ofsted Outstanding institution, we excel at challenging and supporting our students to achieve their best. This has led to Carmel being ranked as the best performing Sixth Form College in the country for A Level progress and we are extremely proud of

this. Our students not only make outstanding academic progress, they are also provided with a wealth of opportunities for personal development, helping them to grow in confidence and to feel well prepared for life after Carmel."

Former student Jamie Stockley (pictured above), left Carmel having studied A Level Graphic Design and BTEC ICT followed by the Art Foundation Diploma. He then progressed to Edge Hill University gaining a degree in Animation.

Jamie is now an award winning Art Director at Factory Create Animation Studios and he visited Carmel recently to speak to Art students, "Since getting a hold within the Manchester animation industry I have worked on numerous productions including Roary the Racing Car, Disney's Frankenweenie and Strange Hill High. I've made props, built sets and made puppets working my way up to become Art Director on Clangers. It is my job to work from the scripts with the directors to design and create props and sets. To have worked as part of the CBBC production team who brought back such a British heritage kind of series as the Clangers, is a dream job for me! To win a BAFTA for this is a surreal and joyous feeling!"

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Art group's "Three Villages" display



SPECIAL feature of Culcheth Thursday Afternoon Art Group's annual exhibition was a "Three Villages" display – featuring people and places around Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft.

All the members of the group contributed to the display. The exhibition at the Culcheth Centre in Jackson Avenue proved a huge success and the group would like to thank all those who supported them over the two days of the event.



Project to help those with a long term health condition or disability

WARRINGTON Disability Partnership, with funding from Active Cheshire has set up a Living Life Well Project offering "Let's Go Sessions" in Culcheth.

The sessions are Free (including drinks and biscuits) and designed to support people with long term health conditions and disabilities by developing self-help groups which will offer peer support (meeting people who share the same experiences), themed sessions (information, advice and guidance), guest speakers and additional support from staff and volunteers from Warrington Disability Partnership.

The project provides opportunities for people living with long-term health conditions and disabilities to improve their health and well-being through sharing coping strategies to manage their ill health and to access information on healthy living and increase their participation in social and physical activities.

The sessions will help people to manage their own condition(s), help with understanding treatments and medication – involve people

in planning their own care to help improve the outcomes of treatment, prevent deterioration or complications (including regular visits to GPs and admissions to hospital), and can make people feel more in control of their life. Knowing what support options are available can build confidence and when to ask for help.

Sessions will include:
Understanding your condition, medication management, money advice, healthy lifestyles, self-help (pain management), reflexology and massage, peer support and welfare benefits and local concessions.

Weekly events take place at Jackson Avenue Centre Culcheth each Friday - 2pm – 4pm On January 13, 20, 27, February 3, 10, 17 and 24 and March 3.

For more information on this and other groups in Lymm, Oakwood, and Burtonwood please contact:

Brun Munslow – Disability and Long Term Conditions Team Leader
Brun.Munslow@disabilitypartnership.org.uk
01925 240064

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2017 SHOWS ALL THE SIGNS OF BEING A FANTASTIC TIME TO SELL IN OUR AREA

2016 has been a buoyant year!

According to Rightmove, the period of January 1st – November 17th 2016, saw a total of 282 properties in the WA3/4/5/6 areas on the market. 198 of these were new instructions, so over 70% of the available stock was new, indicating the market overall was still buoyant.

Rightmove recorded a total of 127 sales agreed, meaning 45% of stock actually sold.

So, what's in store for 2017?

Well these postcodes, like most areas, have the post Brexit concerns about how leaving the EU will reflect on the housing industry. However, WA3/4/5/6 are also part of the HS2 scheme which many feel poses a threat to our villages, business' and landscapes and as most of those postcode areas are now not eligible under the HS2 compensation scheme, it means that we can still value property at the market value it was, prior to the HS2 announcement.

It is predicted that interest rates may reduce further and so 2017 looks a fantastic time to sell in our area.

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