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Issue: 168
March 2017

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Printed by TwentyFourSeven

Editor's Comment



IN all that has been said and written about the plight of Culcheth Library and other libraries across the borough in recent months, little time seems to have been devoted to working out why the number of people using them has plummeted.

Yes, we have heard all about the influence of the internet, e-books, smart 'phones, etc. But surely this influence is felt universally, not just in places like Culcheth and other parts of Warrington?

It is true that many libraries all over the country have been losing readers for some time. But while there has been a 32 per cent decline in visits to libraries in Warrington, near neighbours Cheshire East came top in a survey of library use in the country's 55 unitary authorities.

Nearly 5,300 books were borrowed per 1,000 members, making Cheshire East the lead unitary authority for library services. Their biggest library, at Macclesfield, was the busiest in the

North West.

So why are people on one side of the common boundary between Cheshire East and Warrington using their libraries more than those on the other? Is it that people in places like Knutsford, Congleton, Crewe and Macclesfield have resisted the advance of technology more than those in Warrington?

Or are people on the Warrington side of the boundary less literate?

We can't pretend to answer the question, but it does occur to us that while everyone has been quick enough to heap blame on the borough council and library operators LiveWire, the real culprits

could be the public. Let's face it, if Warrington could claim to be top of the league for library use, there is unlikely to have been any talk of saving money through closing libraries.

Here in Culcheth we have had very vocal opposition to any suggestion that our library should close. We are very fortunate to have people prepared to set up a "Friends" group to campaign to keep the library open.

But they will have to do more than persuade the borough council and LiveWire not to close the library – they will also have to persuade more local people to use it.

**Deadline
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Friends of Culcheth Library meeting

THE Culcheth Library Working Group which has been set up with the aim of saving the village library will next meet on March 8 at the library at 7.30pm.

The group has already held two meetings to secure the future of the Culcheth Library and are arranging the next meeting to hopefully kick start a new organisation, The Friends of Culcheth Library.

Paul Taylor, MD of Taylor Business Park and board member of LiveWire is a member of the current group and is putting out an appeal to residents.

"If you care about your library service in the area as I know most of us in the village do, then please come and attend the meeting at 7:30pm on Wednesday the 8th March and put your views forward and if possible offer your help and join the new group."

"The consultation results have been announced and a working group is being set up by the council to look at how all of the libraries can be sustainably run and funded."

"The Friends of Culcheth Library, will be here to promote the current library service and put views to the new working group, and to look at possible solutions to making sure Culcheth keeps a library service here in the village rather than having to use facilities at Birchwood should this library be closed. It will be an asset to the library and in the future will work to attract new users to the service by running events and meetings here."

Mr Taylor added: "We would like to see a diverse group attend of all age groups and backgrounds so that we can get a good feel for the desires of library users in the village, and we want to see those that don't currently use the library but are passionate about keeping a library service here too so we can work out how to attract more users."



Councils to get closer

PARISH councils in Culcheth and Croft plan to work more closely together in future – particularly when faced with major issues which affect both parishes.

Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council and Croft Parish Council have instructed their clerks, Mike Durrington and Mike Pope, to get together to plan closer working.

A number of councillors already serve on both councils.

One of them, Cllr Keith Bland, said: "Both councils have agreed to work together more closely."

"It is mainly to deal with major issues affecting both parishes, such as the HS2 rail route and the proposed changes to the library service. But we will also work together on any issue which affects both parishes."



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Business Park boss disappointed by objections to bird sanctuary

BUSINESS park boss Paul Taylor has expressed his "disappointment" at objections from Croft Parish Council to the Wild Wings Bird Sanctuary being located near Taylor Business Park.

Mr Taylor, who has been working hard to find a new home for Wild Wings said: "It came to our notice that Croft parish council have objected to Wild Wings being relocated near Taylor Business Park on the grounds that "The Parish Council believes that a public attraction is an inappropriate development in an industrial estate."

Mr Taylor, Managing Director of the business park said that he was disappointed that the parish council wasn't looking to support a not for profit business that does "amazing work" in its attempts to find a temporary site where they can get back on their feet for the next five years.

He added, "HS2 have also objected which was to be expected but we are responding to them to explain that it's only for the duration of a five year lease which is excluded from the Landlord and Tenant Act so they will have to go by then."

This will be well before the date that any works will need to be carried out on the land.

"Their plans are outside the area of the safeguarding zone and to my knowledge this is the first time

that HS2 Ltd have objected to any planning in the area. Hopefully it's not a sign of things to come and they can look at each case individually and weigh up the pros

and cons.

"The proposed site isn't in the Business Park itself, it's on land to the side, near the entrance and by the beauty spa (Spa Beautiful), it's hardly a heavily commercial area. Oddly they registered no objections to their first planning application so we're really not sure where this

came from.

"If you live locally and would like to see this amazing facility come to the village please go to the planning website and post your comments of support! It only takes a minute. The planning ID number is 2016/28853."



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So, what are you giving up for Lent?

RESIDENTS of Culcheth and Croft are being invited to "Experience Easter" during the season of Lent.

Special displays will be on show at Newchurch Parish Church and Christ Church Croft.

Rector Chris Jones said: "A question you may hear this month is what are you giving up for Lent? After Pancake Day on the 28th Feb (or Shrove Tuesday) we find ourselves entering into Lent. That time when many of us begin that annual period of self-denial.

"So, what are you giving up? Chocolate; Facebook, Coffee?

"But is this all that Lent is about; self-denial?

"So often the question we ask, or are asked is "What are you giving up for Lent?" as if this is all there is to it; legalistically, even 'religiously' giving something up for the forty days of Lent. Of course such self-denial was originally intended to help Christians reflect upon the Easter message;

Christ's sacrifice for us: that journey from death to resurrection. But in truth too often the focus tends to be upon ourselves and our acts of denial.

"But surely Lent isn't simply about personal denial; surely it's about personal transformation; about those big questions of life and purpose; about becoming a better person. And surely transformation is about letting ourselves be filled with God's presence so that we can be shaped by God's love. If this is the case, then our acts of denial, of self-emptying, must not become simply an end in themselves, but a means to an end – that God would fill us and transform us.

"So, the question is not so much: What can I give up? But: What can I do?

"If you're struggling to find an answer to the question, you may like to take some time to pop in to either Newchurch, Culcheth or Christ Church, Croft. Both churches would love to welcome you to come and "Experience Easter" during the season of Lent.

There will be six displays in church each representing part of the Easter story, each will offer an opportunity for quiet thought, reflection and meditation. Please come when you want, during the times below, and feel free to stay as long, or as short as you want.

Newchurch on Church Lane, Culcheth, WA3 5ET.

www.newchurch-christchurch.com

Starting on Tuesday 7th March, and up to and including Tuesday 11th April the church will be open on Tuesday evenings and Saturday afternoons for quiet reflection at the following times:

Tuesday's: 6:00pm–8:00pm

Saturday's: 3:00pm–4:00pm

Christ Church on Lady Lane, Croft, WA3 7AU.

www.newchurch-christchurch.com or follow us on facebook at: Christ Church Croft

Starting on, Wednesday 8th March and up to and including Wednesday 12th April Christ Church will be open twice a day (every Wednesday) at the following times: 9:30am – 10:30am 6:00pm – 9:00pm.



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Guitarist's travels in the Soviet Union

INTERNATIONALLY renowned classical guitarist and world traveller Neil Smith was guest speaker at the monthly meeting of Croft WI.

The main topic of the talk was his experiences while on a concert tour of the then USSR in the early 1980's. Aided by a slide show along with rare items such as a Red Army uniform, he described the terrain and extreme climate variations of such a vast country, from deserts and camels in the south to arctic conditions and reindeers in the north.

Neil demonstrated an extensive knowledge of the history of what is now Russia beginning with Viking raiders from Sweden followed by Mongol invaders at the time of Magna Carta. Gruesome tales from the time of "Ivan the Terrible", who actually asked for the hand in marriage of Elizabeth 1 - needless to say she declined - right up to stories of Heroes of the Soviet Union who fought in WW11 were included in the presentation.

The most interesting part of Neil's talk was relating to his extremely "hairy" experiences with the Secret Police, who somehow knew that he had worked for the MOD in the past and twice arrested him for taking photos, but "by the skin of his teeth" he managed to avoid being thrown in prison, where few were ever seen again in the Soviet era! During his travels Neil made life-long Russian friends with whom he is still in contact today. He has visited Russia in more recent times and says life is now somewhat easier for the population under the present regime.

Exciting stories were interspersed with Neil's skills as a classical guitarist with the most beautiful renditions of Russian folk tunes, which were greatly appreciated by the members.

President Ann Lamming thanked Neil for an extremely interesting and enjoyable evening.

Diary Dates: February 28 - Readers Group, Christ Church Hall, 10am; March 14 Theatre Trip - "Evita" Lowry Theatre, Salford; April 11 - Coffee Morning, Youth Centre, Croft 10am to 12 noon; May 18 - Garden Open Day, Haughton Hall, Tarporley, 10.30 am to 3.00 pm.

Cricket club to play in new league

GLAZEBOURY Cricket Club will be playing in a new league this summer - arising from the amalgamation of the old Cheshire Cricket League and the Cheshire Cricket Alliance.

The new Cheshire Cricket League will have five divisions for 1st XIs - and Glazebury, who finished eighth in the 1st division of the Alliance last season will be in the 4th division of the new league.

Most of the teams they play will be the same as in recent years, however.

The 2nd XI will play in Division C East/North in a format designed to minimise travelling for 2nd XIs

This means they will play a number of local sides including Appleton 3rd and 4th teams, Rylands 2nd team and Warrington 4th team.

The new format will mean the club could, theoretically progress up through the five "first team" divisions and then up to the Cheshire County League - the top tier of cricket in the county.

Meanwhile the club has started indoor pre-season net practise at the Orford Jubilee Park in Warrington.

Anyone interested in joining the club should call 01925 766482.



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Croquet – not such a sedate game

CULCHETH Croquet Club is anxious to gain a few extra members – but also to dispel the sport's image as a sedate 19th century game played on the lawns of large country houses.

The club plays all the year round at Culcheth Sports Club – indoor in the winter but outdoors on the club's croquet lawn from April to October.

Spokesman Bob Connop said: "Croquet usually conjures up an image of ladies in crinoline dresses and men in plus fours hitting balls with mallets through hoops on the lawn of a large country manor house.

"But times have moved on. Things have changed particularly since the Egyptians learnt the game from the British in the last century.

"There are two main variants of the game: Association and Golf. The latter, which was developed by the Egyptians, is a very fast game which can be learnt in a few hours but takes a lifetime to master.

"This latter is the game we play at Culcheth."

The club plays in leagues across

the North West from Llanfairfechan in North Wales to Pendle on the Yorkshire border and some members play in national competitions. All equipment is provided and the club has Croquet Association qualified coaches to teach novices as well as develop experienced players.

A pair of flat shoes is required but all other equipment needed is provided by the club.

All ages can play and indeed in the North West League matches the age ranges from 18 to 90!

Bob added: The club is small at around 25 members but we are always open to anyone who might want to play. Why not try it out?

Anyone interested should contact Bob or Anne Connop on 01925 765194 and they will try and arrange a trial game.



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Village community day

PLANS are already well advanced for this year's Culcheth Community Day – and hopefully the event will take place as usual on the village green.

But after the disappointment of last year's event being cancelled, for the first time ever, because the green was flooded, an emergency

back-up plan has been drawn up to enable it to go-ahead even if the green is under water.

If necessary the day will be

Trumble the Clown retires

A FAMILIAR face will be missing from the line-up of entertainers at this year's Culcheth Community Day.

Trumble the Clown, who has entertained local children for many years, has announced his retirement.

As a result, organisers are searching for a replacement children's entertainer.

Cllr Sue Bland said: “We are very sad that Trumble the Clown has decided to retire. He will be missed by many as he has been bringing plenty of laughter to Community Day for years.

“We are looking for a replacement children's entertainer and hopefully will find someone suitable in time for the event.”



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prepares for the worst

moved to the Shaw Street playing field car park.

Last year's event was postponed because the village green was waterlogged on the normal day – the May Day bank holiday. But at attempt to hold it later in the summer also had to be called off – again because of flooding.

Parish councillor Sue Bland said: "It was the first time in 26 years that the day had been cancelled and we want to make sure it doesn't happen again. Hopefully, it will be on the village green as usual. But if the weather is bad and the green is again flooded, we will move to Shaw Street."

Already lined-up for the day are a BMX show, Children's Circus Act, a Pet Show and children's fairground rides.

Local charities and community organisations will also have stalls

to promote their activities.

Any organisation that would like to take part, or any business interested in helping to sponsor the event should call Cllr Bland on 01925 766641 or email susanbland55@gmail.com



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Judith Evans, Seasonal Plant Buyer

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Councillor calls on parents to ensure children are safe

A Councillor is calling on parents to make sure their children are safe when out riding their bikes.

Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Councillor Ileyne Hutchinson said, "I am very concerned with the number of reports being received by Councillors and the Police that many local children out riding their bikes after dark are doing so while wearing dark clothing and with no lights displayed".

A number of motorists have described how they have come close to colliding with these young cyclists coming at them out of the darkness. The Parish Council and

Police are asking that parents take all possible steps to ensure their children wear bright clothing and display lights after dark. The local Police unit will be speaking to cyclists where they see that they are a danger not only to other road users but also to themselves. As that well known Police advert goes - 'If you do not have bright clothing and lights when riding your bike after dark then you are invisible. Don't be invisible.'



New hope that HS2 may avoid Culcheth

A NEW report on proposals for the HS2 rail line has offered fresh hope that the Golborne link – which threatens devastation in the Culcheth area – may have to be axed from the project.

The report for HS2 Ltd, the company overseeing the proposals, has identified five sites in the Lymm area where there is a high risk of subsidence due to salt mining activities in the past.

Another 14 sites could also pose a risk to the high speed railway.

Culcheth councillor Keith Bland said: "If the route has to be amended at Lymm it could make a big difference at Culcheth, which stands to suffer even more seriously from the project.

"But it is not only old salt mines which could cause problems. The current route runs through part of the old Silver Lane tip at Risley where there could be all sorts of subsidence problems.

"We also suffer from subsidence caused by mining from the former Parkside Colliery and we also have a lot of peat moss, which is

not an ideal base for a high speed railway."

The HS2 route through Cheshire has already had to be changed to avoid salt mines so local councillors are puzzled as to why it has taken until now to find out about the risk in the Lymm area.

People at Lymm are worried about potential damage to their environment – but concede that there would be much more damage in the Culcheth area.

They believe the spur to the east of Warrington should be dropped altogether.

Cllr Ian Marks said: "People have differing views about the merits of HS2, but most people object to this link. We think it is a waste of money and will have a detrimental effect on the environment in our village.

"We strongly support Warrington Council's campaign to upgrade the existing line from Crewe to Warrington and create an upgraded station at Bank Quay.

"This alternative would have the big advantage of linking in with the

proposed east/west so-called HS3 route and support Warrington's role in the Northern Powerhouse. I just hope this new finding will persuade HS2 Ltd to think again and avoid the eastern route through Lymm and Culcheth. Safety is of over-riding importance and HS2 should now get behind Warrington Council's upgrade proposal."

Cllr Bland added: "This just seems like another reason for abandoning the spur line that runs through Culcheth and Lymm and which many people don't think is needed anyway."

HS2 Ltd say the new report is part of ongoing consultation in Cheshire.



Residents celebrate after housing plan rejected

RESIDENTS of Culcheth Hall Drive and Withington Avenue were celebrating after planning chiefs threw out proposals for nine houses on land between the two roads.

The application by Evoke Homes came only 20 months after the company had lost an appeal against an almost identical proposal.

Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council opposed the scheme and 17 Culcheth households jointly funded planning consultants Ashall Town Planning to represent them at a meeting of the borough's development management committee.

Officers recommended the scheme be approved – but the committee rejected the recommendation after hearing that nearby residents were not opposed in principle to housing on the site and would support a scheme with fewer properties and accessed from both Culcheth Hall Drive and Withington Avenue.

Cllr Joan Grime took exception to a paragraph in the report which described the Culcheth Hall Drive as a quiet location with minimal traffic. She said parking along the road was considerable at peak times, and the road was used heavily by parents during school pick up and drop off times. Highways issues were a serious

consideration and the area could not cope with the increased vehicle movement the properties would bring.

After the meeting, Cllr Matt Smith said: "I am pleased to see the committee seriously considering

the arguments made by residents and councillors, and decide to reject the officer recommendation. The result is a victory for common sense and democracy! I hope the developer uses this opportunity to fully reconsider his plans before coming back with a more reasonable proposal in keeping with the location."

Local resident and former

councillor Chris Vobe, praised the efforts of local residents who worked with councillors on the campaign, adding: "We are delighted to have delivered a victory for the local community and commend those residents on Culcheth Hall Drive and Withington Avenue who have led the fight, and ultimately won the day."



Chris Vobe, Cllr Jacqui Johnson, local residents Peter Shaw and Barbara Jordan, along with neighbours celebrating at the Town Hall after their victory.

Bents celebrating 80th anniversary

GLAZEBURY based Bents Garden & Home is celebrating its 80th anniversary as the family owned and run business - 80 years since Alfred and Margaret Bent started to sell roses from the front garden of their small terrace house, marking the start of what would be a very special journey.

Since 1937 Bents has evolved from a small specialised plant based business to one of the country's largest garden, home and leisure destinations all of which is celebrated in a short film, highlighting its journey and thanking customers for being part of it: Thank You 80th Anniversary at Bents.

2017 promises to be a year of celebrations with an extensive

calendar of events, seasonal surprises and random acts of kindness planned to commemorate its impressive milestone, all anchored by a spectacular summer garden party planned for the weekend of 7-10th July.

Whilst never forgetting its gardening heritage Bents has worked hard to create a destination that is no longer just focussed on the garden but also encompasses home, lifestyle, leisure and a day out. Under the guidance of three generations of the Bent family it is now a £20m turnover operation, employing over 430 colleagues.

Managing Director Matthew Bent said: "As a family business we've never been ones to rest on our laurels. We've always followed

our passions, taken chances and strived to innovate. And that is exactly how it all started in 1937 when my grandparents started to cultivate roses as a hobby in the front garden of their terraced house at 404 Warrington Road, just meters away from our current location. Little did they know that it would be the start of something so unique and special."

Over the past 80 years Bents has undergone a number of key milestones including the introduction of Christmas and catering to the business, helping to make it an all-year attraction and establish a number of key trends within the garden centre industry.

2017 saw the launch of the UK's first Open Skies Glass House,

an all-weather destination where customers can shop for plants come rain or shine and more recent years have seen the opening of a £10m extension, housing a number of new home and leisure departments, including an extensive Food Hall.

Now, with its six dining destinations, adventure play area, landscaped lake and on site nursery, where it grows and nurtures over 60% of its plants, Bents is a very different entity to when it began life 80 years ago, but says Matthew: "Despite growing in size we've worked hard to keep the great family feeling and ambience we have established a reputation for; something I think my grandparents would be very proud of if they could see us now."



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Two day 'Mini Crufts' dog show

BENTS Garden and Home, Glazebury will once again be hosting its own "Mini Crufts" dog show on Saturday and Sunday, March 11 and 12.

The show is being timed to tie in with the national show – one of the most prestigious events in the dog owner's calendar.

The team from The Pet Place at Bents has planned its own show ring, complete with winners' platforms and prizes available in a number of categories, with first, second and third places up for grabs.

This year there are 10 classes open for competition, with a £1 entry charge per class which will be donated to the Warrington, Halton and St Helen's branch of the RSPCA. Anyone wishing to enter should visit The Pet Place to register as places will be limited and booking is required in advance.

Classes include: Cross Breed Beauties, Modern Breeds, Finest Senior (9+ years), Most Expressive, Junior (6 – 18 months), Puppy Love

(under 6 months), Small Breed Dogs, rescue/Rehomed Dogs, Extra-large Breeds * Adult (18 months – 9 years)

Representatives from Tyldesley Veterinary Centre will judge the event and present winners with their prize before being photographed for Bents' Facebook page. Winners will be announced at 11am, 12 noon, 2pm, 3pm and 4pm on both days and all winning dogs will take home a dog bed and a voucher to use at the groomers located in The Pet Place and there will be treats and certificates for all second and third place competitors.

Bents will also be holding a pet photoshoot for a donation to charity, with all participants entered into a Mini Crufts Facebook competition. The winner, chosen on the number of likes generated, will win a £400 Portrait Experience at Bartley Portrait Studios, with second and third places winning a £250 Portrait Experience Voucher (photos will be taken on Saturday and Sunday between 10am – 4pm).

There's lots more being planned for The Pet Place in the coming months with a weekly Puppy Hour starting on Monday March 13 and the next Guided Dog Walk through Windy Bank Wood taking place on Friday March 17. Further info can be found at bents.co.uk



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left to right, are Anne Lamming - trustee; Heather Hiley - chairman of Alice Hiley Memorial Trust; Balamurugan Palanisami - consultant, Andrew Hiley - trustee, Matt McCormack - CFM supplier, Robert Clarke - Liverpool Women's chairman and Roger Lamming - trustee.

Croft charity donates £16,000 equipment to hospital

A CROFT-based charity has donated ground-breaking medical equipment costing £16,000 to Liverpool Women's Hospital Neonatal Unit.

The Alice Hiley Memorial Trust has donated a Cerebral Function Monitor (CFM) to Liverpool Women's Neonatal Unit.

It will benefit many new-born babies from the Warrington, Cheshire and Merseyside area that Liverpool Women's Hospital serves for babies with specific needs.

The Trust was established in memory of baby Alice who was

born at Liverpool Women's Hospital in July 2010.

Alice lived for only six hours after she was born with a rare congenital disorder. Ever since, Alice's parents, Croft based Heather and Andrew, and grandparents Anne and Roger, have worked tirelessly to ensure her memory lives on by raising money and setting up the Alice Hiley Memorial Trust.

The Trust raises money to fund equipment to help other babies born with life-threatening conditions, it also supports the families of babies requiring special medical care in the North West. In 2011 they purchased a Giraffe Incubator at a cost of £14,000 for the Neonatal Unit and to date they have raised a spectacular £33,000, benefiting many babies across the North West.

Bill Yoxall, clinical director, on the Neonatal Unit said: "We are

so grateful to receive this fantastic piece of equipment. It will be the first time we will have full-time access to this type of machine on the Unit.

"The CFM monitors activity within the brain. Monitoring the brain waves is really helpful in guiding the treatment of babies who have suffered injuries to their brain. We use it particularly when there has been concern about whether a baby has been deprived of oxygen during birth, but we can also use it in other conditions such as meningitis. Having this equipment on site will benefit many babies and their families, helping us continue to achieve the best possible outcomes for all our Neonates"

Heather Hiley, chairman of the Alice Hiley Memorial Trust and mother to Alice said: "We would like to thank all our supporters that have helped us achieve the levels of fundraising enabling us to be able to donate this brain scanner. We are so pleased that we can truly make a difference to babies within the local area."

Staff on the neonatal unit are now being trained to use the new equipment.

Scottish dancing at the WI

SCOTTISH dancing was the main theme of the monthly meeting of Lowton WI as members welcomed Christine and Alan from "Aluinn" Scottish dancing group.

Members were able to put on various pieces of Scottish clothing and were invited to take to the floor to perform three dances.

Considering the dances were unfamiliar to say the least, everyone entered into the spirit of the evening

and a good time was had by all, so much so that several members have decided to go to the dance group's next meeting.

Following tea and Scottish shortbread, Liz Bennett gave details of news from Leyland.

Lin Hayes welcomed a new member- Dorothy Wright and two visitors.

Celia Adamson reminded ladies about the DNA Profiling lunch at

Mytton Fold in Langho, which is a much anticipated event.

The annual Spring council meeting will be held at Southport Floral

Hall on Wednesday March 8 and trips to the Lowry theatre have been arranged.

Visitors and new members always welcome. For further details contact Lin on 01942 207764



Recreation ground's £500,000 facelift

THE long-awaited new changing rooms and community facilities at Culcheth's Shaw Street recreation ground have been officially opened.

Cllr Tony Higgins, Warrington Borough Council's lead member for leisure opened the £500,000 facility – which also includes a new car park and perimeter fencing – accompanied by Warrington Wolves players and members of Culcheth Eagles RL team.

The Eagles then played their first friendly game at their refurbished home ground.

The improvement works, carried out by Warrington-based contractor Clovemead Ltd, have seen the existing changing rooms replaced with larger, modern and accessible facilities.

Cllr Higgins said: "These much-needed improvements will provide a real boost to sport in the area. It's the latest part of the rejuvenation of Shaw Street and supports our wider work to invest in sport and green spaces across the borough.

"I'm delighted this work has been completed. It will provide modern facilities that local sportsmen and women and the whole community can be proud of."

The project includes:

- Four changing room areas, incorporating showering and WC facilities, providing home and away teams and different age groups with separate, secure and private changing facilities.

- A separate match official's changing and showering facility.
- A community room with full disabled access.
- Male and female WCs, plus disabled WC and a baby change room, accessed from the community room
- A small kitchen area for the provision of hot drinks and refreshments.

Clovemead joint managing director Graham Holland said: "We applaud this great initiative by Warrington Borough Council. It will provide a terrific boost to Culcheth Eagles and other sports teams in the vicinity and as Warrington contractors, Clovemead are very proud to have been a part of the redevelopment team."

As well as replacing the existing changing rooms which were at the end of their life, the new facilities will extend the use of the building by providing community facilities that can be used by a wide range of groups.

To enquire about booking the facilities, email games@warrington.gov.uk



A visual tour of the Western Isles

NEWCHURCH WI members enjoyed a visual tour of the Western Isles at their monthly meeting, thanks to speaker Morag Burton.

She used beautiful slides and paintings to enhance her talk "The 7 Macs" with the addition of sound effects.

The Macs of her title were the MacBraynes, the MacNeils, the MacDonalds, the MacKenzies, the MacGillivrays, the MacLeods and lastly the "machair" – a Gaelic word for the coastal grassland found throughout the Hebrides. History and legends featured in her talk, as well as nature and science.

The machair is the home of many rare wild flowers and the whole island group is visited by puffins, seals, and other marine creatures. The human islanders have worked hard at fishing and subsistence farming, although in past centuries there was often piracy and feuding and more recently big support for the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion. The Jacobite leader, Charles Edward Stewart, was helped to escape by Flora MacDonald, the best-known lady of that clan. The Clan MacBrayne is well-known in our

own time as one of them founded the steamship line to the Isles and this line survives as Calmac Ferries.

In spite of many official attempts to smother the Gaelic language and local traditions, both still survive, like the MacBrayne ships.

After a vote of thanks from Sylvia Brown, Morag judged the February competition - an arrangement of heather in a teacup. She chose Ann Langridge as winner, with Margaret Wilkinson and Irene Bromilow coming second and third.

The meeting concluded with tea served by Margaret Mellows and Kathleen Manning, followed by a quiz. President Doreen Procter then wished everyone a safe journey home

Newchurch has a busy calendar of events for the spring and summer – the Spring Coffee Morning on March 15 with a special Mosslands evening event at Bents in April and proposed outings to Boundary Mill and Shrewsbury in May and July.

Sincere thanks from the Bibby family

MEMBERS of the Bibby family would like to say a massive thank you to family, friends and the people of Culcheth for your kind messages, flowers, cards, donations and amazing support following the sad passing away of Dean Bibby a truly wonderful son, brother and fantastic father to Charlotte, Nathan, Dominic and Olivia.

The family has been totally overwhelmed with offers of help and support at this difficult and sad time. It is very much appreciated and will never be forgotten, thank you.



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ABOUT TO EMBARK ON REDESIGNING AND EXTENDING TO CREATE YOU'RE DREAM HOME?

Think about the following before borrowing on your mortgage or gaining loans to fund your plans

1. Write down the reasons you are doing this, your needs and wants! (Two very different things)
2. Draw yourself a basic plan, with how many rooms you need, how much space you want to allocate to them.
3. Check your plan flows, are reception areas away from bedrooms? Are hallways positioned correctly maximizing space?
4. Does your home actually warrant this change or would it be more prudent to actually move?
5. It's often beneficial to gain the opinion of an estate agent they will be able to advise if the they foresee if your plans will help or hinder should the need to resell the property in the future arise!
6. If you know what you want, but have no idea on design ask your local estate agent, builder and instruct a reputable architect (preferably one who has been recommended to you or you have seen their work). Good plans are paramount to your builder!

SO, YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT, YOU HAVE IDEAS AND PLANS, YOU NOW NEED SOME QUOTES

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Builders are often blamed for clients over spend on budget, but it's not always there fault.

Reasons for budget over spend!

Initial information given to builder was vague.

You may want a door there, you may not! You may want 4x electric sockets, or maybe 8, you're not sure to have spotlights or not? Etc...

You have over complicated matters

All you need to give the builder are clear instructions, provide engineering, landscaping and construction drawings, to build the shell, don't waffle about where your coffee table is going, keep it relevant, no more no less!

You lose focus

You have your brief, then your designer gets carried away with more ideas and more to think about, (suddenly your budget has increased).

Choosing a builder

Firstly, remember the cheapest quote could cost in the long run and as builders are very busy and in short supply, if you get a builder that can 'fit you in straight away' then ask yourself why? Are they desperate for work? Reputable builders are often booked in advance. Although you are the client, it's also worth noting that builders can pick and choose the jobs they want, a job with ample off street parking for vans, skips, scaffold, diggers etc, will be preferable than those with complications or potential issues that a builder may need to factor in his quote, facilitating the need to maybe overestimate in order to provide for contingency.

The key to success

Plan well ahead, be accurate, communicate clearly, once you have a good perception of cost then you can see about funding your project, remember to stay in control if you allow your budget to escalate due to design change, your builder can't be blamed for your over spend.

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