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April 2017

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**Rosie's voice
is on TV**

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Editor's Comment



IT is somewhat ironic that Culcheth – surely one of the most literate parts of the borough – appears to face a tougher battle than other areas if it is to save its library.

A village that boasts the only independent book shop for miles around can't support a library? Surely not?

Well, we certainly hope not. But two things became clear at the well-attended meeting organised to seek ways to keep the library open. One, thankfully, was that there are plenty of local people prepared to join the campaign – people who in this digital age are still aware of the importance of the printed word.

The other, unfortunately, that the

existing library is in a deteriorating condition and could require up to £150,000 spending on it. And given that the whole purpose of "re-organising" the library service is to save money, that is rather a large obstacle to overcome.

We want to see the library saved, in its present form and on its present, centrally located, site. We believe it should be at the heart of the local community, offering a venue not just for borrowing books but also for meetings and other events. A place that offers something for almost everyone.

Clearly it must move with the times but its main reason for being must remain as a centre for learning

and reading.

In Culcheth and elsewhere across the borough where the future of the library service has been thrown into doubt, people are coming forward with ideas to revive libraries. Some may be a little fanciful, but others appear to have merit. We hope they will all be looked at carefully, not just by our local campaigners, but by the decision-makers.

Culcheth may be about to lose its last bank, but it still has good schools, busy shops, popular pubs and restaurants, thriving organisations and well supported churches. It remains a vibrant community.

But it would be less so without the library.

Easter coffee morning

Croft WI will be holding an Easter Coffee Morning at the Youth Centre, Smithy Lane, Croft on Tuesday April 11 from 10.00am to 12.00pm.

Funds raised will be donated to Croft Memorial Hall to improve audio and visual technology systems. Entry Fee will be £2 and home-made cakes, sausage rolls, tea/coffee will be served, plus a Raffle and Easter Bonnet competition. There will be an activity corner provided for young children.



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Rosie's voice is on TV

A SIX-year-old Glazebury girl is currently playing a key role in a BBC cartoon series – School of Roars.

Rosie Cooper-Kelly, a pupil at Twiss Green Primary School, Culcheth, is voicing one of the

characters in the weekly CBeebies animated series.

Over the last 12 months, Rosie



has been travelling down to London once a month to record three or four episodes of the series at a time.

She's in good company because top TV stars Sarah Lancashire, Kathy Burke and Andrew Scott also voice parts in the show.

Rosie is following in the footsteps of her elder sister, Daisy, who appeared in a three-part drama, "The Trials of Jimmy Rose" on ITV in 2015.

Daisy appeared alongside Ray Winstone and Amanda Redman – playing the part of Ray Winstone's granddaughter.

School Of Roars follows five mini

monsters through their school day as they learn monastery lessons in maths, music, cookery and life.

The class is taught by the loveable Miss Grizzlesniff, who is voiced by Kathy Burke (Gimme Gimme Gimme). Other voices in the series include Sarah Lancashire (Happy Valley, Last Tango in Halifax) who plays the Headmistress, Mrs Twirlyhorn and Andrew Scott (Sherlock) who is the narrator, as well as voicing other characters including the cookery teacher Mr Marrow.



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Finally some good news for Wild Wings!

ONE major obstacle for Wild Wings bird sanctuary relocating to Taylor Business Park has now been overcome.

HS2 have now removed their objections to a planning application for the not for profit business to have a temporary home at the business park.

When Wild Wings submitted their new planning application on land to the side of Taylor Business Park, after moving the proposed site outside of the safeguarding

zone for HS2 once the new route was announced, it came as a surprise when HS2 Ltd registered a holding objection with the planning authority.

The company was concerned that the site would have an impact on them building and operating the railway but Paul Taylor, MD of Taylor Business Park, contacted HS2 to see if they would be willing to negotiate some sort of agreement.

"We asked them if they'd reconsider their position as Wild Wings are well aware that the high speed line is coming and the last thing they want is to be flying birds near a high speed train line, or being around when the noise of the construction starts in the area. We assured them that this is a temporary solution for Wild Wings to give them around four or five years to get set up here, start to earn money so they can look after the birds again (which they can't do at their current location), and at the same time look for a new site to set up in as a permanent home which is proving very hard to find."

"I'm very happy to report that HS2 Ltd have not only lifted their objection but have also provided wording that allows them to continue to remain there should the rail project be delayed. They

will provide a date to give them a suitable period of notice which leaves everyone in a position where they can get on with their business. It seems clear that the best way of dealing with planning issues created by HS2 is to communicate with them directly as I'm very glad to say that they do indeed appear to be treating all applications on a case by case basis and applying logic and consideration to their decisions.

"Croft Parish Council have objected on the grounds that they believe that an "industrial estate" isn't a suitable site for a wild bird sanctuary. I'll be contacting them to make them aware that we are in fact a business park with very low levels of noise and disruption and the temporary site is not based in the existing business park, but on fields to the side which is evident from the planning documents.

"Hopefully they will have removed their objection by the time this goes to print, and give their blessing to allow a fantastic not for profit business to carry on their good work and hopefully bring visitors to the area which will help other businesses in the village. As I've said before I firmly believe Wild Wings would be a great asset to the village and it's about time they had some good news!"



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Lottery grant will refurbish play area

CULCHETH Primary School has been awarded a Big Lottery Grant to refurbish their outdoor provision for the Reception class.

The funding has bought a mud kitchen, a water wall with pumps and pulleys, a large play house with mirrors, a sand box, seating and some writing and play equipment.

The redeveloped area will be shared with Culcheth Day Nursery and local voluntary groups. There are also plans to open the area at weekends for the benefit of the whole community.

Head teacher Mrs Amanda Dodd said, "We place a great emphasis on early learning through play and this area will help us to provide high quality learning experiences"

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Councillors target fly tipping

FLY-tipping continues to be a problem in the Culcheth area – and local councillors have taken action to try and solve it.

The "Look of our Villages" team set up by Conservative members of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council targeted a serious case of tipping on a disused car park off Church Lane.



A large number of items were dumped there, including a mattress, child's buggy, television, Christmas tree, vacuum cleaner and general rubbish.

Nearby residents contacted the team - councillors Keith and Sue Bland, Val Allen and Ileyne Hutchinson who made arrangements for the rubbish removed.

Cllr Sue Bland (left) said: "There is a considerable amount and it is an eyesore to anyone passing.

"This is unacceptable dumping of waste on what is private land but in full view of anyone passing.

"I will be contacting the landowners and if necessary Warrington Borough Council to have this rubbish removed as a matter of urgency and have them monitor the site for any future fly tipping".



Speeding, litter, the environment – the issues that worry residents

SPEEDING traffic, the environment and litter – all issues that have been raised by residents of Newchurch ward, Culcheth at a series of consultation events held by local councillor Margaret Webber.

The events were held to help ensure residents' concerns are prioritised as part of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council's forward planning.

Cllr Webber said speeding traffic was a worry for many residents - particularly for the elderly and parents with young families.

She said: "In many parts of Newchurch, speeding is a serious problem. Areas like Newchurch Lane and Hampson Avenue are

being used as a 'rat run' to avoid the village centre, and parents are rightly concerned about the safety of children and young people.

"That is why the parish council is working with partner agencies to follow up on residents' suggestions of a speed camera or better speed signage at the worst-affected locations.

"The issues are very similar on Warrington Road, where speeding continues in spite of the existing restrictions.

"Residents have suggested that there should be a 20mph restriction and a speed bump on the main road south of the school in order to slow the traffic appropriately

before the crossing.

"Elsewhere in Newchurch, we are working with the borough council on behalf of households on Downham Avenue to ensure overgrown chestnut trees are properly maintained. And we have taken up the cause of residents who live in sheltered accommodation at Chatburn Court.

"Here, the 20mph sign at the entrance suggests it is a through route when in fact it is a cul-de-sac. Lorries often use this entrance to turn round, when it is in fact totally unsuitable."

Parish council chairman Cllr Joan Grime, who is also a borough councillor, said: "From the work

our parish councillors do to improve our village environment, to the borough council's delivery of significant projects like refurbishing Shaw Street Recreation Ground, or our local MP Helen Jones fighting for residents affected by HS2 in Parliament, all of our efforts help to ensure that our community is a welcoming and inviting place to live, with a strong local economy and good employment opportunities."

Councillors have arranged a litter pick on Shaw Street playing fields in the coming weeks, led by Cllr Jacqui Johnson.



Cllrs Webber and Grime ready to start litter picking.

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Warrington 2021 City of Culture



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New heritage hub planned

The competition, which happens every four years, was started after Liverpool's successful European Capital of Culture and is designed to build on the successful regeneration that

Liverpool achieved. Despite the title, you don't have to be a city to enter.

Warrington-based, award-winning TV Producer, Ken Horn said: "Whatever you think of culture in Warrington right now, this is a great opportunity to accelerate existing cultural plans and to put Warrington on the map for the right reasons.



Town centre investment of more than £100m by 2021

Win or lose, there will be a benefit to Warrington by just being part of the process. I'm proud to be backing the bid and the support so far has been brilliant."

Hull is the UK City of Culture for 2017 and has already brought in more than £32m of additional investment as a result, with an overall economic impact of more than £60m being projected by the end of the year. If Warrington was to be successful it could expect to see similar benefits.

Back the bid!



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New Jurassic ad

BENTS Garden and Home have confirmed details of its latest family-friendly Jurassic attraction.

Plans for a crazy-golf course have now been approved and pave the way for dinosaurs to descend on Bents, creating a Jurassic adventure at the Glazebury based centre.

The new family focussed attraction will appeal to all ages, placing golfers in the midst of an ancient world where dinosaurs roam free and 'Jurassic' planting

dominates the landscape! Players will make their way round a nine-hole course surrounded by spectacular life-sized animatronic and static dinosaurs.

Matthew Bent, Managing Director at Bents Garden & Home said: "We've always looking for opportunities to enhance the Bents' experience and increase our



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venture at Bents

appeal as a complete day out. We hope our new attraction will be the perfect place for all members of the family to relax and have fun together.

The fun officially starts in April when the new experience can be appreciated by the whole family no matter what their age or golfing skill. Visitors will also be able to enjoy refreshments as plans also include a new adventure themed

café selling a range of hot and cold drinks, sandwiches and Bents' homebakes.

Prices start at £3.00 per round for mini explorers (under 4), £4.00 per round for Junior Explorers (4 – 11) and £4.90 for Explorers age 12 and over. Family tickets are also available and all children under 12 must be accompanied by one playing adult.



The Gardening Guide APRIL



“Spring fertiliser can be applied to your lawn, but remember to water it in if there’s no rain”

Lynne Roe, Garden Care Team Leader

- Spring vegetables such as peas, beans and lettuce seeds can be sown now
- Try spring cleaning your houseplants; remove spent flowers, dead leaves and rinse the dust from the leaves with a sprayer as clean leaves allow the plant to breathe!
- Plant up hanging baskets with fuchsias and other basket plants and then hang them up in your greenhouse to establish
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More than 100 turn up for 'save our library' meeting

MORE than 100 people from Culcheth and district turned up for a "Save our Library" meeting organised by local councillors and the Friends of Culcheth Library group.

The meeting – designed to update the community on the efforts of the local library working group, recruit new ideas and gather input from library users – was hailed as a victory by its organisers.

But a warning was sounded by Cllr Matt Smith that although progress had been made on securing the future of libraries across Warrington, Culcheth Library could not be considered "saved."

The meeting was attended by members of both Culcheth and Glazebury and Croft parish councils, to allow as many people as possible to put forward their suggestions, ideas and expertise about how the community could ensure the library remained open, well-used and sustainable in the long term.

An overview of the work of the Friends group so far was given along with details of the discussions that have been held with representatives from LiveWire and Warrington Borough Council.

During the meeting, a poll was conducted to test the public response to LiveWire's proposals that the library be moved to the High School site, further up Warrington Road. It was clear from resident feedback that councillors and the Friends group had been right to oppose this plan as there was no appetite by users to access the site on Culcheth Campus.

Cllr Joan Grime said: "Residents in Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft are resolute that we wish to retain our library at its current location. The purpose of this meeting, and the work of the Friends group going forward, will be about working to secure partner organisations to co-

habit the site, to increase use and bring in revenue which will help us sustain this valuable service in the long term."

Cllr Smith said: "The meeting was extremely positive, and allowed both an opportunity for the working group to feed back on the progress we have made so far, as well as collect ideas and input from a wide range of people throughout our community about what they would like to see provided in their local library. There was certainly no shortage of ideas! Although there is a restrictive covenant on the land, we have started from the position that 'no idea is off the table' and we are now collating all the suggestions we have had to see which can be pursued, and how local businesses and community groups can get involved."

Cllr Jan Davidson said: "A crucial part of our efforts to save the library here in Culcheth is securing the funding that is needed to carry out repairs to the building, so that it is made fit for purpose, and remains an inviting place for people to work and enjoy reading. We are determined to secure this commitment from the council and we are working alongside Helen Jones MP to lobby the council chief executive to put forward a business plan which would give our community the investment it deserves."

Paul Taylor, local resident and board member of LiveWire who was present at the meeting added: "It was a very well attended meeting. It was great to see so many people who were passionate about our local library. There are however two major hurdles that the council's new working group will need to overcome:

"Firstly there are substantial repairs that need to be made to the building that are the responsibility of the borough council and they would need to commit to funding these in order to keep the library fit for purpose (figures ranging from £40,000 to £150,000 were mentioned at the meeting), and crucially there would need to be an agreement reached to relax the covenant that states that only statutory services can operate from the building.

"Hopefully a change of wording for the covenant can be put to the trustees at the Co-op that will allow a way of raising revenue at the library, while still making sure that the property can't just be rented out or sold off to a retailer or restaurant in the future, that will allow it to become more sustainable like proposals we've seen put forward at other libraries in the borough."



All systems go for Winwick Carnival

PLANS this year's Winwick Carnival are well underway and the new carnival committee are hopeful it will be one of the best yet.

The carnival will take place on Saturday, July 15 after fears at one time that last year's would be the last if new committee members could not be found.

Winwick Carnival Committee Chair, Cllr Cathy Mitchell said: "The committee started work on this year's carnival shortly after the last one ended!

"We are now at the stage of putting our programme together and so are looking for local businesses to advertise for as little as £25 –

it's a great way of showing your business' support for the Winwick community. We are also looking for prizes for our raffle.

Last but not least, we need volunteers who are willing to help out on the day (15th), setting up the day before (14th) or clearing the field the day after (16th). If you can

lend a hand on any of those days, we'd be delighted to hear from you, so please feel free to get in touch!"

Bookings are now being taken for stalls. Please call Cathy on 07815 550157 or email info@winwickcarnival.co.uk if you can help.



CULCHETH & GLAZEBURY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Your Parish Councillors

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Jacqui Johnson
01925 763435



Margaret Webber
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Anne Roberts
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Joan Grime
01925 763631

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Peter Holmes
Pdholmes@gmail.com



Keith Bland
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Sue Bland
01925 766641



Valerie Allen
01925 767274



Illeyne Hutchinson
01925 765131

HS2

The HS2 information event at Culcheth Sports Club on February 24th was well attended. Since then we have commented on two consultations. The first was to support the removal of the Rolling Stock Depot at Golborne. The depot would have brought late night trains through our villages as well as being an argument for the Golborne link, which we continue to argue against. The second concerned the package of assistance and compensation which we argued should be widened, particularly where the HS2 route crosses other transport routes.

Environmental surveys should be happening along the route now, with engineers going on site towards the end of the year. We are collecting information about problems on the route: please let us know if you have any information, particularly from when the M62 was built.

Culcheth Library

On 8th March a "Save our library" meeting was held at the library organised by the existing library working party formed from councillors and residents. After an update on what had happened so far a very useful discussion followed. If you couldn't attend the meeting and wish to give support and suggestions join the "Friends of Culcheth Library" on their Facebook page or contact one of your councillors.

Community Day, Monday May 1st on Culcheth Village Green

Plans are in place for a full programme of entertainment, displays and charity stalls.

If the green isn't suitable the venue will be changed to Shaw Street Recreation Ground. (not the pitches). Information on Community Day will be in the press, on notice boards, on flyers delivered to your home and on Facebook. If anyone would like to set up their stall to raise funds for their organisation contact Sue Bland on 01925 766641 or Ben Allred on email: ben.allred2016@protonmail.com

The Parish Precept

The precept for 2017/18 has been raised by an extra £10.54, ie just over an extra 20p per week for band D. This is an increase in what was a historically low base compared with other Parishes. We have had one of the lowest precepts in the whole of Warrington for very many years. Even with this present increase the actual precept is still less than roughly half of the other Parishes.

The increase enables us to have, for example, more speed indicator devices, pay HS2 legal fees, and have a contingency fund for the Green drainage. Our accountant also says we have to keep a reserve of 25% of income. Since then it has emerged that the way we pay towards our PCSO may change, plus in May the next stage of the local plan process comes out and we will need professional representation at some point given that there will be a reassessment of Green Belt boundaries. For more details visit the Parish website www.culchethandglazebury.org.uk

Joint meeting with Croft Parish Council

There are many issues today which affect the whole ward of Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft. HS2, library provision, policing and proposals outside our ward which will affect us - for example through increased traffic. We have had one meeting, found it useful and will be meeting regularly.

Our Parish website is www.culchethandglazebury.org.uk

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Their Raw Food Nutriment which gets a 5 out of 5 star rating has quickly become a favourite with their customers and they keep in stock around 400kgs to keep dogs fed and happy on the BARF diet. Also in stock is DAF & Natures Menu alongside lots of RAW Treats.

They have a wide range of toys including Kong to entertain your pets and grooming accessories,

shampoos, flea treatments are all available.

For Wild Birds they sell a varied amount of feeders and best quality seeds, these include a general 16 seed mix, peanuts, nyger, sunflower hearts, no grow, black sunflower, fat balls, half coconuts etc.

All their prices are very competitive and they also offer a Free Local Delivery Service (terms apply) and a Loyalty Card.

Their motto is if its not in stock they will endeavour to get it in for you and they have access to over 30,000 pet products.

Please find them on Facebook- Animal Kingdom Warrington Pet Supplies and Raw Food Specialist, Twitter or visit Website www.animalkingdomwarrington.co.uk

Also look out for their newly opened shop inside Wags Doggy Day Care on Taylor Business Park, Risley, Warrington.



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Celebrate Bents anniversary with a prize giveaway

BENTS Garden and Home in Warrington is celebrating its 80th anniversary with a number of seasonal surprises which started with a prize giveaway on Tuesday March 21 - the 80th day of 2017.

Continuing with the theme, Bents have planned 80 surprise envelopes for customers to choose from.

Prizes contained within the envelopes include a selection of 80th anniversary products, gift cards and one Bents Voucher worth £80, but customers are advised to choose carefully as not every one is a winner! The 80th Day Giveaway will be located in Bents' Outdoor Living Department and will continue until all envelopes have been claimed.

Once the 80th Day is over it's all about spring and a visit from BBC Gardener's World presenter, Adam Frost. The award winning garden designer will be Bents'

special guest on Sunday April 2 as part of the Centre's Get Gardening Weekend.

Customers visiting Bents throughout its Get Gardening Weekend - on Saturday 1 and Sunday 2 April - will enjoy a host of early season offers, discover top garden care tips from the experts at Westland and be inspired members will have the chance to enter a prize draw to win 2 tickets to Chelsea Flower Show on Friday May 26, worth £126.00.

Bents' own team of horticultural experts will also be on hand throughout the weekend to share their knowledge of plants and suggest unique garden design solutions which will transform any

outdoor living space.

Bents' 80th Day and Get Gardening events are just the start of a more extensive calendar of events and random acts of kindness planned for the year, all anchored by a spectacular summer garden party planned for the weekend of July 7-9.

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

* Sign up to Bents' be inspired privilege club can be carried out in store or at www.bents.co.uk/be-inspired/1821/



Councillors seek to end pothole problem

POTHOLES are again blighting roads at Culcheth - and members of the "Look of our Villages" team on the parish council have been out and about noting where they are and reporting them to the borough council.

Cllr Ileyne Hutchinson (pictured) said: "As we come out of winter, the problem arises across the borough and our roads in Culcheth and Glazebury are no exception.

"Wherever we become aware of the issue we will report it, but we also advise residents to notify the borough if potholes are a problem in their roads."

The team have also been looking at parking problems and street lighting.

Cllr Hutchinson was approached by residents of Thames Road and Bollin Close with complaints about broken street lamps.

As a result she raised the issue with borough council officers.

"The lighting on Thames Road required some major work and the job needed some time spent on it, but I am glad to report the work has been completed and residents now

have working streets again."

Councillors are also searching for a solution to the problems of inconsiderate parking in Ellesmere Road, which they say are causing road safety hazards for road users and pedestrians.

Anyone wanting help from the "Look of the Villages" team can contact them by emailing wnconservatives.org.uk



Bungalow to make way for house

PLANNING chiefs have given the green light to proposals to demolish a bungalow in Wellfield Road, Culcheth - and replace it with a taller, larger, dorma-style house.

The scheme was opposed by Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council on the grounds the new property would not fit in with the street scene because of its height.

But they were also concerned at proposed parking provision on site which they believed inadequate and likely to lead to obstructive parking in Marton Close.

Three objections were also received from neighbours who felt the proposed dwelling would be a house, not a bungalow, and would be overbearing and out of keeping with the character of the area.

However, planning officers recommended the scheme be approved. They said although the new building would be higher than neighbouring properties, it would still fit into the character of the street as existing properties had varying heights and designed.

They also felt the parking arrangements would be satisfactory.

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Young gymnasts flying out to Norway to compete in World Gym for Life challenge

CULCHETH'S GR8 gymnastics club are off to Norway in July for the World Gym for Life challenge - one of only four gymnastics clubs taking part from Great Britain.

They will compete against squads from across the world and take part in training sessions over four days at the Oslofjord Convention Centre.

The club is currently doing fundraising activities, tuck shops, raffles, social evenings, family zumba sessions and are still looking for any help to raise some

money for the trip.

Anyone who would like to help through sponsorship or donations should contact Shelley on 07595 338502.

GR8 Gymnastics Club trains out of Culcheth High School. Training takes place on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays with adult gym on

Friday evening. All ages from school age up and all abilities are welcome. The club holds internal competitions and attend external competitions against other local clubs.

For the third year running the squad have attended the Gymfusion event which takes place at the Lowry Theatre and recently travelled to Derby to take place in the Trix Academy Gym Challenge.

Church plans events for Easter

CULCHETH Methodist Church has a number of special services to mark the Easter weekend - one of the most significant events in the Christian calendar.

On Palm Sunday (April 9) there will be Morning Worship at 9.45am, with Junior Church, and Evening Service at 6.30pm.

Good Friday (April 14) will see a service held at 10am in the church, after which the congregation will meet up with congregations from the other churches in the village at Culcheth Christian Fellowship, to take part in a walk of witness to the centre of the village, followed

by a Churches Together vigil through Good Friday and Easter Saturday outside Sainsburys.

On Easter Sunday (April 16) breakfast will be available (including eggs) from 9am. The celebratory Easter Sunday service will begin at 10am, and will be followed by a walk around the village. An evening service of praise will be held at 6.30pm.

More details are available from the Rev Andrew Bradley on 01925 763218 or email andrew.bradley@methodist.org.uk or see the website www.leighandhindley.org.uk

Fiona puts WI in the picture

PROFESSIONAL photographer Fiona Lea was the guest speaker at the monthly meeting of Croft WI.

She became interested in photography as a teenager taking pictures of varied subjects including people, landscapes, wild life etc., but ultimately she became enthralled with the beauty of plants and gardens, eventually taking many specialised studies for National Garden Schemes open days. Fiona's work is now highly prized and she sells her images to a publishing company who forward them on to major gardening magazines both nationally and internationally.

Fiona explained the many "tricks of the trade", including the use of light, contrast and backgrounds and members were treated to a presentation illustrating her work in both large and small gardens around the North West. An enthusiastic vote of thanks was

given by Jill Hillam for a stunning presentation.

The competition "A Vintage Garden Implement" was won by Bettina Sharpe, with Sue Hamer second and Margaret O'Leary third.

Long-standing member Jean Entwistle, who recently celebrated her 90th birthday was presented with a card and bouquet by president Anne Lamming.

Croft WI will be holding an Easter Coffee Morning at the Youth Centre, Smithy Lane, Croft on Tuesday April 11 from 10.00am to 12.00pm. Funds raised will be donated to Croft Memorial Hall to improve audio and visual technology systems. Entry will be £2 and home-made cakes, sausage rolls, tea/coffee will be served and there will also be a raffle and Easter Bonnet competition. An activity corner will be provided for young children.

Newchurch WI's 58th birthday

President Doreen Procter welcomed members and four visitors to the 58th birthday meeting of Newchurch WI.

She also read out a long list of March "Birthday Girls" and Helen Slattery donated a festive bunch of roses to suit the occasion.

Coming events included Mosslands' fashion evening at Bents' on April 4, Croft WI's coffee morning on April, Newchurch's trip to the ballet on April 19 and osteoporosis testing in the parish hall on April 20. Doreen thanked Kathleen Manning for bringing leaflets about falls and how to lessen the damage they could cause. She announced Marjorie Pugh's new Information Cascade system, soon to have a trial run and also suggested a revival of Newchurch's Christmas trip to Chester.

The evening's speaker, Cynthia Gent, revived her own memories of two trips to China, first in 1991 and then in 2011. She went with five friends, all Guiders, who used little coolie hats and huge costume

rings as their holiday "uniform". Her talk was illustrated by many beautiful slides showing cities and countryside and a long trip down the Yangtze River. The Great Wall, the Terracotta Warriors, the Forbidden City in Beijing and Mao's Tomb all featured but so did air pollution and severe traffic congestion caused by the huge modernisation in 20 years. Some living conditions had improved and there was great wealth for a few but Cynthia could see many problems still.

She was very sorry that the 2008 Olympic Stadium was not being used. Eileen Griffiths gave the vote of thanks and Cynthia judged the competition (A Holiday Memento). Winner was Marjorie Pugh, with Kath Ellison and Margaret Harrop coming second and third. The meeting closed with tea and birthday cake served by Barbara Allred and Shirley Boyfield.

Church launches Christmas tree fund

VILLAGERS at Winwick have launched a fund to raise money for an environment-friendly reusable Christmas tree outside the 700-year-old St Oswald's Church.

They want a 15ft tree, with low energy LED lights, outside the church next Christmas – and for many years to come.

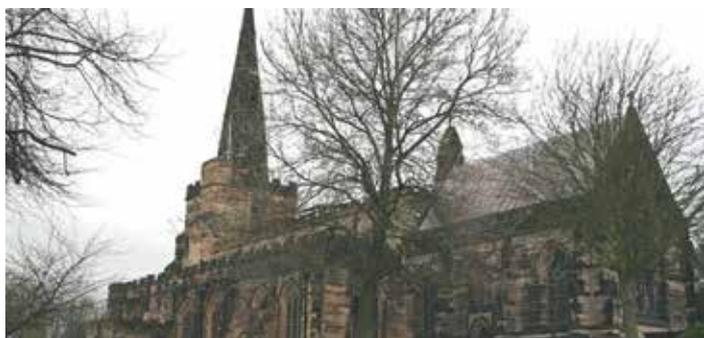
The Grade 1 listed church has been undergoing essential restoration work for several years but the scaffolding and covers are due to be removed early this summer.

But with the restoration work itself costing more than £800,000 more fund-raising is needed to provide the tree.

Local parish council funding for none essential items such as Christmas events has been dramatically cut in recent years meaning there is very little available for a new tree.

The fundraising group have planned a number of events across the year, such as themed evenings at Winwick Leisure centre, a stall selling cream teas and scones at Winwick carnival in July, sponsored walks, discos, raffles/tombola's, school events, and many more.

Anyone interested in helping should email savewinwickschristmas@gmail.com for more information or visit www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/savewinwickschristmas



Bungalow extension plan approved

PLANNING chiefs have given the go-ahead for a flat-roofed dormer extension at the rear of a bungalow in Wellfield Road, Culcheth.

The extension, along with refurbishment of the loft space, will result in two bedrooms, each with an en suite, within the roof space.

Members of the borough council's development management committee were told the development would see the introduction of two rear windows serving bedrooms and two windows serving the en suites. But planning officers said the windows would not result in any loss of privacy for neighbours.

The property was in an area characterised by detached bungalows, some of which had dormers to the front and rear and the proposals would not result in any harm to the character of the area.

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Landlords... get set for a rocky road!



Article written by Victoria Barlow
Head of Courtyard Homes

If you haven't heard already, the buy to let sector is set for its second 'shake up' in less than 12 months.

Yes, that's right – not only have YOU, the landlord been faced with a hike in stamp duty for any additional home, from April 2017, the government is set to reduce the amount of mortgage relief you receive, so if you are a high tax earner, you are about to get a shock. Here are the facts...

Stamp duty, this now literally 'stamps all over your investment'

You now pay 3% additional stamp duty on your purchase if it is a second home.

Example:

A buy to let property at £250,000 saw stamp duty increase from £2,500 to £10,000 and for properties over £400,000 the amount more than doubles from £10,000 to £22,000.

Remember:

Any second home purchase, 'buy to let' or not will be subject to the additional 3% stamp duty hike! So, before you go buying your holiday home by the sea, stop and calculate as it may cost more than you think.

However, if a home you are buying replaces your main residence i.e. you sell your existing main residence to buy your next one, you will not be liable for the 3% surcharge.

If you need to buy a main residence before selling your last

one, the surcharge will apply initially, but HRMC will make a full refund up to 36 months from completion of the purchase.

Mortgage 'relief' – more anxiety than relief for landlords

Currently, landlords can claim relief of up to 45% on residential 'buy to let' properties, but this is set to reduce to 20%.

Example:

Buy to let purchase price of £200,000
Buy to let mortgage £150,000
Rent on buy to let £800pcm

Profit:

Previously	After changes
£2,160 per year	£960 per year

So, what's the point?

Well, for some of you the financial impact maybe too great, with the best option being to cut your losses and sell up, BUT before you do, THINK! ...

Property may still be the first choice for your savings as banks keep interest rates low for ISA's and high savings accounts, so your money maybe no better off. Once you sell your investment property or property portfolio off, then the question is, what do you do with that money? Food for thought indeed!

If you require further information please contact us - our team will be more than happy to assist.

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