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Issue 203 February 2018 FREE

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How to avoid the mid-life savings crisis

Recent research has revealed that almost one in five people (18%) in their 50s and 60s are failing to save anything towards their retirement thanks to the rising cost of living and stalling wage growth. Described as a 'mid-life savings crisis', it means that millions of people close to retirement age are unaware of how much they will need to pay into their pension pot in order to live comfortably once they finish working.

More than half of people in their 60s have not increased the payments they make into their pension in the final years before retirement, a figure which increases to 64% when looking at people in their 50s. Inflation in the UK has reached its highest rate in nearly six years at 3.1%, whilst the average weekly pay packet is growing at only 2.2%, making it increasingly more difficult to cover household costs and put money away for the future.

As a result of the added squeeze on their finances, one in four people said that since reaching their 50s they have been choosing to spend less money in order to put more away for when they retire. Around one in six of these people do this due to moving from full-time to part-time work or reducing their contractual hours, which has resulted in their income being reduced. One in ten people also said that they now spend

more money than they did before turning 50, explaining that they like to splash out on family members including children, grandchildren and elderly parents.

For anyone over 50 finding themselves in a mid-life savings crisis, the first step is not to resign yourself to thinking that it's too late to do anything about it. Whilst you don't have the opportunity to grow your savings in the same way as someone at the start of their working life, starting to put money away each month, as soon as possible, is essential. Making the most of your employer's additional contributions will also help. As employers will often match whatever you put in, contributing more of your monthly salary will mean your employer will pay in more too.

If you're a homeowner over 50, another option to increase your pension pot is releasing some of the equity in your property through downsizing. Whilst it might be an emotionally difficult decision to move from your family home, it can be something worth exploring to provide a healthy boost to your retirement savings and ensure you can comfortably enjoy your life after work.

Disclaimer: None of the above article constitutes advice.



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Editor's comment

THE news that villages south of the Manchester Ship Canal are to receive an improved bus service in the near future is welcome.

Full details are not yet available, so we cannot either approve or disapprove of the new Cheshire Cat service to be provided by bus company Network Warrington. But any improvement is welcome – and first impressions are favourable.

A public roadshow is to be held at the Sandy Lane Community Centre, Stockton Heath, on Wednesday, February 28 and this is clearly a date everyone should put in their diary. The more people who turn up and the more ideas they put forward, the better the new service is likely to be.

Conversely, if hardly anyone shows up, we can't blame the bus company if they decide they don't need to make too many improvements!

In fact, of course, the Cheshire Cat network could be vital in the years to come if the thousands of new houses planned for Appleton, Grappenhall and Walton are built. The houses will bring thousands of cars, but if there is a good local bus service, the new residents might be persuaded to leave them at home and use public transport. Particularly if, as we fear, local roads become gridlocked with traffic.

Local parish councils are aware of the likely problems and have already agreed to work together to oppose the Local Plan. They each have their own concerns – Stockton Heath will be worried about traffic problems while

Appleton, Walton and Grappenhall and Thelwall may be more concerned about the number of houses being built on green fields.

But if they can all speak with one voice, their views are more likely to be heeded by the planners.

We would expect the parish councils to visit the Cheshire Cat roadshow to try and influence the bus service improvements.

But we would hope ordinary members of the public will turn up too. We have said it once, but it is worth repeating: Put February 28 in your diary and turn up at the Sandy Lane centre.

Appleton Thorn is one of the smallest villages in the Warrington area – but as developers Bloor Homes have discovered, it punches above its weight.

Which is why, more than three years after first trying to woo villagers into accepting their plans for 78 houses on a green field site in the village centre, they are still trying to get planning permission.

A key reason for their failure, so far, to do so, has been the opposition mounted by local group CARE – Campaign Against Ruining our Environment.

The company hasn't given up. They have reduced the number of properties to 74 and changed some from houses to bungalows. But they still haven't persuaded the residents who are as resolutely opposed to development as



they were at the start. They want that green space preserved for the benefit of future generations.

Just who will win the battle we cannot pretend to know. But the residents have shown that big business does not always get all its own way – and that is something that is comforting to know at a time when the South Warrington area is facing up to what could be the biggest ever "invasion" by developers.

Let us hope other residents will show the same resolve as those in Appleton Thorn.

Deadline for the March issue of Village Life is February 13

Former student wows judges on The Voice UK

A FORMER Bridgewater High School and Priestley College student from Appleton gave the biggest performance of her life when she sang on the stage of The Voice UK.

Chloe Jones was one of the first singers to audition on the ITV show when it returned for a new run in

front of new judge Olly Murs, who joined returning mentors Sir Tom Jones, Will.I.am and Jennifer Hudson on the talent show.

The 22-year-old, who works in Manchester as a barista in a coffee shop, impressed the judges with her version of Corinne Bailey Rae's "Just Like A Star".

Chloe chose Sir Tom Jones to be her mentor to take her forward in to the next stage of the show, with him turning his chair within a few moments of her singing her song.

Others to turn their chairs were Will.i.am and Olly Murs.

Will.i.am said "You've done Warrington Proud."



Popular Dingle Farm Tea Room set to close

THE popular Dingle Farm Tea Room at Appleton, is set to close at the end of January following a decision not to renew the lease.

Tea room owner and manger Jane Bilton posted on facebook: "It is with a heavy heart we announce that from 29th January 2018 the tea room will no longer be open to the public. The farm house will be converted back into a dwelling like it originally was.

"We would like to take the opportunity to thank all our customers for all your support over the last six years and in making our tea room so special. You have been wonderful!

"We are very sad to see it go, but we are thankful to have had a fantastic time and achieved a great deal over the years. We couldn't have hoped for more!

"This will not affect bookings up to this date."

Jane says the lease on the tea room which she has run for over six years has not been renewed and the property will be returning to a family farmhouse.

"There was no opportunity to renew the lease and it was only right that I let people know. It is a sad time."

Jane says she will continue to carry on her work as a pet portrait artist.

"We have helped raise a lot of money for charity over the years and I would like to thank all our loyal customers for their support over the years."

Jane says she doesn't know if the gardens will re-open in the future as part of the National Gardens charity scheme.



Cheshire Cat – a new local bus service

A PUBLIC roadshow will be held at Stockton Heath's Sandy Lane Community Centre on Wednesday, February 28 to highlight widespread improvements to bus services in South Warrington.

Bus company Network Warrington is to introduce the Cheshire Cat – a newly branded network that will service the area south of the Ship Canal, starting later this year.

The changes will see buses in the south network simplified, improved

and will also see the introduction of a new, cutting-edge bus fleet.

Cheshire Cat branded buses will include the latest transport essentials, including WiFi, skylights, extra leg room, comfy seats and USB charging points.

Network Warrington managing director Ben Wakerley said: "I'm pleased that we're making big improvements to the south network that will hopefully have our customers purring. These are truly buses to be seen on!

"This latest round of improvements follow our Dallam discount, hospital frequency increase, Pops network and '£1.70 to Westy' initiatives, and I can't wait to unveil this further improvement.

"We will be introducing 13 new vehicles onto the Cheshire Cat network to ensure that our fleet remains modern, fit for purpose and achieves improvements for the environment."

Cllr Ian Marks, Lymm North & Thelwall, was pleased about the

prospect of network improvements, adding: "I'm looking forward to seeing the positive changes delivered by Network Warrington and the proposed routing, giving better connections."

The improvements will be announced in full at the roadshow which will also give residents the chance to comment on the service changes before they are officially confirmed.

For more information, visit networkwarrington.co.uk, call 01925 634296 or follow @WarringtonBuses.



Advertiser's announcement

What will 2018 bring?

It's been an amazing year and we want to thank each and every one of you, our loyal clients, for all your fantastic support, we really do appreciate it and we hope you ended 2017 with some wonderful memories!

So what will 2018 bring? Everybody has a wish list – places we have to go to, experiences we are eager to have, countries we want to visit. We are here to assist with all aspects of travel and some of these ideas are ranked as the most spellbinding travel experiences in the world – Wildlife encounters, Unesco World Heritage Sites and the most romantic mode of travel – by train. You can spot the big five on a South African Safari, Find your spiritual side at Machu Picchu, Wildlife spot on an Antarctic Cruise, Dive at the Great Barrier Reef (the world's largest living structure and the coral is visible from outer space!). Gorilla trekking in Rwanda or Uganda is such an amazing experience. You could be stood just metres from a Silverback surrounded by his tribe, watchful mums and playful babies. Discover the power and beauty of Iguazu Falls, which is four times wider than Niagara. The most magical natural experience would be the sight of the Northern lights in Norway – in winter you need to maximise your chances by going as far north as you can. Travel on the Venice Simplon Orient Express with all its art deco elegance (erase the memory of every bad commute!); plus we have a long list of day trips on the Northern Belle where the trains depart

from Liverpool, Manchester and even Warrington! For those of you who do not fly then we are able to offer Mainland Europe by Rail. There is no time wasting in airports, just bag a window seat and let the train take the strain while the continent unfolds before you. Perhaps Cruising is your holiday of choice? We can access all the Ocean and River Cruising Operators. If the large ships do not excite you then remember the ocean cruises take you TO the country, river cruises will take you THROUGH the country!

If this list has left you wanting to explore; you know where we are! It does not matter how large or small your travel plans are we can assist. Being the UK's largest Independent Agent gives us the ability to search numerous Operators to find the best price. We shop around so you don't have to! Please remember to call in or phone to speak to a member of our experienced team. We believe in the personal touch and strive to offer this to all our clients.

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Village hall prepares for new life – and children leave messages for the future

CHILDREN have left messages for future generations as part of a major scheme to refurbish a village hall.

The youngsters at Whitley Community Preschool have written messages and their names on the back of tiles being used to re-roof Whitley Village Hall.

They won't be seen again until at least 2050 – and hopefully even later.

Eight weeks into the restoration project, the village hall has been transformed – thanks to contractors Urban Building Projects, a good spell of weather and some great work by the local team.

Most of the external work has now been completed and attention has now switched to the inside.

During the whole process the preschool has been camped in the unaffected part of the building, waiting for their new home to be completed.

Carl Palmer, managing director of Urban, was keen to minimise the impact on the preschool and the wider community.

The "roof slate signing" took place in December, as the new slates replace the old and deteriorating asbestos roof.

The project has been made possible thanks to significant contributions from funding bodies WREN and Biffa Award as well as the local parish councils of Dutton and Whitley.

In addition to the new roof, the main hall and storage areas are being refurbished.

Steve Moore, chairman of Whitley Village Hall Committee, has been

amazed at the pace of the work.

He said: "We have been delighted with the progress made and the way many people in the village have taken time to stop by and see how things are going.

"I have no doubt this project will provide a real boost to the people of Whitley. We are hoping to welcome back our numerous community groups in February ready for the year ahead".

Richard Smith, WREN's grant manager for Cheshire, said: "I think everyone is surprised how well the work has progressed. We are delighted to be supporting this essential project to replace the roof and look forward to it benefitting community groups for years to come".

Gillian French, head of grants at Biffa Award added: "We are delighted at how the work is progressing and the positive engagement with the local community and particularly Whitley Community Preschool. We look forward to the full completion of the work in the weeks to come and being able to visit a modern, safe and welcoming environment for all. It is clear that with Landfill Communities funding we have been able to provide vital support that will ensure this place is well-loved and well-used for many years to come".

Mr Moore said the village hall committee were grateful to key suppliers who had discounted their products and services to help the work progress. Forticrete Ltd and Cheshire Roofing Supplies (roof tiles); and Stelrad Ltd and City Plumbing Ltd (radiators) had all been extremely helpful.



Brothers who made the first-ever walk from John O' Groat's to Land's End

A NEW book from Grappenhall Local History Group casts light on a little known fact – that the first-ever recorded journey from John O' Groat's to Land's End was completed by two Grappenhall brothers.

John and Robert Naylor made the 1,372 mile journey on foot in the Autumn of 1871. It seems they must have made some detours as it should have only been 872.

But there is no doubt they made the journey as they kept detailed notes and, indeed, in old age John wrote a book in memory of his brother, who had died in 1908 and it is this book

on which Grappenhall Local History Group member Ron Phillips has based "The End to End Trail."

John and Robert were born in Grappenhall, the sons of local farmer and coal and slate dealer John Naylor senior.

They lived in Grappenhall they moved to a newly-built house, Cuerden Hall, off Weaste Lane, Thelwall. They later moved to Beeston, driven out by "The Thelwall Nuisance" – a foul smell which invaded the village and was believed to be caused by poor drainage when the Mersey was being diverted as part of the building of the Manchester Ship Canal.

The brothers planned to walk 25 miles a day for six days a week. They did not carry maps and it is not known how they recorded the miles walked, other than from local sign posts. They lingered to sight-see at historic towns and buildings and this could account for the length of their journey.

John Phillips' book contains many photographs of the sights the brothers encountered, although they were not taken at the time, the photographic equipment of the day being too big to carry.

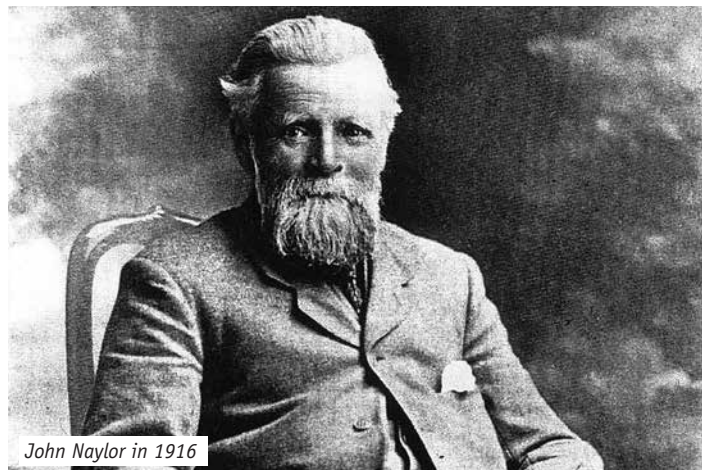
It is recorded that each brother used one pair of boots only for the journey. John's were re-soled twice

but Robert's – specially made by an old cobbler in Warrington – required re-soleing only once.

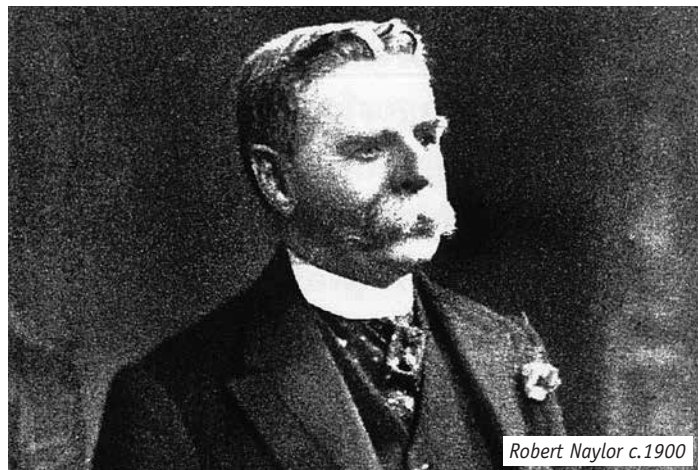
They both carried stout, hardwood sticks, not just as an aid to walking, but as a means of defence should they be set-upon on dark, isolated roads.

"The End to End Trail" makes a fascinating read and reveals much about local history as well as from the various places visited by the brothers on their epic walk.

It can be purchased, at £4.50, from Grappenhall Community Library or by calling 01925 261505.



John Naylor in 1916



Robert Naylor c.1900

Environment plan welcome

CHESHIRE Wildlife Trust has welcomed the publication of the 25-year environment plan announced by Prime Minister Theresa May but says it must turn into actions.

The plan focuses on a number key areas where the Government is aiming to improve the country's resource efficiency, air and water quality, biodiversity and provide ecological restoration. While the plan has strong ambitions for land and sea, Cheshire Wildlife Trust believes that it does not yet offer the detail required to make these actions happen.

"It's fantastic to see the Government recognising how important environmental issues are to people, and the plan makes a good start in shaping the issues that need attention," said Martin Varley, director of conservation at Cheshire Wildlife Trust. "But we are concerned about its lack of legal underpinning and mechanisms for putting these ambitions into practice."

"We are pleased to see a recognition of the need to encourage a love of

wildlife from a young age. In order to protect the landscape we know and love, we must foster a passion in future generations. This is something we are active in at Cheshire Wildlife Trust by offering nature-themed activities to over 4000 children each year.

"We also welcome the appreciation of the link between health and wellbeing and the natural environment. For many years our volunteers have been experiencing the benefits of working with wildlife in mind and we continually receive positive feedback on how this has in turn improved their fitness and mental health.

"Of course it goes without saying that a reduction in the amount of plastic we use as a society, which often escapes into the environment causing further harm, is excellent and we look forward to these measures being put in place.

"There must now be an ambitious Environment Act in the next Queen's Speech, so that this plan becomes more than words and instead becomes direct action."

Creamfields' £2,000 donation to school

CREAM - organisers of the controversial Creamfields music festival held at Daresbury over the August bank holiday weekend - have donated £2,000 to Daresbury Primary School.

The gift - which the school is using to buy ipads for pupils - is one of a number made in recent years in the parishes of Daresbury, Walton, Hatton, Moore and Stretton which all suffer noise and traffic issues during the festival weekend.

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Strictly St Rocco's runner-up says big thank you to supporters

DANCING novice Carl Palmer is still over the moon after coming runner-up in St Rocco's annual Strictly Come Dancing event, helping raise thousands of pounds for the Warrington based charity.

Carl from Hatton, who owns Urban Building projects, was pipped at the post by Chris Downey, General Manager of Catherine Street Motors, but is still delighted after personally raising £13.5k on a just-giving page along with thousands of pounds worth of other donations from family and friends on the night.

"Congratulations to Chris and his dance partner on winning the event but having never danced before I was over the moon to come runner-up," said Carl. "I would like to thank all those kind people, especially my family and friends, who sponsored me."

In total the annual Strictly St. Rocco's event raised a sparkling £60,000 towards patient care at the hospice as 10 amateur dancers took to the floor.

More than 400 guests packed out the James Braid Suite at the Mere Golf Resort and Spa to watch the 10 amateurs take to the floor, accompanied by professional partners from Cadmans

Dance School who helped them to show off their newly acquired dance skills.

As well as putting on a dazzling display of dance the volunteers, all drawn from local Warrington businesses and organisations, were encouraged to raise as much sponsorship as possible towards patient care at St. Rocco's.

This year the audience was able to hear first-hand about the difference that support makes to patients and families when Chris Patino, whose wife was cared for by staff at St. Rocco's last year, spoke about his family's experience. Guests responded generously and over £64,000 was pledged, the highest amount ever for the event.

The dancers had worked incredibly hard and the high standard impressed the judges including Cadman's new Principal, Victoria Bennett, Ralph Casson, Wayne Newhouse and last year's winner, Rob Foden.

All the dancers achieved high scores but it was Chris and his professional partner, Holly Hewitt, who secured four tens for their exhilarating Charleston. It was down to the audience vote, however, combined with the judges' scores, to determine who lifted the coveted glitterball trophy. In the event, the crowd agreed with the judges and Chris and Holly were crowned Strictly St. Rocco's champions 2017, with Carl and his partner Natalie Goodier coming a close second.

"We're over the moon with the response at this year's Strictly St.

Rocco's," said Fundraising Manager Lauren Tilston, "The dancers must be congratulated for their commitment and dedication, not only to learning to dance, but also for the fantastic amount they have raised through their sponsorship efforts. The audience has been incredibly generous and it is wonderful that we have raised more than ever before to help our patients and families. We are so grateful to everyone who has supported us in whatever way for this year's event."

As always, thoughts are already turning towards next year's event so keep an eye out to see who will be in the Strictly St. Rocco's spotlight in 2018!



■ Winner Chris Downey.



■ Carl and dance partner Natalie.

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New planning battle to start over village housing scheme

A NEW planning battle is set to start over controversial housing proposals for Appleton Thorn.

Developers Bloor Homes have submitted plans for 74 homes on land off Stretton Road – just four fewer than their previous proposal which was thrown out by borough planners last June.

The new scheme includes eight bungalows following claims from local people that there is a need for single-storey dwellings in the village.

But the new proposals have done nothing to lessen local opposition to the scheme.

Campaign Against Ruining our Environment (CARE) – the action group set up to oppose the proposals – say the amended scheme does little to compensate the village for the loss of the open, green space the development would require.

CARE Chairman Alan Murray said: "Appleton Thorn villagers are totally opposed to any development in the centre of the village. As expressed in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, this is an historic village, with an individual character, which we are anxious to defend and maintain. That character relies, to a large extent, on the open green space at the heart of the village.

"The latest plan again ignores the need for perpetuating an open

green space. It, as in all the earlier plans, has a narrow grass verge along Stretton Road and a small square of land at the crossroads, dominated by a play area which takes up a third of that area. Villagers deserve, if there must be a development, a far more substantial and useful piece of land stretching from Pepper Street to Arley Road. It would probably require the loss of four or five houses.

This would provide a common: a place to walk and sit, for children to play; which could be used for the Bawming celebrations, as well as other village events such as concerts, drama productions, fetes and other such activities; a true recreational resource for the whole village and the wider community.

The Bloor Homes representatives made much of the consideration they were giving to the residents who live in the bungalows on Chapel Lane. The changes they have made will be of tremendous value to those residents. To allow the retention of much more of the open green space on Stretton Road would be of value to all the residents of Appleton Thorn; and provide some compensation for the loss of the existing Village Field.

With Warrington Borough Council's Local Plan Preferred Development Option and the HCA proposed developments, green space in our Parish is now of even greater value

than when Bloor's last application was being considered. Villagers, who fear being swamped in a potential urban sprawl, look upon the Village Field as an oasis which we will strive to protect."

It is now nearly four years since Bloor Homes first announced the proposals with a series of exhibition designed to show how the scheme would benefit the village.

But despite glossy presentations by a PR team, local residents were not convinced and CARE was set up to oppose the plans. More than 170 residents lodged objections to the original scheme and there is no sign of any change of heart.

Bloor Homes say they are confident their new proposals take into account the feedback they have received from residents.



■ Residents rally to oppose the latest planning application.

Flautist Meera's 5th concert in aid of Foodbank



FLAUTIST Meera Maharaj, 22, is returning to give her fifth concert at St Wilfrid's Church, Grappenhall, in aid of the Warrington Foodbank.

She will be joined by Dominic Degavino to present a flute and piano recital on February 2 at 7:30 pm. They will be performing some of the great flute/piano works including music by Tchaikovsky, Dutilleux, Liebermann and Barber.

Meera has held a concert in aid of the foodbank every year since she started music college and has raised over £4,000 and many crates of grocery donations over the years.

Meera and Dominic are both

Masters students in London and previously studied together at the Royal Northern College of Music.

A rising young star and passionate performer, Dominic is making his mark in many prestigious competitions and was also a BBC Young Musician Keyboard finalist in 2012 while a pupil at Chethams, Manchester.

Meera went to Lymm High School and her family lives locally in Grappenhall. She has also won major competitions in the UK and Europe.

Tickets, priced at £10 to include an interval glass of wine, can be obtained via 077484 25286 or on the door.

Tennis club serves up new plan for floodlights



STOCKTON Heath Tennis Club is making a new bid to win planning consent for floodlights at their Delfhfields Road Road courts.

An application has been submitted to borough planning chiefs – backed up with advice from the Lawn Tennis Association.

The proposal is for floodlighting to five existing tennis courts, new perimeter fencing and conversion of two shale courts to all-weather surfaces.

It would mean all the club's courts had artificial turf all-weather surfaces.

Over the years, the club has made a number of bids for floodlights but planners have rejected them because of the proximity of houses.

The club has shared floodlit courts at nearby Bridgewater High School after contributing to the cost of building them some years ago.

The new proposals have already been discussed with the borough council's environmental protection department.

They have been designed to minimise any impact on nearby residents, with narrow beam distribution that focusses the light on the courts and reduces spillage into the surrounding area.

There would be shields to prevent light spilling into residential areas – and screening is already provided by substantial mature trees.

The club says it has a good relationship with its immediate neighbours and, in the event of any complaints, would take swift action to resolve them.

Money Column

By Margaret Black

VAT on building work

The basic conditions for reduced-rating the conversion of premises to a different residential use.

The contents of this column is in relation to a VAT query we recently received from a client. VAT on building work is a vast and complex subject, we can only outline part of it in this article. If you wish to know more we will be happy to advise.

If you are a VAT registered builder and you carry out work to an existing building you will normally have to charge VAT at the standard rate. However, it may be possible to charge VAT at the reduced rate of 5% if you are converting premises into:

- a 'single household dwelling', a different number of 'single household dwellings',
- a 'multiple occupancy dwelling', or premises intended for use solely for a 'relevant residential purpose'

The remainder of this article explains the detailed conditions which should be met before the reduced-rate can be applied. If you install goods that are not considered to be building materials (such as carpets or fitted bedroom furniture) you must charge standard-rate on the installation.

Your services can be reduced-rated when all of the following conditions are met:

The following table summarises the types of conversion that are 'qualifying conversions'.

- Single household dwelling(s) before conversion, not normally a qualifying conversion unless there is a change in the number of single household dwellings
- A qualifying conversion is carried out when a building or part of a building is converted to either a greater or indeed a lower number (but not less than one) of 'single household dwellings
- The number of 'single household dwellings' in part of the premises is unchanged Work that is unrelated to changing the number of dwellings cannot be reduced-rated. Example below:

A block of flats consists of 4 floors, each with 4 flats. A lift is installed and work is carried out throughout the whole building. On the ground, first and second floors the footprint of each flat is changed to accommodate the new lift. This results in the internal configuration of each flat being changed. On the third floor 3 penthouse flats are created from the original 4. Although the overall number of single household dwellings in the building has changed (there has been a reduction by one unit) only the work to convert the third floor will be eligible for the reduced rate because it is only in this part of the building that the number of dwellings has changed.

As advised at the beginning of this article, VAT to be applied to building works is a huge topic on its own, the content here is just a small extract, if you have any VAT queries on other areas of the building trade please seek advice you will find our contact details below.

WatkinsonBlack have considerable experience in all areas of taxation and business services, including providing a very cost-effective payroll bureau service. If you want to arrange a no-obligation initial meeting on any taxation or accounting matter then please contact us.

Please note that these ideas are intended to inform, however, you should always obtain professional advice before taking any action.

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What's on in the villages

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

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

LIVE AT ST WILFRID'S
Joslin Piano Trio (violin, cello, piano)
Rosa Hartley, Lucy Holte, and Hayley Parkes

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

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

Every Monday
COUNTRY DANCING CLUB
St Thomas' Primary School, Parkgate Road, Stockton Heath.
8-10pm. Details: 01925 262356

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Every third Thursday
NORTH EAST CHESHIRE FLOWER CLUB
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road 2pm
Details: 01925 740419

GRAPPENHALL WI
Grappenhall Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane 2.15pm

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

To list your event call Village Life on
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Garden centre's reindeer raised more than a smile



High Legh Garden Centre's incredible singing reindeer and donkey managed to raise more than a smile over the Christmas period.

The Garden Centre's generous customers kindly donated £1400 in the reindeer collection bucket for Warrington and Halton Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (Intensive Care Unit).

Loft conversion approved – against officers' advice

PLANNING chiefs have approved an application for a loft conversion at a semi-detached house – despite being urged by officers to refuse it.

The proposal involved a house in Burnside Avenue, Stockton Heath and worried members of Stockton Heath Parish Council feared changes to the roof style could impact on the street

scene. But borough councillor Graham Welborn pointed out that all 32 houses in Burnside Avenue had been extended in one way or another and, as a result, the road already had an interesting and varied appearance.

Planning officers said that while there had been many alterations to houses in the road, the roof form in the

majority of cases remained substantially unchanged.

They claimed a change from a hip-style roof to a gable roof would result in a significant and detrimental impact on the property itself but also on the wider street scene.

Similar extensions in the road had involved detached, rather than semi-detached houses.

But members of the borough's development management committee decided the alteration was acceptable and gave the extension the green light.

CCTV protection for historic hall

CCTV cameras look set to be installed at historic Walton Hall to deter vandalism and other criminal activity.

The borough council has submitted proposals for a nine-camera system covering various parts of the hall and estate.

Council chiefs say the cameras will not be detrimental to the historic nature of the building and will provide security for visitors and employees.

A spokesman said: It is considered necessary to increase the CCTV coverage to deter future damage and vandalism to the buildings and help to prevent criminal activities or misuse of the estate, without compromising the historical integrity of the buildings.

"In recent years, vandalism and damage to the buildings have diminished the integrity of the buildings."

Parish councillors wanted at Appleton Thorn

VACANCIES have occurred for two parish councillors to serve the Appleton Thorn ward of Appleton Parish Council.

The vacancies arise from the resignation of former councillors Andy Cross and six-times former chairman Dot Edwards who retired recently after serving on the council for more than 30 years.

They leave the Appleton Thorn ward with no councillor at present.

The council now needs to co-opt two new councillors, no-one having called an election.

Anyone interested should contact the parish clerk, Mrs Joanne Monks, emailing their CV with a brief covering letter to clerk@appletonpc.org.uk by 5pm on Monday, February 26.

Any applications received after this date, cannot be considered

More information about the parish council can be obtained from www.appletonpc.org.uk

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