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Page 8

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CCTV arrives in village

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Editor's Comment



IF ever there was a story to bring the planning system into disrepute, surely it is the continuing saga of the Risley Landfill Site.

After being refused planning consent to continue tipping for a further three years, waste disposal giants Biffa appealed and forced Warrington Borough Council to spend some £75,000 fighting a public inquiry.

The council won – and the company was told it must wind up its

tipping operation according to the original planning consent. Which should have meant they stopped tipping last October.

What happens? The company says it needs more time to complete restoration of the site. How much more time? Why, three years, of course! Two years more for tipping and one year for restoration.

Their application comes before Warrington's development control committee and is approved.

We acknowledge that if the plan which went to the public inquiry had gone ahead it would have involved the loss of valuable farmland which will not be required for the new proposal.

We also fully understand why most

of those who originally fought tooth and nail to stop the tipping withdrew their opposition at the final hurdle. No-one wants the tip left half-finished.

But the company knew from the outset that its planning consent ran out in 2008. It could, and should, have made sure its work was completed by then, including restoration.

Whatever excuse might be put forward to explain why it wasn't, it seems to us that there has been a cynical manipulation of planning regulations to win more time.

Biffa have, apparently, undertaken to be 'good neighbours' during the final three years and to make donations to local good causes.

We hope everyone will keep a keen eye on the situation to make sure they do just that.

'Litter buster' wins high praise

CULCHETH'S new 'litter buster' is winning high praise for his work across the parish.

Community maintenance officer Paul Hill works five hours a day for Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council clearing litter and has made a big impression in a short time.

Coun Keith Bland told the council: "He is really doing a great job. A lot of people have commented on how much better the village is looking.

"The original idea was for him to concentrate on the village centre but he has been going all over the parish. He has made a fantastic difference."

Coun Bland advised fellow councillor to let Mr Hill know whenever they spotted a litter problem.

"He will soon get rid of it – but he obviously needs to be told about any new problems."

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Three generations see award presented

THREE generations of a family travelled to Buckingham Palace to see a Croft woman receive the OBE for services to education and skills.

Merron Mitchell received her award from Prince Charles, The Prince of Wales, at a special ceremony.

Merron, of Betsyfield Drive, Croft, Warrington began her career as a teacher at Croft Primary School in 1970 and, following the birth of her two children Ben and Annick, later began teaching at Risley Prison.

She then worked as head of education at HMP Liverpool, and later took her current role as vice principal, Offender Learning at The Manchester College. She manages the learning and skills provision in 42 secure establishments across the UK.

She said: "It was a lovely ceremony and we all enjoyed visiting the palace."

Merron said she was pleased to get recognition for the service of offenders' education.

"The service is all about changing people's attitudes, and helping people realise they have life choices and can make better decisions," she said.

"A lot of people now leave prison with a qualification, and then can get a job. They can then go back to family life and don't cost the taxpayer anything."

Both her children also attended Croft School as did Ben's wife, Sue



Pictured at the palace are (left to right) Annick, Tom, Sue, Holly, Lucy, Merron, Andrew and Ben.

(nee Marshall), and now her two granddaughters, Holly and Lucy, attend the school in years six and three.

Also at the palace with her were husband, Andrew, and grandson,

Tom.

Her husband and two children went into the palace with her for the ceremony. They met the others outside later before travelling to St Pancras Station for a celebration in the Champagne Bar.

CCTV arrives in village

THE new trial CCTV system arrived in Culcheth just in time for the festive season.

Parish councillors, local police and community support officers have welcomed the new system which has been funded by the Neighbourhood Action Team.

If it proves to be a successful trial members of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council have pledged to make funds available for a permanent system.

The new high tech camera is situated on Barclays Bank on Lodge Drive, by coincidence the scene of a recent ram raid attempt.

Parish council chairman Ileyne Hutchinson said: "If the trial is successful and the general public and the parish council members feel there is a need the parish council will find the funds somehow."

Front page picture shows parish council members with local police and community support officers at the 'official unveiling' of the CCTV system.

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Heavenly headshave!

CROWDS gathered in a church hall as a brave church Rector had his head shaved for two good causes.

Newchurch Parish Church Rector Rev Chris Stafford agreed to have his head shaved to raise funds to be equally divided between charity and church repair funds.

His daring deed raised £1,600 in sponsorship which will be divided between St Rocco's Hospice and a new roof and central heating appeal fund for Newchurch Parish Church.

The shave was carried out by Neil Blinkhorn, of Blinkies Barbers in Classy Studios, Glazebury. Onlookers cheered as the hair fell to the floor – and many offered the rector a woolly hat to keep warm when the job was done.

Rev Stafford said: "I am extremely grateful for the great response of the people.

"I am starting to feel the cold though – I didn't pick the best time to have it done weather wise! But money is still coming in."

A total of £30,000 is required for the church repair fund, although they have received a grant of £4,150 from the Historic Cheshire Churches Preservation Fund.

Any one who would like to make a donation to the fund can email chris.stafford@talktalk.net

Rev Stafford before and during his head shave.

House appeal thrown out

PLANS for a detached dwelling at the rear of 8, Hob Hey Lane, Culcheth have been dismissed by a planning inspector.

The borough council refused permission for the development - which involved a part change of use and removal of a single storey lean-to - some time ago. But the applicant appealed against the decision.

Now a government-appointed inspector has ruled in favour of the council.

He says the proposal would contribute to a significant oversupply of housing in the borough.

Although only one dwelling, it is necessary to consider the cumulative effect of granting permission for even one dwelling which, over time, would have a significant effect on housing oversupply.

Film on youth crime

STUDENT film-maker Dan Briney is making a second film in Culcheth – this time focussing on the issues of youth crime and vandalism in the village.

He will be looking at the roles of police, councils and youth groups, and use reports from the media as background.

Dan, a media production student at Staffordshire University, has only recently been filming in Culcheth as part of his studies.

He shot footage in McDee's coffee shop.

A former pupil at Twiss Green Primary and Culcheth High schools, Dan recruited aspiring and experienced actors from throughout the county for the film, 'Coffee'.

The quirky comedy told of a girl working alone in a coffee shop, who became infatuated with a man who visited the shop each day.

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Dave's new innings at 'The Chat'

WHEN Dave Warhurst took over as 'mine host' at the Chat Moss Hotel, it strengthened a link between the pub and Glazebury Cricket Club that goes back further than most people can remember.

For the "Chat" has probably been the unofficial headquarters of the club for as long as cricket has been played in nearby Hurst Lane – and that must be nearly 100 years.

And Dave – born and bred in Glazebury – is a member of the Warhurst cricketing dynasty which goes back...well, further than most people can remember!

Dave's father, the late Jack Warhurst, is a legend at the club and almost certainly scored more runs than any other player in its lengthy history.

For many years there were three Warhursts in the team – Jack and his sons Dave and Paul, now the club chairman.

These days, Dave's son Ryan and Paul's son Jack junior, carry on the tradition.

So with Dave and his wife Lyn now behind the bar, cricket will clearly still be a topic of conversation at the Chat Moss.

The club's annual fun day - its main money-raising event of the year - will still be held in the pub's spacious gardens. After match "inquests" will still take place in the bar!

But the Chat Moss is much more than a pub. It boasts a spacious restaurant where Dave and Lyn put the



emphasis on quality, locally-sourced food and there is fine beer, wines and spirits available from the bar.

Railway history is also an important part of the pub because at one time the booking office for the former Glazebury Station was located within the building!

Sport will inevitably still be an important part of the pub's life. There is a thriving Chat Moss Golf Society and, of course, darts and domino teams which play in the local leagues.

Dave and Lyn offer a warm welcome to old friends and new - sporting or otherwise.



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Buy a brick for school

IT'S not too late to buy a little bit of Winwick CE Primary School!

The school's new £400,000 extension is already up and running, providing two new classrooms and toilets for staff, children and the disabled, following an official opening ceremony performed by Warrington North MP Helen Jones.

But the school's "buy a brick" scheme, which contributed to the cost of the two-storey building, is still going on, as plans are now going ahead to modernise older parts of the school.

The new extension replaced a single-storey wooden building dating from the 1970s.

Anyone who wants to buy a brick or help the fundraising should call the school on 01925 630995.

Folk group entertain

LOCAL folk group New Era entertained a "Christmassy" meeting of Croft WI with songs and carols.

Committee members donned various types of festive decoration and provided a light supper. Everyone joined in the singing but there was a change from the usual Christmas Party as members will be having a meal at Statham Lodge on March 25 instead.

Doris Friar read an amusing poem about the stresses of Santa providing the perfect Christmas present.

The overall winners of this year's competitions table were Diane Sims, Christine Sylvester and Frances Fisher who went home with some lovely prizes.

The raffle was also free, and several members took away some interesting Christmas parcels to put under their trees.

At the next meeting a member of the RNLI will be giving a talk about their organisation and the competition

will be for a Nautical item.

New members and guests are always welcome. Telephone 01925 764555 or 766327 for more information.

'Yokel' visits the WI

A "YOKEL" in smock and old hat entertained members of Culcheth WI at their Christmas Lunch at Newchurch Parish Hall.

Mr Raymond Rush gave an energetic talk on "Christmas Customs" with many tales of the origins and significance of the popular customs and decorations used to adorn homes and told the history of St Nicholas and how he had gradually developed into the modern Father Christmas.

After Dot Pendleton had thanked him, Mrs Forrest thanked the choir members who had represented Culcheth WI at the WI carol service.

The hall was, as usual, beautifully decorated for Christmas and all the tables looked very festive with crackers and a small poinsettia on each. The festivities included a raffle with lots of attractive prizes.

Next meeting will be on Tuesday January 20.



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Children are real stars



ABC Preschool, based at Culcheth Methodist Church, recently held their Nativity play entitled "This is the Star".

It marked the end of a successful year, following an "Outstanding" OFSTED inspection earlier in the year.

Recently, the children donated to Children in Need, raising well over £900. Special thanks to Mr and Mrs Higham.

The Preschool will be offering extended hours to suit parents' needs from January 2009.

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Spire Cheshire Hospital have launched a new treatment for dry age related macular degeneration - the IOL-VIP system (intra-ocular lens for visually impaired people).

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Treatment options for dry AMD are limited, but the IOL-VIP system has shown promising results, providing patients with macular disease with an improvement in their central vision. The procedure takes about 30 minutes and there is no need for an overnight stay in hospital.



For more information about the IOL – VIP system please call:

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Walking for water – again

THE third annual 'Walk for Water' in Culcheth will take place on March 8 – and preparations are already under way.

Over the last two years, the power-walk has raised more than £5,000 for the charity WaterAid, which works to provide safe water, sanitation and hygiene education for some of the world's poorest people.

Those taking part carry out an eight and-a-half mile or half marathon power-walk.

Amy Driver, founding organiser of the walk, said: "This is an ideal way to shape up after the excesses of Christmas, while helping raise money for WaterAid! The money raised by the event will help provide communities which would otherwise be forced to drink dirty water from streams and shallow wells with clean water and sanitation."

Organisers are hoping to double the number of walkers this year to 100 and expect many to take part in fancy dress. A group of walkers who took part last year intend to complete the village circuit carrying water buckets and cooking pots, representing the daily chore of many women and children in some of the world's poorest countries.

Entry forms can be obtained by calling 01925 766550 or visiting www.angeldf2s.com/walkforwater for details. Anyone who does not want to walk but would like to know about other ways they can help should also call the same number on 01925 766550.

Veterans turn back the clock



WORLD War 2 veterans from Glazebury rolled back the years to tell youngsters what life was like when Britain stood alone against the Nazi menace.

Irene Rankin, Sid Crockett and Michael Latchford, who all had experiences from the war years to recount, visited Glazebury CE Primary School to talk to Year 5 and Year 6 pupils.

They brought a number of mementoes of the war, including books, photographs and medals.

Our picture shows the three with pupils Liam, Lucas, Kofi, Bradley

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Traffic worries

SPEEDING traffic in Wigshaw Lane, Culcheth is worrying local councillors.

Members of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council expressed concern about the speed of vehicles entering the village, particularly in the Wigshaw Bridge area.

There were also concerns about the speed of some cars using Thames Road and Severn Road, particularly in view of the number of elderly people living in the area.

PC Richard Whitehead said he would arrange for police to target the problem areas.

Bus suggestion

CULCHETH and Glazebury Parish Council is to press for the restoration of a bus service along Church Lane to cater for the number of elderly people living there.

Members agreed to suggest to the bus company that every other bus passing through the village should take in Church Lane, as they once did.

Police winning battle with crime

THE police are winning the battle against crime in Culcheth.

Overall, crime in the village is down by 35.6 per cent, members of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council were told.

PC Richard Whitehead said across the board crime was falling.

Violent crime was down by 59 per cent, burglaries were down by 37.5 per cent, criminal damage by 41 per cent and motor vehicle crime by 21 per cent.

PC Whitehead said he believed an increased and more visible police presence was partly responsible for the improvement.

The arrival of CCTV cameras would, he believed, bring about a further improvement.

"I think Culcheth has been seen as a soft target in the past. But this is not the case now and the criminals are going elsewhere."

Gardening tips

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January Tips

General Tasks

Spend some time this month getting your equipment ready for the coming season or replace old tools.

The Flower Garden

Ensure protective straw or fleece is still in place on tender plants overwintering outdoors.

Seed sowings

This is a good time to sit down & study the seed catalogues and plan your new season's sowings.

The Lawn

New turf can be laid if the weather is mild and the ground is not frozen. Work from planks when laying the turf, to avoid compaction.

In the greenhouse

Maintain a minimum of 5°C to prevent Fuchsia, Pelargonium and other tender plants being killed by the cold.

Water gardens

Regularly shake leaves off nets over ponds. If you do not have a pond heater place floats on the surface of the water to prevent it from freezing.

Houseplant care

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Three more years for landfill site

THE operational life of the Risley Landfill site has been extended by three years.

Borough council planners have agreed to allow tip operators Biffa Waste Services to have another two years tipping and a further year to complete restoration of the site.

It means the company will remain on site until October 2011.

Originally the tip should have been completed and restored by last October.

Of all the organisations originally opposed to extending the life of the tip and expanding it over adjoining farm land, only Birchwood Town Council and about 30 nearby

residents maintained their opposition.

The borough council's development control committee approved the scheme because to refuse it would have left the site unfinished.

Even the Risley Landfill Opposition Group "reluctantly accepted" that more time was needed to complete the job.

Issues such as noise, vermin, smells, etc will continue to be regulated by the Environment Agency.

A planning department spokesman said: "Regrettably, up to three years will be required before final

restoration is achieved, but this is considered to be the most reasonable and environmentally acceptable solution."

Late takeaways off the menu

PLANNING bosses threw out a proposal that a Culcheth hot food takeaway shop be allowed to stay open later - before the premises had even opened.

Members of the borough council's development control committee turned down an application from the takeaway in Common Lane because they feared it would add to existing noise, parking and litter problems in the area.

Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council had lodged strong objections to the application, which would have resulted in the shop staying open until 2am on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays and 1am other days.

The committee was told the shop wished to extend his opening hours in line with those at the adjoining wine bar.

Officers had recommended the application be approved - but the committee decided the shop should be allowed to stay open only until midnight on Fridays and Saturdays and 11.30pm other nights.

Council team to target 'grot spots'

TEAMS of council workmen will target Culcheth for a period of up to seven weeks, filling in pot holes, cleaning gullies and improving the street scene.

The initiative is part of the "Look of the Borough" project which aims to improve the street scene across the whole borough.

Work will start in the Culcheth, Glazebury and Mee Brow areas on March 16.

A similar project in Croft will be carried out in May.

List

Coun Keith Bland told fellow members of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council they should draw up lists of "grot spots."

He said: "If you know of any areas where there are pot holes, blocked gullies or overgrown hedges, we have to let the team know."

Opportunity

"They will be in the area for up to seven weeks and it is a wonderful opportunity for us to get things done."

"I would advise all councillors to look around their areas, identify the grot spots and let us know what needs doing."

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Top Tips for the New Year

If you have any money left, after all the expense of Christmas, why not make your New Year's resolution to minimise your exposure to tax payments. Here are some tax-saving tips to assist:-

- **Make good IHT use of your income** – Most people know that you can give up to £3,000 every year without creating a tax problem, but that larger one-off amounts are subject to the seven year rule. However, did you know that you can give more, if you can afford to do so out of your income? Take care, as the gift must be set up as a regular arrangement and documented, ideally with your will. For example, you may decide you can afford to pay the school fees for your grandchildren, on a regular basis, without it affecting your standard of living or, more importantly, your IHT clock.
- **Property Abroad owned by Your Company?** If you have been charged tax or NI on the use of a property overseas, you may be able to obtain a refund as such use is now exempt from the benefit-in-kind rules.
- **Get your tax return in early** – too late this year! But put it in your diary for June 2009! If you haven't completed this years then you'd better act quickly to avoid any

finances!

- **Make a will** – this has probably been your New Year's Resolution for several years and you still haven't got round to it! Perhaps you believe you don't have much to leave behind, but remember, despite the recent fall in house prices, the level at which properties are subject to Inheritance Tax has not been increased by the government in line with house price inflation. Why give more of your hard earned assets to the Crown unnecessarily?
- **Start a Pension** – It's never too late, no matter how old you are! Remember that pension contributions qualify for tax relief and payments up to £3,600 (gross) can be relieved irrespective of the level of earnings, for yourself or your family.
- If you would like any assistance in reviewing the above please contact Les Styles or Maureen Cross or any member of our tax team at Styles & Co on 01925 761600.



Please note that these ideas are intended to inform rather than advise and you should always obtain professional advice before taking any action

If you would like more information on this or any of the previous subjects we have featured, please contact Les Styles or Ian Lloyd on 01925 761600.

**The Styles Files are provided by Styles & Co
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How many rugby players does it take to butter a barm?

HOW many rugby players does it take to butter a barm? No its not a joke with a witty punch line, the answer is one! Jon Wilkin, current St Helens and England forward has been spotted making sandwiches in the close season.

Wilkin and close friend Ian Barker, have taken over Culcheth's atmospheric 'Le Brunch' gourmet sandwich shop and aim to make it the first choice for a breakfast, sandwich or luxury muffin and coffee in the village. The Le Brunch business is a passion and alternate interest for Wilkin following a hectic season at St Helens.

The new owners are looking to add to the sandwich shop's reputation by increasing the range of healthy and more indulgent snacks available and also producing homemade

soups. Quality ingredients and breads are used in the shop and Wilkin, who was a regular customer prior to purchasing the business, has highlighted the shop's high quality of produce as one of its main strengths.

Le Brunch at 439 Warrington Road is re-launching this month with a change in layout and options for a tasty and great value breakfast or lunch and owners Messrs Wilkin and Barker look to attract new customers with a happy and helpful group of staff. Also watch out for a highly anticipated open day when you can meet your local rugby heroes and sample the shop's tasty offerings. A new improved buffet service is available for businesses in the surrounding areas. Contact the shop for more information 01925 733888.

Great oaks grow . . .

A NEW tree has been planted to replace the 57ft London Plane tree in Winwick Park, Winwick which was blown down in a gale in January last year.

While the original tree, planted in 2001 by singer and garden guru Kim Wilde, was transported from Belgium at a cost of £60, the new one - a young oak - was donated free of charge by local residents Mary and Sid Mostyn

It was grown from a seed planted for the Millennium celebrations.

At a growth rate of about 0.5m a year, it could be around 2060 before it matches the size of the Plane tree.






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Junior cricketers bat on for £525

JUNIOR cricketers raised £525 with a Saturday bag-pack at Sainsbury's in Culcheth.

The youngsters – junior members of Glazebury Cricket Club – spent the day busily packing bags to raise the money.

The club has been awarded a 75 per cent grant for the provision of a second all-weather practise net at its Hurst Lane ground and the money raised by the event, and a similar one last winter, £1,163 in total, will go towards the club's contribution.

Club coach Mike Durrington said: "I would like to thank all the children and adults who turned out and to the

management and staff of Sainsbury's, who were all very welcoming and helpful, and not least to the very generous people of Culcheth."

Junior indoor cricket training will start at Culcheth High School Sports Hall on Saturday, February 7. Under 11s will train from 12 noon to 1pm, under 13s from 1pm to 2pm and under 15s from 2pm to 3pm.

Further details are available from Mike Durrington on 07729 853915 or email elmik2326@aol.com

Students praised for presentation

TWO senior students from Culcheth College – Roseanne and Lucy – won high praise from members of Newchurch WI for their presentation following a visit to Auschwitz.

A small group of WI members attended the event at the High School and later paid tribute to the girls for the way they made their presentation.

The visit was one of a number enjoyed by members in a busy month for the WI.

Others included the annual shopping trip to Chester and the choir taking part in a carol concert at St Helen's Church, Hallins Green.

The Craft Group and helpers

decorated Newchurch Parish Hall and later the president, Sylvia Brown, welcomed members and two visitors to the annual Christmas Party at the hall.

The Margaret Dowson Bowls Trophies were presented to winner Wynn Worthington, and runner-up Jean Gregson. Amy Williams was the competition winner for the year and received a gift voucher. A delicious meal was served by the Harrow Inn and afterwards everyone received a small gift, followed by a free raffle.

The first meeting of 2009 is on Wednesday January 14 at 7.30pm in Newchurch Parish Hall. For information phone Jean Riley on 01925 762722.

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