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December 2013

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THE HS2 roadshow which visited Culcheth seems to have antagonised local people rather than allayed their fears. From what we have heard, opposition to the high speed railway's route through the area has hardened.

Main concerns, understandably, are the impact the railway would have on the village. First, construction and later the ongoing noise of high speed trains travelling through what we have come to regard as a relatively quiet part of the countryside.

In fact, if HS2 is to be stopped, it will not be because of the horrific damage it would cause to Culcheth, Rixton, Glazebrook or anywhere else. It will be because the powers-that-be decide, nationally, the business case does not stack-up.

Culcheth and District Rail Action Group (CADRAG) have been

putting forward a lively argument, as have other action groups along the proposed route of the railway. If the project goes ahead, they cannot all be successful and if any are it will probably be at the expense of someone else.

We do not, for one moment, suggest that local opponents should ignore the purely local arguments based on the destruction of the environment, people's homes and people's businesses. But neither should they ignore the wider issues based on the viability of the whole project for it is here, we believe, that they stand a more realistic chance of winning. They will not be fighting alone as in recent months it has become apparent that there are many people and organisation who have their doubts about HS2.

Even people who at one time supported the project.

Some of these people may have more influence than the residents of any village or town along the route. They cannot be relied upon to fight our battle for us, but we can perhaps assist them if we make sure we all sing from the same song sheet. The consultation continues until the end of January. All local people should make the effort to join the debate, voice our opinions clearly and forcefully and take into account the wider picture rather than focussing only on our own backyard. In the meantime, it's the festive season and the team at Culcheth Life would like to wish a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our readers and advertisers.

Beer festival raised £8,500

THE two day Culcheth Beer Festival organised by Newton and District Jubilee Rotary Club in September raised £8,500 for Rotary charities.

Nearly 800 people attended the event at Culcheth Sports Club - the third to be arranged by the Rotary Club.

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Anger over 'slick' HS2 exhibition

RESIDENTS have reacted angrily to an exhibition promoting the HS2 high speed railway in Culcheth.

Hundreds of people visited the exhibition, mounted by HS2 Ltd at Culcheth Sports Club.

But an exit poll carried out by members of the Culcheth and District Rail Action Group (CADRAG) suggested that local residents were 100 per cent opposed to the railway.

Cllr Keith Bland, a member of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council and also of CADRAG said:

"People dismissed the exhibition as a slick PR job.

"There were a lot of people from HS2 there but they were not really interested in answering people's questions. They were there to promote HS2 - that's all."

Cllr Bland, whose home is only 100 yards from Culcheth Sports Club, erected a gazebo and an inflatable white elephant in his garden to attract the attention of people visiting the exhibition. He was joined by fellow members of CADRAG and also residents of Rixton and Glazebrook, which will

also be affected if HS2 goes ahead on the preferred route.

He said: "I made my garden available because CADRAG were not allowed to have a stand at the exhibition inside the club.

"People are opposing this scheme because of the devastating affect it will have on Culcheth and surrounding areas.

"It will cut through the Taylor Industrial Estate and Culcheth Linear Park. It will affect other local businesses, residents and farmers.

"The impact it would have on the community during the construction period would be terrible.

"We could not find one local

person who supported the proposed route of the line. Many people even doubt the business case for building HS2 at all.

"People were against it before this exhibition was held but they are even more opposed to it afterwards."

Cllr Bland's wife - borough councillor Sue Bland - was kept busy making cups of tea and coffee for people calling in to talk to CADRAG members during the day.

She said: "This campaign against HS2 has really united the community."



Campaigners against HS2 outside Cllr Keith Bland's residence. From left, Steve Gerrard, Frank Allen, Cllr Keith Bland, Tina Caldeleugh, Dave Richardson and Peter Fillery chairman Rixton and Glazebrook Action Group.

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Dave and Emma – ideal in a restaurant

DAVE Williams and Emma Graham make an ideal couple when it comes to running a restaurant – and proof of this can be found at Culcheth's new Nectarine restaurant.

With more than 20 years' experience as a chef, including time at some of the North West's top eateries, Dave is king of the kitchen. Emma, Culcheth born and bred, does front-of-house and knows how to make customers immediately feel at home.

The result is relaxed, intimate dining with great service in elegant surrounds.

All dishes are prepared in the Nectarine's own kitchen from the fresh-baked bread to the hand-made petit fours.

Dave describes his menu as "modern British cuisine with some European influences."

He and his staff cook with the seasons, using high quality ingredients, locally sourced and combined to produce well flavoured, balanced dishes that excite the palate. This philosophy is reflected in regular changes to the menus.

The Nectarine has been awarded top marks from the local council environmental health officer for food safety and hygiene standards.

Dave said: "We are passionate

about food and service, which is why I think front-of-house is just as important as the kitchen. We want our customers to know we care about them."

When he's not in the kitchen, Dave

is a keen runner and has completed several half and full marathons.

He hasn't as much time for this now, after opening Nectarine, but hopes to get his running shoes on again to raise money for charity.

Hannah's South American night

CULCHETH girl Hannah Charlton organised a South American themed community night to help tackle poverty in Bolivia.

Hannah, aged 22, will travel to Bolivia this January to work on a development programme for three months, and organised a sell out theme night at McDee's to help raise funds.

On the programme, she will team up with Bolivian volunteers to tackle some of the problems facing the local community, after getting a place on the government funded International Citizen Service (ICS).

Hannah said: "The project I'm working on is run by the development charity, International Service and aims to help underprivileged people understand their human rights, empowering them to achieve lasting, positive change."

"This is a unique opportunity to work alongside people from a different culture who have requested help from young volunteers to fight poverty and make a difference where it's needed most. I'm really excited to get out there."

Other fundraising efforts included

baking cakes for Newchurch Church and creating a video to inform and encourage people to donate to International Service.

The video has so far been a success in getting people to donate, with Hannah raising £350 with her video alone. The video is available to view on YouTube by searching 'Hannah Hopes to Fundraise for International Service'.

To help Hannah's fundraising effort, you can donate at justgiving.com/hannahhopes.



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Croft Parish Council News

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Christmas Tree

The Village's Christmas Tree lights will be turned on at 6pm on Friday, 6th December by the Chairman of the Parish Council, Cllr. Les Hoyle. Choirs from Croft Primary School, St. Lewis' Primary School together with the local Brownie packs will be singing carols around the tree which will be located in the Playing Field car park. Everyone is welcome to attend this community celebration.

Vandalism at the Playing Field

After all the hard work by local residents to raise funds to improve the Playing Field play area, it was extremely saddening that someone set fire to some of the swings. The fire destroyed one swing completely, made the swing for children with disabilities inoperable and severely scorched the safety matting. Anyone with any information that might lead to the apprehension of the vandals should contact Cheshire Police.

Croft Village Memorial Hall

The Memorial Hall is an important asset to the Village. It hosts a number of community events and activities and is available for hire (phone 222715). While the inside of the Hall has benefited from some recent improvements, the Committee was aware that the access roads' surfaces needed some renewal. Thanks to its own fund-raising, contributions from the Hall's principal users and a grant of £2,000 from the Parish Council this remedial work has been completed.

The Parish Council would like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Residents may contact Mike Pope, Croft Parish Council's Clerk on 01925 733766 or
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Consultation will decide future of sixth form

THE future of the sixth form at Culcheth High School depends on a widespread consultation exercise currently underway with parents, pupils, staff and other interested parties.

A drop-in session will be held at the school on December 10, from 5pm to 7.30pm, when parents and pupils will be able to meet the head teacher, governors and borough council representatives.

People can also make comments via the council's website, www.warrington.gov.uk/consultation.

Final decision on whether the sixth form should close will be made by the borough council's executive board in May.

But the governing body has already voted 8-0 in favour of going to consultation, with six members abstaining.

The Culcheth community as a whole was stunned when it was announced last month that the future of the sixth form was in doubt, less than two years after the school was rebuilt at a cost of £28 million.

Culcheth and Glazebury parish councillor Keith Bland said: "I am gobsmacked. We had no inkling this was in the offing."

"Culcheth High is a good school and this is a major blow - particularly after the new school being built. But I understand the reason is a diminishing number of pupils making it difficult, if not impossible, to provide an adequate curriculum."

Borough and parish councillor Chris Vobe - a former pupil - said: "I was shocked to hear this news. It is very disappointing that the situation has deteriorated to this point. When I was at Culcheth

Sixth Form, it was a thriving and well-attended college which served our local community well.

"Given that the High School itself is full, I believe the governing body should have been looking more closely at why pupils from the village are opting to pursue their post-16 studies elsewhere."

The number of students staying on at the sixth form has been falling steadily over the last 10 years, even though in the 11-16 age range, the school has grown.

A number of factors have been blamed - the increasingly popularity of colleges such as Priestley College, Warrington, Winstanley College, Wigan and Warrington Collegiate, plus the opening of a sixth form at Birchwood High School, which this year acquired Academy status.

If the sixth form at Culcheth closes it will not be until the summer of 2015, allowing current Year 12 and 13 students to complete their studies. But there would be no admission of Year 12 students from next September.

A statement issued by the governors said: "The fall in student numbers in the sixth form, combined with the national reduction in funding for each student has meant that it has become increasingly difficult for Culcheth High School to offer the range of subjects and the learning experience that students



Keith Bland



Chris Vobe

deserve.

"There are an increasing number of providers of post-16 education in the area and Culcheth High School students have a range of choices when it comes to selecting a place to study.

"We will continue to support all our students in securing the best and most appropriate provision at the end of Year 11."

As Culcheth High is a community school, the consultation process is being led by the borough council.

Christmas appeal

The Village Sandwich Bar, Culcheth has registered as a drop off point for the Key 103 Cash for Kids Christmas appeal to support a child living in poverty.

The aim is to raise £1 million worth of toys by inviting people to buy one extra present this year - a gift that will make Christmas 2013 for a child living in poverty.

Presents dropped off at The Village Sandwich Bar, 18 Church Lane, Culcheth will have them delivered in time for Christmas.

TIMETABLE CHANGES From Monday 16 December

On the 16th December we'll be making some changes to the following services...

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Off-peak service frequency to Leigh will be increased during the day and services after 19:00 will be reduced. The reductions are due to a change in the terms of a Warrington Borough Council tender.

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Health and wellbeing spa goes from strength to strength

THE girls at Spa Beautiful, the health and wellbeing spa situated at the entrance to Taylor Business Park, are celebrating the success of their first year in business.

They've gone from strength to strength in the last twelve months and are now proud to launch another side to their business, a new vintage tea room, located downstairs in the stunning period property in which the spa is based.

They'll be providing High Teas for spa visitors or for passers by who just wish to treat themselves to the selection of teas and home baked goods on offer in a peaceful, relaxing environment. The tea room is open Monday to Friday 10 til 3 and 5 pm on Saturdays.

On Wednesday mornings, the Tea Room will be hosting vintage coffee mornings for the local community.

Success

Catherine and Angela from the spa believe that a lot of their success comes from their high standards that they set for themselves, the level of service that they provide and the trouble free parking that tends to be an issue, just down the road, in the centre of Culcheth.

Paul Taylor from Taylor Business

Park said, "The spa is a breath of fresh air on here. I've enjoyed a few treatments there myself and a relaxing half day makes a great Christmas gift. We love to see start up companies flourish and we've

seen a few success stories over the last twelve months on here.

"The spa is a fantastic addition to the Business Park and the village and I can see them doing even better in the new year."



Christmas Tree and Crib festival

THE eighth annual Newchurch Parish Church Christmas Tree and Crib Festival will be held on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, December 13-15.

Local businesses and community groups will decorate trees and cribs and display them in the church over the three-day festival.

Theme for the festival is "Our Wonderful World."

Refreshments will be available and on the Friday, local schools will be singing carols during the day and in the evening, Ellenbrook and Boothstown Brass Band will hold a concert.

On the Saturday afternoon there will be children's crafts and activities.

Over the seven year history of the festival, £3,000 has been raised for local charities and this year the festival will be supporting The Children's Society Warrington Project and church funds.



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Father Christmas is coming to town

FATHER Christmas will be touring the streets of Culcheth, Croft and Gorse Covert in the run up to the festive season - courtesy of Newton and District Jubilee Rotary Club.

The early evening tours will start when his sleigh arrives on the Mee Brow estate on December 16, moves on to Culcheth on December 18, Gorse Covert the following day and Croft on December 23.

Santa will also be inside at Bent's Garden and Home, Glazebury on December 7, 14 and 21 and outside CPS, Culcheth on December 13 and 20.

The Rotary Club is inviting requests for assistance from local charities, schools and other organisations.

Anyone interested should call Bernard Groom on 01925 733893 or visit the Rotary District 1280 website, following the link to Newton and District Jubilee.

Volunteers wanted for day centre committee

VOLUNTEERS are being sought to serve on the management committee at the Age Concern Day Centre in Jackson Avenue, Culcheth.

Fundraising is already going on to bring about improvements to the building, the outside of which has already been painted.

Internal decoration is now going ahead, carried out with the help of offenders supervised by the Probation Service.

Cllr Sue Bland said: "The building has been looking very tired for some time but we are gradually carrying out improvements.

"The next task is to replace a storage building at the rear which



leaks. At first we considered repairing the existing building but discovered there is asbestos in the roof."

Anyone interested in serving on the committee should call Cllr Bland on 01925 766641.

Culcheth High Community Campus

Adult Learning Courses

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Pottery Learn how to work with clay, create your own ceramic lantern as well as other pots. Mixed ability, all welcome. This course costs £40, however learners can access one free course this academic year, a cost of £15 for materials applies. Every Tuesday evening for five weeks starting 14th January, 6.30pm - 8.30pm. Call Registry on 01925 494494 to enrol.

Introduction to Creative Writing On this course you will learn basic techniques to get started with writing creatively in both prose and poetry styles. This course costs £40, however learners can access one free course this academic year. Every Tuesday evening for five weeks starting on 14th January 6.30pm - 8.30pm. Call Registry on 01925 494494 to enrol.

Cooking for Dinner Parties Chef Paul Ratcliffe will guide you as you create a range of dishes suitable for dinner parties. This course costs £40, however learners can access one free course this academic year, a cost of £15 for materials applies. One class every Tuesday evening for four weeks starting 14th January 6.30pm—9pm Call Registry on 01925 494494 to enrol.

Vintage Crafts On this course you will learn a range of basic craft skills including .distressing, burning and creasing - to achieve a true vintage effect. This course costs £40 with a cost of £15 for materials, however each learner is entitled to one free course each academic year. Every Wednesday evening for five weeks starting 13th November, 6.30pm - 8.30pm. Call Registry on 01925 494494 to enrol

Floristry Learn floristry techniques to create beautiful flowers for family and friends. This course costs £40, however learners can access one free course this academic year. A cost of £15 for materials applies. Every Wednesday evening for five weeks starting 15th January 6.30pm -8.30pm. Call Registry on 01925 494494 to enrol.

Introduction to Art Relax in the creative environment of our Art department and have taster sessions on printmaking, handmade paper, drawing skills and 3D design. This course costs £40, however learners can access one free course this academic year. Every Thursday for five weeks starting 16th January 6.30pm - 8.30pm. Call Registry on 01925 494494 to enrol.

Introduction to Holistic Therapy Relax and unwind while learning a new skill in Holistic Therapy. This course costs £40, however learners can access one free course this academic year. Every Thursday evening for five weeks starting 16th January 6.30pm - 8.30pm Call Registry on 01925 494494 to enrol.

For more information on enrolment or guidance regarding these courses please contact: Debbie Porrin via email:

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Turning back the clock

VILLAGERS turned back the clock at the annual Culcheth Victorian Day which was organised by Birchwood Lions and supported by Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council.



Enjoying the music from a Fairground Organ from left, Oscar Twist aged 3 his sister Evie aged 4 and Kate Heyes.



From left, Tom Bird shows his scale Marshall steam traction engine to twins Kieran Yates, Joshua aged 3 and their sister Emily aged 6.



Vice president of Birchwood Lions Jean Whibley dressed for the Culcheth Victorian Day.



Selling raffle tickets for a food hamper are Birchwood Lions left, Mike Barnes and Jon Graves.

Evening service to continue

LOCAL bus company Network Warrington has announced that, following ongoing negotiations, TfGM (Transport for Greater Manchester) have agreed to continue to fund evening bus services from Warrington to Leigh.

Upcoming service changes scheduled for December had previously meant that services would have finished earlier than the current timetable.

Evening services on this route are tendered by Warrington Borough Council and TfGM, because the patronage is too low to support a fully commercial bus service.

In October, Warrington Borough Council renewed their tender, to operate only between Warrington and Glazebury, Foresters Arms (Borough boundary), and reduced the number of journeys per hour. TfGM had previously decided not to renew, but have reconsidered their decision and have now agreed to provide funding to enable the service to continue to run between Leigh and Glazebury, Culcheth and Warrington.

Network Warrington interim MD Ann Marie Slavin said: "It's clear that a number of people rely on this service. However, it would have been difficult to run this commercially so we are delighted that the tender has been renewed by TfGM, and I'm sure our Warrington and Leigh passengers are too."

Service changes will come into effect on December 16.

New timetables are available at networkwarrington.co.uk and printed timetables will be available from the Travel Centre from Monday December 9.

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Look at Victorian Day



At their baked goods and raffle stall Culcheth Methodist Church are 19th Warrington Culcheth Scouts from left, Nathan Remmer, leader Jane Kelly, Jake Remmer, leader Sally Casson and Elliott Livingstone.



Dishing up hot food are staff from McDee's Cafe from left, Helen McVey, Sarah Sharp and Hannah Charlton.



Meeting Father Christmas at Culcheth Methodist Church are from left, Laura and Andrew McFarlane aged 8.

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NOVEMBER...Winter Gardening Tips

- Christmas wrapping – remember to protect your half-hardy plants during particularly cold spells. Wrap the pot with bubble wrap for the entire winter and the plant with fleece while it is below freezing.
- Christmas crackers – not all the garden is asleep at this time of year and there are several stars still performing: Mahonia 'Charity', Sarcococca - Christmas Box and Helleborus – the Christmas rose
- Christmas dreams – now is the ideal time to plan ahead for an even more fantastic garden next season. Come in store for inspiration and ideas and talk to our team of garden experts.

DECEMBER...Christmas Tips

- Most LED lights use 90% less electricity than regular lights and as an added bonus they are made from plastic rather than glass so it's harder to break them when putting them up.
- When dressing your Christmas tree it is better to use more of the same item than too many different ones.

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Valerie to open her 'grotto' home

A CULCHETH woman who decorates her home every Christmas is to throw it open to the public for the first time.

Only a handful of people normally see the magical display at 59-year-old Valerie Stock's home.

But those who do are usually bowled over by it so Valerie, who suffers from MS and is largely confined to a wheelchair, has decided to share the experience with local people.

She will open the house on Sunday, December 15, Saturday December 21 and Sunday December 22 between 2pm and 4pm.

In return she will ask for donations towards the cost of a special mattress which she desperately needs because of her condition.

Carer Chris Bull and cleaner Angie Malone, will do most of the festive decorating, working to designs prepared by Valerie herself.

Chris joked: "By the time we have finished, the house looks like Santa's grotto!"

Valerie lives alone with her two much-loved cats, Lily and Louie – and thanks to Lily she is getting some extra help from schoolgirls Lili and Issi Boyle, aged 14 and 10.

They got to know Valerie after wondering why the cat from across the road came running every time their Mum called "Lili".

Now the sisters are helping raise money for the appeal at the Christmas fair at Lili's school, Loreto Preparatory.



Valerie with Chris Bull (left) and Angie Malone with some of the decorations and sisters Lili and Issi with Lily the cat.

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Ian Lloyd.

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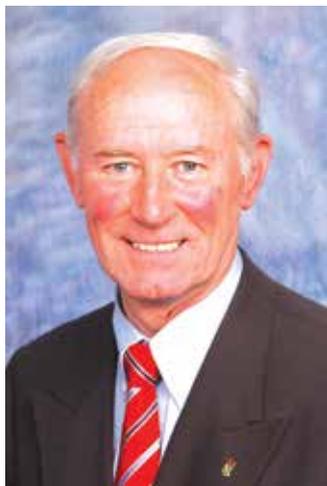
Councillor calls for 20mph limits

A LOCAL councillor is pressing for the early introduction of 20mph speed limits on two roads at Culcheth.

Cllr Les Hoyle believes the restrictions are necessary in Doeford Close and on Twiss Green Lane, outside Twiss Green Primary School.

He said: "I have written to the borough council's head of highways, David Bowyer, asking for these roads to be designated as 20mph road as soon as possible.

"Local residents and parents of pupils at the school are concerned about the speed of some cars using these roads and have approached me.



"I realise that the council's policy is to introduce widespread 20mph limits across the borough but I want to make sure these roads are designated as soon as possible.

"The situation in Doeford Close can only get worse if additional houses are built there."

Parking restrictions to be investigated

THE feasibility of double yellow lines at the junction of Shaw Street and Church Lane is being investigated by Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council.

After meeting with local residents, parish councillors have pledged to raise a number of concerns with the borough council.

Residents of Shaw Street have been expressing concern over a number of issues for years.

Parking at both ends of the road have been highlighted and residents feel additional double yellow lines near to the Pack Horse pub would be helpful.

Council steps in with £2,000 grant

CROFT Parish Council has committed £2,000 towards the cost of refurbishing the entrance path and car park at Croft Village Hall.

The council agreed to step in and "match fund" a grant already secured from Warrington's East Area Neighbourhood Board after another potential grant source failed to materialise.

Residents, who have been asking for the repairs for some time, have already expressed their delight at the works.

The car park and entrance had become worn and riddled with pot holes through heavy use over a number of years.

It is hoped to repair the exit path soon, when funding is secured.

Advertiser's announcement

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Homes plan rejected

PLANS for 14 detached houses on the site of a disused discount store and petrol filling station at Glazebury were thrown out by borough planning chiefs.

But many Glazebury residents were displeased at the decision and said an opportunity to remove an eyesore — the disused M&S Discount store — had been missed.

Members of the development management committee indicated they were not opposed to the principle of housing on the site and might look favourably on an amended scheme. The site in Warrington Road is partly in the Green Belt and planners would like to see the "green" part retained and restored. At present it lies neglected and an eyesore.

Cllr Sheila Woodyatt, a member of the committee, said: "The site is an absolute eyesore and we have no objection to the principle of housing. But quite a large part of the site is in the Green Belt and we would like to see it retained."

Planning officers recommended the scheme be refused. They reported: "The proposal includes permanent built development across the whole site, which is considered to have a far greater impact on openness compared with the existing building, which is confined to just under half the site."

The developers said their scheme would remove all previous development and "green up" the site. Houses would be dispersed across the site, reducing impact

and allowing for the introduction of green space. A woodland belt would be planted to the west of the site.

After the decision was made, local councillor Chris Vobe said: "There is a clear desire from people in Glazebury for this site to be developed. However, there is also great concern locally about the types of homes being proposed in this application and the fact that these plans extend beyond the Green Belt line. The council have rightly expressed a desire to see the openness of the Green Belt retained, and perhaps even restored to green space by way of landscaping."



The disused M&S Discount site.

Recreation ground revamp coming soon

PROGRESS is being made on plans to revamp Culcheth's Shaw Street Recreation Ground, according to local councillors.

Cllrs Matt Smith and Chris Vobe announced earlier this year that a campaign to secure funding from the borough council's capital programme had been successful.

Now, after seeking an update from senior council officers, they have been assured work will be carried out in the near future.

Cllr Smith said: "As residents know, the condition of the recreation ground is an issue that we are taking very seriously.

"Our petition, which we named

'Refurbish our Rec Ground' was greeted with a huge response from people living in the area and the money that we have secured from the council's capital programme as a result, will ensure that the car park is drained and resurfaced, and that the area around it will benefit from 'cosmetic treatment' - including new fencing and better quality lighting.

"We know that residents have waited for some time to see these works bear fruit. That's why we have been working closely with the council to make sure that everything is put in place for this exciting project to be rolled out smoothly. When the work is complete, we

should see great benefits for the village and particularly the Newchurch area."

Cllr Sue Bland has been campaigning for action on the recreation ground since 2009.

She said: "I have been assured work will start on the car park soon and that in 2015 attention will be given to the changing facilities.

"In the meantime, volunteers from the rugby club have decorated the changing rooms.

"Eventually it is hoped to have separate entrance and exits to the car park."

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CULCHETH & GLAZEBURY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Your Parish Councillors

NEWCHURCH WARD



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01925 419481



Jacqui Johnson
01925 763435



Matt Smith
matt.smith062@gmail.com

GLAZEBURY & MEE BROW WARD



Angela Duncombe
01925 419481



Eddy Estlin
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CULCHETH WARD



Mike Vobe
mike.vobe2012@gmail.com



Peter Caswell
01942 671938



Keith Bland
01925 766641



Lilian Houghton
01925 762935



Paul Campbell
01925 766658

Bus stops

The Parish Council is in the process of securing quotes for cleaning work to be carried out on the bus stops around the villages. As many residents will have seen, our bus stops are in urgent need of a "spring clean". The materials used in the construction of the bus stops, however, means that the cleaning job has to be undertaken by a specialist, using the most appropriate materials. Parish councillors are committed to making sure that the cost to the public purse is as limited as possible and represents the best value for money. We nevertheless hope that the work will be carried out by the early part of next year.

Victorian Day

By the time you read this, the village will have hosted what we hope was another successful Victorian Day. Our thanks and appreciations are extended to the many volunteers who help to make this day a huge success. We're also pleased that the festive season has officially launched with the annual "switch on" of the community lights. The Parish Council pays for the Christmas lights in the centre of both Culcheth and Glazebury, as part of our efforts to ensure that our local community remains an inviting and welcoming place for all.

This year, we were pleased to have ensured that local businesses were involved with the arrangements for Victorian Day. Following the problems experienced last year with the closure of Wilton Lane, councillors felt that it was vital to have the input of traders, who contributed a number of ideas to this year's plans in a bid to encourage more people from outside the area to come to the village centre, use our local shops and help to keep our economy moving. As this year's event was somewhat different from previous years and included a number of competitions for younger people, the Parish Council would particularly welcome any feedback that residents would like to offer.

We hope to build on the success of this event next year, with 2014's Community Day the next significant event on the village calendar.

HS2 Consultation

Cllrs Matt Smith and Mike Vobe attended the consultation meeting convened by HS2 Ltd in nearby Rixton this month. There, they ensured that the concerns of residents were relayed to the representatives of the project and posed some tough questions on behalf of the community. Parish councillors actively encourage local people to take part in the consultation process, where it is now possible to submit your thoughts and comments on the route that is being proposed. For more details, please don't hesitate to get in touch with Cllr Smith.

Planning applications

The Parish Council has recently recognised the contributions made by local residents in the fight against a number of controversial planning applications. Whilst Parish Councillors made very strong representations on issues such as the land at Doeford Close, we feel that the presentations by residents at planning meetings is widely deserving of recognition. It is always difficult to make a concise case in front of a Town Hall committee, but those residents who have accompanied councillors have been a real credit to our villages, and we thank them for the time and thought they have put in.

Culcheth Hall Drive

The Parish Council recently received a presentation from a company called Evoke Homes, who are proposing to submit a plan for a number of homes on Culcheth Hall Drive. These will be located on the site of the former "Tithebarn" and access will be via the Drive. Many interested residents joined us at a recent meeting to pose their questions to the developer, but we encourage all nearby neighbours to give us their thoughts.

As is the case with all planning applications in the villages, your comments are hugely valued and help to inform the representations that we make on local people's behalf. Don't hesitate to get in touch with one of your Parish Councillors if you would like further information, or more details on what is being proposed. We will make sure to keep residents updated on the submissions that we make.

And finally... a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Last, but not least, as this is the final update from your Parish Council for 2013, can we use this opportunity to extend (on behalf of all members of the Council) our very best wishes to all residents throughout Culcheth and Glazebury. We wish all of you, and your families, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

A welcome for new street lights

TWO Culcheth councillors have welcomed the first phase of a new street lighting scheme which they say will benefit the village.

Street lights on Cranwell Avenue are the first to be replaced under Warrington Borough Council's 'Invest to Save' initiative - a programme of works which will see every street light across the borough upgraded or replaced over three years.

Councillors Matt Smith and Chris Vobe have welcomed the first phase beginning in Culcheth.

Cllr Smith said: "There is no

doubt that the condition and quality of our street lights remains one of the top priorities amongst residents that I speak to. There is a real need for our lights to be upgraded, as many of the columns are over 40 years old and are drastically inefficient.

"Street lighting also impacts on people's personal safety and good quality lighting helps to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

That is why the council's 'Invest to Save' scheme makes good sense - it allows for our lighting to be upgraded without cost to the taxpayer in the long term.

"Cranwell Avenue is the first street to benefit from these works, but it certainly won't be the last. The works there are an indication that the upgrades in Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft have begun and many more will follow in the coming months."

Cllr Vobe added: "Matt and I have pressed for our community to

be moved up the queue for many months now. Street lighting is a priority for people here.

"We are now in a position whereby our lights will be significantly improved by 2015, something which will come as a great relief to many people.

"Matt and I welcome this scheme and will be closely monitoring the way it is implemented. We will be listing the areas of the village most in need of upgrades and working to ensure that the worst-affected streets benefit first."

Access plan refused

PLANNING chiefs have rejected proposals to amend an access track for stables on land off Petersfield Gardens, Culcheth.

Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council and 18 nearby residents objected to the application on the grounds the access would be incompatible with the rural setting and that access through a housing estate and passed a primary school would be inappropriate and unnecessary.

A good year for the WI

THE annual meeting of Croft WI was told it had been a good year - with the group now having 104 members and an average monthly attendance of 65.

During the year, they celebrated their 60th birthday, went on various outings and theatre visits, took part in the County Quiz, won the prize for the best float in Croft Carnival and much more.

The meeting was chaired by vice president Ann Tansey and secretary Sue Birchall in the absence of president Doreen Clare.

Members were reminded of a visit to Chester Cathedral for a carol service on December 4, the Christmas Party at Statham Lodge on December 11 and a carol service at Fearnhead on December 13.

Advertiser's announcement

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AROUND fifty people die each year in the UK from Carbon Monoxide poisoning. Known as the silent killer, lives are claimed by poorly maintained appliances, flues and chimneys.

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WI members taken back to Fifties

MEMBERS of Culcheth WI were taken back to the 1950s at their monthly meeting.

Guest speaker Graham Stirrup had amazing stories to tell of donkey stoning, black and white photos, very few with cars, etc.

He told of events at home and abroad post-Second World War when people were desperate for normality.

An election was won by Labour which saw Clement Attlee as prime minister.

There was sweet rationing, the Festival of Britain, coal fires, smog, the death of King George VI, the coronation of the Queen, children's TV with Andy Pandy and the Flowerpot Men and pop singers like David Whitfield, Paul Anka and Buddy Holly.

Mr Stirrup was thanked and praised for an illuminating talk by president Joan Jarvis.

Refreshments were served by Kathleen Totham and Ann Hambleton.

Raffle prizewinners were Myrtle Gerrard, Mary Bardsley, Shirley Bennett, Sylvia Morris, Lydia Howard, Frances Robinson and Christine Seddon.

Next meeting will be on December 17 when the speaker will be Peter Turner "Through the Eyes of a Magician"

Flowers and festivities

FLOWERS and festivities were the subject of the talk at the monthly meeting of Newchurch WI.

Speaker was Kate Fitch, of the Walton Lea Partnership, which runs courses teaching gardening and other skills to people with learning difficulties.

From small beginnings 15 years ago the partnership has grown until it caters for more than 70 people.

Kate showed members some of the craft items made at the partnership's two sites in Warrington and described how sponsorship and fund-raising of all kinds had helped the group.

While she spoke she created three festive flower arrangements using a lot of garden greenery enhanced by a few fresh flowers and some "sparkly bits".

She gave advice on treating fresh flower stems and recommended mixing silk flowers with garden greenery.

Kate judged a competition for a home-made pomander. Winner was Olive Lee, with Aileen Paterson and Lesley Lloyd coming second and third.

Three new members were welcomed at the meeting which ended with a boxed supper served by the committee.

Next meeting is the members' Christmas Party on December 11.

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