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Issue: 82 January 2010

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Andrew's challenge

Page 3

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Editor's Comment



OUR cover picture this month is of Andrew Cronin, the youth worker whose activities on the streets of Culcheth are drawing widespread praise from councillors, voluntary groups, the churches and others concerned for the well-being of the community.

Andrew modestly makes few claims for himself.

"I am a professional youth worker, just doing my job," he says.

That may be true, but from all accounts, he is doing it well.

He spends just 20 hours a week in Culcheth, Glazebury and Rixton, working alongside the youth clubs and the borough council's youth service.

Although he does work in the youth clubs, he spends more time out-and-about of an evening, challenging the "drinking culture" which seems so attractive to many teenagers.

He has a firm belief that most young people are fine - even those who would never darken the door of a youth club. He meets them wherever they congregate offering advice on alcohol, drugs, smoking, sexual behaviour, etc.

He believes he can relate to the youngsters because he was once like them himself. He does not try to stop young people drinking and smoking. He urges moderation - because he finds that way, youngsters listen to him. He finds many underage drinkers see no wrong in what they are doing because their parents drink heavily themselves - and we agree with him.

Andrew will not be in Culcheth forever, but he is not just here for the short term. He will not solve all problems associated with young people, but he seems to be doing pretty well.

We wish him well for the future.

Finance chief

CULCHETH councillor Paul Campbell has been appointed the borough council's executive member for finance and value for money.

He has taken over from Coun Fiona Bruce, who has stepped down because she has been selected as Prospective Conservative Parliamentary candidate for Congleton.

Coun Campbell is also a member of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council.

Extensions refused

PLANNING chiefs have rejected proposals for a single-storey side extension and two storey rear extension at Highcroft Farm, Lady Lane, Croft.

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Andrew's challenge on the streets

YOUTH worker Andrew Cronin, 33, found his early professional challenges in far flung places, climbing mountains like Kilimanjaro and Mont Blanc.

He was working for an adventure holiday company, teaching outdoor pursuits such as canoeing and climbing.

Today his challenges are still mainly outdoors - but on street corners, parks and in shop doorways in Culcheth.

Andrew, pictured on front page, is working with the young people so often blamed for anti-social behaviour, underage drinking and other problems on the streets of Culcheth.

He meets them, befriends them, advises them and earns their trust. He can relate to them because, as he says: "I used to be one of them. I used to think Friday night was a night for going out and having too much to drink."

Now he is doing his best to make sure they don't cause trouble.

"The vast majority of them are great kids," he says. "I am getting to know them and, more importantly, they are getting to know me. They know I am there to help - and that I won't snitch on them."

Andrew works 20 hours a week in Culcheth, Glazebury and Rixton as part of an initiative of Culcheth Methodist Church, funded jointly by the church, the borough council and the parish council.

He only started work locally in September and is already in regular contact with nearly 200 youngsters and has met many more.

Although many are from Culcheth, significant numbers are attracted to the

village from places such as Rixton, Cadishead and Winwick, he says. But few come from larger towns such as Leigh.

Andrew's mother was a youth worker and his wife, Lynn, is training to be a teacher so, although he has no children himself, he has a background of working with young people.

See: Editor's comment.

Motorists warned - park at your own risk

THE borough council sign at a Culcheth car park says it all: 'Users of this car park do so at their own risk.'

And the council is not kidding. For the car park at the Shaw Street Recreation Ground, Culcheth, looks more like a lake during the winter months.

At times more than half the car park is unusable because of deep pools of dirty water and a rutted and muddy surface.

Residents have been complaining for some time because there is a demand for parking spaces - particularly at weekends when soccer and rugby matches are being played at Shaw Street.

Coun Sue Bland, chairman of

Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council, said: "We have received a number of complaints and we have taken the matter up with the borough council. But they say they haven't the money to resurface the car park but can fill in potholes with second hand scree left over from other projects."

A borough council spokeswoman said: "We are aware that this site has drainage issues which are a seasonal problem and require significant investment."

"We are able to carry out repairs to alleviate any considerable flooding such as filling in pot holes."



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Another England call-up for Jamie

BUDDING Rugby League star Jamie Hodgkiss, from Croft has again been selected for the England Youth Squad.

The 16-year-old Culcheth High School pupil reports for medical screening this month and will attend his first training camp at a venue yet to be decided from February 14-18.

He will attend a training camp in France from April 9-17 and a further one in London on August 26-28.

Jamie has already had his hands on some international silverware after flying out to Serbia last year with the England team which defeated France 22-14 in the final of the Under 16

European Championship

He fought his way into the squad after months of hard work training - but also needed a little help from surgeons at Warrington Hospital after suffering a wrist injury.

Jamie has a good Rugby League

pedigree. His second cousin, Tommy Martyn, helped St Helens win the Super League Grand Final and the Challenge Cup.

Tommy Martyn Senior played for Warrington and Leigh while his grandfather Ian Hodgkiss and uncle Mickey Martyn both played for Leigh.

Olympic star shows support



OLYMPIC Gold Medallist Sally Gunnell, Wolfie and Pudsy Bear visited Tumble Tots at Newchurch Parish Hall, Culcheth as part of National Children's Activity Weekand to support their sponsored Balance Challenge for the BBC Children In Need Appeal.

Balancing with Sally are Tumble Tots Seth Loynd and Bethan Wallington both aged 3.

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Picture of health

TWO teachers and two parents grew mustaches and pupils painted on mustaches to promote mens health at Culcheth Primary School.

Pictured from left, parent John Bowden, Adele, Jack, year 4 teacher Jason Donohue, Tommy, year 6 teacher Phil Chesworth, Nicole, Mitchell and parent Lee Johnson.

Cricket coaching

GLAZEBCURY Cricket Club will start gearing up for the coming season next month.

Coaching sessions for juniors - aged 8-15 - will start at the Culcheth High School sports hall on Saturday, February 6.

Sessions will be run by qualified England Cricket Board coaches and all equipment is provided.

Further details can be obtained from head coach Mike Durrington on 0772 9853915 or emailing him at elmik2326@aol.com or visiting the club website, www.glazeburycc.org.uk

The club runs senior and junior teams, competing in the Cheshire Cricket Alliance and the West Lancashire Cricket League.

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Pupils win card competition

CULCHETH based Warrington North MP Helen Jones has presented two local youngsters with their prizes after their designs had been chosen for the MP's 2009 Christmas cards.

Kofi Johnson from Glazebury Primary School and Becky Cookson from Winwick entered the House of Commons 150th Anniversary Christmas

Card competition earlier in the year. They each received a box of 60 cards, with their own design, to use for themselves.



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New PA system

MEMBERS of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council have agreed to spend up to £200 on a new public address system for use on Culcheth Community Day.

The council was told the existing PA system was no longer considered adequate.

Officers appointed

SALLY Probert has been appointed chairman of the steering group working on the Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Plan.

Roger Taylor has been appointed secretary and Ann Daybell publicity officer.

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School celebrates 40 years

PUPILS at Twiss Green Community Primary School are pictured looking at old photographs and school log books from 40 years ago.

The pupil's parents attended the school in the 1970s and the school will be celebrating its 40th anniversary this month.

Pictured from left, Thomas Standish, James Anderson, Joshua France, Holly Standish and Jack Burns.



Advertiser's announcement

Make do and mend

THE downturn in the economy has been good for one local firm as householders adopt a "make do and mend" approach instead of buying new.

Professional oven-valeting firm Ovenu is achieving record trading figures as people decide to put off buying new white goods and instead give their existing appliances a new lease of life.

Ovenu's Paul Clark said: "We have seen an increase in bookings from householders keen to get their hard working oven looking good as new. We are seeing a knock on effect from a shift towards a 'make do and mend' attitude, as householders are putting off buying in new white goods and instead turning to us to help preserve and prolong the life of their existing appliances."



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The Gardening Guide

January...



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Row over house that took 17 years to build

DEVELOPMENT control chiefs have decided there is no action they can take over a long running neighbour dispute at Culcheth involving a house first granted planning permission 17 years ago.

The dispute centres on access to a house built in the grounds of an existing house in Twiss Green Lane.

Outline planning consent for the house was granted in 1992, with reserved matters approved the following year.

But the scheme was not implemented and planning consent was renewed in 1997 and again in 2002. Work on site started in 2007.

In a report to the borough council's development control committee,

planning chief John Groves, says breaches of planning conditions have been alleged over a considerable period.

Conditions were attached to ensure access to Twiss Green Lane was improved and available for use prior to the new house being occupied. The developer chose to create an access for construction traffic via Marton Close - and the occupiers of two properties in Marton Close raised concerns over its legitimacy. Enquiries with the developer

indicated the access was intended for the period of construction only.

Mr Groves said this information was passed on to the complainants, together with assurances that the Twiss Green Lane access would have to be provided before the house was occupied. The council assumed once the house was completed the access to Marton Close would cease.

Eventually the Twiss Green Lane access was provided - but the Marton Close access remained in place to the annoyance of the complainants. They claimed it caused a loss of amenity.

Mr Groves said the use of this access perpetuated a longstanding neighbour dispute which had required the

intervention of the police and the courts.

But it had been concluded it would not be appropriate to take enforcement action as there was nothing to indicate the new access would raise any highway safety or amenity objections. Nor was there any condition which precluded a second access.

It was considered there were no legitimate planning grounds to justify enforcement action to require the removal of the access.

The obvious route for the Marton Close residents was to pursue the matter with the Local Government Ombudsman. The council had pointed this out to them but no such action had yet been taken.



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Girl Guides celebrate 100 years

GIRL Guides in Culcheth will celebrate 100 years of the organisation with an exhibition at Culcheth Library.

Photos, memorabilia and uniforms from the last 100 years will be on display from January 25 until February 19.

A church service for all girl guides, past and present, will also take place on February 22 to commemorate the Centenary.

Crime prevention

POLICE are to hold a 'Crime Prevention Day' at Newchurch Parish Hall, Culcheth on Saturday, January 16.

The Fire Service and Trading Standards will also attend the event, which will start at 10am.

Members of the public will be able to pick up advice from officers on a wide range of crime and fire prevention issues.

On Tuesday, January 19 police will be staging another of their popular "Bobby in the Lobby" sessions at Sainsburys, Culcheth between 10-11am - another opportunity for people to talk to local officers.



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THE STYLES FILES styles and co chartered accountants

Funding for business

2009 was a year in which the recession dominated the headlines. We all hope that 2010 will see a return to economic growth – and the banks must play their part.

Although the lack of available funding has been given many media column inches, prior to the recession there was surely too much credit available in certain areas.

At the heart of any offer by a bank to lend money, it should consider both the borrower's available security and their ability to repay the debt (serviceability).

Although there may be viable lending opportunities where full security cannot be provided by the borrower (see later), serviceability is essential. However, how many of us have been offered a 'guaranteed' amount if we take out a personal loan or new credit card? Our personal circumstances aren't known in detail by the potential lender and so it is impossible that they have properly assessed our ability to repay.

Over the past 12 months many businesses have seen their banks focusing on reducing their exposure to debt rather than looking at new lending opportunities.

However, in order for businesses, and therefore the economy, to grow it is essential that banks support viable businesses and that funding is available on realistic terms.

Banks are now telling us that they are looking for new business. In addition to this, the government has put in place certain schemes which will enable the banks to lend where, otherwise, they

might have perceived there being too much risk.

One such scheme, the Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme ("EFGS"), is intended to support businesses based in the UK with turnovers of up to £25 million. Although some restrictions apply, loans of between £10,000 and £1 million are available under the scheme and applications are made through high street banks. Critically, the government will guarantee 75% of the loan. This enables businesses without the levels of security normally required by banks to raise funding.

However, EFGS is not a soft lending scheme and banks must apply the same lending criteria as they do to other loans – the business must be viable and this must be demonstrated in a business plan backed up by robust financial forecasts.

We have had success in obtaining this form of funding for clients and we look forward to helping more businesses in this way over the coming year.

Please note that the contents of this article are intended to inform rather than advise. Tax is a complicated subject 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.

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Welcome to our special feature which is aimed at encouraging our readers to support local businesses. Any local business wishing to feature in future editions please contact us on 0800 955 5247. *Please mention this publication when responding to an advertiser.*

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World cup winner owes it to Town!

CULCETH'S most famous footballing son Roger Hunt says he 'owes it to Warrington Town' for helping kick start his iconic career.



Principal Paul Hafren and Roger Hunt with a signed Warrington Town shirt

Roger was talent spotted playing on Cantilever Park by Liverpool after previously being rejected by Bury!

The rest is history as he went on to become a goal scoring legend for Liverpool and a 1966 World Cup winner with England.

Now Roger is giving his backing to the new partnership between Warrington Collegiate and the town's premier football club which is proving to be a great success, with two members of the Collegiate's team already stepping up to the reserves.

As the club's Principal sponsors, the

Collegiate's Academy team is now a feeder for town's reserves, providing students with a realistic opportunity of playing at a higher level.

Roger said: "This is a great partnership and it will be a big incentive to students knowing that they have got a chance of playing for Warrington Town."

Collegiate Principal Paul Hafren said: "This is a really good partnership which can inspire our youngsters achieve realistic ambitions."

Meanwhile Roger has signed retro Liverpool shirts to help the club with its fund-raising.



Tennis club floodlights rejected

THE controversial plan to install floodlighting on the tennis courts at Culcheth Sports and Social Club has been thrown out by planning chiefs.

Numerous nearby householders had opposed the plan and Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council had also objected.

The scheme was turned down by officers without ever going before the borough council's development control committee.

Residents had opposed the proposals on the grounds their homes would be affected by glare caused

by the 10, 26ft high floodlights proposed and also by noise of an evening.

The parish council admitted it was reluctant to oppose a proposal which would benefit the community but felt the interests of the residents had to take precedent.

Tennis club officials had pointed out the floodlights would enable the club to offer after-school coaching for junior members.

They said their contractors had assured them the lights would be directed down onto the courts and would cause minimal light spillage.

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