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March 2013

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# Editor's Comment



THE massive HS2 project seems to have split communities across Warrington. For every person supporting the proposed new high speed rail link with London, you can easily find another opposing it vehemently.

Some divide on predictably political lines and it's probably best to ignore them. The nature of party politics means that when one side comes up with an idea, the other feels duty bound to rubbish it.

Here in Culcheth, however, there is more unanimity on the issue and while outsiders may blame the "not in my back yard" syndrome we think it is

entirely understandable that a village that will suffer all the inconvenience of the scheme without reaping any of the benefits should be virtually united in opposing it.

So far, it has even got our local politicians singing from the same hymn sheet!

The borough council has, perhaps wisely, initially been a little cagey on the issue.

Council leader Terry O'Neill said: "Officers in our transport and policy teams will be studying these plans closely over the coming weeks and we will be engaging with stakeholders such as parish councils, partner agencies, residents, businesses and neighbouring authorities to formulate and submit our official representation to the government."

HS2 does illustrate one thing, however, and that is our continuing obsession with speed. Trains travelling at 225mph are held up as a reason for pressing ahead with the scheme, even though they will lop only about half-an-hour off journey times between Warrington and the capital.

Is half-an-hour so important? Particularly in an age when we have been told that the internet and video conferencing make much business travel unnecessary?

Our scepticism about HS2 is not based on whether it will benefit this town or that, or despoil this beautiful landscape or that, but rather on whether it is needed at all.

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Culcheth Life  
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# Villagers unite to fight HS2 proposals

VILLAGERS at Culcheth have voiced their strong opposition to the draft HS2 high speed rail line which would slice through the village's Linear Park if current proposals go ahead.

More than 200 people attended a meeting at Culcheth High School organised by the Friends of the Linear Park, Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council and local borough councillors.

It was decided to oppose the proposed route through the Culcheth

and Croft area and to set up an action group to fight the proposals.

More than 20 local people put their names forward as being willing to get involved in the action group and a collection raised £204 to help launch the group.

Parish council chairman Keith Bland, who chaired the meeting, said: "The line which affects Culcheth is not the main HS2 but a spur line."

"There is no way we could stop HS2, but there is every chance of stopping the spur line, or perhaps getting it amended. It is certainly not a lost cause."

"It was a very good meeting and everyone was united."

"I cannot see why HS2 can't go through Warrington Bank Quay station."

Among others at the meeting were parish councillor Matt Smith, borough councillors Chris Vobe, Les Hoyle and Sue Bland, parish councillor Jacqui Johnson, Croft Parish Council chairman Val Allen, Paul Taylor from the Taylor Business Park and representatives from Lowton and Rixton, where action groups have already been set up.

Cllr Smith gave a presentation on HS2 as it impacts on Culcheth and commented on what he believed was a complete lack of any economic assessment by the government on the benefits to the Warrington area.

After the meeting, Cllr Vobe said: "What came across strongly was the determination and great community spirit that continues to prevail."

"Local councillors, at borough and

parish level, are united on this issue and have committed to working together to oppose the current route which would be extremely detrimental to Culcheth."

"It was said at the meeting, and it's absolutely true, that we must pull together, regardless of party politics, to fight for the best deal for our area. We all agree that the current proposals deliver little to no economic benefit to the villages and would see residents suffer immense disruption for no reward."

Cllr Vobe said he and local MP Helen Jones had already held discussions with senior borough council officers over possible

alternative routes and working with other local authorities to help strengthen the case.

Volunteers who signed up for the action group will meet shortly.

Cllr Bland suggested that one of the first things the group should do would be to have talks with the action groups at Lowton and Rixton about co-operating together.

In addition to cutting through the Linear Park, the draft route also appears to impact on the Taylor Business Park, run straight through the Old Rectory in Warrington Road and also affect the Hollins Green area.





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# Action call on Shaw Street

CULCHETH councillor Sue Bland has sent a strongly-worded letter to the borough council calling for action to improve the Shaw Street sports ground.

She wants urgent action to provide a permanent solution to the problems which have plagued the ground for years.

Cllr Bland said: "I have been pressing the council for action on Shaw Street for years.

"In particular, I have complained about pot holes on the car park but

all the borough council ever do is carry out temporary repairs, which don't last five minutes.

"Frequently, large parts of the car park are unusable because they are under inches of water. But I would also like to see a fenced off area on the field for dog walkers so that we don't get dog mess on the sports pitches. I am also asking for showers in the changing rooms - and for the conversion of an old garage used for storage into changing accommodation for juniors.

"Shaw Street is a valuable amenity for Culcheth and it should not be neglected by the council."

Cllr Bland believes that if the car park was brought up to a reasonable standard it could be used to solve problems caused by people parking in the street while they visit local restaurants.

# House in a garden plan approved

A CONTROVERSIAL plan to build a detached house with basement garage in the garden of a bungalow at Culcheth has been given the go-ahead by planners.

But members of the borough's planning committee imposed a condition that obscure glass be installed in windows on a third floor in the roof space, and that the windows be kept locked.

This was to allay fears of neighbours who feared the top floor windows would rob surrounding homes of privacy.

Councillors visited the site in Hob Hey Lane before coming to a decision, following objections from four neighbours and Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council.

The parish council argued that the height and design of the building would be out of character with the area and would cause overlooking and a loss of privacy.

They also believed it could add to existing traffic problems in Hob Hey Lane.

Neighbours claimed the property would effectively be a three-storey house. But planning officers recommended the plan be approved.

They described it as a "small-scale, low impact infill development."

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# Traders ask for 'gesture of goodwill'



Helen Jones MP, Cllr Chris Vobe, and traders at the campaign launch.

ANGRY traders in Culcheth are calling for a reduction in rates following a loss of business caused by the closure of Wilton Lane over the festive season.

Warrington North MP Helen Jones and local councillors Chris Vobe and Matt Smith are backing the traders in their bid to get a business rate reduction from Warrington Borough Council as a "gesture of goodwill."

The MP said: "The decision by the council to close Wilton Lane in the run up to Christmas had a serious knock-on effect for many shops and small businesses in the village.

"These businesses rely on the trade that the Christmas and New Year period brings. They are small firms which provide jobs for local people and help to keep our economy moving. The council chose to threaten the viability of many local firms by carrying out these repairs at the worst possible time."

Her comments were supported by

the two councillors who said they aimed to do all they could to support local traders who, they believe, deserve a fair deal from the council.

They have written to the council, asking for a rate reduction for every Culcheth businesses to compensate for the loss during road closure.

In a joint statement they said: "The council have already admitted that mistakes were made during this work programme.

"Our letter makes clear that a rates reduction would serve as the gesture of goodwill that is sorely needed in these difficult times. It would be a tangible helping hand to exactly the kind of businesses we are trying to help during these difficult economic times."

They say the road is the main route into the village for people in nearby Lowton and Golborne, and closure provoked "widespread controversy" last year.

## 'Women in the mines'

MEMBERS of Culcheth WI learned something of the history of mining, and in particular the role of women, at their monthly meeting.

Guest speaker Graham Stirrup's talk "Women in the Mines" started his story 1,000 years ago when coal was not mined but washed up by the sea and collected.

Most of Britain was forested at this time but shafts were dug 15-20 foot deep by men and women. The men dug for coal but it was the women who carried the coal in baskets which the men strapped to their backs. It took two men to lift the basket which could weigh as much as three hundredweight. It was only later that sledges were used for this job.

By 1812 machinery was in use in England, though not in Scotland which was more isolated. In 1833 children under nine were banned from working in mines and in 1840 Lord Shaftesbury proposed that women and children under 10 should no longer be allowed to work in these conditions.

The House of Lords disagreed but in 1842 the proposal was passed. Women and children under 10 could no longer work underground. In present times there are still a few women workers in the underground but only as engineers and surveyors.

Mr Stirrup illustrated his with slides.

Birthday congratulations were extended to Betty Jones and Mary Bardsley. Ann McCormick was thanked for the lovely flowers. Brenda Seddon gave reminders of outings on April 3 and a later one planned to the Octagon Theatre to see a comedy: "Stitched Up". Christine Seddon reminded members that Osteoporosis testing is to take place in the Parish Hall on April 17 and that monthly outings to the Queen Ann would begin again on March 25.

Tea, coffee and biscuits were served by Ann Hambleton and Barbara Hartley. Raffle prizes were won by Christine Rankin, Betty Jones, Shirley Bennett, Christine Adams, Heather Lawler, Margaret Fletcher and Sheila Stephenson.

## 'Bake off' to raise funds for church

KEEN cooks are invited to take part in a "Bake off" to raise funds for the historic St Oswald's Church, Winwick.

It will take place at Winwick Leisure Centre, Myddleton Lane, on Saturday March 23 from 12 noon to 4pm.

There are four categories: scones, sponge cakes, fruit cakes and biscuits/cookies. Members of the public will be able to buy samples and vote for their favourite.

There will also be an Easter egg tombola and the opportunity for children to decorate home made cakes.

Money will go towards restoration work currently taking place at the church.

One of the organisers Margaret Bunting said: "Although we have been given a grant of £267,000 from the Heritage Lottery Fund, we still have to raise £98,000 in order for

the continuation of our village's Grade 1 listed building to take place.

"Our ultimate aim is for the church building to be used for the whole community, such as concerts etc, as well as its spiritual use."

## Eagles are ready to fly

CULCHETH Eagles Rugby League club kicks off its new season on March 3.

The club is fielding six junior and youth age groups this season with an open age team and The Cubs, who start training and playing tag matches at the age of four.

Eagles have lots of plans in the pipeline for the development of their home ground at Shaw Street, in conjunction with Warrington Borough Council.

Long term, the club plans to provide a modern kitchen/canteen area on site, fence off pitches to meet league requirements and also upgrade changing facilities and pitches - ultimately aiming for a state-of-the-art 4G playing surface.

A club spokesperson said: "We are hoping that the local community will support us in our endeavors to help to make Culcheth Eagles RL a club that local children will be proud to be part of."

Anyone interested in finding out more about the club should visit the website [www.culchetheagles.co.uk](http://www.culchetheagles.co.uk)

# Councillors will be 'on your street' again



Cllr Chris Vobe.

LABOUR councillors will again visit every house in the area to find out what the community's top priorities are.

The "On Your Street" initiative has been launched for a second year in Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft.

Residents will have the chance to speak to Cllr Matt Smith, Cllr Chris Vobe and MP for Warrington North Helen Jones, about their top priorities in the villages.

### Success

Cllr Smith said the scheme was a success last year, and rather than resting on their laurels the team was starting the research again.

He said: "As your local labour campaigner, I want to make sure that I speak out for people here as best I can - and the only way to do that is by listening to them."

"It is going to take us a little time to get round everybody, but we will keep going."

"The local team are out in the village every week and, over the next 12 months, we'll be visiting every street in turn once again, to speak to



Cllr Matt Smith.

you and your family (regardless of your political affiliation) about the issues and concerns that are important to you."

If residents are out when the team calls, a leaflet will be left with details of how to make contact.

## Charity fundraiser

A FUND-raising dinner organised by the Culcheth committee of Cancer Research UK at the General Elliot, Croft, raised £1,086.

There was a three-course meal, tombola, raffle and entertainment from The Settlers.

The money will be split equally between Cancer Research UK and the NSPCC



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## All about the Eggheads!

SPEAKER Betty Hayhurst told Newchurch WI about her appearance on the BBC quiz Eggheads with friends from the Inner Wheel under the team name Five Alive.

She said the BBC staff pressed their clothes and provided refreshments, make-up and hairdressing. But despite some lucky breaks the team lost to the regular "Eggheads."

The team enjoyed their day, but Betty said the main drawback was having to keep quiet about the result for 10 months until the quiz was broadcast.

The meeting opened with a welcome from President Sylvia Brown. She thanked Celia Crowe for the basket of flowers for the table. Ruth Briggs and June Osborne were tea hostesses for the evening. There was sad news of the death of Barbara Trevor, a much-loved member of many years' standing.

Sylvia told members of WI projects to help women in Cameroon and to make cushions for athletes at the Olympics.

Members heard about future events including theatre trips, a coffee morning and photographic competition. Betty Hayhurst then judged the decorated eggs in a competition and chose Olive Lee as winner, with Paddy Poulter and Freda Wilcock coming second and third.

The next meeting is on March 14 at 7.30pm when David Tomlinson will speak about "The Staff of Life". Further details are available from Jean Riley on 762722.

## Change of name for tots group

A CULCHETH mums and tots group has changed its name to reflect the changes in care of youngsters in today's society.

Volunteer Julia Trickett said: "When Mums and Tots was originally established many years ago, mums predominately provided the childcare.

"This is no longer the case with dads, grandparents and childminders all now playing an important role. To reflect this Mums and Tots has recently changed its name to Tuesday Tots."

The group meets from 10am on Tuesdays at Culcheth Methodist Church, for babies and pre-school children and those looking after them.

The group has a range of toys, dressing up clothes, books, art and crafts. Admission is £1.50. A healthy snack break is included, giving the adults time to relax with a hot drink and biscuit.

Advertiser's announcement

## Perfect time for dreaded chore!

LOCAL oven cleaner Paul Clark believes now is the perfect time of the year for a chore that is dreaded in households up and down the country.

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He said: "People's ovens take on a heck of a lot of work due to the number of meals cooked over the holiday season. When we get to this time of year, the oven can be covered in grease and grime, and can become a real fire hazard."

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Paul added: "Ensuring the oven has had a thorough clean can eliminate the risk of a potential fire, helping the oven to run more efficiently and prolonging its life."

A full video demonstration of the valeting process can be seen on the Ovenu Warrington website at [www.ovenuwarrington.net](http://www.ovenuwarrington.net).

For more information contact Paul Clark at Ovenu on 01925 453 377 or [ovenuwarrington@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ovenuwarrington@hotmail.co.uk)

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# £10,144 raised for children's hospice



CUSTOMERS at Bents Garden and Home helped raise £10,144 for the centre's charity of the year Claire House Children's Hospice.

Angella Rawsthorne, senior area fundraiser for the charity, visited the centre to accept the donation. She was joined by the Christie Bear and Sarah Lee from The Christie - the largest cancer care centre in Europe.

Bents managing director Matthew Bent said: "We are delighted with our total for 2012, especially during what has been another difficult year. Our customers have been hugely generous in helping us to raise such a fantastic amount."

"Claire House provides vital care

for children and young people with complex medical conditions from across Cheshire and the surrounding area and we hope our donation will help support the work they do."

He said the centre will continue to work with the charity this year. Bents has set a target of £12,500 which would allow The Christie to purchase a state-of-the-art Intensive Care Bed.

Sarah Lee said: "We are delighted to be working with Bents Garden and Home throughout 2013 and believe this will be a great partnership. We want to thank them for choosing to work with us."

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## The Gardening Guide MARCH

- Encourage a weed free garden by applying a mulch.
- Lawns should be swept and raked prior to the first mowing and given a spring feed.
- If conditions are suitable you can start to plant vegetable seeds.
- Plant herbaceous perennials into a well prepared and conditioned soil.
- Plant your fruit trees by early March to give them a good start.

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# School rated 'outstanding' for behaviour

CULCHETH Primary School has been rated "good" overall following a recent Ofsted inspection.

The school, on Warrington Road, Culcheth, was rated "outstanding" for behaviour and safety of pupils.

Head teacher Amanda Smith said staff, pupils and governors had worked hard and were "delighted" with the results.

The school's previous inspection was also rated "good." This year's assessment was "good" for achievement of pupils, quality of teaching, and leadership and management.

The inspector said: "This is a good school. The school has improved

continuously since the time of the last inspection.

"Children start school with skills below and sometimes well below those typical for their age. By the time they leave Year 6, pupils have made better progress than that typically found nationally and their achievement is good."

The report showed that those who joined the school later than normal were given a "warm welcome." There was also "very good support" for pupils who are disabled, have special education needs, those eligible for the pupil premium and those from Irish traveller backgrounds.

The report showed staff and

governors worked well together, and that pupils were proud of their school. Parents were shown to be "overwhelmingly positive" about the school.

## Inspire

The inspector said: "Leaders and staff foster pupils' love for learning by planning exciting and memorable activities which inspire and motivate them to work hard and strive to succeed."

"Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted outstandingly well. Parents hold overwhelmingly positive views of the

school."

The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) was found to be outstanding. This is particularly the case in the Reception class and Key Stage 1, where lessons are very active and teaching is imaginative, all pupils are fully involved and make rapid progress.

The inspector said the school is not yet "outstanding" as the teaching can only be rated good.

Governors are supportive and hold leaders to account well for pupils' overall performance but they do not receive enough information about how well different groups of pupils are doing."

## Three join accountants' team



Sheri Beck



Brandon Cherrett



Nicola Melia

CULCHETH chartered accountants Styles and Co have appointed three new staff members to cope with business growth.

Sheri Beck has joined as payroll administrator taking on the responsibility of processing payrolls for Styles' clients. In her spare time Sheri enjoys playing squash and cycling.

Brandon Cherrett has been appointed as a trainee AAT Accountant in the "earn and learn" scheme and will gain accountancy experience in the team. He is a football fan supporting Liverpool FC and playing for the Daten Saturday

Open Age team in Culcheth.

The third new staff member is Nicola Melia who shares the role of receptionist and administrator. When not at work she enjoys keeping fit by going to the gym and taking spin classes.

Partner Graeme Hindley said: "We are delighted to welcome Sheri, Brandon and Nicola to the ever expanding Styles team. It's a sign of our continued growth and individually their skills and attitude are helping them play key roles within our accountancy practice."

## Perfect gifts for Mother's Day

Are you unsure what to treat your Mum to on Mother's Day?

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There are so many gift ideas throughout the centre including Candles, Clothes, Scarves, Shoes, Handbags, Ornaments, Bath Bombs and Wall plaques.

Do you want something a bit different? Why not have the ironing done for her or book an appointment in the Beauty Salon or Hairdressers.

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# stylesfiles

## What do our clients think of us?

**Last month we conducted our first ever client survey. It's always a risky business asking your clients what they think of you, but one we were prepared to take. We genuinely wanted to know the answers.**

Our clients are the ones who are using our full range of professional services so they are best placed to give us their honest feedback.

The questions focussed on the client's experience of Styles and Co in terms of overall service, satisfaction, expertise and depth of knowledge. The key highlights were:

- 100% of clients who responded said they were satisfied (or very satisfied) with the service received Styles & Co
- 100% of those responded said they would be happy to recommend Styles and Co
- 95% said the most important

factor they were looking for with an accountant was their needs being understood

- Over 90% said the personal relationship with their Styles and Co partner or client service manager was good or excellent.
- Over 82% who responded said the friendly approach of our staff was excellent

Ian Lloyd, Managing Partner of Styles and Co comments "We are delighted with the response we have received, and thank our clients for taking the time to provide us with their feedback. However, we won't be resting on

our laurels and we will use the results and the comments received to ensure that we continue to improve in every aspect of our endeavour to create and deliver excellent value to our clients".



Ian Lloyd and Graeme Hindley

*Please note the contents of our article are intended to inform rather than advise and you should always take professional advice before taking action.*

If you require any further information or assistance then please contact Ian or Graeme at Styles and Co on 01925 761600.

The Styles Files are provided by Styles & Co, if you would like further information call 01925 761600

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# Karate success is a family affair

A SUCCESSFUL year at a Culcheth based karate club has been a real family affair.  
 North West Karate Academy 's Steve Scott and his sons Luke and Zach, who all live in Birchwood, Warrington, have been at the heart of the success.  
 Luke, 25, is celebrating 20 years in karate after achieving his fourth Dan black belt at an extensive grading session. It consisted of competitive sport kumite (fighting), Jiyu

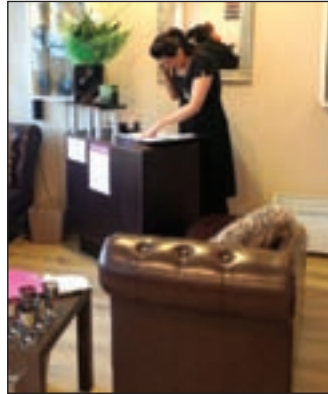
kumite (no holds barred fighting) and competitive Ne waza (ground fighting).  
 Advanced katas (patterned moves) were all demonstrated too, with brother and fellow instructor Zach assisting as his partner in the grading. Zach, 19, is also enjoying success, having been awarded his senior instructor award.  
 He also retained the British open heavyweight kumite championship title last year.

Chief instructor Steve, 52, received his seventh Dan endorsed by the English Karate Federation.  
 Meanwhile ten of the club's students achieved black belt status this year, including Culcheth High School students 15-year-olds Rebecca Duff and Megan Kirkham.  
 They achieved their Junior Cadet Dan grade second level, involving sport karate and basic self defence. They will continue to train towards their adult first Dan at the age of 16.

Advertiser's announcement

## Nail and beauty salon moves next door

CULCHETH'S Fifth Avenue Nails and Beauty salon has moved into larger premises to enable them to accommodate their growing clientele.  
 But clients need not worry - they've only moved next door and are still at The Courtyard, off Common Lane.  
 Emma opened the salon in October 2005, initially specialising in nail treatments and services.  
 But over the years she has developed other beauty treatments, such as waxing, tinting, tanning etc and has built up a loyal clientele.  
 The team - Emma, Kirsty and highly qualified spa therapist Katie - have 44 years experience between them.  
 There is also Rosie, who offers HD brows, threading, lash and semi-permanent make-up.



Emma said: "We now have friendly, cosy and hygienic accommodation where we can offer a really confidential service. We only use best quality products and have undergone the highest level of training to ensure we provide the very best for our lovely clients.  
 "We hope they like the improvements and we will always try to be the best, keep up with industry developers and provide exceptional services and

## WI celebrates its diamond anniversary

MEMBERS of Croft WI celebrated their Diamond Anniversary with special guests, including Cheshire Federation chairman Frances Woollam.  
 President Doreen Clare gave a brief history of the institute from its formation in 1953 up to the present day.  
 She said 1953 was a time of great expectation after the privations of World War 2 - the commencement of the New Elizabethan Age, being Coronation year, and also the year Everest was conquered by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tensing Norgay, a momentous time, not only for Croft WI, but for the whole country.  
 Croft was a much smaller village in those days, so having 74 members, later expanding to 95 was quite an achievement - and the daughter of the then president, Mrs E. Hodgkinson, is a member to this day.  
 Some of the subjects of talks given at meetings in the fifties were similar to the present day, but times have changed and meetings now include the likes of interactive belly-dancing and Zumba!  
 Croft WI members now also enjoy theatre trips, a book club, luncheon club, bowls, organised walks and access to Denman College, where a full spectrum of courses are available.  
 An extensive buffet was enjoyed by all and the singing of "Happy Birthday" accompanied the cutting of the anniversary cake by longest serving members Mary Donaghue and Joan Wilshaw.  
 The president thanked all committee members and Officers and gave a special thank you to Louise Geekie and Nicky Adams for their involvement in the production of the Heritage Banner. The meeting closed with a hearty rendition of the National Anthem.

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# Motoring Car of the year!



AUDI'S A3 Sportback has been named the What Car? magazine "car of the year" after undergoing what the car maker describes as a "considered yet complete transformation."

The all-new five-door premium compact hatchback took the top honour, along with the Best Small Family Car award.

According to the magazine's road test team, there has been a ground-up redesign under the subtly but comprehensively remodelled skin of the new A3 Sportback. The end result as "an incredible package" that sets "the new benchmark", they say.

Referring to the specific version that impressed them most - the 1.4 TFSI 122PS SE - they commend the "smooth and punchy" engine, the "top

drawer" refinement and the suspension, which they say "strikes an exceptional balance between fun and comfort."

Chas Hallett, editor-in-chief at What Car? said: "The Audi A3 Sportback, our 2013 Car of the Year, brings new levels of brilliance in a host of areas. It mixes excellent refinement and an accomplished driving experience with easily the finest cabin quality ever seen in a small family hatchback; you'd have to look at full-size executive saloons to find anything that can match it."

UK deliveries of the car will begin in March with a choice of three advanced turbo charged and directly injected engines - two petrol and one diesel initially. Further engines, will be available later in the year.

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