

VILLAGE life

Your Community Magazine

Issue 165 December 2014

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Woodland wonders!

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Future of Interest Rates

June 5 this year was the day the financial market backdrop changed for the income investor in Europe.

It was on this day that Mario Draghi, president of the European Central Bank (ECB), announced it had cut its deposit rate to -0.1 per cent. In other words, the ECB has become the first big central bank to charge banks for parking their money with it.

There is a school of thought which says you should not get paid 'interest' for having your cash in a UK bank. Why? Because you are not taking any risk. Think about it, if you have £85,000 sat in the bank, and the government is guaranteeing your investment if the bank fails, then why should you get interest as well. One day in the future, the banks will 'cotton on' to this and stop paying interest on deposits.

In the short term I don't expect rates to do anything. Here in the UK the Bank of England has inflation under control, unemployment is hardly out of control. And if you also look around the world most of the developed economies have similar interest rates to us in the UK, and some lower. So expect much of the same. Great news for borrowers though!

Warrington Town FC

What a great night we had recently with Warrington Town beating Exeter in FA Cup. I watched the match on TV and thought it was like a throwback to watching football in the 1980's with proper tackles being made, and a referee that was prepared to let things go. How the Premiership could learn from this!



Finally

As if to add to TESCO's current woes I saw a brilliant bit of marketing the other day on Twitter by one of TESCO's rivals Lidl. It showed the Lidl trademark and the caption was 'Every Lidl helps.'

Don Wernham,
Financial Planner

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• Pensions are changing due to the March 2014 budget and you now have a lot more options to consider'

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Editor's comment

IT'S always been an issue – progress versus conservation. There are those who champion the advancement of science and technology and those who want to preserve the status quo – or at least the best of it!

The tiny village of Hatton, population less than 400 is embroiled in such a controversy at the moment with a majority of the population opposing an innovative plan for a sustainable, low energy house and a lesser number supporting it.

But the applicants have brought in some "big guns" to help promote their cause. Internationally renowned architects say the house is a rare example of how low impact living is possible without sacrificing our culture, history, comfort and local landscape.

It is, in fact, a proposal that Hatton should be proud of and inspired by – an example for others to follow.

In fact, it is the fear that others may follow that worries local residents

most of all. Few, if any of them would argue against a new dwelling which set new standards of sustainability, low energy use, etc. It is just the appearance of the proposed dwelling that bothers them – particularly in the Green Belt.

It has to be admitted the illustrations the applicant has produced show a dwelling that would look more at home in a Scandinavian setting than a Cheshire village.

The developer argues that such levels of sustainability cannot be achieved without a radical approach to design.

But surely a compromise could be worked out that would produce an "eco house" a little more traditional in appearance?

CHRISTMAS is coming again and everywhere people are giving our towns and villages a festive appearance.

For some, it is a means of generating



more business at their busiest time of the year. For some it is a time they rely on to carry them through the rest of the year! And for some, it is just because it is Christmas.

The team at Village Life wishes them all well and extends to them sincere hopes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year – particularly our readers and advertisers.

Walton Hall's Christmas Winter Wonderland

IT'S all happening this Christmas at Walton Hall - Father Christmas will be back again to take up his winter residence and switch on the lights while the Winter Wonderland will recreate the magic of Christmas past.

Winter Wonderland will take place on Saturday 13, Sunday 14, Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 December from 10.30am-4pm - Capture the magic of Christmas past and meet Father Christmas in the heritage yard.

The yard and stables will be transformed into a captivating Winter Wonderland, complete with grotto, traditional games, children's entertainer, live music, yule log making, pottery and more! Don't forget to enjoy a tempting treat and mug of something hot in the cosy coffee shop.



Award for volunteer Syd

VOLUNTEERING stalwart Syd Edwards has been presented with a Volunteering Certificate for his work in and around Appleton.

Syd – husband of Cllr Dot Edwards, chairman of Appleton Parish Council – has been carrying out a wide range of voluntary work in the village for years.

He works in the church yard, around Appleton Thorn war memorial, at the lily pond and also carries out regular litter picking duties.

He has been involved the village Speed Watch scheme for more than 11 years.

Syd was nominated by the parish council and received his certificate from the Mayor of Warrington at a ceremony at Orford Community Centre

Festive lantern parade

SHOPPERS are being invited to get involved in a new Christmas event at Knutsford – a Lantern Parade

The parade will take place from 4pm on Saturday, December 6, starting from St Cross Church, proceeding across the Moor and then into King Street, Minshull Street, Canute Place, Princess Street and Church Hill before ending up back at the Moor.

It is hoped people will then fit in some Christmas shopping in the town.

Two lantern making workshops have already taken place to make sure there will be plenty of lanterns available.

Further details are available from deputy town clerk Lisa Benskin on 01565 653929.

Husband and wife get on their bikes for charity

A HUSBAND and wife from Appleton are getting on their bikes to help raise money for a local hospice.

Martin and Karen Evans, along with their friend Fiona Buckley from Hale, are cycling a challenging 400 kilometres from Vietnam to Cambodia in just five days.

Pedal power will see the trio ride from Saigon all the way to Siem Reap in intense heat and humid conditions – all in the name of charity.

Their route sees them riding from the bustle of Ho Chi Minh City through numerous river communities within the heart of the Mekong Delta to the finish line at stunning Angkor Wat.

The trio are taking on the gruelling challenge to raise money for the

Hospice of the Good Shepherd in Backford which cares for 1,500 people from Chester, Deeside and Cheshire every year.

They have never completed a challenge on this scale ever before and see the ride as a once-in-a-lifetime challenge.

Martin (pictured), aged 48, finance director with a restaurant group, said: "To say we've never done anything on this scale before is an understatement. Not only is it by far the furthest distance I've ever ridden but Karen and Fiona have had to buy bikes just to be able to do this.

"As part of our training we all recently took part in The Christie Foundation's bike ride from Manchester to Blackpool which was tough but less than a quarter of the distance we need to ride this time. We know our Vietnam challenge will be a huge ask – but it will be a fantastic experience and will raise money for a wonderful charity."

The Hospice of the Good Shepherd helps to improve the quality of life for those living with any incurable illness and gives support to families, friends and carers but needs to raise an astounding £6,800 every day to provide free care.

Martin and his team have chosen to support them after the hospice

cared for his mother late last year. He added: "The hospice work very hard to look after families during some very difficult times, as we found out first hand. The care they gave was amazing. Their team were very kind and compassionate through a very hard time and this is our way of thanking them as well as helping to support their work going forward."

The team have covered all travel costs and fees to enter the challenge themselves, meaning that all donations will go straight to the charity.

Anyone who would like to donate and support the challenge, should visit www.justgiving.com/EvansBuckley/



295 homes planned for village

PLANS have been submitted for 295 homes in the "Alice in Wonderland" village of Daresbury.

Developers Redrow Homes (NW) say further planning applications for land at Delph Lane, Daresbury will involve about 505 new homes, with a local shopping centre, 20 acres of employment land and a new marina alongside the Bridgewater Canal.

The plans have been submitted to Halton Borough Council and the initial application is expected to be dealt with early in the New Year.

Redrow say the proposals have won the support of local residents, following an exhibition held in the village earlier this year.

The new houses will be in a range of sizes and styles, from two to four bedrooms and including detached, semi-detached and mews houses.

This planning application complements a previously submitted hybrid planning application, originally submitted in March last year, for 300 new homes to the south of Delph Lane, and outlines how the vision for the site would be delivered as a whole.

As part of the proposals, significant junction improvements on surrounding roads will be delivered to manage traffic flow, provide greater accessibility for local residents and improve road safety.

David O'Reilly, senior planning manager at Redrow, said: "We've been really encouraged by the positive response we've received from local residents as part of the consultation on these plans. We've worked hard to ensure that any concerns have been addressed and we believe that the plans submitted represent the best option for the delivery of the strategic vision for this site."

"As well as much-needed new homes, the scheme as a whole would also provide a boost for the local economy through investment, job creation and the delivery of employment land. A focal point of the community would be created through

the new local centre and residents would benefit from new recreational amenities, including a linear park along the Bridgewater Canal, children's play areas and a marina."

The proposed development is in line with Halton Council's vision for the site, according to Redrow.

*Lewis Carrol, author of Alice in Wonderland, was born at Daresbury and there is a Lewis Carrol visitor centre in the village.

Advertiser's announcement

3 Top Cities to Visit in Europe

Here are a few ideas for a city break to take away your winter blues!

Malaga is a port city on the Costa del Sol in the Andalucía region of southern Spain. It is the second most populous city in Andalucía, the sixth in the whole of Spain and more importantly it's a major tourist destination. Famed for its rich architectural history, Mediterranean cuisine, outstanding wines and beautiful sandy beaches its main attractions are outdoor activities, bars & nightlife, Malaga once a city of Moors and now a city to revel in its gastronomy and festivities is an exceptional place to visit as well as being the birthplace of Picasso. Muelle

Uno has some of the best restaurants of all the streets. Marques de Larios is where the designer shops are found and there are also shopping centres and department stores. There are rickshaw bikes to get around the city which you can use for free. There are beautiful gardens and the Alcazaba Fortress to visit.

Why not try Vienna this is a romantically imperial city: Vienna is a dream city for anyone with a romantic streak or an interest in history. Wander along narrow, medieval alleyways or across imperial squares, view Schönbrunn Palace or the Imperial

Palace (Hofburg) in the footsteps of Sissi and Emperor Franz Josef, and marvel at the majestic architecture along the Ring boulevard.

Vienna is a city of culture, classical or experimental theatre, film or dance festivals, opera or operetta, or exhibitions and concerts - no matter when you come and how long you stay, there is sure to be something exciting for you to discover. Visit one of Vienna's famous coffee houses or traditional wine taverns ("Heurige")

Palma is a genuine year round city break. This is an attractive bustling and historic city where you can visit the medieval walls, palm lined streets, numerous cafes and restaurants. There is a magnificent gothic Cathedral, designer shops, boutique hotels, trendy bars, art gallery's etc. The cultural centre around La Llotja is the hub of the old town and the promenade of Passeig de Born and Parc de la mer are ideal for relaxing strolls.

All these 3 are perfect for a weekend or mid week break.

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Now Ashley is a champion apprentice

A 22-YEAR-OLD bricklayer from Grappenhall Heys has been named the City & Guilds Apprenticeship Champion of the Year.

Ashley Terron, a former student at Warrington Collegiate, won the award at National Apprenticeship Awards finals at Birmingham's LG Arena.

The youngster, who already has an impressive list of awards to his name, fought off competition from hundreds of other former apprentices around England.

He is now working as an assistant site manager with Redrow Homes.

The awards, now in their 11th year, are run by the National Apprenticeship Service and recognise

excellence in two areas - businesses that grow their own talent with apprentices and apprentices who have made a significant contribution to their workplaces.

Ashley said: "My apprenticeship transformed my life and was the start of an incredible learning journey resulting in a gold medal at Worldskills 2013 in bricklaying, after setting a new world record score."

"Since then I've had the opportunity to promote apprenticeships in the UK and worldwide and regularly give

talks to local schools and colleges, inspiring their students to fulfill their potential.

"I hold an enormous amount of belief in apprenticeships being the best pathway from school for a lot of people, leading to a long successful career in industry. I hope to play a big part in further promoting apprenticeships to increase the numbers of people starting them and even start to tackle the skills shortage affecting many industries."

Ashley was chosen as the winner in recognition of the outstanding contribution he has made to championing apprenticeships since

completing his own apprenticeship in 2011.

Chris Jones, chief executive of the City & Guilds Group, said: "City & Guilds is all about helping people get into jobs, and apprenticeships are a fantastic way to do that. That's why it's such a delight to honour Ashley Terron as the Apprenticeship Champion of the Year."

"Ashley has worked tirelessly to promote the benefits of earning while you learn, and is certainly deserving of this award. He's not only demonstrated exceptional talent in the workplace, but has inspired others to follow in his footsteps."



Thugs attack horses at night

HEARTLESS thugs entered a field at Appleton during the night and attacked two horses - hacking off their manes and tails.

The wanton act of cruel vandalism has distressed the horses' owners, Caroline Hesketh and her daughter, Holly, aged eight who found the disfigured animals when they arrived early in the morning.

Police are investigating the incident in a field next to Foxcovert Cemetery in Red Lane.

Caroline said: "I can't imagine what sort of person would do something like this. We haven't any enemies as far as I know so it just looks like a case of mindless, cruel vandalism."

"The worrying thing is that they might come back. The horses' manes and tails will grow back, but it will take a long time."

The two horses, Billy, aged 21 and Holly, aged eight - coincidentally the same name and age as her owner! - have been kept in the field for nearly three years without any previous incident.

Caroline said: "Everybody in the area knows them and everyone is upset at what has happened. I hope everyone will keep an eye on them now, in case the attackers come back."

"I'm just hoping that the more people hear about this, the more likely the culprits will get caught."



Holly, aged eight, with her namesake, Holly.



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An artist's impression of the proposed eco-house.

House of the future divides a village

IT has been described as one of the most advanced eco-houses in the country and one which the local authority, the parish council and villagers should be proud of and inspired by.

The plans won the support of internationally known environmental architects.

But the innovative proposals for a house to be known as Orchard House, to be built on Green Belt land off Warrington Road, Hatton, divided opinion in the village.

Residents were widely consulted and while some supported the principle of an advanced "Passivhaus" others opposed it fiercely.

Hatton Parish Council decided the proposal could have implications for future development in the village and supported opponents of the scheme.

Planning officers at Warrington Borough Council recommended the scheme be thrown out - and councillors agreed.

But environmental architect and author Sofie Pelsmakers, founder of Architecture for Change, a not-for-profit environmental build organisation which aims to challenge current design and build methods, backed the scheme enthusiastically.

She wrote to the council: "The environmental merits of this project are too many to mention, but its performance to a near Passivhaus standard indicates its light footprint on the site and the planet, acting as an exemplar scheme for the parish and its residents to be inspired by and be proud of."

Ms Pelsmakers, author of the Royal Institute of British Architects' "Environmental Design Pocket Book", added: "Designs of the quality and architectural and environmental merit of Orchard House are unfortunately rare.

"We need more of them to inspire

our neighbourhoods that low impact living is possible without sacrificing our culture, history, comfort and local landscape.

"I believe Orchard House is exemplar in setting that pace of change and a scheme the local authority and the parish council will be proud of and will be upholding in the future as exemplar for other buildings and renovations to aspire to."

She pointed out it had recently been announced that global greenhouse gases were at their highest level ever recorded and that the current pace of change was nowhere near fast enough to avoid dangerous levels of climate change.

"Using basic environmental principles, Orchard House will be one of the lowest impact builds in the country, paving the way for truly environmental designs of the future."

Objectors said the house would not blend with the general environment or the individual look of houses in the village.

With its unusual appearance, it would dominate the street scene and nearby properties.

Planning officers said while the house could be described as interesting and unusual, it could equally be viewed as a "jarring and inconsistent feature."

It would represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt and that there are insufficient "very special circumstances" to outweigh this.

*A Passivhaus is a building which provides a high level of comfort without high energy consumption.

Tory wins by-election

CHRISTOPHER Gray, Conservative, has been elected to Knutsford Town Council in a by-election in Nether Ward following the death of Cllr Clive Nicholson.

He topped the poll in a three-cornered fight, polling 271 votes in a 23.29 turnout.

Independent Julie Tempest came second with 160 votes and Labour's Graeme Webster was third with 62 votes.

Wildlife artist wins prestigious new award

WILDLIFE artist Anita Young has become the first person to win a prestigious new award – the Association of Animal Artists’ Inaugural Chairman’s award.

Anita, from Stockton Heath, was presented with the award at the association’s annual dinner at Wrightington, near Wigan.

She said: “It is wonderful to have the recognition of the Association and makes all the hard work of this last 12-18 months so much more worthwhile.

“There are lots of exciting new projects already developing on the horizon for 2015. The award has given a boost to my motivation to move forward with renewed confidence – and reassurance that I am travelling in the

right direction”.

Anita, who paints and teaches from a studio at Higher Whitley, is strongly influenced by her deep love of nature.

She has an all-consuming passion for wolves, is a dedicated supporter of wild wolf conservation and promotes the cause at every opportunity through her paintings, workshops, demonstrations and talks.

The Association of Animal Artists was founded in 2009 to offer opportunities and support to animal artists who have already attained a level of expertise

and experience, whether as amateurs or professionals, and who wish to promote and exhibit their artwork and further progress their skills.

The Inaugural Chairman’s Award was conceived as a means of recognising the achievements of an up-and-coming member artist who exemplifies the founding principles of the Association and who has raised the profile of animal art through their work during the previous 12 months.

As the first recipient of the award, Anita was commended for her sterling work in a number of areas of artistic endeavour and activity – for her support of wolf conservation, contributing a

percentage of proceeds from sales of painting prints and raising awareness through the narrative painting “Glowing Embers of Ice” and for her support of local community projects via donations to the Warrington Wolves Charitable Foundation from sales of her previous work “Spirit of the Pack.”

Anita received her award from the Inaugural Chairman herself, Anne Corless, who was a founder member of the association and chairman for four years until last year.

Anita’s latest work, “Glowing Embers of Ice” is on display at the Castle Park Art Centre, Frodsham, until January 4.



Anita with her painting “Glowing Embers of Ice.”

Prime Minister praises work of local media

PRIME MINISTER David Cameron praised the work of local newspapers and magazines during a special reception at 10 Downing Street.

The event was attended by local and regional Editors and publishers including Village Life Editor Gary Skentelbery, who was a guest of

Warrington South MP David Mowat.

During the reception Mr Cameron said local newspapers and magazines were vitally important for reporting on important issues within local communities.

Commenting on the event Gary said: “Whatever your politics you

can not help but be impressed by 10 Downing Street and all the famous faces pictured on the walls as you walk up the stairs. You literally walk through history.

“As well as meeting the Prime Minister it was also interesting to meet other local and regional

Editors and publishers and hear how they have been faring through the recession and engaging more with online news.

“As the first independent online newspaper in mainland Britain it was interesting to see how many others have now followed our lead!”



(L-R) Gary Skentelbery and David Mowat with the Prime Minister.



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Historic vehicles on show

THE annual Festival of Transport at High Legh Garden Centre attracted thousands of people to see more than 140 historic vehicles of all shapes and sizes.

The event was organised by the Historic Rally Car Register and Knutsford and District Motor Club to raise money for the North West Air Ambulance.

Exhibits varied from the Sheldon's Dairy horse-drawn milk float to the amazing, futuristic Tesla electric car.

In between, were veteran and vintage cars representing various marques – some of which no longer exist except in museums and private collections.

The event is expected to raise more than £500 for the air ambulance charity.



Priestley opens £1.5m technology centre



Top, principal Mike Southworth, Dr David Whan, chairman of governors Reg Haslam and vice chairman Di Stead along with Priestley students.

A £1.5 million technology centre that will improve the education of thousands of young people has opened at Warrington's Priestley College.

The development – known as the Lewis Carroll Building – will house more than 200 computers and be home to Priestley's computing and ICT courses.

Speaking at the opening ceremony, principal Mike Southworth said the new facility was befitting of the education Priestley provided.

He said: "I think it's great news for Warrington that our town's young people now have access to cutting edge facilities that will enhance their learning and acquisition of skills including those in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

"Not only does this improve their own life chances, but it will also contribute to the economic and social prosperity of our town and indeed beyond."

The opening ceremony was attended by councillors, representatives from the University of Salford and Barclays Bank as well as governors, tutors and students.

Guest of honour Dr David Whan,

a trustee of the New Engineering Foundation, spoke of the significance of opening such a building at a college named after renowned scientist Joseph Priestley.

After meeting students and having a tour of the college he said the centre would be a great asset.

"Joseph Priestley was a remarkable man and this is a college that is fit to bear his name," he said.

Overall, £14 million has been spent over the past eight years to create an environment that brings out the best in students at Priestley.

Last year the college became the UK's first dedicated sixth form to receive STEM assured status – making it one of the country's top providers of science, technology, engineering and mathematics education.

Mr Southworth said the Lewis Carroll Building would provide a great environment in which to learn.

"I'm privileged to be in my 13th year as principal here at Priestley and without doubt today represents a very important milestone in the development of our college," he said.

Pupils plant bulbs along woodland path

CHILDREN from High Legh Primary School turned out to plant bulbs along a new woodland pathway that has been created near to the school.

The pathway was created by the Village Appearance Group, as part of the High Legh Parish Plan and links the school in Wrenshot Lane with nearby housing areas.

It was completed in time for the school re-opening after the summer holiday and is now well used by the children and walkers taking advantage of a "mud free" zone.

The project was funded by Cheshire East Council, Manchester Airport community Trust Fund, High Legh Parish Council and Sunday Tea customers at High Legh Parish Hall.

The original plans were drawn up by landscape architect Marianne Dobson and Richard Cornwall Legh and the project was organised by group secretary John Cope.



(left to right) Fergus Thompson, aged 8, Toby Ashford, 9, landscape architect Marianne Dobson, Elizabeth Mann, 8 and Eve Hanif.

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Money Column

By Margaret Black

We wish you a Merry Christmas and here are some tax tips

The Christmas Party (Pass me a cracker)

You can offset up to £150 per employee, per year, against profit for spending on treats like "Christmas bash" – so go party

What About Checking 'The VAT Flat Rate Scheme' (What was that, you want us to tell you more?)

If you're VAT registered, you "may" be able to save money by going on the Flat Rate Scheme (FRS). This means that instead of paying the difference between 20% on sales and 20% on purchases, you pay a percentage of total gross sales.

Incorporation – Maybe! (The savings could be there)

Once you reach a certain level of turnover, under current legislation, it may be more tax efficient to convert from a Sole Trader or Partnership to a Limited Company. You can save loads of tax by remunerating yourself in a certain way.

Use Up Available Tax Free Allowances... (and why not)

Are you married or have a life partner? Do they help out in your business and do not have any other income? Why not make them a part of your business, use up their otherwise wasted tax free allowances Note: do it properly "a legitimate position commanding a legitimate wage"

Don't Lose Out (Offset! Offset! Offset!)

If you've got more than one business or source of income and you are showing a loss in the year and you may be able to offset this loss against other income which may subsequently to produce a tax refund. Want to know more...?

Drive For Miles (The Long and Winding Road -Wheee)

If you are not already doing so, check out if it is more tax efficient for you to claim on miles travelled as an alternative method to the one you might be using. Do the comparison, maybe you need help to do this?

Good Things Are Meant for Sharing (A Bit like Rolo - Who Do You Know Well Enough?)

Do you have employees who have been with you since they were knee high to a grass hopper, and they work really hard and you cannot think of a way to reward them. Here is one way you could do it - issue them with a considered minority share in the company and remunerate with salary and dividend saving loads of tax for both employee(s) and company. You will almost certainly need help setting this up. (We are here to help)

Hit The High Street (Brown Paper Packages Tied Up With String)

When is your 'YEAR END?' When do



you get any 'TAX SAVINGS ON BUSINESS PURCHASES?', especially the 'significant' buys. Well! You buy them before your year end of course, in other words don't wait until the day after otherwise you will have to wait virtually a whole year before you benefit from any tax savings.

Then There Is Your Domestic (Like Mrs Overall?)

If you conduct your work from home, you can claim a 'reasonable' proportion of household bills through your business (gas, electricity, internet etc). Every little helps, ooh where have I heard that before.

The Money Column is provided by
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jobs fair

I will be holding a Jobs Fair on Friday 6th February 2015 at The Parr Hall.

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If you are a business that would like a stand at the Jobs Fair, please call **01424 441833** or email: terri@eventsoffice.co.uk

www.warringtonjobsfair.com



Breakfast with Santa

Add an extra 'WOW' to Christmas

Enjoy a festive breakfast with Santa this Christmas. There will be plenty of festive fun and laughter including a Winter Train Ride and each child will receive a gift from Santa.

Breakfast with Santa dates

Saturdays 13th & 20th December

Sundays 14th & 21st December, Monday 22nd, Tuesday 23rd and 24th December

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To get your business on track and in the 'Pink' contact James Bryan on **01925 631592**

Christmas market will be bigger and better

STOCKTON Heath Festival's annual Christmas Market takes place on Sunday, December 7 – and this year its expected to be bigger and better.

There will be more locations around the village and something for all ages with shopping, entertainment and a range of refreshments.

In total there will be approximately 50 stalls selling crafts, delicious foods and the chance to get that unique gift.

Stockton Heath Primary School in West Avenue will have a variety of stalls and serve refreshments.

Santa will be based there along with his post box and there will be face painting. There is also the chance to win a fabulous hamper or a children's prize in the festival raffles.

Proceeds from these raffles will go towards the cost of putting on the summer Festival.

The Forge shopping centre will also have stalls and Festival Volunteers will be serving mince pies and mulled wine.

Walton Lea Project will be selling their produce outside The Red Lion and behind the pub there will be a special children's area with story telling and singing.

For the first time this year there will be food stalls, including hot foods, in Victoria Square outside The Mulberry Tree.

Entertainments adding to the Christmas atmosphere will include the evocative sounds of the Golborne Brass Band, local choirs Wired for Sound, Vocal Infinity and the Bridgewater Singers along with the infectious voices from Sixpence Voice Studio.

Christmas lights will be on and many of the village's shops and wide range of cafes, restaurants and pubs will be open.

For specific information about the markets contact markets@stocktonheathfestival.co.uk, or visit the website www.stocktonheathfestival.co.uk

Entry opens for 10k race



ENTRY to the 2015 Robert Moffat Memorial High Legh 10k is now open – but is filling up fast.

Now in its eighth year the race around High Legh continues to grow in popularity, with entry now limited to 600 runners, and is continually over-subscribed.

The race will once again be organised jointly by Lymm Runners and the High Legh Community Association.

Lymm Runners will be offering a free "from zero to 10k" training course starting in early January and leading up to the race.

The race will be chip timed and the new team category, introduced last year and won by Knutsford Tri Club, will once again be up for grabs, as well as individual prizes for males and females. All runners receive a goody bag including a technical running T-shirt.

Chris Lees, Lymm Runners captain and race director, said: "The course is the same as last year and mostly on quiet, flat country lanes, and we will of course have our friendly and enthusiastic team of marshals and race organisers and free parking."

"Over the years the race has grown in popularity and number of entrants, but it still has a friendly atmosphere, and is well supported by the running community, whether part time fitness runners or competitive athletes, as well as the wider local community."

The High Legh 10k takes place on Sunday, March 1 at 11am. Entry before December is £15 for affiliated runners and £17 for non-affiliated runners.

After December, if any places are left, the fee will increase.

The route starts and finishes at High Legh Primary School and refreshments are provided by the school's PTA.

For more information or to enter visit: www.highlegh10k.org.uk.

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What's on in the villages

December 9
STOCKTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
Sandy Lane Centre, Stockton Heath. 7.30pm

December 16
APPLETON PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 7.30pm

December 18
GRAPPENHALL & THELWALL PARISH COUNCIL
Council Offices, Bellhouse Lane. 7.30pm

Every Monday
ST MARY MAGDALENE MONDAY CLUB
St Mary Magdalene Church, Appleton 1.30pm

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

BRIDGE CLUB
Grappenhall Village Sports Club
Stockton Lane. 7.30pm. Details 01928 712233

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

HIGH LEGH RUBBER BRIDGE CLUB
Village Hall, 7-10pm. Details: Audrey Greaves 0161 904 0120

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

First and third Wednesday each month
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS
Sandy Lane Centre, Stockton Heath.
8pm. Details: 01925 268311

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

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

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

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

BRIDGE CLUB
Grappenhall Village Sports Club
Stockton Lane. 7.30pm. Details 01928 712233

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

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

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

GRAPPENHALL WI
Grappenhall Community Centre, Bellhouse Lane 2.15pm

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

To list your event call Village Life on
01925 623632



Simple Solutions celebrating five years in village

Simple Solutions Financial Management is celebrating 5 years of working in their Stockton Heath office...how time flies when you enjoy what you do!

...In 2009 when Don and Tracy had aspirations of setting up an office in Stockton Heath, it was a quite a scary time within their industry, as it was only 12 months on from the banking crisis and the country was still in recessionary times. But because they had a strong vision of wanting to create a successful financial services business based locally in Stockton Heath, they were determined to set about structuring their office within the village.

Tracy explained: "The first two years like any business you are building, were long hours and hard work and felt like we both lived at the office premises, starting work early and finishing late into the night on many occasions, however as we both have a strong work ethic, we thrived on the excitement and experience of seeing our business starting to form and take shape.

"In 20011 we took on our first employee Declan, our son, who had worked within the banking industry for a number of years prior to joining us. Declan was then trained up to support Don as a Paraplanner. In 2013 we then took on another member of staff, Sharon, who is Diploma qualified and also supports Don as a Parra planner as well as undertaking a

business development role within the business. Our turnover continues to increase year on year and it is highly likely that we will need to take on another member of staff in 2016 to support our business needs.

"Our industry is a service led business and we feel that part of our

success story is down to offering our clients a great customer service; we know this because our clients tell us that they value this about us. Many of our clients recommend us to their family and friends and it is this fact that we feel most proud of...You would only recommend someone who

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Solicitors raise over £3k for hospice



L to R Norman Banner (FDR consultant solicitor and former senior partner/St Rocco chairman), Helen Latham (St Rocco's), Margaret Evans (FDR Commercial partner) and Emma Stride, (FDR Wills Partner).

LOCAL law firm FDR Law has raised £3,120 for St Rocco's Hospice, thanks to a charity will week and golf day involving solicitors, staff and clients.

The firm's wills and probate specialists gave their legal services for free in a special will-making week in May when dozens of clients were asked to make a donation to the hospice in return for FDR's professional services. Wills and probate partner Emma Stride

led the initiative which resulted in a £2,730 boost for the charity.

And in September, the firm's business associates battled on the greens of Delamere Forest Golf Course in aid of the charity. Commercial partner Margaret Evans organised the popular annual golf contest which raised £390. The winning team comprised of Paul Richards (Mitchell Charlesworth), Jonathan Mckenna (RBS) and Eddie

Coxon (GVA Dixon Webb).

Oliver Burton, FDR Law chief executive, said: "We have enjoyed a long association with St Rocco's and over the years raised thousands of pounds for the charity. It's really important for a law firm rooted in our local community to support such a worthwhile local cause. All our staff and clients have responded magnificently to the fundraising challenge."

St Rocco's fundraising manager, Claire Houghton, thanked FDR Law for its support. "With running costs of almost £8,000 a day, 365 days a year, we rely on the local community for our funding. One in three of us will be touched by hospice care. Each year St Rocco's cares for hundreds of patients with a terminal illness and supports their carers, family and friends. Your support helps us continue this care."

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