

Village Life

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November 2010

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IT is inevitable in these times of cuts in public spending that the future of Grappenhall Library, one of the smallest and least used in the borough, should come under scrutiny.

But it is far from inevitable that Grappenhall should lose its library service. Even if the building, at the junction of Victoria Avenue and Albert Road, has to close, there is surely some alternative premises the library service could share. We think Coun Mike Biggin's suggestion of moving the service to Grappenhall Youth and Community Centre, in Bellhouse Lane, is one worth investigating.

The borough council has suggested that it should be the people that decide whether the library, together

with the Mobile Library Service, should close or not. They have launched a public consultation exercise before making a final decision.

We can only urge readers - whether from Grappenhall or elsewhere - to take part in this consultation.

The borough will undoubtedly regard a low participation as a sign of indifference and people who don't care whether the library closes or not will be ranked alongside those - if there are any - who support the closure.

An independent library review board, set up to advise the borough council, were unanimous in recommending the closures in preference to a reduction in opening

hours across all the borough's libraries. We are not entirely convinced by their argument but we fear it may well prevail.

However, a massive rejection of the closures by the public could well shift the balance so we repeat: Take part in the consultation.

War Memorial

ENGLISH Heritage has confirmed that Thelwall War Memorial has been added to the list of Grade 2 Listed buildings.

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'Residents only' parking proposal

CONSULTATION on a "residents only" parking scheme in Stockton Heath will be carried out during November.

The area chosen is bounded by Fairfield Road, London Road and - but not including - Alexandra Road.

A parking survey is being carried out by the borough council. Results will be published early in the month and then residents will be consulted, before a final report is published in December.

Remembrance Sunday

A GRANT of £120 for a Remembrance Sunday wreath and donation to the Royal British Legion has been made by Stockton Heath Parish Council.

Members agreed that chairman Coun Graham Roughsedge should lay the wreath at the village ceremony on Sunday, November 14. The parish council heard a procession will assemble in the Lower Forge car park at 10.20am, before the service.

Following complaints last year about traffic, the council has contacted police to ask for traffic to be stopped during the event.

Library closure: The people must decide

MEMBERS of the public will decide whether Grappenhall Library must close to help the borough council save £387,000 a year.

The council is to go out to widespread consultation on whether the library, along with a similar branch library at Great Sankey and the mobile library service, should be closed.

Members of the council's executive board insist that it will be the public that make the final decision.

An independent library review board was set up in May and has come up with two options - closing the two libraries and the mobile service or cutting opening hours at all libraries across the borough by an average of five hours a week.

The review board unanimously supported the closures which, if they go ahead, will take place next April.

Other reductions would be achieved through not filling vacant posts, redirection of management costs, reducing book stocks, ceasing to stock periodicals and making further efficiencies on supplies and services, whichever option was chosen.

But the review board warned that cutting hours at all libraries could reduce the library service to such a point that it could be in breach of the council's duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient service under the Libraries Act.

Executive member Coun Mike Biggin (pictured), of Grappenhall, said: "Clearly things can't stay as they are. But we would be losing valuable services and some people will be affected."

He suggested the library could be moved to Grappenhall Community Centre, where there was plenty of



space available.

Leader of the council Ian Marks said he hoped the consultation exercise would bring in creative suggestions from the public, which would enable the council to maintain and develop the library service in new ways.

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National success for Stockley Veg Man

A Cheshire man who launched his own franchise business last year has been named as one of Riverford Organic's top franchisees in the UK.

Alan McInness, who delivers fruit and veg boxes to customers across Cheshire and Merseyside, beat off competition from 110 other Riverford Organic franchisees nationally to be named runner up in the company's Franchisee of the Year Awards 2010.

Presenting Alan with his award Guy Watson, founder of Riverford Organic which delivers to more than 47,000 customers across the UK each week and was named Best Ethical Retailer in the 2010 Observer Ethical Awards, said:

"Alan has done an amazing job developing his business and the Riverford brand across Cheshire and Merseyside. He is now turning over in the region of £7,000 every week and is a great example to our other franchisees across the UK. His success is down to many factors and, as well as recruiting many new customers and developing sales considerably, Alan is also popular with his existing customers many of whom have commented on the high levels of customer service they enjoy."

Alan's turnover was just £750 a week when he launched his business in August 2009 so his current weekly turnover figure of £7,000

demonstrates phenomenal growth. He has worked tirelessly to encourage debate about organic, seasonal and healthy food on a local level, attending many food festivals, events and farmers markets and working with community groups and schools across the area.

"Alan is a real ambassador for Riverford and his passion for organic, seasonal and great tasting produce

along with his hard work have really paid off. His success is helping Riverford on Stockley Farm (the company's sister farm in the North West) further develop the Riverford brand across the North West as we look to encourage more and more consumers to think local and organic and enjoy the convenience of receiving a weekly box delivery."



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We can offer rail travel to these destinations for those people who do not want to fly or go by coach. included is return rail from Warrington or any station of your choice, 3 nights hotel accommodation, the services of a tour manager and visits to Christmas Market. Enjoy a trip round the city and sample the local cuisine in the evenings. Ring for more details 01925 269400.

from Manchester or other regional airports for the day or stay for 2 nights or more. Take the trip to north of Finnish Lapland where you will visit totally unspoilt snow covered wilderness. The trip includes an all inclusive package ie the hire of protective thermal suit and boots, so all you need to take is hat scarf and gloves plus wear warm clothing (thermals are advisable as the temperatures can drop to as low as -32 degrees)

Once you arrive you will be taken from the airport to commence your memorable time here. Take a reindeer sleigh trip or a 40 minute husky dog sled ride. If you have a full UK driving licence why not take a snowmobile trip which lasts about one and half hours - children are accommodated in the sleigh behind the tour guides. There will be time to play in the snow and experience tobogganing, snowballs and see who can make the tallest snowman. There is a lunch included and then you will be off to search for Father



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Christmas through the forest and each family will have their own private time with him.

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Christmas lights switch on

Thur 18 Nov, 5.30pm - 7.30pm
Old Market Place, Golden Square
with a big screen on Bridge Street

Wire FM host an evening of family entertainment with special guest Bob the Builder and a 2010 X Factor finalist. Advance tickets required to guarantee admission to Old Market Place. For details please contact Golden Square on 01925 631387.

Warrington's vintage Christmas

Sat 20 Nov, 10am - 4pm
Warrington Market, Time Square
and Market Gate

Over 30 specialist traders will be in the market events hall with the best in retro fashion, handicrafts and collectables. Vintage vehicle display in Time Square and an ice sculpture at Market Gate.

Christmas market

Sat 27 Nov, 10am - 4pm
Warrington Market Forecourt,
Time Square and Market Gate

The three wise men are doing their shopping at Warrington's Christmas market. Come and meet them and their camels.

Late night shopping

Every Thur 18 Nov - 18 Dec and
Mon 20 - Thur 23, 9am - 9pm

Free entry to Golden Square car park after 4pm and free exit from council car parks after 6.30pm.

Christmas grotto

Sat 27 Nov and then weekends
in December until Xmas.
Warrington Market

Contact Warrington Disability Partnership for opening times on 01925 240855.

Lunchtime school choir concerts

Weekdays Mon 1 Dec - Fri 17 Dec
Golden Square

Salvation Army Band

Sat 4, 11, 18 Dec and Fri 24 Dec,
10am - 12pm Market Gate

Christmas craft fayre

Old Market Place Golden Square
For details contact Golden Square
on 01925 631387.

Warrington lantern parade

Thur 16 Dec, 6pm - 7.30pm
Old Market Place, Golden Square
Starts from the Old Market Place
and takes in Horsemarket Street and
Bridge Street before returning to
Golden Square.

Free park and ride

Every Sat 13 Nov - 18 Dec,
9.30am - 6pm

Operating from secure car parks north and south of the town. Buses every eight minutes direct to and from the Bus Interchange in the town centre. Car parks will be clearly sign-posted from the highway.

Park and ride 1 (South) from Wilderspool Park



Park and ride 2 (North) from Warrington Collegiate



Free Sunday parking

Shops open throughout the town centre. Free parking at Cockhedge, Golden Square and council car parks all day.

Ready steady cook!



YOUNGSTERS at Appleton Thorn Primary School were given a lesson in "ready, steady, cook" during a special cooking demonstration from the Crazy Hog Catering Company.

The event was organised as part of British Food Fortnight supporting the use of local produce, which was donated by Riverside Organics produce at Stockley Farm.

Ian Robinson from the Crazy Hog Catering Company is pictured with Hattie Porteous aged 10 and Leo Roberts aged 8 making a stir fry chicken dish.

Bus shelters refurbished

A PROGRAMME of refurbishing bus shelters in Grappenhall and Thelwall has been carried out - resulting in new seating and new windows.

Windows had fallen out in numerous shelters following a spate of thefts of stainless steel window supports.

Parish council chairman Coun Mike Biggin said: "At first we thought it was vandalism but then it was realised the problem was being caused by thieves stealing the stainless steel."

Police asked to step up surveillance

POLICE have been asked to carry out increased surveillance on the B5356 Stretton Road through Appleton Thorn.

Coun Dot Edwards told Appleton Parish Council she was concerned that a temporary ban on driving on the A50 Knutsford Road, from Bellhouse Lane to Cliff Lane, during November and December, would result in increased use of the B5356 by heavy lorries, travelling to and from the trading estates of Barleycastle Lane, despite the weight limit in place.

She asked if police could contact companies on the estate to ask their drivers to use the designated route.

Joy as 'lost' £38,000 grant restored

A £38,000 grant which was feared a casualty of Government spending cuts has been spared.

The grant for Grappenhall's Euclid Park has been restored and will enable Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council and the Mersey Forest to press ahead with ambitious proposals to open up the park to a wider section of the community.

A "natural play park" is planned, with improved access for the disabled, a nature trail, wildflower areas, and an amphitheatre where people can gather.

There will also be a path winding through the park.

Parish council chairman Coun Mike Biggin said: "This is excellent news. We feared this grant had been lost but I am delighted to say it hasn't."

"Much of the planning has already been done so there need not be any delay."

"In fact, the money has to be spent by next March so we have to get moving."

"But the first thing we must do is consult with local residents. We want to make sure they approve of what we are proposing."

"The aim is to make the park attractive to a wider age group."

Meanwhile, members of the parish council rolled up their sleeves and spent two weekends planting 10,000 bulbs at the "gateways" to both Grappenhall and Thelwall in Deans Lane, Knutsford Road, Bellhouse Lane and on various roundabouts.

This should result in a blaze of colour in the spring as thousands of daffodils, narcissus and hyacinths come into bloom.

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What's On in the Villages

November 2

STOCKTON HEATH FLOWER CLUB
Patti Dawson of Penrith: A Winter's Tale
Appleton Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 7.30pm.

November 9

STOCKTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
Sandy Lane Centre. 7.30pm

November 16

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

November 25

LIVE AT ST WILFRID'S
The Leyland Band with music from the
Classics to the Movies
St Wilfrid's Parish Church, Grappenhall. 7.30pm.

Every Monday

THE EVERGREENS Senior Citizen's Club
Bellhouse Community Centre, Grappenhall.
Details: 01925 261381

ST MARY MAGDALENE MONDAY CLUB
1.30pm

FOLK 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

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 first Monday

STOCKTON HEATH FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY
St Mary Magdalene's Church, Dingle Way, Appleton.
8pm. Contact: Linda Pearson 01925 602803.

NATIONAL VEGETABLE SOCIETY

Cheshire District meeting
Grappenhall Ex-Servicemen's Club, Chester Road,
Grappenhall.
8pm. Details: 01925 265773.

Every fourth Monday

MARFIELD WI
Independent Methodist Chapel, Knutsford 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.

Second and Fourth Tuesday of each month

STOCKTON HEATH & DISTRICT LIONS
Ram's Head, Grappenhall.

Every Wednesday

Lymm Afternoon Bridge Club
Appleton Parish Hall. 1.15-4.15pm

Every first Wednesday

Walton WI
St John's Church Community Hall. 7.30pm

First and third Wednesday each month

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS
Sandy Lane Centre, Stockton Heath.
8pm. Details: 01925 268311

Every third Wednesday

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

Every Thursday

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

Every second Thursday

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

Every third Thursday

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

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



Dalek-size recycling bins 'a waste of time'

PLANS to encourage late night revellers in Stockton Heath to recycle their drinks containers are a 'waste of time' according to the parish council.

Members heard the borough council was planning to provide recycling bins on the streets in the village centre to target the "night time economy."

The borough proposed two groups of two bins in the centre, for people to recycle plastic containers, bottles, paper and card.

But Coun Stephen Taylor said: "This initiative to target the night time economy is a waste of time."

"I cannot see people who have had a few bebies using these."

Chairman Coun Graham Roughsedge (pictured) said he had walked through the village centre many time early on Sunday mornings and litter had not been a problem.

He said: "We have got bins in the village centre already. Will they also stay? We could end up with a plethora of bins."

"The pubs and restaurants already clean up the area around their land - so I cannot see why we need these "Dalek-size" bins."

One of the organisers of Stockton Heath Festival Coun Helen Dutton complained about people attending festival events and leaving litter "all over the field."

She said: "People will not take the stuff away with them. We have to get it into their heads - don't just drop litter."

Coun Tudor Pole confirmed bins had been provided and were



constantly emptied but people continued to leave litter.

Members heard the new bins would be provided on a trial basis. They decided to invite borough officers to a future meeting to get more information on the scheme.

'Glossy' council newsletter criticised

PLANS to upgrade a parish council newsletter on to glossy paper were criticised as a waste of public money.

Stockton Heath Parish Council was considering plans to improve its newsletter in a bid to reach more people.

Members had been impressed by the high-quality newsletter produced by Stretton Parish Council.

But Coun Sonia Boggan said: "Is it necessary to go to all this expense?"

"This is just a case of 'keeping up with the Jones.' We are just telling people what is going on - all this expense in the current economic climate is wasting money."

Coun Wendy Emsley said: "I think this would upgrade Stockton Heath. In a way it is advertising Stockton Heath and the work that we do."

Members were told 2,888 copies were produced of each issue of the newsletter and agreed to increase the budget for next year from £450 to £900 to enable a glossy publication with pictures to be produced."

Road repairs axed

LARGE areas of Quarry Lane, Appleton previously earmarked for repairs will not now be dealt with because of borough council budget restraints, the parish council has been told.

Coun John Price told the council the pot hole situation in Quarry Lane had deteriorated.

Problem

Clerk Peter Briggs said he would contact the borough council again about the problem but indicated that in discussions with the borough's highways inspector he had been told large area previously earmarked for repair on Quarry Lane North would not now receive attention due to budget restraints.

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Ideas wanted to improve village

IDEAS to improve the look of Stockton Heath village are being considered by the parish council.

Members heard the village has been chosen by the borough council for a "Look of the Borough" project.

This means borough council workers will be available to carry out work in the village for six weeks from March 21 next year.

Clerk Peter Briggs said: "We need to keep the team busy for six weeks, so we need input on ideas."

He suggested improving the landscaped area at the end of East Avenue, painting railings on Walton Road and fixing paving in Victoria Square.

Members agreed to take a look around their wards to see what work needs doing. They also agreed to invite borough officers to a future meeting to explain more about the project.

Coun Robin Wilson said members needed to consult residents on possible projects to ensure there was enough work to be done.

Projects will also be considered by the parish's Village Committee.

Beauty spot out of the public area

STOCKTON Heath beauty spot Ackers Pit has been "taken out of the public arena", a councillor has complained.

Coun Robin Wilson told Stockton Heath Parish Council: "We used to have meetings about Ackers Pit, but it has been taken away from the parish council."

"We have gone from discussing it every month, to not discussing it at all. It has gone off the agenda and that concerns me."

As a result, he said, there was no information given about the council-owned site and its future development, and that the public and parish councillors were not kept up to date with progress.

Working party

Following problems with restoration of Ackers Pit, a working party of parish councillors and anglers was formed to oversee work. The group was supposed to report regularly to the parish council.

Clerk Peter Briggs said: "I should have put it on the agenda every six



months but I didn't feel there was a need. But I should have brought it back every six months."

Coun Stephen Taylor suggested the

issue be brought back to the parish council for consideration. He believed the parish council should have an input and be aware of developments.



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Women's cricket team disbands

THE Walton Lea-based Warrington Cricket Club women's team, which has played in the ECB Women's Premier League North for the last two summers, has decided to disband.

With the majority of the team also playing for Cheshire, it was felt that the number of games and the amount of travelling required to play both Premier League and County Championship cricket had become too much.

The club had also experienced a number of other difficulties in operating the team throughout the 2010 season.

It is hoped that many of the squad will now return to play for local clubs in the Cheshire Women's League - possibly at Appleton, who were this year's champions.

It is expected that Cheshire Women's CCC will arrange friendly matches next summer to allow existing county squad members and developing players the chance to bridge the gap between local club cricket and championship cricket.

Team spokesman Martin Saxon said, "It is sad to have to call time on the Warrington project after only two years, but I do believe that this decision has been taken in the best interests of women's cricket in Cheshire. I would like to extend my thanks to all those who have played their part at Warrington over the last two years."



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High school plays host to South African visitors



Members of the South African party, with some of their hosts, enjoying a visit to Warrington.

BRIDGEWATER High School played host to a party of pupils and teachers from its 'linked' school in South Africa.

The party from Forte High School in Soweto joined in lessons at Bridgewater, were entertained by parents and teachers and went on various outings across the North West, including Manchester, Liverpool and Blackpool.

Throughout the year, there has been fundraising at Bridgewater to enable the return visit to take place.

Shopping

Bridgewater has had links with Forte since 2005 and a group of teachers and pupils from Appleton visited South Africa earlier this year.

The South African youngsters and their teachers also enjoyed some shopping in Warrington - including a last minute shop at Golden Square before flying home from Manchester Airport.



The South African party at the home of Mr and Mrs Jim Sparks.

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Parish to be given a 'make-over'

APPLETON is set to be given a "make-over" next year as part of the borough council's "Look of the Borough" programme.

A specialist team of borough council workers will visit the parish to give any run-down areas a facelift.

Similar work has been carried out in several parts of the borough and has won high praise from local people.

The work is expected to be carried out over a six week period starting on August 15.

Borough officers have expressed a wish to meet the parish council to explain the scheme more fully, discuss consultation and answer questions. The parish council has suggested they attend the annual parish meeting on April 19 when the project could be placed on the agenda.

In the meantime, the parish council's environment committee will review the programme and provide ideas for work to be done and all councillors will be asked to submit ideas from their own wards.

Members of the public will also be invited to submit suggestions and also urged to attend the annual parish meeting.

It's panto time

STOCKTON Heath's expatriate drama group The Playmakers is to stage its third pantomime on January 20-23.

The group, which formerly played at St Thomas' Hall, Stockton Heath, now stage their productions at the Cinnamon Brow Community Association Farm Club at Perth Close, Cinnamon Brow.

Although they have been established more than 50 years, it is only their third panto. Last year's was a sell-out so people are being advised to book early.

This year, the panto is "Dick Whittington" and the ticket hotline is 01925 261099 or email playmakers@hotmail.co.uk

Christmas workshops

CHARITY group the Walton Lea Project has announced details of a series of Christmas workshops and demonstrations during December.

The demonstrations will offer advice to people facing the seasonal problem of wreath-making and wrapping gifts.

Refreshments will be on offer, including tea, coffee, biscuits and at some events, mulled wine and mince pies.

The workshops at the Garden Room at Walton Lea are as follows:
Monday, December 6 and 8, 7-9pm: Wreath-making. All materials provided and guidance available

Friday, December 10, 2-4pm and 13, 7-9pm, Christmas Wrapped Up!
Further details are available from 01925 860143 - Monday-Friday.

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Money Column

By Margaret Black

Tax error letters have started to arrive

45,000 of nearly six million taxpayers have already been sent letters telling them that they have paid the wrong amount of tax. It is strongly advised that anyone receiving such a letter should consider challenging the demands for extra payments.

Meanwhile the Inland Revenue are trying to recover £2bn worth of tax that was underpaid and at the same time are having to repay £1.8bn which was overpaid. The rest of the new tax calculations are to be sent out by Christmas. It appears that the mistakes made over the past two years have been revealed by a sophisticated new computer system. This has brought together the separate databases for tax and national insurance payments used by HMRC, and has highlighted where tax had previously been overcharged or undercharged.

It has been reported that the 'repayments' to 4.3 million people are only worth on average £420 each and are to be repaid via changes to their tax codes for the next tax year, 2011-12. Whereas the underpaid tax charges will average a massive £1,380 compared and most will also be recovered via changes to next year's tax codes. Where the tax charge is more than £2,000 for an individual, however, they will,

hypothetically, be asked to pay a lump sum, but it has reportedly been by a spokesman for the Revenue that where there are cases of hardship those payments could possibly be staggered.

HMRC are to use its experience of the first 45,000 letters - form P800 and its guidance notes - to see just how many recipients write to it, phone or visit its inquiry centres. Tax experts advise that anyone who receives a letter stating that they owe extra tax that they should first check the facts on their letter to make sure the updated record of employment and income is accurate, it has also been advised that it is best to "Look back through your coding notices and compare them to your payslips to ensure your employer has applied the correct codin" It is further advised that the taxpayer "Study the PAYE codes, particularly the last one, and check that all the figures in the code reflect your circumstances and that if there appears to have been a mistake somewhere, then you should get in touch with your tax office and make them aware of this". If someone does want to challenge the new calculation, then simply phone HMRC to ask for a recalculation.

In cases where HMRC have had all the information needed and the taxpayer could reasonably have thought they were



David Watkinson and Margaret Black

being accurately taxed, but an underpayment has still arisen, an HMRC spokesman has said "it could be written off." "In fairness to all taxpayers, this is not a blanket exemption and very much depends on the specific circumstances of each case." It has been said by the Low Incomes Tax Reform Group that: "If you disagree with HMRC's decision on that, you can refer the matter to the Adjudicator, but you cannot appeal. "However, it is important to know that the concession exists, something about which HMRC are notoriously reticent," it said.

This article is only meant to inform, if you require more advice please do not hesitate to contact us.

The Money Column.....is provided by **WatkinsonBlack**. Chartered Accountants, 1st Floor, 264 Manchester Road, Warrington, WA1 3RB. Accountants who care, for clients who matter. Please telephone 01925 413210 or e-mail on margaret@warrington accountants.co.uk

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