

VILLAGE

Your Community Magazine

Issue 164 November 2014

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There is no doubt you have greater flexibility at retirement age with the impending rule changes in April 2015. But as always it is probably wise to have a mixture of a few investments or tax wrappers as they are referred. There are also other areas of investment such as Venture Capital Trusts or VCT's as they are known, which attract valuable tax incentives. But I shall cover these another time.

UKIP

I saw on Sky News recently that Warrington South is going to be a key marginal seat at the next General Election. And Stockton Heath was shown, with several people being interviewed. I cannot imagine voting for a party who you don't know the name of the incoming chancellor. After all the chancellor has the most important job of all – looking after the economy. As an American once said 'It's the economy stupid'. If people do use their votes as a protest it will be sad because I personally think the current chancellor has done a terrific job.



Don Wernham,
Financial Planner

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Editor's comment

A TOTAL of 53 villages and small towns entered this year's Cheshire Community Pride competition – the vast majority from Cheshire East and Cheshire West and Chester.

Only one was from Halton and only two from Warrington – and we feel we must ask the question: Why?

Now it is true that the two Cheshire districts have a lot more villages and small towns than either Warrington or Halton. In fact, depending on one's definition of a village, it can be argued that Halton doesn't have any, although the residents of Daresbury (which didn't enter the competition) or Hale, Widnes (which did) might beg to differ.

But Warrington has 18 parish councils, some of which cover more than one village. Yet it was left to two of the smallest – Hatton and Winwick – to represent the borough in what is undoubtedly a prestigious competition.

Both got mentions – indeed Hatton, population less than 400, was highly commended in four categories.

So we must repeat the question: Why don't more Warrington villages enter?

We have heard the "we don't stand a chance" argument many times. Usually because of litter or some specific local eyesore that nobody will take responsibility for. In fact, it was only a couple of years ago that Frodsham didn't enter and yet this year they came first in the 5,001-10,000 population category.

So anything is possible. Nothing ventured nothing gained. We think Warrington villages are attractive enough and sufficiently well cared for to figure among the prizewinners.

Let's hope that next year, more of them will make the effort.

Meanwhile, if you still haven't visited the Walled Garden at Grappenhall Heys since the £1m Nationally Lottery restoration work was completed, we suggest you do.

It is one of South Warrington's hidden gems and has been steadily gaining in popularity over the years.

The lottery grant has seen the former greenhouses restored to their



former glory and the cafe facilities have also received a major makeover.

Added to the attractive grounds it makes for a very enjoyable visit, especially for creams teas and home made cakes!

Congratulations to all those hard working volunteers and the local parish council who have put in so much time and effort over the years.

Their hard work and endeavour has certainly paid off!

Ted is 'Pride of Britain'

SEVEN-year old youngster Ted McCaffery has won a Pride of Britain award for his fundraising efforts for Alder Hey hospital.

Ted from Stockton Heath, underwent a major heart operation in February last year and completed a fundraising mini-triathlon just eight weeks after leaving hospital.

Ted a pupil at Grange Junior School received his award, in the Young Fundraiser of the Year category, during the glitzy Pride of Britain ceremony that was broadcast on ITV1 recently.

Ted's desire to raise money for the hospital arose as he awaited lifesaving heart surgery. When the television in the hospital did not work, Ted resolved to raise enough money to provide a new television so that the boredom of an extended hospital stay could be alleviated for future children.

The operation itself took six hours to complete and it was a number of weeks before Ted was allowed to come home. Just eight weeks later, however, Ted completed the mini-triathlon and raised over £1000 for the hospital. Ted was exhausted by the end of the challenge which entailed scooting for 150 metres, cycling 600 metres and running 200m.

"It was really hard but I told everyone I was going to do it and I just wanted to stick to my promise," reasoned Ted.

After completing the challenge and raising the money, Ted was asked by Alder Hey to become a children's ambassador.

Ted's fundraising did not stop there, however, as he has become the driving force behind a number of such events that have taken place in school.

Mr Guy Rands, Head of the Grange Junior School said: "I am not surprised that Ted has been awarded Pride of Britain Young Fundraiser of the Year. He is a young man with a transparently kind, optimistic and pragmatic nature who engages really

easily with all the people around him, children and adults alike. Staff, pupils and parents have thrown themselves wholeheartedly into the variety of fundraising activities that Ted has engineered over recent months. This reflects the high regard in which he is held within our

community as well as his ability to indirectly motivate others by the way in which he has conducted himself through his own personal challenges. It is richly deserved recognition and warmly welcomed by all those of us that know Ted."

Meanwhile the Grange Junior School holds an open Morning on Saturday, November 8, 10am – 1pm.



Charity seeks donations of furniture, bikes and gardening tools

LOCAL charity, the Walton Lea Partnership, is requesting donations of unwanted furniture, bikes and gardening tools from people in the local community.

The charity runs two sites based in Warrington, the Walton Lea Walled Garden in Higher Walton and the Long Lane Garden Centre in Orford, and provides supported employment for adults with learning difficulties, mental health challenges and the early onset of Alzheimer's.

The charity has a number of ongoing projects which enable its beneficiaries to learn skills in gardening, floristry, woodwork, conservation and customer service in a therapeutic manner. It is searching for material donations to ensure beneficiaries can continue to gain from its services.

The 'Recycled Cycles' project restores bikes of any condition and needs bike parts plus both adult and children's bikes. The 'Take a Seat' project, which restores furniture ranging from tables and chairs to picture frames and everything in between requires unwanted furniture, paint and wood for up-cycling and restoration. In addition, both sites have gardens and nurseries and have also asked for gardening tools to help with the maintenance.

The charity relies on donations and support from Trusts and Warrington Social Services, but also depends on sales from visitors purchasing its produce, upcycled furniture and plants, in order to finance the work that it provides for its beneficiaries and the wider community.

Commenting on the call for donations, manager at the Walton Lea Partnership, Kate Fitch said: "Of course monetary donations are important to keep the charity running for its beneficiaries and for the Warrington community. However, this is a call for material donations, and we're asking people to have a look around for furniture they are looking to throw away, gardening tools they no longer use, or any storage solutions they do not need, and get in touch, as we're always so grateful for such donations."

"I believe Walton Lea Partnership is a fantastic asset to the Warrington area, but to keep it going we have to occasionally ask the generous people within the local area for their help. We would be so very grateful to anyone who donated, as it really does make a difference."

If you're interested in providing a

donation to the Walton Lea Partnership you can get in touch by calling either site - the Walton Lea Walled Garden on 01925 860143 and the Long Lane Garden Centre on 01925 632847.

In addition, Walton Lea Partnership is always looking for volunteers to help out at the charity across both sites, in the shop, within the gardens and on its various projects, especially at weekends. If you feel you have the skills and are looking to help out a local charity, then please get in contact by calling either site.

To find out more information about the Walton Lea Partnership, please visit the website at www.waltonleaproject.btck.co.uk or alternatively you can donate to the charity's donation page here: <http://localgiving.com/charity/waltonleaproject>.



Drama group's tribute to former chairman

DRAMA group the Bridgewater Players has announced details of its forthcoming season – a tribute to former chairman Ian Hornby who died last year.

The plays will be the first to be held at Thelwall Parish Hall since last winter's season was ended when gales wrought havoc with the building's roof and made it unsafe to use.

The hall is now up and running again with a new acoustic ceiling which should improve theatregoers' experience.

New chairman Andy Rushman said: "The forthcoming season will be a tribute to Ian.

"The committee has decided that emphasis should be on giving everyone a laugh and that is why we have selected two farces.

"We have also decided to maintain ticket prices, although the cost of renting the hall has increased, so we will inevitably have to pass these on next season. But for this season there will be no cost increase.

Two of the productions were written by Ian Hornby – a prolific playwright for many years.

On November 13, 14 and 15 they will present "Hello, Is There Any Body There?" – produced by Alison Hornby.

February 19, 20 and 21 will see Ian's pantomime, "Help! I'm a Celebrity Pantomime Dame Get Me Out of Here" produced by Norma Dransfield.

A third production will be presented on April 23, 24 and 25 – "Fairway to Heaven" – a farce by Dainna Raffle, produced by Andy Rushman.



Luxury Gulet Cruises

A gulet cruise on board a traditional wooden boat is the perfect way to enjoy complete relaxation – a truly authentic Turkish experience. Lie back and enjoy the scenery as you cruise the crystal-clear waters, soak up the sun on the spacious deck, stopping off at idyllic bays to swim. From time to time you will stop off to explore charming villages and beautiful scenery – Turkey's rich history is never far away.

Gulets are twin-masted motor yachts built in traditional style using quality teak and mahogany. They are tastefully designed and are air-conditioned with spacious sundecks, comfortable dining and communal areas and stylish guest cabins with en-suite facilities.

Life on board is unhurried and relaxed and a gulet cruise is a time for soaking up the sun, swimming in the clear waters, sharing meals al fresco and enjoying lazy days and evenings on board.

- Children aren't usually allowed on board, unless you rent the whole gulet to holiday with your own group of family and friends.
- Our gulets have from 7-10 air-conditioned guest cabins all with private en suite shower and WC.
- Breakfast, lunch and dinner are

prepared by the gulet's chef from fresh local ingredients. Lunch is usually a light meal, made up of Turkish meze-style dishes and the evening meal is usually fresh fish or succulent meat. It is easy to cater for vegetarians.

- Meals are provided on a full board basis and complimentary soft drinks are included in the price of your holiday.
- Private hire is available.

Itineraries

There are a number of departure points along the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts and all itineraries take in some of the most beautiful, charming and interesting villages, sites and bays Turkey has to offer. Highlights of your cruise may include:

Fethiye – a charming market town, overlooked by Lycian rock tombs, built around a natural harbour

Gemiler – a small island, once a pirate stronghold, which shelters the ruins of an ancient Byzantine settlement

Kekova – an island, surrounded by the ruins of the submerged harbour of Kaleköy, with its ancient sarcophagus emerging from the clear water, overlooked by the atmospheric ruined castle of Simena

Kas – an authentic town with its



■ Linda Crowder – Stockton Heath Travel

picturesque harbour, seafront tea-garden and whitewashed mosque

Cleopatra's Bay – Visit the beautiful sandy beach, said to have been imported from Egypt for Cleopatra, and the partially submerged ruins of a bath complex.

Göcek – A charming village with a glitzy marina.

Ekincik and Dalyan – A secluded bay from which you can take an optional day trip to visit Dalyan, the beautiful river delta, overlooked by Lycian rock tombs, with its mud baths and turtle beach.

Follow us on twitter @stocktonhthtlv & like us on facebook and linkedin.

We are open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and Saturdays 9am to 4pm. If you cannot make these times we are happy to arrange an appointment at your convenience.

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Homes plan is 'thin end of the wedge'

VILLAGERS and local councillors have expressed dismay over a planning decision which they believe could mean the end for the "green" gap between Thelwall and Lymm.

Planning chiefs have given the go-ahead for four houses with detached double garages in the grounds of historic Bridge House, in Stockport Road, Thelwall.

The locally listed former farm house is said to be the last remaining smallholding in the village and is on the edge of Thelwall Village Conservation Area.

A disappointed Cllr Mike Biggin said: "This could be the thin end of the wedge and mean the end of the gap between Thelwall and Lymm."

"It makes one wonder what the point of conservation areas is when proposals like this are allowed to go ahead."

"This is quite a serious precedent and local residents will be very disappointed."

Cllr Biggin, together with Cllr Wendy Johnson, Cllr Ted Finnegan, eight local residents and Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council, had lodged objections to the scheme put forward by developers Redwaters Elite.

They argued the scheme represented over-development of the site and was little different to an earlier scheme refused two years ago.

There were also road safety issues arising from a new access in Bell Lane



and increased traffic at the junction of Bell Lane and Stockport Road.

Existing flooding problems could be worsened because of inadequate drainage facilities and extra sewage could contaminate a natural pond

inhabited by Great Crested Newts and other species of wild life.

Planning officers recommended the scheme be approved. They said the conservation area already contained a mixture of old and new properties

and the proposed houses would be in character with the immediate vicinity.

Although contemporary in design, they would reflect the agricultural character of the existing farmhouse and barns.

Exciting new building project

WITHINGTON Girls' School is delighted to report that first foundations have been laid for the construction of a new Junior School building and a central social 'Hub' at the heart of the School.

With construction due for completion in summer 2015 - Withington's 125th anniversary year - the project will deliver a new suite of classrooms for younger pupils, enabling two-form rather than single-form entry in both Years 5 and 6, and enhance accommodation and facilities available for the whole School. The 'Hub' will be a light and airy roofed courtyard linking the Junior and Senior departments.

The project has been designed by Manchester and London-based architects Levitt Bernstein, who have created a master plan to meet Withington's long term development

strategy. Northwest Construction company, Seddon, who have carried out hundreds of school refurbishments in their 115 year history, has been appointed as lead contractor on the project.

Said Withington's Headmistress Mrs Sue Marks: "Withington has a heritage of vision stretching back to its foundation in 1890. The new Junior School and Hub will help to ensure that Withington remains at the forefront of girls' education nationally in the way our founders intended, offering exceptional opportunities for personal development - academic, cultural, sporting and social - and encouraging independence of mind and high aspirations".

Pictured below: Withington Junior girls look forward to moving into their new building'



50 villages and towns vie for "best kept" awards

MORE than 50 villages and small towns entered the annual Community Pride Competition organised by Cheshire Community Action.

Overall winner was Sandbach, but local communities figured in the various categories of the competition - particularly Hatton.

The village was highly commended in the Community Spirit Award, Hatton Village Hall was highly commended in the Community Initiative section, Hatton Parish Council was highly commended for its work with young people and the village also came fifth in the Best Kept Village Award for populations of under 400.

Ron Beever, of Hatton, was highly commended in the Community Champion section.

Highly commended in the Community Website section were Knutsford and Plumley with Toft and Bexton.

Antrobus were fourth for the Best Kept Village with a population of 601-1,000.

Winners and runners-up in the Best Kept Village/Small Town section by population were: 10,001-30,000: 1, Sandbach; 2, Knutsford. 5,001-10,000: 1, Frodsham; 2, Upton by Chester. 2,501-5,000: 1, Kelsall; 2, Tarporley. 1,001-2,500: 1, Audlem; 2, Rainow. 601-1,000: 1, Pickmere; 2, Tilston. 401-600: 1, Acton Bridge; 2, Crowton. Under 400: 1, Hankelow; 2, Marbury-cum-Quoisley.

Reproductive Health Group - free and discounted IVF cycles

THE Reproductive Health Group opened the UK's first integrated fertility hospital, the Centre for Reproductive Health, at Daresbury Park in April 2014. Feedback from patients and visitors has been highly positive.

Recognising that embarking on fertility treatment is an extremely important decision and that uncertainty about costs and the chances of success can cause concern, RHG have decided to take a unique approach to funding for IVF treatment which demonstrates their confidence in the exceptional quality of fertility care they deliver.

After undergoing a full set of diagnostic tests to identify the best course of treatment, patients can be offered one of two packages which include subsequent free or discounted cycles of IVF treatment should the first cycle not result in a pregnancy. RHG are the first clinic in the UK to offer such a scheme.

Free fertility consultations are also available at the Centre for Reproductive Health. To book or to find out more, call today on 01925 202180, email info@reproductivehealthgroup.co.uk or see www.reproductivehealthgroup.co.uk.

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Thursday 6th November
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Saturday 8th November
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Historic walled garden glasshouses now open after £1 million restoration

HISTORIC glasshouses, restored with the help of a £1,056,600 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, have now been formally opened to the public.

A special opening ceremony at Grappenhall Heys Walled Garden marked the completion of a lengthy

project to transform a derelict eyesore into a thriving community asset.

It was opened by Cheshire gardening expert Sam Youd, former head gardener at Tatton Park and a representative of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The Grappenhall Heys estate dates

from 1830 and originally consisted of a house with formal gardens, parkland and a walled garden.

After passing through several ownerships, the house fell into a state of disrepair and was eventually demolished.

The walled garden, however,

survived and many historic features were retained including the glasshouses – although they were in a poor state of repair.

Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council launched the glasshouse regeneration project and won support from the Heritage Lottery fund.

Janet Richards, a member of the working group which steered the initiative with support from the Friends of Grappenhall Heys, said: "We are thrilled to open the glasshouses which have several new amenities to make the visitor experience more enjoyable.

"The transformation is remarkable and can be witnessed on a time lapse video available online via You Tube".

Sara Hilton, head of Heritage Lottery Fund North West, said: "The Walled Garden at Grappenhall Heys is a much-loved local heritage treasure, and we are delighted to see that our funding has made the restoration of these magnificent glasshouses possible.

"The project has also created a number of exciting volunteering opportunities and space for events and educational activities, meaning people from across the community will benefit from the fantastic achievements of the parish council and Friends group."

The restored glasshouses and back rooms will allow plant propagation and display. Other areas will be used for practical work and demonstrations.

There is also a multi-purpose community space which will be used as a café at the weekends and to deliver educational workshops, events and exhibitions for an array of visitors including schools, families and adult groups, during the week.

Ian Fountain, treasurer of the Friends of Grappenhall Heys Walled Garden said: "A well equipped kitchen and improved cafe facility means visitors can relax in the glasshouses and at new picnic tables while enjoying homemade cakes and hot drinks. They will also be able to overlook the beautiful kitchen garden."

The walled garden is managed by gardener/manager Graham Richardson and supported by volunteers.

It is hoped more volunteers will come forward to help with gardening, co-ordinating events, marketing roles and working in the café. Anyone interested should email friends@ghwalledgarden.org.uk

The opening ceremony ran alongside "Apple Day" activities.



■ Celebrating the opening of the new glasshouses with a glass of Apple Juice are from left, Geoff Weston volunteer, Janet Richards parish council finance officer, Graham Richardson gardener manager and Parish Cllr Ian Fountain friends of walled garden treasurer.



End of season win for golf club



Ringway captain, Ian Cochrane, presenting the splendid cut glass trophy to Lester Scott.

WARRINGTON Golf Club ended their season with success against Ringway.

Having lost the other two captain's matches v Sandiway and Oswestry, Warrington won the second leg of their home match 5-1, to record a 9-3 victory overall.

They had previously defeated Ringway away in June, 4-2.

A Ringway spokesman said: "The course, company and hospitality were all excellent. Only the result was disappointing!"

Hotel boss turns to pedal power for charity

HOTEL boss Paul Gallon turned to pedal power to help raise nearly £1,500 for charity.

Paul, manager at the Park Royal Hotel, Stretton, Warrington, cycled a total of 305 miles over three days from York to London, as part of a team of 20, raising funds for the hotel industry charity, Hospitality Action.

Paul, who takes part in a charity challenge each year said: "I have worked in the industry since the age of 14 so I decided it was time to raise some funds for its benevolent fund.

"Now I will have to think of what my challenge should be for next year!"

As a group more than £30,000 was raised for charity.

Donations can still be made online at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/ParkRoyal>



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Awards keep coming for champion bricklayer Ashley

FORMER Warrington Collegiate Apprentice Ashley Terron is celebrating again after being crowned Apprenticeship Champion of the year for the North West – with the next stop, the national finals at the NEC, Birmingham.

The City & Guilds Apprenticeship Champion of the Year celebrates former apprentices who have made exceptional achievements since their completion and go above and beyond to Champion Apprenticeships

Nominated by Warrington Collegiate, where he trained for 3 years, a delighted Ashley, aged 21 from Grappenhall Heys said: "From starting my apprenticeship I have always aspired to be the best. I hold an enormous amount of belief in apprenticeships being the best pathway for many young people leaving school, leading to a long, rewarding and successful career in industry. As a consequence of WorldSkills, creating opportunities of a voice on the national and

international stage, I strongly believe that I can be a big part in further promoting apprenticeships to the next generation."

From being an apprentice at Warrington Collegiate Ashley's career has seen a meteoric rise. Competition success at college resulted in a gold medal at the WorldSkills International Championships in Leipzig 2013, closely followed by recognition by the Worshipful Company of Tylers and Bricklayers as a Master Craftsman and the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday list.

Rob Holmes, Ashley's tutor and mentor at Warrington Collegiate, comments, "Ashley is an exceptional young man and role model, both encouraging young people to consider an apprenticeship as a career choice, and inspiring them to step outside their comfort zone and continuously strive for excellence."

Warrington Collegiate has recognised Ashley's outstanding contribution to the college and



apprenticeships by creating the Ashley Terron Brickwork Area, Gateway to Excellence.

Ashley attended the awards at The Monastery, Manchester, with his girlfriend and two representatives from Redrow Group Services Ltd, where he is employed as an Assistant Site Manager. Ashley has now been entered into a final judging stage. Employers of the winners will feature in the acclaimed top 100 Apprenticeship Employers list.

Speaking after the ceremony, Skills minister Nick Boles said: "Apprenticeships continue to grow in popularity, and events like the

■ Ashley receiving his award from Celia Rawlinson from City and Guilds, sponsors of the awards.

National Apprenticeship Awards showcase how beneficial they are to both employers and individuals. It is fast becoming the norm for young people to choose between an Apprenticeship or university as a route to a great career."

Georgia wins place in new girl band



STOCKTON Heath youngster Georgia Williams will perform alongside some of the biggest names in the music business after winning a place part in a new girl band.

Georgia aged 15, was chosen by the public as one of four members of The Piccadillys following a competition by Manchester radio station Key 103.

Band members will now have singing and dance lessons and will record a single. They will also perform at Christmas lights switch-ons and on the main stage at the Key 103 Christmas Live show in Manchester.

Georgia, a pupil at The Grange Senior School, won a place in the final 10 of the Girlband competition after taking part in singing and dance auditions.

Three members of the group were then chosen by public vote and the final member was chosen by a judging panel.

Proud mum Kate said: "I was really nervous, and when Georgia was chosen I was ecstatic. We still can't believe it, and she has had cards and best wishes from people, who have all said they knew with her voice she was going to be a rock star one day.

"It has always been her dream to be in a band, and I think she has an amazing voice."

She will perform at The Christmas Live show at the Phones 4U Arena on December 4, and Kate and her family, including husband Stephen and daughter Charley, have booked tickets near the front.

Kate produced posters and stickers to publicise Georgia's appeal for support in the public vote, and Charley, 10, asked fellow pupils at Grappenhall Heys Primary School to vote for her sister.

Georgia said she would like to thank everyone who voted for her.

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Money Column

By Margaret Black

Statutory Residence Tests

It is now over 12 months since the Statutory Residence Tests were introduced. Residency is an important concept which affects people with foreign income but, surprisingly, it was only defined in law last year.

The tests consist of a three part process as follows:

- Firstly, non-residency is defined in three ways. If a person falls into one of these definitions then they are "automatically non-resident". The three ways are:

1. he is resident in the UK in one or more of the last three preceding tax years, and he spends fewer than 16 days in the UK in that year

2. he is not resident in any of the last three preceding years, and spends fewer than 46 days in the UK in that year

3. he works full time overseas and spends fewer than 91 days in the UK in the tax year.

- Secondly, residency is defined in two ways. If, and only if, the first tests fail to apply then these are considered. If a person falls into one of these definitions then they are "automatically resident". The two

ways are:

1. he spends 183 days or more in the UK

2. he spends at least one period of 91 consecutive days in the UK, of which at least 30 fall in the relevant tax year, and he has a home in the UK in which he spends at least 30 days during the tax year, and he has either no overseas home or had an overseas home in which he spent fewer than 30 days during the tax year (pew!!)

- Thirdly, if none of the above two sets of definitions apply then a "sufficient ties" set of tests are applied. There are five elements to this test, and these are:

1. a family tie

2. an accommodation tie

3. a work tie

4. a 90 day tie

5. (only if he was resident in the UK in one or more of the three preceding tax years) a country tie

The number of elements required to be non-resident depends upon

- the number of days that are spent within the UK during that tax year, and

- whether you are arriving within the UK or leaving it



We do not have enough space to go through these "ties" in detail. However, most people will be either "automatically resident" or "automatically non-resident" and only a very small number of people will need to consider the "sufficient ties" set of tests.

We would be pleased to advise on this if you think that you may be affected.

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David Mowat, MP for Warrington South, holds regular surgeries throughout the constituency. If you would like to arrange an appointment to discuss an issue of concern to you please

e-mail him at david.mowat.mp@parliament.uk
or telephone **01925 231267**.

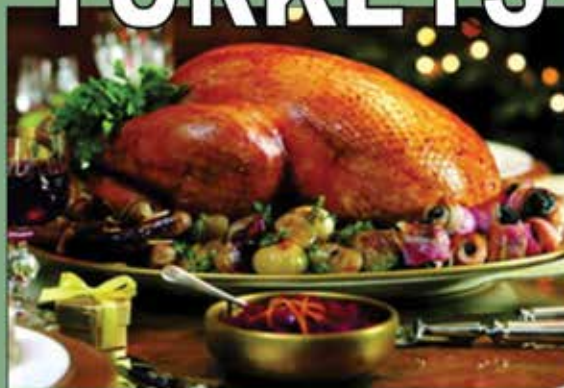


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To book your place on the first workshop on November 8 please contact Tracey Turton, Clinic Director at Cheshire Natural Health on 01925 730123.



Community orchard plan in jeopardy

A QUESTION mark hangs over the future of a proposed community orchard – because Warrington Borough Council wants to store leaves on it.

The land, off Cliff Lane, Grappenhall has lain unused for 25 years but three years ago a committee was set up – with the backing of Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council – to press forward plans for a community orchard. Cliff Lane Community Orchard Committee opened a bank account with around £2,000 in it committed towards funding the project.

The borough council was approached and, although they at first thought it was not their land, were supportive. Local borough councillors backed the idea as did Warrington South MP David Mowat.

Cllr Dave Hockenull, chairman of Grappenhall and Thelwall Parish Council, said: "Three years have elapsed with no final decision made by the borough council – and then, right of the blue, two council employees turned up with a JCB to re-establish the site entrance which had been sealed for years to keep travellers off.

"No approach had been made to the community orchard committee, the parish council, the local borough councillors nor the MP.

"Apparently the borough has suddenly decided it needs the land to store leaves – although I'm sure there were just as many leaves to dispose of last year."

Borough councillor Mike Biggin, who is also a member of the parish council, said: "This represents shameful duplicity on the part of the borough council and clearly illustrates they had absolutely no intention of supporting the project from the beginning.

"It is also another example of a worthy project in South Warrington being deliberately derailed. What is

most appalling is that it appears to have been under a cloak of secrecy."

A council spokesperson said the community orchard committee had been informed some time ago that the future of the site would depend on an ongoing depot review.

When the review was completed, the site might, or might not, become

surplus to requirements.

In the meantime, the council had a need for leaf storage in the south of the borough and the Cliff Lane site was considered ideal.

"The council's present requirements outweigh future external requirements."

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What's on in the villages

November 11
STOCKTON HEATH PARISH COUNCIL
Sandy Lane Centre, Stockton Heath. 7.30pm

November 18
APPLETON PARISH COUNCIL
Parish Hall, Dudlow Green Road. 7.30pm

November 20
GRAPPENHALL & THELWALL PARISH COUNCIL
Council Offices, Bellhouse Lane. 7.30pm

November 22
LIVE AT ST WILFRID'S
Corus Brass Ensemble. One of the finest brass ensembles in the country.
St Wilfrid's Church, Grappenhall. 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 LEIGH 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
November - 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.

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