

# Culcheth Life

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November 2018

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**Editor**  
Gary Skentelbery

**Production**  
Paul Walker

**Advertising**  
James Balme

**Freephone**  
0800 955 5247

**Editorial**  
01925 623633

**Email**  
info@culchethlife.com

**Websites**  
www.culchethlife.com  
www.frodshamlife.co.uk  
www.lymmlife.co.uk  
www.warrington-worldwide.co.uk  
www.warrington.tv

**Address**  
New Media Centre  
Old Road Warrington  
WA4 1AT

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# Editor's Comment



TOO often in the past we have, in this column, found ourselves being critical of young people.

But a quick look through the pages of this month's magazine reveals plenty of evidence of what we knew all along – that there is a great deal of good in the majority of young people. The troublemakers may grab some lurid headlines, but they are very much a minority.

So this month let us concentrate on the majority.

First, there are the youngsters at Culcheth High School who have been busy preparing their annual Senior Citizen's Christmas Party – an event that is looked forward to by so many of our older residents.

There is festive food, drink,

entertainment and fun in a school hall that has been transformed with Christmas decorations.

Everything is ready for this year's event and all the youngsters are worried about is that there may be some pensioners who are missing out because they are not on their mailing list. If you, or someone you know, fall into this category, let the school know and we are pretty sure an invitation will be on the way!

Then there are the pupils at Newchurch Primary School, who organised a charity day that raised money for Cancer Research UK and Macmillan Cancer Support. Worthy causes like these could not exist without the support of the public and it is good to see the younger members of the community getting involved at an early age.

And of course, the individual

efforts of young people, such as Amy Groves, the Birchwood High School pupil who had her long hair cut short so she could donate some to the Princess Trust, who make wigs for children who have lost their hair through chemotherapy or other conditions.

Amy's hair will help some other child feel beautiful again, but she realises that hair alone does not make a wig so she is also raising money to pay for the wig to be made.

So there we are. Three examples of local young people making a positive contribution to our community. We know there are many more – and we'd like to hear about them.

## Wi coffee morning

LOWTON WI held a coffee morning in aid of Leigh Well Women centre and raised a total of £702.50p. Members wish to thank everyone who contributed in any way towards making the morning such a great success.

The WI meet on the first Thursday of the month at Lowton Social Cub at 7.15pm. If anyone is interested in becoming a member or to arrange a visit, contact Lin Hayes on 01942 207764.



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# Christmas Market will kick start the festive season

CULCHETH'S popular Christmas Market takes place on Saturday, November 24 and arrangements are already well advanced.

Organised by Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council, the event will incorporate the switch-on of the village's Christmas Lights.

It is the third year the Christmas Market has been held and each year the event has been judged even better than the year before!

Last year, more than 3,000 people attended the event and this time it is hoped even more will attend.

Local shops will be showcased, along with stalls selling seasonal wares, crafts, food and drink

At the same time, there will be a Christmas Fair at Newchurch Parish Hall and another one at the Methodist Hall, an art exhibition in the Culcheth Centre and the Cheshire Police Museum will be putting on an exhibition at the Scout Hall on Jackson Avenue.

There will be fairground rides, Radio Warrington will be broadcasting all day and, of course, Santa will be in his grotto.

In the evening, after the Christmas lights are switched on, there will be carol singing led by Culcheth Choir.



## Musical firework extravaganza

TWISS Green Primary School, Culcheth is staging a "musical firework extravaganza" at the school on Friday, November 2.

The gates will open at 6.30pm with the firework display starting at 7.30pm.

Refreshments will be available on site

Tickets are on sale at a number of shops in Culcheth, including Forget-me-Not Toy and Book Shop, Poyntons, Spotless Cleaners, Culcheth Newsagents, Le Brunch, Barber 48, The Olive Tree and Black Sheep Wool.

The event is in aid of school funds.



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# Library friends get busy with spades



MEMBERS of the Friends of Culcheth Library (FoCL) have been busy planting bulbs and late flowering shrubs to add a splash of colour to the front of the library building.

It all started after the group's annual general meeting when some members commented on the rather sad looking empty soil patch in front of the building and decided it would be a good idea to plant some daffodils to provide some colour in the spring.

Eight days later, seven FoCL members, armed with two big bags of bulbs and several bags of compost, got busy.

In addition to the daffodils it was decided it was not too late to plant some decorative shrubs as well.

Member Janet Evans said: "It took three hours altogether but it was time well spent and all of us left feeling a huge sense of satisfaction

at what we had done.

"There might have been a few aching joints the next day but when the shrubs start to grow and the daffodils provide a burst of colour next spring it will all have been worth it."

FoCL are still looking for more members and ideas for increased use of the library premises for meetings, activities, interest groups, clubs, etc – all of which would help to keep the library as a vibrant and indispensable centre at the heart of the village.

Anyone who would like to get involved should contact the library staff and leave their name and contact details.

The seven gardeners with subsequent aching backs were: Joan Grime, Janet Evans, Jim Billington, Andrew Mortimer, Marian Wood, Christine Smith and Kathryn Wright.

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# Have your say on the HS2 environmental statement

RESIDENTS have until December 21 to respond to the HS2 environmental statement consultation – and Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council is urging local people to do so.

Reference documents are available in Culcheth Library, Birchwood Library, Golborne Library and Lymm Library and a series of information events on the consultation, including more details, will be held during November.

These will be at: Rixton with Glazebrook Community Hall, Wednesday November 14, 2-8 pm; Golborne Parkside Sports and Community Club, Tuesday, November 27, 2-8 pm; Culcheth Sports Club, Wednesday November 28, 2-8pm; High Legh Village Hall, Friday November 30, 2-8 pm.

Cllr Margaret Webber, chairman of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council, said documents for the consultation could be found by searching [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for "Policy Papers and Consultations 11 October 2018", or "HS2 Phase 2b working draft environmental statement".

There were a number of ways to respond – online, by completing a response form, emailing [environment2b@ipsos-mori.com](mailto:environment2b@ipsos-mori.com) or writing to Freepost, HS2 Phase 2B



Environmental Consultation.

She said: "There are a number of documents - a starting point is HS2 Phase 2b working draft Environmental Statement volume 2: map books.

"These are for all the areas - we are Risley to Bamfurlong which follows Broomedge to Glazebrook. Maps start around page 22.

"Earlier this year there was an HS2 Event at Culcheth Sports Club with maps which now have more detail. Wigshaw Lane is still blocked with a diversion to the

A574 Warrington Road, the only HS2 crossing point in the village.

"The elevations and cuttings are shown, as are the construction compounds, the land potentially required during construction and Public Rights of Way stopped or diverted.

"Please keep a copy of any comments that you make as they will be useful for us in our response.

"We have always opposed the Golborne Link because of the very damaging impact it would have on our villages, with no benefit.

"This information is not just for Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft residents and businesses but for those along the route from the South to the North of Warrington and in fact for anyone who travels through our villages."

Local MP Helen Jones is also urging residents to get involved, saying: "I urge people to get involved and make submissions to the consultation. HS2 have said that feedback will be used to develop their proposals and will help shape the report which will be submitted to Parliament alongside the Hybrid Bill in mid-2020.

More information will be given on the parish council page in the December "Culcheth Life."

## Ancient bog could help combat climate change

A 10,000-year-old bog at Gorse Covert could have an important role to play in combating climate change, according to experts

Pestfurlong Moss is a rare fragment of lowland raised peat bog, locally known as mossland.

It may not look much but it is remarkably diverse and acts like a sponge for soaking up harmful carbon. So much so that it – and others like it – are sometimes dubbed the "tropical rainforests of the UK".

But Pestfurlong Moss has been drained in the past, is drying out and is in desperate need of restoration. It is owned by The Woodland Trust and managed with help from a local community volunteer group, 'The Friends of Gorse Covert Mounds'.

Now they have got together with the Carbon Landscape Partnership, led by Lancashire Wildlife Trust to try to restore the moss.

The project has secured £33,000 of funding from Enover Landfill and the Heritage Lottery Fund to carry out work to re-wet the mossland, improve access and provide information for visitors to explain why the mossland is so important and working with the local community to offer conservation and wildlife training courses.

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# Carmel College bucks the national trend

THIS year's exam results confirm Carmel is once again one of the top 10 Sixth Form Colleges in the country.

The Class of 2018 achieved a very impressive 99% pass rate with 51% of grades at A\*-B. Carmel's results saw 80% of grades at A\*-C, an increase of 0.3% on last year. This has bucked the national trend which has seen A\*-C grades fall overall compared to last year. Once again, this year saw Carmel's BTEC courses achieve a 100% pass rate with 88% of grades at Distinction\*/Distinction – a fantastic achievement!

Principal, Mike Hill, was delighted. "We are really pleased with this year's outstanding results. The number of our students who have achieved a grade C or above has increased which is really pleasing, particularly compared to the national picture. Not only does this show how hard our students have worked, it also illustrates how our staff continue to be passionate about working with students both in passing on their knowledge and supporting them to achieve their best."

Seven of Carmel's students have continued their studies at the prestigious Oxbridge Universities and a further seven students will be studying Medicine or Veterinary Science:

Emily Bonnon AAAC – History at



Trinity Hall, Cambridge  
 Caitlin Corrigan A\*A\*AA – Law at Mansfield College, Oxford  
 Katherine Cleary A\*A\*A\* – Modern Languages, Girton College, Cambridge  
 Hannah Mitchell A\*AA – English, Corpus Christi College, Cambridge  
 Anna Elliott A\*A\*AA – Psychology, Christ Church, Oxford  
 Natasha Clieve A\*AAA – Law, Herford College, Oxford  
 Anthony Walker AAB – Modern Langs, St Peter's College, Oxford  
 Anna Raju AAAB – Medicine,

Newcastle University  
 Austin Sabu AAAB – Medicine, Liverpool University  
 Jasmine Johnson A\*AAA – Medicine, Cardiff University  
 Hannah Barton A\*A\*A – Vet Science, Liverpool University  
 Hannah Sorvel ABB – Bio-Medicine, Liverpool University  
 Ella Riley AAA – Medicine, Sheffield University  
 Ray Sheridan-Warburton A\*A\*A\*A – Medicine, Birmingham University

## "Mindfulness" Open Day at the library

THE Friends of Culcheth Library are hosting a "Mindfulness Open Day" on Friday, November 16.

The event will be held in the library, which has its own lottery-funded well-being hub

On the day, the library will be open from 10am to 12.30pm for the event and the Friends will be delighted to welcome anyone interested in finding out about Mindfulness and Heartmath, including how these can help to reduce stress and anxiety and promote well-being.

November is Men's Health Month, and on Friday November 10 there will be an event promoting health in Culcheth Library which will be open from 10.00 am to 12.00 pm just for this event.

The Friends will be delighted to welcome anyone who would like to find out about Mindfulness and Heartmath, including how they can help to reduce stress and anxiety and promote well-being.

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# Wild Wings secures open to t

WILD Wings birds of prey wildlife sanctuary is now officially open to the public after securing a zoo licence.

The centre based at Taylor Business Park, thanks to the endeavours of former landlord Paul Taylor, recently opened it’s doors for a Family Fun Day to raise much needed funds.

Happy visitors flocked to the wildlife sanctuary for the event which not only had more than

80 magnificent birds to view but also had lots for families to enjoy including archery, facepainting, children’s quizzes, tin can alley, lovely refreshments and more.

The well attended event raised £1,180 to help run the centre and also awareness of the wonderful visitor experience now being offered at the site.

Wild Wings Birds of Prey is a not-for-profit, rescue, conservation and education centre.



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# zoo licence and now the public

Co-owners Ian and Carole Middleton run the centre with the help of a small group of dedicated volunteers and have now obtained a zoo licence.

Offering a 24/7 rescue service for birds of prey, both wild and captive bred, the centre provides a valuable service to the birds, working in partnership with the RSPB and police or concerned members of the public who come across birds of prey in distress or danger.

Captive bred birds are often lost by owners or sometimes deliberately released. If they can be traced, the owners and their birds are reunited. If the owner cannot be found or no longer wants the bird, Wild Wings house the bird or make suitable alternative arrangements. The bird's welfare is paramount.

They have more than 80 Birds in their care at any one time and provide emergency medical treatment to give the birds the best chance of survival and regularly rehabilitate and release wild birds back into the wild where they belong. Recently five young Tawny owls were released by the centre which had been cared for and prepared for life fending for themselves.

Co-owner, Ian Middleton

explained: "We are going to be holding displays on a regular basis. We have been really busy building the centre and raising funds as well as caring for the birds but we have got there. It's a nice area. Paul Taylor has really helped us out and has been a massive inspiration for us."

The centre is open to the public every day except for Mondays and Tuesdays from 10 am until 4pm. More information regarding display times, school or group visits can be obtained from Ian or Carole on 07957 416883 or visit their Facebook page.

During a recent visit to the centre Paul Taylor was invited to unveil a plaque, naming a rehabilitation facility after him as a thank you for his efforts to secure the future of the sanctuary, which has had a nomadic existence in recent years.

He said: "They work tirelessly and put everything they have into looking after these birds and I'm incredibly proud to be associated with the Wild Wings Bird of Prey Sanctuary.

"I'm so happy they and the birds now have a home, even if it is just for another four or five years. They can plan for the future at their own pace now."



## The Gardening Guide



“With the colder weather and decrease of natural foods wild birds will need feeding regularly, especially with high calorie fatty foods”

Simon Box,  
Plant Area Specialist

- There are a surprising number of plants that perform well over the winter period, often they are well scented - examples include Sarcococca, Hamamelis and Mahonia
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# A real winter warmer for local pensioners

AS the nights begin to draw in and the leaves begin to turn golden, everyone's thoughts gently begin to turn towards the Christmas countdown, but for the Student Leadership Group in Culcheth High School it is already time to begin some serious planning. Every year, for as long as any of us can remember, we have held a Christmas party for the senior citizens of Culcheth and surrounding areas.

The CHS Senior Citizens Christmas Party has become something of a fixture in local calendars – a real winter warmer to brighten up those dark December days. Every year, guests are delighted at how welcoming the school and the students are. A

In a special article for Culcheth Life, the Student Leadership Group at Culcheth High School describe the run-up to the school's annual Christmas Party for Senior Citizens.

wonderfully festive atmosphere is created in the local community, which unites seniors and students in their enjoyment of the Christmas spirit.

The afternoon begins with plump mince pies and a drink in the canteen before guests are seated in the main hall, where the Christmas trees and tables, which have been meticulously decorated with tinsel and baubles, sparkle with seasonal cheer. Here, guests are served and hosted by our fantastic students from the Student Leadership Group. A full Christmas dinner with all the trimmings, followed by Christmas pudding and white sauce, mince pies and chocolates can be washed down with a sherry or a port for those who fancy a little tippie. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet up with old friends, or meet somebody new, and it's always a pleasure to see how well our young people get on with the senior citizens.

After the meal there are entertainments. The musical theatre group thump out some grand numbers from the school musical (Abba Mia this year) while the choir bring a gentler, more festive, mood with their angelic recitals of classical carols and other Christmas favourites that really lift the spirits.

The bingo is always competitive, with a range of prizes up for grabs. We have learned over the years to cut away all the frills here: bingo is a serious matter, and people mean business! A note for anyone who was a guest last year: we will have a proper bingo machine in 2018 (none of that online nonsense) to help things run a little more smoothly than last year!

This event is always extremely popular and we have many guests who return year after year, but we do worry that there are people out there who would really enjoy it but aren't on our mailing list for

invitations. If you are someone who is lucky enough to be drawing their pension, or if you know a senior citizen in our local community who you think would enjoy Christmas dinner and entertainments with some of the most delightful local young people, please email a name, address, telephone number and email address to the school at [info@culchethhigh.org.uk](mailto:info@culchethhigh.org.uk). Invitations will be sent out in December and the school can arrange door-to-door transport for any guests who need it. The CHS Senior Citizens Christmas Party is completely free of charge.

## Sid turns up in Winwick

SMILEY Sid – the speed indicator device that warns drivers when they are exceeding the speed limit – has arrived in Winwick.

The portable device, which accurately displays the speed of oncoming traffic, was installed following complaints from local residents about the speed of vehicles passing through the village – particularly in Alder Lane.

It will be moved around the village, depending where there are speeding problems.



Last years senior citizens party.



## Culcheth Community Primary School

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Brown ale-braised beef meatballs with "Grandma Singleton's" cheese

## Main Course

Beer-battered plaice fillet, handcut chips, mushy peas, lemon wedges  
Grilled bacon chops, maris piper potatoes, seasonal vegetables, parsley sauce  
Beef & real ale stew, suet dumplings, mashed potato, seasonal vegetables  
Cauliflower cheese, sourdough breadcrumbs, garden salad  
Grilled chicken fillets, bacon & leek sauce, handcut chips, seasonal vegetables  
Cumberland sausage "pigs-in-blankets", mashed potato, red wine onion gravy

## Dessert

Chef's sticky toffee pudding, butterscotch sauce, salted caramel ice cream  
Apple crumble with "proper" thick custard  
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# Festive lights at Glazebury

GLAZEBURY village will be celebrating the Festive Season in style this year, with the addition of Christmas lights illuminating the trees outside All Saints Church and the Scout and Community Centre.

The lights will be switched on at 6pm on Sunday December 2. Santa and Mrs Claus will be in attendance and children are invited to

dress as elves and join in. Mince pies and warm fruit punch will be available free of charge and everyone is welcome to join in bringing a lantern if possible.

Those who can linger are invited to join a lantern procession into church for a Churches Together Advent Carol Service at 6.30pm.

Rev Jan Harney, priest-in-charge of All Saints

Church said: "We are delighted that this part of the village will be lit up for the Christmas season. Grateful thanks to the parish council for providing the lights and for timing the switch-on to link with the first of our joint church services as we look forward to celebrating the birth of Jesus together in this community."

## Creating quilts for worthy causes

SPEAKERS at the monthly meeting of Glazebrook WI were Terri and Jenny were from Project Linus, an organisation that creates quilts for worthy causes.

It originated in America in 1995 when just one woman made a patchwork quilt for a child in hospital.

Now Project Linus has spread to many countries.

In Great Britain it started with 10 knitters and one quilter but now exists all over the country with many members creating patchwork and wool covers, incubator covers and sheets, etc. initially for children in hospital but now for any worthy cause.

Terri and Jenny brought a lovingly made collection of covers created by their volunteer members in their church hall.

## Road to be widened – and closed!

PLANNING chiefs have given the go-ahead for the widening of a stretch of Kelvin Street, Birchwood Park– and the closure of another section of the road.

Kelvin Street will be widened from 5.8 metres to 7.3 metres for a distance of about 263 metres from its junction with Cavendish Avenue.

But it will be permanently closed to traffic north of the junction – where it is currently temporarily closed - with the use of permanent bollards.

The borough's development management committee approved the changes after hearing from officers that there were no residential properties close by and there were no highways objections to the changes.

There were no objections to the changes.

## Christmas at Bents revealed



THE Mayor of Warrington, Cllr Karen Mundry, joined the team at Bents Garden and Home to officially open this year's Christmas experience.

The Mayor was invited into Bents enchanted forest to draw back the trees and reveal another very special wonderland.

Christmas at Bents has been kept strictly under wraps for the past six weeks but all the hard work was revealed at the official opening event, and hiding behind the trees was another special visitor who had made an early visit to Bents to help start the celebrations.

Father Christmas mingled with the crowds, meeting children and getting people in the festive spirit as they took the opportunity to look around the displays and discover trends and fashions for 2018.

Said Cllr Mundry: "The Christmas opening at Bents has become quite a tradition in the Mayor's diary and one which I am delighted to continue. Bents is a hugely successful local business which undergoes a fantastic transformation at this time of year. I thoroughly enjoyed our tour and believe the team has once again set the scene for another inspiring – and hopefully award winning –

display!"

Managing Director Matthew Bent said: "We'd like to say a big thank you to the Mayor for helping us open our winter wonderland. We hope everyone has enjoyed what they've seen today and will join us again in the run up to Christmas to experience what else we've got planned this year."

Bents' Winter Food Market is open from 12noon every day and has a new, extended menu as well as more evening entertainment, with live music every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings from 6 – 8pm.

Father Christmas's official arrival will take place on Saturday 10th November at 10am when he will be joined by some magical festive folk.

Bents' popular Family Fun Weekend returns on Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th December with the much loved real reindeer making an appearance alongside fairground rides and other fun activities.

There are even more Festive Inspiration Evenings planned throughout November and early December with new workshops using fresh festive foliage as well as the brand new Elf Adventure Challenge on December 17.

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# Supporting children who are not reaching their full potential

HELP is at hand for parents who feel that, for one reason or another, their children are not reaching their full potential at school.

Culcheth-based Chrysalis Education Consultancy provides a range of professional services to support children and young people, from pre-school to end of high school age and can help with a wide range of special educational needs with advice for home and school.

Founder Dianne Allsup said: "I have been working in education for many years and moved up to consultancy 12 years ago now. Time flies when you have a passion for seeing every child gets the best opportunities."

"The most important thing for every member of our team is to see each child happy and thriving as they work towards achieving their potential."

Dianne said Chrysalis staff are able to draw on their experience as teachers, teaching assistants, specialist teachers and specialist practitioners in local authorities, primary and secondary schools.

Full and thorough consultations and assessments give a full picture what a child can do, as well as advice for areas needing support.



"We fully document consultations and assessments (including AMBDA) for parents and schools to share with other professionals as needed."

"Understanding the needs of schools enables us to provide realistic and effective liaison and advice. We offer follow-up consultations if appropriate. Also, specialist special needs tutoring is available, planned specifically according to your child's needs and their most effective way of learning."

Chrysalis educational consultants provide expert assessments for education to help with Dyslexia, Autism Spectrum Disorder and other needs, as well as offering Special Needs training and consultancy.

More details are available at <https://chrysaliseduc.com> and Dianne can be contacted on 07507 105 326.

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# Village choir marks centenary of World War 1

CULCHETH Village Choir is to present a concert to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War.

The concert will be staged at Culcheth Sports Club (The Datan) on Charnock Road, Culcheth WA3 5SH on Sunday November 11 at 7.30 pm

Members of the choir decided they wanted to do something to mark the anniversary and put together a concert consisting of a programme of songs, some from the era, and arranged by their musical director Paul Vowles, a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music, and others written by Paul especially for the event.

Choir members, some in period costume, will also read poetry and letters written during the war with a projected backdrop of images from the era.

Tickets are £5 and can be reserved on 07711 410855 or purchased from the bar at the club or paid for in cash on the door on the night. All profits are to be donated to The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal and Help for Heroes.

Culcheth Village Choir was formed in 2013 by six people and has since grown to a choir of around 25 members. They are a mixed voice adult choir who meet every Thursday at Culcheth Sports

Club at 7.30pm to 9pm. New members are always welcome.

There is no audition and no requirement to be able to read music. Just a love of the joy of singing is all that is required. The choir regularly perform at local community events and have taken part in the occasional choral competition, the last being the prestigious Alderley Edge Music Festival when they finished in fourth place.



## Amy donates her hair to help other children

BIRCHWOOD High School pupil Amy Groves had her long hair cut short – to help other children undergoing treatment for cancer to feel beautiful again.

Amy has always worn her hair long, so the decision was not an easy one.

But reading an article on hair donation made her think about how she would feel if she lost her hair and how unhappy she would feel at a time when she was at her most vulnerable.

So she had her locks cut short and donated her hair to the Princess Trust, who make wigs for children who have lost their hair due to radical lifesaving treatments for cancer and other conditions.

To make a wig costs between £350 and £500 so donating hair is not the end of the story. Amy has set up a Just Giving page, which can be found at [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/sarah-groves4?](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/sarah-groves4?)

She would really appreciate any support to her fundraising to help the Princess Trust to make a wig from her hair and help a poorly child to feel better again.



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OPEN



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# Open Evening

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Wednesday 14th November

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01925 494494

wvr.ac.uk/openevenings

# School's charity day for two great causes

A CHARITY Day at Newchurch Primary School, Culcheth raised funds for two great causes – Cancer Research UK and MacMillan Cancer Support.

Pupils, staff and parents were involved in the event which took place both indoors and outdoors.

Out on the school field, more than 200 children and some enthusiastic adults took part in a "Race for Life" in aid of Cancer Research UK.

Organiser and classroom teacher Lee Singleton was thrilled to see the event so well supported.

He said: "It was a gorgeous sunny day and the school field was filled with smiling faces, all wanting to take part and do their bit for Cancer Research."

But there was also a hive of activity inside the school building with staff and the Parent Teacher Association running a "Great Newchurch Bake Off"

Children brought in their own homemade cakes to sell – with all donations going directly to MacMillan Cancer Support.

Mr Singleton said: "The school would like to thank everyone for their kind donations and support for both the fantastic events."



## Puzzlers put the pieces in place

A NEW community group aimed at jigsaw puzzle enthusiasts has launched in Culcheth.

Culcheth Jigsaw Library, runs every Monday from 2.30pm to 4pm at Culcheth Library, providing the opportunity for people to meet to help complete a jigsaw or borrow one to enjoy at home.

The group has only been running since early October and already has 100 jigsaws on offer - providing plenty of choice for "puzzlers".

Christine Smith, a member of the Friends of Culcheth Library, said: "Culcheth Library was threatened with closure - so a group of local residents and councillors have been working together to keep the library open in the existing location.

"One of the suggestions was to start up a jigsaw library - which seemed like an excellent idea, so I offered to help get it set up. We have a number of local residents who have volunteered to help run it.

"It is well known the importance of keeping a healthy mind, especially in later life, and that reducing social isolation has a positive effect on health. The jigsaw library combines both of these so you can enjoy a challenging jigsaw while socialising at the same time. We hope that the jigsaw library will appeal to a variety of people, including those suffering with dementia, and we are also working with a local care home to see how their residents can access the group."

Julie Berry, one of the volunteers, said: "Thanks to everyone who has donated jigsaws to us so far. Also one of the big puzzles and games companies has offered us a selection of jigsaws for the library - and these will be available soon to borrow."

The jigsaw library sessions are free to attend – but membership of Culcheth Library is required.



## Heads shaved at cancer charity event

A HUSBAND and wife put on a charity event – and added to the fun by both having their heads shaved.

The event at the Poacher pub at Birchwood raised more than £384 – and money is still coming in.

The event was to raise funds for CANsupport, which is part of the CANtreat cancer treatment centre at Halton Hospital.

CANsupport is run by volunteers and provides equipment and support for cancer patients.

There were stalls, tombola, a raffle, cakes, etc and lots of personal donations.

Nikki, from Bugs Biz came along with an assortment of exotic animals.

Steven Bishop, 59 and his wife, Kerry, 41, both had their heads shaved.

Afterwards, Kerry said: "We would like to thank everyone who came along and helped. We would not have been able to achieve this without their help."

Anyone who would like to donate to the appeal can contact Kerry by email at kdimps1977@aol.com



# WI members taken into a world of crime

**MEMBERS of Newchurch WI were taken into a world of crime and detection by the speaker at their monthly meeting.**

Caroline Eames, spoke of her 31 years of work as a forensic scientist.

She held members' attention as she went through all the traces that criminals leave behind them and made the members work out how these traces could solve a case. One comic incident involved a burglar who used a half-brick and was caught because of brick fragments in his clothing and the fact that he was caught at the scene with a stolen TV.

Other cases were much more serious and Caroline's team needed to work quickly to preserve evidence.

She is currently working on a list of "cold cases", using DNA evidence and the study of human bones and explained how DNA traces can trap criminals.

Next she dressed one WI

member in full working gear to show how it stops contamination of the scene by the actual forensic team.

Trudy MacDonald gave the vote of thanks and Caroline judged the competition – for a magnifying glass. Barbara Alldred was winner, followed by Jean Riley and Lesley Lloyd.

After refreshments, the annual general meeting was held and a bouquet was presented to Kath Hanley to mark her retirement after many years on the committee.

On November 28, members are going on a trip to Boundary Mill and the Calf's Head and on December 12 the annual Christmas party will be held.

The Craft Group will take part in the Festival of Trees and Cribs in Newchurch Parish Church.

## The Secrets of Handwriting

Speaker Susan Ord enlightened members of Croft WI on "The Secrets of Handwriting" at their monthly meeting.

Aided by computer graphics, she explained where graphology could be used in such things as forensic testing and psychological assessments. The many nuances of different writing styles were explained, both the positive and negative implications. For instance heavy pressure can mean a person with lots of energy, or suppressed anger. A large, flamboyant signature can mean someone who is the life and soul of the party, or alternatively signal arrogance.

Conversely, it can also mean low self esteem, for even though the person appears very confident in public, privately they could be full of self-doubt, as was the case with the late Tony Hancock. Writing style can give a pre-conception of

the type of person involved. When members were shown a sample of very tiny handwriting and asked the characteristics of the writer, approximately 80 per cent thought the person could be mean and tight with money, but it can also signify a reserved, positive, careful being, thus demonstrating the broad spectrum of writing analysis.

Size, the use of the page, slopes, spaces between letters, all can be scrutinised by graphologists like Susan, who has spent many years studying her craft. Barbara Laycock thanked her for a very interesting evening.

The competition was won by Louise Geekie, 2nd Diane Simms, 3rd Ann Tansey

Croft WI meet at 7.30pm on the third Wednesday of each month. For further information ring 01925 817019

## Seven Macs – but nothing to do with raincoats

"SEVEN Macs from the Outer Hebrides" were on the agenda at the monthly meeting of Culcheth WI – but it had nothing to do with raincoats.

It was the title of speaker Morag Buirton's speech, which dealt with the Scottish islands, the herring fishing industry, which had largely gone by the end of World War 2, and the massive tourist industry which started after a visit by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert in 1850.

Morag's seven Macs were: MacBraynes. He started the first ferries to the islands and still supplies the remote islands with food and essentials.

The MacNeils are a well-established island family.

Macchair – a Gaelic word meaning "fertile grassy plain"

MacGillivray – a bird expert

who once walked more than 800 miles to London to study them in the Natural History Museum

MacDonald, Flora, who helped Bonnie Prince Charlie to escape, putting her own life at risk.

MacLeod, Donald, who escorted Bonnie Prince Charlie for seven weeks, as he evaded capture after the Battle of Culloden.

Mackenzie, Compton, who wrote "Whisky Galore" and also helped to found the Scottish Nationalist Party.

Next theatre trip is to see 'The Matt Monro Story' at the Brindley in November and on December 4 there is a trip to Oswaldtwistle Mills.

A volunteer is needed to join the committee as one member is resigning after many years' service.

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# HOUSE PRICES HAVE INCREASED SO WHY HASN'T MINE?

**WELL LET'S START WITH THE FACTS, ACCORDING TO THE GOVERNMENT HOUSING INDEX (UK HPI) PRICES HAVE INCREASED BY 0.3% SINCE APRIL 2018 IN ENGLAND. YET ON AVERAGE THROUGHOUT THE UK THEY HAVE ONLY RISEN BY 0.1%.**

## **Which area saw the greatest increase?**

The East Midlands experienced the highest rise by 1.7% whilst London witnessed the lowest annual price increase down by 0.4%. The Northwest saw a moderate increase of 0.1% in monthly change since April 2018, however the Northwest also saw the highest recorded repossessions in March 2018 with a staggering 160 compared to the East of England that only had 11.

## **So what about our local area?**

Culcheth has an overall average asking price of £268,488 making it more expensive than nearby Glazebury at £206,646 and Birchwood at £165,425 but it was cheaper than Croft at £300,393.

***Culcheth although 9% down on the previous year has still seen a price increase in a pocket of its market with most property sales involving semi-detached homes achieving an average of £232,873.***

**If you currently own a detached family home in the WA3 area and haven't sold, you may be wondering why?** Well although the average price for a detached home is £385,825 this figure also includes bungalows, which due to a continued interest and increased demand for them from developers, has elevated their asking prices. Yet the demand for a standard four bed detached home has declined. Many families with 2.4 children are concerned about the upcoming Brexit 'deal or no deal' situation. If inflation occurs it affects them the most, childcare costs, petrol and running costs etc. Purse strings are already tight so why go up the ladder just yet, its maybe easier to stay where they are and extend. There is also a nervousness regarding the HS2 spur (this affects all house styles) and combined with an increase in divorce and separation, it has meant more people are downsizing than up scaling. Hence the semi-detached market prospering whilst the detached falters in the wings.

However no matter what the house, big, small, quirky or standard at a price there is a buyer for every category. It's about ensuring that you are pitched at the right level to attract them.

**For more information on your local market, please do not hesitate to contact us on 01925 767000.**

*Information correct at the time of writing based on stats from Rightmove and UKHPI.*



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