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**National beauty pageant
returns to town**

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Editor
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Production
James Bryan

Advertising
James Balme
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Editorial
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Editor's Comment

AS we celebrate a new year with the current cost of living crisis, it is difficult to look to the future with optimism.

With inflation soaring, energy prices going through the roof, various strike actions and more and more families becoming dependent on foodbanks, it is difficult, even for an eternal optimist to look to the future in a positive away.

But what I have seen this year, more than any other, is the goodwill of lots of people reaching out to help those in need.

Despite all the doom and gloom, here at Warrington Worldwide we have taken great joy in reporting on those in our local community,

who have gone above and beyond, helping those in need.

Whether it was lighting up the local neighbourhood to bring some much needed Christmas cheer, or making collections to support the foodbank and toy appeals, there have been plenty of people out there working hard to help others.

Let's hope this can continue throughout the year – because if all of those who can afford to help others, do so, it will help those most in need.

So let's try and continue with the



Christmas spirit into the new year and reach out and support those in need. Just like a dog is for life not just for Christmas, exactly the same applies to human beings.

It doesn't cost anything to be kind to people and whatever frustrations we have in life, there is no better feeling than helping someone – so if you are making a resolution for the new year – make an extra one to be kind to people. Believe me – it will make you feel better amongst the doom and gloom.

End of an era as Shelly's closes down

IT was an end of an era as the popular Shelly's Restaurant in Warrington town centre held a tabletop closing-down sale.

Owned and run by Michele Butterworth, the popular restaurant and tea room on Bold Street, Warrington, had to close during the COVID-19 pandemic and never re-opened due to spiralling costs.

Michelle has now taken the heartbreaking decision to put her property up for sale and held a tabletop clearance sale.

But she will continue to run the neighbouring Michele & Co Hairdressing salon.

Shelly's opened two decades ago as a restaurant in the evenings

and a tea room during the day and proved hugely popular over the years.

But with times getting tougher and the COVID-19 pandemic Michele was left with no choice but to make the heartbreaking decision to close.

Michele, who was up until 3 am baking cakes for the tabletop sale said: "As much as I would have loved to have re-opened it just wasn't viable. COVID just changed everything for me. Now I've got to look forward and retire and make cakes for my grandchildren and someone else can have a fresh start here."

Meanwhile, Michele will be

celebrating 50 years in hairdressing next year. "I love hairdressing. It is a top job with the least stress. I've also loved Shelly's and I just want to say thank you to everyone who came here spending money and supporting me."



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National beauty pageant returns to Warrington Parr Hall

LOCAL businesswoman, Holly Pirrie, is bringing the sparkle back to Warrington by preparing for the annual finals of the Miss International UK beauty pageant.

The pageant will be held at Parr Hall Theatre in Palmyra Square on Saturday, June 10, and will see over 50 families travelling to Warrington to attend and support the event. The event has also confirmed the attendance of the Mayor of Warrington, who will be watching the show on the evening.

The contestants of the competition will compete in the glamorous grand finals, with on-stage rounds such as Swimwear and Eveningwear, in the hope to become the next Miss International UK winner. Alongside an amazing prize package, which includes an official sparkly crown and voucher to spend at The Dress Studio in Culcheth, the winner of the Miss International UK competition will win a trip of a lifetime to Japan.

She will compete in the prestigious Miss International Official Pageant, against beauty queens from across the globe as the representative for the United Kingdom! The pageant has been running annually for over 60 years and is among the top 5 pageants in the world.

The winner will also travel to India on a humanitarian visit with the not-for-profit organisation A-Sisterhood. The newly crowned Miss International UK will be an ambassador for the cause and support a host of Women's Charities

such as Stop Acid Attacks over in India.

The reigning Miss International UK Evanjelin Elchmanar, who won in 2021, travelled to Japan recently to compete against other national winners from all over the world, for the official Miss International crown!

Each year, the Miss International UK competition receives hundreds of applications to the Warrington-based office from all over the UK. It is one of five national beauty pageants organised by Holly and her team, who plan to bring more events to the town for 2023. Watch this space!



Lions makes £4000 donation to Walton Lea

WARRINGTON Lions has generously donated £4000 to Walton Lea Partnership, with the money raised through donations to their Christmas Sleigh Appeal.

Member Tony Gandy handed the cheque to Walton Lea Partnership Site Operations Manager Karen Moore, who was accompanied by some of the Walton Lea-supported learners.

Walton Lea Partnership will use the money to help cover the cost of the charity's new pick-up truck.



2022 Christmas & New Year Bus Services

Monday 19 th December	Normal Service (School days)
Tuesday 20 th December	
Wednesday 21 st December	
Thursday 22 nd December	Hybrid Saturday Service with 22/47/96/98/594 & 596 operating with earlier finishes around 19:30 on Christmas Eve
Friday 23 rd December	
Saturday 24 th December	No Service
Sunday 25 th December	Sunday Service
Monday 26 th December	Hybrid Saturday/Sunday Service with 5/5A/47/96/594 & 596 operating (with earlier evening finished on 31 st)
Tuesday 27 th December	
Wednesday 28 th December	
Thursday 29 th December	No Service
Friday 30 th December	
Saturday 31 st December	Sunday Service
Sunday 1 st January	Normal Service (school day timetables)
Monday 2 nd January	
Tuesday 3 rd January	

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Advertiser's announcement

We are Warrington BID

Our plan on how to invest over £1.5 million added value investment in Warrington town centre.

My plan for a successor Business Improvement District for Warrington town centre is well underway and provides a unique opportunity for businesses and stakeholders to once again, unite and continue to build on the success of BID 1.

The plan is currently in draft form and has been produced by the Warrington BID Executive Board, based on the feedback businesses provided to us through the BID 2 consultations, throughout the summer of 2022.

The BID board has been established since August 2018, representing the views and opinions of the Warrington town centre business community, with the aim of delivering a number of key objectives.

Some of our deliverables have included;

- Creating and developing our dedicated destination brand We Are Warrington BID, now with a strong social following of over 14,000
- Supporting and delivering town centre events including the more recent – Warrington's Weekend Wonderland which saw over 60,000 visitors descend on our town centre
- Bringing crime prevention and security initiatives
- Creating opportunities for environmental and aesthetic enhancements across the town

centre

- Importantly providing the support and guidance our business community needed before, during and after the Covid pandemic.

Over the last 4 years we have made significant enhancements to raise the profile of the town centre, ultimately making Warrington the destination of choice for visitors and consumers. We recognise that there is still work to be done, particularly with the current economic challenges that will impact on consumer choices.

Through the BID 2 proposal, we have set out our ambitious aims to build upon the successes we have achieved in BID 1. Continuing to bring forward innovative, dynamic and exciting opportunities to; engage consumers, create great experiences for visitors, and build a stronger, resilient business community.

As the Warrington BID Manager I am determined to deliver a plan that meets the current needs of the business community, delivering when possible, added value and additional investments into our town centre.

In this draft plan we represent the interests of town centre businesses, therefore please take the time to read through and please email me your feedback on andrea.morley@groundwork.org.uk

BID 2 proposal can be found on our website: <https://warringtonbid.co.uk/bid-2-proposal/>



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- BUILDING A SUPPORTED COMMUNITY OF TOWN CENTRE BUSINESSES

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Apprentice scoops top gong at National Apprenticeship Awards

A WARRINGTON apprentice has scooped the top accolade at the National Apprenticeship Awards, being recognised for his commitment to his career and his passion for helping customers.

Sam Johnson, Apprentice Credit Controller at United Utilities, won the Babington Award for Intermediate Apprentice of the Year at a ceremony in London on 30th November. He had previously won the North West title, which put him in the running for the national going up against the other six regional winners.

Sam, 19, finished his GCSEs and then enrolled on a BTEC Sport course at college. Despite completing that with a distinction and two merits in May 2021, he decided to earn while he learned, rather than heading to university to study full-time. Sam has a real interest in the world of profit margins, revenue and customer relations, having been something of an entrepreneur in his school days, and so he decided to enter the world of income.

Sam joined the regional water company in September 2021 to work towards a Credit Controller and Collector Apprenticeship standard. His role is all about customer service, helping people set up payment arrangements that

suit them so they can get back on track with their bills and reduce their debt.

"I'm so thankful for my mentor Matt Newman for encouraging me to enter the North West Awards, and it was amazing to win and go forward to the national finals," Sam said. "I never really thought I would win against the other regional finalists, so I was really chuffed. My mum was crying and the whole table was cheering, it was fantastic."

"At United Utilities I feel ready to achieve and go beyond expectations, and the support from my mentor, team leader, and everyone at the company helps me do that. I've had chance to experience the work of different teams since joining and have found the perfect place for me to thrive within Nikki Carney's team."

"Nikki has taught me a lot in terms of my role and coached me how to negotiate effectivity with customers. It's really important to me to be able to help others, so supporting people who are going through financial hardship is really rewarding."

"I'm looking forward to what the future holds. I'll keep working hard and see what else I can achieve."

Nikki Carney, Income Team Leader, added: "This is the first time a United Utilities apprentice has taken home a national title, and we're all so proud of Sam. He is a fantastic member of the team who goes above and beyond to find the right solution for each customer who is struggling to pay their bill."

"He has a clear passion for his work and we can see a really bright future for him."

Sam has also been shortlisted for the Chartered Institute of Credit Management Rising Star Award in February 2023.

To find out more about working at United Utilities and see the current vacancies, visit: www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/careers/



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Still signs for optimism

by John Laverick - Warrington & Co

I get accused of being too much of an optimist quite a lot, fortunately not a mindless optimist, but an optimist none the less. I think I am quite happy with that tag, although last year managed to put a bit of a dent in the optimism for reasons that we are all too familiar with, but in common with last January I still see signs for optimism.

Whereas previously I have spoken of planned developments and planned homes and things in pipelines, we can now see them in the flesh and people are occupying them. The development of Academy St by Torus and Lane End is a good example, the process started almost 4 years ago with a

very robust debate in relation to the delivery of affordable housing versus the viability of delivering housing in the town centre at all.

The end result is now that we have housing on the site that is affordable and proving very popular with younger people who work in Warrington and want to

live in the town centre, and most importantly can now do so. The debate is now about how much affordable housing can be brought forward viably on a site rather than if and how those developments can bring forward sustainable communities rather than just houses. This is a reason to be optimistic about the future of Warrington's Town Centre.

We have more residential developments on site ready to deliver housing this year and I hope that we start to see the greater vibrancy in the town centre as a result of this. The Local Plan will also help this process and deliver certainty of housing delivery both within the Town Centre and more broadly across the Borough. It is a long process but essential.

Against this optimistic view I have to set the increased cost of living and the increased cost of bringing forward development. And here the dents get larger. I don't think we can continue with what are seen as traditional forms of home ownership, where the conflicting pressures on one person or a family prove too great to contemplate home ownership and so different ways to own your own home, if that is the desire, need to be considered on a far more flexible basis, perhaps supported



The partnership for driving growth



John Laverick

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Dante help deliver some Christmas cheer to help those in need



PUPILS at Locking Stumps Primary School in Warrington have helped deliver some Christmas cheer thanks to local facilities management company Dante.

Following a Xmas hamper donations request Dante, based at Europa Boulevard, Westbrook, Warrington, managed to raise over £900.00 thanks to all their staff and subcontractors. It is the fourth successive year they have done a hamper appeal.

All monies were put towards Food, Toys, gift sets, and vouchers, which will be donated to those families in need.

The Christmas goodies were dropped off at Locking Stumps Primary, to be distributed to those in need in the community.

Dante Director/owner Al Roskell said: "Thank you everyone for your kind contributions and a big thankyou to Michelle for her efforts in putting this all together."

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Strictly St Rocco's night of dancing raises £65,000 for charity

ST ROCCO'S Hospice delighted an audience of 400 people raising a staggering £65,000 with its 'Strictly' style dancing competition.

The annual fundraiser took place at the Mere Golf Resort and Spa in Knutsford where eight couples impressed the crowd with ballroom, waltz and salsa-inspired moves. Eight amateur dancers were paired with a professional dancer from Cadmans Dance Centre in Sale where they learnt to dance.

Russ Scanlon, Consultant at Huddle Hospitality was crowned

the winner with Chris Hodgkinson, Director at HC Promotions voted as runner-up.

Also donning their dance shoes and taking part was Anna McCartney (Service Host, ASDA), Carole Huggall (Trustee, St Rocco's Hospice), Robyn Pollard (Personal Trainer, RKP Personal Training), Lee Kinsey (Van Driver, Stapletons), Vicki Ditchfield (Director, BMECH Group) and Ian

Cox (Centre Director, Golden Square Shopping Centre).

Nicola Henshaw, Fundraising Manager, told us, "This year has been especially hard for events fundraising for all charities. To see the support St Rocco's receives at this event year on year is amazing and goes a long way in helping us to continue our care to Warrington people living with a life limiting illness and their families. We would like to extend our thanks to every single person involved in Strictly St Rocco's 2022, thank you!"

Thanks went to everyone involved including headline sponsor of the event, Ingevity; Cadmans Dance Centre for training and supporting the amateur dancers; Corporate table sponsors Zachary Daniels and DP Diamond Drilling; Guest judges Victoria Millward, Ralph Casson, Elle Magee, Sean Preston; and hosts Ian Lawson and Tracy Griffiths with guest speaker Sarah Dillion.

Further thanks to DJ Nigel Vaughan of DMC Media, volunteer

photographers Brian Touhey and Moore Photography Club, and ACTS Sound and Lighting for their support. Also to Claire McGinty for the dancer spray tans and Warrington Vale Royal College for the dancers' hair and makeup. Thank you to everyone that has donated prizes for the raffle, including Quintessential Brands, The Mere Hotel, The Village Hotel, Beaverbrooks, Chisholm Hunter, Piero Belmonte and Wife-To-Be.

Final thanks were offered to the 8 contestants who have worked so hard and shown exceptional support and commitment to St. Rocco's Hospice.



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Generations of apprenticeship success at college



WARRINGTON & Vale Royal College recently invested into improving the safety of its campus by installing electrical barriers in the main reception area – just the first phase of a campus-wide implementation.

The work was carried out by not one but two of the college's apprentices who work for Lock-tec (UK) Ltd – a company owned by Warrington & Vale Royal College apprentice alumni Glen Whalley.

The work was carried out by Sam Whalley, Glen's son, and Joe Lowe – both bright sparks completing their apprenticeships at Warrington & Vale Royal College. Sam, who has been an apprentice for one year, study's in the college's Advanced Manufacturing & Engineering Training (AMET) Centre one day a week, where he benefits from the specialist facilities. Here, Sam develops his practical skills and theoretical knowledge of electrical installation including wiring, installing cables and lighting circuits. When asked what advice he would give to anyone considering taking the apprenticeship route, he said: "Go for it! I am so much happier doing an apprenticeship than I would have been if I had gone down a different route. At Lock-tec, I am well supported and happy. The best thing is that I am learning something new every day."

Joe has worked at Lock-tec for over four years now and began his career in a similar fashion to Sam. Preferring practical, career-orientated learning, Joe knew early on that he wanted to get straight into work and an apprenticeship was the

perfect way to do this, whilst gaining a nationally recognised qualification. After successfully completing his apprenticeship, Joe decided to continue his studies at Warrington & Vale Royal College and progressed on to a HNC and HND Electrical & Electronic Engineering course – whereby he also achieved incredible results. After working in the industry for a number of years, Joe's career is thriving and he now intends to work towards a promotion at Lock-tec.

In addition to Sam and Joe, Glen Whalley – Managing Director of Lock-tec, also studied for several years at Warrington & Vale Royal College (formerly Warrington Collegiate). Glen says: "I would highly recommend an apprenticeship for any budding engineer who wishes to develop specialist skills and gain experience within a trade whilst continuing their studies. Working on the tools with guidance and support of experienced engineers develops practical skills, technical knowledge and encourages personal growth."

Warrington & Vale Royal College are delighted with the success of these three apprentices, and look forward to seeing Sam and Joe flourish in their careers as Glen has. If you think the apprenticeship route could be for you, visit: wvr.ac.uk for more information.

Alderman Bolton Primary celebrates successful Ofsted report

STAFF and pupils at Alderman Bolton Primary School in Latchford, Warrington, are celebrating another successful inspection report.

Ofsted visited the 305-pupil Warrington Primary Academy Trust school in early October and the school learned this week that it had maintained its 'good' rating.

The inspection report noted that children were happy and safe in school and that pupils felt a strong sense of belonging in what they described as "a caring school".

The report added: "Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils rise to these expectations. They are polite and well behaved. Classrooms are calm spaces where pupils enjoy learning. Pupils learn well."

It went on: "Leaders and teachers are aspirational for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)."

"Leaders provide a well-designed and ambitious curriculum which gives pupils the knowledge and skills that they need to be ready for secondary school."

The report added: "Trustees and governors skilfully provide effective support and challenge to leaders. Staff were overwhelmingly positive about leaders' support for their workload and professional development. Staff are proud to work at this school."

Law firm announces further expansion

LAW firm, Taylor Rose MW has announced its expansion into the North-West of England after completing a key strategic change in Warrington.

From December 1st, the leading consumer law firm has successfully transferred its colleagues from its sister firm, Warrington-based FDR Law.

The transfer oversees the retention of staff as well as its current office location, expanding from 1-3 Palmyra Square South to 1-5 Palmyra Square South.

This transfer ensures that clients' local Warrington experts will remain on hand to provide the same excellent service they have previously experienced with FDR Law simply operating under a different brand, Taylor Rose MW.

Over the last few years, Taylor Rose MW has extensively developed its presence in the South-East of England after its successful merger with McMillan Williams in 2020, and now looks to expand this further to the M62 corridor.

As part of this continued strategy, the firm acquired offices in Manchester and Cumbria. However, the new office in Warrington is expected to strengthen the firm's offering in the region and comes just months after Taylor Rose MW opened its first office in Wales (Cardiff).

The expansion of Taylor Rose MW to North-West England and the growth of its consultant solicitor operation in this region has been something the firm has aspired to do for some time now to enhance its strong local and regional presence.

The opening of the Warrington

office is just the start of Taylor Rose MW's journey to build a national network to support both its traditional law firm operation and fast-growing consultancy business.

The team in Warrington will offer a range of legal services, including:

- Commercial Property/Real estate
- Corporate and Commercial Law
- Contentious Probate
- Conveyancing
- Crime
- Employment Law
- Family Law
- Litigation and dispute resolution
- Wills, Trusts and Probate

Taylor Rose MWs Adrian Jaggard, CEO said: "The Taylor Rose MW brand is expanding at pace across the UK as we continue to implement our strategy and take our flexible and attractive business model to new parts of the UK. We now have more than 30 offices throughout England and Wales, meaning more and more clients get on-the-ground support and our solicitors have more resources at their fingertips."

"The experienced team in Warrington is already well established in the local community and imbues the same values that underpin the Taylor Rose MW ethos, and we would like to welcome the Warrington office to the Taylor Rose MW family."

If you'd like to learn more about the Warrington office, please do not hesitate to get in touch (01925 230000).



Social work programmes named "best in country"

SOCIAL work programmes in Warrington have been named the best in the country at a national awards ceremony.

The University of Chester's Social Work programmes, which are based at University Centre Warrington, have won University of the Year in the annual Social Worker of the Year Awards receiving praise for its commitment to the local community, dedication to diversity and the expertise and support of its lecturers.

The award recognises outstanding and effective social work education for its students and shaping the social workers of tomorrow into reflective, compassionate and resilient practitioners.

The University's Social Work Department was praised by the judges for embedding itself in the local community and ensuring those around it directly benefit from social work.

The judges said: "The Department prides itself on involving people with lived experience of social work in its programmes and encourages students to promote a range of local services such as foodbanks and care centres."

"During the pandemic, students developed a project to support homeless people to have a hot meal and change of clothes. The importance of these close local links is reflected in the University's excellent employment statistics, with many students opting to remain working in the area after completing their studies."

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Advertiser's announcement

Keeping well in winter

Cold weather can make some health problems worse and even lead to serious complications, especially if you are 65 or older or have a long-term health condition.

Follow our simple guide to keeping well over the winter months and making the right choices on health services.

An Emergency Department, also known as Accident and Emergency (A&E), should only be used for genuine life-threatening emergencies, such as loss of consciousness, choking, chest pain, breathing difficulties, severe bleeding that cannot be stopped, stroke or major trauma such as a road traffic accident.

Less severe injuries can be

treated in urgent treatment centres or minor injuries units.

Get help early

If you are aged 65 or over, or in another at-risk group, it's important to get medical help as soon as you feel unwell. Please don't wait until your symptoms get worse.

Unsure where to get help?

Visit 111.nhs.uk online for information and guidance on where to get help for your symptoms and

injury, prescription and medicines information, mental health information and information on a range of conditions including Strep A and COVID-19. The website also includes symptom checkers and details on when to seek emergency help.

Alternatively, call 111 free from a landline or mobile. Trained advisors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can book appointments with a healthcare service, if needed.

Get to know your local pharmacist

Pharmacists are experts in medicines and can advise you on their safe use. They can also offer clinical advice and over-the-counter medicines to treat a range of minor illnesses, such as coughs, colds, sore throats, tummy trouble and aches and pains to help you recover at home.

Most community pharmacies have a private consultation room and will direct you to other services, if required. To find your local pharmacy and opening times visit www.nhs.uk/nhs-services

Feeling low, overwhelmed or anxious?

You can get mental health support and advice by texting the word REACH to 85258. The text service is available 24/7 and offers free and confidential support to adults, children and young people who can be put in touch with a trained volunteer.

If someone is experiencing a mental health crisis you can contact the local mental crisis line 24/7 on freephone 0800 051 1508. This service, provided by Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust, is for all ages – children, young people and adults.

NHS Urgent Treatment Centres in Runcorn and Widnes are available to anyone in Warrington, Halton and surrounding areas who has a minor injury or illness that requires urgent attention but is not critical or life threatening.

Open 8am to 9pm, seven days a week, 365 days a year (including bank holidays), they can provide diagnostic services including x-ray. Please arrive before 8pm to allow time to be seen before closing.

The centres in our area can also provide arrival time slots for patients who contact NHS 111:

Runcorn Urgent Treatment Centre
Nightingale Building, Hospital Way, Runcorn, WA7 2DA
01928 714567

Widnes Urgent Treatment Centre
Health Care Resource Centre
Oaks Place, Caldwell Road, Widnes, WA8 7GD
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Parr Hall named 'Music Venue of the Year'

WARRINGTON'S Parr Hall has been named 'Music Venue of the Year' in an awards ceremony celebrating the people and places behind the region's buzzing live scene.

The historic and much loved concert hall, which has been in Palmyra Square for 127 years, was recognised at the first [WAM] Awards at The Brass Monkey, a bar in the new 'Hive WA1' development in the town centre.

Parr Hall was announced as the winner on Thursday (December 8) evening after more than 5,000 people took part in a public vote. Other shortlisted venues included Friars Court/FC2, Warrington Irish Club and The Snig in Widnes.

The [WAM] Awards was organised and hosted by Warrington Music, a platform set up by Lee Harman to support grassroots artists in and around Warrington.

The aim of the ceremony was

to celebrate the 'amazing talent Warrington, Widnes and Runcorn has to offer' and prevent the region being overlooked by the huge music cities of Manchester and Liverpool that the area sits between.

The awards also marked the 10th anniversary of [WAM]. In other categories, Dave Gillespie, who works at Parr Hall as a venue management assistant, narrowly missed out on 'Photographer of the Year' and Clone Roses' Parr Hall gig was in the running for 'Event of the Year'.

Chris Persoglio, Venue and Events Manager at Parr Hall, said: "Thank you so much to everyone who voted for us and to Lee Harman for bringing the music scene together for the awards.

"We're delighted to be the [WAM] Music Venue of the Year. It's an incredible feeling and it means so much to us to still be at the heart of the community after 127 years. There is really nothing else like it when we have a sell-out gig. There is so much vibrancy and energy in the room."

Since Parr Hall's relaunch after the pandemic, the venue has welcomed the likes of The Script, James, Robert Plant, Shed Seven, Starsailor, Sophie Ellis-Bextor, Scouting for Girls, Slow Readers Club and many more.

Lee Harman, organiser and

founder of [WAM], added: "Parr Hall has a very special place in my heart. It's where I've seen many amazing events, and I was even lucky enough to host a show there in 2018.

"Congratulations to Parr Hall on their win and with almost 5,000 votes cast in the category, it's incredibly well deserved."

The Pyramid and Parr Hall team are also up for another accolade in 2023. They have been shortlisted for a Marketing Cheshire Tourism Award in the Team of the Year category at Halliwell Jones Stadium on 23 March.

Wallace and Gromit are heading to town

A CLASSIC Wallace and Gromit adventure is to be screened at Warrington's Parr Hall alongside a live brass band.

The Fairey Band, from Stockport, have teamed up with Aardman Animations to present a family concert that will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Academy Award winning The Wrong Trousers.

Following the cracking success of the short film's first adaptation into a concert earlier this year at Stockport Plaza, the brass band are hitting the road in 2023.

It is coming to Parr Hall on Sunday, April 23, where the audience can expect a performance promising fun for all the family with a short concert by players from the band followed by the main feature with original score by Julian Nott, arranged and performed by the Fairey Band.

Wallace and Gromit: The Wrong Trousers will lead a vibrant programme of family entertainment at Parr Hall next year.

Other highlights include Pop Princesses on March 5, Ministry of Science on April 8 and Milkshake! Live on June 3.

Tickets are on sale now - visit parrhall.culturewarrington.org or call 01925 442345.

Advertiser's announcement

Do you want to make a difference to healthcare in Warrington?

Do you feel passionate about your local healthcare services? Do you wish there was someone who could help people get the support they need? That someone could be you by joining the Healthwatch Warrington Volunteer Team!

The past 2 years have been difficult for everybody trying to access local health and social care services, with providers dealing with the effects of the pandemic which has left them with a backlog of appointments and long waiting lists for many. As the pandemic has eased, the NHS and other health and social care providers have prioritised working through the backlog of healthcare cases, but this will take time and is expected to be impacted by the cost of living crisis and an already stretched health service. This is where our Healthwatch volunteers can really help make a difference.

Our volunteers are at the heart of what we do, from talking to people about their experiences of health and social care, to writing reports, to updating our social media - volunteers are vital to our work. Whether you have a few hours to spare or are looking for a

regular commitment, we've got a volunteering role to suit you:

Virtual Voices Volunteers - Get involved by taking part in email polls, online questionnaires and surveys. (15 minutes per month)

Peoples Panel Volunteers - Share your experience and understanding of Health and Social issues that are important to the residents of Warrington. (2 hours per month)

Enter and View Volunteers - Help observe health and social care services at the point of delivery; speaking with staff, patients, residents, relatives, and carers, and producing reports with recommendations to improve service delivery. (3 hours per month)

Events and Engagement Volunteers - Support Healthwatch Warrington at local and county-wide events.

Our volunteers make everything we do possible and love helping to make local services better for everyone.

If you want to know more and get involved, check out the Healthwatch Warrington website - healthwatchwarrington.co.uk/how-can-i-volunteer



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Royal appointment for fashion designer

WHEN talented fashion designer Isabelle Pennington-Edmead embarked on her career she could hardly have believed it would lead to an audience with Royalty.

However, that's exactly what happened as the former Priestley College student from Stretton, met Prince Charles just weeks before he became King.

Their two meetings took place at Dumfries House to discuss a new womenswear collection she had been involved with that was designed in London and Milan, but manufactured in Scotland at The Prince's Foundation headquarters.

"He said he was very proud of what we were doing and seemed interested by the design process," said Isabelle.

"I was really nervous to meet him and address him correctly, but as soon as I spoke to him I was put at ease because he's very warm and friendly. I also met the late Queen Elizabeth when I was a child so it was exciting I was going to be meeting the future king too."

The project brief was to create a womenswear collection celebrating circular design using innovative features like QR codes and carbon tracking. It also celebrates more traditional techniques of small batch production and craftsmanship.

The designers took inspiration from the gardens at Highgrove, something Isabelle had done before while at Priestley College only then it was the beauty of Arley Hall's gardens that were her muse.

"We actually worked in a similar way when designing at Highgrove as we did on the Arley Hall project," said Isabelle, who studied Textiles and Fine Art.

"We walked around the grounds taking photographs for inspiration and doing observational drawings. It was also a similar time of year so all the gardens were similar autumnal colours."

Isabelle, a former pupil at Bridgewater High School, worked in London at the YOOX Net-a-Porter Group offices with three other British artisans.

They partnered with four artists in Milan and during the collaboration she visited Italy to source fabrics and trims. Throughout the project they worked with Carbon Sink to ensure their impact was offset.

All the artisans relocated to Scotland to manufacture the collection and were mentored by the likes of Patrick Grant, Gabriela Hearst and Giuliva Heritage.

"One of my favourite things

about the experience has been meeting some amazing people, which has been great for industry contacts, but I have also made some friends for life.

"I am so pleased with the manufacture skills I have perfected from being on this programme and I now know I can produce clothing made at luxury standard."

The collection is available exclusively on Net-A-Porter and Yoox, 50% of the recommended retail price from sales will be donated to The Prince's Foundation

charity.

Isabelle said her time at Priestley had helped her to reach where she is today.

"Priestley felt like it embraced students even if they aren't academics like myself and encouraged creativity and careers in the creative industry," she said.

"Studying Art Foundation at Priestley helped me to build a strong, diverse portfolio. It also changed my perspectives on art and allowed me to look at it differently."



Santas turn out in force to help raise funds for charity

SANTAS turned out in force to help raise funds for Warrington Disability Partnership at the charity's annual Santa Dash at Walton Hall and Gardens.

Deputy Mayor of Warrington Cllr. Graham Friend was on hand to help start proceedings and is pictured below.

Crosfields rugby players also

took part in the Santa Dash which helps raise funds for Warrington Disability Partnership, which also run the Christmas grotto at Walton Hall & Gardens in Partnership with Warrington Borough Council.

Santas could walk, push, jog, run or even cycle the 3km route, all at their own pace!



Former Mayor made Honorary Alderman



FORMER borough councillor Mike Biggin, who recently retired from the council has been awarded the title of Honorary Alderman.

Mike, who served for 16 years as a borough councillor across Grappenhall and Thelwall and also served as Warrington's 128th Mayor during 2011/12, stepped down as a Liberal Democrat borough councillor earlier this year and has since been recognised for his exemplary dedication to the people of Warrington, at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Council on Monday 5 December.

The position of Honorary Alderman is a ceremonial title which is open to any person who, in the eyes of the council, has given eminent service to the area in a public position. With this in mind, the motion to bestow the Honorary Alderman title upon Mr Biggin was unanimously approved.

Leader of the Council, Cllr

Russ Bowden, said: "Mike spent a number of years supporting his communities and was a truly committed councillor.

"I always enjoyed working alongside Mike and engaging in good debate and discussion with him. He was a hard-working, welcoming, respectful councillor and a real asset to both the council and the people he represented.

"I will also remember his lively and colourful mayoral year!

"I valued Mike's input and contributions he made during his tenure as borough councillor and we will miss him as he leaves this role at the council. Being recognised as Honorary Alderman is something Mike definitely deserves."

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Award-winning social supermarket to open in Bewsey

COMMUNITY Shop, the award-winning social supermarket, is set to open a new store in Bewsey, Warrington, early next year.

The supermarket will provide hundreds of local people with access to deeply discounted food and household products, as well as life-changing learning and development programmes.

The store will be the eleventh in Community Shop's network of social supermarkets which are based within some of the UK's most deprived communities, and is opening thanks

to the support of Warrington Borough Council and long-standing partner Ocado. It will be based in the Bewsey Park Pavilion (WA5 0BA).

Community Shop will sell products that are perfectly good to eat or use that have been donated by major retailers, brands and manufacturers after being deemed 'surplus' for reasons such as incorrect labelling or seasonal packaging, meaning they

may otherwise have gone to waste.

Revenue raised in the store will be re-invested back into the local area through the store's Community Hub, which will offer personal development programmes tailored to the needs of each member, offering a hand up and not a hand-out.

These unique programmes, which offer a mix of skills training and personal mentoring, have supported tens of thousands of people over the last 10 years and so far this year, over 19,000 members have accessed this support to develop a great life plan for a strong future.

The store will also house a Community Kitchen, offering low-cost wholesome hot meals, with children eating for free every day.

Gary Stott, Executive Chairman of Community Shop, said: "We're incredibly excited to be bringing Community Shop to the Bewsey area of Warrington. With the cost of living continuing to rise, this store will make an enormous difference to those who may be struggling to put food on the

table.

"However, the store's impact will go far beyond just deeply discounted food. By providing life-changing development programmes, this new Community Shop will equip individuals and the local community with the skills and knowledge needed to create long-term aspirational change."

In 2021, Community Shop helped its members collectively save more than £7.5m on their shopping and redistributed the equivalent of 2.95m meals through its stores.

Jonathan Wiseman, General Counsel and Chief People Officer at Ocado Retail said: "We're proud to be supporting the opening of another Community Shop – the fourth store that Ocado has funded. We look forward to continuing to work with Community Shop as it provides an invaluable service to so many up and down the country."

To find out more visit: www.communityshopgroup.co.uk/communityshop/

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BACK TO THE GARDEN
CHILDCARE

550 homes and 160-bed hotel approved for town centre

OUTLINE plans for 550 homes, a 160-bed hotel and 3,000 sq metres of shops or offices in Warrington town centre have been given the go-ahead by borough council planning chiefs.

But the scheme for land bounded by Tanners Lane and Winwick Street has been scaled down from earlier proposals for the same site some two years ago which envisaged buildings of up to 25 storeys.

Highest buildings now proposed for the site would be 12 storeys.

Members of Warrington Borough Council's development management committee approved the scheme, subject to the provision of affordable housing, a contribution from the developers towards travel planning, a local employment scheme and a

mechanism to review the viability of the scheme.

The site is about 1.2 hectares in size and is close to the Kings Head public house and the Three Pigeons public house – both of which are Grade 2 Listed buildings and a number of other designated and none-designated heritage assets.

Officers told the committee the application proposed redevelopment of the site for a mixture of uses all of which were appropriate in a town centre location.

There would be no adverse

impacts on the amenity of the area, highway safety or heritage assets.

A minimum of 10 per cent affordable housing would be

included within the development and the scheme would make an important contribution to increasing the council's supply of housing land.



Ashton and the 'art of acceptance'

AN ARTIST who studied at Warrington's Priestley College has been included on a list that once featured the likes of David Hockney and Damien Hirst.

Ashton Blyth, who studied Fine Art at Priestley, has been included on the list of emerging talent produced by New Contemporaries – a prestigious organisation that has supported young artists for more than 70 years.

"To have my name listed as an alumni of this organisation alongside these famous faces is daunting and a lot to live up to," said Ashton.

"There are not many LGBTQ+

people that are included in that long list of names, and fewer that make work regarding the trans experience. So to be part of the few representing the many in the art world is an honour and a privilege."

New Contemporaries is the leading organisation supporting emerging artists after graduation through an annual, nationally touring exhibition that has been running since 1949.

Alumni include Frank Auerbach, David Hockney, Damien Hirst and Gillian Wearing.

Since his third year at Priestley

College, Ashton's artistic practice has been about personal identity.

As he puts it, 'creating artworks that challenge the rules and restraints society lays out for us regarding our personal identity – because they should be challenged, broken down and reformed in new ways to represent the constant evolution of identity in society.'

"As a transgender man, whose life experiences often hang in the balance dependant on government and ever-changing laws regarding the LGBTQ+ community, I believe it is important to make artworks that highlight the struggles we face but also normalise our experiences as human beings, with the same fears and desires as everyone else," he said.

Ashton received both academic and personal support during his time at Priestley that made a huge difference to his life.

Since leaving Priestley College, the highlights of his artistic career includes winning the Young Artist category in the international Visual Art Open 2021 competition.

Also, having an animation shortlisted and shown at the Iris Awards – an LGBTQ+ BAFTA-qualifying film festival in Cardiff sponsored by the likes of Film4 and Pinewood Studios.

The animation was shown at the Roxie Theatre in San Francisco, as well as in a number of film festivals

around the world while Ashton was also interviewed by Oscar-nominated director Dean Hamer at another film festival.

"To have my little animation of such a seemingly insignificant moment be so well received globally and win several awards was mind-blowing and still is," said Ashton.

"Knowing that strangers from all over the world have watched my memory play out and understand instantly what I was portraying, what this child was going through without need for explanation, is an overwhelming feeling of acceptance I struggle to put into words."

You can see more of Aston's work at ashtonblyth.co.uk or on his Instagram @ashtonblyth.art



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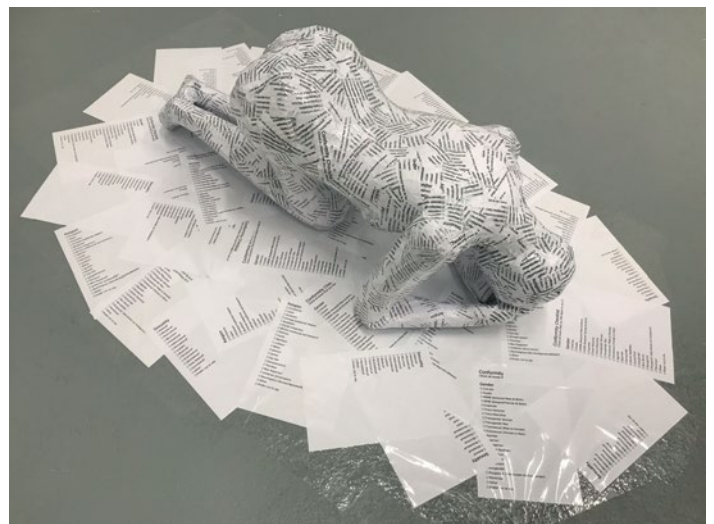
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New Year's Eve	9am - 1am
New Year's Day	Closed
2 January	9am - 7pm

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WM

"Queen's Canopy" tree planted in Longbarn Park

A TREE from the national "Tree of Trees" sculpture from the queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations has been planted at Warrington's Longbarn Park.

The Alder tree was presented to the park in a pot embossed with Her Majesty's cypher and was planted by Lady Redmond, Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, at a ceremony also attended by Mayor of Warrington Jean Flaherty, volunteers from the Friends of Longbarn Park and local councillors.

The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) "Tree of Trees", which was designed by Thomas Heatherwick, stood outside Buckingham Palace as a centrepiece of the Platinum

Jubilee celebrations in June. The living sculpture sought to put the importance of trees at the heart of the historic milestone to celebrate Her Majesty, who planted more than 1,500 trees all over the world during her 70-year reign.

During the summer the trees were cared for by Barcham's Nursery ahead of distribution at the start of the planting season in October. The trees were gifted evenly across the UK in proportion to the population, with each county receiving at least

one tree.

The Mayor said: "Longbarn Park is one of only four locations in Cheshire to receive one of the 300 tree of trees that formed part of the installation at Buckingham Palace as part of the legacy in honour of Her Majesty the Queen. It was a huge honour to join the Lord Lieutenant for the planting ceremony.

"This is a fantastic gift for the park – and for Warrington – which will

create a green legacy of its own, with every tree planted bringing benefits for people, wildlife and climate, now and for the future."

The Friends of Longbarn Park, supported by the borough council, have been maintaining the site since their establishment in 2014, have planted a community orchard and continue to work in partnership with the council to enhance the park.



College students scouted by Liverpool Empire Youth Musical Theatre Company

FORMER Level 3 Performing arts students at Warrington & Vale Royal College, Alisha Ward and Lucian Hinchcliffe are taking to the stage at the Liverpool Empire Theatre after being scouted during the college's recent production, *Bad Girls: The Musical*.

When Alisha started her studies at Warrington & Vale Royal College, she had no experience in performing arts, but had a strong interest in acting and wanted to see where this could take her. Now, she is working with the Liverpool Empire Youth Musical Theatre Company, preparing for a role in an upcoming production of the hit musical; *Legally Blonde*.

Lucian, former pupil at Penketh High School, joined the college having already realised his passion for performance while participating in their high school's Christmas productions. *Bad Girls* was a pivotal moment for Lucian, as it was his first major role which included both a musical solo and a duet. He wowed the scout and was invited to audition for a sought-after position within this selective youth company.

Alisha looks back at her time at college with gratitude, thanking the tutors and the college's strong links with industry for opening the door to this fantastic opportunity.

She said: "If it hadn't been for my time at Warrington & Vale Royal College then I would never have known about Liverpool Empire Youth Theatre. Without a doubt, these were best two years of my life so far and I've met some amazing people, been involved in so many opportunities and I have trained to be a great performer."

Lucian is still treading the boards in the college's Advanced Creative & Digital Skills Centre, completing his HNC Performing Arts to further enhance his acting resume. To him, the welcoming, inclusive, and nurturing environment he found at the college and the industry-experienced tutors at the college have been instrumental in building his confidence. He said: "I have loved my time at the college so far. At my course discussion in year 11, I knew this was the place for me and I was certain I would be happy here. I wholeheartedly recommended the college, not only for the course, but for the amazing opportunities you are offered along the way!"

The college, its tutors and fellow students are so proud of Alisha and Lucian, and we cannot wait to see what they will achieve next on their journey to centre stage.



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Penketh Carnival will celebrate 100 years of Disney characters!

PLANNING is already underway for next year's Penketh Carnival which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, July 8th, 2023 and will celebrate 100 years of Disney characters.

With the dark nights, the volunteer Carnival Team in Penketh is already around the table planning what they can do to bring you some "sunshine" and excitement to look forward to in 2023.

After the huge success of this year's event with record-breaking attendance and temperatures of 25 degrees the volunteers want to bring the community the joy of the annual extravaganza on their doorstep once again.

The date is set for the 8th July 2023 and with the 100-year centenary of Disney's creation organisers have chosen a Disney-themed event to celebrate this.

Mickey will be there with a Disney-themed parade and up to six marching bands to serenade

the locals as it passes through the streets of Penketh.

The volunteers of Penketh Events Team will be working with the Residents Association and Hollies farm to make the parade a spectacle to remember. There will be stilt walkers, dancers, performers, floats and an array of Disney costumes to enjoy.

Harrisons funfair will be present alongside the event on the field and there will be a multitude of activities to enjoy including local choirs, bands, stilt walkers, free circus workshops from HULA HULA FUN and CIRCUS TRY, an army firing range and a family sports day run by POCKET ROCKETS!

The team urge the community to "Save the Date" as this isn't an event to be missed!



Charlotte Nichols MP
Warrington North

If you live in Warrington North and have an issue you need help with or would like to book a surgery appointment, please get in touch.

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CharlotteNicholsMP.com

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By David Watkinson

Looking forward to a brand new year

2022 proved to be an interesting year for everybody, with numerous budgets and reversals, and ending with an immense hike in fuel bills despite a huge amount of support given by the government. Hopefully, the Xmas break has given you all a welcome break, and let us all raise a festive glass and wish each other a healthy and prosperous New Year.

As usual, January heralds the usual tax return season. So let us look at a couple of the most popular expenses that can be claimed by employees.

Firstly, there is the **Working From Home** expense claim. This is a deduction of £6 per week, or £312 per annum. This is worth a tax saving of £62 for a basic rate taxpayer, and £125 for people paying the higher rate of tax. The WFH deduction was widely prompted during the Covid-19 pandemic when many employees were required to work from home for all, or part, of their working time. HMRC did not require the employee to provide any evidence of the expenses incurred by the requirement to work from home, to support claims for the tax years 2022/21 and 2021/22. They were also quite relaxed

about whether the employee was required to work at home for all of their working week or just part of it.

However, from April 2022 the conditions necessary to claim the WFH deduction reverted to almost the position that existed before the pandemic. This year an employee can only claim a deduction from their employment income for WFH if:

1. substantial duties of the employee are performed at the employee's home, and
2. there are no facilities at the employer's premises for the employee to work, and
3. the employee is required to work from home by their employer, and
4. the employee has no choice about whether they work at home or not.

If all of the above conditions are met, and the employer does not pay a working from home allowance, the employee can claim the deduction.

If the employee can show that their extra costs of working at home are higher than £6 per week, they can claim the

actual costs if they keep the evidence. With electricity and gas bills at the current high levels, then this may be worth considering.

Secondly, employees who **use their personal vehicles for work** can claim a deduction for the costs involved. In order to be deductible the following conditions must apply.

1. the obligation to incur the expense must come from the employment, and
2. they must relate to the actual performance of the duties.

Consequently, a claim cannot be made for normal commuting as this does not meet the second condition but merely puts the employer in a position where he can perform them. However, travel to a temporary workplace could usually be claimed, as would travel to see a customer or supplier.

Claims by employees must be made using **HMRCs Approved Mileage Allowances**. Since 2011/12, for cars and vans the allowance has been 45p per mile for the first 10,000 business miles in the tax year, and 25p per mile for each mile above 10,000.



Margaret Black and David Watkinson

These rates purport to reflect the actual cost of using a vehicle. However, they were set at a time when the average cost of unleaded petrol was about £1.35p per litre and have remained unchanged since. However, unlike the Working From Home expense claim, **the employee cannot claim the actual expense incurred if higher**. Also, should the employer reimburse the employee at a higher rate then tax will be payable on the surplus. However, if the employer reimburses at a lower rate then a claim can be made for the difference.

And now some Christmas cheer from the infamous WatkinsonBlack Book of Jokes... A patient was about to have a heart transplant and was offered the choice of the heart from a 28 year old marathon runner or the heart of a 60 year old tax inspector. He picked the tax inspectors heart because he said it would never have been used.

HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYONE.

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Priestley College footballers raise the bar



PRIESTLEY College footballers continue to show they are leagues ahead of their competitors after securing eight places in the county squad.

Six of those selected for the Cheshire Schools U18s were also called up for England trials including first-year, Joe Sacharewicz, who made the final round.

Priestley's first team captain Elliot Whalley, who studies A-Level PE and BTEC Business, said their success was down to the professionalism instilled at the college.

"Our coaches really put the time in," said the former Culcheth High pupil.

"They have prepared diet plans for all of us and always keep us grounded and working hard."

Priestley's success on the pitch has built in recent years under the guidance of Dan Jordan, head of the Football Academy, and former professional academy coach Josh Greaves.

Last year they won the North West

College's leagues one and two and reached the national final, losing narrowly 2-1 in a match played at Doncaster Rovers' stadium.

Declan Scallan, who also plays in Priestley's first team, said: "We want to go one step further this year and win the whole thing."

"We have a lot of talented footballers here at Priestley, but we also have personality and you need that at the trials to help you stand out." Priestley are well positioned to make another tilt at this year's league titles and face Cardinal Newman College in the next round of the national cup. I'm thoroughly enjoying my football at Priestley," said Joe, who is studying BTEC Sport.

"The coaches treat you with respect and that's why we are doing so well."

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