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Warrington Worldwide

Issue No. 281 May 2023 FREE EVERY MONTH

Hidden Jewel in Crown

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Printed by TwentyFourSeven

Editor's Comment



IT'S certainly been a busy time at Warrington's Own Buses recently, in particular their move from the old depot on Wilderspool Causeway to their new state-of-the-art premises on Dallam Lane.

I am sure the new working conditions will be a huge improvement for the staff. It all comes on the back of another Government initiative aimed at getting more people on the buses, with fares currently capped at £2.

From all accounts this is having a positive impact with the aim of making bus travel cheaper – and with the current cost of living crisis, I am sure this will be helpful for some bus users.

With an electric bus fleet around the corner, with the aim of not only keeping costs down but also reducing Co2 emissions, it should help our air quality – although I know there is also the issue of particulates from rubber tyres off all vehicles that use our roads – but at least it is a step in the right direction.

All this investment is aimed at encouraging people to leave their cars at home and use local buses instead – but I suspect that will still remain a challenge, no matter how good a bus service we have.

Human beings are creatures of habit and jumping in the car to pop to the local shops or to get into work, or to take the kids to school is often easier than catching public transport.

People are often quick to criticise

when a bus doesn't turn up, or run on time but how many are critical of using their expensive cars?

Running a bus company can not be any easy job, particular in a town that suffers so much gridlock – which I'm afraid hasn't been helped by the Central 6 ITN at Westy, Latchford.

I've lost count of the number of times I have been stuck in traffic while attempting to get up and down Knutsford Road, due to the swing bridge being off or a crash on the motorway networks or local roadworks.

The final consultation on the scheme is now ongoing and hopefully common sense will prevail and this travesty of a highway scheme scrapped.

If we want free flowing public transport will need a free flowing highway network – and whatever road improvement scheme is introduced only seems to make things worse.

The only real solution is getting cars off the roads – but that's almost like which came first the chicken or the egg?

Until there are enough buses running on time, people will continue to jump in their cars adding to the congestion! Good to luck to everyone involved in solving

that problem!

Meanwhile best wishes to Ben Wakerley and the team at Warrington's Own Buses in their new premises – I know they are always doing their best to deliver a reliable bus service to our town, in difficult circumstances.



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'The quality of teaching was fantastic, always helpful and encouraging'

Ian



'I am no longer the mum who can't help with homework, who doesn't know and doesn't understand'

Hanicka



'I'd say it's changed my life'

Samantha

Hidden Jewel in Crown

ONE of Warrington's hidden jewels in the crown, the Friends of St Elphin's Park Pavilion has become the latest recipient of a Warrington Worldwide Legacy Project grant.

The Friends of St Elphin's Park is run by volunteers, including current Mayor of Warrington and local Cllr. Jean Flaherty and her consort husband Terry, to continue to develop and maintain the park and run The Pavilion Tea Rooms to support events in the community.

Currently open Wednesdays and Thursdays 10am till 2pm, the Legacy Project grant of £500 will help support Summer Schemes this year, with more details to be announced soon.

The team of volunteers provide a valuable community facility supporting people of all ages in the local community. With a pavilion, bowling green, room for hire,

cream teas and wonderful well maintained gardens – it really is one of Warrington's hidden jewels in the crown.

Members of the public are always welcome to drop-in during opening hours.

The Pavilion Tea Rooms serve tea, coffee, home made cakes, freshly made sandwiches and toasties, burgers and soup at very reasonable prices. All labour is voluntary and all proceeds support development and activities in the park.

For more details call 07595 652 267 or email terry.flaherty@fairfieldhowley.co.uk



Volunteers with Warrington Worldwide Editor Gary Skentelbery.

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Advertiser's announcement

We Are Warrington BID 2

Spring is upon us and we're already starting to see those lighter mornings and evenings draw in. This time of the year is my favourite time, because it means we can get stuff done more easily!

So, the ballot for a second term BID in Warrington town centre started on 19th April, lasting until 18th May, after which the results will be announced. But what does this mean for our town centre business community? And what does a YES vote mean for our town?

Warrington Business Improvement District 2 (BID2) will continue the work of BID1 and provide businesses and other

organisations the opportunity to manage nearly £1.6m of further investment into Warrington town centre over the next five years.

The BID are currently leading on or supporting a host of high profile events over the next 12 months, these events include Warrington Music Festival, Warrington PRIDE and Warrington's Weekend Wonderland.

Without the BID, our town centre will lose:

- Town centre brand "We are Warrington" and the associated marketing activities, promotion across a host of media platforms and regional communication and no dedicated website to drive visitors to information about Warrington
- No new investment into the Warrington Business Crime Reduction Partnership and associated services which include a radio network scheme, the Crime Self-Management system (DISC) and work towards achieving Purple Flag Accreditation
- Closure of your dedicated BID team
- No capacity for the town to raise its profile through national awards and accreditations including the RHS In Bloom awards, Purple Flag Accreditation, British BIDs national awards and government backed High Street awards
- No scope or funding to deliver good quality town centre based festivals and events
- Ending of locally delivered BID funded training course to upskill your employees
- No new investment into improving the landscaped/greenspaces, town centre dressing and public

art installations in Warrington town centre

- No single dedicated body that will provide you with a collective voice to address common issues or raise the profile of Warrington town centre
- No capacity to bring together key stakeholders to work collaboratively for the good of the town
- Loss of the BIDs capacity to enable close partnership working with government agencies, Warrington Borough Council and Cheshire Police

To find out more, and to view the full proposal scan the QR code to visit www.warringtonbid.co.uk or contact Warrington BID Manager, Andrea Morley E: andrea.morley@groundwork.org.uk M: 07810 123 994.



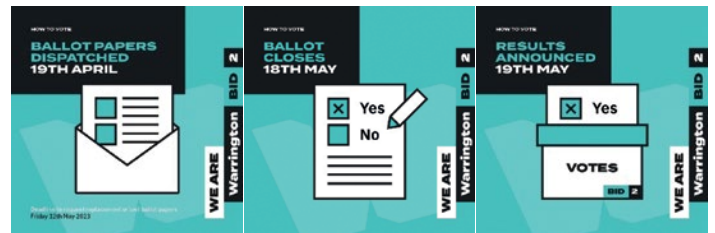
Key facts and actions that town centre businesses will need to take:

Ballot papers were released on 19th April 2023. You will need to post your ballot paper back as soon as possible or by 5pm on 18th May 2023 at the latest to ensure it is counted on the day of the ballot.

The Ballot results will be declared on Friday 19th May or as soon as possible after this date.

THE MAIN BID BENEFITS IN 10 POINTS

A Warrington Business led partnership working together to raise the profile of the town centre	Nearly £1.6m private sector led investment to deliver an enhanced programme of projects and initiatives to support Warrington town centre as a destination of choice for shoppers and visitors
New investment into tackling Anti-Social behaviour and business crime	The BID will continue to be a single dedicated voice for Warrington town centre businesses
Marketing reach and engagement to over 1 million consumers through the We Are Warrington brand. Giving BID members a platform to promote their business directly to the consumer	Additional investments into an annual portfolio of high-quality events and festivals
Supporting Warrington town centre businesses to grow and thrive by providing dedicated support and investments into "free or low cost" training for employees	Investments above the council's statutory baseline to ensure Warrington town centre is greener, cleaner, safe and an attractive place for shoppers and visitors
A dedicated, proactive BID team based locally, working on behalf of your business.	New investments into footfall intelligence & visitor behaviour software, that will enable us to market Warrington town centre as a destination of choice, to a targeted audience.



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Warrington recognised for inclusivity as part of Marketing Cheshire Awards

AS part of a momentous Marketing Cheshire awards evening which celebrated local businesses and individuals, the whole town of Warrington was given a special award for its commitment to inclusion.

The awards evening, which took place this year at the Halliwell Jones stadium, celebrated achievements and contributions by a number of key organisations across Cheshire, with a particular focus on partners who

have supported the county's thriving visitor economy.

And, to end the awards evening, in a move kept under wraps until the night, the whole town of Warrington was given the Special Recognition

Award for its contribution and commitment to inclusion.

Examples cited by the judging panel included the outstanding work of Warrington Disability Partnership – particularly the annual Disability Awareness Day – and the pioneering Physical Disability Rugby League World Cup tournament supported by the council and Warrington Wolves Foundation, which Warrington hosted late last year as part of the Rugby League World Cup.

These examples, alongside recognition of the Foodbank Weekends at Gulliver's World, LiveWire's commitment to dementia-friendly buildings and services, and the RunThrough Foundation's Warrington Running Festival, were key highlights raised by the judges.

Representing Warrington at

the awards, Cabinet member for leisure and community, Cllr Tony Higgins, said: "For Warrington to be recognised across the county as a place of inclusivity, is recognition of the amazing commitment our partners and people collectively show day in, day out, to make Warrington a place where everyone matters."

"I want to thank in particular our charity and voluntary partners for their tireless and excellent work to champion inclusivity."

"I am incredibly proud of our communities and this special award is continued validation that we are making excellent progress in Warrington to embed inclusivity across leisure and tourism."

The Special Recognition Award will be hosted in Warrington Town Hall.





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Annual Property Review is back!

by John Laverick - Warrington & Co

Following the explanation of the budget announcements last month, I have important news of our own. The Annual Property Review is back! 'The what?', I hear you ask.

Every year Warrington & Co undertake a review of the property market within Warrington, ably aided by our partners at BE Group. The review looks primarily at how many property transactions and at what level have taken place within Warrington in the previous 12 months, in this case over 2022. This has been going on for 25 years now and to mark this silver anniversary we have also looked back over the past 25 years to see how much of

Warrington has changed. Did you know that over 140,000 square metres of industrial floorspace was let in 2022 or that 77% of all office deals were leaseholds or that over the past 25 years nearly 600,000 square metres of office space has been let? I bet not. Many individuals or companies invest in property in order to derive an income and these investment deals, 15 in total are lower than previous years but still a good number for Warrington,

showing its attractiveness as an investment location. For residential property demand is softening as the effects of the pressure on the cost of living makes its effects felt. Just over 700 new properties were built in Warrington but nearly twice that amount were sold within the same period.

All exciting stuff I know, but the review also looks at some of the other significant events that impact the economy and therefore impact the market and appetite for property within Warrington. Such diverse events as the Rugby League World Cup and the opening of the Youth Zone to the firming up of the position around the Local Plan to our ability to secure significant external government funding all have a significant effect on how people view Warrington. These views drive decisions on where businesses locate themselves or choose to invest, both of which provide opportunities for people.

Although not in the same scale as noted above, the new Bus Depot has opened its doors and Warrington Owns Buses are now successfully operating from their new base. This is good for the bus company as well as the users of the buses, but also good for the development plans for the Southern Gateway. The old bus depot is now within the Council's



John Laverick
01925 442 243

www.warringtonandco.com

ownership and the site will be developed for more housing as we seek to try and raise the number of homes that are available within the town centre.

In short Warrington is still retaining its attraction as a location for people and their businesses and for those leisure and housing opportunities that make a good rounded offer to prospective businesses. Warrington and Co also undertake a significant amount of work with individuals and companies in finding people and jobs and promoting skills and training to take advantage of this enviable position. But more of that next month.

Date and venue set for Six56 Public Inquiry

THE date and venue have been set for the public inquiry into the Six56 logistics development on Green Belt land in south Warrington.

The public inquiry into the appeal by the applicants Langtree PP & Panattoni to the Secretary of State will open at The Base on Dallam Lane, Warrington, on Tuesday, May 9 at 10am

The building has disabled access and facilities, with disabled parking available to the front of the building and within the public car park to the rear.

The Public Inquiry will proceed under the direction of the Inspector, Dr R Catchpole, appointed by the Secretary of State to decide the appeal.

Government inspectors have previously instructed Warrington Borough Council to remove the proposed Six56 logistics development site from the Local Plan after stating it was not sound and would require some significant modifications, including reducing the impact on Green Belt.

A copy of the Council's and the Appellant's statements, proofs of evidence and summaries are available for inspection at <https://online.warrington.gov.uk/planning/index.html?fa=search> and using the reference number 2019/34799 AND at Six56 Public Inquiry www.warrington.gov.uk

The Case Officer contact at the Planning Inspectorate is Alison Dyson Tel: 0303 444 5304 Email: alison.dyson@planninginspectorate.gov.uk When made, the decision will be published online at <https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

The application by Langtree PP & Panattoni is on Green Belt to the west of Junction 20 of the M6 Motorway, and Junction 9 of the M56 Motorway and to the south of, Grappenhall Lane/Cliff Lane (known as Six56 Warrington) Grappenhall, Warrington, seeks Outline Planning (Major) - Outline application (all matters reserved except for access) comprising the construction of up to 287,909m² (gross internal) of employment floorspace (Use Class B8 and ancillary B1(a) offices), demolition of existing agricultural outbuildings and associated servicing and infrastructure including car parking and vehicle and pedestrian circulation, alteration of existing access road into site including works to the M6 J20 dumbbell roundabouts and realignment of the existing A50 junction, noise mitigation, earthworks to create development platforms and bunds, landscaping including buffers, creation of drainage features, electrical substation, pumping station, and ecological works, accompanied by an Environmental Statement.

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Community comes together as new social supermarket opens its doors

COMPANY Shop Group's award-winning social enterprise, Community Shop, has opened the doors of its 11th social supermarket in Bewsey.

People from across the local community attended the official opening to see the high-quality food and household products on offer at deeply discounted prices, as well as to sample a delicious free breakfast.

The unique social supermarket sells 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 like wonky labelling or seasonal packaging. These products otherwise might have gone to waste.

It operates on a free membership basis and is open to anyone living nearby who receives welfare support, is on a low income, or is referred to Community Shop by a partner organisation. Members are also encouraged to become stronger individuals by accessing the learning programmes available through the store's Community Hub.

All revenue raised in the store will be reinvested into the local area through the Community Hub where members can access a range of life-changing personal development support, with sessions including cookery clubs, interview skills support, business courses, and more.

There is also a Community Kitchen serving delicious low-cost meals, with kids eating free every day.

Community Shop Bewsey has opened thanks to the support of long-standing partner Ocado, who have provided funding to convert the building, which has been provided by Warrington Borough Council.

At the opening of the store, Community Shop also launched its latest annual Impact Report, which highlights the significant social value that has been delivered across

its stores. In 2022, Community Shop supported more than 28,000 households with 92% of people saying their quality of life had improved and 96% stating their sense of community has increased since becoming a member.

Gary Stott, Executive Chairman of Community Shop, said: "We're delighted to have opened the doors to our new Community Shop and welcome all our new members and partners inside."

"This new store will give a hand up to those finding things tough during these financially challenging times by taking away some of the stress of putting food on the table and enabling people to focus on becoming the best version of themselves through our life-changing development programmes."

"Our annual Impact Report shows how Community Shop uses surplus food to create significant value for people and for local communities, and I am very excited to see our new Bewsey store deliver positive impact for this community for many years to come."

Jonathan Wiseman, General Counsel and Chief People Officer at Ocado Retail said: "We're very proud to be supporting the opening of another Community Shop – the fifth store that Ocado has funded. We look forward to continuing to work with Community Shop which provides such a vital lifeline to so many up and down the country."

Warrington Borough Council's cabinet member for children's services, Cllr Sarah Hall, said: "It's fantastic to see the new Community Shop open its doors in Bewsey. The shop provides a helpful way for people to purchase good quality products at a discounted cost, while enabling them to access practical, tailored support to help them to live as well as possible during these

challenging times.

"The cost-of-living crisis is causing real hardship and anxiety for many Warrington residents and is likely to affect people's health and wellbeing, so it's by working in partnership to deliver initiatives like this that will have a real, positive impact on people's lives."

"Alongside projects like this, our online directory is available to give

residents access to as much help as possible with the cost of living. I would urge anyone struggling or feeling anxious to visit warrington.gov.uk/cost-living-support to see what support is available."

To find out more about Community Shop, and apply for membership, visit: www.companysshopgroup.co.uk/communityshop/



Peace campaigner delighted future of Peace Centre secured for SEND youngsters

PEACE campaigner Colin Parry says he is "delighted" that the future of the town's iconic Peace Centre has been secured as a venue for SEND youngsters.

It follows Warrington Borough Council confirming that it will purchase the Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Centre to support the town's young people with special education needs and disability (SEND).

The Peace Centre will provide a new local service for young people over 19 and additional support for the over 16s.

Colin, who campaigned for the facility with his wife Wendy in the wake of the IRA bomb attack which claimed the lives of their 12-year-old son Tim and three-year-old Johnathan Ball, said: "We have been engaged in talks with Warrington Council

for many months in reaching this mutually beneficial agreement. I am delighted that the Foundation and the Council have secured 2 key goals – 1. the long-term future of the Peace Centre, and 2. the provision of a new home for SEND children".

The Peace Centre, which was opened on March 20th 2000, the 7th anniversary of the bombing was, for many years the place where so much of the Peace Foundation's vitally important work of helping young people, victims of terrorism and communities in conflict, was carried out. However, in recent years, much of the Foundation's work has been delivered in schools and communities across the country and so the Peace Centre has been used much less.

The Peace Centre, which will always be a living memorial to the

boys, will become a vibrant and valuable asset within the Town's Education portfolio.

The Tim Parry Johnathan Ball Peace Foundation will retain its offices in the iconic Warrington

building.

Total cost of the project has been estimated at £9,743,000 funded from the council's prudential borrowing and the capital programme.



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- Sun 7 May - Boyzlife**
- Mon 8 May - Frankie Boyle - SOLD OUT**
- Fri 12 May - Seann Walsh - SOLD OUT**
- Thu 18 May - Ben Fogle**
- Fri 19 May - Lost in Music**
- Sat 20 May - The Drifters**
- Sat 20 May - The Ambersons**
- Sat 27 May - Calling Plant Earth**
- Sat 3 Jun - Milkshake! Live**
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- Sat 17 Jun - The Bohemians**
- Sat 1 Jul - Comedy Store**
- Wed 5 Jul - Kings of Europe**
- Fri 14 Jul - Shed Seven - SOLD OUT**

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First look inside "Little India" at the Ring O' Bells



THE historic Ring O' Bells pub in Warrington has been transformed into a brand new "Little India" Indian Restaurant.

Warrington Worldwide was invited to take a first look inside the new concept Indian restaurant, where customers can either enjoy a traditional pint or Indian meal – or both!

It is a joint venture between Azid Miah, who is looking after the restaurant side of the business and Chris Catelani from Same Again Pubs.

The venue on Church Street is described as mixing two of the nation's favourites, the Pub and Indian Cuisine!

While the premises has been given a stunning makeover, it has managed to retain its traditional

pub theme alongside a new-look Indian restaurant.

For those looking to treat the kids – kids eat free on a Sunday between 3-5pm (T&C apply).

Bookings and takeaways can also be ordered online via www.little-india.co.uk

Judging by Warrington Worldwide's facebook live viewing figures of over 23,500 people – the venue is likely to be busy so booking is advised.

For anyone interested in promoting a new restaurant or business in the Warrington area email info@warrington-worldwide.co.uk for details.

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Exciting plans for new boutique hotel revealed for iconic building The Hive

EXCITING plans have been revealed for the launch of a boutique hotel in Warrington town centre, situated in one of its most iconic buildings which has been redeveloped into 'The Hive WA1.'

With stunning roof-top views across the town, the hotel which will be above offices and a shopping arcade will feature over 120 modern bedrooms and suites.

The hotel will be situated on the second and proposed third and fourth floors of this iconic building providing magnificent views over the town's skyline. There will be an onsite restaurant, rooftop sky garden and an expansive 2,500-square-foot spa area for the ultimate relaxing getaway.

Conference and banqueting facilities will be housed in the existing historic second-floor Grand

Memorial Hall and accommodate up to 250 individuals, with the facilities boasting the latest tech, making it ideal for big and small meetings and events.

Neil Trainer – owner, said: "I am thrilled to be developing this exciting multi-million-pound project that promises to bring more footfall to the designated cultural quarter of Warrington. Not only is this project exciting for the building itself, but it has the potential to greatly benefit the community and wider businesses as a whole."

Jonathan Doherty – Managing Director of WORQ Group: "As

part of the WORQ Group we are beyond excited to be part of The Hive community in the heart of Warrington! As a hotel, we have the opportunity to become an integral part of the Warrington community, and we cannot wait to see our doors open here."

The completion of this development is an exciting prospect for the community. The Hive WA1 is an all-in-one location that offers a wide array of recreational, social, and workspace facilities, making it a go-to destination for people of all ages and interests.

From co-working spaces for businesses of all sizes to unique eateries, The Hive has it all.

And with Nectar, a co-working space that promotes collaboration

and innovation, The Hive is set to become a real hub for creativity and entrepreneurship. But what sets it apart is its ability to create a sense of community. With high footfall expected once complete of over 10,000 per week and a vibrant atmosphere, The Hive is set to become the heart and soul of Warrington, a place where people can work, play, and connect with one another. It's no wonder that everyone is eagerly looking forward to its completion.

Making the most of their central location, there is plenty of parking available close by as well as great connections to public transport hubs.

For more details visit www.thehivewa1.com/hotel



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St Rocco's Hospice launch new lottery fundraiser from retail outlets

WARRINGTON'S St. Rocco's Hospice has recently launched a new £1 lottery ticket sale from their retail outlets to help raise additional funds.

It is the first time that the Hospice Lottery has sold single tickets at the tills in their shops. The new initiative is aimed at increasing revenue for the hospice, as well as providing a convenient way for customers to support the hospice's work.

St. Rocco's Hospice is a charity that provides specialist palliative care and support to patients and their families in Warrington and the surrounding areas. The hospice relies heavily on donations and fundraising events to continue their work, which is why the introduction of the new lottery ticket sale is such a crucial step.

The lottery tickets will be available for purchase at all St. Rocco's retail outlets. Customers will be able to buy a single ticket for just £1, with the chance to win up to £1,000. The lottery draw takes place every Friday, with the winning number available on the hospice's website.

The new lottery ticket sale has already received positive feedback from customers, who appreciate the opportunity to support the hospice in a simple and affordable way. St. Rocco's Hospice CEO, Sonya Currey, says that the initiative has been in the works for some time and is excited to see it finally come to fruition.

"Our retail outlets are an important source of income for the hospice, and we are always looking for new ways to engage with our customers and raise vital funds. The new £1 lottery ticket sale at our shops tills is a great opportunity for people to support our work while having the chance to win some fantastic prizes. We are grateful for the support of our community and hope that this new initiative will be a success."

Jean Barrett, a retail volunteer at St. Rocco's added: "I'm thrilled about the new lottery tickets being sold at the tills in our St. Rocco's shops. It's such a quick and easy way for customers to support the hospice, and they get the chance to win some great prizes. I volunteer at our Sankey street shop where we've done a trial of the system over the last week and they've been selling like hot cakes!"

The new lottery ticket sale is just one of many fundraising initiatives that St. Rocco's Hospice has planned for the coming year. With the continued support of the Warrington community, the hospice hopes to raise enough funds to continue providing essential care and support to patients and families in need.

The new St. Rocco's £1 lottery

ticket sale is a welcome addition to the charity's fundraising efforts. It offers a simple and affordable way for customers to support the hospice's work while having the

chance to win some fantastic prizes. The hospice's CEO, volunteers and staff are excited about the initiative and hope that it will be a success in raising vital funds for the hospice.





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Play area closed by vandals re-opens after four years

A PLAY area that was forced to close almost four years ago following a series of serious vandalism incidents has finally re-opened.

The much-loved Brentnall "Boat Park" at Hood Manor is back in business after a long-running campaign by local councillors Amanda King and Mo Hussain, working with Your Housing.

Cllr King said: "The Boat Park was originally built by the local residents association then handed to Your Housing to maintain.

"Unfortunately due to serious vandalism, the park closed and the bill to reopen was close to £70,000. I worked with Your Housing and Great Sankey Parish Council to gain support and funding.

"This started with a high-level fence that was installed in 2021 – 2022 to stop anti-social behaviour, then an installation of a new floor and play equipment in 2022 and 2023. There have been many delays with contractors over the years but finally the park is open.

"It is the greatest joy to see the children laughing and enjoying the park. We also have seven park wardens in place to open and close the park morning and evening. Today we gave out Easter eggs kindly donated by One Stop shop and Your

Housing and our local community are very pleased. I am delighted to have been able to bring this park back into operation for the local children to enjoy'.

Cllr Hussain said: "The Boat Park has been such an integral part of our community in Hood Manor and Great Sankey for many years and local residents have fond memories of the park in its many forms.

"I am delighted to see the boat park restored to its original beauty and it's wonderful to see smiles and laughter on the children's faces as we celebrate this opening and may the park be enjoyed for many generations to come"

Cllr Peter Watson added: 'The parish council is very happy to be celebrating the opening of this much-loved park and value the work from our local councillors and Your Housing to ensure the reopening of this community asset. We will open discussions to consider the future of the park and the parish council has made a small donation to ensure the final steps could be completed and the park re-opened for the Easter weekend."

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Award-winning designer handbag fashionista heads for home from across the pond

By Wendy Johnson

AN award-winning fashionista from Warrington who has made her mark on the fashion scene across the pond is heading back to her hometown to expand her unique designer handbag enterprise.

Thirty-three-year-old Lorna Nixon from Westbrook, has rubbed shoulders with the world's top fashion houses and will be opening the doors to her new shop 'I made That Bag' at 25, Cario Street soon, bringing her unique, niche DIY innovation to Warrington's dedicated followers of fashion.

Entrepreneur Lorna has spent the past 13 years building her bag brand in New York's famous historic fashion district of Brooklyn. An internship led to her role as senior designer across leading houses at the age of 25 before taking the big leap to launch her own venture. She is the one woman creator of an idea born from her years of experience in the industry along with her fine making skill set obtained from the prestigious 'Cordwainers' in London whose alumni include Jimmy Choo.

'I Made That Bag' will give the town's fashion conscious the chance to build their own unique

handbag from easy DIY kits through to a range of finished accessories that pair interchangeable pouches creating a finished product that no one else will have. And it doesn't stop there, nothing is wasted as the thrifty creator, who truly values raw materials, sources the finest from Italy and around Europe, turns all her scraps into smaller accessories including her popular designer 'pup poop bags'.

The idea of passing on these age-old skills of leathercraft in an accessible way is Lorna's small nod of appreciation to a craft that has allowed her to flourish across the Atlantic. Her idea allows the maker to gain an insight into making handmade goods and the time and effort that goes into the craft. The spin off, she hopes, will generate new skills and hobbies.

"Though I love New York, the pandemic prevented me from coming home for 3 years. As prices

sky rocket in New York it makes it tougher for small businesses to survive let alone thrive" said Lorna who studied at Great Sankey High School and Priestley College, "I feel it's time to close this chapter. Being home and having family excited about the brand is a plus too, even my 13-year-old niece can't wait to help around the shop. A move was always imminent. It was by chance when I was on a visit back home, this particular shop vacancy popped up, even the look of it resembles the charm of my Brooklyn Studio. It was too perfect a spot not to snap it up". Explained Lorna, who says she is excited about making Warrington her base, hoping it will afford her more time to grow the brand. She added: "New York will always be a big part of the brand and will continue to show and sell at markets in the Big Apple during the busier sales seasons".

With her passion for all things art, it was her 'sketch' that landed her in the Independent Handbag Awards in New York. She painstakingly brought her design to life and scooped top prize awarding her a scholarship with Swarovski enabling her to launch her first debut collection through their London, New York and Shanghai stores.

While she was home last summer, Lorna dived into the local makers markets and was impressed by the variety and hub of makers in the North West. She said: "I'll continue to sell at local markets, Warrington's monthly Makers' Market is just a few streets away, it'll be a great way to get the word out about the shop. It's important for me to produce locally and support all things locally made. It's pretty fantastic to be able to meet the maker behind your purchase and

I cannot wait to meet new customers. All products will be made on site and for those looking to make something for themselves or a gift, the shop will have a dedicated area for 'walk ins' to make our kits which are a range of pre-cut, hole pre-punched accessories making it easy to put together for any skill level. We'll also have a stamp machine where you can further personalize your accessories on the spot."

Lorna added: "This designer handbag concept has been done before, what makes my brand different is it really is a blank canvas for personalization – all styles are functional and stylish. They are all made from high quality leather at affordable prices. My brand is designed to be accessible to all levels and is a great way to learn the basics of hand stitching".

She concluded: "I have a line of 'host bags' which are finished accessories that have a front pocket that can pair with the DIY envelopes, taking the unique factor seamlessly further, creating a new look by interchanging pouches. And YES, to pet accessories!! Truly valuing raw materials, I turn all scrap pieces into smaller accessories, the most popular being our poop bags. Made from scraps, these are all totally unique. You can buy one that resembles your pup or take it a step further and we can hand paint them to match. With little effort 'I Made That Bag' will enable you to create something you'll be proud to show off."

'I Made That Bag' is set to open on May 12. You can contact Lorna via email on hello@imadethatbag.com and Instagram @imadethatbag where Lorna can also be reached via direct message.



Care company donate staff to support others ahead of Royal request

A Warrington-based care company is donating staff to support others ahead of a Royal request for "The Big Help Out."

As part of the King's Coronation weekend, His Majesty King Charles will be encouraging people to participate more fully in their communities.

However, Warrington-based Care at Home Group has preempted the royal request and is not only actively encouraging their staff, while paying them to do so, to help others as often as one day every month.

The scheme is known in the company as 'Muddles makes a Difference' and sees their mascot dragon 'Muddles' accompanying team members who participate in a range of charity and community opportunities. Already staff have been supporting at St Rocco's hospice, grooming at animal sanctuaries, and Muddle's latest jape, singing along with people affected by Dementia at Smiley Tunes in Lymm.

Care at Home Group anticipate that their team will donate over 390 hours a year, and they hope that they can inspire other companies to get involved, and help to strengthen the communities that they work and live in.

Tamsin Vincent, Deputy Manager explains what she gained from spending time helping out at St Rocco's Furniture shop.

"I loved my day playing shop, it was totally different to what I do as a job supporting our carers. It was fascinating to observe the journey of a donation being transformed into its new owners 'treasure'. I literally put a lamp on the shelf and later that day I was chatting with its potential rescuer about how it might fit with her colour scheme. It was so satisfying, especially for an eco-conscious person like me! There were also parts of the job that I'd never considered, like dusting the ornaments, measuring the curtains for sale and hoovering the enormous shop. I'll never take charity shopping for granted again!

"I would happily go back and volunteer at the shop again and I'd also like to do a day with animals on one of my future volunteering dates. Our scheme gives us the flexibility to try new things, and all for a great community cause."

If a charity or project is looking for helpers and would like a member of the Care at Home Group team to spend a day with them they can contact Elicia Lindley at Care at Home Group on 01925 652800.



Homes for vulnerable young people approved

PLANNING chiefs in Warrington have given the go-ahead for a former chapel to be converted into a residential institution for vulnerable young people.

Members of Warrington Borough Council's development management committee approved the scheme in Forster Street despite opposition from local residents.

Residents claimed they had not been adequately consulted about the scheme and said they were concerned about the type of young person who might be placed in the facility.

Two borough councillors also expressed concerns about the proposal – Cllr Sagheer Zaman and Cllr Claire Lloyd-Fitzgerald

They warned of the potential for increased noise, antisocial behaviour, loss of privacy for nearby houses and parking issues.

But the committee approved the scheme after hearing the application was from, Bedspace, a company that had been operating for 24 years, specialising in providing supported living for young people leaving care.

There would be a total of eight apartments, two designed for single-parent families and including one for an onsite support worker.

The company would provide 24/7 support for the young people



who would be aged between 14 and 19.

Planning officers recommended the scheme be approved. They said the building, dating from 1898, was of some significance but the proposals would not result in much change to its appearance.

Although there was potential for increased noise it was unlikely to be much different to when it was run as a "urban church" with up to 150 people attending services and other meetings.

An earlier plan to change the use of the building to eight dwellings was approved in August last year.

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New state-of-the-art £10m bus depot officially opened

LOCAL bus company Warrington's Own Buses has officially moved into its new home, following the completion of the town's new, state-of-the-art £10m depot on Dallam Lane.

Funded by Warrington Borough Council, the Town Deal fund, and the Getting Building fund – it forms a major and important part of Warrington's vision to introduce a fully electrified bus fleet next year.

The bus depot, which replaces Warrington's Own Buses' previous depot on Wilderspool Causeway, has been fitted out to include chargers for the town's new zero-emission (ZEBRA) electric bus fleet, which will see the introduction of 105 new buses in 2024.

The depot also marks the full conclusion of Warrington's second Town Deal project, following the official opening of the town's Health and Social Care Academy at Warrington and Vale Royal College, which opened in autumn 2022. A total of 223 staff are employed by the company, including 23 engineers.

It could become one of the first solar-powered facilities of its kind in the world!

Managing Director of Warrington's Own Buses, Ben Wakerley, said: "I'm really pleased that after many years of planning, we have finally opened our new bus depot. We have been working hard to transfer our bus services and operations over from Wilderspool Causeway, and I'm very proud of our team for their support in a smooth transition for the company.

"The support from all of the organisations involved in supporting our new depot has been immense – everyone has

really pulled together and I'm pleased that another important step in the continued development of Warrington's bus services has been made.

"Better facilities will improve bus maintenance, reliability and, ultimately, improved customer service."

Cllr Hans Mundry, cabinet member for highways, transportation and public realm, said: "The opening of the new bus depot for Warrington's Own Buses is significant, as it paves the way for further bus service improvements.

"We have already seen a good increase in passenger numbers since we introduced our Better By Bus campaign – which has brought reduced fares and improved timetables – and we can now look forward to the new depot supporting the arrival of our cutting-edge, all-electric bus fleet – ZEBRA – next year."

Steve Coffey, CEO of Torus and chair of Warrington's Town Deal board, said: "Following the official opening of Warrington's Health and Social Care Academy last year, it's great to see another important Town Deal project be successfully delivered. Warrington's Town Deal is becoming a real success story and it is down to our partnership working and collective vision to support the continued development of our borough."

For more information about buses in Warrington, visit warrington.gov.uk/buses.



Penketh High School emerge victorious in engineering challenge

A TEAM of Year 9 pupils from Penketh High School, Warrington, emerged victorious from this year's The Challenge Academy Trust (TCAT) engineering challenge organised by United Utilities.

The water company runs the STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) initiative to give youngsters the chance to put their classroom learning to the test. It also aims to inspire them to consider a STEM career and highlights United Utilities as a potential local employer.

Eighty pupils who took part from Beamont Collegiate Academy, Bridgewater High School, Padgate Academy, Penketh High School, and Sir Thomas Boteler CE High School.

They had 20 weeks to research and develop plans to build a community centre in the Lake District. Each week they worked with mentors from United Utilities to put their problem-solving skills to the test and come up with their designs. The culmination was a Dragon's Den style pitch to "sell" their proposal to a panel of judges – Joanne Rands, Head of Process Delivery; Tracey Dempsey, Chief Engineer (Hydraulics and Civil); Sian Taylor, Head of Property; and Gemma Rathbone, Media Relations Manager.

From pedal-powered community centres to technical colleges, this year's teams came up with a wide range of innovative and sustainable ideas which demonstrated their research, design, problem-solving, and teamwork skills.

The overall winning team from Penketh High School proposed a community centre called Windy Lakes, which had the needs of the community in mind and was designed to emulate the local hills.

Joanne Rands, Head of Process Delivery at United Utilities, said: "Every pupil is a winner for taking part in this challenge. It can be very daunting, especially standing in front of the judges to present the final projects, so everyone should be very proud of themselves."

"The pupils have shown incredible resilience and innovative thinking over the past few months and have really impressed our mentors and judges."

"The winning team stood out for their research into the local community of Coniston, and their building design was particularly impressive in the way it incorporated the landscape of the Lake District."

"Well done to all the pupils who took part!"

Nathan Freeman, Graduate Engineer at United Utilities, was

one of the mentors. "It's been a fantastic experience for me as much as the pupils," he said.

"I've been particularly impressed by their innovative thinking and the fresh ideas that they bring to a problem, and how they tested things out along the way. I'm really proud to have helped my group, and I hope I have been able to give them an insight into life as an engineer."

Richard Doyle, head of Chemistry at Penketh High School, said: "Giving pupils the chance to go beyond the curriculum and build new skills is something we're very passionate about at Penketh, so an

opportunity like this with a large local company is something that we really grabbed hold of.

"The challenge gets pupils working as team, talking to people in different jobs, and making new friendships, all while putting their learning into practice in a different way from classroom learning."

"We're really proud of all our pupils who took part, and are delighted that we had the winning team for the second year in a row."

To find out more about careers with United Utilities, visit: www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/careers/



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WHAT'S IN IT FOR ME?

Apart from knowing that your feedback will be pivotal in reassessing the health and social services in the borough, you'll also

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Ambitious plan building into a

AMBITIOUS plans to transform a former college building into guest apartments near Warrington town centre have been thrown out by town planners.

The plan to extend and convert the former 19th-century art school college building in Museum Street, Warrington, involved a three-storey rear extension and conversion and change of use of the original building to provide 41 serviced apartments, following partial demolition of the rear.

The application was rejected by Warrington Borough Council planners under delegated powers

on the grounds the proposed development failed to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Palmyra Square Conservation Area, by reason of introducing a three-storey flat-roofed monolithic block that has a height, bulk, and design which fails to recognise the special qualities, local distinctiveness and unique physical aspects of the conservation area. The development would also

Trustees bring curtain down on Shannon Bradshaw community cafe

THE curtain has sadly come down on the Shannon Bradshaw Community Centre cafe at Penketh due to spiralling running costs.

The cafe, set up to help support the Shannon Bradshaw Trust, has closed, but the charity will continue to operate.

Trustee Patti Bradshaw, who set up the charity and community centre in memory of her young daughter said: "It is with a very sad and heavy heart that we have come to the decision (as Trustees) to close the Community Centre. With the rising costs of food and utility bills and lack of funding, it is impossible to keep our heads above water. We were very fortunate to receive some funding from Warrington Borough Council's Chief Executive Steven Broomhead to keep us going over the Christmas period but sadly this has run out.

"It didn't help when the Conservative club next door fenced off their car park and our customers had nowhere to park. It did become a pay and display but many of our customers are elderly and didn't know how to operate the machine and when they did they still got a fine through the post so it put them off visiting the centre altogether.

"It's been a wonderful experience sharing the building with the police and getting to know the local councillors, we've had lots of support from all of our customers (which I might add are all devastated) and we've made some wonderful

friends. But with the way things are at the moment there just isn't enough funding to go around.

"It seems ironic that we should win the "Best Charity Community Centre/cafe out of Manchester and the North-West award and now we have to close but applying for funding is getting harder all the time as so many charities out there need support.

"But we've had an amazing 10 and a half years serving the community with afternoon teas, family fun days, OAPs Monday club, bingo days and our amazing Christmas parties, and much more.

"If someone came along next week with a big cheque we would love nothing more than to stay open! But sadly all things come to an end and this is the end of our wonderful community centre."

Patti added: "We are will still be running The SHANNON BRADSHAW TRUST our Children's charity 1113368 helping children with life-threatening conditions. We are in the process now of sending a beautiful little girl called Isla aged 6 years along with her parents to make memories in Disneyland Paris this month.

"So from everyone at The Shannon Bradshaw Community Centre we would like to say a massive THANK YOU to all our wonderful customers for their amazing support over the years. We will miss each and every one of you."

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to transform former art college partments rejected by planners

have a detrimental impact on the significance of a Locally Listed Building by introducing a form of development that would be over-dominant and not reflect the architecture of the existing building that is recognised in its status as a non-designated heritage asset.

Overall the proposal was considered to cause harm to the designated asset and have a detrimental impact on the significance of a non-designated asset that is not outweighed by the public benefit.

Planners say the proposal would also introduce a form of development that is not considered to represent a high-quality addition to an existing building, the large 3-storey flat-roofed block does not follow local design guidance which seeks to avoid flat-roofed structures in Warrington Town Centre and overall

the design quality of the proposed extension is not considered to be visually attractive nor sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment.

The proposal was also considered to adversely affect the amenity of adjoining residential occupiers by reason of a significant unacceptable reduction in their outlook and perception of overlooking and loss of privacy. It is also considered that the development would not provide future occupants with an acceptable form of accommodation for a maximum 90-day period particularly for flats on the lower floors of the building with an outlook onto a large boundary wall.

The application involved only five of the dwellings in the original, locally listed, building and the remaining 36 would be in a three-

storey rear extension.

Each unit would consist of a double bed, desk/seating area, cooking facilities, storage and a shower room. Bin stores and 28 cycle spaces would be provided externally, but no car parking.

The rear extension would replace existing two and three-storey extensions which are said to be in a poor state of repair.

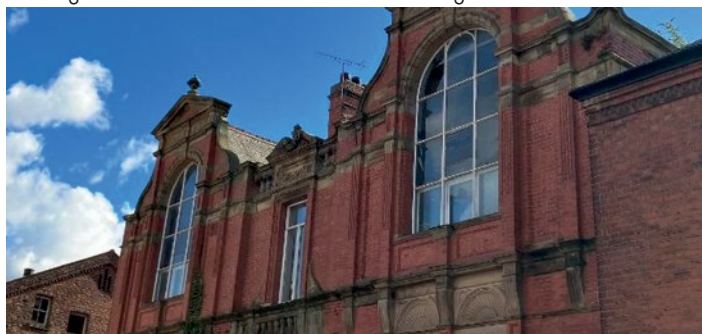
Few changes are proposed for the original part of the building, other than those to "tidy up" the

appearance of the building following six years of disuse.

A car-free development is proposed because of the nearness of bus and train services and of the town centre.

The apartments were described as guest accommodation – with guests not permitted to stay for periods of more than 90 days.

Built in 1884, the building was originally Warrington School of Art. Its understood the applicants will appeal the decision.



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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By David Watkinson

The new Tax and National Insurance Rates

The new tax year started on 5th April, so how much tax and national insurance will we be paying for the next 12 months?

The thresholds at which we start to pay both tax and national insurance have both now been aligned. Whilst the rates of tax are the same for everyone, the rate at which national insurance is paid depends on the source of income. Therefore, the total deductions in England and Wales (the rates are different in Scotland) are as follows.

A. Employees

The rates at which an employee will pay tax and national insurance is as follows:

Earnings up to £12,570 a year (£242 per week) – No tax or national insurance deducted.

Earnings between £12,570 a year and £50,270 a year (£966 a week) – Total tax and national insurance of 32%.

Earnings between £50,270 a year and £100,000 a year (£1,923 a week) – Total tax and national insurance of 42%.

Earnings between £100,000 a year and £125,140 a year (£2,406 a week) – Total tax and national insurance of 62%.

Earnings above £125,140 a year – Total tax and national

insurance of 47%.

There are a few of other points to make.

Firstly, if you earn between £6,396 a year (£123 a week) and £12,570 a year then you will not pay any tax or national insurance **but providing only that your employer operates a payroll and declares these earnings to HM Inspector of Taxes** then you will receive credits to your national insurance contributions record. This could increase your state pension at retirement.

Secondly, your employer will also pay national insurance of 13.8% on all earnings above £12,570. This increases the cost of your employment to your employer, and some people, therefore, consider that this element should also be included in the above calculations. As an example, this would increase the "basic rate" tax and national insurance deductions from 32% to 40.25%. The other bands above would be similarly affected.

Thirdly, the above rates do not take into account any changes in benefits such as the progressive reduction in child benefits if anyone in a household has earnings in excess of £50,000.

B. Self-Employed

The state benefits, in particular employment protection,

available to the self-employed are significantly lower than those available to employees. Whilst the rate of tax is the same as for employees, because of this the normal rate at which national insurance is paid is lower. Therefore, the following rates apply.

Profits up to £12,570 a year (£242 per week) – No tax or national insurance deducted.

Profits between £12,570 a year and £50,270 a year (£966 a week) – Total tax and national insurance of 29%.

Profits between £50,270 a year and £100,000 a year (£1,923 a week) – Total tax and national insurance of 42%.

Profits between £100,000 a year and £125,140 a year (£2,406 a week) – Total tax and national insurance of 62%.

Profits above £125,140 a year – Total tax and national insurance of 47%.

Again, there are a couple of other points to make.

Firstly, in addition to the above, anyone with profits above £6,725 a year will pay an extra flat rate national insurance contribution of £179 a year.

Secondly, the above rates similarly do not take into account any changes in benefits such as child benefits.



Margaret Black and David Watkinson

Finally, if you are just above the level at which you suffer a major drop in your marginal income, such as earning just above £50,000 or £100,000 then there are things that you can do to reduce your taxable income to below that level. We have dealt with these in past articles, and may revisit this in the near future. Meanwhile...

WatkinsonBlack have considerable experience in all areas of taxation and business services. This includes providing a very cost-effective payroll bureau service, as well as assisting to ensure compliance with the latest Making Tax Digital legislation.

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Please note that these ideas are intended to inform rather than advise and you should always obtain professional advice before taking any action.

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Williams and Vaughan commit futures to the Wolves



WARRINGTON Wolves stars George Williams and Paul Vaughan have signed contract extensions with the club.

Both players have been instrumental in the club's red-hot start to the season which has seen the Wire win their eight opening games in the Betfred Super League.

Williams, who is also celebrating being made England Captain, has signed a new long-term deal until November 2026 which will take his time at the club to five-and-a-half years.

The half-back has made 39 appearances so far, scoring 14 tries. He currently leads the competition for try assists and carries and is the joint leader along with Vaughan for metres made on 1,566.

He is also top of the Man of Steel leaderboard after the opening eight rounds.

Australia prop Vaughan has made a huge impact since arriving at the club and has extended his stay with the Wire until at least November 2025.

The front-rower is a metre machine having made 1,566 thus far – 722 of which are post-contact. He has also crossed for three tries in the opening rounds.

He has quickly become a fans favourite winning back-to-back Player of the Month club awards for February and March.

Both were highly sought after by numerous NRL clubs and their extensions are a big scoop for not only the club but Super League.

George Williams said: "I'm really happy to nail my future down. We've got a great group here and I'm excited for what's to come."

"How we've started the year has been unbelievable and there's a lot more behind that – the environment and culture we've all created. It's enjoyable to come to work everyday, everyone's got a smile on their face and I'm happy that

I'm staying.

"As a half-back you're probably hitting your prime years at my age or maybe even a bit older when your experience and understanding of the game is better. Hopefully my best years are ahead of me, we can keep winning and doing my bit for the team."

Paul Vaughan said: "It's a really good feeling. It was a big move for my family coming over but we're really happy and settled and it's exciting to be able to extend my stay."

"The club's been really good to us and made that transition pretty easy. We're loving it and it's really exciting."

"I've said to a few people that I probably haven't enjoyed my footy as much as I have for a very long time. I've got a smile on my face, the boys are playing well and it's nice to be rolling off the back of that."

"I feel like we're building something special and to be part of that for a little bit longer is also very exciting."

Head Coach Daryl Powell added: "George has been outstanding as a player and leader since I have been at the club."

"I think this re-signing is a significant one for not only our club but the game in this country. He is an international player in his prime who I think will continue to get better and be a driving force both at the Wolves and on the international stage."

"Paul has started his career in the British game like a house on fire. His personality off the field and his impact on it have both been high quality and I am delighted he has agreed to extend his stay with us."

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