

Culcheth Life

Magazine

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**Weather fails to dampen spirits
at Community Day**

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Editor's Comment



DESPITE everyone's best efforts – it was never going to be plain sailing to get the Raven Inn back open for business as a community pub.

The age of the building, and the state it had been left in, was not a good starting point.

But thanks to hard work and dedication, involving many people giving up their time freely, opening is hopefully now within touching distance.

It was a little bit disappointing to see things kicking off on social media over proposals to include offices as part of the new offering. But this was no secret and clearly outlined in the proposals to ensure the premises can remain viable. Trading times are tough with pubs closing every week up and down the country.

While the Raven is a community pub it still needs to be viable and everyone needs to pull together in the same direction to ensure it is a success. It is far too easy to sit at home criticising on a keyboard.

No one can criticise the amount of time effort and money that has gone into making the Raven inn project viable.

Those who bought the premises at auction took a gamble, while those who have invested in shares have also taken a gamble, like any investment. It's now time for everyone in the community to pull together, work together and make sure the Raven Inn becomes the success story it deserves to be.

I for one will be looking forward

to my first pint at the premises when it opens in the near future – fingers crossed!

Meanwhile, congratulations to everyone involved in making Culcheth & Glazebury Community Day a success – despite the weather

not being the best, at least there were no downpours.

These community days are vitally important for local groups to raise awareness and much-needed funds.

Let's hope the Christmas Markets can return again this year after last year's last minute cancellation.



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New outdoor bar planned for historic pub

PLANS have been drawn up for a new outdoor bar and servery at the historic Black Swan pub at Hollins Green, Warrington.

The development – details of which have been submitted to the borough council’s planning department – involves the removal of the existing outdoor bar and barbecue, which is said to be nearing the end of its useful life.

Dating from 1667, the pub has undergone many alterations and extensions over the years to meet local demand and remains a key asset to the village. It was locally listed by the council in 2014.

The proposal is to improve the facilities within the outdoor realm for customers of the pub and remove the existing outdoor barbecue and bar area.

The new facility will be smaller and has been designed to blend in with the main pub building.

Reclaimed brickwork in a herringbone pattern will be used for the bar wall and there will be a thatched roofed timber frame oval pavilion. The surrounding area will be paved with Indian stone to match the existing paving. The aim of the scheme is to improve the recreational facilities while respecting the character of the building.

The application is being considered by Warrington Borough Council planning officers.



Residents renew calls for better traffic calming measures

CONCERNED residents have renewed their calls for improved traffic calming measures after a police car was involved in a collision on Myddleton Lane, Winwick, recently.

The police car is understood to have been involved in a collision with a local resident’s car as it was reversing onto the road.

No injuries were reported and no arrests were made.

Just prior to the collision local police had been carrying out speed checks on a stretch of the same road.

A spokesperson for Winwick and Hermitage Green Community Speed Watch said: “As a member of the community speed watch we continue to ask Warrington Borough Council for better traffic calming measures along this 20mph stretch. In the past two Speed Watch events, in just over an hour, 83 vehicles were witnessed travelling in excess of 30mph when the road is 20mph.”

A Cheshire Police spokesman said: “At around 1.15 pm on Saturday 8 April a police car was involved in a collision with a white Nissan X-Trail on Myddleton Lane, Winwick.

“There were no reports of any serious injuries and no arrests were made.”



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Grey skies and drizzle for Culcheth and Glazebury Community Day

DESPITE grey skies and some drizzle, there was still plenty of community spirit at the Culcheth and Glazebury Community Day.

Organised by Culcheth & Glazebury Parish Council, the event on the village green was officially opened by Parish Council Chairman Neil Johnson.

Entertainment was provided by Children's Entertainer Ian "Zippy" Lees, Northern Stars Dance & Fitness and the Mighty Smith Show, featuring "Strongest Men!"

It proved an uplifting experience

for Ruth Campos-Stead when she was plucked into the air by one of the Strongmen who held her in the air on a chair with his teeth!

There was also a pet show, vintage vehicles and lots of stalls from local community groups.

There were also activities taking place in Newchurch and Culcheth Methodist church halls.

Pictures: John Hopkins



fail to dampen spirits at Bury Community Day



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The Raven Inn – one year

IT is now just over a year since the group fighting to save the Raven Inn at Glazebury gained access to the premises.

Culcheth Life published the first photos (right) of the inside of the Raven Pub. Those photos gave an indication of the state of the building. A more detailed examination revealed the extent of the damage and deterioration to the building.

Spokesperson for the Raven Inn Community Benefit Society, Peter Sturman, explains: "We had to be very careful in those first few weeks. There was an awful amount of rubbish to remove, walls and carpets were wet through due to leaks caused by theft of lead from the roof, the Raven was in a sorry state.

"An immediate inspection of the building revealed major work was required to secure walls and reinforce the roof.

"There was one internal brick wall

that you could push to and fro, by hand. That wall was quickly taken down. On a positive note, it was to provide bricks to eventually build the fireplace and bar.

"Our Raven was in a much worse state than we could have imagined. First, the building had to be made safe. Unsafe structures, such as the wall, were removed. Tonnes of steel were inserted to shore up some walls and hold up the sagging roof."

Peter added: "Then came the renovations! A group of volunteers have given up every Saturday from late April, last year, to the present day, working tirelessly and meticulously inside and out.

"Our intended opening dates have slipped and we regret that.

"The internal renovations revealed

evidence of the original water mill and later Tudor foundations. Also some Tudor walls. These discoveries were on the ground floor, which is the pub. A decision was made to preserve and utilise such features, making them a part of the Raven pub. It became preservation hand in hand with renovation.

"Because of the state of the place, the vast majority of what had been added, over the years, had to be removed, thus revealing the true Raven.

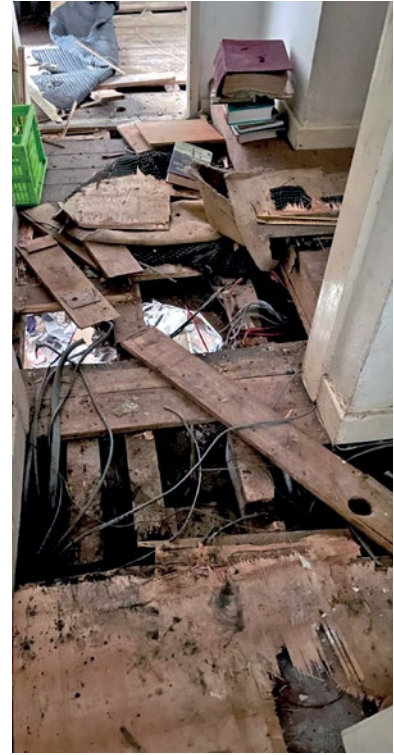
"We felt the situation provided us with just one chance to get it right.

"That meticulous work has been conducted by the owners, our 'White Knights'. It has come at the cost of pushing back the opening time.

"We intend our Raven Inn community pub to be serving people for hundreds of years. We feel that on balance, a few months, well spent, now, will be well worth it, in the long run.

"The community group has started our work with things like the flooring and wood-burning stove. We are now in the process of accelerating our efforts to get the Raven Inn Public House & kitchen fully refurbished and in working order".

Watch this space!



Raven Inn management committee issue statement of clarification

THE management committee at the Raven Inn pub at Glazebury has issued a statement of clarification following concerns over plans for a modern office facility at the rear of the historic building.

It follows a number of complaints and concerns raised on social media regarding a plan to build an office extension at the back of the building which is more than 450 years old and has been saved from demolition by local campaigners.

The statement said: "The management committee of The Raven Inn CBS have been made aware of Facebook posts that have gathered pace since April 12, leading to a small group of individuals making misleading and factually incorrect statements.

"We wanted to take the opportunity to clarify some elements to provide complete reassurance to our shareholders and community.

"We must be absolutely clear

that no shareholders money has been or will be spent on the first floor works. This is entirely the responsibility of the landlord which will be carried out as a completely separate, but complementary venture to our community pub. It allows us to share the costs of the site, to occupy the profitable element of the building only, and to relinquish responsibility and cost for the upkeep of the wider building structure. Sharing the site reduces costs, which supports value for shareholders and makes our venture more sustainable.

"We are concerned about the accusations that the landlord's intentions for the upper floor were not made clear to our shareholders. Whilst this information can be found in other places, we thought it would be helpful to pull it together:

"The potential first-floor offices were discussed at the public meeting shares launch event on

13th October 2022 – FAQ's were produced and published on this website (where they remain) they were also referenced and linked in a post on our FB page.

"A link to the FAQ's was also published on the Crowdfunder front page, inviting people to read before any investments were made.

Leasing of the pub from the owners was referenced in the shares pack, in a number of places.

"The plan for offices was also discussed at the shareholders meeting of 22nd December 2022, referenced in a post on our FB page on 23rd December 2022.

"In order to offer further clarification we will be emailing our shareholders directly."

Meanwhile, work is ongoing to transform the premises into a community pub, which members of the management committee are hopeful will be opening soon.



Charlotte Nichols MP

Warrington North

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Simon Box,
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- Start applying summer lawn foods now - remember to water them in well
- Help the environment by composting as much of your garden waste as possible
- Evergreen hedges can be given their first trim of the season - if the clippings are not too woody, they can be mixed in to the compost heap
- Remove flowers that have finished to ensure a continuity of bloom - this stops the plant wasting energy in producing seeds that are unwanted

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Residents prepare for "David v Goliath" planning battle opposing expansion of Trident Business Park

LOCAL residents are stepping up their "David v Goliath" battle opposing renewed plans to extend the Trident Business Park at Risley.

They have formed the Risley Community Group and are lodging objections and seeking and paying for legal advice from experts.

While Birchwood Town Council have already lodged objections local residents have also linked up with Cllrs across Culcheth, Croft and Glazebury.

They have met with developers St Modwen once last year and are still awaiting minutes from the meeting.

A spokesperson for the group said: "The lack of communication has been an ongoing issue and they have been adamant that the operating hours are non-negotiable – even Christmas Day! Consultation has been woeful and very hit-and-miss.

"We are very despondent at the moment. It really is akin to David and Goliath but this ridiculous application is wrong on every level and will truly set a precedent where these greedy developers can build simply because they own the land. St Modwen were bought out by an American Company as the original planning application in 2017 was to build offices which there would have been no objection to or better still housing. The assessments they have posted are either woefully inadequate or misleading or false ...we have read every 1...all 27."

Local residents and residents of neighbouring villages are strongly opposed to the latest development primarily because it is the wrong type of business in the wrong location.

The spokesperson added: "They say that to house a 14-day distribution centre that intends to operate 24 hours a day, 365 days a year adjacent to a long-established residential area where there is an inadequate road infrastructure is totally unacceptable, especially when there are NO other businesses in the neighbouring Birchwood Park and Birchwood Science Park operating unrestricted hours 365 days a year, so this is totally out of keeping with the area and does not line up with Paragraphs 174 & 183 of the NPPF the National Planning Policy Framework which is the government's policy on appropriate planning decisions.

"The plans include 14 HGV loading bays, 26 HGV parking bays and parking for 120 vehicles. They also include the demolition of two perfectly good detached homes that are in an excellent state of repair when we are desperately in need of new homes. The further demolition of the former Noggin Public House, which may be a relief to some, but St Modwen bought this property, stripped it and have intentionally left it to rot to justify the demolition as part of the longer term plan. They will also uproot 7 Silver Birch & Oak trees that are subjected to Tree Preservation orders, although the application state for each of the 7 trees removed they will plant 7 in its place, however these will not be Oak or Silver Birch trees and nothing can replace or mitigate 40 plus years of growth and maturity.

"Considering the wider community, this site if we are being extremely generous and work on each HGV taking 90 minutes to turnaround will generate 484 HGV movements every 24 hours. At the industry optimum and a worst case scenario it would be over 1000 HGV movement per 24 hours (this is accounting for HGVs arriving and departing). Add to that auxiliary vehicles and you begin to see the traffic implications. If the proposed housing developments of 500 homes in Culcheth, 98 in Croft and 176 in Winwick go ahead this will add further congestion and pollution, when we already have some of the worst air quality in the country.

"For the immediate residents of Warrington Road and Cross South this 24-7-365-a-day will put paid to the relative peace and quiet we currently enjoy during evenings, weekends and public holidays. The service yard will be floodlit and the light pollution will impact sleep and sleep deprivation will subsequently impact the mental well-being of residents. The noise of HGVs movements and their reversing beepers, forklift trucks and their beepers, cars and the noise of drivers enjoying some downtime, will carry through the dead of night. There will be no respite



and no escape, which will further impact the mental well-being of residents and their right to a certain quality of life in their own homes.

"The latest amendment to the plans include, a further reduction in height of 1.5 metres equating to a total reduction of 2.5 metres, but this is a reduction in the "roof haunch" and internal measurement and not indicative of the finished external height. In addition to the original landscaping they propose to introduce 106 mature trees, these will be spread around Trinity Way, the car park area which is situated close to the Spar roundabout, behind Risley Autos and a larger area where the Noggin and two detached houses will be demolished. This is woefully insufficient mature tree's for that area.

One of many objectors includes former Culcheth & Glazebury councillor Jacquie Johnson who said: "This proposal will adversely affect the amenity of residents both nearby and along local roads due to its size, position and the traffic generated."

Her objection highlighted the following.

Warrington Submitted Version Local Plan (SVLP)

This shows the existing employment land and main urban area in Birchwood.

The New Town Development was typified by trees, bushes and grassed areas keeping employment and housing apart. The gap between the proposed large buildings is not enough to minimise the impact of the height, size and the amount of lorry journeys generated on residents.

Note that in SVLP DEV4, proposals within existing employment areas, point 11 says that "Subject to assessments of local transport networks, major warehousing and distribution developments will be primarily directed towards preferred locations at:

Appleton and Stretton trading estates, Omega, Woolston Grange and Fiddlers Ferry Power station"

Point 11 says that outside of

these areas proposals should seek to locate development "away from areas sensitive to heavy vehicle movements."

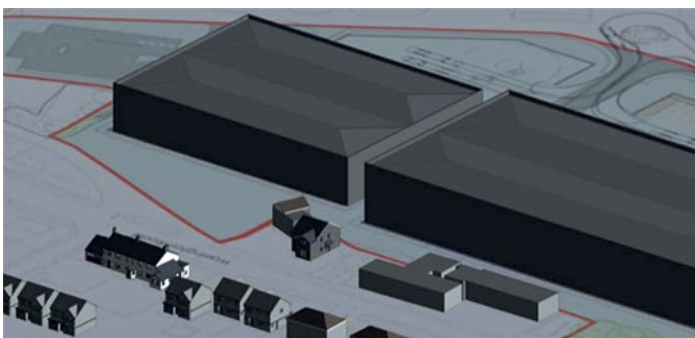
"Traffic from Birchwood was intended to use J11 on the M62 to access the motorway system via M62 motorway and those connecting with it. These motorways are now frequently congested, blocked or being resurfaced. They cannot take more traffic indefinitely. Similarly the local road system is affected by vehicles avoiding motorways.

There needs to be an assessment of the number of lorries already operating from sites in Birchwood and Warrington North. This of course is difficult given that lorry licensing is not under the control of Warrington Borough Council but the Traffic Commissioner at Hillcrest House in Leeds. Also through traffic has to be assessed.

"The consultation on draft modifications to the submitted Local Plan which was subject to an Inquiry last year. Through out the examination the Borough Council has maintained its view that it is not possible or appropriate to establish a direct link between the employment land requirement and jobs growth forecasts. It has also maintained its view that there is not a direct relationship between the employment land and housing requirements. The Inquiry Inspectors have reduced the employment land requirement.

"To "work for all" Warrington needs to minimise the impact on residents by rejecting development proposals which are not appropriate for the area. I understand Trident originally had more appropriate development.

"Warrington Road, North of the roundabout with Daten Avenue, is one of the gateways into Birchwood and should be an asset. Whatever new tree planting is proposed, it cannot be instead of existing trees but in addition. The Noggin Inn, even if converted to business use, could have been part of this street scene rather than the large buildings."



Resident ordered to pay more than £3,500 after breaching planning laws

A Culcheth resident has been ordered to pay more than £3,500 after breaching planning laws by using a garage forecourt area next to his property as a storage yard for commercial vehicles.

Tony Cheadle, 48, of Medway Road, Culcheth, was found guilty at Warrington Magistrates Court on Thursday 30 March for failing to comply with the requirements of an enforcement notice.

The notice had been served on Mr Cheadle in November 2021, after the use of land next to his house had been changed

to a storage yard accommodating various vehicles, machinery and equipment, without planning permission.

This use is out of character with the residential area where it is located and the notice required that the land be put back to its previous use.

Cheadle failed to comply with

the requirements of the notice and then pleaded not guilty at an earlier hearing.

He then failed to attend the trial where magistrates heard evidence of how he had brought vehicles, machinery and equipment onto the land, and despite numerous requests from the council, and following receiving an enforcement notice, he refused to remove them and return the land to its former condition.

He was found guilty, fined £1,100 with a victim surcharge of £110 and costs of £2,354, totalling £3,564.

Cllr Hitesh Patel, cabinet member for environment, housing and public protection, said: "Planning restrictions are intended to protect the character of our residential

areas and the living conditions of local residents.

"When changes are made without the necessary planning permission, this impacts upon the attractiveness of our residential areas. The council will help to put things right by working with offenders, but we will take action if there is a continued reluctance to cooperate or comply.

"A decision to take legal action is not taken lightly, but planning enforcement is there to preserve the integrity of the planning system. We will always work to deter potential offenders and promote public confidence by ensuring that developments adhere to the rules."

Residents can report issues to us online at warrington.gov.uk/report

Ava, 12, is one of five winners in national poetry competition



A 12-year-old girl from Birchwood is one of five winners in a national poetry competition organised by the Young Writers organisation which attracted more than 16,000 entries

Ava Gallagher, a pupil at Birchwood High School, won high praise for her poem "ASD in Me", which has now been published in a book of poetry.

She also received a trophy and a £50 prize for being one of the five winners of "The Power of Poetry" competition.

Proud Mum Hannah said: "Ava has had so many people thanking her for helping to express how it feels to be autistic."

The poem reads as follows:
 "If you don't mind I'd like to explain
 A little thing called autism and how it affects my brain
 It can make me anxious, angry and afraid
 But this stays in my head, on my face it's not displayed
 I may seem heartless and question your meanings
 But it takes me a little longer to process the feelings
 A girl sitting quietly is all you see
 But inside my mind I am far from free
 My thoughts collide, my senses take over
 I become overwhelmed by the smallest sound
 Clicking pens, ticking clocks

That boy's chair and the way it rocks

*All different smells attacking me
 The perfumes, the coffee, the teacher's tea*

*I try to be social, I try to fit in
 I come across rude, I can never win
 I am very literal and straight to the point*

If you want the truth, I won't disappoint

When my brain is overloaded I sometimes lash out

My control fades, I scream and shout

*I get confused and it all spills out
 Intense emotions all trapped inside*

*Finally have nowhere to hide
 Please understand I am not to blame*

*I've just got an atypical brain
 But it's not all doom and gloom*

I'm often the sportiest girl in the room

*I'm quirky, unique, kind and caring
 I'm loyal, protective and always sharing*

I'm obsessed with frogs and all things green

I'm the youngest trendsetter you've ever seen

*I am Ava, I am me
 Please see through my label of ASD."*



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Players prepare for world's greatest detective Inspector Drake!

CULCHETH Players are all hard at work rehearsing for their new play from the pen of David Tristram.

The world's greatest detective Inspector Drake returns with his hapless sidekick Sergeant Plod to investigate a murder in the hilarious whodunit - Inspector Drake and the Black Widow.

Oil Tycoon John Johnson has been brutally murdered in his country pile. Will Drake solve the murder? Or has Plod contaminated the 'hevidence'?

Ever loyal Plod searches high and low for clues but will his constant flashbacks be more of a hindrance than a help? And has the mysterious Wendy bitten off more

than she can chew?

Come along to see for yourself at Newchurch Parish Hall, next to Sainsbury's in Culcheth.

There will just four performances of this hilarious play over two weekends, Friday 12th May and Saturday 13th May then Friday 19th and Saturday 20th May.

Doors open at 7pm and the performance will start at 7.30pm. Tickets are £7.50 online from ticketsource.co.uk (booking fee applies) or £8 cash only, on the door of a performance.



Planners approve wildflowers and rock plants on home extension roof

WILDFLOWERS and rock plants can be grown on the roof of a home extension at Culcheth, planning chiefs at Warrington have decided.

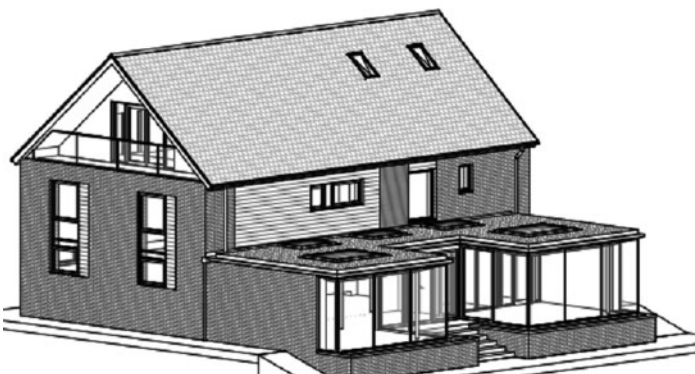
The new, glazed extension at the house in Twiss Green Lane, can be built with wildflowers and sedum as part of the roof.

Planning chiefs say the development will provide a "modest environmental benefit."

While the glazed elevations and

sedum and wildflower roof are not design features found elsewhere in the surrounding area, they are justified by the non-uniformity of the street scene and the contemporary design of the existing dwelling, the planners say.

Overall, the design choices are deemed appropriate for the setting and the extension would be an attractive, harmonious addition to the dwelling.



How the extension will look.

Footpath campaigner warns: "Use them or lose them"



FOOTPATH campaigner Janet Evans is urging Culcheth residents to walk footpaths around the village – or risk losing them.

She said footpaths around the village were threatened by farmers and landowners ploughing right up to the field edge and overriding their existence.

Back in 2010, local residents, with the help of Warrington Borough Council, applied for designated footpath status to save several footpaths, as identified on Ordnance Survey maps, on land behind the barn conversion on Withington Avenue which were ploughed by a tenant farmer towards the end of the year.

As a result, designated footpath status was granted in

2013 making the paths a public right of way.

But the path at the back of Culcheth Hall Drive has gradually overgrown and until recently was almost impassable.

Now the council has cleared this designated footpath making it passable from Twiss Green Lane across the fields and onto Withington Avenue.

Janet said: "Please walk this path to keep it passable. Our village footpaths have been walked for many decades - they can be seen on local ordinance survey maps.

"If you value your right to keep our village footpaths, walk them, preserve that right for you and your children."

A 'reet' good speaker at the WI!

FORMER miner Gary Conley was guest speaker at Croft WI's monthly meeting and his subject was 'The Rise and Demise of the Working Men's Clubs in the North'.

He entertained members with jokes, songs and even a mindreading act.

Working Men's Clubs first started over 150 years ago but it was only in 2007 that women were allowed to become members. They were set up as private social clubs to provide recreation and education for working class men and their families and became popular mainly in the North of England, the Midlands, Scotland, South Wales and Australia. They were non profit co-operatives run by their members through a committee, usually elected annually.

In 1972 there were over 4000 working men's clubs and major stars such as Les Dawson, Shirley Bassey, Bradley Walsh and David Bowie learned their craft there.

However the popularity of working men's clubs has declined since the 1980s, possibly due to the collapse of traditional industries

such as mining and steel which hollowed out local communities. Other factors were the smoking ban, cabaret going out of fashion and the availability of cheap alcohol elsewhere. Nowadays there are fewer than 1300 clubs in existence.

Doris Friar gave the vote of thanks, saying "Well, Gary lad, that were reet good!"

The winners of this month's competition 'A Lancashire saying in dialect' were:

Louise Geekie 1st place: 'Put th'wood in th'ole' (Shut the door - its freezing)

Lesley Lloyd 2nd place: 'Wot's the scran?' (What is there to eat?)

Sue Tippet 3rd place: 'When I'm Cleaning Windows' by George Formby

Sue kindly agreed to recite the lyrics, prompting a sing-along to the chorus from members.

Beer festival will raise funds for community events

THE first Winwick Beer Festival will take place on Saturday, June 24.

Organised by the local community group at Winwick Leisure Centre, the doors will be open from 2.30pm to 11pm.

All profits will go towards funding community events and projects throughout the year

As well as cask beers there will be cider, bottled beers and a gin and fizz bar. Soft drinks will also be available for children and drivers.

To enable fast track entry to the event, a limited number of advance tickets will be available shortly and include two free tokens for drinks. There will be a pay-on-the-door option available too, but these

won't include the free drink tokens. Entry will be £5 and include live music throughout the day and a commemorative glass.

Organisers are now looking for businesses or individuals who would like to sponsor the event. A number of opportunities available, and sponsorship will include a number of free tickets to the event and publicity on the festival website and event materials.

Email the organisers on beer@winwick.org.uk for more information.

Sign up to receive a newsletter to hear more about this event at www.winwick.org.uk/beer

Music to soothe anti-social behaviour!

CLASSICAL music is to be played at Birchwood railway station - to deter anti-social behaviour.

Trials carried out by train operator Northern at nine stations across the region has shown that music inspired by Handel, Beethoven, Mozart and Tchaikovsky has led to a significant reduction in littering, graffiti and vandalism-related incidents.

Now Birchwood is one of 23 targeted stations to be selected to expand the scheme.

Music will only be played at certain times of the day, which will vary from station to station to have the best impact on behaviour.

Mark Powles, customer and commercial director, at Northern,

said: "Anti-social behaviour is a nuisance in its lightest form and nothing short of a criminal act at its worst. Unfortunately, railway stations - like many other public areas - can attract this sort of mindless behaviour - which is unfair and unsettling to our customers.

"The classical music trials proved very interesting - and the results speak for themselves. We'll now begin work on a roll-out programme across 23 targeted stations to spread that success far and wide."

Anyone can report anti-social behaviour on the rail network by contacting British Transport Police via text message on 61016 or by calling 0800 40 50 40.

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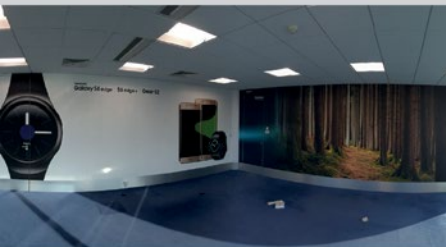






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 Warrington & Vale Royal College

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- Elsa from Frozen
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