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# Warrington Worldwide

Issue No. 282 June 2023 FREE EVERY MONTH

## A right Royal knees up!

Page 12

Pictures: John Hopkins

  
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Printed by TwentyFourSeven

# Editor's Comment

**IT was an absolute honour to be invited to No.10 to be recognised as Warrington's "Local Media Champion" by Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Lucy Frazer as a guest of Warrington South MP Andy Carter MP.**

Whatever your politics the ancestral home of the UK Prime Minister is worth visiting - and I've been lucky enough to go three times now!

I've got to say as our business has developed since launching our online newspaper and monthly magazine almost 25 years ago - one of the most rewarding parts of my job has been writing about and supporting inspiring community projects.

While shock horror stories bring the clicks I'd much rather focus on positive news as much as possible to give a more balanced view of our world. I've pretty much stopped watching the national news on the TV now as it is too depressing

- I just flick through the headlines on a news app to know what is going on in the world. But remember there are more good people than bad!

Meanwhile it was great to hear the ongoing level of investment of £200m a year into Warrington at the 25th anniversary of the Warrington Property Review hosted by Warrington Chamber of Commerce and Warrington & Co.

It is certainly something to be positive about in these tough times.

Finally congratulations to Lisa Billing (who featured on the cover of our April issue) on winning a national award for "Overcoming Adversity"

following the loss of her soldier son Daniel Wade, eleven years ago in Afghanistan.

Lisa won the Celebrating Forces Families (CFF) Overcoming Adversity Award at a celebrity-presented awards evening in London after being nominated by Warrington Worldwide.

The award is for a military family member who has experienced and achieved success despite living through an unfortunate event, experiencing difficulties or challenges. This could be based around mental, emotional or social challenges - or all three.

Lisa is a dedicated supporter of the Armed Forces community who has worked tirelessly to preserve the



memory of her son, Daniel and other soldiers who died in Afghanistan.

Over the past decade, she has spearheaded the renovation of Marshall Gardens near Warrington Cenotaph, transforming it into a beautiful space that honours fallen heroes.

Well done Lisa!



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

# Youth Zone boss hits the headlines with cheeky Ant and Dec Coronation "selfie"

**AS the nation prepared to watch the Coronation of King Charles III Warrington Youth Zone Chief Executive Dave McNicholl managed to capture the spirit of the occasion as a cheeky selfie with TV Stars Ant and Dec hit the headlines.**

Dave, who helped manage the transformation of Warrington Youth Club into the new Warrington Youth Zone, was one of just 2,500 lucky guests to get an invite to the Coronation in Westminster Abbey for his service to Children & Young People following receiving a British Empire Medal.

His cheeky selfie with the obliging TV stars hit the national headlines as it was caught on camera.

Ant McPartlin and Declan Donnelly posed for pictures with other guests at the King's Coronation as they took their seats early.

The presenting duo work with King Charles on the Prince's Trust and were invited in their roles as

goodwill ambassadors.

Another Warrington face who was lucky enough to receive a ticket for the royal event was Warrington South MP Andy Carter, who described it as a "truly incredible day."

He managed to catch up with some well-known faces including Warrington Wolves' PDRL star Adam Hills and pop star Lionel Richie.

The coronation of Charles III and his wife, Camilla, as king and queen of the United Kingdom and the other Commonwealth realms took place at Westminster Abbey. Charles had acceded to the throne on 8 September 2022, upon the death of his mother, Elizabeth II.



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# Warrington businesses vote YES for a 2nd term Town Centre Business Improvement District

**Warrington businesses have voted in favour of having a 2nd term Business Improvement District (BID) for the town centre between 2023 and 2028.**

Voting commenced on 19th April and closed on 18th May. More than 300 businesses had the opportunity to approve or reject the 5 year £1.5million private sector led investment for Warrington town centre, with a majority (80%) approving the 2nd term BID, an increase in support from 68% when the ballot was held for the town centre's first BID in 2018.

Re-approving the town centre BID will enable businesses to lead on a wide range of activities, additional projects and services that will make Warrington town centre more economically vibrant, increase footfall and support the creation of a safer, cleaner and greener town centre.

Warrington's business community join over 300 city and town centres across the UK who have chosen to implement successful BIDs since 2005.

Ian Cox, Centre Director of Golden Square and Deputy Chair of the BID, said "This is a great result. The 'Yes' vote empowers businesses and creates a more vibrant and diverse visitor experience for all. Working together to improve marketing, events, transport, cleansing and security will make a massive difference to our town centre and the business community".

Cllr Tom Jennings, executive member, Warrington Borough Council, added "I'm delighted with the result. It endorses the inherent attitude of our town centre businesses and will build on the great work that the BID has achieved through BID1, whilst further enhancing the town centre offer as a great place to work, live, shop and entertain."

Greville Kelly, Director from Groundwork CLM who manage the BID added

"The result achieved in Warrington today builds upon the great work of a team of dedicated staff from Groundwork over the last seven years, most recently Andrea Morley, Jane Hough and Amy Dawber who have all worked tirelessly to make the case for a 2nd term BID here in Warrington town centre. Groundwork is looking forward to continuing our work with the Warrington business community, changing places and changing lives for the better across Warrington town centre."



Amy Dawber and Andrea Morley who lead the Warrington BID Team on behalf of Groundwork



Emma Hutchinson (Culture Warrington), Ian Cox (Golden Square), Cllr Tom Jennings (Warrington BC), Jenny Carey (Bold Street House), Carla Yearsley (Lloyds Bank) and Lynne Bennett (The Gateway).

# FITBOX

## Free open sessions this June:

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### The open days take place on:

<b>Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> June</b>	12:15 - 14:15
<b>Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> June</b>	20:00 - 21:00
<b>Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June</b>	11:00 - 12:30
<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> June</b>	12:00 - 14:00
<b>Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June</b>	12:15 - 14:15
<b>Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June</b>	15:45 - 17:45

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# Partnerships key to success as Property Review celebrates 25th anniversary

AS it celebrated its 25th anniversary the annual Warrington Property Review heard how despite challenging times, the town continued to attract £200m of investment a year over the past 10 years.

Business leaders from across the town and further afield gathered at the "sell-out" event at the Park Royal Hotel to hear how there had been £2 billion worth of public and private sector investment in Warrington over

the past decade.

Warrington Borough Council's Director of Growth Steve Park said partnerships had been one of three key successes in delivering the council's visions.

Speaking at the event he said: "It's been four years since I last spoke at a Property Review, and although today marks the 25th anniversary, unbelievably it marks 10 years since I first stood in front of you and described my thoughts on transforming Warrington and the renewed focus on economic growth and regeneration.

And what a decade it's been. I think we'd all agree it's not been without its economic challenges. We've had Brexit, a global pandemic, we've had Trump, 5 prime ministers, Trussonomics, debt crisis in Greece, and I know that many argue that we never actually recovered from the financial crisis in 2008. We've had a boom in logistics, and a bust in retail. "These economic shocks have

created some significant and ongoing turbulence in the UK, but I'd argue that Warrington has managed to fly above most of it and it's not by chance either."

Meanwhile, John Laverick, Managing Director of Warrington & Co. said: "We have had some successes over the past year with significant developments. But we understand that there is significant pressure on development and ongoing business viability. There has been good progress but the financial headwinds are making this more challenging.

"When this happens it is our role to find ways of continuing to deliver regeneration and this generally means finding additional funding."

## Charlotte Nichols MP Warrington North

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# Spotlight on Employment Development Team

by John Laverick - Warrington & Co

**Whilst I normally write about upcoming developments and projects in the town, this is only a part of what Warrington & Co get involved with and so I thought you might find it quite useful this month if I explained a bit of what the Employment Development Team (EDT) does at Warrington & Co.**

As the name might suggest this team works with partners such as local voluntary and community bodies to deliver help connect people and businesses. So what does that mean? Well it's quite a broad range of functions but will include things like helping with recruitment drives, co-ordinating and if needs be hosting open days whereby people can come and meet with an employer during the

open day rather than having a more formal interview slot. We also help some residents specifically, where for instance they might need help to improve their employability skills and ultimately gain employment. This also includes working with individuals at risk of redundancy, where we can help with things such as CV writing; application forms, skills around job searching and some, training

advice, job matching, interview skills and techniques – including mock interview sessions and help around confidence and self-esteem concerns.

We also work with local businesses to demonstrate how to be part of the drive for growth for the Warrington area by offering a free recruitment service. This includes things like apprenticeships and links to skills and training opportunities and encouraging businesses to think local in terms of their staff, suppliers and partners and how this can strengthen and build upon the local economy in order to sustain growth. In order to do this we work closely with the planners at WBC to understand the requirements of any new businesses relocating and investing in the area. This provides opportunities to discuss vacancies, apprenticeships, work placement/experience opportunities and support them throughout the recruitment process into job opportunities. We also offer support and guidance on creating skills development packages to suit the business needs.

We also deliver various externally funded programmes around employability & skills and can include things such as advice and support on apprenticeships and funding, including the apprenticeship levy or pre-recruitment training and skills development and in some cases



**John Laverick**  
01925 442 243

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sector specific skills for individuals that then guarantee an interview with a specific employer. Our main focus is ensuring that we match skills to jobs and that it is appropriate and sustainable for both the individual and employer alike. So who have we done this for? You may recognise some of the following to name a few: NEXT, Brakes, Travis Perkins, Lafarge Tarmac, Foresight Restaurants, EXPO Logistics, The Botanist, Amazon, Gravity, Costello's.

I hope that gave you a bit more of an insight into the wider range of Warrington & Co activities and if you, either as a business or as an individual are interested in finding out more then please contact us through the Warrington & Co website.

## Shock as Six56 public inquiry suddenly adjourned

THE Public Inquiry to consider plans for the massive Six56 logistics site has been adjourned due to pollution concerns on Manchester Mosses, which campaigners hope will be the "final nail in the coffin" for the development.

This was a result of a letter received from 'Natural England' which queried whether the correct legal process had been carried out with respect to the effect of traffic on the Manchester Mosses alongside the M62.

Natural England is the government body whose purpose is to 'help conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.'

The public inquiry is considering an appeal by Langtree over proposals for the giant Six/56 development next to Exit 20 on the M6 at Grappenhall.

Lymm Councillor Ian Marks who was present at the Inquiry said, "We were all shocked by this turn of events and cannot understand why the problem only emerged at such a late stage in the process. The Inquiry started on a Monday but after about an hour and a half of preliminary proceedings, the Inspector suddenly announced to everyone's surprise, that the Inquiry would be adjourned

on Tuesday because Planning Inspectors were on strike.

"The law requires there to be a thirty-day consultation process to consider the issue to do with the Mosses, which delays the re-start of proceedings. This had not been carried out. Due to diary commitments of participants, the first available date for a resumption is likely to be 10 October. It is all rather surreal and suggests that Mosses located just outside the Warrington Borough have more influence than the people of South Warrington!

"The Local Plan Inspectors were adamant that the land on which Six56 would be built should not be released from the Green Belt, contrary to the Council's proposal in the draft Plan. The Council has reluctantly accepted this modification to enable the Local Plan to be declared as 'sound'. Providing there is no change of mind from the Inspectors, it is likely that the Local Plan will be approved by the Council prior to the October re-start. Surely it would then be very difficult for such a major component in an approved Plan to be overturned by the Inquiry Inspector with a recommendation that Six56 goes ahead. Together with residents of South Warrington, I really hope this surprise development is a nail in the coffin for Six/56."

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# Sad pilgrimage in memory of local men who died in Isle of Man disaster

**A WARRINGTON man will travel to the Isle of Man in August to pay tribute to the memory of 50 people who died in a disastrous fire 50-years ago.**

Two young men from Warrington were among those who perished when the blaze swept through the five-storey Summerland leisure centre on the sea front at Douglas.

They were Alan Barker, aged 20, from Woolston and Sean Kelly, 21, from Fearnhead.

Now, 76-year-old Barry O'Neill is planning to travel to Douglas on August 2 – the 50th anniversary of the disaster – to visit the site and the memorial that was erected after the fire.

Mr O'Neill, of Ash Grove, Latchford has visited the site several times over the years and has kept in touch with a local woman, Tina

Brennan, who organises an annual memorial service.

She is still in touch with relatives of Alan Barker and Sean Kelly who have visited the site on occasions.

Alan and Sean were working at Summerland at the time of the fire. It is believed Alan managed to get out of the building but went back in to try and rescue other people. He was due to take examinations to join the police on his return from the Isle of Man. He played football for the Church Street Labour Club team and was to have trials with Wigan Athletic.

In addition to the 50 deaths, 80 people were seriously injured in the crush that occurred as people tried to get out of the building.

Mr O'Neill said: "I want to make sure Warrington people don't forget this tragedy. I realise there will be many who are too young to remember it, but I want to make sure local people know about it. Hopefully we can get some over there on August 2."

After the disaster there was a major public inquiry. Although no-one was blamed, the use of flammable building materials and delays in evacuation procedures were condemned.

The skeletal remains of the building were demolished in 1975

and it was then re-built on a smaller scale the following year. It re-opened in 1978.

In October 2002, torrential rain caused a landslide behind the building and it was decided the site could not be made safe. It closed in 2004 and in January 2006, demolition commenced. One wall remains intact as there

are concerns that its removal could cause an adjacent cliff to collapse.

Forty years after the tragedy, a permanent memorial in the form of three granite columns was unveiled in nearby gardens. It bears the names of all those killed in the fire and is set into a circle of paving, alongside a stone laid earlier to mark the 25th anniversary.



## Council leader cleared of election fraud

THE leader of Warrington Borough Council, Cllr Russ Bowden, has been cleared of election fraud after trial by jury at Liverpool Crown Court.

Cllr Bowden, 53, of Applecross Close, Birchwood, was alleged by the prosecution to have lied on his nomination forms for the May 2019 local election for re-election as a Birchwood ward Labour councillor.

He had been living in a rented flat in Lulworth Place for 21 months after marital problems but instead of putting that down on the form as his home he put the Applecross Close address, where his wife still lived.

Cllr Bowden had always denied a charge of making a false statement on a nomination paper telling the court that the Bewsey ward address was only a temporary address and he considered that his home address was the one in Birchwood.

It was claimed by the prosecution that he did so to gain a political advantage as being seen by voters as "a local man". Bowden denied this telling the jury "I am leader

of the council. It is absolutely crucial that I am above reproach."

Following the hearing Cllr Bowden issued a statement outside court saying the trial, which had taken nearly two years to come to court, had been "stressful and deeply upsetting for me and my family."

Stating he had always had a "clear conscience" he added: "Sadly there are those with political motivations that have led them to try and exploit this case in order to cast doubt on me as a person, attempting to undermine my leadership of the council and our Labour led council, regardless of the reputational damage to our town."

He went on to say; "This case should never have come to court. I always maintained my innocence. The unanimous verdict of the jury demonstrates the truth of what I was saying should never have been doubted."

He said he had been "blessed with unwavering support of family, friends and supporters."



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# Vibrant programme of events will be a celebration of Pride

**A VIBRANT programme of events focused around inclusivity and freedom for self-expression is coming to Warrington as part of a Pride celebration.**

Arts charity Culture Warrington will be hosting a number of themed events where everyone is welcome between June 23 and 29, including family-friendly creative workshops.

It is part of a wider Warrington Pride party in the town centre promoting the dignity, equality and increased visibility of the LGBTQ+ community.

Culture Warrington's first Pride event will be the bold yet playful *Barely Visible* on Friday, June 23.

The physical theatre and contemporary dance solo performance at Pyramid's Studio Theatre in Palmyra Square will explore identity, objectification and what it is to be gay.

Then on Saturday, June 24, between 10am and 4pm, creatives will lead free, drop-in workshops for children, young people and their families at Castlefield Gallery New Art Spaces in Sankey Street, Warrington.

The sessions will enable children and their families to express themselves creatively in an open and relaxed setting and there is no need to book.

This event will also see Culture Warrington team up with Warrington Youth Zone to create an interactive exhibition exploring relationships, gender and identity, which can be

viewed until Sunday, June 25.

The programme concludes with a "Queer Scratch Night" at Pyramid on Thursday, June 29.

A scratch night is a platform that gives artists and performers of all disciplines the opportunity to share and test out work in early stages for audience feedback, peer review and further development.

Building on the success of previous scratch nights at Pyramid, this adaptation of the usual platform will provide an opportunity exclusively for north west based LGBTQ+ creatives to tell their stories.

Leah Biddle, cultural manager at Culture Warrington, said: "We're really looking forward to creating these opportunities and platforms for artists and engaging with the community and our young people while enriching the wider Pride programme."

"Our work with Warrington Youth Zone will see us further engage with young people using arts and creativity to enable self-expression."

"I'm particularly looking forward to Rowena Gander's *Barely Visible*. This highly physical show has toured nationally and I'm delighted to bring Rowena's incredible work to Warrington."

"Our audiences can expect to see a lot more contemporary



performances presented within the town very soon."

Isabelle Rudge, from Warrington Youth Zone, added: "The young people at Warrington Youth Zone are very excited to have the opportunity for their artwork to be showcased in an exhibition in the town centre."

"We have several creative projects running, leading up to the exhibition, exploring the theme 'Express yourself through art'. The young people will be involved in every step of the way, from their initial ideas to installing the artwork and seeing their projects come to life."

The Pride events at Pyramid Arts Centre will also be the first Culture Warrington shows to feature a new

'pay what you decide' pricing policy.

The scheme aims to break down barriers to the arts and works by allowing people to book tickets and attend shows without paying beforehand.

Then on exiting the performance, visitors have the opportunity to make a donation based on their overall enjoyment of the event or what they can afford to pay.

Culture Warrington's Pride programme has been made possible thanks to funding from the government through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

For more information visit [pyramid.culturewarrington.org/whats-on](http://pyramid.culturewarrington.org/whats-on)



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# Young conservationist meets Prime Minister and asks to represent UK at COP28



**WARRINGTON'S** young conservationist Aneeshwar Kunchala is hoping to represent the UK at COP28 in Dubai later this year after meeting Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at the 10 Downing Street Coronation Big Lunch.

The Britain's Got Talent finalist, who holds the Guinness World Record as the youngest documentary presenter, met the Prime Minister and requested to represent the UK at COP28 to help save and protect wildlife.

During the brief meeting, the Prime Minister said he would see what he could do to help the youngster achieve his dream.

Aneeshwar who reached the finals of Britain's Got Talent holds the Guinness World Record for the youngest documentary presenter, when aged 7 years and 288 days old when he presented "COP27 – Six ways to Save Our Planet" in November 2022, now wants to represent the UK at COP 28 in the UAE.

COP28 will be the 28th United

Nations Climate Change conference, held from November 30th until December 12th, 2023 at the Expo City, Dubai.

Now aged 8 Aneeshwar says he enjoys time outdoors spotting birds, wondering how they are related to his favourite DINOSAURS!!!

His passion for conservation started when "my beautiful world was shattered when my teacher showed the picture of a whale that had died due to plastic pollution!! I thought I need to help these amazing creatures which are impacted by us."

Since then he has gone on to become a world record holder, a finalist on Britain's Got Talent and now met the Prime Minister!

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# Sunshine and showers as residents celebrate Coronation with right Royal knees up

**RESIDENTS** across Warrington celebrated the Coronation of King Charles III, with a right Royal knees up at street parties across the town.

A familiar face on Hill Top Road, Woolston, Ray and his wife Fran, who have been involved with the famous Hill Top Christmas decorations for many years, put up street of bunting and Union Flags at every house on the road.

Despite overcast skies and the occasional downpours on the Saturday, residents didn't let the weather dampen their spirits, while

those having parties on the Sunday were blessed with sunshine.

Our pictures show residents enjoying the occasion on Hill Top Road, Woolston, Albany Road at Lymm and Grappenhall Heys on the Saturday and All Saints Drive, Thelwall, Chaise Meadow, Lymm, Old Smith Lane, Lymm and Whitefield Road, Stockton Heath, on the Sunday.

Pictures: John Hopkins



Albany Road, Lymm



Chaise Meadow, Lymm



All Saints Drive, Thelwall

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# National beauty pageant returns to town

**LOCAL businesswoman, Holly Pirrie, is bringing the sparkle back to Warrington with the annual finals of the Miss International UK beauty pageant at Parr Hall on Saturday June 10.**

The pageant will see over 50 families travelling to Warrington to attend and support the event. The event has also confirmed the attendance of the Mayor of Warrington, who will be watching the show on the evening.

The contestants of the competition will compete in the glamorous grand finals, with on-stage rounds such as Swimwear and Eveningwear, in the hope to become the next Miss International UK winner. Alongside an amazing prize package, which includes an official sparkly crown and voucher to spend at The Dress Studio in Culcheth, the winner of the Miss International UK competition at Parr Hall Theatre will win a trip of a lifetime to Japan. She will compete in the prestigious Miss International Official Pageant, against beauty queens from across the globe as the representative for the United Kingdom! The pageant has been running annually for over 60 years

and is amongst the top 5 pageants in the world.

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

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

Each year, the Miss International UK competition receives hundreds of applications to the Warrington based office from all over the UK. It is one of 5 national beauty pageants organised by Holly and her team, who plan to bring more events to the town for 2023. Watch this space!



## Warrington again ranked as one of best places in the UK for a night out!

WARRINGTON has again been ranked the third best place in the UK for a night out following new research.

Situated between Manchester and Liverpool and boasting lots of pubs, bars and restaurants Warrington scored 8.01 out of 10 in the ranking following new research.

The study by Get Licensed, analysed the number of venues per head, the cost of a pint and a range of safety issues to reveal the best nights out in Britain. By updating their original research data was refreshed for 2023.

Warrington has a total of 279 CAMRA pubs (169 per 100,000) and also had among the lowest scores for its resident safety concerns, with just 11% of locals worried about being assaulted due to hate crimes. Pubgoers in the area generally feel safer about walking home alone at night than in other towns, with 52% of residents feeling safe doing so.

Commenting on the new report Andrea Morley, Project Manager for Warrington Business Improvement District said: "We

know that Warrington is a great place for a night out, but its always good to have it confirmed by Get Licenced. Our night time economy industry have worked exceptionally over the last decade to deliver a night time offer that suits everyone. The town centre has invested into area's such as, the Cultural Quarter, Old Market Place and the new Time Square Quarter, all with a focus on ensuring visitors to our town centre enjoy a great night out in a safe environment. We'll continue improve on this, with an application for Purple flag accreditation, which will further confirm our commitment to providing a safe but fun night out for all to enjoy."

Newcastle upon Tyne was crowned the best UK city for a night out with a score of 8.19. In addition to having one of the highest rankings for the number of prestigious CAMRA pubs (211 per 100,000), the city has a wide variety of bars and nightclubs where you can dance the night away (66 per 100,000 people). The price of a beer in Newcastle averages at around £4.20 a pint, which is fairly cheap compared to

other big cities in the North.

In second place was York with a night out score of 8.14. The city has a choice of commercial chain bars and quirky independent pubs which pull in the punters. Considering York's small population of just over 153,000, the city hosts many traditional real ale and cider pubs (161 per 100,000) and is also known for its safe streets, with a safety index score of 73.09.

Warrington made the top 3 with a night out score of 8.01, making the North the best area for a night out.

London was crowned the worst

city for a night out with a score of 1.73. London fell to the bottom of the ranking for its average cost of a pint being £6.82 and for its number of real ale pubs (30 per 100,000).

The data used for the number of bars and clubs were taken from Tripadvisor, while the number of pubs close to each location was taken from CAMRA's whatpub.com. Comparing this data to the populations of each town and city using data from World Population Review. This data was correct as of 11/04/2023.



# Credit Union launch new Christmas Saver Account



**WARRINGTON-based Unify Credit Union is making it easier for people to start saving for Christmas with a new Saver Account.**

The average household spends £642 on Christmas! Trying to squeeze that out of one payday in December is impossible for many, but if you put some money away on a regular basis throughout the year it becomes much more manageable.

With Unify's Christmas Saver Account you put aside whatever amount you like on a regular basis. Unify keep that money safe for you, without any charges. Then in November and December you can withdraw with no restrictions on how you spend it.

This isn't like most savings clubs, there are no hidden charges and they won't give you vouchers. It's a safe and simple way to save so you have your money when you need it.

Like all Unify accounts, deposits are fully protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, they are covered by free Life Savings Insurance which could

double the value, and they count towards an annual dividend at the end of the year for being a good saver.

Chief Executive Officer Angela said: "We're always looking for new ways to serve the community and we think people will really value the chance to build up savings for the most expensive time of year. With our Christmas Saver you can keep your Christmas money separate from your regular savings and ring-fence it until the big day comes."

Unify Credit Union is a not-for-profit savings and loans co-operative with membership exclusive to people who live and work in and around Wigan, Leigh, Chorley, Leyland, Warrington and Skelmersdale.

The Warrington premises are based in Golden Square.

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# Biggest ever litter pick is right Royal success!

**DESPITE** pouring rain more than 200 volunteers took to the streets and parks of Warrington in the town's - if not the country's, biggest-ever litter pick to mark the Coronation of King Charles III.

A total of 214 volunteers and at least 255 bags were collected.

One of the co-ordinators from the Warrington Litter networks, Tony Dixon said: "This was Warrington's biggest volunteer event on National Volunteering Day.

"There was nothing like it in the North West according to Andy Carter MP. Maybe nationally this was the biggest litterpick? We don't know of anything else like this at the moment.

"It shows the power of multiple small teams.

"I hope we will see a few more teams appearing in new areas of town so we can move towards the goal to be known as the 'cleanest large town in the North'.

"If anyone wants to discuss starting a local weekly team in their area, please let me know. We have some fantastic model litter teams in our town and we know how to replicate the process."

Warrington South MP Andy Carter said: "Today's Big Help Out is a tribute to the King's public service and a celebration of giving back to the community by volunteering.

"Despite the rain, hundreds of people from every part of Warrington have come together to be part of the town's biggest ever litter pick, including groups such as the Scouts, Lions and Rotary, all organised by Warrington Litter Network.

"So many important events and services are co-ordinated by an army of volunteers in our local communities so it's also important we say thank you to these teams and recognise the contribution made to life in our local areas"

Warrington North MP Charlotte Nichols said: "Thank you to everyone involved in organising, and to everyone who came to participate-heroes every one! Warrington is 255 bags cleaner today than it was yesterday, and it's all down to your

efforts- no mean feat in the minging weather we had."

"Great to see such a diverse group out from right across Warrington, different parties, faith groups, young and old!"

Meanwhile, Warrington Borough Council's David Boyer said: "Massive thank you not only for the litter picking today but also throughout the whole year. It is really appreciated. Enjoy your evening."

Bob Towers of Winwick Litter Network added: "Despite some iffy weather the day was a HUGE success. It leaves a superb platform to work off and lots of great new relationships and community links. We also have ample kit to underpin our ongoing voluntary work."

To find out more about joining a Litter Network near you email Tony at [a-m-dixon@msn.com](mailto:a-m-dixon@msn.com)



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# Memories kept alive at school's community memorial garden

**MEMORIES are being kept alive at a Warrington primary school with a National Lottery-funded community memorial garden.**

The garden at Evelyn Street Primary was made possible through a £10,000 grant from the National Lottery Community Fund.

It includes an artificial grass area and produce garden and was created by Jacqueline Breeze, a learning mentor at the school, and school business manager Emma Leigh, working with contractors.

The garden will be a place for pupils and members of the local community to enjoy, contains trees with plaques commemorating the lives of members of the community and Evelyn Street Primary School. It

includes a plaque dedicated to pupil Cameron Mathieson, who sadly died aged five in 2012 after a long battle with cystic fibrosis and Duchenne's muscular dystrophy.

Warrington Primary Academy Trust's maintenance officer Ste Rowley, who died in March, is also commemorated in the garden.

The garden has already been used for community and school events, including warm space evenings during the winter, and Sankey Bridge Community Centre will be using it for their over-60s sit down aerobics sessions.



Holding a cheque, Cameron Mathieson's brother Guy and Louise Smith, chief executive of Warrington Primary Academy Trust.

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# SEND inspection report highlights areas for improvement while recognising good practice

**A new report has highlighted areas where improvements are needed for young people with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) in Warrington, while also recognising good practices.**

Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission have published their Area SEND inspection report of Warrington Local Area Partnership, following their inspection in February 2022.

Warrington Borough Council and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board (ICB) are jointly responsible for planning and commissioning services for children and young people with SEND.

The inspection found the local area partnership's arrangements lead to inconsistent experiences and outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and says the local area partnership must work jointly to make improvements. The next full area SEND inspection will be within approximately 3 years.

The report found that some children and young people wait too long to be assessed for health services. This includes those waiting for assessments from the speech, language and communication therapy service, the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) and the neurodevelopmental pathway. While leaders have introduced support and guidance for children, young people and their families while they wait. However, some needs escalate as children and young people continue to wait for specialist support and guidance.

Parents, carers and professionals also report problems with communication. Too often, professionals signpost parents and carers to other services. While this is enough for some families, other families struggle while they wait.

A significant number of parents and carers who are waiting for their child to be assessed on the neurodevelopmental pathway reported that they are not updated often enough on wait times. This causes increased stress and worry.

There have been several changes to the senior leadership of Warrington's SEND services since the previous inspection. These include the appointment of a new director of children's services and cabinet member for children and young people. The commissioning of health services changed across England in 2022. On 1 July 2022, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside ICB became responsible for the commissioning of health services in Warrington.

The local authority commissions a single provider to provide education for children or young people, including those who cannot attend school due to social, emotional, mental health and medical needs, or for those who are at risk of or have been permanently excluded. The local authority does not commission any other alternative provision.

The report highlighted that senior leaders across the Warrington Partnership are ambitious for children and young people with SEND. Inspectors also found a number of areas where Warrington Partnership is making a positive difference to improve the lives of children and young people with SEND.

The report also praised the work of education, health and social care professionals to enable young people to take part in decision-making about their education, care

and support.

Most children and young people who responded to the online survey during the inspection reported having a trusted adult in their lives, who listens and acts on their views.

The report also stated that the workforce benefits from training opportunities, which help to improve staff's ability to quickly identify and meet the needs of children and young people.

The inspection also found that many children and young people with SEND enjoy a wide range of inclusive leisure activities across Warrington, including dedicated sessions at Warrington Youth Zone.

Ofsted found that the local area partnership supports young people to gain valuable work experience. These experiences help children and young people with SEND to be visible in the community and prepares them well for the future. Young people with SEND were found to benefit from good quality careers information, advice and guidance.

Warrington Borough Council's Cabinet Member for children's services, Cllr Sarah Hall, said: "I'm pleased with this report, which highlights some of the good work our local area partnership is doing

to make a difference to the lives of children and young people with SEND, so that they are listened to and given the best opportunities to reach their full potential.

"We will also fully take on board the areas of improvement highlighted in the report. By better sharing information between partners and putting measures in place to deal with increased pressures on services, we can further strengthen our ability to meet the needs of all young people with SEND in Warrington. We'll be working hard to achieve this."

Carl Marsh, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside's Place Director for Warrington said: "This report demonstrates the work being done by partners in Warrington to improve the lives of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

"We also recognise there is still more to do and we're committed to working closely with partners through the Warrington Together health and care partnership to use the report's feedback and recommendations to further improve the support available for children and young people with SEND."



## New £4 million housing development completed for older adults

WARRINGTON Housing Association (WHA) has completed the build of an apartment block on the site of the former Penketh Tavern, Greystone Road.

Now named Edgewood Court in Penketh, the development consists of 30 one and two bed apartments for affordable rent and have been built to cater for people aged 55 and above.

This development has been made possible by substantial financial investment by Warrington Housing Association of more than £4million and this figure includes a significant grant funding contribution from Homes England – Homes England is the Government's housing and regeneration agency.

The new development was officially opened by the Mayor of Warrington, Councillor Jean Flaherty, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Councillor Flaherty said on the day: "It's great to see the redevelopment of a vacant overgrown site which will provide a much needed safe, secure and comfortable place to call home for

local older people in an established thriving community which has great shopping, leisure and health service facilities on hand."

New resident at the development, Maureen Woods, aged 79, added: "I can't thank Warrington Housing Association enough for providing me with a lovely warm home near to my friends and family."

The opening event was also attended by Penketh residents,

councillors', WHA staff and board members, Warrington Borough Council and Homes England.

Judith Winterbourne, Warrington Housing Association Board Chair, said "This is a high-quality development to reflect Warrington Housing Association's continued commitment to substantial investment in the borough to make Warrington a great place to live. We are helping to address the housing

needs of local older people as well as boosting local employment and supply opportunities."

Warrington Housing Association procured the services of Kingsmead Construction Ltd to build the new homes with consultancy advice provided by Markhams Ltd, PRP Architects & Sutcliffe Ltd.

For more information about Warrington Housing Association go to [www.wha.org.uk](http://www.wha.org.uk)



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Head over to [www.healthwatchwarrington.co.uk/hospital-discharge](http://www.healthwatchwarrington.co.uk/hospital-discharge) to have your say and share your experiences of Hospital discharge for yourself or someone you care for.



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# Schools were joint winners in knife awareness competition



## TWO Warrington schools were joint winners in a Cheshire Police Operation Sceptre knife awareness competition.

Pupils from Sir Thomas Boteler CE High School and Cardinal Newman RC High School wrote reports raising awareness of knife crime.

They came out winners and went to Warrington Youth Zone to make a video of their report.

Operation Sceptre, is a national campaign which takes place twice a year, supporting the work police carry out all year round to ensure residents are safe from knife crime in their community.

In Warrington, the campaign is supported by the borough council, Warrington Wolves Foundation and Warrington Youth Zone.

PC Mel Marsh-Croft from Cheshire Police said: "We've worked closely this year with Dave Ditchfield at

Warrington Youth Zone to create a digital support for our campaign and reached out to high schools to create a video that we will be sharing across our social media."

Mrs Anna Mawby, assistant headteacher at Boteler said "This was a fantastic opportunity for our students to deliver a message around knife crime and the affects that it has on our communities.

"Spending the morning at Warrington Youth Zone was incredible. Students made a short video using fabulous technology and also had a tour around an incredible building with amazing facilities for the young people of Warrington."



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# Warrington Worldwide recognised as "Local Media Champions"

**SECRETARY of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Lucy Frazer recently invited Warrington-Worldwide Editor and owner Gary Skentelbery to a special reception at 10 Downing Street, to recognise the work of "Local Media Champions."**

During the trip down to London as a guest of Warrington South MP Andy Carter, Gary was given a tour of the House of Commons before entering the iconic front door on Downing Street.

Commenting on the occasion Mr Carter said: "It was a great pleasure to welcome Gary Skentelbery to Downing Street to recognise his invaluable contribution to life in Warrington as a Local Media Champion.

"Gary's family business, Orbit News, has been reporting the news for Warrington since 1968 and is

best known for the thousands of free magazines Warrington worldwide and Lymm Life magazine which appear through letterboxes and in magazine racks each month - as well as the town's first daily online news service which was launched in 1999, it was the first daily online newspaper in the U.K.

"Gary and his business make a great contribution to life in Warrington, allowing advertisers to reach their customers, promoting good causes and positive news about the town and being fair in his reporting, even the most

controversial topics.

"Well known for a selfie, Gary couldn't resist one in Downing Street!

Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport Lucy Frazer said: "Local journalism helps local areas stay connected, generates local pride and keeps communities engaged in local issues.

"Local journalists capture the heart of our communities and make sure politicians are doing their jobs better by holding them to account.

"It was wonderful to be joined by

local journalists across the country in Downing Street - from community news sites, radio shows and free sheets - to thank them for their work to keep communities connected."



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By David Watkinson

## Should I opt out of my workplace pension?

One thing that has become clear over the past couple of years, and particularly in the last 12 months with the horrendous increase in the cost of basic needs such as power and fuel, is the inadequacy of the basic state pension in providing a comfortable standard of life. The full new state pension is £203.85 per week, and this can be reduced if you have a shortfall in your national insurance contributions record. This is substantially less than the National Living Wage for anyone over 22 years old who works for 19 hours a week or more. Despite this, the rumours that the "triple lock" protection of the state pension may be removed are getting louder, and if this happens then it will only have the effect of reducing the level of increase of future pensions.

The government have seen Workplace Pensions as being at least part of a solution to poverty in old age. With some minor exceptions, for the past few years all employers have had to provide a workplace pension for employees in the UK who are both aged between 22 and the state pension age and who also earn at least £10,000 per year. However, even if you fall into one of the exceptions an employer cannot refuse to enrol you if you so request, although they

do not need to make any employer contributions if you earn less than £6,240 per year. The choice of pension provider rests solely with the employer.

The amount that the employer and the employee pay into a workplace pension depends on the individual scheme. However, all schemes must meet the minimum requirements which are currently:

- The employer pays 3%, and the employee pays 5%,
- On all earnings between £6,240 and £50,270 per year, or £120 and £966 per week.

Any employee can "opt out" of a workplace pension. However, any decision to do so should be carefully considered. Obviously, opting out will stop you paying your 5% into the pension scheme. However, this may come at a considerable cost. **WatkinsonBlack** are not authorised to provide investment advice, and therefore the following points are for information and general guidance only. Any further advice specific investment advice required should be obtained from an independent authorised source.

Firstly, and very importantly, opting out will directly lead to your income in retirement

being reduced.

Secondly, whilst your immediately net income will be increased, this will be at the cost of a substantial reduction in your gross pay. By opting out you will not only "save" your contributions of 5% but will also remove your employer's obligation to pay their 3%. There is no obligation on your employer to pay this to you instead.

Thirdly, as usual you will receive tax relief on your contributions. This can be given in a number of ways, but if by means of a salary sacrifice then you will also reduce your national insurance contributions. This means that the increase in your net pay by opting out may be significantly less you might think.

Fourthly, the reduction in your net pay of joining the workplace pension may:

- mean that you become entitled to tax credits, or to an increase in the amount of tax credits received; or
- mean that you become entitled to an income-related benefit, or to an increase in the amount of benefit received.

It might also remove or reduce your liability to make student loan repayments.

Finally, some people may



Margaret Black and David Watkinson

worry about losing any benefit from their pension if they die before they retire. This need not be a problem as you can usually nominate someone, such as your spouse or civil partner, to receive the benefit of your pension pot. Details of how to do this can be obtained from the pension provider chosen by your employer.

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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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# Warrington Town promotion celebrated with Civic Reception at Town Hall



By James Gordon

**THE Mayor of Warrington, Cllr Jean Flaherty, welcomed the Warrington Town squad and management team for a Civic Reception at the Town Hall.**

Manager Mark Beesley, chairman Toby Macormac and the first team squad, led by skipper Josh Amis, mixed with local dignitaries before an address in the chamber at the historic Grade I listed building.

Photo opportunities then followed on the Town Hall steps and in front of the famous Golden Gates, symbolic to the town and which are celebrated in the football club's logo.

In her address, the Mayor said: "I am really pleased to congratulate you all on being promoted to National League North. It's a fantastic success.

"I noted that you are approaching the 75th anniversary of being the home team of football in Warrington and it's great that you've achieved this success ahead of that anniversary, and also great that you've achieved this success on the 58th anniversary of former player Roger Hunt winning the FA Cup with Liverpool.

"You've made Warrington Town a football club with a great, bright future and a football club we can all be proud of as a town, and I am very proud of you all."

The Civic Reception was kicked off by Steven Broomhead MBE, chief executive of Warrington Borough Council, to mark the club's achievement in earning promotion to National League North, the highest level of football that the town has ever seen.

Isaac Buckley-Ricketts' dramatic late winner earned a 1-0 win in the play-off final against Bamber Bridge following a long season that saw the Yellow's finish second in the Northern Premier League, the club's highest ever finish.

Prof Broomhead added: "Sometimes people think Warrington is about rugby only, but we support every sport in the town. Football is really important to us, and when you play next season there will be some big teams coming to Cantilever Park like Hereford, Scunthorpe United and others, and the town will reap the benefits of that."

The club previously enjoyed

a Civic Reception back in July 2016, to celebrate Warrington Town winning the Northern Premier League First Division North and the visit of Northern Irish side Crewe United for the then annual Peace Cup tournament.

Barely two weeks since promotion, preparations are already well underway for the new campaign in National League North, with the FA confirming earlier this week the 24 clubs that will be participating in the competition next season.

Club chairman Toby Macormac said: "It's been a difficult season operating on low resources and a small squad of players. But it is that camaraderie and the tightness of the group of all the players working so hard for each other, coupled with the relentless hours that all staff put in, that helped get us over the line and give the town a new level of football to enjoy.

"It's that new level of football that will bring many new people to the town, some of those arriving on Friday evenings to spend the weekend with their families, watching their team and therefore having a positive impact on the business community in Warrington.

"On the field, in around six weeks time preparations for a new journey will begin, one of which all the players and staff are looking forward to and will include visits to and from renowned clubs such as Scunthorpe United, Hereford, Chester and Boston United, which hopefully will all be sell out crowds.

"Off the field, preparations have already began planning how we can make upgrades to our current venue in a timely manner to ensure that we stay in the new competition and give us a platform to push on even further.

"Who knows, maybe next April we'll have the chance to take Warrington Town Football Club even higher.

"In the interim though, we will visit all new grounds, meet all new supporters and with the help of everyone here, deliver a level of football this town deserves."

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