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Birchwood Community Hub Redevelopment

Coming soon - opens 20th September!



See advert P5

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Editor's Comment

BIGGER certainly isn't always better when it comes to running organisations.

I could write a book on my own personal experiences with the likes of BT and Barclays Bank – and I am sure many readers will have been through similar experiences.

I find it ridiculous a bank the size of Barclays with a main office in Warrington Town Centre can no longer offer face-to-face meetings, by appointment in branch.

At best you can just about manage to get a phone call from a business manager based down the road at Radbrook Hall in Knutsford.

The COVID pandemic brought about a lot of changes in the business world – some for the better but certainly not all. It took me the best part of two years to sort out my business banking issues with Barclays – which in the good old days of a face-to-face meeting with an in-branch manager who actually knew me, could have been resolved in literally five minutes.

Similar with BT taking over EE I had ongoing issues following the miss-selling of a business product which took many months to resolve. I won't bore you with the details but thankfully it has now been resolved.

The frustrations certainly didn't help my mental health.

I fear mental health for many is reaching breaking point with the ongoing frustrations in the modern world. I seem to be writing about more tragedies than ever before.

Our NHS is under immense pressure which has been worsened by the pandemic and now ongoing strike action and while I have every sympathy with people being paid a fair wage for the work they do; it shouldn't be costing people their lives.

While the world of communication should be getting easier with all the new technology it seems to be getting harder to contact people.

Also, simple tasks like getting

a blood test have become more complex. Pre-Covid you could just go into the outpatient's department and get a blood test.

Now you must make an appointment, which can take up to a week or more. It certainly doesn't make things easier.

While there will never be enough money to resolve all the issues in the NHS, I'm sure, like with many big organisations more could be done to improve communication.



Meditation solutions for modern problems

THE Odiyana Kadampa Meditation Centre is running a 5 week course in Warrington from September 6 entitled Solutions for Modern Problems.

The classes will be open in person at The Old Fairfield School, Fairfield Street, Warrington on a Wednesday evening. The class starts at 7.30pm and run for 5 weeks. Each class comprises 2 meditations and a talk.

Julie Forrest, Education Programme Coordinator for Odiyana Kadampa Meditation Centre said: "In recent years our knowledge of modern technology has increased considerably and as a result we have witnessed remarkable material progress but there has not been a corresponding increase in human happiness. There is no less

suffering in the world today and there are no fewer problems. Indeed it might be said that there are now more problems than ever before.

"Superficially it looks like our world is improving. We know so many things we didn't know before and can do things we never even dreamt of but if we look a bit more deeply we will see that there are many problems that never existed before. The result of an unbridled pursuit of happiness is that our planet is being destroyed and our lives are becoming more complicated and dissatisfying. People are suffering more from stress, anxiety and low self-esteem."

For details visit www.meditationincheshire.org or email – epc@meditationincheshire.org

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Gulliver's family fun run raises funds for St Rocco's Hospice



A FAMILY fun run at Gulliver's World has raised £1,690 for St Rocco's Hospice in Warrington.

The charity event, which saw more than 400 people take part, was organised by the theme park to raise money for the local charity.

Participants could run, walk or toddle the route, which weaved through the resorts' thrilling rides and attractions.

From every £15 entry (which included theme park admission), £5 was donated to St Rocco's Hospice, which provides free care 365 days of the year for people with life-limiting illnesses.

Craig Clews, resort manager at Gulliver's Land, said: "It was heartwarming to see so many people join us for this year's fun run, supporting St Rocco's Hospice.

"We've been working closely with the hospice and supporting

their important work for the local community. A big thank you to everyone who came out to take part in the event and helped raise money for this vitally important cause."

Nicola Henshaw, fundraising and partnerships manager at St Rocco's Hospice, said: "We are thrilled to have the support of Gulliver's World once again for this fun run. It not only provides a fantastic day out for all the family, but it highlights the important palliative care St Rocco's provides for the local community, completely free of charge.

"Thank you to Gulliver's World for their ongoing support - it means the world."

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Another record-breaking footfall weekend

MORE footfall records were broken during the school holidays as Warrington town centre came alive with the summer extravaganza proving a hit with visitors.

Following Warrington Market's record breaking week the week before, it smashed its own newly set record for the highest ever footfall, with 31,860 visitors coming through the doors, which is nearly 3,000 more than the record set the previous week.

Market footfall on the Saturday was 9,295, compared to 6,770 on the same Saturday last year, and on Sunday, 3,583 people came through the doors, compared to 1,993 on the same Sunday last year.

Across the weekend (Saturday 29 and Sunday 30 July), special summer events took place across Time Square and the town centre, as the heart of the town came alive with fun and activity with a packed schedule of live performances, art, music, activity and colour.

On Saturday, around 800 people took part in the events throughout the day. Visitors to Time Square enjoyed Street Games, with inclusive and accessible games from around the world, plus live music and dance with BSL performance and interpretation, and the Many Hands parade brought people together to explore the shared communicative power and expressive potential of hands.

'Wake Me Up Before You Dodo', tied in with the environmentally themed events in the town centre, with a family friendly exhibition at Warrington Museum and Art Gallery about endangered wildlife. Also, back by popular demand, Out of the Deep Blue, everyone's favourite eco-friendly puppet Eko returned to Time Square to the delight of visitors for shows on Saturday and Sunday.

Even with the threat of rain on Sunday, around 700 people saw the Eko show in Time Square. Families took to Queens Gardens which hosted a giant whale – The Whale: Plastic Ocean invited bold explorers to encounter an 'aquabatic' diver, a shipwrecked pirate with a treasure tale to tell, a real life mermaid with a haunting siren's song, and an intriguing secret alongside a true-to-life 50ft inflatable sperm whale.

There was also a Sunflowers performance at Palmyra Square, with Culture Warrington presenting a new, eye-catching dance, aerial and hand balancing performance designed for children and families. A 'Be Kind to Our Planet' family workshop completed the day at the Parr Hall, with six local artists hosting a programme of free, drop-in workshops themed around the environment.

Cllr Tom Jennings, cabinet member for economic development

and innovation, said: "These new footfall figures, smashing the previous week's numbers, demonstrate that our market, Time Square and the wider town centre continue to go from strength to strength as people visit Warrington for shopping, leisure and family fun, with the summer events programme bringing in the crowds – there truly is something for everyone, so make sure you don't miss out."

For more information about what's on as part of the summer events calendar throughout August, visit warrington.gov.uk/summer-2023.

Warrington town centre summer events programme has been funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and delivered in partnership with the council, Culture Warrington, Warrington Market and the Warrington Business Improvement District (BID).



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Coming soon - opens 25th September!

Change is in the air at Birchwood Community Hub as we embark on an eagerly anticipated redevelopment project aimed at enhancing your experience and the overall wellbeing of our valued members.

Here's a sneak preview of what you can expect:

- Transformation of the bar area into a modern, open plan library space including a children's area and public network computers.
- Refurbishment and expansion of the existing upstairs studio for group fitness classes.
- Leisure, library and community spaces under one roof to support mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- A new, second dedicated Group Class studio on the ground floor.
- An extra fitness studio space through the existing first floor studio.
- Updated changing rooms, enhanced programme of group exercise and much more!

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Warrington care company wins St Helens Council contract

WARRINGTON-based Care at Home Group has won the contract to provide domiciliary care services to St Helens residents following a thorough and selective bid process.

St Helens is the latest council to back the ambitious and forward-thinking company that was established in Warrington over 30 years ago and have since expanded to cover Cheshire, Wirral and Warrington.

CEO Karl Jacobie bought the company with a will to transform the home care industry and set a benchmark in quality care following his first-hand experiences of lax and shoddy care in the case of his own mum. He has steadily raised the quality of care levels and

standards at Care at Home from bottom up. His belief is that the care level is only as good as the individual team member team and so ensures staff are well rewarded and professionally trained so that they can confidently achieve their mission statement to 'make their clients smile'.

He is proud to have been selected as the preferred supplier to St Helens residents and explains how he thinks CAHG stood out from the competition: "Carers and healthcare staff do an amazing job

and offer a bit of their heart to their clients. They look after some of the most vulnerable people in our communities and I believe that they deserve recognition for the work that they do.

By raising our game in terms of training, ongoing career support and our innovative rewards package our staff are happier, and that positivity passes on to our clients".

"My team know that my motto is that we must prepared to go the extra mile to help our clients smile, and if they achieve that every day, we've done a good job!"



Former hotel boss takes leap of faith to help disabled people experience enhanced travel

FORMER hotel boss Donn Timmons has teamed up with local charity Warrington Disability Partnership to help enhance travel experiences for Disabled People while also helping co-ordinate a fundraising skydive!

Donn has launched 15Travel.com, a start-up travel platform after his many years in the hospitality industry and has joined forces with the user led charity based in Warrington, which has over 30 years' experience of developing and designing solutions to independent living.

Also as a veteran of sky diving with more than 200 jumps, Donn is organising a charity skydive for anyone who wants to tick a bucket list later this year.

Meanwhile, 15Travel.com, endeavours to address the challenges faced by disabled

people in the world of travel. By working closely together, both organisations aim to foster a greater understanding of these challenges and create a more inclusive travel environment.

Disabled travellers often encounter difficulties due to a lack of insufficient online information, that is often complicated as most travel agencies have little or no information that is relative to questions raised, which is further compounded due to inadequate staff training. What should be an enjoyable experience all too frequently becomes a source of stress and frustration, leaving some disabled travellers unable to access the most basic of facilities. Booking travel arrangements often requires numerous phone calls, leaving disabled People frustrated, and uncertain about the outcome upon

arrival at their destination, resulting in limited options for spontaneity.

Recognising the need for change, the first step is to comprehend the diverse needs of disabled travellers and identify the most common issues they face. To achieve this, 15Travel.com has been conducting user group meetings and one to one sessions in collaboration with WDP and the individuals they support.

The ultimate goal of this partnership is to provide disabled people with equal access to travel, bridging the gap between them and able-bodied travellers. It is crucial for travel providers to move beyond the fulfilment of basic needs and strive to consistently deliver exceptional experiences as the standard.

In an effort to include as many people as possible in this

transformative journey, 15Travel.com encourages interested individuals to sign up on their website, 15Travel.com. By doing so, they can actively participate in and contribute to this groundbreaking initiative.

For more information on 15Travel.com, contact Donn@15Travel.com

Meanwhile, 15Travel.com is delighted to support Warrington Disability Partnership with their next fundraising event which is taking people to new heights.

Limited places are available to experience the thrill of skydiving in October in Lancaster who boast the UK's highest skydive.

If this is on your bucket list, contact Kate Picken on k.picken@disabilitypartnership.org.uk

Local business founder Sam Fox named finalist in Northern Gamechangers awards

WARRINGTON business founder Sam Fox has been named as a finalist in the Northern Gamechangers awards, for his dedication to revolutionising the PHSE curriculum for secondary school students, helping teachers equip them in the best way possible for life after high school.

Sam is the founder of video learning platform The Talk, a bespoke resource tool which is switching up the narrative for PHSE lessons across the North. This comes at a time when teachers across the country are under more pressure than ever to deliver quality education on core subjects as well as providing wider world education for their students.

The Talk creates engaging content on a range of 'real life' topics, tackling everything from how students can prepare for their first interview, to budgeting effectively and how to engage in relationships.

The Northern Gamechangers awards celebrate those making a

real difference across the North. Whether it's businesses pioneering innovation in sustainability or individuals making positive change in their local communities, successful 'Gamechangers' use their influence as a force for good.

Sam, who also founded the Warrington-based UK Mortgage Centre, is one of 50 individuals and businesses shortlisted for the awards, with the Top 10 Northern Gamechangers set to be announced at the official award ceremony on 21st September.

The awards, which are run by north-west based business consultancy Elevate, were judged by some of the leading businesspeople and community leaders across the region, including Tim Heatley, Co-Founder of Capital & Centric; Mike Taylor, Customer Engagement Manager at Electricity North West and last year's Ultimate Northern Gamechanger winner, Policy and Influencer Manager at Manchester charity, Macc, Lauren Rosegreen.

Ilona Alcock, Co-Founder and Director of Elevate, said: "We've had some excellent submissions this year, and it really goes to show the breadth of talent we have across the region. There's a real commitment from people across the North to deliver positive change in their communities and it's an honour to be able to recognise them with these awards.

"Sam's story is a shining example of the importance of challenging

archaic narratives, and his work ultimately ensures that the adults of tomorrow have the tools they need to make their own communities a better place. Good luck to him and everyone else nominated in September!"

Event sponsors include leading independent PR agency, The PHA Group; Perfect Sense Energy; and Appleyard Lees, Intellectual Property specialists.



The joys of British summertime!

by Stephen Fitzsimons - Warrington & Co

I was up in the Lakes this month and we experienced the full spectrum of British summertime. Waterproof jackets were required one day, quickly followed by an almost unbearable heat the next.

It may be inconvenient for us, however it can be make or break for private businesses. Remember Camelot theme Park in Chorley? They were already struggling before successive wet summers kept the visitors away and the money ran out. Thankfully, our own Gulliver's World has more diversification with a splash park and hotel! The warm

weather in June helped to grow the UK economy by 0.5%, with retail spending up 3.3%. By contrast, the miserable July and August have shrunk that back to 1.5%. We may get a little wet, however next time you are under the umbrella at Neighbourhood Weekender or sheltering in a shop doorway in Bridge Street, remember that your

patronage is greatly appreciated!

The cost of living crisis may be easing slightly, however the high interest rates are making it more difficult for companies to invest so when they do, it's especially welcome for the local economy. I recently visited Graepels in Burtonwood. They are arguably the last ones standing from the once mighty wire industry in Warrington. They still manufacture cages, including one to imprison a villain in a recent Bond movie. Great then that they are staying in Warrington and expanding the operation. Over at Birchwood, fire testing experts Warrington Fire (Element) will be opening a new £20m facility in 2025 with 50 new jobs. There is still growth in certain sectors and as always, we'll be supporting these exciting opportunities as best we can.

The 4th Warrington Business Conference is nearly upon us, with 200 delegates descending on Cineworld once more to hear from the likes of Eddie Stobart, Sellafield and Bents Garden Centre. Time Square really is a jewel in the town centre crown and recently received an award from the Royal Town Planning Institute. Understandably, it's taken a while to attract the right occupiers and one or two haven't been as successful as expected.



The partnership for driving growth



Stephen Fitzsimons

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Time Square to play host to annual business conference

TIME SQUARE will once again play host to businesses from across the borough on Friday September 15 for the Warrington Business Conference.

The annual business conference, jointly hosted by Warrington&Co, Warrington Business Exchange and Warrington Chamber of Commerce, is back for the fourth year after being established as a key event for local businesses.

This year's theme is around "maximising performance", and 200 delegates are expected to gather to hear presentations from successful businesses including Sellafield, Eddie Stobart and Bents Garden and Home.

Warrington's two MPs, Charlotte Nichols (Warrington North) and Andy Carter (Warrington South) will be joined by Kevin Hollinrake MP, Minister for Enterprise, Markets and Small Business, the latter to outline the government's support for supporting commerce and industry.

Once again, the annual event will be hosted in Warrington's Time Square development, using Cineworld for the main conference and The Botanist for the networking lunch.

Borough council leader, Cllr Russ Bowden, said: "Warrington's popular annual business conference returns this September for what promises to be another

good opportunity for businesses to hear from industry leaders, share ideas and network. I'm delighted that we will once again be hosting the conference at Time Square and I'm looking forward to another informative and successful event."

Cllr Tom Jennings, cabinet member for economic development and innovation, said: "Warrington Business Conference has proved itself a great success and is an important date in our annual calendar. It's an opportunity for local companies to be at the heart of discussions about the future of business in Warrington and how we can work together to share ideas and maximise our collective potential. It's a great way for business leaders to connect and collaborate, so make sure you sign up for the event."

The conference will be from 8.45am until 2.30pm. To book a place, visit the Eventbrite booking page.

There is a charge for attending the conference, however, members of the Warrington Business Exchange and Chamber of Commerce can attend free of charge.

To become a member and get a free pass, or for more information about the event, contact Jackie Emson at Jackie.emson@warringtonandco.com or call 07740 075 785.

However, the development is nearing capacity and Yum Cha will be a fantastic addition in the autumn.

Heads up on the forthcoming Warrington Running Festival on Sunday 24th September organised by Runthrough. It is apparently the worlds first free to enter, chip-timed race. And you don't get many of those - well none in fact, apart from this one. It has a combined in town out of town route and finishes at the Town Hall, I believe you still have time to enter the last ballot for what is a free to enter race.

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THE 1330 (Warrington) Royal Air Force Air Cadets is proudly inviting the public to commemorate the Battle of Britain with a Memorial Service on Sunday, 17th September 2023 at the historic St Elphin's Parish Church.

This annual event, held to honour the valiant aircrew who defended our skies during the Second World War more than 80 years ago, serves as a poignant reminder of the bravery, determination, and sacrifice that defined our nation in its most trying hours.

The Memorial Service will commence at 3pm, with attendees asked to arrive from 2:30pm to allow for a prompt start. The service will include readings, hymns, and the drumhead ceremony with the laying of the Book of Remembrance to honour those who gave their lives.

1330 (Warrington) Royal Air Force Air Cadets will play a

prominent role in the proceedings and offering their own tribute to the veterans of the Battle of Britain. Their involvement symbolises the enduring spirit of service and commitment that characterises the Royal Air Force and the Royal Air Force Air Cadets.

The cadets warmly encourage everyone to join them on this special day of remembrance. Let's stand together, pay our respects, and ensure the legacy of the Battle of Britain continues to inspire future generations.

For further details about the event, please visit their Facebook page or contact via adj.1330@rafac.mod.gov.uk



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Contact Us

To secure your place in this years event use the QR Code provided.

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Students jumping for joy as they celebrate results success

The 2023 A-Level results has brought positive news for many Warrington students.

The last three years have been challenging for students who have worked through the COVID pandemic, but it is important to celebrate the achievements of all of our young people.

Three colleges in Warrington supported pupils with A-Levels this year. The results released is initial data and could be subject to change.

Schools and colleges in Warrington have seen an increase in the number of A-Level entries compared to last year.

- The percentage of A-Level entries achieving A* – E for 2023 is 98.1%, which is higher than pre-pandemic results reported in 2019
- The percentage of A level entries A* – E pass rate is higher than both the North West (97.4%) and England (97.2%) averages
- The percentage of students achieving A* – A, A* – C and A* – E grades is higher than pre-pandemic results reported in 2019

In line with national trends, the pass rate in Warrington has fallen slightly compared to 2022 results, although North West and England averages have fallen at a greater rate.

Cllr Sarah Hall, cabinet member

for children’s services, said: “Staff working in our schools and colleges have worked incredibly hard to ensure students were well prepared for exams this year. I would like to thank them for all their hard work and appreciate the support provided often goes above and beyond teaching.

“I’d like to congratulate all of our young people on their fantastic achievements in their A-Levels this year and wish them every success in their future.”

Young people who are looking for guidance in relation to their next steps can visit warrington.gov.uk/warrington-life.

Meanwhile students and staff at Warrington & Vale Royal College were jumping for joy with yet another outstanding year for results.

The celebrations were a chance to reflect on what has been one of the College’s brightest years yet! The college has seen the launch of two state-of-the-art facilities in the past 12 months thanks to £3 million in investments, firmly asserting itself as a northern hub for technical training dedicated to shaping the workforce of tomorrow. Standout investments include the new Health & Social Care Academy (HSCA) and an innovative Advanced Creative & Digital Skills (ACDS)

Centre. Students across the college have also represented their subjects in nationwide competitions, events, and projects, demonstrating their aptitude and enthusiasm for their studies and future careers.

At Priestley college around 1,000 young people collected their results with their sights firmly set on making a difference in the world.

Their hopes and destinations were as varied as the courses they

studied with students heading to some of the UK’s most competitive universities to study Medicine, Pharmacy, Bioveterinary Science, Criminology and many more inspiring courses.

They spoke of wanting to pursue careers as neurologists, detectives, vets, teachers and nurses as well as fashion designers, police officers, firefighters, diplomats and journalists.



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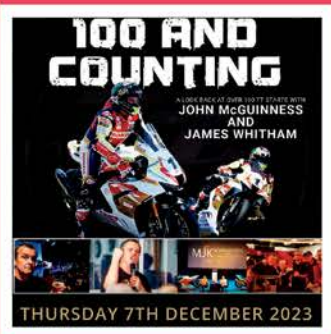
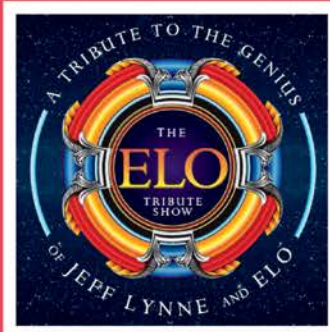
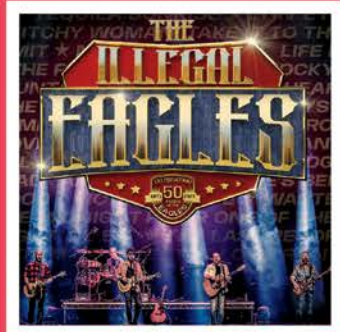
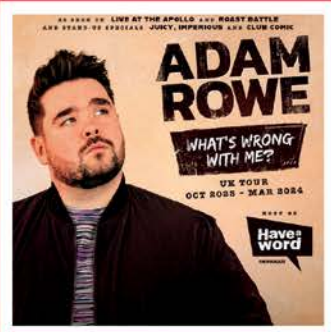
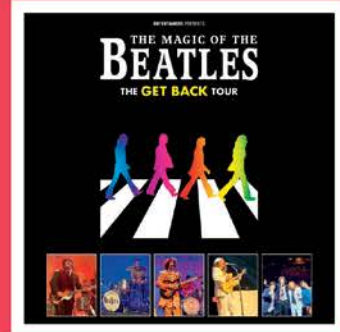
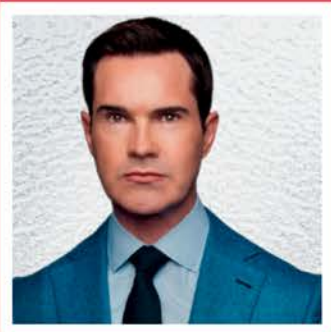
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- Fri 22/Sat 23 Sep - Identities
- Fri 29 Sep - T.Rextasy
- Thu 5 Oct - The Smooth Rock Show
- Fri 6 Oct - Fastlove
- Fri 6 Oct - Fältsånger
- Sat 7 Oct - Comedy Store
- Fri 13 Oct - ADHD The Musical
- Sat 14 Oct - Looking Glass Burlesque
- Sun 22 Oct - Fireman Sam Live
- Tue 24 Oct - Autism and Sea
- Thu 26 Oct - Most Haunted
- Sat 28 Oct - Greatest Hits of Motown
- Thu 2 Nov - Frankie Boyle
- Fri 3 Nov - Noel Fitzpatrick Beyond Supervet
- Sat 4 Nov - Comedy Store
- Wed 8 Nov - Gabrielle

- Wed 8 Nov - Angela Barnes
- Sat 11 Nov - Magic of the Beatles
- Sat 18 Nov - Adam Rowe
- Sun 19 Nov - The Illegal Eagles
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- Sat 25 Nov - Maet Live
- Fri 1 Dec - The Ambersons
- Sat 2 Dec - Comedy Store
- Thu 7 Dec - 100 and Counting
- Fri 8 Dec - ABBA Reunion
- Fri 8 Dec - Rich Hall
- Sat 9 Dec - Peter Price
- Sun 10 Dec - Justin Moorhouse
- Thu 14 Dec - Last Days of Disco
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- Fri 15 Dec - The Houghton Weavers
- Sat 16 Dec - WMVC Christmas Voices
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LOCAL MUSIC SCENE



by Glen Screeton

Woodfest defies the weather!



TERRIBLE weather didn't dampen the spirit at Woodfest but it certainly tried its hardest!

Excellent organisation by Sam Heathcotes 'Eventive' team, a fabulous venue at The Woodlands Pub in Great Sankey and six musical acts from 1 till 9pm with full DJ support turned this potential garden party into its deserved status of mini-festival last Saturday, July 22.

Approximately 300 revellers occupied the outdoor/ covered seating area and set up camp alongside the bbq, pizza, cake & pretzel stalls, and with an inside and outside bar what more did they need!

A fantastic stage with superb sound from Nathan Higham greeted the first act at 1.15pm, namely soloist Lee Egerton a.k.a Defined By. With the rain slowly coming down and the crowd under cover it was always going to be a tough act. However, strong vocals and clean guitar play with a mix of original and cover songs did the job and the crowd quickly warmed to him.

Second and third acts were soloists Suzie Whitlow and Keree Sheree in that order who sang in fine form to well known backing tracks to keep the crowd entertained, and by this time people had ventured out from cover and were dancing 'poncho clad' in the drizzle, a sign of things to come before the fourth act appeared on stage.

This was the first band of the day, popular locals 'Jonny Foreigner' with a lively 1 hour set of high-

tempo covers and frontman Gordon Shaw's infectious energy had many brave revellers dancing in the teeming rain.

Following a scheduled 20 minute changeover and supported by great music from DJ Peter Aramayo the next band up were 'The Raymonds' - this young Warrington outfit continue to grow in confidence and raced through their own set of Funky Pop which was well received and they gained deserved recognition and more followers.

Headline act for the festival was the tribute band 'No Gallagher's High Flying Birds' who took to the stage under leaden skies at 7pm and played a set of Oasis and Noel Gallagher songs very well indeed. There was also a nice touch by frontman Richard and festival organiser Sam, as their 10 year old daughter Grace played keyboards/ effects and sang tuneful backing vocals as a one-off for the festival. Finally, and in closing, the band played the well known tune 'Don't Look Back in Anger' which was belted out by the soaked revellers who, by now were beyond caring about the rain before heading back to the warm sanctuary of the bar a little earlier than scheduled.

Overall, and despite the weather this inaugural festival can be deemed a success and let's hope it continues for years to come and adds to Warrington's ever growing number of music events.





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Stepping out in style with Prom dresses from the Dress Studio

YOUNGSTERS have been stepping out in Style across Warrington with Prom Dresses supplied by local business The Dress Studio.

Prom has become a popular event as teenagers celebrate the end of their time at high school and finishing their GCSE's, before moving on to further education or the next steps in their lives.

Prom is the event of the year, made even more special with the perfect dress.

Local store, The Dress Studio, launched by former Miss England finalist and Miss Warrington Holly Pirrie, has been the go-to place for that all important Prom dress this year, with visitors from hundreds of teenagers to help them find their dream dress.

The Dress Studio is located in Culcheth and specialises in Prom & Pageant gowns. Each year, they help hundreds of teenagers to pick out the perfect dress and shine on their Prom night. They have collected some special moments from local Warrington Prom's in their Dress Studio dresses.

The Dress Studio promotes a 'Prom Promise'. This means that they will not sell the same dress to the same school, even in a different colour, to eliminate any worries of someone else wearing your special dress! Prom 2024 collections are starting to arrive now at The Dress Studio – This could be you!

Are you looking for a special

gown? The Dress Studio is open now and fully stocked with occasion, prom & pageant dresses. Open Tuesday – Saturday, no appointment needed! The full address is Unit 1, The Warehouse Studios, Glaziers Lane, Culcheth, Warrington WA3 4AQ.



Skye Eccleston, Birchwood, Evie Collins, Great Sankey, Tia Perkins, Great Sankey and Olivia Neary, Culcheth.

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Lumb Brook Millennium Green celebrates Green Flag award



IN a record-breaking year Lumb Brook Millennium Green at Appleton is celebrating raising its prestigious Green Flag Award.

The news that Lumb Brook Millennium Green has achieved the accreditation – the international quality mark for parks and green spaces – is testament to the hard work and dedication of the team that cares for the green space so that everyone can enjoy it.

Keep Britain Tidy's Green Flag Award Scheme Manager Paul Todd MBE said: "I would like to congratulate everyone involved at Lumb Brook Millennium Green in achieving a Green Flag Award. Lumb Brook Millennium Green is a vital green space for the community in Cobbs, Appleton, bringing people together and providing opportunities to lead healthy lifestyles. The Directors and volunteers do so much to ensure that it maintains the high

standards of the Green Flag Award, and everyone involved should feel extremely proud of their achievement."

The Green Flag Award scheme, managed by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy under licence from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces, setting the benchmark standard for the management of green spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world. A full list of Green Flag Award-winning parks and green spaces is available.

A record number of parks and green spaces across the UK have reached the high standards required to receive a coveted Green Flag Award in 2023.

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Celebrating 26 years of community support at Warrington Rotary Oktoberfest



WARRINGTON'S premier Oktoberfest, organised by Warrington Rotary Club at the town's Parr Hall, is celebrating its 26th year of raising money for local and international charities and community organisations.

From humble beginnings of a few casks of real ale, to a festival of over 70 casks of various beers, a gin and fizz bar and live music over three days and raising over £350,000 over the years, it has become a regular feature in the town's event calendar.

The idea of an Oktoberfest beer festival came from Cliff Houghton, a member of the club and also a master brewer at a local brewery.

The rest is history, with thousands of people attending over the years. Rated as the best in the northwest by many beer aficionados, it continues its long service to both

attendees and charities.

Many friendships have been created, due to Rotary's Warrington Oktoberfest, at its annual meet-up.

This year the event starts Thursday 12th October until Saturday 14th October at Warrington's Parr Hall in Palmyra Square.

Opening times are 5:30pm to 10:30 pm on Thursday, 5 pm-11.30 pm on Friday, and 12 noon until 10:30 pm on Saturday.

Tickets are obtainable online and at the door.

For more details visit www.warringtonoktoberfest.org.uk

How knitters and quilters help children in need of a hug



A WARRINGTON voluntary group that has brought comfort to thousands of sick children is to hold an exhibition of its handicrafts to raise funds.

Project Linus UK Warrington will hold the exhibition at its autumn fair at Padgate Methodist Church Hall, Padgate Lane on Saturday, October 14, from 11am to 2pm.

On show will be the security blankets made by the group which are sent to Warrington Hospital's Special Care Baby Unit, Warrington Women's Refuge, Alder Hey Children's Hospital and Liverpool Women's Hospital.

They are also given to individual children identified to the group, schools, etc.

Group co-ordinator Jean Dickeson said: "We deliver quilts and blankets to children in need of a hug. There is no charge and they keep their blankets. We always try to get the blankets delivered to children who are local to the makers."

Originally, the group targeted paediatric cancer patients, but Project Linus UK has broadened its focus to take in seriously ill, abused, bereaved or traumatised

children from birth to 18.

Project Linus – named after the character in the Peanuts comic strip who never went anywhere without his security blanket – was launched in America in 1995. Five years later, it came to the UK and the Warrington branch was formed in 2006 with 12 members. It now has 40 members and a waiting list to join.

The members are knitters and quilters who enjoy meeting up to chat and create the blankets.

But the cost of materials has risen sharply in recent times and the group rely on fundraising to keep going. The autumn fair is one of its main fundraising events.

In addition to the exhibition there will be stalls selling crafts, gifts, cakes raffle, etc. All proceeds will go to Project Linus UK Warrington.

Jean said: "While we cannot reach out to every distressed child, we can help to provide some tangible evidence that someone cares, along with the physical reassurance that comes with being snuggled up in a quilt and the lift to the spirit from the bright colours and cheerful patterns sewn into it."

WARRINGTON
Oktoberfest
2023
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Carers named in the top home care groups for sixth year running

CARERS at Belong at Home Warrington have been named in the top home care groups in the UK for the sixth year running.

They were praised for the hard work caring for the elderly by leading online reviews website, homecare.co.uk.

Based on client and family reviews, a place in the country's Top 20 Large and Mid-size Home Care Groups also distinguishes the domiciliary care operator as the only not-for-profit service in the country to have won the award every year since 2018.

Supporting both people in and around Warrington and those residing in the Belong village apartments to live independently, the dementia specialist has achieved a group score of 9.9 out of 10 for assisting with one-to-one personal care, housekeeping, food preparation, as well as running errands, helping with excursions and offering companionship. Locally, the service has also maintained its perfect 10 rating from its customers.

One daughter of a client reviewed: "All the staff are caring, friendly and professional and have provided excellent support for Mum who has mixed dementia."

Another said: "They are very well trained and have proved to be totally dependable, flexible to our changing needs and always willing to go the extra mile."

The accolade comes as

the organisation continues its recruitment drive, providing opportunities for support workers, as well as training roles for local people new to care. Its 'for people, not profit' strategic approach enables it to continuously reinvest in

its team to provide award-winning care to customers.

Belong at Home is one of the few community care operators to recompense colleagues for travel time between appointments, as well as for client visits.

Andrew Shield, business manager at Belong at Home, said:

"This award marks another year of continued success, and we're delighted to receive such positive feedback from our clients and their loved ones. As we grow, we invite anyone interested in a fulfilling career helping others to get in touch and be part of our fantastic team."



B's Dementia-Friendly Café



B's Dementia Café, in Belong Warrington, offers a warm and welcoming space where families, friends and carers of people living with dementia can come together with their loved ones over a lovely cup of tea or coffee and cake!



Join us for our next session:
Tues 26th Sept
2pm – 4pm

The Venue
Belong Warrington
Loushers Lane,
Warrington WA4 6RX

Includes talk by a Belong Exercise Specialist

B's Café is hosted by a Belong Admiral Nurse (a registered nurse with specialist expertise in dementia care), in conjunction with the village Experience team, who help facilitate opportunities for verbal and nonverbal communication, for example, through music, art, exercise or dance.



Contact the village for further information or to book a free place:

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Candlelight concerts coming to Parr Hall



GLOBAL live-entertainment discovery platform Fever is bringing its Candlelight Concerts to Warrington, with a series of special performances at the Parr Hall.

The season will kick-off on September 16 with concerts in tribute to Queen, Vivaldi's Four Seasons, Hans Zimmer's Best Works and more.

The first concerts will see the Parr Hall, illuminated by thousands of candles, allowing viewers to fully immerse themselves in an adapted programme, inviting a broader audience that might have never considered a classical music concert before to connect with the most iconic pieces of the greatest composers and listen to the top hits of well-known artists in a different way.

Candlelight Concerts are a series of original music concerts created by Fever aimed at democratizing access to classical music by allowing people all over the world to enjoy live music candlelit performances played by local musicians in various stunning locations illuminated by thousands of candles.

Candlelight was initially conceived as a classical music series with

concerts featuring works from the greatest composers, such as Vivaldi, Mozart, and Chopin. Now, the ever-growing list of programs includes a wide variety of themes and genres, including tributes to contemporary artists like Queen, ABBA, Coldplay, and Ed Sheeran, as well as shows dedicated to K-Pop, movie soundtracks and many more. This multi-sensory experience has also evolved to feature different elements, such as ballet dancers or aerial performers, as well as other genres, such as jazz, soul, opera, flamenco and more.

The Candlelight concerts at the Parr Hall will be:

September 16: The best of Hans Zimmer.

October 20: Vivaldi's Four Seasons.

November 4: A tribute to Queen.

There will be two hour-long performances each night.

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Council received fewer complaints about potholes than almost anywhere else

IT may come as a surprise to Warrington road users, but the borough council received fewer complaints about potholes than almost anywhere else in the North West last year.

Warrington received 569 complaints – and only Blackpool, with 425 and Lancashire, with 536, received fewer.

Near neighbour Halton received 708, Cheshire East 945, St Helens 1482, Salford 2024, Wigan 2568. Trafford 3419 and Chester West and Chester a whopping 8635.

The figures have been collected by the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB), who use Freedom of Information requests to local authorities to draw up a league table.

The FSB concentrate mainly on authorities in Greater Manchester where they also look at how many legal claims are received for damage caused to vehicles by potholes.

Their research showed that half of Greater Manchester's 10 councils fail to spend their allocated road repair budget.

Wigan had the largest underspend, spending only 75 per

cent of allocated funds on repairs it had budgeted for – despite its hefty 2,568 pothole complaints.

FSB spokesman David Sudworth said: "While a well-maintained road network may be seen by some as a 'nice to have', they're actually rather important. Everybody relies on the road network in one way or another, whether that's getting to work by bus, car or bike, or for businesses to get their goods in and out on time. Our roads, paid for by our taxes, are our most important transport asset, and authorities must continue to invest in them."



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By David Watkinson

When and if you need to complete a tax return

If you normally file a Self Assessment tax return then the deadline for submitting your 2022/23 return is approaching.

You must file your return, and pay any tax you owe, by 31st January 2024. Once you are registered for Self Assessment then you must file a return before this deadline even if you think that you have paid all of the tax due. Failure to do so will result in automatic penalties starting at £100 and reaching £1,800 after 12 months.

You may need to complete a Self Assessment tax return if, between 6th April 2022 and 5th April 2023:

- You worked for yourself as a sole trader or a business partner. This applies even if you had another job as well, or
- You worked as an "off-payroll worker", or contractor, through a personal service company or your own limited company, or
- You had total income in excess of £50,000 and either yourself or your partner claimed child benefit, or
- You had total income in excess of £100,000, or
- You received income in excess of £2,500, or £10,000 before expenses, from UK property or land, ie rental income, or
- You received more than £10,000 from dividends or savings, or
- You received income from a trust, or
- You received income from outside the UK, or
- You received more than £2,500 in commission or cash in hand payments, such as tips, or
- You have made a taxable Capital Gain from selling personal possessions worth more than £6,000 or any other asset such as shares or a holiday home. But be aware that Capital Gains Tax is not payable when you sell your Principal Private Residence, or
- You hold a position of:
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 - Lloyds underwrite
 - Examiner, moderator or invigilator
 - Share fisherman

To help you determine whether you need to submit a Self Assessment tax return the tax office have issued a helpful tool to lead you through these and other questions and this can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/check-if-you-need-tax-return>.

If you are not already registered for Self Assessment but you meet any of the criteria for needing to submit a Self Assessment tax return then you must inform HMRC who will register you. This can be done on-line or by calling the HMRC helpline. You will then need to submit a tax return by the due date. Normally, you will be expected to submit your return electronically. This can be done through the Government Gateway or by using third party commercial software. If exceptionally you need to submit it manually then you will need to call HMRC and request form SA100. They will then send you a paper copy of the return. All other forms and supplementary pages can be downloaded.

If you needed to file a return in 2021/22 then, in all likelihood, you will have been issued with a Notice To



Margaret Black and David Watkinson

Complete a Tax Return by the tax office. If you feel that you no longer need to complete a return then you will need to tell HMRC. If you have ceased self employment then you can do this using the on-line form. Otherwise, you can either use HMRC's digital assistant or by post or by telephone call to the HMRC helpline. You will need to provide both your National Insurance number and your Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR) number. If HMRC agrees that you no longer need to complete a Self Assessment tax return then they will send you a letter confirming that you do not need to do so.

In summary, it is your responsibility to register if you need to submit a return, to submit your tax return by the due date, and to inform HMRC when you no longer need to submit a return.

The clue is in the name – Self Assessment!

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. **If you are employed or self-employed either as a sole trader, partnership or limited company and want to arrange a no-obligation initial meeting on any taxation or accounting matter then please contact us by telephone on 01925 413210 or by e-mail to info@watkinsonblack.com.**

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 star joins Macclesfield



Warrington Town midfielder Luke Duffy has departed the club to join Macclesfield FC for an undisclosed fee.

Duffy, 24, joined the Yellows from Lower Breck in September 2020, and went on to make 92 appearances, scoring 17 goals, with ten of those coming last season, in which he played a pivotal role in Warrington Town's promotion-winning campaign.

Most recently, the talented winger scored in the club's first-ever National League North fixture in a 4-0 away victory over Southport.

Warrington Town confirmed that they refused an initial offer from the Silkmen, but reluctantly agreed to allow Duffy to leave after indicating that he wanted to depart to join the revitalised Cheshire East outfit.

"The club was approached with an initial offer, which it turned down, and had no intention or reason to sell a key member of the

first team squad," Warrington Town said in a club statement.

"However, despite efforts to persuade him to stay, the player made it clear that he wished to leave the club to take up a more lucrative offer with the Northern Premier League club.

"With that in mind, the club felt it was in its best interests to negotiate the best deal possible rather than having a potentially unhappy player disrupting a pivotal season in the club's history."

Following their impressive start at Southport, it was back down to earth with a bump with their opening home league fixture as they went down 0-2 to Blyth Spartans, followed by two more wins.



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