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Pumpkin picking!

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Picture: John Hopkins


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Editor's Comment



THE transformation of Warrington town centre is continuing at pace with planning permission now approved for 900 new apartments on part of the site of the Cockhedge Shopping Centre.

The proposals involve the demolition of 16 retail units to make way for 900 new homes as part of regeneration plans for the site that had been provisionally earmarked for a new much-needed hospital.

With Warrington Hospital failing in a bid for new build funding, it now remains to be seen which development will progress.

Town centre regeneration specialist, Altered Space, received approval for its plans submitted in January 2023, that aims to breathe vital new life into this popular retail destination, creating employment opportunities and increasing footfall. The development aims to attract new retailer, leisure, food and beverage operators.

In line with a larger Greater Cockhedge Master Plan approved in August 2022, Altered Space intends to create a more accessible and visually appealing shopping centre through this stage of redevelopment. The plan includes downsizing the shopping centre and removing the pedestrian bridge over Scotland Road, resulting in a downsized yet enhanced commercial offering.

If the proposal moves forward, it leaves a big question mark over the future development of a new hospital.

Meanwhile an even bigger pressing need in Warrington is a Walk-in centre to help ease the pressures on our overworked Accident & Emergency department, which will soon be back under the

winter pressures.

Many people who struggle to access a GP, are overloading A&E.

A walk-in centre would be the perfect solution. All the town's surrounding Warrington have one - so why not Warrington?



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Fright Fiesta returns to Gulliver's World

FAMILIES can celebrate the spookiest season of the year with a festival of fun and frights at Gulliver's World featuring a Halloween celebration full of fabulous family activities, frights and theme park fun.

Highlights include daily shows such as Gilly's Halloween Dance Party, a haunted mansion experience, interactive scare attractions at selected times and spooky rides. In addition, mini zombies and little witches can showcase their fancy dress in the spine-tingling street parade or delve deep into the resort to discover hair-raising rides.

The event, which will be open 10.30am-4pm, from Saturday 7 October and selected dates thereafter through October weekends and half term holidays.

Families can extend the fun by enjoying a 'spooky sleepover' and stay the night at Gulliver's World's unique themed accommodation with options including a Princess Suite, Western Suite or Pirate Suite, dino den, pixie pod, safari lodge and more.

Craig Clews, resort director at Gulliver's World, said: "We're super

excited to welcome families to celebrate the spookiest season of the year with us at Gulliver's World.

"Our Fright Fiesta is all about family fun and celebration and families can save money on the freaky festivities by booking tickets at least two days in advance.

"We hope lots of people will join us for a festival-style Halloween celebration bursting with colour, costumes and music."

For more information and to book your tickets for Fright Fiesta, visit www.gulliversworldresort.co.uk/fright-fiesta



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Walkers take to streets for Hope 100 suicide prevention walk

MORE than 250 walkers took to the streets of Warrington as five local organisations, committed to raising awareness of suicide prevention and the need for conversations, teamed up for the HOPE 100 walk.

Lead organisation Livewire Warrington Lifestyles team along with Warrington Speak Up, Warrington Wolves Foundation, Directions for Men and Warrington Veterans Community Support set off from the Halliwell Jones Stadium, coinciding with World Suicide Prevention Day.

They were joined by Warrington North MP Charlotte Nichols.

The name HOPE 100 was chosen because the International Association for Suicide Prevention who are the key instigators of World Suicide Prevention Day have the theme 'Hope through action' for this year. Also 1 in every 100 deaths worldwide is as a result of suicide.

Organisers believe that through open conversations, active listening,

asking questions, supporting people to access help, and challenging stigma around mental health, they can make a difference in Warrington.

The walk was happening for the 4th time but this year under a new name – it was previously called Darkness into Light and started at the stadium in Widnes and finished at the Halliwell Jones.

This year it was a circular walk starting and finishing at the Halliwell Jones. The walk was a 10.3-mile route largely on designated public pathways such as the Trans Pennine, Black Bear etc.

For those who couldn't walk the full distance, there was a more accessible route starting at Victoria Park.

Pictures: John Hopkins



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Prosperity Network kick start new charity partnership with £15,000 donation to JUMP

THE Warrington-based children's charity JUMP is celebrating a £15,000 donation to kick start the launch of a new partnership with the Prosperity Network.

Founded by local property investor Danny Inman, the Prosperity Network, will be working with the JUMP charity, which provides professional memory photography and events for children with life-limiting conditions, moving forward.

Commenting on the new partnership Danny said: "The synergies are clear. The charity do an amazing job of creating a community and experiences for children with life-limiting illnesses and their families, creating long-lasting memories and support.

"Following the work from our network and our previous charity work with Keystone Foundation we have been able to start off the relationship with our first £15,000 donation.

"Our Xmas awards gala will be in their name. It is the start of something special and we hope a real impact can be made.

"For me, a local charity, making a real difference. We spend so much time focusing on our long-term future, we take having one for granted. So creating special memories for special children

and their families now and in the future is a wonderful thing for our community to do."

Danny is the "accidental leader" and director of the Prosperity Network.

A very successful business owner in the property market and serial property investor and developer, he is passionate about education, quality content and personal development.

With £25m pipeline of developments at almost all times, extensive experience in all of the property strategies they teach in the Prosperity Network, and having had the honour of coaching, training and mentoring thousands of property investors in the last decade, feel pretty well placed to comment on the market, and help to lead this Community to being the best in the game.

Danny is described as a straight-talking, logical and analytical investor, who loves this game but doesn't love the hype that often surrounds it. As such, this very real product has been created.



Water company welcomes 80 new starters



WATER company United Utilities has welcomed 80 new starters at an induction session at their Lingley Mere headquarters in Warrington.

The group – made up of 34 graduates and 46 apprentices – then went on a five-day residential with the Outward Bound Trust where they will take on team building, problem solving and leadership challenges. All graduates undertake a tailored programme to provide them with the business and technical knowledge required to become future leaders. They benefit from first-class training and support alongside an in-depth understanding of their chosen area and the chance to make a tangible contribution to live projects that are benefiting the entire region. New graduate Georgia Dale, joined the company after completing a master's degree in Chemical Engineering at Manchester University. She is taking up a role as a hydraulics engineer. She said: "I'm really excited to be joining one of the biggest water companies in the country. It's going to be a challenging role but I'm excited by that and to be joining a company that is so diverse."

Among the apprentice group the new starters are taking up positions across the business in roles ranging from process controller and customer advisor to water network technicians, mechanical engineers and laboratory scientist. For the first time, United Utilities has recruited a dedicated cohort of data analysts to support the growth of digital technology in the business. Many have joined the company after attending the first apprenticeship open evening earlier this year, where they had the chance to talk to existing apprentices and find out about life at United Utilities.

Apprentices at United Utilities are able to earn while they learn, studying Apprenticeship Standards which are endorsed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and the Department for Education, while also gaining hands-on experience. They get to work across different areas of the business relevant to their role, and benefit from a variety of personal development opportunities.

Guy Hinnigan, joins as an apprentice mechanical field service engineer and is looking forward to getting out onto sites. He said: "I find wastewater treatment fascinating and I'm looking forward to getting out onto the sites, working with the teams and being in an environment that most people never get to see."

Adrienne McFarland, people director at United Utilities, said: "We're really pleased to welcome our new graduates and apprentices and look forward to working with them."

"They each bring a set of unique skills, experiences and enthusiasm to their role, and we'll be aiding them in their professional development as well as supporting their wellbeing at work throughout their time at United Utilities."

"We're sure they all have bright careers ahead, and we're delighted that they're starting with us at United Utilities, helping to make our region stronger, greener and healthier."

Applications for next year's graduate positions will open later this September, and apprenticeship positions will open in February. Details on all the roles, as well as other career opportunities at United Utilities, will be available at: www.unitedutilities.com/corporate/careers/

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New Town inspiration!

by John Laverick - Warrington & Co

Inspiration is an odd thing. I am not sure if inspiration is something that is given or whether it is taken but wherever you draw inspiration from, one word, idea or action can set off a number of unintended consequences sometimes welcome and sometimes not so welcome events.

Take the creation of New Towns as an example. For those unfamiliar with New Towns or who didn't do geography O level (ask someone over the age of 50!) the New Towns programme was conceived in the late sixties to deliver much needed quality housing outside of the then City Centres. The New Towns themselves are now between 50 and 70 years

old and this should be of interest, as of course Warrington is one of them along with other highlights of town planning such as Crawley, Milton Keynes.

The idea was that the Government would create New Town Development Corporations that would create a modernist utopia to which people would flock, to escape inner city slum

housing and look forward to a brave new utopian future, or something like that.

The reality, well that is still a matter for debate. Bearing in mind that the programme was started over 70 years ago and that they have been reviewed at least four times, it is still not clear if they were a success or not. I have been invited to speak at an event in October to discuss this again and see if we can still learn lessons from their establishment, so the debate still rages. My view, by the way is a qualified yes. The delivery of new homes was I think successful, they are still there and still in demand but the delivery of sustainable neighbourhoods and the shops, leisure and cultural activities that need to sit alongside them are probably only now being realised. Crumbling concrete shopping precincts (not Warrington any more obviously) are often cited as a failure of the programme and led to severe criticism under the Thatcher Government.

So why the connection between inspiration and the New Towns programme, well obviously if you are going to talk about something the first thing you do is google it and the top answer that comes from google is 'Warrington - Runcorn New Town Development Plan - 'Music for a broken concrete utopia'. This believe it or not is electronic music written by



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Gordon Chapman-Fox and inspired by the formation of Warrington and Runcorn New Towns and how the problems of levelling up are still being dealt with today. Not what I was expecting but just goes to show that inspiration is an uncontrollable thing, particularly when you delve a bit deeper and see the amount of cultural and artistic activity that has been inspired by the New Town programme from paintings and photography collections and exhibitions to books and 80's electronica.

Judging by the minutes of the meeting of the Warrington and Runcorn New Town Board in 1968 I am pretty sure that the development of electronic music was not top of their list of outputs. Although if they were to listen to it, they might like it. But I am a bit of a fan of 80's electronic music as I was there the first time.

Hive of activity at one of town centre's most iconic buildings

A Hive of activity is continuing at one of Warrington town centre's most iconic buildings which is being transformed into a shopping mall and state-of-the-art office premises.

The former Co-op building on Sankey Street, now named The Hive WA1, is gradually taking shape with new businesses already or about to open, while phase one of the first-floor office space is nearly fully let. The brainchild of local property developer Neil Trainer the latest business to sign up is Mamars at The Old Bank which is relocating and opening its doors at #TheHiveWA1 on November 6. Described as "Your one-stop shop for all things delicious, including freshly baked bread and selling artisan cheese, meats, deli items, beers, coffee, and wine" Mamars takes pride in using locally sourced, high-quality ingredients and supporting their Community Partners. The premises will have seating for around 35 people, with a capacity of up to 50 for special events and private/community bookings. The Hive WA1 is also specialising in creating bespoke retail spaces and exclusive bars in Warrington, stating "No project is too big for us."

Charlotte Nichols MP Warrington North

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

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Visitors take trip down memory lane as classic car show returns

HUNDREDS of car enthusiasts descended on the annual North West Casual Classic's Car Club event held at the Burtonwood Heritage Centre site at Gulliver's World.

Visitors took a trip down memory lane as North West Casual Classic's Car Club displayed numerous vehicles, including some military vehicles, all of an extremely high standard.

The event also helped boost the number of visitors to the Burtonwood Association Heritage Museum on the site.

The RAF Burtonwood Heritage Centre is situated at Gulliver's World, itself situated on part of the former RAF Burtonwood Airbase.

Admission to the Heritage

Centre is free, as a donation-based charity. The entrance is situated on Gulliver's World car park. The Centre is normally open to the General Public Wednesday to Sunday 2:30 pm until 5.00pm although it is possible to arrange visits outside these hours by prior arrangement. It isn't necessary to go into the Theme Park to gain entrance to the Heritage Centre.

If you are visiting Gulliver's World a visit to the Heritage Centre is included in your entrance fee to the park.





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New CT scanner unveiled at hospital's Emergency Department

A NEW Emergency Computerised Tomography (CT) Department has been officially unveiled to staff and patients visiting Warrington Hospital.

The new £1.9 million CT Department is directly accessed from the hospital's Emergency Department (A&E) to speed up the transfer of patients requiring urgent scans. The scanner equipped with the latest technology makes detailed X-ray imaging available to clinicians 24 hours-a-day, supporting them in making urgent and often life-saving diagnoses.

The new facility was part funded by NHS England who supported the purchase of a new state-of-the-art CT scanner alongside Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals' own capital investment programme. The Trust made it possible to reconfigure the department to accommodate the scanner and provide an improved environment for those undergoing urgent diagnostic scans.

Patients will also benefit from increased privacy as the department has been thoughtfully designed with a two-bed waiting bay with ambient and skylight ceiling lighting in the scanning area to help put patients more at ease.

A computerised tomography (CT) scan uses X-rays to create detailed images of the inside of the body including many structures including internal organs, blood vessels and bones. They can be used to diagnose conditions including damage to

bones, injuries to internal organs and problems with blood flow which may be present in patients experiencing trauma, stroke or some cancers.

When not required for emergency care, the scanner will be used to support the wider radiography and scanning requirements for patients receiving care elsewhere in the hospital.

This CT scanner is one of a series of improvements to improve the experience of patients in the Emergency Department, following the opening of a Same Day Emergency Care Centre in July 2022 and a recent refurbishment of the waiting

and triage areas.

Dan Moore, Chief Operating Officer said: "Our teams have once again demonstrated continued commitment to providing safe care and the best possible experience despite high levels of demand for emergency care and the challenges presented by the physical limitations of some of our older buildings.

"This new CT scanner situated

within the heart of our emergency care services will be a real boost to our capacity to carry out urgent diagnostic tests. Providing our emergency clinicians with timely information to make diagnoses or plan for the next phase of care and treatment for patients will reduce any unnecessary waits in the department. Thank you to everyone involved in delivering this project."



Community groups can apply for funding

COMMUNITY groups across Warrington can apply for funding of up to £5,000 from the Cheshire Police and Crime Commissioner's Community Action Fund.

Commissioner John Dwyer, has reopened the fund and applications can be made until Thursday, November 30.

The Community Action Fund makes £100,000 available for projects which benefit their local community by working towards improving the safety of individuals in the area.

Individual bids of up to £5,000 can be submitted by applicants who are working with their local policing team to address their area's priorities. Applications are welcome from community, voluntary or third sector groups, including parish councils.

Applications to the Community Action Fund must be match-funded to provide the maximum benefit to the area, resulting in the true value of the fund doubling to £200,000.

During the application process, applicants are also asked to name

a contact within their local policing team and local authority or volunteer centre when submitting their form.

There have been a wide range of projects that have already benefitted from the Fund, including youth projects, mini cops and water education sessions to schools across the county. Information about the Community Action Fund, the type of projects that have been supported, and how to apply is available on the Commissioner's website at www.cheshire-pcc.gov.uk

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Jacqueline leads the reader down intriguing false trails

WARRINGTON author **Jacqueline Grima** has been writing from an early age. Her first rejection slip came from a magazine when she was still a teenager.

But she persevered and in 2015 embarked on a creative writing MA at Manchester Metropolitan University, graduating with a distinction as well as the 2018 Janet Beer prize for outstanding contribution.

She has set her new novel "My Daughter's Killer" in her home-town although apart from a reference to Penketh and a marina which could have been inspired by Fiddler's Ferry, makes little use of local landmarks to create atmosphere.

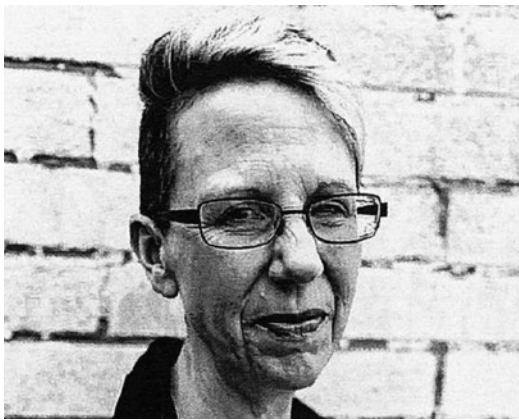
Instead, she leads the reader down a series of intriguing false trails which help to create a sense of mystery, foreboding and menace. Just when you think you have worked out what is going to happen next, she adds another twist to the tale

that keeps you turning the pages.

An unusual writing style, shifting repeatedly from past to present tense, adds to the drama.

At times, the many twists and turns begin to stretch the bounds of credulity, but this does not detract from the enjoyment of a highly original plot.

"My Daughter's Killer" is published by HQ, an imprint of HarperCollinsPublishers.



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LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

Post-Britpop rockers Starsailor help raise £4,300 for Warrington Wolves' Academy tour down under

by Glen Sreeton

AN intimate gig in the 40-20 lounge at the Halliwell Jones Stadium by post-Britpop rockers Starsailor helped raise £4,300 in aid of The Wolves Academy tour of Australia 2024.

Organised by Alex Chicken – Chair of Warrington Wolves Supporters Trust the band generously gave their time to support the Academy tour.

Approximately 280 people thoroughly enjoyed an excellent, short electro-acoustic set of approximately 40 mins although it was originally scheduled for 30, and quite how the band selected the songs from such a huge back catalogue was beyond me, we could have easily been there all night!!

From the moment the band appeared the atmosphere was electric as they were definitely amongst friends and there was little doubt that James Walsh (Lead guitar and vocals), James Stelfox (Bass), Barry Westhead (Keyboards) and Ben Byrne (on Cahon) were 'up for it' as well.

"Good to be here Warrington!" from a smiling James was greeted with the usual whoops of delight from the excited groups of ladies before the band launched into 'Poor Misguided Fool'.

Now, I have seen Starsailor twice before, I recall the last time was probably about three years ago and yet again this highly experienced, professional band was absolutely faultless, had they really been away?

The sound was excellent and just right for this venue as it's not

really a music setting, vocals were pitch perfect, keyboards from Barry were cutting through nicely and even Ben's Cahon and tambourine combo was clearly heard, so kudos to the engineers. After delivering hits 'Alcoholic' and 'Tell me it's not over' James asked people to "close in, fill the gap at the front." Nobody required a second prompt and with plenty of good humour people shuffled forward, quickly claiming a spot to be within touching distance and then we were all in real party mode!

Hit records 'Fever', 'Lullaby' and 'Four to the Floor' followed prior to a short pause to remove the jackets and cool off.

James briefly mentioned the great work of the Warrington Wolves Supporters Trust and how he hoped the band playing would contribute to the Academy tour.

It's always a nice touch when bands talk about their roots and tonight was no exception as James recalled the very early days on the pub circuit in Warrington and how grateful the band were for the support at that time, nearly 23 years ago now!

After a quick tune-up and a few jokes we were on to 'Silence is Easy', a massive hit for the band in 2003 which was delivered with the usual finesse and the audience were

loving this with beaming smiles all around which were reciprocated by the band who were clearly enjoying themselves. This was followed up with 'Tie up my hands' before James commanded the audience with a solo rendition of 'What a Wonderful World'.

It's a fact that some music magazines are full of unique and sometimes unfathomed reviews, but when NME wrote that 'Starsailor are blessed with a singer whose voice thrummed like an emotional telegraph' they were spot on, there was not a dry eye in the house for Louis Armstrong's huge hit.

"Good luck to the Academy on the fundraising and thanks again Warrington, you've been amazing!!" were the final words from James and sadly the show was drawing to a



close with the driving, melodic 'Good Souls' being played for the exuberant audience who had certainly witnessed true musicianship.

However, before Starsailor departed there was one very nice touch remaining from organiser Alex as she presented James (on behalf of the band) with their own framed Starsailor rugby shirt signed by the Warrington Wolves 1st Team.

Post music, a raffle for an additional signed Starsailor commemorative rugby shirt raised a whopping £390 in a humorous 'bidding war' and organiser Alex later reported the evening had raised a further £4300 for the Academy tour, overall a magnificent effort and a very successful evening, well done to everyone involved.



Stepping back to the world of vinyl at Lizard Records

PEOPLE of a certain age (author included), remember the world of vinyl records very well and it appears many younger music fans are returning to it and are clearly enjoying the world of the original (non-digitized) sound in all its glory.

In between extensive festival reporting **Warrington Worldwide** popped along for a chat with owner Steve Davidson aka 'Diddy'.

Next time you are in Warrington town centre or sat in the 9 Gallon real ale pub on Legh St enjoying a quiet pint, why not walk another 20 yards on the left to Lizard Records – keep your eyes peeled, you might not see it but you will hear it!

Crossing the threshold you will be greeted enthusiastically by 'Diddy', you might even recognize him as he has been a DJ since the age of 13 when he helped out at various shows by playing his own 'punk' set at Woolston Leisure Centre and the Cantilever Youth Club and continues to 'spin' records today at many of the festivals in town and beyond. During his time on the road Steve had amassed thousands of singles and albums of various musical genres

to cater for his increasing D.J. spots. To the uninitiated, vinyl records (33 & 45's) can take up a lot of space and probably contain music you might not play again..... ever! Around 2010 -2012 (ish) the music scene was changing quickly and in Steve's own words he was "sick of looking at a huge stack of old Dance and Techno" and took approximately 2000 records to various charity shops around town.

Roll forward to 2014, when Mike Wilkie – current owner of the 9 Gallon pub offered Steve a storage unit for his huge vinyl collection it dawned on him that perhaps he shouldn't have given away all that vinyl after all? Especially as 2 years later in 2016 Steve started officially trading as Lizard Records and had to go to flea markets, boot sales and second hand shops to acquire more stock!!

As a former interior shopfitter Steve knew what was required in his new unit to make it into the authentic 'record shop' style that you see today and being a keen artisan he would love to see more environmentally friendly – second hand quirky traders

in glass & ceramics, clothing, & furniture in the area – a kind of Afflecks Palace in Warrington. When I was there people were bringing in collections of all music genres for Steve to assess, and although he doesn't class himself as a business man he considers his venture more of a community service where you can buy or sell old vinyl, purchase re-issues or browse and have a chat whilst being educated about vinyl by Steve himself. Reader beware though, you will disappear down the rabbit hole, indeed a number of youngsters came in the shop to browse and eventually buy quite

a few vinyl albums and Steve's enthusiasm was boundless, he even got excited about a 1980's carrier bag advertising jeans, that's passion for you.

So, next time you are in the area swing by and smell the vinyl, soak up the atmosphere and tune in to whatever Steve is playing on his excellent sound system, if you have the kids in tow they might even get a lollipop, now you won't get that in any of the corporate stores!

They're open Wednesdays 12pm – 5pm and Thursday-Saturday 10am – 5pm.



Applications now open as Krazy Races Soapbox derby comes to Warrington

IF you fancy living life in the fast lane while having fun raising money for charity it's time to buckle up as Warrington is set to get a little wackier next year as Krazy Races comes to town on Sunday, June 9 2024.

Krazy Races is a free-to-attend soapbox derby event, aiming to bring all manner of wild and zany races to towns and cities across the UK and beyond while raising substantial funds for local charities.

The award-winning soapbox derby event has welcomed over 150,000 visitors and raised over £100,000 for local charities with events across the country and now the event is on the lookout for local, Warrington teams to race in the heart of Warrington town centre.

Warrington Krazy Races is the first of its kind to be held in the town centre. The route will start at the Skittles on Marketgate, with a ramp taking racers down Bridge Street. The racing route will contain chicanes, obstacles and more with racers expected to be cheered on by over 15,000 locals.

As well as fantastic races, Krazy Races is looking to work with local sponsors and businesses to bring together entertainers, food stalls and more, giving families a fantastic day to remember.

Warrington Business Improvement District (BID) approached Sarah Belcher Events Limited, the organisers of Krazy Races, to bring this unique event

to the town after the tremendous success of the previous events, and will be working closely with the events team as headline sponsors.

Sarah Belcher, Founder of Krazy Races, said: "We are so excited to be officially announcing Warrington as a brand new 2024 location. The main feedback from businesses, teams and spectators this year is that everyone needs a bit of fun, some laughs and joy after a very difficult couple of years. Krazy Races will bring that to Warrington in spades!"

"We would like to thank Andrea Morley from Warrington BID, who has worked hard in ensuring this event happens in Warrington. With the support of the BID board and the town centre business community, Warrington BID will be the headline sponsor for the 2024 event. We can't run our free-to-attend events without the support of our amazing sponsors, and we are so grateful and excited to be working with such an enthusiastic team!"

Andrea added: "I've attended this event in various towns and cities across the UK, and it's a great event for all the family to enjoy. I'm excited to be bringing Krazy Races

to Warrington, especially to Bridge Street. We've seen lots of changes to our town centre over the last decade and I'm keen to bring the crowds back to this part of the town.

"We know from experience that the races will bring thousands of spectators to Warrington, and I'm looking forward to our town centre businesses benefitting from new and existing audiences visiting."

Applications for teams to enter open today, with event organisers looking for 20-40 teams to enter the race in a knockout-style competition with multiple trophies. Teams and spectators are encouraged to raise as much money as possible for charity, and later this year, the event will announce its official

Warrington Krazy Races headline charity.

Information on how to enter can be found on the Krazy Races website www.krazyraces.co.uk



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Woolston Eyes and Willow Tit set to benefit from new funding to help endangered species

WARRINGTON'S Woolston Eyes Nature Reserve, home of the rare Willow Tit, is to benefit from new Natural England funding to help support endangered species.

It is one of 63 projects throughout Cheshire, Lancashire and Merseyside awarded a share of £14.5 million to support 150 species recovery across England.

Along with the Willow Tit, some of England's most rare and threatened species – including the large marsh grasshopper, native white-clawed crayfish, lapwings and water Voles – are to be supercharged on the road to recovery thanks to the multi-million-pound grant scheme.

The Species Recovery Programme Grant Scheme supports targeted action to recover our most endangered species. The funding will support efforts to fine-tune habitat conditions for our rarest species, and actions such as propagation, captive rearing, translocations, research and solution-trialling to find the best approaches to enable endangered wildlife to survive and thrive.

England's wildlife is facing extreme pressures – habitat fragmentation, climate change and invasive species have created huge declines, with average species abundance falling by 52%. Numbers of the Duke of Burgundy Butterfly, for example, have declined by some 50% in the last 20 years.

In Warrington, Woolston

Eyes Nature Reserve, a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), has received funding to enable further improvements in habitat management, trialling new techniques which aim to mimic natural processes over extensive areas and to return the population of willow tits to their previous high levels.

Willow tits are currently the fastest declining resident bird species in the UK with a 94% reduction in numbers since 1970. Woolston Eyes SSSI has traditionally been a stronghold for this species with 40 years' worth of monitoring data. Until recently the Reserve regularly supported a population of 25-30 breeding pairs (up to 0.7% of the UK population) but recent ringing data shows an apparent decline to around 17-20 pairs.

The project is being led by Woolston Eyes Conservation Group (WECG), a voluntary organisation that manages the site, which is owned by Peel Ports. The study and conservation of wildlife and habitats within the area will also support species such as soprano pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats, woodcocks and great crested newts.

Amanda Wright, Natural England Nature Recovery Manager

for Cheshire to Lancashire Area Team said: "Woolston Eyes is an amazing site for wildlife, providing a hotspot for so many species across a unique man-made site which is owned by Peel Ports, and supported by the RSPB."

"Woolston Eyes Conservation Group have created a mosaic of habitats across the site and with this funding will be able to support further wildlife benefits, especially for the endangered Willow Tit."

Other projects to receive funding from Natural England in Cheshire,

Lancashire and Merseyside include: Riverthrive by Cheshire Wildlife Trust. The project will create a network of interconnected wetland habitats across the landscape including ponds, reedbeds, riparian habitats and reprofiling canalized river sections.

It will also support the migration of the European eel and other freshwater fish by removing weir and penstock structures and reconnecting the river to its historic channel.



© Francis C. Franklin Wikipedia

Walton Hall and Gardens wins Travellers' Choice award



WARRINGTON'S Walton Hall and Gardens has been awarded yet another Travellers' Choice award from Tripadvisor placing the estate among people's favourites.

The coveted award celebrates businesses that have consistently received great reviews on Tripadvisor over the last 12 months, placing these winners among the top 10% of all listings on Tripadvisor globally.

The estate is currently first on the list of 'Top Attractions' in Warrington, with a recent review stating: "There is so much to see and explore at Walton Hall and Gardens, it's a brilliant place for a family day out. It sits on the Bridgewater Canal with lovely views and canal boats going by and there is a large pay and display car park right outside."

"Entry is free, once inside there is a huge amount of space to explore, including nature trails, woodland walks, duck pond and flower gardens. There is a Children's Zoo with farm animals, a large play area suitable for all ages, and there's also mini Adventure Golf and Pitch 'n' Putt (additional charges for this). There is also the addition of a treetop High Ropes course, a large hall and heritage centre, plus a lovely cafe."

"Many events are held throughout the year, including food fayres and

Christmas events, all of which have been amazing that we've attended. We visit regularly and would highly recommend."

Council leader, Cllr Russ Bowden, said: "I'm delighted to hear that Walton Hall and Gardens continues to be a favourite tourism destination in Warrington."

"The quality and quantity of reviews the estate receives on Tripadvisor is a testament to the hard work of the estate team to ensure that Walton continues to be the jewel in Warrington's crown and remains a popular visitor destination for many years to come."

John Boris, Chief Growth Officer at Tripadvisor, said: "Congratulations to the 2023 Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice winners. The travel resurgence we've seen throughout the past year has even further heightened the competition."

"Earning a Travellers' Choice Award demonstrates that you have provided great experiences to those who matter most – your guests. With changing expectations, continued labour shortages, and rising costs, this is no easy feat, and I am continually impressed with the hospitality industry's resilience and ability to adapt. Cheers to another successful year!"

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- Retailers already on board include: Mamars, Thirst Juice Bar, SJA Clinic, Krapow Thai Kitchen, Brighella, Tank Bar, Pendergast Steakhouse, BG Optics, real5 Estates & Brass Monkey Sports Bar.
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Long-established law firm opens new office

Chambers Fletcher Solicitors has opened a branch office in Stockton Heath, operating from Suite 4, Cambridge House, 16 Walton Road.

Chambers Fletcher, whose head office is in Northwich, is a long established Cheshire law firm with a history dating back to the 1700's.

The firm focuses on a select few areas of law and provides expert advice and guidance in those areas. Senior partner, Peter Wilkinson from Appleton, is an experienced family law solicitor and litigator specialising in all aspects of family law including

divorce, financial settlements and child arrangements.

Partner Stephen Worrall from Lymm is head of the firm's busy property department dealing with both residential and commercial property transactions such as house sales and purchases, remortgages, transfers of equity and also commercial lease matters.

The firm also deals with Wills, Trusts and Probate work and the

setting up of Powers of Attorney. This section of the firm is headed by partner Daniele Marks.

Peter Wilkinson comments "It's fair to say that Chambers Fletcher has stood the test of time with a very long and proud history of providing high street legal services from its office in Northwich and the partners are excited and delighted

to now be expanding the firm into South Warrington to make our services more accessible to the people and businesses of the local area."

To contact Chambers Fletcher call 01925 359005 or send an email to info@chambersfletcher.co.uk



Stephen Worrall



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Pumpkin picking at Primrose Hill



A Pumpkin Picking extravaganza is taking place at Primrose Hill Nurseries at High Legh near Lymm every weekend during October.

Special events are also taking place on Friday evenings from 5pm-9pm and during half-term October 23-31.

As well as plenty of pumpkins there will be Halloween themed lunches at the on site cafe, a

Halloween Trail, an opportunity to paint your pumpkins, face painting, photo opportunities and free parking!

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Relaunch for festival for creatives

A FESTIVAL which has been providing a platform for Warrington creatives for more than a decade is set for a relaunch next year.

Culture Warrington's annual Contemporary Arts Festival has previously been held in the autumn but will be moving to springtime next year and going forwards.

This is to unlock more funding opportunities for the event which could see it grow in the future, develop its outdoor programme and position the festival at time of year when there will be more venue and staff resources to support it.

Warrington Contemporary Arts Festival (WCAF) is a multi-venue event which champions all artforms as well as providing a springboard

for emerging creatives and new work.

It is probably best known for presenting Luke Jerram's awe-inspiring Museum of the Moon at Parr Hall and the 'Light Night' in Queens Gardens.

Each year, the festival also supports emerging artists of every discipline with the Open Exhibition.

However, to provide a stopgap and an offering for WCAF audiences in the meantime, there will still be a small-scale festival between September and November this year under the banner 'WCAF

Presents'.

This will encompass theatre productions, contemporary dance, exhibitions and even aerial dance theatre.

Leah Biddle, Cultural Manager for Culture Warrington, said: "We'd like to take this opportunity to thank all our artists, supporters and audiences for helping to make WCAF a success as we enter our next chapter."

"We're busy working on our programme for spring 2024 and we're excited about the opportunities for growing the festival which lay ahead. But we also felt it was important to maintain a presence this year and we're doing just that with 'WCAF Presents' - a diverse collection of events which really showcases what we do, just on a smaller scale. We hope you can join us."

WCAF Presents includes:

- Identities, Pyramid, 22 and 23 September - Co-created with women who have lived experience of breast cancer and those who treat them, Rae Bell's Identities unclasp the hidden adventures our boobs go on.
- Tony Green: Scribble, Warrington Museum, from 29 September - Warrington's own renowned fashion illustrator will be showcasing his playful and energetic style which has seen him work with brands like Selfridges, Prada and Adidas.
- Wired Aerial Theatre: Me vs Me, Pyramid, 3 October - This bungee assisted dance

performance focuses on mental wellbeing. There will also be opportunities for school students to meet the company and discuss pathways into the creative industries.

- ADHD The Musical, Pyramid, 13 October - A wonderful mix of storytelling, facts and showtunes exploring what it is like to have ADHD in a world designed for the neurotypical brain.
 - When You Light A Candle, You Also Cast A Shadow, Pyramid, 11 November - This unique performance includes a trio of dancers and a live string quintet in a moving show that celebrates the natural world amid warning about the climate crisis.
 - Scratch Night, Pyramid, 16 November - Our popular Scratch Night returns providing a friendly and open platform for works in progress where artists can seek audience feedback and peer review.
 - Pete Regan: We're All Alone In This Together, Warrington Museum, from 24 November - This exhibition ponders Warrington's future following the closures of iconic giants Fiddler's Ferry and Unilever and the dusk of the town's industrial heritage.
- WCAF Presents launches on 22 September and runs until 24 November. Warrington Contemporary Arts Festival returns in spring 2024. Visit <https://wcaf.culturewarrington.org>



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Families can explore their ancestry and heritage thanks to a free genealogy service

A NEW family history service has been launched to help Warrington people delve into the past and unlock the mysteries of their ancestry.

Experts will be on hand from Warrington Family History Society on a monthly basis and can be found at Warrington Archives, inside Central Library in Museum Street.

Working alongside Culture Warrington, the friendly volunteers can give free advice to anyone, from beginners who want to look into their family tree but don't know where to start, to experienced researchers who have hit a brick wall and don't know how to get past it.

In recent years, programmes such as 'Who Do You Think You Are?' and 'DNA Journey' have helped increase interest in genealogy across the UK.

And now it couldn't be easier for people to make their own discoveries as the Warrington Family History Society team have access to billions of electronic records as well as a vast array of original historic documents held in Warrington's Archives.

The service has been rolled out after the success of similar schemes at Penketh Library and Lymm Library.

Philip Jeffs, Culture Warrington's Archives Officer, said: "People who come to the help desks have all sorts of questions. Sometimes

they are just curious about where they come from and what their ancestors' lives were like.

"Other times, they have very specific questions such as what their grandfather's role was during the First World War or where their grandmother was born.

"A lot of people who come to the help desks just have one nagging question about their family history that they just haven't been able to answer and it's fantastic when we're able to help them make a breakthrough.

"Between them, the volunteers from Warrington Family History Society have a lifetime of knowledge in the field and have probably come across every problem a researcher might meet."

Over the years, these enthusiastic and tenacious researchers have discovered all sorts of weird and wonderful facts.

Philip added: "Might your ancestor have been a juggler at the Gaiety Theatre? Or a war hero at the Battle of the Somme? Was your great grandfather arrested for stealing apples on Warrington Market, or rewarded for saving a drowning child from the River Mersey?"

"Did your family come to Warrington to escape the potato

famine in Ireland, or have they lived here hundreds of years? The possibilities are endless and Warrington Archives can help you start your journey into your family's past.

"The stories you uncover can help to show how your family has become what it is today through all the hardships and the joys and highs and the lows your ancestors experienced through time."

The family history service will be at Warrington Archives on the following Saturdays between 10am

and midday – 23 September, 21 October and 25 November – with more dates to be announced.

Visitors do not have to book in, but are encouraged to email searchroom@culturewarrington.org in advance where they are welcome to send details of their enquiry before the meeting.

People who are not from Warrington are also welcome to attend as the team have access to vast collections of online records covering the whole of the UK.



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Football club to host fundraiser for young fan battling cancer for a second time

WARRINGTON Town Football Club is hosting a special fundraising event to support a young fan battling a rare cancer for a second time.

The club is helping raise money to support the "most amazing family," who are yet again going through such a heart-breaking time with a special event on October 7th at 7 p.m. with the chance of winning a signed Warrington Wolves shirt.

For any family having to go through cancer once is traumatising enough but to go through it a second is just heart-breaking.

Callum's cancer had come back.

Callum, aged 15, who is a big fan of Warrington Town and Warrington Wolves, has a rare genetic condition called neurofibromatosis, where tumours attach themselves to nerves in the body.

Most of the time his tumours are benign, however, they can turn malignant. When he was 10-years-

old he had a large tumour which was growing rapidly in his neck, this was removed and doctors told the family the heartbreaking news it was cancerous.

He underwent chemotherapy and proton beam therapy to treat the tumour and rang the bell for the end of treatment on his 11th birthday. He was also diagnosed with a brain tumour in 2016 which doctors said was a low-grade glioma and due to its location, the

tumour cannot be removed.

In 2016, Callum had an operation to relieve pressure in the brain and had no issues until earlier this year.

Despite the setbacks, the football and rugby mad Callum tries to keep a positive mindset.

Tickets for the "Bongo Bingo" event at Cantilever Park can be ordered online via <https://callumfightforcancer.co.uk/>



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Warrington Wolves confirm six end of season departures



WARRINGTON Wolves have confirmed the departures of six first-team players when their current contracts expire at the end of the season.

Peter Mata'utia, Daryl Clark, Thomas Mikaele, Greg Minikin, Jack Darbyshire and Aiden Doolan will all leave the club.

Mata'utia joined Warrington Wolves at the start of the 2022 season and has made 54 appearances for the Wire to date. He has played a big role off the field too, forming an integral part of our leadership group over the last two seasons.

Minikin also joined at the start of last season and showed his commitment and dedication to overcome an ACL injury before making his debut last July. He's made 20 appearances for the club to date.

It was confirmed earlier this year that hooker Clark will leave the club to join St Helens. The no.9

has made 240 appearances in primrose and blue, scoring 51 tries. He famously scored the decisive try in our 2019 Challenge Cup Final win over Saints where he also picked up the Lance Todd trophy for a man-of-the-match display.

Clark led out the team as captain in his final home game against St Helens which sadly ended in defeat 6-18.

Mikaele rejoined the club last month on a short-term deal and has made 23 appearances across his two spells with the Wire. He will return to Australia at the end of the year.

Academy graduates Jack Darbyshire and Aiden Doolan will also depart for new opportunities in 2024.

The Wolves would like to thank all of their departing players for their effort and commitment during their time with the Wire and wish them all the best in their next chapters.



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Wire appoint Ryan O'Brien as club's Head of Youth



WARRINGTON Wolves have announced that Ryan O'Brien has been appointed as the club's new Head of Youth.

O'Brien joined the club earlier this year as Head Coach of the Scholarship and Reserves sides. He has made a big impact with Academy players who have secured their play-offs spot winning nine of their 11 fixtures this season.

He will oversee the club's whole youth department, under the leadership of new Director of Rugby Gary Chambers, with the overarching vision of developing the pathway for more homegrown talents progressing to first team level.

Ryan said: "I'm very proud that people at the club have put their trust in me to do such an important job."

"The club has expressed its commitment to producing more homegrown players because we believe that is the way to sustain success.

"Right the way through the pathway there's exceptional talent coming through. There's players on the cusp of first team who have already had some experience - the likes of Lucas Green, Leon Hayes and Adam Holroyd. We've got a really good crop in the Academy, too, and some of those players have been recognised in the England, Lancashire and Yorkshire programmes lately. In our Scholarship programme there's an abundance of potential there as well."

"There's no better feeling than going on that journey with a player and seeing them fulfil their dream of becoming a first team player. Hopefully we can produce more of them over the coming years."

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By David Watkinson

Tax Payable on Gifts and Entertainment

As we are now approaching the season of goodwill we thought that we would look at the tax payable on business gifts and entertainment.

1. Gifts

A gift is something that is given voluntarily to a person without receiving anything in exchange, or without any expectation of receiving something in return. Free samples to potential customers is advertising and are deductible. It could also be something supplied at less than the cost, when the gift is the difference between the cost to the trader and the selling price. Again, discounts such as a baker selling off fresh bread at the end of the day is not a gift as it a normal trading.

Generally, the cost of business gifts is not an allowable deduction against business profits for tax purposes. However, there are a number of exceptions to this rule.

Firstly, gifts which contain a conspicuous advertisement for the trader are deductible provided that:

- It is not food, drink, tobacco or a voucher exchangeable

for goods, or

- The total costs of gifts other than the above to the same person in any tax period does not exceeds £5

A common example of an allowable gift is a diary, pen or mousemat

Secondly, gifts to employees are deductible provided that the gift is not also provided to others (but see below concerning tax incurred by employees).

Thirdly, gifts to charities are deductible provided that it is wholly and exclusively for the purposes of the trade.

2. Entertainment

Entertainment is defined as the provision of free or subsidised hospitality. This can include, for example, food and drink, hotels or other accommodation, sporting events and facilities, theatre and concert tickets, and entry to clubs and nightclubs.

Whether a trader can claim tax relief on the cost of providing entertainment depends on to whom they are providing that entertaining.

If they are entertaining an

employee of the business, and the entertainment relates to their work, then the cost of providing that entertainment can be claimed as a deduction for tax purposes. However, if they are entertaining anyone else, such as a customer or supplier, then the cost of that entertainment cannot be claimed as an expense against taxable profits.

An employee is essentially someone on the payroll and being paid a salary. It does not include former employees, subcontractors or shareholders who do not work within the business. It also does not include a sole trader or a partner in a partnership.

If it is a mixed event for both customers and employees then the deductibility depends on the primary purpose. If that is to entertain customers but some staff are attending then the whole of the cost is not deductible. If it is to entertain staff but some customers are in attendance then the cost must be apportioned between deductible and non-deductible.

3. Tax Payable By Employees

Whilst a trader may be able to claim a tax deduction on



Margaret Black and David Watkinson

the cost of providing gifts or entertainment to employees, the employees would need to pay tax on the "benefits" unless the total costs of gifts received is less than £50 or the entertainment is a "qualifying event". A qualifying event is one which is:

1. An annual event such as a Xmas party or summer BBQ, and which is
2. Open to all staff, and which (in total with previous qualifying events in the same tax year attended by that employee)
3. Has a cumulative cost of less than £150.

The cost of the qualifying event which takes the cumulative cost above £150 is wholly taxable as well as all future events in that tax year. So do not attend an annual BBQ in July costing £30 followed by the Xmas party in December costing £130!

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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Yellows part ways with number one



WARRINGTON Town have parted company with goalkeeper Tony Thompson by mutual consent.

Thompson, 28, made 50 appearances for the Yellows last season in their Northern Premier League campaign that ended in promotion.

He started the National League North season as number one, keeping three clean sheets in six appearances, but was then absent from the club's next three games.

That had led to some speculation surrounding his future, with the club now revealing his exit.

A statement said: "After being left out of the starting team for the trip to Brackley Town recently, he expressed his unhappiness at the decision and wanted to be in a position where he was playing every week.

"Both parties have therefore agreed to a termination to enable Thompson to explore opportunities elsewhere.

"The club would like to thank Thompson for his contribution to bringing National League football to the town and wish him well for the future."

The only game Thompson missed last season was through

the suspension handed to him for his controversial red card in the FA Trophy defeat to Guiseley, which resulted in national headlines over a visiting supporter urinating in his water bottle.

Formerly with Altrincham, Thompson's arrival was seen as a coup last summer following Altrincham's decision to go full-time, which resulted in the departures of several players.

What turned out to be Thompson's last game for the Yellows was the 4-1 home defeat to Curzon Ashton.

Dan Atherton, who returned to the club in the summer after a season away, started with defeats away at Brackley and Banbury, either side of the gripping 3-3 draw at home to Spennymoor Town.

Despite the scorelines, Atherton shone in each of those fixtures. He was an ever present in the 2021/22 season as the Yellows lost to Scarborough in the play-off final, before he moved on to the Welsh Premier League and then Hyde United.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LICENSING ACT 2003: NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is hereby given that I Jack Peter Critchley have made an application for the Grant of a New Premises Licence at 2nd floor & Terrace, 122-126 Bridge Street, Warrington, WA1 2RU on 15th September 2023 to Warrington Borough Council for the following licensable activities: Live Music, Recorded Music & Provision of Late Night Refreshment (Indoors & Outdoors) & Sale of Alcohol (On & Off Sales) Sunday to Wednesday 10.00 - 23.30 & Thursday to Saturday 10.00 - 00.30. Opening Hours Sunday to Wednesday 10.00 - 00.00 & Thursday to Saturday 11.00 - 01.00.

Representations to this application must be made in writing by the end of 13th October 2023 to the Licensing Section, Warrington Borough Council, Town Hall, Sankey Stret, Warrington, WA1 1UH. The register of licensing applications can be inspected at the above address between 09.00 and 16.00 Monday to Friday or at www.warrington.gov.uk

It is an offence on summary conviction, to knowingly or recklessly make a false statement in connection with an application. (18/10/23)

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