

Culcheth Life

Magazine

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Maximus is a winner!

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Editor's Comment

THE Local elections at borough and parish level were in full swing as Culcheth Life went to press - and whatever the outcomes there will be some new faces following several prominent retirements.

We will report on the full outcomes in next month's edition - along with coverage of this year's Culcheth Community Day on Bank Holiday Monday - let's keep our fingers crossed we get no rainfall!

If you can't wait to find out the election results, we will be putting them all online as soon as possible, although results are not expected until Saturday afternoon for the borough and Sunday for the parish.

At parish level some elections have been uncontested, most notably at Winwick where six independent candidates will be elected unopposed.

This is almost unprecedented and could become a worrying trend, with mainstream parties now struggling to find candidates willing to stand.

A lot of this is down to the fact many people unwilling to put themselves forward and into the firing line of the toxic world of politics.

It's no coincidence that three senior Cllrs. who have decided to stand down, have all been victims of online abuse and trolling.

Locally the Lib Dems have been unable to field one single candidate, following a national policy of focusing on their heartlands.

With many people being turned off politics I fear apathy could win the day.

Meanwhile, to those who have put themselves forward to represent their local areas, good luck and there is every chance you will need thick skin.

My advice, as a former Cllr. at Appleton, distance yourself from the national scene and just represent your area to the best of your ability focusing on local issues - and don't get drawn into online battles!

While social media is a necessary evil to get elected - it could also be your downfall!

Borough Election Candidates:

Culcheth Glazebury & Croft

Allen Valerie Margaret (Conservative)

Benson Carol Ruth (Conservative)

Edwards Alicia (Conservative)



Johnson Neil (Labour)

Seddon Janet Elizabeth (Labour)

Smith Matthew Philip (Labour)

Burtonwood & Winwick

Burgess Kevin (Labour)

Carr Siobhan Maureen (Labour)

Gardiner Stewart Anthony

(Conservative)

Mann Stuart David (Independent)

Murray Theresa-Jane (Independent)

Wheeldon Maddison Stacey (Green)

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issue of Culcheth Life
is May 21**



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Fantastic turnout for Parkinson's afternoon teas fundraiser event

AN afternoon cream teas fundraiser at the Raven Inn, Glazebury, in support of Parkinson's UK, proved to be a great success ahead of World Parkinson's Day.

As well as a good fundraiser, it provided a valuable opportunity to exchange knowledge, contacts and experience of living with Parkinson's.

The organiser, Peter Sturman, said: "The primary idea for this event was to provide a complementary afternoon tea for people living with Parkinson's.

With plates full of sandwiches, gallons of tea & coffee and enough homemade cakes to feed an army, the Raven certainly did that.

Parkinson's manifests itself in different ways with different people.

This was an ideal opportunity for people living with Parkinson's and their carers, to effectively network. To talk about and share their experiences.

Generally, the partner of a person living with Parkinson's becomes their carer. It was so important to include everyone at the event. Partners deal with this together.

Someone is diagnosed with Parkinson's, in the UK, every two

hours. It is a sobering thought to consider that, during the course of the afternoon tea, six more people will have been diagnosed.

A raffle was also launched, with the World Parkinson's Day.

Prizes included a three-course meal for two @ The Raven.

Peter said: "Thank you to the Raven for hosting this charity event, thank you to all the volunteers who worked so tirelessly, thank you to the fantastic cake bakers, thank you to the member of the Raven Management Committee for sponsoring it.

"Most of all, thank you to everyone who came along, on a day when the awful weather did not encourage any of us to leave our homes.

"The beauty of the Raven is that it is many things to many people.

"For this event, it was 100% a community pub. Not just providing a venue, but actively working with and for our community."

The fundraising initiative was inspired by 'Cindy's Story.'



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Residents hope for positive change after independents set to take all six uncontested seats at Winwick

IN what is believed to be a first in the history of Winwick, if not the whole of Warrington, SIX Independent candidates will hold every single seat on the Parish Council after May 2nd.

After an uncontested election, Stuart Mann, Theresa Murray, Emma Lavender, James Herron, Margaret Steen, and Andy Griffiths will proudly represent the community where they live. James and Andy were already existing independent councillors on the council.

Describing themselves as the "Super Six" the Independents see their initiative as a 'catalyst' for positive change for both the Peel Hall and Winwick wards of the parish and feel they now have a chance to forge a better deal in a host of issues ranging from improving poor community facilities to tightening control of unsympathetic planning issues and over development of green spaces.

Winwick resident Stuart Mann, who has recently announced that he will also be standing as an Independent for a seat as a borough councillor in the Burtonwood and Winwick ward, explained: "We are all really close friends who care so much about where we live. We have already done a great deal together to support our communities. We support the Peel Hall Campaign

Group and are part of the speed watch team, the gardening group, the Christmas tree crew as well as the Winwick litter network.

"Our passion is Winwick & Peel Hall so it was a lovely coincidence that we all decided to stand as Independents, and for us to gain all six seats is absolutely amazing.

"We cannot be more proud and committed to respect and represent the views of our friends and most importantly the needs of our Parish for the next four years. James, and latterly Andy, are returning councillors, and we look forward to expanding on the work they have started in reconnecting the Parish Council to the community."

He added: "Margaret has been a stalwart Peel Hall campaigner for decades. Over the years, Margaret and I have represented the concerns of residents at the many Planning Inspectorate Public Inquiries. Whilst at a national level, we may have varying political ideals, we stood as Independents because we all firmly believe that our parish councils should be apolitical and reflect the broad church of views that all residents of Peel Hall and Winwick

may hold.

"After all, it's the same play areas our children use, the same parish green spaces that need tending and the same neighbourhoods impacted by Local Plan developments with little improvement to our fragile road network or services".

Stuart concluded: "Winwick and Peel Hall residents have often said they felt left out or forgotten.

"We have NOW changed that set-up and hope the people of Winwick and Peel Hall will support us as we venture into a whole new Independent community focussed parish council."

Meanwhile, there are also contested Parish elections in Croft and in two wards of Culcheth and

Glazebury Parish Council.

At Croft, Southworth ward, the following candidates have been elected unopposed:

Valerie Allen, Carol Benson, Philip Sharpe, Sue Ward (Conservative), Caroline Bower, Norman Partington (Labour).

At Culcheth and Glazebury, Culcheth ward, elected unopposed: Valerie Allen, Carol Benson, Paul Campbell, Les Turner (Conservative), Christine Smith (Labour).

Newchurch Ward: Ben Alldred (Labour), Neil Johnson (Labour), Steve Fleming (Conservative).

The results of contested elections were not known when **Culcheth Life** went to press.



Wellbeing Festival to return – bigger and better

THE Cheshire Wellbeing Festival is returning to Partridge Lakes, Culcheth.

It will offer exclusive deals, nourishing food and drink options, enlightening workshops and inspiring talks to uplift the mind, body and spirit.

The event in Glaziers Lane, Culcheth, will take place on Sunday, May 26 from 10am to 3pm and follows the successful festival held last August.

A spokesperson said: "Whether you're looking to delve into spirituality or simply seeking some positivity in your life, this event has something special for everyone.

"It will prioritise self-care and holistic health in an enriching environment.

"We got fantastic feedback following last year's event so we are bringing it back – bigger and better.

"There will be a wide range of vendors offering free advice and taster experiences."

The event takes place in a beautiful lakeside setting and will bring together numerous businesses and services from across the region.

Entry costs £5, but under 16's go free.





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Revitalised community pub The Raven appoints new general manager

REVITALISED community pub The Raven, at Glazebury has appointed a new general manager.

Jon Pattullo was selected from an experienced field of candidates and has extensive experience in the hospitality trade.

He has been in the business 30 years, working in restaurants, small pubs and larger establishments.

Widnes born and bred, he is very well-travelled in his career and was previously general manager at a 30 bedroom inn in North Yorkshire.

He said: "I'm looking forward to building on the success of the Raven. It is important that we do not rest on our laurels. The Raven is a fantastic pub and the team will drive it forward."

"I will put all my experience and energy into ensuring the Raven continues to go from strength to strength."



Raven spokesperson Peter Sturman said: "This is an important time for the Raven. Having someone of Jon's experience and background will definitely help to keep the Raven ahead of the game."

"As Jon says, there is no time to rest on our laurels. More than 500 pubs closed their doors for good last year."

"The British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA) has disclosed new data which reveals that 750 pubs are set to close in the first half of 2024, in UK. That is almost 30 pubs a week."

At a time when pubs are struggling, as purse strings tighten, the importance of community pubs really comes to the fore.

"The Raven offers a warm friendly place for people to meet, natter over a drink and possibly also a bite to eat. We provide opportunity for community led activities such as gardening, rambling and cycling groups, run by local members and open to everyone."

"There have already been thousands of pounds raised for charitable causes, hosted and supported by the Raven. If you have a community based idea you would like to take forward. Please contact the Raven."



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Author David Costa meets up with top screenwriter

LOCAL author David Costa – the pen-name of former councillor Paul Campbell – met up with a top screenwriter on a recent visit to Belfast.

The pair had plenty to talk about as screenwriter Declan Law's popular TV drama "Blue Lights" which has just started a second series on BBC-1 and Paul's David Reece SG9 Black Ops trilogy, both deal with policing in Northern Ireland.

Declan was a former investigative

journalist and Paul was a police officer who spent many years working in counter-terrorism so they both have plenty of background knowledge to add realism to their writing.

In more recent years Paul has served as a Warrington borough councillor and as a parish councillor

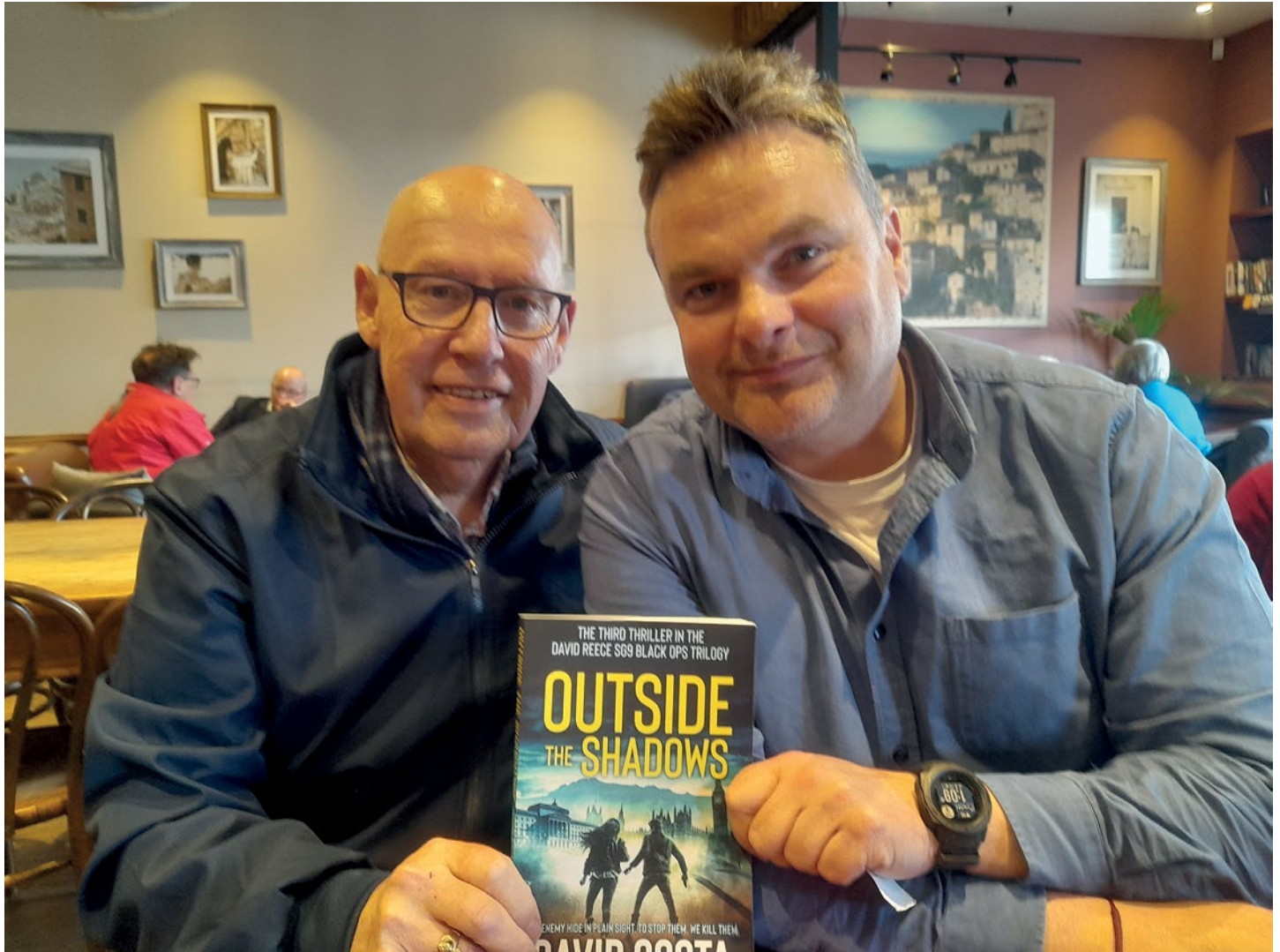
in both Culcheth and Croft. But he has many memories of his years in the police which enable him to give his thrillers plenty of authenticity.

He said: 'It was great to catch up with Declan and to present him with signed copies of my books which I hope he enjoys. I also congratulated him on his wonderful work on the BBC series and the news that the BBC has signed up for two more series of the cop

show. "

Paul's trilogy – "Tested by Fire", "Outside the Shadows" and "Light of the Sun" are all available from Amazon, both as paperbacks and as e-books.

They all appear under the name David Costa – and if you wonder where he got the name from, it came to him while he was enjoying a drink in a certain coffee shop!



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Unemployed man sets himself up as a clairvoyant to make money

AN unemployed man sets himself up as a clairvoyant in a bid to make some money – and finds himself attracting the attention of MI5.

They, along with Russia and America, want to use his skills to contact a scientist who died possessing secrets they all need.

What could possibly go wrong? This unlikely scenario forms the plot of Culcheth Players' next production, "Give us a Sign", a comedy written by Tony Domaille which will be staged over two weekends at Newchurch Parish Hall Friday and Saturday May 10 and 11 and 17 and 18.

Performances will start at 7.30pm with doors opening at

7pm.

Rehearsals have already provided the cast with plenty of laughs and they are confident the show will have audiences laughing too.

Tickets can be purchased online at ticketsource.co.uk at £7.50 (booking fee applies) or on the door at £8 (cash only).

Culcheth Players are seeking support to help keep live theatre alive in the village.

They say the play is suitable for older children.

Probus Club to hear all about volcanoes

MEMBERS of Culcheth Probus Club will hear a talk on "Volcanoes" at their meeting on Wednesday, May 8.

The speaker will be Peter Webb, who has previously spoken at a club meeting, when his subject was "Why Earthquakes Happen" and proved to be entertaining and informative.

The club's meetings are held monthly, on the second Wednesday of the month at the Culcheth Village Club.

Other recent talks have included "Prisoner lives in Strangeways Prison" by a senior prison officer, which gave the history of the

prison, together with the many changes and requirements in prison procedures which have occurred over the years.

The talk was illustrated with many surprising anecdotes of prisoners actions.

On June 12 the talk will be "My Life in Crime" by Simon Michael a retired barrister and future talks will include "Lucky Hitler", "The High Peak Dambusters", "The Making of Manchester" and many others.

Prospective members are welcome to attend the meetings. For further details please contact Barrie on 763785 or Rick on 766754.



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All set for Culcheth Community Day

CULCHETH Community Day takes place on Bank Holiday Monday, May 6 from 12 noon until 4pm.

Organisers say it will provide a great family day out on the village green, while providing a fund raising opportunity for registered charitable organisations.

A whole host of activities will

include Childrens rides, childrens entertainer, displays, pet show and tractor/motor bikes on display.

Unfortunately for reasons beyond the control of organisers there will not be any classic cars this year.



New £24m fire resistance testing laboratory nearing completion

A NEW £24m fire resistance testing laboratory is nearing completion at Warrington's Birchwood Technology Park.

Four out of a planned seven state-of-the-art fire resistance testing furnaces are already installed.

In August last year, Warringtonfire, the UK's leading testing and certification provider, announced it was building a brand new 101,000sqft facility.

This significant investment enables Warringtonfire, part of the global Element Materials Technology (Element) group, to expand capacity and meet increasing demand for fire resistance testing of critical fire safety products and systems, such as fire doorsets, intumescent coatings for steel protection, and other passive fire protection solutions.

Ten months into Warringtonfire's projected 17-month build programme, four furnaces have been fitted and are ready to enter the commissioning phase shortly. The furnaces will be supported by a raft of technology to carefully manage air quality both during and after the testing process.

This includes new air handling and high-performance ventilation systems, as well as cold smoke and hot smoke extraction systems, ensuring a better working environment for employees and compliance with strict environmental regulations. To support this, specialists from Element undertook an extensive Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) involving acoustics and noise modelling, air quality dispersion modelling, and emissions monitoring.

By the laboratory's open date, scheduled for January, two vertical furnaces, two horizontal furnaces, and one indicative furnace will be ready to accept test specimens. Another two furnaces, one horizontal and one vertical, will be installed by the end of 2026. In total, this will represent

an 80 per cent increase in testing capacity over Warringtonfire's current site at Holmesfield Road, Warrington. Following the opening of the Birchwood Park laboratory, the existing facility will become a centre of excellence for reaction to fire testing, which are smaller scale tests including spread of flame and heat release.

Dafydd Llewelyn-Jones, project manager for Element Materials Technology, has been coordinating the laboratory's construction.

He said: "We are on track with our progress and are actually seven weeks ahead of schedule in terms of the furnaces themselves. We are now moving swiftly along to fitting out all the office areas and control rooms, commissioning the building services, and completing the test bay preparation areas."

"It is brilliant to see this project coming together. We have put a significant amount of money into making this new laboratory truly one of the best in Europe, if not the world."

Besides the investment into furnaces, Warringtonfire is committed to reducing the laboratory's carbon footprint and making the new site as sustainable as possible. Measures include energy-efficient fans, upgraded power supply transformers that consume minimal electricity when idle, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure including a fleet of EV forklifts and charging points.

The site will also be well lit, through a combination of natural light from skylights and LED lighting that delivers a high lux level. In addition, the laboratory is set up to accept a blend of clean hydrogen and natural gas once local infrastructure offers this service.

For more information about Warringtonfire's new site, the latest updates or to book for 2025, please visit www.warringtonfire.com/about-warringtonfire/warrington-site-relocation-and-expansion



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"Growing together at the heart of God's community"

Maximus is a Grand National winner for great grandma Linda – in more ways than one

WHEN joint favourite “I am Maximus” romped home as 7-1 winner in the Grand National it drew a particularly loud cheer from one local family.

For great grandma Linda Miller, 79, of Winwick, had decided to “have a flutter” on the eight-year-old Irish horse because her great-grandson had been born four days previously – and named Maximus.

She said: “Maximus is Latin for ‘greatest’ – so I had a feeling the horse would win.”

The Grand National horse won by a comfortable seven-and-a-half lengths, but in the early stages of the race had not looked a likely winner.



But after the final jump he steamed into the lead – and Linda’s “flutter” won her £160.

“We were all very excited – a big cheer went up in our house.”

Linda’s granddaughter Charlotte Caple, from Lowton near Warrington, gave birth to Maximus on April 9. She has always liked Roman names – her first son, now aged five, was named Vincent.

Maximus weighed in at 9lb 3 ounces and mother and baby are now both doing well.

There was another omen that helped convince Linda she was on to a winner.

Maximus was born on April 9 – the same birth date as Liverpool soccer legend Robbie Fowler, who has invested in several racehorses through his company The Macca and Growler Partnership, most notably 2003 Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Celebration Chase runner-up Seebald.

He set up the company with his former team mate and long-time friend Steve McManaman.

And as the family are big Reds fans they felt they couldn’t really lose on their Grand National punt.



Birchwood Park donates £10k to local charity as it confirms new community donation partner

BIRCHWOOD Park has announced its successful fundraising efforts over the last 12 months, with a total donation of £10,000 made to the Walton Lea Partnership for the second consecutive year, ending the two-year fundraising partnership with just over £20,000 raised in total.

The Walton Lea Partnership specialises in empowering young people and vulnerable adults with learning disabilities through various activities and learning opportunities. In 2023, Birchwood Park supported the charity’s fundraising efforts through a series of engaging events and challenges, including the annual DuckFest and five-a-side tournament.

As the new year unfolds, Birchwood Park has voted Esther Ghey’s recently established community interest company, Peace & Mind UK, to be the Park’s official donation partner for 2024.

Martin O’Rourke, Commercial Director of Birchwood Park, commented: “We’re dedicated to making a meaningful impact in the local community which is why the Park team gets together to choose a local cause to support. Over the past two years, our partnership with the Walton Lea Partnership has allowed us to witness first-hand the positive changes our contributions have facilitated, and we wish them well with the hope of working together closely in the near future.”

Peace & Mind UK is a Birchwood

based community interest company founded by Esther Ghey in memory of her daughter, Brianna. Peace & Mind UK aims to support schoolchildren with their mental health, carrying forward Brianna’s legacy through impactful initiatives.

Esther Ghey, founder of Peace & Mind UK, shared her thoughts: “I’m absolutely delighted that Peace & Mind UK is named Birchwood Park’s donation partner for the year.”

“I have been overwhelmed with the support, kindness and community that our family has received from staff across the park since Brianna was taken from us. I’m proud to be part of the park and can’t wait to get involved in the amazing challenges and competitions.”

Martin O’Rourke added: “The team felt strongly about voting Peace & Mind as Birchwood Park’s donation partner, as we all felt compelled to support Esther who has already raised tens of thousands for students most in need of wellbeing support. We’re looking forward to driving fundraising efforts this year in Brianna’s memory, via a lineup of fundraising activities already in the pipeline, to give occupants and visitors alike the opportunity to support such a good cause.”

To stay updated on Birchwood Park’s fundraising activity and upcoming events, visit parklife.birchwoodpark.co.uk



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Rain stopped play - before the cricket season even started!

IT was a case of rain stopped play for Glazebury Cricket Club - even before the cricket season had started.

In common with all other clubs across Cheshire, Glazebury had struggled to get their Hurst Lane ground ready for the scheduled first match on April 20 because of the extremely wet winter and spring.

But in the event, the Cheshire Cricket League delayed the start of the season until the following week.

Glazebury's ground has been notorious for waterlogging at the start of the season for many years, despite the club spending considerable sums to try and improve the drainage.

So it was no surprise when Glazebury, in common with a number of other clubs, decided to cancel the April 27 fixture as well.

New 1st team captain Sean Caine (pictured right) said: "Our square was looking amazing - almost ready to go. But the outfield was still a wet, boggy mess. It was almost completely submerged for five or six weeks. I have never seen it so wet in the last 25 years."

It proved impossible to get the outfield cut nor get the heavy roller on to the square.

But it was hoped that the ground would be fit on May 4.

The league's position was that the season must officially commence on April 27 due to the difficulty in adopting an alternative proposition without creating further problems

down the line.

They decided any match unable to take place on the April 27 due to the "fitness and safety of the ground for play", should be treated as cancelled (6 points to each team) in accordance with league rules.

Home team groundsmen were said to have a key part to play in assessing whether a ground was fit to play as they had an on-going responsibility to prepare the ground for the entire season.

Team captains were told that no undue pressure was placed on umpires or groundsmen in their understandable desire to play the game as the safety of players and officials as well as the durability of the ground condition were the

foremost priorities to be considered.

Off the field, Glazebury will have a stall and cake sale at Culcheth Community Day on May 6 when there will also be a raffle for a hamper and a signed, framed picture on Lancashire and England bowler Jimmy Anderson.



Hedgehogs – and how we can help them

THOSE cute, illusive creatures Hedgehogs were the subject of a talk given to Croft WI by Kelly Leyland from Haydock Hedgehog Helpers.

This is a charitable, non-profit organisation which has been open for five years that cares for injured hedgehogs and is totally reliant on public funding. Their team include one person to rehabilitate, 30 on-site volunteers and 10 foster carers. They have a dedicated "hog hospital" including heated boxes all labelled with information about each occupant. Ninety per cent of the hedgehogs they treat are eventually released, those that

are beyond help are painlessly euthanised.

Surprisingly it costs £150 to rehabilitate and release one hedgehog. Costs include medication, food, microchips and some need expert veterinary care.

Hedgehogs have been around on this planet for around twelve million years. In the 1950s there were approximately 36 million, in 2017 their numbers were down to 600,000! More than 150,000 are killed on our roads every year, as well as numerous other injuries caused by man and other animals. These little creatures really need our help, due to the fact their natural

habitat, wildflower meadows and farmland that has not been contaminated with pesticides, has been rapidly declining over the decades.

In fact they seem to be more prevalent in urban areas than farmland these days, but modern gardens that include solid fences and such items as astro-turf and the use of weed killers and slug pellets are not hedgehog friendly. "Hog Highways" (small holes in fencing) to allow them to wander and not using harsh chemicals can help. Planting insect friendly flowers like nasturtiums and open faced flowers such as single dahlias help with

the hedgehog diet which consists of worms, beetles, earwigs and slugs. Bedding plants are usually not very insect friendly. Also the use of garden strimmers cause many dreadful injuries, as hedgehogs tend to hibernate in long grass and gardeners are unaware of their presence.

Never feed hedgehogs bread, milk, yoghurt, fruit or veg, but they can be fed dry cat food and just water to drink.

The competition was won by President Gill Coon with Lesley Lloyd second and Sheila Brooke third.



Hospice Care for the Warrington Community

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WI hear the origins of nursery rhymes

THE origins of nursery rhymes were explored in detail by guest speaker Jean Finney at the monthly meeting of Sundial WI, Culcheth.

Nursery rhymes were the start of learning for young children with the metre of the rhymes with their measured syllables helping memory to develop.

The Cat and the Fiddle Inn, on the Buxton road, was named after one.

In Tudor times, James I (James VI in Scotland) had a favourite boyfriend, George Villiers, who liked men and women equally but was stabbed to death – a sad end to "Georgy Porgy."

The Civil War brought us Humpty Dumpty, not a person but a big cannon!

The Plague of 1665 brought "Ring of Roses" and later "Pop goes the Weasel" was a reminder of pawnshops and rhyming slang.

Jean's favourite was "Little Miss Muffett" whose father was an entomologist!

Jean told of her own battle with spiders- the answer was a big sponge to capture them and she put on spider gloves to sing her own song about them!

The April competition was for a children's book was won by Aileen Paterson and Brenda Pinion.

Doreen Procter went over the details of the 2024 outings once again and after Freda and Ann had served tea, the business meeting began.

Anne Burns was thanked for the table flowers, won by Joyce Daniels, one of four "Birthday Girls"

Six new members were welcomed to the meeting.



Guest speaker Jean Finney.



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Jovita joined our college to excel in her career. Having successfully completed her higher level qualification, she is now progressing on to the University of Chester to complete her degree in the field of mental health.



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