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Editor's Comment

THE year is 2025 and the UK is meant to be a place of freedom of expression.

During my recent visit to Warrington Pride I was shocked and horrified by the level of homophobia and abuse directed at our LGBTQ+ community.

Numerous comments posted under a short video of the event I published on our Facebook page made me feel like I had been teleported back in time to the 1960s.

I had to monitor proceedings and spent a great deal of time deleting and hiding many of the comments, while also leaving some in public to help expose those responsible for their vile rants.

Comments ranged from "Who cares about this gay s**t" to "What a load of boll**ks, who wants to see this" and others I feel unable to publish.

I've worked as a journalist for more than 40 years and consider myself broad-minded but some of the comments were truly appalling.

It certainly left my pride in my home town dented, realising these people, with no tolerance for how others lead their lives, walk amongst us.

We have already seen people sent to prison for inciting hatred on social media – but clearly not enough to become a deterrent.

From what I could see, everyone taking part was having a great time and it certainly brought plenty of colour and music spread across the town centre in Golden Square

and Times Square, generating lots of much-needed income for local businesses.

Those who felt it necessary to post their vile abusive on social media have achieved one thing – my full support whenever possible for everything PRIDE related in Warrington and beyond.

I will also be spending some time weeding out the serial offenders so they can no longer view or comment on our social media posts – and will consider referring the worst offenders to the local police to see if they warrant further action.

If you don't want to celebrate or support PRIDE that is your freedom of expression but here at Warrington-Worldwide we will not tolerate homophobia or personal attacks on people based on their gender or



choice of gender.

Here's looking forward to next year's PRIDE event and congratulations to all involved in organising a vibrant event for our town centre.

**While freedom of expression is a fundamental right, it is not absolute and can be subject to certain restrictions. These limitations are often outlined in national laws and international human rights instruments.*

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Tributes paid following sudden death of "brilliant" journalist Pete Magill

TRIBUTES are being paid to "determined", "tenacious" and "brilliant" journalist Pete Magill from Warrington, who has died suddenly aged just 49.

A stalwart of the regional media, Pete Magill worked across numerous news outlets. He began in Warrington, working for Orbit News, publisher of Warrington Worldwide, before moving to the Warrington Guardian, then to newspapers in Oldham, Burnley and East Lancashire. Most recently, Pete was promoted to Head of Print for the North West and North Wales for Newsquest and managed the print edition of the Lancashire Telegraph and sister titles such as the Bury Times.

Pete was a hugely respected colleague, renowned for his work ethic, never shying away from covering council meetings late into the night, trawling agendas for the hidden stories, and keeping the closest eye on criminal court listings.

A huge Warrington Wolves fan, he followed his club through good times and bad with his loyal rugby crew. He loved to travel, for work and pleasure, with his passport being stamped in locations as varied as America, Australia and Israel.

His passion for the job was endless and he willingly shared his knowledge. One former Warrington Guardian colleague, Suzanne Elsworth, said: "Pete was

the one who took me to court in my first weeks as a news reporter when I was petrified about ending up in the dock rather than on the press bench. He had contacts everywhere, building up trusted relationships over many years and always being that 'critical friend' who held the authorities to account, sharing their good news but seeking out the truth when things went bad.

"As our careers progressed, we stayed great mates, even when we were competing for the same promotion. He was always there when I'd ask for a cheesy pun or random headline if I ran out of ideas. Despite living far apart, we'd meet for good food and even better chat when our paths could cross.

"I can't believe I'm talking about Pete in the past tense. He was devoted to his job, the rugby, a proper pint of real ale, and to his family. I can't believe we will never share any more late-night gossip texts, or have the request for my address – the one thing he never seemed to jot down in his contacts book – ahead of the annual Christmas card exchange. We're raising a glass of questionably-flavoured craft beer to you Pete. You will be missed."

Gareth Dunning, Warrington Guardian deputy editor, took over as news editor from Pete more than 20 years ago. He said: "Pete and I became good friends when I started at the Academy. He would pass on his knowledge of Warrington, and his thirst for news.

"Long before the days of 24-hour news, Pete would be out at 11 pm if he heard about a story. You could drop Pete into a town centre anywhere in the UK and within an hour he would have had four page leads and a splash.

"He lived and breathed news. Tales of him sleeping in the Crewe office after deadline are legendary.

"After leaving Warrington, he wrote a much-loved Podium column in the Warrington Guardian which had those in authority shaking in their boots. Yet he kept the respect of everyone, even when being critical.

"He came and worked in our office a couple of weeks back. He was looking forward to Wembley, we exchanged glances of bemusement as we heard young reporters discuss Charlie XCX and TikTok.

"He never changed and it is hard to think I won't see him in the newsroom again."

Pete attended Thomas Boteler High School in Warrington and, after a short apprenticeship on a local paper, began his career at

Orbit News with its founders David and Gary Skentelbery.

Gary said: "To hear that a former colleague who started as your office junior has died so suddenly and young is heart-breaking. On the one hand, you have my father who is still working aged 87 who trained us both and then Pete taken from us so young. I can't even begin to think what his family must be feeling at this time.

"Although Pete left us to join the Warrington Guardian as we embarked on our own journey with Warrington Worldwide, we always kept in touch with a friendly rivalry.

"Pete was never afraid to express his opinion and was one of the most hard-working determined journalists I have ever met."



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Council apologises after rare orchids mown down in error



WARRINGTON Borough Council has issued an apology after rare orchids on Birchwood Way were mown down in error and plans are now in action to protect them moving forward.

The issue was flagged by former Mayor Geoff Settle, Chair of Warrington Nature Conservation Forum who expressed regret that the town is unlikely to see many rare orchids this year – because the grasses they thrive in have been mown down for a second successive year.

Mr Settle has been trying for several years to protect the orchids after receiving complaints from residents when he was a Poulton North borough councillor.

Despite a promise last year from Warrington Borough Council that grass verges where the rare Bee orchids and Northern Marsh orchids grow would not be mown, the same happened again this

year.

A Warrington Borough Council spokesperson said: "We're very sorry to confirm that a section of wild orchids on Birchwood Way were cut down in error."

"We plan to protect these areas in the future by installing physical barriers to prevent mowing until the end of the summer when the plants have flowered and set seed."

Meanwhile, Mr Settle said: "Hopefully next year we can see the bee orchids once more in their full glory!"

"What I am pleased about is the fact that the mowers haven't been out in Cinnamon Brow and there are lots of wildflowers popping their heads up!"

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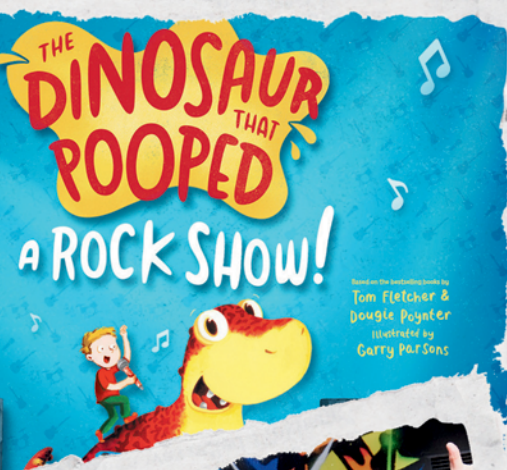
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- Thu 14 Aug** - Sweet & Sour
- Wed 3 Sep** - What's Love Got To Do With It?
- Fri 5 Sep** - Everton Double Winners of 1985
- Sat 13 Sep** - Dinosaurs Live!
- Tue 16 Sep** - Swan Lake
- Fri 19 Sep** - The Beast - Iron Maiden Tribute
- Sat 11 Oct** - Northern Live
- Mon 27 Oct** - The Dinosaur that Pooped a Rock Show
- Thu 30 Oct** - Skindred
- Fri 31 Oct** - Antarctic Monkeys
- Sat 1 Nov** - Greatest Hits of Motown
- Sun 2 Nov** - A Night at the Darts
- Thu 6 Nov** - Alan Davies - Think Ahead
- Fri 7 Nov** - The American 4 Tops
- Fri 14 Nov** - Luke Combs UK Tribute
- Fri 21 Nov** - The ABBA Reunion Tribute Show
- Sat 29 Nov** - Peter Price
- Fri 5 Dec** - Inspiral Carpets
- Fri 12 Dec** - The Houghton Weavers
- Thu 18 Dec** - Taylormania
- Fri 19 Dec** - Live/Wire: The AC/DC Show
- Sat 20 Dec** - Warrington Male Voice Choir



TEDxWarrington announces 2025 event

TEDxWarrington is back for 2025! Event plans have been launched with a brand new theme and an exciting partnership with Warrington Youth Zone.

Local businesswoman, Kirsty James, has once again secured a coveted licence from TED to run TEDxWarrington. 2024 saw a pause in events as she attended a TED conference in the US to upgrade her licence. She also became a TEDx speaker in her own right at another location, allowing her to 'walk the talk' and support the growth of the Warrington event even further.

Kirsty commented, "I'm over the moon to be bringing TEDxWarrington back for 2025 to give opportunity and profile to my home town. Volunteer team members and associates across the Warrington area have now reunited and the social channels and website are packed with new information."

TEDxWarrington 2025 will run on the evening of Tuesday 2nd December 2025 and the team is delighted to be working closely with Warrington Youth Zone who will be hosting the event at their site on Dallam Lane in the centre of Warrington. It is a partnership that is particularly exciting because it aligns with several new initiatives to engage young talent and increase the impact of TEDx on the local community.

The event theme will be 'Identity and Purpose' and the 2025 event will showcase a selection of speakers and performers with Big Ideas to share based on their interpretation of this theme.

The presence of a brand such as TEDx – one of the most famous speaker conference formats globally – will inevitably generate both curiosity and expectation in the town, especially after the 2022 and 2023 events received such high praise. TEDx, where x = independently organised, is a local, self-organised event program that brings people together to share a TED-like experience.

TEDxWarrington has already showcased 20 TEDx talks and several pieces of performance to live audiences with the approved talks listed on the official TEDx YouTube channel. One of the 2023 talks was even selected by TEDx as an Editor's Pick and announced directly to their 40m+ subscriber base. All

prior talks can be viewed on the TEDxWarrington website and the TEDxWarrington YouTube Channel.

TEDxWarrington offers great opportunities for local businesses, big and small, to support a significant event in their town, focused on sharing new ideas that spark conversation, learning and changes in behaviour.

The application window has now closed for core applicants, although it remains open to youth applicants until Thursday 31st July 2025 for. The website, newsletter and social channels provide details about the video application process. They also share exciting new changes for 2025, including the inclusion of a Young Person's category and a Pitch evening on Tuesday 15th July

2025.

The organising team, who work voluntarily on this non-profit event, invite readers to spread the word amongst friends, family and colleagues to assist the call for event sponsors, partners and above all, a new cohort of amazing speakers with 'ideas worth spreading'. The event is reliant on the Warrington audience and local organisations to cover event costs by way of ticket and sponsor revenue.

For TEDxWarrington contact details, 2025 event plans or to apply to speak, visit www.tedxwarrington.com

To enquire about partnership or sponsorship, email organisingteam@tedxwarrington.co.uk



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Divorce Column

By Peter Wilkinson
Divorce Lawyer at Chambers Fletcher Solicitors

Birdnesting

Whilst this is definitely not an article on ornithology the concept of birdnesting in divorce gets its name from bird parents who keep their chicks safe in a nest and alternately fly in and out in caring for them. Birdnesting, in the context of divorce, is a co-parenting arrangement where parents take turns residing in the family home with the children while the other parent lives elsewhere.

The children remain in their familiar home and the parents rotate in and out, aiming to minimise disruption and maintain a sense of stability for the children.

The primary goal is to keep the children's environment as stable as possible during a divorce/separation. This minimises disruption for them and provides them with the security of knowing they get to sleep in their own bed each night. In cases where birdnesting is agreed it is typically treated as a temporary solution while longer term living arrangements are being worked out.

One parent lives in the family home with the children while on a rotational basis the other resides/stays temporarily elsewhere. The children's home remains the same providing a sense of security for them during an otherwise unsettling time.

However, there are some obvious challenges with this sort of arrangement. For it to work there must be effective communication between the parents. There must be mutual trust, but which is so often absent in divorce, and careful thought needs to be given to meeting/sharing the expense of the arrangement – the expense of the family home and perhaps also the expense of living elsewhere depending on where elsewhere is.

Birdnesting can be a viable co-parenting temporary option for some families. It's obviously not for everyone, probably not for most, but it might be worth a try for some. It requires careful planning, open communication and a willingness on the part of both parents to work together.

For expert advice and assistance regarding divorce and related matters please get in touch – we have a great deal of experience advising, guiding and supporting clients in all aspects of family law matters.

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Peter Wilkinson

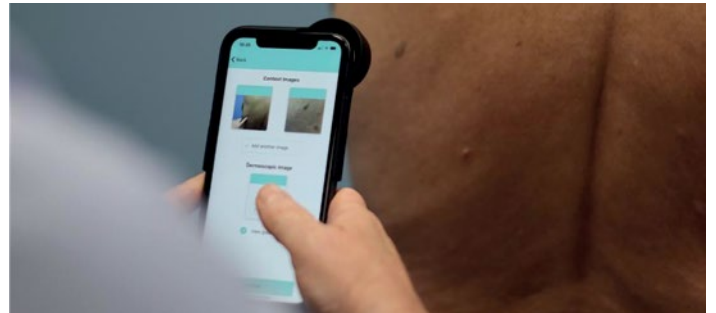


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AI technology helps speed up diagnosis of skin cancer



AI technology is now being used to help speed up the diagnosis of skin cancer in Warrington.

Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust are using the latest in AI technology to provide patients with a swifter diagnosis of skin cancer.

A rise in skin cancer referrals is resulting in a high demand for dermatology services across NHS organisations in England, including locally in Warrington.

Since 2022, the dermatology service (which is run by Bridgewater Community Healthcare) is now averaging over 300 patient referrals per month, with approximately half resulting in further testing and treatment in to conditions such as skin cancer.

This new NHS partnership with artificial intelligence technology provider Skin Analytics uses cutting-edge, NICE-recommended AI by recognising cancerous, pre-cancerous and common harmless skin conditions through photographic images.

Resulting in faster diagnosis, this state-of-the-art system called DERM, is impressively 99.9% accurate when ruling out melanoma and 97% sensitive when detecting skin cancer.

When visiting the service, patients have images taken of their mole or skin lesion at a dedicated 'Photo Hub Clinic'. These are then inputted into the DERM system and assessed using AI.

Those with common harmless skin conditions are quickly discharged without having to see a consultant. If, however, the DERM system flags any skin lesions as potentially pre-malignant or malignant, the patient will receive faster access to care, with some treatment performed on the same day, at the same location.

Acting as a 'one-stop clinic', not only is the service a first of its kind across the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside region; its location in a local shopping centre makes it more unique.

Warrington and Halton Diagnostics Centre (a service provided by Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals) is located at Halton Health Hub, within Runcorn Shopping City. This is one of only a small number of NHS community diagnostic centres to be launched inside a shopping centre in the country, and as such is another first for the NHS Cheshire and Merseyside region.

Dr Paul Fitzsimmons is joint

Medical Director for Bridgewater Community Healthcare and Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals. He said: "Skin cancer is the most frequently referred cancer speciality within the NHS, and we're experiencing this increase firsthand across Warrington."

"The rise in suspected skin cancer referrals has been placing increased pressure on our dermatology service."

"To better manage this growing demand, the partnership we have created with Skin Analytics has offered a valuable opportunity to work creatively by using effective, cutting-edge AI healthcare innovation."

"Not only does this AI technology speed up diagnosis and possible on-the-day treatment; the fact the service is located, not in a hospital but inside a modern diagnostic facility within a shopping centre, showcases how healthcare is able to reach out into our local communities."

Dan Mullarkey, Medical Director at Skin Analytics said: "At Skin Analytics, we believe every patient deserves access to fast and effective skin cancer diagnosis."

"With DERM, NHS organisations receive a flexible and transformative solution for dermatology services that brings care directly to the community."

"By establishing this service within a shopping centre, expert dermatological care is conveniently accessible where people already live, work, and shop."

"It's wonderful to see local NHS trusts embracing innovation that eliminates traditional barriers to healthcare access, and together, we'll improve the patient journey for those with suspected skin cancer by providing timely care in familiar, convenient locations."

Speaking about his recent visit to the Warrington and Halton Diagnostics Centre, Stephen Campion from Penketh couldn't quite believe how quick the AI technology was: "I was amazed by the speed of the AI. The fact that you get seen and diagnosed within minutes rather than having to book a follow-up appointment, was great. The staff there were brilliant too, very friendly and explained clearly what was going on."

"In terms of where the service is, because you're at a shopping centre, I didn't have to pay for parking and there's plenty of it too. It was all seamless."



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National award for bus company



Warrington Borough Council and Warrington's Own Buses have been recognised at this year's Chartered Institute of Highways and Transport (CIHT) Awards.

At the CIHT awards ceremony earlier this week, the council and Warrington's Own Buses won the Bus Centre of Excellence – bus initiative of the year award.

The CIHT awards are an annual competition that celebrates excellence in the highways and transport sector. The awards recognise outstanding projects, people, and organisations that have made significant contributions to the industry.

Warrington's award win is recognition of the council's decision to invest in its bus services for local people. These big improvements include work to cap bus fares for passengers and improving services, alongside the delivery of the new bus depot and Warrington's pioneering all-electric fleet.

The award was presented to Warrington by Minister for Local

Transport, Simon Lightwood MP.

Leader of the Council, Cllr Hans Mundry, said: "Winning this prestigious award is acknowledgement by the industry that it really is 'better by bus' in Warrington, and that we're making good progress with our bus services."

Managing Director of Warrington's Own Buses, Ben Wakerley, said: "This award win is a reflection of the partnership working between the council and Warrington's Own Buses, and it's something we should all be proud of. By keeping bus fares low and improving our services, we hope to encourage even more passengers onto our buses."

"It is also a credit to the teams at both organisations who have delivered the improvements to buses in Warrington and Cheshire".



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Crowning glory as Miss International Grand Finals held at Parr Hall Theatre

THE glitz, glamour, and empowering spirit of pageantry took centre stage as the Grand Finals of Miss International UK at the iconic Parr Hall Theatre, right in the heart of Warrington, raising funds for women who are survivors of acid attacks.

Sixty remarkable women from across the United Kingdom competed for the opportunity of a lifetime — to represent the UK on the global stage at Miss International in Japan, one of the world's top three beauty pageants.

Adding a special touch to the occasion, the event was organised by Holly Pirrie, a Warrington local herself.

Reflecting on the event, Holly said: "It was such a pleasure to host the Miss International UK finals once again in my hometown. Sixty incredible women competed for the title, and we have a wonderful winner, Sophie, who will represent them and the UK on the Miss International stage in Japan later this year."

After the finalists took part in interviews, photoshoots, and their on-stage rounds, Sophie Wallace, from Glasgow, Scotland, was crowned the new Miss International UK 2025/26. It was a dream come true for Sophie, who had returned for a second attempt at the title and proved that perseverance truly pays off.

A trailblazer in every sense, Sophie is a journalist, broadcaster, PR manager, and model who has spent the past decade championing

representation in the media. A former international display gymnast, she holds an Honours degree in Multimedia Journalism and made history early in her career as the youngest woman to present a flagship news programme in the UK.

Now a PR Manager at one of the country's leading agencies, Sophie uses her platform to amplify marginalised voices. In 2023, she founded Helping Hats, a nonprofit that has already supported over

300 families affected by fuel poverty. She is also the creator of The Empower Hour, an initiative tackling the gender gap in mainstream media. Her work continues in collaboration with the global women's organisation A-Sisterhood.

As Miss International UK, Sophie will now prepare to represent her country in Japan — all expenses paid — where she will compete alongside women from across the globe at one of the most prestigious and respected pageants in the world. She will also enjoy a visit to India with the A-Sisterhood organisation to visit the Sheroes, a

group of women who are survivors of acid attacks. The Sheroes Hangout is a charity that is supported by the A-Sisterhood organisation, the partner charity for Miss International UK. The 2025 Miss International UK finalists collectively raised over £4,000 for the cause.

With the finals concluded and the crown newly placed, the journey continues: applications for Miss International UK 2026 are now open! Are you aged 18–28 and ready for your moment in the spotlight?

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Young people given a chance to shine at Gulliver's World

A successful work experience programme at a Warrington theme park is giving lots of young people the opportunity to get first-hand experience of a career in the leisure and hospitality industry.

Gulliver's World has been running a work experience scheme for over four years working in partnership with several schools and colleges across the town including Willow Green Specialist Further Education College, Warrington Vale College, Great Sankey High School and Helsbury High School.

One of the young people to benefit from the programme is Dan Ayo (22) from Willow Green College, which offers opportunities to young people with SEND in Warrington on both Education and Adult Social Care. Dan has special educational needs and has been completing a Supported Internship work placement at Gulliver's World over the last 12 months.

Dan works in different areas of the Gulliver's World resort including in stores, the hotel and catering providing an excellent work environment for him to flourish and increase his skills knowledge and behaviours. Completing these roles has enabled Dan to develop in a number of areas including developing his communication, work ethic, decision making and

working as a member of a team.

Dan said: "I am really enjoying my work placement at Gulliver's World. I have learnt new skills and each week I learn something different that helps me as a young person with Autism in the workplace. From the outset everyone at Gulliver's World has made me feel welcome and, importantly, I have felt part of the team which I really like. I am very grateful for this opportunity."

If you are interested in finding out more about work experience opportunities at Gulliver's World, please contact mel.burrows-carr@gulliversfun.co.uk



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Your monthly local music round up. This month we have a podcast launch featuring local 'Superstar DJ' Sammy Dean.

It's been another very busy month here at Ameritz! The first big project has been our new 'Ameritz Radar' podcast, launched on May 30th 2025. You can get it on Spotify, Apple Podcasts etc... The idea is to use each episode to discuss the music business. We will have lots of special guests, and music industry professionals. We want to include lots of local artists and more established artists from the UK.

The latest episode is with local Warrington DJ **Sammy Dean**. It is a fascinating listen, from memories of the iconic Warrington club 'Legends' to her, now, fantastic DJ career taking her all over the world.



Podcast hosts Dave Green and Tia Main with DJ Sammy Dean (right).

The studio has also been busy with new artists. **'Lonely Mountain'** are from North Wales. The brothers Archie and Finlay Johnson write fairly laid back acoustic songs about the countryside and their community in North Wales. Archie developed his production and writing skills at Edge Hill University. His brother Finlay is currently studying 'Recording and Popular Music' at Salford University.

The brothers can often be seen recording live performances on the cliffs around North Wales. Their songs are amazing. Like the very best of David Gray. Go and check out 'Lonely Mountain'

We have had another acoustic folk artist **'Lower Angel Band'** (named after the pub in town). This is the band project of local singer Vicky Williams.

Vicky is well respected in Warrington and runs many open mic nights around town. Vicky's song 'Weak Like the Others' is the debut single for the 'Lower Angel Band' out later this month. We are excited to be working with Vicky and her band (pictured below). A true talent from our town.

Speak next month,
Dave



Warrington Arts Festival unveils its awe-inspiring summer programme

An alien invasion, a life-sized knitted house and a nostalgic nod to iconic nightclub Mr Smiths are among the eclectic highlights for the return of Warrington Arts Festival this July.

The vibrant annual event, hosted by arts charity Culture Warrington, has revealed its full programme for a summer town centre takeover with a series of performances and installations coming to a variety of venues over nine days.

Led by a dedicated team and powered up by a substantial funding boost, Warrington Arts Festival underwent a substantial relaunch in 2024 to make it more accessible, far reaching and community-centred.

This year's follow-up, between 18 and 26 July, will once again be

focusing on largescale, free and family-friendly attractions that aim to break down barriers to the arts and bring people of all ages and backgrounds together.

In that spirit, Family Garden Party will be returning to Queens Gardens by popular demand – packed with live music, performances and hands-on activities over two days on 19 and 20 July.

Highlights at this weekend of garden-themed fun include Do What Ya Mama Told Yah, a feast of a show that fuses family, food history and slapstick performance in

a mum and daughter collaboration, and some astonishing acrobatics from Farm Yard Circus.

Elsewhere, the Meadow Sprites – Japanese-style bunraku puppets – will be flying and flitting about as they bring tales of their woodland habitat, and Cusan Theatre will present The Seedkeepers, a carnival-esque celebration of stories about the importance of the many women of the world who protect the seeds and grains of their homeland.

In the same weekend, an internationally respected creative director, whose work has included projects for the London 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony and the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pageant, is coming to Golden Square.

British-Caribbean choreographer Jeannefer-Jean Charles MBE will grace the stage to present Patois to tell a globe-trotting story of culture, lost languages, through the language of dance.

Meanwhile, renowned outdoor theatre specialists, The Dream Engine, will be hovering over the town to bring a flying saucer and aliens to Warrington. The mysterious, spectacular and otherworldly Starsaucer will be providing a fitting festival finale to Bank Park on 26 July as seemingly weightless figures start to emerge from a UFO amid blinking lights and a haze of smoke.



This final weekend in the festival will also see a host of colourful and mesmerising pop-up performances including the acclaimed Brazen Brass Band and Batida Rio, a samba drumming and carnival group based in Warrington.

Dance-circus company, Motionhouse, will join the spectacle too using gravity-defying performance techniques in a show that has already wowed some 100,000 people all over the UK and beyond.

For more information, tickets and the full programme, visit warringtonartsfestival.org



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Warrington Mela returning

WARRINGTON Mela - the leading outdoor multi-cultural festival of free street theatre, dance, music, food and colliding cultures is returning again this August after securing public funding through Arts Council England.

Warrington Borough Council, in partnership with Warrington Ethnic Communities Association (WECA), and with the support of Culture Warrington and Warrington BID, has once again been awarded a National Lottery Project Grant from Arts Council England towards the cost of this year's festival.

Funding has also been awarded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Warrington Borough Council, Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service and the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire. This year's event will also be sponsored by Cadent Gas Ltd.

Warrington Mela will take place on Sunday, August 31, spread across two locations, Palmyra Square and Time Square. The two sites will be linked through a complementary programme and a procession performance which leads to a grand finale.

The programme promises something for everyone with stunning professional and community performances of dance, drumming, music, singing and an artisan market offering a range of food and crafts from different cultures.

A feature of the day will be giant

puppets, created by Manchester's Nutknot for the Platinum Jubilee Pageant celebrations in Central London in 2022.

Cllr Jean Flaherty, cabinet member for communities, culture and leisure said: "The theme of Mela 2025 will be 'Home' and by exploring this theme with some of our local communities, we aim to foster a sense of unity and shared humanity, breaking down misconceptions and building empathy."

Cllr Mo Hussain, Mayor of Warrington and WECA executive member, said: "We are very thankful to Arts Council England for awarding us the funding to allow us to develop Warrington Mela into a vibrant celebration of multiculturalism that resonates deeply with our communities."

For more, visit: weca.org.uk/mela



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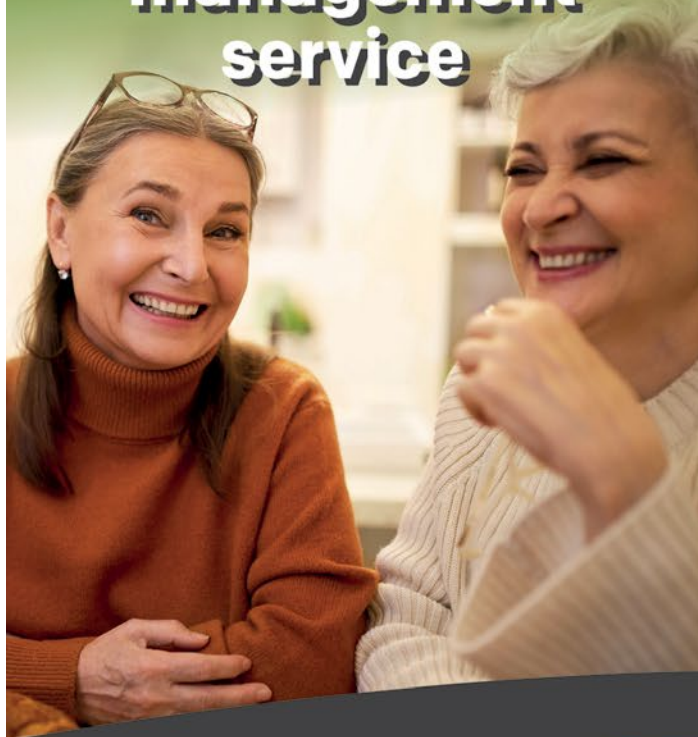
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Spotlight on Local History with James Balme

A wander to Wonderland on the trail of Lewis Carroll



It was in the year of 1827 when Charles Dodgson of Daresbury, Warrington was to marry Frances Jane Lutwidge. Frances went on to give birth to seven girls and four boys during their marriage.

On the 27th January 1832 their third son was born at All Saints' vicarage in Daresbury and his name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. In his later life he was to become world famous as a writer of childrens' fiction whilst a lecturer at Oxford University under the pen name of Lewis Carroll notably publishing his works 'Alice in Wonderland' and 'Through the Looking Glass'. In his early years Charles could often be seen playing between the gravestones in the churchyard of All Saints church in the village. His father was the perpetual curate at the church and Charles would often play outside whilst his father saw to matters within the church.

Young Charles was educated at home rather than attending school. He was an avid reader and extremely intelligent. He suffered with a stammer that had an effect upon his social life throughout his later years. His father was a much-loved vicar of the church and serving sixteen years of his life at All Saints preaching to the parishoners of the village. But it was at the young age of just eleven years old when his father accepted a new position in Stockton-on-Tees in the North Riding of Yorkshire meaning that Charles would no longer be able to play around in the grounds of the church or hide behind the old gravestones.

The whole family was to move to the North Riding rectory where they made it their new home and remained there for the next twenty-five years. At the age of twelve

Charles was to attend Richmond school in North Yorkshire where he was to study hard in the years to come before eventually entering the University of Oxford in 1849. In later life his fame increased as his written works attracted worldwide recognition. By the time he reached his sixties Charles suffered severe illness that led to the loss of his ability to walk for much of the time and leaving him bed-ridden for weeks and sometimes months. It was on 14th January 1898 whilst staying at his sister's home in Guilford that Charles died of pneumonia. Charles was buried at nearby Mount cemetery in Guilford.

The church at Daresbury that we see today was entirely rebuilt in 1872, however the original tower remains intact and is believed to date back to 1550 AD. Within the churchyard stand many tombstones that pre-date the current church including one simply marked in memory of Elizabeth and dated to 1703.

Today there stands within the grounds of All Saints church at Daresbury 'The Lewis Carroll centre' dedicated to the work and memory of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. People from around the world come to visit the centre and to see for themselves the Lewis Carroll church window in the church.

You can view my history feature 'A Wander to Wonderland' telling the story of Charles Lutwidge Dodgson And his life by visiting my history channel [YouTube.com/tvpresenter4history](https://www.youtube.com/tvpresenter4history)



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Director ID Verification: What every UK company Director needs to know

Over the coming months, you'll likely see more news and notifications from Companies House about a significant change in company law: all company directors in the UK will soon be required to verify their identity.

This new obligation applies to directors of all companies—whether you're running a trading business, a consultancy, a property investment vehicle, or a residents' management company. It's part of sweeping reforms introduced under the Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Act 2023 (ECCTA), aimed at increasing transparency and tackling economic crime across the UK's corporate landscape.

Why is this happening?

Companies House is evolving from a passive registrar of company information into a more active gatekeeper of corporate integrity. Identity verification will form a key part of that role. The aim is simple: to make it harder for fraudulent or criminal individuals to hide behind UK company structures.

In practical terms, it means that every director—new or

existing—will need to prove they are who they say they are.

When does it take effect?

Although the requirement becomes mandatory from autumn 2025, directors can already verify their ID voluntarily as of April 2025. For newly formed companies and newly appointed directors, verification will be a compulsory step from the autumn. For directors of existing companies, there will be a transition period with a final deadline expected in autumn 2026.

How does verification work?

The verification process is designed to be quick and straightforward. Most directors will use the free GOV.UK ID Check app, which works with biometric documents such as a UK photocard driving licence, UK biometric residence permit or a passport (UK or international, as long as it has a chip). The app scans your ID and uses facial recognition technology to confirm your identity.

If using the app isn't an option, verification can also be completed at selected

Post Office branches or by answering security questions online. Accountants and other authorised agents can complete verification on behalf of directors, although this may incur a fee.

Once verified, each director will be issued a unique identification number by Companies House. This number will need to be quoted on future filings such as confirmation statements and company accounts. Without it, documents simply won't be accepted.

What happens if a director doesn't verify?

Failing to comply with identity verification will be a criminal offence. Companies that allow unverified directors to continue acting on their behalf could also find themselves in breach of the law. Penalties may include financial sanctions or even disqualification.

Until verification is complete, a director should not undertake any formal duties or make decisions on behalf of the company. Given that the whole process can take just a few minutes, the risks of delay far outweigh the inconvenience.



Thomas Coyne and Stuart Barr

Taking action now

While there's no need for panic—transitional deadlines mean there's time to act—it's important for directors to understand their responsibilities early and avoid a last-minute rush.

If you're unsure whether you're listed as a director (for example, if you took on a role informally or some time ago), it's easy to check your status for free on the Companies House website. No login is required.

Likewise, if you act as a director for more than one company, you'll only need to complete the process once. Your unique ID will apply across all your directorships.

This is one of the most significant compliance changes in recent years. While it's primarily administrative, it underlines a broader shift in how UK companies are regulated and monitored. If you need help understanding your obligations or navigating the process, speak to your accountant or get in touch with us—we're here to support you.

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Wolves suffer more Wembley heartbreak



WARRINGTON Wolves suffered heartbreak at Wembley for the second successive year as Mikey Lewis' late conversion won the game for Hull KR.

Unlike last year, Warrington pushed the game all the way and despite being unfancied, led for a long time in the game thanks to Josh Thewlis' first half try.

But with barely two minutes left, Tyrone May's kick bobbled around in-goal and Tom Davies touched the loose ball down within inches of it going dead, and Lewis stepped up to add the decisive two points from wide out to win it 8-6 for Willie Peters' side.

George Williams made his return to the Warrington team, well ahead of schedule following from injury, and he was part of a lively opening from the Wolves before the arrival of teeming rain changed the nature of the game.

Warrington enjoyed the better of the early exchanges and had a try shout referred to the video referee when the ball came loose from a Jack Broadbent carry and was touched down by Adam Holroyd in-goal, but replays showed Rodrick Tai had stripped the ball illegally and instead a penalty was awarded to the Robins.

Hull KR struggled to get field position in the opening quarter but they did end the stalemate on 24 minutes through a Mikey Lewis penalty, after Ben Currie had tackled him high.

It turned in to a war of attrition in the first half and it looked like 2-0 might be the half time score until a spiralling Marc Sneyd kick was spilled by Joe Burgess five metres from his own line to gift Warrington

a full set of six and they made it pay.

There was fortune to it, Sneyd's low kick attempt came off the foot off Jez Litten and spun out to the right hand side and in to the hands of Josh Thewlis to catch and dive in at the corner, with Sneyd adding the touchline conversion to make it 6-2 at the break.

Hull KR came out with renewed vigour in the second half but they couldn't find a way through, and soon Sneyd started managing the game perfectly with his kicking game on his way to winning the Lance Todd Trophy for a third time.

There was a blip when after Sneyd forced a drop out, Arron Lindop let Hull KR out of jail when Lewis' drop out bounced in to touch.

Hull KR came close when Jez Litten's kick came back off a post and was put dead by Sam Powell, but largely the game was at the other end of the field, with Sneyd forcing multiple drop outs and then a Williams chip kick looking for Matt Duffy was diffused by Jack Broadbent.

Warrington were still holding on to their four point lead and Hull KR snatched it at the death through Davies to leave the Warrington fans heartbroken in the wet.

Sneyd received the Lance Todd Man-of-the-Match award for a record third time - but it was little compensation for defeat after an outstanding performance from the kicking ace.

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Friendly, helpful & specialist team, ready to help you find your perfect dress.

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