

Culcheth Life

Magazine

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Second chance to invest

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Editor's Opinion



The Raven Inn at Glazebury proves what a community can achieve – and now there's another chance to be part of it.

Three years ago, many people feared the Raven Inn at Glazebury would become yet another village pub lost forever.

Across the country we've seen far too many traditional pubs close their doors, converted into housing or simply left to fall into disrepair. Every closure represents more than the loss of somewhere to enjoy a pint. It means losing a meeting place, a social hub and, in many cases, the heart of a community. Thankfully, Glazebury chose a different path.

This month the Raven celebrates its third anniversary as a thriving community-owned pub – a remarkable achievement that deserves recognition, not just locally but as an example of what can be accomplished when local people refuse to give up on an institution they value.

The Raven's story has never been just about saving a building. It has been about preserving a sense of identity. Villages need places where neighbours meet, friendships are formed, community groups gather and families celebrate life's special occasions. Those opportunities simply cannot be replaced by bricks and mortar alone.

What makes the Raven particularly special is that it belongs to the people it serves. Hundreds of local shareholders backed the vision of

rescuing the pub and turning it into a sustainable business run for the benefit of the community rather than distant investors. That is something everyone involved should be immensely proud of.

Of course, no community venture succeeds simply because of good intentions. It takes countless hours of hard work from directors, volunteers, staff and supporters who have all played their part in making the Raven the success it has become. They have demonstrated determination, resilience and a willingness to overcome the inevitable challenges that come with running a community enterprise. The result speaks for itself.

Today the Raven is once again a welcoming destination for residents and visitors alike, helping support the local economy while providing an important venue for community events and bringing people together. It has become proof that community ownership can work when local people share a common purpose.

Now, as the Raven celebrates this important milestone, local residents are being offered another opportunity to become shareholders. That deserves serious consideration.

Buying shares in a community pub is not the same as making a conventional financial investment. Nobody should expect quick returns or significant dividends. Instead, it is

an investment in something arguably far more valuable – safeguarding an important community asset for future generations.

Every additional shareholder strengthens the long-term future of the Raven and helps ensure it continues serving Glazebury for many years to come.

In an age when many communities feel decisions are increasingly taken out of local hands, the Raven stands as a refreshing reminder that people can still shape their own future when they work together.

Three successful years have already shown what is possible.

The next chapter now depends on continuing that same community spirit which saved the pub in the first place.

Congratulations to everyone who helped make the Raven's revival possible. Here's hoping its third anniversary is just another milestone on the road to many more decades at the heart of village life.

After all, the Raven isn't simply a pub. It's Glazebury's living proof that when a community believes in itself, remarkable things can happen.

Deadline for the September issue is August 18



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A SECOND CHANCE to invest in THE RAVEN

The third anniversary of the Raven Inn Community Pub is fast approaching, on the 12th of August.

There are still shares available from the original share offer. The Raven will now make those shares available.



“Spokesperson Peter Sturman says, “This community pub adventure really is a marathon, not a sprint. Now is the time to have some new energy and ideas added to the mix.”



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A second chance to invest in the Raven

The third anniversary of the Raven Inn Community Pub is fast approaching, on the 12th of August.

The Raven shareholders committed just under £200,000 in the original share offer. This funded the renovation of the community pub, including a completely new kitchen.

There are still shares available from the original share offer. The Raven will now make those shares available.

Spokesperson Peter Sturman says, "After three years, a lot of Community pubs give their community a second opportunity to invest in their community pub."

"Sadly some of our original shareholders are no longer with us. New people have moved into the area. Also anyone who wasn't sure about the viability of a community pub, back in the day, now has the evidence of the last three years."

"You are not going to make a fortune, although you will be able to claim 30% tax relief on your

investment (providing that investment is for at least three years). If you invest at least £500, you will be entitled to 10% discount at the Raven.

"What you will get is you will become part of a community adventure at the heart of our villages."

"You will be buying shares in your own community - keeping a community asset alive for all to enjoy."

"If you wish, you can help out in the pub. Some of our current shareholders help out front of house, clean the windows, cut the grass, organise the weekly quiz, run events, and most importantly they become our most loyal customers."

"Any funds raised will be invested in the Raven. That could be replacing worn out equipment, purchasing different equipment, repairing / replacing infrastructure, for example."

Peter added: "We want to build on what has been achieved. This

community pub adventure really is a marathon, not a sprint."

"Now is the time to have some new energy and ideas added to the mix."

"Anyone thinking about becoming a shareholder has the ideal opportunity to see what it is all about, this month."

"We have many special events to mark our third anniversary."

On the 9th The Raven hosts the NHS Ride of Thanks in aid of 'The Greater Manchester Blood Bikes charity'.

Regular patrons will know all about the Greek night, on Saturday 15th August. The brainchild of

shareholder Yannis Nicolaidis and now an annual favourite.

Not only a fantastic evening, but also an example of how shareholders can and do become part of the community adventure.

The 3rd anniversary party for the Raven is on Friday 21st. The Harper Bros return for the biggest and best feel good Friday to date.

Anyone interested in becoming part of the Raven Inn adventure, please contact the Raven Inn Management Committee at info@theraveninn.org

The Raven will be closed on Mondays moving forward for maintenance works.



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Delight at completion of pavement works

INDEPENDENT Councillor Neil Johnson has expressed his delight following the completion of works to clear the pavements along Wilton Lane in Culcheth.

Cllr Johnson has been campaigning for some time for significant works to be carried out to clear the pedestrian route along this stretch of narrow road. Due to a build up of dirt, weeds and grass, it had become impassable, so much so that the pavement itself could not actually be seen!

Concerned that anyone on foot would be placed in a dangerous

situation, Neil pressed Warrington Borough Council to undertake a temporary road closure and use heavy duty equipment to completely clear the overgrown pavements.

Neil maintains it will deliver significant benefits to the village.

He said: "For many months, residents throughout Culcheth and Croft have expressed their concern at the dreadful state of Wilton Lane.



"This is a main arterial route in and out of our villages, as well as being a link road between Warrington and the neighbouring Wigan council area. For it to be impassable by pedestrians was absurd.

"This is a popular route for people to walk, over the famous chequered bridge by the golf course. Without a pavement, it was highly dangerous. No one should have to walk on the road because the pavements have not been maintained.

"This excellent scheme of work saw temporary traffic lights installed and a partial road closure while the work was undertaken. All of this was done with minimal disruption and the end result will make a huge difference.

"This goes to show the positive

difference that having an Independent councillor makes. Local concerns don't have to fight for attention within a divided political group. Instead, they are taken directly to the highest levels and results are achieved.

"I am pleased to have secured this investment in Culcheth and Croft. It forms part of my ongoing work to ensure that the whole community is cleaned up and looking its best for the future."

Neil is pictured inspecting the works, which took place during the recent heatwave. He hopes residents will forgive him for not wearing his usual striped jacket on this occasion! Neil's foot is perched on the pile of mud and soil that was removed from just one section of the pavement!

Give us a Cluedo

It's a dark and stormy night and you've been invited to a very unusual dinner party. Each of the guests has an alias, the butler offers a variety of weapons, and the host is, well...dead.

So Whodunnit? Join the iconic oddballs known as Miss Scarlet, Professor Plum, Mrs White, Reverend Green, Mrs Peacock and Colonel Mustard as they race to find the murderer in Boddy Manor before the body count stacks up. Based on the cult classic film and the popular board game, Cluedo is a madcap comedy that will keep you guessing until the final twist.

Culcheth Players are currently rehearsing the production which will be staged in Newchurch Parish Hall, in Culcheth (next to Sainsbury's). The dates are Friday 11th and Saturday 12th September and the following weekend Friday 18th and Saturday 19th September. Doors open at 7pm and the show starts at 7.30pm. It will finish at around 9.45pm. As always, complimentary refreshments will be served in the interval.

Tickets are £10 (including booking fee) and are available online at www.ticketsource.co.uk/culchethp or they can be reserved on 07943 517710. You can also

pay on the door (£10, cash only). There is step-free access throughout the hall.

Whilst directed at an adult audience, the play is also suitable for older children and has become something of a cult favourite, often being performed by schools and colleges.

Culcheth Players have welcomed some new members this year and are always keen to recruit more—not just for acting roles, but backstage too. Rehearsals are held on Monday and Wednesday nights in the parish hall. If you fancy joining them, come along or contact them on the above telephone number.

Following their September play, the next production will be the annual panto in January 2027. It's always a sell-out and is a good place to start if you fancy being involved. Rosemary Powell School of Dance performs in the panto and is looking for more dancers to join the performances.

If you have a little one who would like to take part, contact Rosemary on 07840 536333 or email rpowell5556@gmail.com. The dancers are always a delightful addition to the panto.

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Local garden centre awarded "best family experience"

GLAZEBURY-based Bents Garden & Home has been named Best Family Experience at the prestigious 2026 Cheshire Muddy Stiletto Awards, recognising its commitment to creating memorable days out for families from across the region.

The award, which celebrates outstanding local businesses, was decided through public nominations and votes with almost half a million nominations and votes cast nationally across 21 categories. Bents triumphed over an impressive shortlist, which included Chester Zoo, to take home the coveted regional title.

The recognition comes at an exciting time for the family owned and run destination centre, which continues to invest in creating engaging experiences for visitors of all ages. From its seasonal events and attractions, including the recently launched Dinosaurs in the Hidden Garden, to its award-winning dining and retail offering, Bents has become a destination where families can enjoy spending quality time together throughout the year.

Matthew Bent, Managing Director at Bents Garden & Home said: "We're absolutely delighted to have been named Best Family Experience in the Cheshire Muddy Awards."

To receive this recognition through public nominations and votes makes it even more special as it reflects the support of our fantastic customers and colleagues.

"Creating memorable experiences for families has always been at the heart of what we do. Whether visitors come to enjoy one of our seasonal events, explore the store or simply spend time together at one of our dining destinations, we strive to make every visit special. We'd like to thank everyone who took the time to vote for us."

The Muddy Awards celebrate the very best independent businesses from across the UK, recognising excellence in categories ranging from hospitality and retail to family attractions and wellbeing. This year's awards reached more than 11 million people nationally, highlighting exceptional businesses that make a positive contribution to their local communities



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Villagers turn out in force for colour

CROFT village was transformed into a bustling hub of community spirit as hundreds of residents gathered for the annual Croft Carnival.

The highly anticipated parade featured spectacular floats and was followed by a vibrant afternoon of festivities on the Croft Playing Fields.

The village was alive with vibrant colours, music, and unwavering community spirit for the beloved annual Croft Carnival.

The spectacular event proved once again why it is one of the most highly anticipated events on the local calendar.

The festivities officially kicked off as the grand parade departed from The Plough. Villagers lined the streets to cheer on a brilliant procession of decorated floats, tractors, and fancy-dress participants.

Among the standout displays was a packed float by the pupils of Croft Primary School, which garnered widespread applause from the crowd.

Following the parade, the action shifted over to Croft Playing Fields for an afternoon of non-stop family fun. The grounds were packed with market stalls, thrilling rides, and live

entertainment that kept locals and visitors alike thoroughly engaged.

Attendees who purchased the official entry program were treated to a diverse itinerary of activities throughout the day. The afternoon provided a perfect opportunity for locals to catch up, celebrate village traditions, and enjoy the summer weather.

The local Parish Council and policing teams worked closely with event organisers to manage traffic and minimise disruption to the village.

As the day's celebrations wound down, organisers took to social media to express their gratitude to the local community.

The Official Croft Carnival Facebook Page posted a heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended, volunteered, and sponsored the event.

With the 2026 edition now in the books, the community will look forward to another stellar year of float-building, fundraising, and festivities in 2027.

Pictures: Brian Tuohey



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ful Croft Carnival



The Gardening Guide



Continue to feed & water tomatoes regularly, making sure that the plants are evenly moist.

Simon Bax,
Plant Area Specialist

- Dahlias will be at their best now and will need feeding, watering and dead heading to keep them performing for as long as possible
- Keep the pond well oxygenated when the weather is hot by running water features or spraying the surface with a hose
- Animals are starting to prepare for the winter so ensure you are offering a wide range of food
- Stop feeding roses now as you will encourage them to produce soft sappy growth which will be more prone to winter damage or disease and dieback



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Call for "root and branch review" following resignation of third parish clerk in as many years

INDEPENDENT Councillor Neil Johnson has called for a "root and branch review" of Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council after Parish Clerk Cheyenne Bower, the third person to hold the role in as many years, announced her departure after just six months.

In a statement published on Facebook, Ms Bower said: "I would like to inform residents that I have today resigned from my role as Parish Clerk at Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council.

"I have worked hard for the last six months to turn things around at the council and believe I have transformed things internally- though that may not yet be apparent to outsiders.

"I have updated policies, balanced the books, completed the internal and external audits and opened the accounts for inspection by the public.

"It is part of the job description for me to advise members on the legality of their actions and decisions. Unfortunately, this has caused conflict with those who don't want to follow the law.

"These same members have the majority and therefore decided that upon completion of my six month probation, they didn't want to offer me the security of a permanent position.

"I have already proved myself against all odds and will not be forced to endure any more of the toxicity and bullying, without any job security behind me.

"Thank you to Chris, Janet, Ben,

Neil, Bernie and Val for your support.

"I think it says everything when even my two very public previous enemies have recognised that I have done a good job and earned a permanent role."

Reacting to the latest developments, Cllr. Johnson says: "Cheyenne Bower's statement is a vindication of all those who have challenged the current ways and means by which the Parish Council is run.

"Her remarks, which imply that certain elected members have implied that they do not wish to follow the law are very serious indeed and are deserving of a full investigation.

"Although I have disagreed politically with Ms Bower on many occasions (and, I am sure, I will do so again), she speaks powerfully about a dangerous culture that has consumed village politics and which must be brought to light and rooted out.

"The Parish Council in Culcheth and Glazebury must now recruit its fourth Clerk in as many years. By any measurement, this is not a common or tenable situation.

"I believe there must be a root and branch review encompassing all aspects of the Parish Council's operation. All members of the

Labour/Conservative Coalition should be properly scrutinised and, where failings are identified, held to account.

"The Borough Council must commission such a review without delay.

"Enough really is enough."

In response, Councillor Alicia Edwards, Chair of Culcheth & Glazebury Parish Council said: "Culcheth & Glazebury Parish Council acknowledges the resignation of the Parish Clerk and thanks her for her service over the past six months. We appreciate the work undertaken during her employment and wish her every success in her future career.

"As this relates to an individual

employment matter, it would not be appropriate for the Council to comment on personal opinions, employment discussions or confidential staffing matters. The Council has a legal duty to respect employee confidentiality and will continue to do so.

"The Parish Council remains committed to serving the residents of Culcheth and Glazebury, maintaining high standards of governance, and ensuring that the Council continues to operate effectively during this period of transition.

"Our priority remains delivering services to the community and working positively for the benefit of our residents."



Cheyenne Bower is 😞 feeling disappointed.

5h · 🌐

I would like to inform residents that I have today resigned from my role as Parish Clerk at Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council.

I have worked hard for the last six months to turn things around at the council and believe I have transformed things internally- though that may not yet be apparent to outsiders.

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Thank you to Chris, Janet, Ben, Neil, Bernie and Val for your support.

I think it says everything when even my two very public previous enemies have recognised that I have done a good job and earned a permanent role. [See less](#)



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Frustration leads to “Clean up Culcheth” campaign amid council inaction

FED-UP villagers at Culcheth have taken matters into their own hands, launching a community-led weeding and tidying blitz after growing tired of waiting for the local authority to clear “dreadful,” overgrown streets.

The grassroots “Clean Up Culcheth” campaign has seen local businesses and residents unite to transform the area, despite scorching temperatures and questions over where their Council Tax money is being spent.

The campaign was sparked after independent Culcheth & Glazebury parish councillors Bernie Kingston and Neil Johnson both received a wave of complaints from local residents regarding the heavily overgrown state of pavements, kerbs, and alleyways.

On June 9, Cllr Kingston contacted Warrington Borough Council (WBC) Highways department to report the issues. While WBC responded quickly—stating that their Woolston Depot and a Highways Inspector would handle the complaint—residents remained deeply unsatisfied with the broader lack of routine council maintenance.

Following a discussion on Cllr Kingston’s public Facebook group on June 10, locals voiced anger that the council frequently relies on “quick sprays” rather than proper, regular upkeep. Others flagged further issues, including overgrown hedges and trees blocking local

pathways.

The turning point came on June 16, when a resident highlighted a corner at Lodge Drive and Common Lane on social media, describing it as “shabby and unloved.” Just two days later, the same resident spent an entire day single-handedly clearing the site. The massive effort resulted in 36 bags of waste being removed and taken to the local tip. The community momentum quickly escalated from there.

Cllr Kingston and four residents spent hours clearing weeds from pavements, kerbs, and around street bollards. Independent Councillor Neil Johnson joined the effort, personally clearing an overgrown alleyway.

Residents and businesses have now started clearing pavements, mowing unsightly grass verges, and planting sunflowers and bedding plants around road signs and lampposts.

The campaign spread to the neighbouring village of Glazebury, where residents launched their own localised cleanup operations.

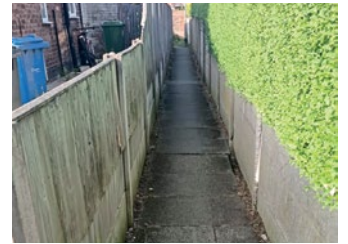
While WBC recently mowed the main village green, residents noted that residential grass verges were left completely untouched, fueling

the community’s drive to finish the job themselves.

“All this hugely improves the look of our villages and I’m truly grateful to all those who have joined in,” Cllr Kingston said, praising the community spirit during the extreme hot weather. However, the parish councillor concluded with a sharp reminder to the borough authority: “We shouldn’t have to do this ourselves, but we gave up waiting for WBC.”

Fellow independent Cllr. Johnson also expressed his delight after a successful initiative to Clean up Culcheth.

Warrington Borough Council directs residents wishing to report potholes or damage to roads, pavements, and footpaths to submit concerns directly through the official Warrington.gov.uk portal.



Independent Voice

by Independent Councillor Neil Johnson



In the community

I wanted to use this edition of Culcheth Life to provide residents with an update on some of the issues that I am (and have been) working on, on your behalf. I am striving to address the issue of the hedge cutting near **Culcheth High School** as well as in **Glazebury**. These hedges were cut during nesting season and the work seems to have been carried out very carelessly. I have asked the Council to investigate who has done this and why. I would also like a proper, defined schedule for this work. Efforts are ongoing to address the dangerous trees in **Crossfield Avenue** and **Poplar Avenue** which are “leaning” and have overhanging branches. They need to be inspected, cut back and made safe. There has been a great deal of double parking on **Wigshaw Lane** recently, along with vehicles parked near the junction. I have asked Traffic officers to explore whether yellow lines could be painted here to put an end to this. The ginnel which runs between **Langcliffe Close** and **Pendle Gardens** has a number of broken knee rails. I have been on site clearing away the untidy, overgrown foliage and helping to install new rails.

The trees which border the path from **Lodge Drive** car park to **Common Lane**, beside the village green, are overhanging and dangerous. They need to be sensitively cut back. I have asked the Environment department at the Council to carry out this work. The alleyway between **Withington Avenue** and **Culcheth Hall Drive** is flooded. The grid at the Culcheth Hall Drive end is blocked and needs to be cleared. As residents have rightly said, this should be a priority piece of work.

Glazebury Solar Farm

The Labour Council recently approved a Solar Farm on Green Belt Land in Glazebury. I wrote to the local MP on behalf of all residents to ask her to refer this matter to the Secretary of State for review. I am sorry to report that I received no reply to my letter. I have issued a newsletter to the village to update the community on this disappointing development.

Proposed Housing Developments

I am in regular communication with residents in **Croft** regarding the proposed **Turret Hall Farm** development on land north of Lord Street, and residents in **Culcheth** regarding the proposed development on Green Belt land near the Linear Park. Again, I will be issuing newsletter updates to people in these areas very soon. My stance on these matters is unequivocal: we are seeing too many new developments being proposed in our community. Our infrastructure and resources simply cannot cope with the addition of so many properties, which in turn will increase the number of cars on the road. I will fight these plans and stand shoulder to shoulder with residents who oppose these schemes. The Council must look again and revise their Local Plan to ensure that our area is not overloaded with new developments.

Neil

Cllr Neil Johnson | Independent Councillor for Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft

Get in touch: 07977 825296 | CllrNeil.Johnson@warrington.gov.uk

Neil Johnson – Independent Councillor for Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft

This page is funded and paid for by Cllr. Neil Johnson and does not represent the views of Culcheth Life or its publishers Orbit News Ltd.

Rotary Culcheth & District CULCHETH BEER FESTIVAL

CULCHETH BEER FESTIVAL 2026

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Return of Culcheth Beer Festival



CULCHETH & District Rotary are repeating their "Culcheth Charity Beer Festival" on Friday and Saturday, September 18th and 19th, at The Village Club on Wigshaw Lane in Culcheth.

Friday will run from 5 pm to 11 pm, with Saturday opening from noon to 11 pm.

There will be an offering of 24 cask ales sourced again from 4T's Brewery, draught ciders and lagers, plus a Fizz Bar, live entertainment with hot food to be served by The Village Club. Soft drinks will also be available for children and drivers.

To gain fast-track entry to the event, Rotary will be selling a

limited number of advance tickets. These will be available from the Village Club and include free tokens for a first drink. There will be a pay-on-the-door option available too, but these won't include free drink tokens. Entry will be £5 and include the Festival Programme, live music and a souvenir glass.

Follow updates on the Club's website at www.culchethbeerfestival.com

Family fun run raises funds for Culcheth Library

On Saturday, 11th July, Friends of Culcheth Library held a successful Family Fun Run on the Village Green, supported by members of Culcheth Rotary.

The event got off to an energetic start with a warm-up session led by Keep Fit Sue, before David, the Culcheth Fairy and President of Culcheth Rotary, led participants on the fun run around the Village Green. Everyone who took part did a fantastic job and thoroughly enjoyed the morning.

Janet Evans from Friends of Culcheth Library said: "Although the hot weather meant the turnout was smaller than we had hoped, the event was a great success and raised valuable funds for the library. The money will go towards installing a knee-high fence at the front of the library to help protect the garden and lawn from damage caused by motorbikes and bicycles, giving newly planted flowers and shrubs a better chance to thrive."



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MP welcomes pupils from Croft Primary into Parliament



PUPILS from Croft Primary School paid a visit to Warrington North MP Charlotte Nichols in Parliament as part of a school trip to London.

Visiting Parliament was a great opportunity for Croft Primary School to learn about the history of democracy in our country, and to ask questions directly to their MP who represents them.

Pupils were treated to a tour of Parliament, including Westminster Hall. This was followed by a workshop.

It is not only as citizens of tomorrow that it is important to involve children, but also to include them in our debates of today.

Charlotte said: "It was wonderful to welcome Croft Primary School into Parliament today, as part of their trip to London, on my last day in Westminster before the Summer Recess!

"The children had some fantastic questions and were so engaged with the programme of learning from Parliament's Education Centre, which is such a fantastic

resource for visiting schools that I cannot recommend enough."

Headteacher Mrs Mains added: "It was a privilege for our pupils to visit Parliament and experience first-hand where many of the decisions that shape our country are made.

"We are incredibly grateful to Charlotte Nichols MP for taking the time to meet with the children and answer their thoughtful questions.

"The visit brought their learning about democracy and British values to life, and the pupils returned to school feeling inspired, informed and proud to have had such a memorable opportunity."

Schools can book a free Education Visit on the Parliament website, and travel can be funded by up to 85%. More information can be found here: learning.parliament.uk/en/session-workshop/tours-and-workshops/

learning.parliament.uk/en/schools-and-colleges/travel-subsidy/Education

If you have a school or community group visiting Parliament and you would like to meet Charlotte during a visit, please email: charlotte.nichols.mp@parliament.uk



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**SATURDAY
9TH AUGUST**



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IN AID OF

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**SATURDAY
15TH AUGUST**



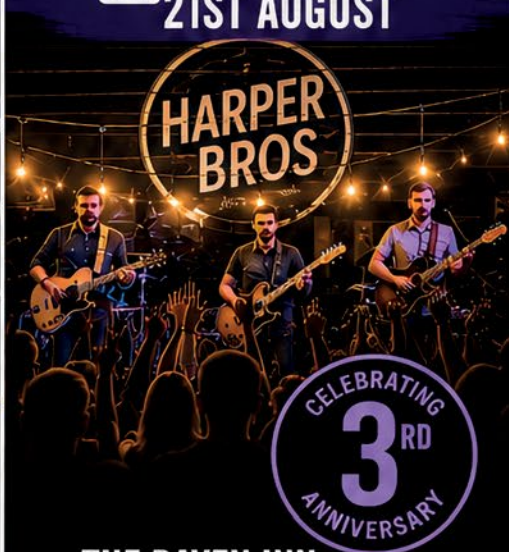
GREEK NIGHT

Our much loved Greek Night returns! The brainchild of shareholder **Yannis Nicolaidis** and now an annual favourite.

A fantastic evening and a perfect example of how our shareholders become part of the community adventure.

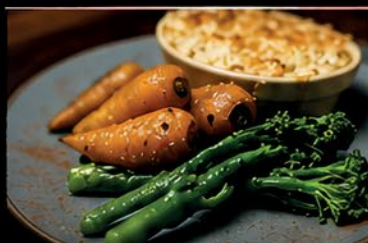


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