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July 2014

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Editor's Comment



WHILE I am not surprised Warrington Borough Council's Executive Board's decision to support the closure of Culcheth Sixth College has been called in for scrutiny - I do wonder what outcome can be achieved.

The College has already effectively "closed" for the future intake of pupils and the Governing Body has decided it is not financially viable to keep it open.

While I applaud local democracy and campaigning by local councillors and parents groups to fight what they perceive to be an injustice, I fear little can be now done to change the eventual outcome.

Maybe it is now time to draw a line under the issue and ensure

those seeking Sixth Form education can be easily accommodated elsewhere and receive the education they deserve.

Meanwhile Culcheth High School is an excellent facility and judging by the recent Ofsted report will hopefully continue to go from strength to strength.

Falling student numbers for the College would tend to suggest the demand for such a facility in the village is no longer required and while it is unfortunate, I can not see any road back.

As a former pupil and student at Culcheth Sixth Form I will be sorry to see it go - as I was sorry to see the old school be demolished - but

time moves on and I am sure many will agree that the new school facility is far better than what stood there before.

If any of the local councillors who have fought to have the decision called in for scrutiny can outline what benefit this will have or whether it will achieve a reversal in the decision I am happy to hear from them.

Deadline for the August issue of Culcheth Life is July 15

Car boot sale for soccer club

CULCHETH and Glazebury parish councillor Helena Campbell is organising a car boot sale to raise money for Culcheth Athletic Football Club.

The sale takes place at The Village Club, Wigshaw Lane, on Saturday, August 30 between 9am and 12 noon. Fee for pre-booked cars is £5.

Contact Helena on 01925 766558.

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Sixth form decision to be 'called in'

WARRINGTON Borough Council's decision to support the closure of Culcheth Sixth Form is to be "called in" for further scrutiny.

Following the Executive Board's decision to support the Governing Body in their plans to end post-16 provision in Culcheth, councillors from all three political groups have referred the matter to the Council's influential Scrutiny committee.

The "call-in" is led by Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft councillor Chirs Vobe and has been supported by 15 other members of the Council – the highest number of elected members to sign a "call-in" in recent years – including fellow Culcheth councillor Matt Smith and all three councillors from neighbouring Rixton and Woolston.

In a document submitted to Warrington Borough Council's solicitor, Cllr Vobe gave three reasons why support for the Governing Body's decision deserves further scrutiny.

He states that professional advice has not been given due consideration; that the decision lacks clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and that alternative options and their likely effects on the social, economic

and environmental well-being of the Borough have not been considered. Cllr Vobe and Cllr Smith believe that pursuing the closure of post-16 provision conflicts with the Council's policies of both "building stronger communities" and "protecting the most vulnerable".

The matter will now be heard in a public Scrutiny meeting, where Cllr Vobe will present the case on behalf of the 15 councillors who have signed the "call-in" and residents in the affected communities.

Cllr Vobe said: "Scrutiny is an important part of our Council's democratic process, as it allows elected councillors a further opportunity to consider issues after the Council's Executive Board has made a decision, and for those who represent a given area to present an alternative view point on behalf of their community.

"In this case, I have carefully considered the documents presented to the Executive Board and the issues raised by the Governing

Body of Culcheth High School. I believe that there are a number of important points which need greater consideration and, to that end, I have initiated this "call in". I am pleased that it has been counter-signed by 15 other councillors, from across all three political parties.

"Matt Smith and I will use the scrutiny process to present a comprehensive case in support of residents throughout Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft, and press for post-16 provision to be retained in our village."

Meanwhile Cllr Vobe is urging those who signed the "Save Culcheth Sixth Form" petition to attend the

meeting, which is open to any member of the public and has pledged to provide details of the date, time and venue when they are confirmed.



Pre School birthday party

A SPECIAL tea party is being held at Croft Early Years Pre School on Wednesday, July 16 - to mark the first birthday of the group's new building.

The event takes place between 1-3pm and will give parents and opportunity to see how the group is getting on 12 months after moving into their own, purpose-built premises in the grounds of St Lewis's RC Primary School.

Croft Early Years Pre School spent three and-a-half years funding raising for the new building and had previously had temporary homes at Croft Memorial Hall, St Lewis' Parish Hall and within St Lewis's school itself.

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Gambia trip provides Guide with most memorable times of her life

A CULCHETH Guide has returned from a trip to The Gambia – which she describes as seven of the most amazing and memorable days of her life.

Rosie Byrne, aged 16, a member of the 7th Culcheth Senior Section, went on the trip with 28 other Girl Guides.

They enjoyed a hands-on experience of the local culture, with guided tours to a local fishing village, a nature reserve, local markets, a performance by a local band, drumming and dance sessions and a visit to a women's garden.

Rosie said: "I wasn't expecting how warmly we were welcomed. We were made to feel like guests of honour as they proudly showed us their village and their way of life.

"By far the most rewarding experience was the two days we spent with the local Scouts and Guides. We ran sessions on Advocacy, The UN rights of the Child, Water Sanitation and Hygiene and Backwoods Cooking,

but we also played plenty of games and made friends.

"Those two days had their challenges but they were the most enjoyable and invaluable days of the trip. It made me realise how grateful I ought to be for all the things I have. Mostly it made me value my membership of Girl Guiding, and the amazing organisation it is, when I saw how important it was to the girls in The

Gambia.

"At the end of the second day with the Scouts and Guides we were invited back to join in their camp fire.

"Camp fire 'Gambian style' was incredibly joyful and entertaining, and like nothing we'd seen before. My trip to The Gambia was truly invaluable and one I'll always treasure."



Humorous poems were just their style

GUEST speaker Meg Thurston had members of Culcheth WI entertained and amused with her talk "Just My Style" – which included many of her own humorous poems.

She had written her first poem at school at the age of eight, winning a prize of three pence which, having a head for business, she managed to increase to half-a-crown by reading it to family and friends.

Later more poems were written and a book of these printed. All were sold and a reprint ordered with most of the proceeds going to a local hospice.

Meg was invited to stay for the annual afternoon tea which consisted of a fine assortment of sandwiches and crisps and a variety of fresh fruit and cream and cakes etc.

The raffle followed and prizewinners were Crid Lewis, Mary Bardsley, Ann Brew, Barbara Hartley, Lorna Mayoh, Myrtle Gerrard, Margaret Fletcher, Fanny Hainsworth and Sylvia Morris.

The next meeting will be on August 19 when Janet Bradshaw will give a talk entitled "Come into the Garden".

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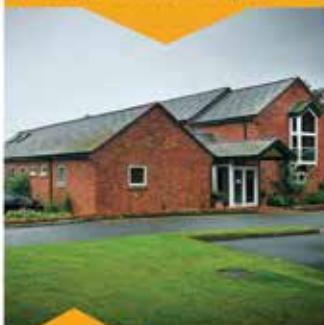
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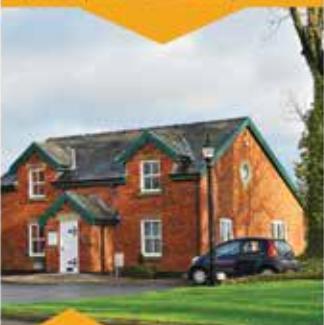


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Bus route changes leave residents 'disenfranchised'

MANY Culcheth residents have been left "completely disenfranchised" as a result of route changes to the No 19 bus service in the village, according to two local councillors.

Borough councillor Sue Bland and Culcheth and Glazebury parish councillor Paul Campbell are angry that the changes went ahead despite protests from local residents.

The route has been moved from Hob Hey Lane to Wigshaw Lane which completely disenfranchised a large swath of Culcheth residents, effectively barring them from access to local bus services, they claim.

Both councillors have been in contact with the bus company Network Warrington and the borough council to raise their and residents objections without success.

Clr Bland (pictured) said: "I am

still working to try and get the route reinstated and will work with or meet with anyone who can bring this about."

Clr Campbell said: "We have to be honest with this whole issue. Network Warrington are replying to residents and councillors with a standard letter setting out their reasons for changing the route as down to the size of the vehicles, the health and safety of passengers and the lack of use on this particular route.

"I find these excuses to be totally unacceptable. The health and safety aspect given for drivers turning at the Hob Hey Lane/Common Lane junction is strange to say the least

when drivers have been doing so without mishap for over 20 years. If the route does have low numbers maybe a smaller vehicle should be used.

"When I say we need to be honest I am calling on the bus company to come clean.

"As a public owned company it continues to get loans from Warrington Borough Council to keep it afloat yet reduces or does away with routes and at the same time raises prices by up to 25 per cent for this much reduced service.

"I have called in the past for there to be an open and frank discussion on the running of our bus company and that a serious look at private ownership should be considered before we lose the service to a mountain of debt and have to sell it off for pennies."

Rector's ministry started when he was five!

A RECTOR whose first experience of the ministry was playing at being a clergyman when he was only five was guest speaker at Croft WI's monthly meeting.

The Rev Michael Burgess, Rector of Warburton and Oughtington, said some members of his family thought it a little weird for so young a boy to be holding a pretend communion service with his granny,

but he now believed it was the start of his life-long commitment to God's service.

His talk was entitled "Faith, Fun and Fellowship", faith being his strong beliefs, fun, all the hilarious situations he experienced and fellowship being all the wonderful friends he made during his ministry.

He had many amusing and, sometimes, scary experiences to

relate – including one when he had to persuade a man holding a knife to his wife's throat not to commit murder!

The great enthusiasm and love of his work came across in his talk which even included a hearty rendition of a folk song.

He was thanked by president Doreen Clare.



Open Day

AN open day – complete with strawberry tea – is to be held at Culcheth's Age Concern Centre in Jackson Avenue on Friday, July 11.

Admission is free but there will be a £2 charge for the tea.

Trading Standards officers, the police and Life Time will be there with help and advice for the Over 50s.

The event takes place between 2pm and 4pm.

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Villagers commemorate 70th anniversary of D-Day

TO commemorate the 70th Anniversary of D Day, members of the Royal British Legion based at The Village Club, Culcheth, hosted a complimentary Afternoon Tea for local residents with entertainment and a short service, led by Winston Churchill lookalike, local councillor Paul Campbell.



Award Winning Village Club

A little over 3 years ago, the Club was close to folding, with membership dropping to 100 people and debts mounting.

Since then, with a lot of hard work, everything is very different. At the RBL County AGM in 2013 and again, in 2014, the Village Club has been recognised as the, "Fastest Growing Club in the Region" and we now have nearly 500 members and the average age has fallen considerably!

When asked to comment on this meteoric rise, Club Chairman, Les Styles said, "Since Warren Bibby became involved, we've improved little by little, everyday.

"The club is a great place to spend your time, whether its sporting events like The World Cup, Tribute Nights, like Take That or Sunday Lunch followed by our World Famous Meat Raffle, with Chris and Lewis.

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Anger as homes plan approved

COUNCILLORS have reacted with anger and disappointment to a decision by a government-appointed planning inspector to allow housing development on the site of the former M&S Discount store at Glazebury.

Part of the site is Green Belt land which will be lost when the plan for 14 luxury homes goes ahead.

An angry Cllr Chris Vobe said: "There has always been support for renovating the former Discount Store site by removing the disused filling station and landscaping the area.

"We have always supported homes for local people being built there.

"But there should be no negotiation on the Green Belt. Once the boundary is breached, it opens the floodgates for more."

Cllr Sue Bland said: "It is a disappointing decision. It would have been an ideal site for affordable homes.

"But something had to be done – the site is an absolute eyesore on the approach to Glazebury.

"Only a small amount of Green Belt land is affected."

Earlier this year, the borough council threw out proposals for

housing on the site.

Planning chiefs said they were not opposed in principle to housing but were opposed to the use of Green Belt land.

Cllr Vobe said Glazebury residents had fought to protect Green Belt land around the village for years.

There had always been support for removing the former discount store and petrol station and for building homes suitable for local people.

He added: "The kind of housing being proposed here is not what Glazebury wants or needs. When these plans were first announced, our community overwhelmingly called for homes which were affordable for the sons and daughters of local people. Instead,

this development will price people out of the area – jeopardising the security of the Green Belt at the same time!"

Award for Mersey Forest chief

CULCHETH resident Paul Nolan, director of the Warrington-based Mersey Forest, was awarded an OBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours list – an award which acknowledges people who have been recognised nationally for their major role in local and regional activities.

Mr Nolan has lead The Mersey Forest team at Risley Moss Nature Reserve, Birchwood, for 13 years, and has worked in the organisation for 20 years. He is married with three sons.

His work has seen almost 1.5 million trees planted in Warrington

– with more than nine million planted across Merseyside and North Cheshire.

He said: "I am surprised and delighted. It's great that the achievements of The Mersey Forest have been recognised in this way.

"I've been really lucky to work with some fantastic people to help create The Mersey Forest. While I take great personal pride in everything the partnership has achieved over the last 20 years, I'm really grateful to all of my colleagues for making this happen."



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The Gardening Guide JULY

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Parish hall's new roof is completed

WORK has been completed on the re-roofing of Culcheth's Newchurch Parish Hall – some three months after the church won a grant of £18,540 to enable the project to go ahead.

People attending events at the hall will again be able to stay dry – whatever the weather.

Funding for the roof has come from The Veolia Environmental Trust who awarded the grant through the Landfill Communities Fund.

In addition to the new roof, access to a storeroom in the hall has also been improved as part of a separate project.

The vicar, Rev Chris Stafford said: "We are delighted that work is complete.

"Previous projects have made the hall more accessible to people with disabilities, and the new roof has made it even more fit-for-purpose."

Paul Taylor, executive director at Veolia said: "Over the last five years we have awarded £642,192 to community and environmental projects in Cheshire and it is always great to hear when one is complete. I hope that the new roof means that the parish hall is used and enjoyed by the community of Culcheth for many years to come."

Newchurch Parish Hall consists of two adjoining halls with a shared kitchen, toilets and storage areas.

The old felt and metal main roof of the larger hall, built in around 1960, needed replacement as it had deteriorated badly.

Newchurch Parochial Church Council led the project to replace the roof and improve the guttering and

drains.

The popular hall is used for a wide range of community groups, activities and events including karate, dance, Tumble Tots and WI as well as for concerts and fairs.

The new roof will ensure that the hall is dry and comfortable and allow these activities to continue and also improve the building's insulation.

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Twitter @ChrisVobe1

Summer Playscheme

Following the great success of last year's summer playscheme, the Parish Council has decided to fund the activity again this year. The playscheme is promoted by Warrington Borough Council and operated by Tinies North West. The playscheme is aimed at children aged 5 to 11 years and activities include art, music, dance and games. In Croft the playscheme will operate at the Croft Youth Base on Smithy Lane and will be held on weekday afternoons between 1pm and 3pm from 28th July until 15th August.

Attendance is on a first come first served basis but priority will be given to children who live in Croft parish or who attend one of its schools. A charge of £2 per afternoon session will be payable for each attendee.

A downloadable pre-registration booking form is available on the Parish Council's webpage together with the Tinies North West address to which the form should be submitted.

Residents may contact Mike Pope, Croft Parish Council's Clerk on 01925 733766 or Email: croftparishcouncil@gmail.com Twitter: [@croftparish](https://twitter.com/croftparish) Web: www.croftvillagecheshire.co.uk

Road Safety

The speed of some motorists travelling through the Parish has raised cause for concern. Last year the Parish Council asked for permission to erect a speed-activated warning sign to remind motorists of the speed limit and to try to encourage safer driving. This request was refused. The Parish Council persisted and asked for speed surveys to be undertaken at specified locations within the Parish. The results demonstrated the excessive speeds at which some were travelling and as a result the Borough Council has agreed to permit the Parish Council to erect a sign on the approach to St. Lewis' Primary School from Culcheth. The sign, which will be funded by the Parish Council, will be solar powered and should be in place in the near future.

Croft Carnival

On Saturday July 5th Croft Playing Field will be the venue for the annual Croft Carnival. A great day is in store for all who attend, so please come along. Tickets may be bought in advance or on the day.

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Daten FC Vets team do the 'Quadruple'

The Daten FC Vets team celebrate a fantastic 2013/14 season having been crowned Division 1 Champions of the Bolton Vets League, winners of both cup competitions and also being awarded the league crystal award for outstanding sportsmanship.

Commenting on the season manager Paul Kellet said: "This season has been brilliant for everyone associated with the team and to win 4 trophies is simply unbelievable! To say we are delighted is an understatement and no doubt we will be the team to beat next season!"

Crowning ceremony will be all-girl affair

IN a break with tradition, crown bearers at this year's Croft Carnival will be girls.

That means with carnival queen Georgia Hayes and carnival princess Hannah Garbutt, rosebud Popsy Walker, and their attendants Olivia Bellas, Makenzy Haslam, Rosa Sakh, Sophia Houghton, Sophia Gregory and Isabella Field the crowning ceremony will be an all-girl affair.

The carnival takes place on Saturday July 5, starting with a parade of floats from The Plough at Kenyon Lane at 12 noon, the walking parade joining in at the Memorial Hall 25 minutes later and the official opening being at the playing field at 1.15pm.

A fun packed afternoon is planned with be a variety of stalls and fairground rides.

There will be entertainment from Galloping Acrobatics, Wild Birds of Prey display, Punch and Judy and Professor Pumpernickel – The Mad Scientist is back by popular demand.

Music will be provided by Eclipse New Orleans Jazz band and Tyldesley Brass Band.

The afternoon draws to a close with novelty races and the famous egg throwing competition!

Queen Georgia, aged 15, is a pupil at Culcheth High School.

She says she loves the spirit of Croft Carnival and is looking forward to representing the village as Carnival Queen while Princess Hannah, aged eight, is a pupil at St. Lewis's School.

Rosebud Popsy attends Croft Primary School.



Cherry Climbers complete Three Peak challenge

NINE friends from Culcheth took on the notorious three peak challenge, climbing the highest mountains in Scotland, England and Wales, Ben Nevis, Scafell and Snowden, to raise awareness and money for "Reverse Rett."

The team named the Cherry Climbers was inspired by 14-year-old Beth Stephenson (pictured right), who suffers from the rare condition and requires 24 hour care. Her father Andrew was a former pupil at Culcheth High School and his friends decided to take on the challenge to help raise funds.

The challenge was completed in 23 hours 10mins, having started on Ben Nevis (4408ft), followed by a 270 mile mini bus journey to Scafell (3209ft) in the Lake District, and another 230 mile mini bus journey to Snowden (3560ft) finishing just under 24 hours later... Having set a sponsorship target of £2000 the team raised money in a number of ways, including:

- www.justgiving.com/cherryclimbers
- Sponsorship forms in their respective work places
- Football Cards
- Sale of Wrist bands
- Sweep stakes on sporting events including the Froch / Groves Boxing and England World Cup Matches
- Raffles

Rett Syndrome is a neurological

disorder that affects seemingly healthy little girls, striking around the time of their first birthday and ending their parents' and dreams for their future. It takes away their ability to walk, talk and use their hands, causes breathing and eating problems and many girls have seizures.

However, there is hope, in 2007 Rett Syndrome was reversed in the lab! Reverse Rett was founded by parents of girls with Rett Syndrome, they are committed to research and driving the science to its ultimate conclusion: An effective treatment for Rett Syndrome.

Team Members were Chris Mayoh, Richard Platt, Jim Fecitt, Paul Davison, Glynn Teasdale, Alan Evans, Neil Roscoe, Barry Grell and Adam Peacay.



Brave trio took the plunge for life saving equipment

A brave trio took the plunge with a sponsored sky dive to help raise funds for life saving equipment at two "great Culcheth based sporting institutions".

Chris Bibby, who organised the event as part of his 18th birthday celebrations, is pictured presenting a defibrillator to Phil Gaskell Chairman of Culcheth Athletic Junior FC along with his Uncle Wayne Bibby and

friend Lewis Smith, who all took the plunge with a 14,000ft skydive that helped to buy two defibrillators with full training support packages for Culcheth Athletic Junior FC and also for Leigh Golf Club.

Initially a defibrillator was going to be donated to Culcheth Eagles Junior Rugby but prior to the day of the skydive they had already been donated one so it was agreed

to donate the other one to another great Culcheth institution the local Golf Club.

Wayne Bibby said : " The day was a memorable one and we are so pleased that we managed to raise enough funds to buy the equipment and help to raise awareness of the importance of having this type of equipment on site at local venues within our Village.

"We would like to thank all of our sponsors especially Sainsburys, The Village Club, Leigh Golf Club, Culcheth Athletic Junior FC, Hunter Healey Accountants, Dr Stephen Coogan from Promedsol and his colleagues Gary Collins and Lee Anderson, who carried out the Defibrillator training session for members of Culcheth Athletic Junior FC."



Newly elected councillor gets straight to work



Newly-elected councillor Matt Smith has already set to work on a number of issues following his election victory.

The Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft councillor promised after his win was announced that he would not only concentrate on the "big issues", but would ensure that proper attention was given to smaller projects and local priorities in each of the villages.

Cllr Smith said: "I was delighted that local people across all three villages put their trust and faith in me at this year's election. I will now work hard to show them that their trust was not misplaced.

"Already, I have set to work resolving a number of issues that were raised with me during my campaign, as well as continuing to pursue long-standing projects that I have worked on throughout the past two years.

"I have spoken with residents of Culcheth Hall Drive and Withington Avenue, who are dismayed at the graffiti which has been sprayed on the ginnel that connects these two roads. We are working to have this removed by our Street Services Team as quickly as possible.

"Along with parish councillor Mike Vobe, I have asked for a replacement street sign to be installed on Lowther Avenue, where the current one has been badly damaged in a car accident.

"We are liaising with Golden Gates Housing Trust to bring about repairs and improvements for residents in areas like Crofton Gardens and Warrington Road.

"And we have already secured a guarantee that additional road repairs will be carried out on streets including Broadhurst Avenue, Kirby Road, and Spring Lane to address the many pot holes and defects that residents have had to endure in those areas. These repairs will be carried out in the next few weeks, and should represent a vast improvement."

The two councillors have also pledged to continue supporting local community groups, including the Culcheth and District Rail Action Group (CADRAG) and the Glazebury Play Area Committee.

Cllr Smith concluded: "It doesn't matter if the problems affects the whole village, a single street, or even just one house – along with our Helen Jones MP and our hard-working parish councillors, we will strive to bring about the best resolution for local families and fight for more investment in Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft."

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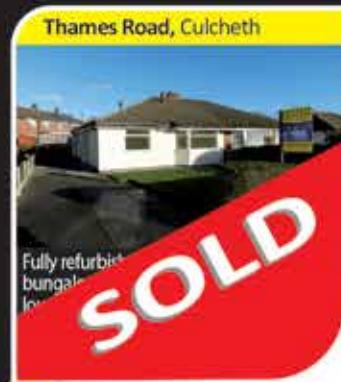
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