

WP News

Westminster Park Residents' Association



Bringing our community alive

www.wp-ra.org.uk


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Notes from The Chair

Welcome to our December issue of WP News.

We have had a busy autumn with a sell out quiz at the Community Centre, a public meeting to discuss new plans released by Taylor Wimpey for their site behind Five Ashes/Rowcliffe Avenue and Sherbourne Avenue and most recently the announcement by the Council that they have decided to hold a competition to appoint an academy trust to establish and run the new Kings Moat school.

Taylor Wimpey plans

Following the refusal of their previous plans, Taylor Wimpey (TW) have come back with new plans and a willingness to seek the views of local residents. Further to our earlier objections that the planned houses backing on to WP residents' homes were not of a similar size and character, TW have redesigned the boundary houses to reflect neighbouring properties more closely. They are also consulting on the nature and ownership of the boundary buffer area. A lively public meeting was held on 24 October to give residents the opportunity to view the plans and air their views – thank you to all who came.

Consultation on New School

Your views are sought as part of a consultation about the new school to be built on the Kings Moat estate. The 6 week consultation period will run until 17 December 2023. You can contribute via the Council's website or by email. Feedback will be used to help formulate the Council's specification for the new school issued to trusts competing to run the school.

Christmas Lights Switch-on

Our ever popular Christmas event is taking place on Tuesday 5 December and I do hope that you can join us to hear the Belgrave choir sing and celebrate the start of the Christmas season in Westminster Park. As usual, our shops will be providing festive food and drink for you to sample and Santa will be paying a visit to listen to your children's hopes and dreams. The Lord Mayor of Chester will be leading the countdown at 5pm and we look forward to seeing you there.

Finally, the WPRA Committee and I send you our warmest wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy and healthy New Year.

Jennifer Crew

Diary Dates

Wednesdays 10.00-12.00

Friends of Westminster Park meet behind the café & help maintain the Park

1st Tuesday of the month 7.30pm

WI, St Mary's Community Centre Handbridge

3rd Thursday of the month 2-3.30pm

Evergreen 55+ club, WP Community Centre

Sat 25 Nov 12.00-3.00pm

Christmas Fair, St Mary's Community Centre, Handbridge

Tues 5 Dec 5.00pm

Christmas Lights Switch On:

Westminster Park Shops

Fri 8 & Sat 9 Dec 7.30pm

A Choral Christmas. Chester Operatic Society. St Mary's Community Centre Handbridge

Tues 12 Dec 7.30pm

Traditional and seasonal music played by Anthony Mitchell at Grosvenor Museum

Wed 24 Jan 7.30pm

The sinking of HMS Thetis, a talk by Derek Arnold at the Venue, Lache Community Centre, CH4 8HX.

Join in the festive fun at our Christmas Lights Switch-On

5pm, Tuesday 5th December 2023
at Westminster Park shops



- Belgrave School Choir
- Visit Santa
- Festive Music & Carols
- The Lord Mayor of Chester
- Seasonal Refreshments

Organised by Westminster Park Residents' Association

Councillors' update

Matt Carter:

This autumn, I enjoyed working with local volunteers who turn up for everything from the Tidy Up outside the Westminster Park shops; Friends of Westminster Park and the sports' groups that use the park; WP Residents' Association meetings about planning debates on further development at Kings Moat. It is really good to see how local people get involved in the day-to-day business of the area and its future. If you have any comments and suggestions about any of these issues, please contact me if you would like me to raise them on your behalf.

It was good to visit the WP Croquet Club as it held a national final competition, attracting people from all over the country. This club is partially managed by the local authority, unlike many other croquet clubs, and is always keen to welcome new members. Croquet is suitable for all ages and fitness levels, so if you are thinking of giving it a go, (perhaps when the weather improves!) contact them: springboard_sally@hotmail.com. I have also heard from the cricket club as it explores renewing its playing surface in the park.

Local ward budget funds have been authorised for bulb planting at the park and the annual Christmas lights' switch on at Westminster Park shops.

I am available for face-to-face meetings to discuss and help in ward related issues.

I have now restarted monthly door knocking sessions, talking to you about what matters most and what I can do to help.

Matt.carter@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk. My Facebook page: Cllr Matt Carter – Handbridge Park Ward; 074515 689178.

Razia Daniels:

I continue to champion the installation of a safe pedestrian crossing and new paving across the Wrexham Road near Ash Grove and thank the many residents who signed the petition.

I was pleased to attend the public meeting to share information about the revised Taylor Wimpey proposals for further house building in the Westminster Park area. This is on-going, so I will continue to monitor the application in order to represent you.

Having received many comments and concerns about the traffic along Lache Park Avenue, I have contributed funding from my members' budget to the Highways Department for a speed and traffic volume survey and will share the results in due course. Pavements on Marlston Avenue and Rydal Grove have been improved after a report about their poor state.

Police Crime Commissioner John Dwyer has tasked an independent organisation, Victim Focus, to carry out a survey of women and girls in Cheshire aged 16+ about personal safety, crime and their experiences with the police. It is vital to hear from girls aged 16-17 as they are particularly likely to be victims of crime, but are often missed in other surveys as they are children. The survey is open until midday, Friday 1 December: <https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/l2mpYbKv>. You do not need to have been a victim of crime to take part.


Provision of school at Kings Moat

The Council has decided to start a Free School Presumption Process for the Wrexham Rd Housing Development. Consultation runs until 17 Dec and can be viewed here:

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/your-council/consultations-and-petitions/consultations/current-consultations/free-school-presumption-consultation-wrexham-road

To complete the survey, the link is: www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/WrexhamRd/

Handbridge Medical Centre: The proposal to relocate this practice has been scrapped due to lack of funding. The Practice Manager at HMC reports



1pm-4pm on Mondays
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Centre, CH4 7HL.

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WARM WELCOME SPACE

MP for the City of Chester

Since being elected as MP for the City of Chester, I have responded to almost 5,000 cases, putting more than £250,000 back into people's pockets by helping to navigate government bureaucracies. I have supported individuals with their housing and healthcare provision and investigated environmental issues such as sewage dumping in the River Dee and better train services in the region.

It was a privilege to speak at the recent Chester Residents' Association Group conference where plans for Chester's future were discussed. I am constantly impressed by the passion shown by people for every aspect of life in Chester, it is a very special place and I am prepared to work with them to address the many challenges faced by our community. If you need help or would like to share your thoughts on any issue, please get in touch:
samantha.dixon.mp@parliament.uk



that the Integrated Care Board is investigating renovation of the existing building. I will continue to monitor this.

Members' Budget: Funding was granted for Christmas lights, Christmas Tree, Summer Reading Challenge at Lache Library and spring bulbs for planting by our amazing volunteers and Neighbourhood Pride Funding went towards the wild flower area outside Lache Library.

If you have community projects requiring funding or have other concerns, contact me or come to my monthly street surgery: 1st Sat every month, 10am - 10.45am at Westminster Park shops.

Councillor Razia Daniels

Mobile: 07481234411

Email: razia.daniels@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Evergreen 55+ Club

Evergreen, the club for Westminster Park residents aged 55+, will finish the year in style with a Christmas party on Thursday 7 December and Christmas lunch at Chester Golf Club a week later.

As ever, it has been a busy year with sessions on court disasters, the Royal household, the Mersey, radiography in art, local geology and the Hospice movement plus quizzes and outings for afternoon tea at Blakemere and a summer trip to RHS Bridgewater. At the end of November we enjoyed a seasonal trip to the mansion at Tatton Park to admire the decorations and enjoy lunch. The Supper Club had another successful year, with outings to ten Chester restaurants enjoyed by many.

Our programme for 2024 has been produced and memberships are now being taken out for the year. Subscriptions are £10 for the calendar year and you also have to be a member of WPRA, for insurance purposes.

Meetings are at 2pm on the third Thursday of each month in the Community Centre, with complimentary coffee, tea and biscuits. We look forward to welcoming members old and new in 2024.

Supporting your Residents' Association

It's renewal time for Westminster Park Residents' Association with subscriptions due on 1 January. We really appreciate the support we receive from many residents in Westminster Park and Lache Park area – every contribution is very welcome.

For just £3 per year, per household, WPRA provides all of the following:

- 4 newsletters a year, delivered to over 1500 households
 - The WPRA website and Facebook page
 - Planting and maintaining the floral displays at WP shops
 - The regular 'Tidy-Up' around the shops
 - Quiz and supper nights
 - Many improvements to community areas
 - Liaison with our councillors and MP representing residents' opinions on planning matters
 - Parent organisation for Evergreen 55+, Supper Club and Gardening Club
 - Collecting your donations for the Friends of Westminster Park.
- All of the above, for just 25 pence a month!

Please help us by paying your contribution in cash, by cheque or online banking – all the details are on the form included with this newsletter. Completed forms can be left in WPRA post box in Bebbington's or can be posted through my door – Colin Dollimore, 5 Ludwell Close, Chester CH4 7RD 629167. Colin Dollimore, Membership Officer

Good News from Friends of Westminster Park

It was exciting to welcome a judge from RHS Britain in Bloom for the It's Your Neighbourhood awards to look around Westminster Park. He loved our woodland paths, the hedge-laying, wildflowers, bug boxes and our public engagement and we were awarded LEVEL 5 OUTSTANDING!

Bulb planting continues; many thanks to councillors Razia Daniels and Matt Carter for funding this spring colour.

We have started to prune selected lower branches on the trees in the car park and the chippings from this job will be used to top up the woodland paths. This will keep them nice for walking on during the winter and cheer up the car park - Win Win!



Going Strong at 50

The WI in Handbridge have plans for an exciting start to 2024 as members prepare to celebrate their 50th birthday in February – expect fun, fizz and fabulous cake to mark the occasion. Meanwhile, to end the current year, on Armistice Day a wreath was placed on their adopted Commonwealth war grave in Overleigh Cemetery.

There was a litter pick during Chester's Big Green Week and they are joining in the Santa Dash. With chocolate tasting in December and a talk on Cycling in Chester in January, there should

be something for every palate and personal interest!

Meetings are at 7.30pm on the first Tuesday of the month at St Mary's Handbridge Centre. Please contact Maureen on 01244 671304 for more details.



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Volunteers needed to support a large number of Afghan refugee children at Overleigh St Mary's Primary School, Chester.

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Hip Hip Hurray! 50 years and counting at our local Community Centre

It should come as no surprise to learn that Westminster Park Community Centre would not have taken shape 50 years ago without the vision of local volunteers plus a land grant from the then Duke of Westminster and funds from the Council, the Royal Air Force and all of those residents who bought a brick!

Some things don't change and the WP Community Centre continues to be strongly supported today by dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly to organise and promote a wide variety of activities throughout the week for the benefit of local people of every age, from playgroup and pre-school through to the Evergreen 55+ club. Incidentally, the Baby and Toddler group is in need of a leader – if you could help (contact WP-CC for details). Are you interested in: quiz nights; bingo; bridge; gardening; yoga; karate; Pilates; Zumba; WeightWatchers?

There are children's discos, special events for the new SEN and Siblings group, Evergreen's monthly talks on a huge variety of subjects, Sunday Church, bridge, a free weekly exercise class for girls aged 11+, stretching and mobility for seniors and an exciting new Open Mic night – everyone welcome - with instruments and amps provided!

There have been, and will be, celebrations galore, including the King's Coronation, the Centre's own half century, children's Christmas parties, and a grand New Year's Eve bash. In addition to the packed weekly schedule, the community bar is open to all (whether you are a member or not) every evening and during the day at the weekend. There are the traditional 'pub' games like darts and dominoes plus board games for children who are welcome until 9pm. And, of course, the hall is available to hire for private events.

Community spirit is built through participation and mutual support and our local centre offers the opportunity for us all to become more involved, either through joining an existing activity or perhaps introducing a new class or sport? Please get in touch: Westminster Park Community Centre Facebook page or wp-cc.org.uk.



Stretch and Smile

If you'd like to work on your fitness and flexibility this winter without exercising in the cold outdoors or at a sweaty gym session, try the friendly Stretching and Mobility class at Westminster Park Community Centre. Held on Tuesdays, 4-5pm, it costs £6 and is run by Viv, a qualified personal trainer and fitness instructor. Designed with seniors in mind, the class is as demanding as you want it to be, with seated and standing exercises chosen to strengthen mobility

and improve breathing techniques and balance. Gentle weights, stretch bands and Pilates blocks can also feature in the routines for extra challenge.

For details (and before attending your first class) contact Viv: 07511 759 322, email: personaltrainerviv@hotmail.co.uk.



Singing out for Christmas

The ever-popular Christmas concerts performed by Chester Operatic Society will take place on Friday 8 and Saturday 9 December at 7.30pm in St Mary's, Handbridge. 'A Choral Christmas' will feature the usual mix of traditional carols and Christmas songs, accompanied by a 5-piece band. Tickets, £16.50 and including mulled wine and a mince pie, are available from Brian Westcott (01244 675431) or Ticketsource.



**Westminster Park
Community Centre**

Christmas Party

Saturday 9th December
Time: 1.45-3.15
Age: Up to 8 years old
Cost: £4 per child
Disco and meet Father Christmas
Gift included
Advance ticket purchase essential




Drive Safely

Busy roads, new speed limits, drug and alcohol consumption, driving aids and public transport were all part of the conversation at the recent Drive Safely for Longer event in the community centre.

Organised by WPR and run by the council's Road Safety department, there were plenty of questions and answers during the workshop, together with 'on the road' advice from a driving instructor. Staying on the road is one way of maintaining independence and an impartial, informed assessment can be very reassuring. Everyone who came along was given the opportunity to book a free driving assessment in their own vehicle with the aim of being given advice during the session and a follow up report.

If anyone is interested, a further workshop may be arranged next year. Please contact Andrea (07792474504) for more details.

**Tickets for the Christmas Party now
available from Bebbington's Butchers.**

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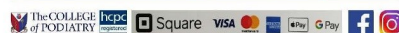
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Café in the Park

Work is underway on the café in Westminster Park to transform it into an attractive, welcoming and flexible space. There will be plenty of seating where you will be able to enjoy delicious coffees, teas and snacks whilst having a chat or even working on your laptop. Watch out for announcements via social media about an opening event soon.



There are also plans to extend and enhance the outside terrace. In conjunction with the Friends of Westminster Park, funding is being applied for in order to replace the flagstones and install planters to create an attractive seating area.



At the moment, the golf course will re-open next spring. The greens are being improved and the new putting course should be ready for play early next year.

A Question for Christmas

Craft beer and crafty quizzes – a winning combination on offer at Sandstone Bar in Westminster Park! It's Christmas themed on 19 December and a review of 2023 on Boxing Day. Call in to reserve your place or telephone: 01244 952679.

Sandstone will be open every day (except 25 December), to serve its carefully curated selection of ales, wines, spirits and mulled wine and cider. You can also see in the New Year here – no tickets required!

CRAG & the Big Conversation

If you pay £3 pa to Westminster Park Residents' Association, then you are a part of the Chester Residents' Associations Group (CRAG) working for the benefit of Chester's inhabitants.

At a recent CRAG conference over 150 local residents heard about plans and initiatives to improve and enhance every aspect of life in 21st century Chester.

The One City plan consists of 45 actions which prioritise inclusivity and sustainability by establishing a healthier, greener and fairer future for all of its people. It covers housing, policing, education, the well being of citizens, commercial and business ambitions, transport, environmental initiatives, cultural life, tourism, heritage and the management of historical buildings. Participants included representatives from the council and the University of Chester; Chester's MP; representatives from the Business Improvement District; the One City Plan, Chester's Great and Small (GAS) group and CHASE (a community interest group); plus the Police and Crime Commissioner for Cheshire together with the police's divisional commander for Chester.

Lache and Westminster Park Local History Group

The sinking of HMS Thetis, a Royal Navy submarine that disappeared into the depths of Liverpool Bay in 1939, is the subject of Derek Arnold's talk at 7.30pm on Wednesday 24 January at the Venue, Lache Community Centre, CH4 8HX.

More details available from Linda Shuttleworth: shuttleworths@talktalk.net.



The One City Plan document is available to download at: chester.westcheshiregrowth.co.uk/one-city-plan If you are interested in these plans that will affect us all, why not take a look? If you want to comment on any of its aims via CRAG, contact: hello@crag.uk



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Have you ever thought about becoming a Governor and supporting the local community by making a difference to the lives of children and families?

Lache Primary School are looking for a new school Governor to work within our dedicated team of volunteers who help to uphold the vision, ethos and strategic direction of our Ofsted rated 'Good' school.

Previous experience as a governor, or of working in education, is not necessary. Of more importance is an interest in the education, welfare and development of children. The School has arrangements for the induction and continuous training of Governors.

If you are interested, please contact:

Sue Yarnall, Chair of Governors,
(sue.yarnall@lache.cheshire.sch.uk), or

Neil Holmes, Governor

(neil.holmes@lache.cheshire.sch.uk)

We will then invite you to visit the School and meet informally the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher.

For more information about our School go to
www.lache.cheshire.sch.uk

Experiencing history at Belgrave School

Class 6 Belgrave Primary School pupils recently visited the Stockport Air Raid Shelters for a memorable experience of what life was like during World War II. They tried on gas masks – trying to achieve this in the recommended 6 seconds – and found out lots more information about this significant historical event. Some pupils went on to visit Western Approaches during half term, the top secret war rooms located under Liverpool's streets, which are unchanged since 1945.

Pupils and staff are looking forward to Christmas events and the junior choir is rehearsing for performances at several different venues – including the Westminster Park Lights' Switch-On 5 December.



You can view preferences via our members' portal to give you control over which emails (if any) you receive from us. If you are not already on the system, you can also register on the portal site. There is a link on our main website - www.wp-ra.org.uk

Grosvenor Museum Society

You are warmly invited to the Grosvenor Museum Society's Christmas social evening where guitarist Anthony Mitchell will play acoustic and electric instruments and entertain us with a varied selection of music including traditional songs and some seasonal favourites.



This takes place at 7.30pm on Tues 12 December at the Museum and tickets (which include snacks, mince pies and seasonal cheer) cost £10. Please contact Andrea Hopkinson: andreaHop@talktalk.net , 07792 474 504 if you would like to join us.

GMS talks in 2024:

Tuesday 16 Jan, 2.30pm. Railways of Thomas Brassey by Peter Bolt
Wed 14 February, 2.30pm. RAF Poulton. The Archaeology of a Military Ghost Town, by Dr Kevin Cootes

Thurs 7 March, 2.30pm. Barry Cave – a Bodyguard's Story.

Entry is £3 for members and £5 for guests. Complimentary tea and coffee available from 2pm.

Brownie Birthday Bash

There was a great turn out for the belated 50th birthday celebrations of 18 th Chester Brownies, with a delightful mix of past and present members and leaders attending.

Memories were triggered by scrap books and photo albums and, proving that some things never change, a spectacular cake was cut by a former Brownie and her daughter who is a current member, which was then enjoyed by all!



Challenges and badges are being pursued with glee: skewering inflated balloons without popping them for the Physics badge; learning the Brownie Promise in British Sign Language for the Trefoil Guild 80th birthday challenge and a session on the ice rink.

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Winter Reflections from WP Gardening Club



Our season ended with a fascinating talk from Anne Harrison on how to achieve colour and interest in the garden all year round. One of her top recommendations is this attractive tulip called Peppermint Stick. Garden visits included: the Winter Garden at Dunham Massey; RHS Bridgewater; Wildegoose Nursery and the Plant Hunters Fair at Whittington Castle.

All members of WPRa are welcome to attend our visits and meetings. After all, most residents have gardens and enjoy making them look attractive: pole.mary@gmail.com.

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For all plumbing repairs and installations, including kitchens and bathrooms, ring Jack on 07957 438541.

Wills - Lasting Powers of Attorney - Trusts - Inheritance Tax Planning GPW Tax and Law Limited

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Please call us on 07746 777760
Email: graham@gpwtrusts.co.uk
www.gpwtrusts.co.uk

Community Noticeboards

There are four local noticeboards for events, items for sale, etc. Contact details:

Community Notice board, Castlecroft Road (no trade notices)
Martin Amesbury 01244 679271
Brian Westcott 01244 675431

Notice boards at Lache Lane & Hough Green entrances to Westminster Park:
Sue Britton 01244 677936

WPRa Notice board, outside Bebbington & Williams, Fishmongers:
Sandra Magilton 01244 677373.

Advertise your unwanted items (free) or business services (£5 for 3 months).



The information section

WPRa Committee

Chair: Jennifer Crew chair@wp-ra.org.uk
Vice Chair: Colin Dollimore 629167
Secretary: Penny White sec@wp-ra.org.uk
Treasurer: Sue Britton 677936
Editor: Andrea Hopkinson

newsletter@wp-ra.org.uk

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webmaster@wp-ra.org.uk

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Tracey Casey
Susan Eva 676697
Karen Liddle
Annemarie Macfadyen
Sandra Magilton 677373
Brian Westcott 675431
Anne Ord Sykes 07973151410
anneordsykes@gmail.co

(Please let the Editor know if details are incorrect or you have an organisation to list.)

Clubs & organisations in Westminster Park

Belgrave Badminton Club: Khal 07786 080089
Belgrave Pre-School: Ashley Middleton 07761 816891
Bowls: Martin Amesbury 679271
Bridge Club: Nick Ryan 675923
Chester Road Runners: Gill Warburton chesterroadrunners@gmail.com
Cricket: Tirumala Dayama dayamatirumala@googlemail.com
Croquet: Sally Slater 07711 374927
Evergreen (55+): Sandra Magilton 677373
Friends of Westminster Park: Steve Telford 07976 712339
Gardening Club: Mary Pole 674439
Junior Football: Peter Burke 07798 576790
Lache & Westminster Park Local History Grp: Linda Shuttleworth 679791
Model Railway Club: Colin Dollimore 629167
National Women's Register: Betty McLoughlin 677680
Nordic Walking Grp: Ted Rose 01928 722334
Shotokan Karate Club: Dave Craggs 07711 009041

St Mary's Church Parish Office: 671202
Tennis - Glan Aber Club: Sue Britton 677936
Westminster Park Community Assoc: 671243
Westminster Park Walking for Health Club: Fred Whiteley 675085
Maureen 671304

WI, Handbridge:

SCOUTING:

Group Scout Leader:

Susan Jones bsusanjones@aol.com

Beavers (Wed 6.15 to 7.15pm): Jane Shorthall 07890 159545

Cubs (Mon 6.30 to 8pm): Simon Duggan 18rowallancubs@gmail.com

Cubs (Thur 6.30 to 8pm): Christina Owens 01244 676691

Scouts (Wed 7.30 to 9pm): Michael Glass eighteenthchesterscouts@outlook.com

Explorer Scouts (Tuesday): Sharon Johnson

GUIDING:

Rainbows (Wednesday): Krystina Littlehales 07860 845402

Brownies (Tuesday): Janne Hooper 674701

Guides: Krystina Littlehales 07860 845402

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