

WP News

Westminster Park Residents' Association



Bringing our community alive

www.wp-ra.org.uk



@wesparkra

Notes from The Chair

Welcome to our Spring newsletter. It seems a long time since our Christmas Lights Switch On but it's only a few weeks ago that we switched off the lights which had brightened up the dark January days – we hope that you enjoyed them!

The crocuses and daffodils planted around our neighbourhood by the Gardening Club are putting on a great show already and the planters that we fund by the shops are coming into full bloom. Spring is arriving in its usual rush.

A new addition by the shops is the defibrillator outside the fish shop, Bebbington & Williams. Organised by WPRA and funded by generous donations from local residents, the defibrillator is available 24 hours a day. We have now also arranged for the Red Cross to provide **First Aid training on 14 March** at the Community Centre (see p3). Other spring events include our ever-popular **Quiz Night on Saturday 20 April** and a **Spring Tidy at the shops on Sunday 21 April** – please come along.

We are also holding our **AGM on Wednesday 1 May** to report on our activities over the past 12 months. There is an opportunity for you to ask questions and make suggestions. We currently have two vacancies on the committee so if you would like to find

out more about what goes on in our area and give a little back to your community, why not volunteer? One area which we need particular help with is our website – if you have an interest in design this might be a good project for you!

Over the winter our Wrexham Road Development sub-committee has been busy working with Taylor Wimpey to improve the design of Phase 3 of their site, particularly in relation to the interface with Westminster Park. This has resulted in a number of significant changes, and we continue to work towards a satisfactory outcome (see p3).

Our plans for a summer event in partnership with the Westminster Park Community Centre are well advanced. Put the date **Saturday 20 July** in your calendar for the **Summer Picnic and Fun Day** – live music, gymnastics, dance and karate demos, bouncy castles – it's all going on! If you want to get involved – take a stall, volunteer to help for an hour or two, please get in touch.

I hope to see you soon at one of our events. In the meantime, if you have any suggestions for improvements in our neighbourhood or events for our community, do let me know.

Jennifer Crew

Diary Dates: more info inside....

Mondays 1.00-4.00pm

Warm Welcome space at St Mary's Centre, Handbridge

Wednesdays 10.00-12.00

Friends of Westminster Park: Meet behind the café & help maintain the Park

Wednesdays 1.30-3.30pm

Digital Friends: The Venue, Lache. Help with laptops, phones etc. £1 donation appreciated.

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

Thursday 7 March, 2.30 (Doors open 2pm tea & coffee) 'A Bodyguard's Story' by Barry Cave, Grosvenor Museum

Saturday 9 March, Mini Golf Official Opening, Westminster Park **2.30-3.30pm**: PCSO Cain Jones at Green Day Café

Wednesday 13 March 7.30pm 'Same way back' History talk, Lache Community Centre

Thursday 14 March, 2-4pm First-Aid course by the Red Cross, WP Community Centre – pre-booking essential

Thursday 21 March, 10.00-11.00am &

Saturday 30 March, 2.30-3.30pm PCSO Cain Jones at Green Day Café

Tuesday 9 April, 2.30 (doors open 2pm, tea & coffee) 'The Origin of Nursery Rhymes' by Jean Finney, Grosvenor Museum

Saturday 20 April, 7.30pm

WPRA Spring Quiz at WP Community Centre

Sunday 21 April 09.30-12.30 & 1.30-4.30

Croquet Taster Day at Westminster Park

Sunday 21 April, 10.00am Spring Tidy-Up at the shops.

Sunday 21 April, 10.30am Spring planting, Incredible Edible at the shops

Wednesday 24 April 8.00pm Gardening Club talk, WP Community Centre

Wednesday 1 May, 8.00pm WPRA AGM, Community Centre

Tuesday 7 May, 7.30pm (doors open 7pm) 'The Sinking of the Thetis' by Derek Arnold, Grosvenor Museum

Saturday 18 & Sun 19 May 10.00-4.00 Model Railway Open Day: St Bartholomew's Church, Old Sealand Road

Saturday 20 July Summer Picnic & Fun Day WP Community Centre and school grounds

Westminster Park Residents' Association

Spring Quiz Night

8pm Saturday 20th April 2024

(Doors open 7.30pm)

Westminster Park Community Centre

Tickets £10 inc. excellent supper, available from:

Brian Westcott (675431) or Bebbington's

Maximum team size 6



Councillor Matt Carter

Recently, I met PCSO Jones for a walk around Westminster Park and raised a few local concerns: parking, speeding and anti-social behaviour. As a result, she has had access to the speed gun to monitor speeds locally.

At the Westminster Park Christmas Light Switch-on, Belgrave school children's singing was great, even if it did make me feel quite old not recognising the school Christmas songs! A big thank you to the Lord Mayor for doing the official countdown - I am sure she was very busy across Chester attending lots of other Christmas events.

I attended a further meeting with Taylor Wimpey about stage 3 of the Wrexham Road development. I felt the meeting was open and honest and was glad to see that residents' concerns are still being discussed through communication with members of the Westminster Park Residents' Association. It is likely that the application will be heard at planning in March; if you want to raise any further concerns please get in touch.

In early January I visited the new Green Day café in Westminster Park; the place looks great and I hope it will thrive in the park and will get plenty of local support.

Surgery Details: I am available for face-to-face meetings on request, to discuss and help in ward related issues. I have also restarted monthly door knocking sessions, talking to you about what matters most and what I can do to help. (Contact details: see page 11)

Councillor Razia Daniels

Green Day café: I am delighted to see the café reopening in Westminster Park and enhancements made to the golf course, setting a positive tone for the new year. I have already received fantastic feedback about its coffee and cake! After a resident contacted me regarding the absence of accessible toilets in the Park, I raised this with the Council and also requested an update on improvements to the changing rooms.

Planning Application - Taylor Wimpey: Thanks to the Chair of WPRA, Jennifer Crew, for organising a meeting at the Community Centre to discuss residents' concerns about the on-going development proposals. TW have made some adjustments to their planning application; it is expected revised plans will be submitted shortly. I have called in the application and will do my best to represent residents' concerns when it is in front of the Planning Committee.

Planning Application - No.1 Lakeside Chester Business CH4 9QT: A planning application has been submitted for a part change of use to accommodate a mental health care facility, replacement windows, installation of PV panels and electric vehicle charging points with the remainder of the building continuing with Class E(g) activities: a dispensary and an IT and archive facility. More details are on the Cheshire West and Chester council website (planning applications) reference: 24/00096/FUL

Flooding issues: I have received concerns about flooding on Wrexham Road, Overleigh

Roundabout and Kings Moat Garden Village which I reported to the appropriate departments, asking them to look into the various matters raised. I have also asked Highways to clear the blockage of road gullies which have not been maintained for a very long time.

Libraries and Museums: Council is asking for residents' views on these services and for feedback on a number of proposals on how they could operate in the future. These include changes to opening hours. The proposed changes have been designed using usage data and local knowledge to ensure that excellent services continue to be available to residents. If you wish to take part in the consultation, please ensure that your survey is submitted by Tuesday 2 April. Full details can be found here:

cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/librariesandmuseums. Consultation documents and survey will also be available at all Cheshire West libraries and museums.

Members' Budget: I was delighted to support the Westminster Park Christmas lights at the shops, bulb planting for the park and wild flower seeds for planting at the Lache Library. If you have community projects requiring funding or have other matters of concern please contact me or attend my monthly street surgery on first Saturday every month at 10am - 10.45am. I will do my best to help if I can. (Contact details: See page 11)

Membership matters

My thanks to all who paid their annual subscription promptly; we have already exceeded the annual total for 2023. It would be excellent to recruit 500+ members this year and you can help the Residents' Association achieve this by paying outstanding £3 subscriptions and by letting me know of any new residents in your neighbourhood so that I can approach them to join. Contact me, Colin Dollimore: 01244 629167, 5 Ludwell Close, CH4 7RD; colindollimore@gmail.com

Colin Dollimore, Membership Secretary

You can view your membership details and update your email 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

NOTICE OF AGM

Westminster Park Residents' Association

All welcome!

8pm, Wednesday 1 May 2024

at Westminster Park Community Centre

The AGM is to be held to report on the Association's activities in the past year and to elect Committee Officers and members. Residents can also raise matters of interest.

If you wish to submit any questions or propose anyone to join the Committee please let the Secretary, Penny White, know by Wednesday 10 April 2024 by email: sec@wp-ra.org.uk or c/o WPRA post box situated in S J Bebbington Butchers.

Community First Aid

Let's give a 'heartfelt' welcome to the addition to the facilities offered at Westminster Park shops – the brand new defibrillator that has been installed outside Bebbington & Williams Fishmonger.

According to the British Heart Foundation, every year around 30,000 people are struck by sudden cardiac arrest whilst going about their daily lives and when this occurs, it's essential that resuscitation is carried out as soon as possible. The defibrillator is a portable device that has the capability to determine whether to administer high-energy electric shocks and is a vital tool that can massively increase the chance of survival. It can be used by anyone as it gives verbal instructions on its application and will NOT function if not needed, so there's no chance of giving an unnecessary electric shock.

WPRA has purchased the defibrillator with two generous anonymous donations



so there are now three in the area – the others being inside the Community Centre and at Glan Aber Tennis Club in the park.

The Residents' Association has also arranged for a free first aid course, which is being offered to community groups by the Red Cross. Whilst the 90-minute session does not lead to a qualification, it will give instruction on effective first aid, including the use of the defibrillator. It will be held at the Community Centre on Thursday 14 March, 2-4pm and numbers will be limited. If there is demand, a further session may be arranged, possibly in an evening. Please contact Penny White as soon as possible if you would like to sign up: sec@wp-ra.org.uk; tel 07890 994676.



Free First Aid Course

**Including use of Defibrillator
by Red Cross trainer**

**Westminster Park Community Centre
Thursday 14 March, 2 - 4pm**

This event is aimed at anyone over the age of 18 who wants to learn more about First Aid at home. It will also include information about using a defibrillator such as the one that WPRA have had installed outside Bebbington & Williams fishmongers.

Booking is essential!

Places are limited, so booking is essential.

To book, please contact Penny White (07890 994676) or email sec@wp-ra.org.uk

Evergreen 55+ plans for 2024

Evergreen 55+ Club ended the year with 96 members and despite some bad-weather months our sessions were well attended. We thank you for your support.

This will be our 12th year and we have a varied and interesting programme for the year ahead. We kicked off in January with an amusing talk on behalf of RSPB which enlightened us to the many aspects and habits of our garden birds. February was our AGM. Our planned speaker, John Dwyer, was unable to attend so we hastily put together a quiz which was well received.

In the coming months we will have a talk on the history of cheese making and a tasting, April is a fascinating talk on the Walls of Chester and in May a hilarious speaker taking us back to life in the Sixties. We have also planned trips to Lion Salt Mines and Wedgwood/Trentham Gardens. Supper Club has its own programme of restaurants planned for 2024 and there will be something for everyone's taste and palate.

Membership for the year remains at £10 and Evergreen members have to be members of WPRA for insurance purposes. New members are always welcome to come along and have a taster session for a visitor fee of £2.00. We meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month, 2.00–3.30pm in the Westminster Park Community Centre.

Sandra Magilton - Chair

WPRA working to improve Taylor Wimpey plans

Members of WPRA's Wrexham Road Development sub-committee have continued to meet with Taylor Wimpey, the Council's Planning Officer and our Councillors to work towards improvements to the plans submitted by the builder for Phase 3 of their site (Planning Application 23/003377/FUL).

In response to our requests, they have taken a number of actions:

- Revised the composition of houses planned on the boundary, reducing the number backing onto Rowcliffe Avenue and Five Ashes Road from 33 to 24.
- Moved all 2.5 storey properties planned for the boundary to positions further into the development, including those on the southern section which were approved under the original application.
- Agreed that the existing surveyed boundary line will be upheld and all existing garden extensions will be retained by WP residents.
- Agreed to install a French drain along the boundary.

There remain areas for discussion regarding the boundary position and treatment. Residents are welcome to contact Jennifer Crew for further information or to discuss the plans. The application is still open on the Council website for comments.

Spring tidy-up

Sunday 21 April, 10.00am



Please arm yourselves with brushes, hoes and spades and come and help us tidy up the areas around our local shops.

A short time spent by some willing volunteers can really improve the whole area and make a big difference in a short time. Thank you!

Brian Westcott

Green for 'Go!'

The wonderful Westminster Park now has a café to add to its great offering to visitors, in addition to the many sports and activities that already take place there.

Green Day Café is open daily from 9am - 4pm, serving up a fine range of hot and cold drinks, delicious cakes and other treats.

Also, our local Police Community Support Officer, Cain Jones, will be located at the café on Saturday 9 March, 2.30-3.30pm; Thursday 21 March, 10.00-11.00am and Saturday 30, 2.30-3.30pm in order to meet local residents and hear about any issues that they may wish to raise with her. If groups would like to meet in the café, they are most welcome - just call in or make contact via Facebook beforehand if there are lots of you.

Meanwhile, work on the mini golf course just outside is racing ahead. This exciting facility will offer the proper putting experience for experienced golfers but will also encourage all ages and abilities to take up a club and have a go. The cost will be £5 for children, £6.50 for adults and £20 for a family of 4, equipment is provided and it will take about an hour to get round. Check for opening hours on the Green Day café Facebook page and look out for details of the special event on Saturday 9 March when Ken Brown, BBC TV Golf Commentator, former Tour Player and 5-times Ryder Cup player will officially open the course.



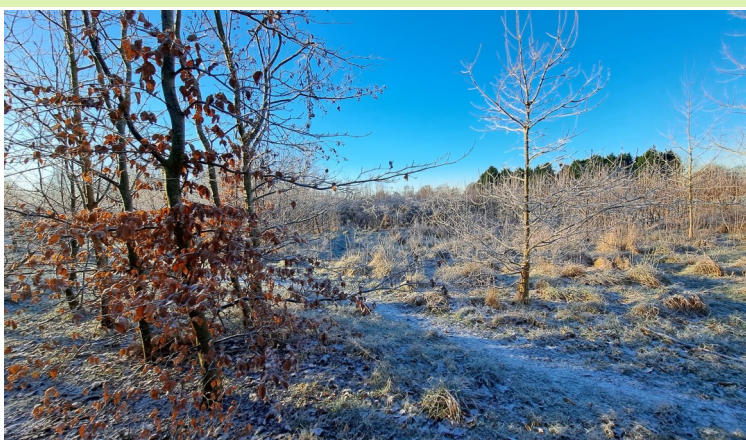
Ken Brown will open the course

Looking forward to spring — news from Friends of Westminster Park

As we all know, there's been lots of rain and the area beside the pond is still very muddy but we are making good progress chipping the mountain of Christmas trees, so the paths through the woods are looking and smelling great. Another section of the bramble patch has been tamed – they will re-grow but will be lower and have better fruits. Small mammals and birds which like to forage close to the ground will thrive in this type of habitat.

In November, we helped council workers to prune the lower branches of the tall conifers to give the car park a welcome spruce up. On the same day we were also busy tidying shrubs at the main gate and Lache Lane gate. Cliveden Road entrance has been transformed and we are all looking forward to the spring bulbs, summer flowers and autumn colour. You may have noticed we are working on the hedge between the café and the football pitches. This hedge is at least 150 years old and needed a lot of attention. A number of the trees were dead and being held up by ivy. Now removed, we are laying the rest and planting new whips (saplings) which were free native species from the Woodland Trust: English oak, blackthorn, hazel, hawthorn and dog rose. With careful management, the hedge should be good for another 150 years, creating a terrific habitat for birds, small mammals and insects.

In the next few weeks, we'll be planting autumn flowering bulbs and putting up new bird boxes. Builders took down the old wall at the back



of the long shrubbery near the golf facility and it has been replaced with a fence. This gives us a great chance to renovate that border and get rid of some of the very spiky shrubs.

Why not come and give us a hand? If you like the sound of all this, you are very welcome to join us. We meet at 10am on Wednesdays at our tools shed round the back of the café. Just wear sensible clothes & footwear, we'll provide the tools.

Have a look at our Facebook page and post some of your own park photos.

Please Support our Summer Picnic & Fun Day

Plans are well underway now for the 2024 Westminster Park Summer Picnic & Fun Day on Saturday 20 July and we will have a great mix of entertainment, stalls and refreshments for all the family. Organised jointly by WPRa and the WP Community Centre, this has become a great fixture in the local social calendar!

As previously we want to keep this event free for all to attend, but this means that we have to raise money in other ways to cover our expenses: through a raffle, stall charges and sponsorship.

One of our largest expenses is the stage for music acts and we are looking for a sponsor to help us pay for it. If you would like to advertise your business on our stage, we would like to hear from you!

Equally, if you are able to help your community in the form of a raffle prize, please get in touch. Many thanks. Jennifer Crew (07752 854383) or chair@wp-ra.org.uk

Chester Croquet Club - Taster Day Come and try croquet!

Fun. Sociable. Competitive. For all ages.

We invite you to attend our taster sessions at Westminster Park where you will be introduced to the great sport of croquet.

**Sunday 21st April, 2024
9.30 - 12.30 or 1.30 - 4.30**

No special ability needed - just flat shoes, warm clothing and a desire to have-a-go. We'll supply the lawns, the coaching, the kit and the fun.

Places are limited so don't delay. To book a place or for more information please contact:

Sally Slater on
07711 374927 / springboard_sally@hotmail.com

www.chestercroquet.club



Delicious Incredible Edible



As the end of winter approaches and we move into our third growing season, it is a delight to see how well our autumn-planted peas, broad beans and chard are doing. We are busy planning our 'menu' of vegetables for the next season and our spring planting day will be Sunday 21 April, 10.30am; please do come along. Remember that produce grown at our planters is free for you to help yourselves; all you need to do is check out the signage for when different vegetables are ready to harvest.

There are fresh ideas in the pipeline and we will be continuing to collaborate with the Incredible Edible group in Handbridge. So, if you would like to get involved in championing the use of public spaces for growing food, please do get in touch or come to our 10.30am Sunday meet-ups, starting weekly from 21 May. We are also looking for a Treasurer. Contact us via email ediblewestminsterpark@gmail.com, Facebook or Instagram: @ediblewestminsterpark or call Anne on 07707 683711.

WPRA Gardening club news

Spring Talk at WP Community Centre, Wednesday 24 April 2024, 8 pm, tickets £4: The National Garden Scheme Jane Moore, organiser from NE Wales, will talk about this scheme for allowing visits to over 3,500 exceptional private gardens with the funds raised from admission and refreshment sales being donated to nursing and health charities. There will also be a bar, light refreshments, plant and seed swap.

Visit to Grappenhall Heys Walled

Garden Friday 17 May. Meet at 2 pm for tour led by Graham Richardson, Head Gardener, Witherwin Avenue, Grappenhall Heys, Warrington, WA4 3DS. The 4-acre walled garden consists of two main areas, the fully working kitchen garden and the ornamental pleasure garden. The garden is very unusual in that both the kitchen garden and pleasure garden are enclosed within a single, continuous sandstone wall. The site also includes a run of eight fully refurbished Victorian glasshouses, several outbuildings, three ponds and a café in the central glasshouse space. £2 for the garden tour.

It would be great to have more members from our community – all members of the Westminster Park Residents Association are welcome to attend our visits and meetings. After all, most residents have gardens and enjoy making their plot look attractive.

The 2024 Gardening Club programme is now available from Mary: pole.mary@gmail.com



Can you give our web site a makeover?

The WPRA website is in great need of a design update – could you be just the person to give it a smart new look?

We set up our website many years ago using WordPress and it has served us well, but it is now looking a tad out of date and needs to be given a redesign.

We thought that this might be a good project for someone studying web design or recently retired from the profession or simply someone who has a bit of interest in design and would like to have a go.

There is no pressure on time and you would be working with other members of the WPRA committee who are very willing, but not designers.

Please email me if you want to know more: chair@wp-ra.org.uk.

Jennifer Crew

The Lache Animal Sanctuary – spring in their step



As the weather improves and days lengthen, the donkeys and Star the horse at Lache Animal Sanctuary would like to thank the local community for continuing to support the work of June and Archie as they care for all the animal residents at the facility. Volunteers have helped to repair damage caused by recent high winds, painted fences, cleaned the yards and done lots of mucking out!

If anyone would like to get involved, there is a vacancy for an over-18 to do general maintenance, mucking out, painting etc, all under the instruction of Archie and June – get in touch via the Facebook page where you can also find details about adopting an animal, the Easter raffle and other fundraising activities.



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Sarah Webber Bsc (Hons) MSCh HCPC Reg :CH32605

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Getting out there...

One of the main aims of this newsletter is to give details of activities available to residents in our community in the hope that everyone can find something of interest in which to participate or get support. A community that shares pastimes and undertakes joint enterprises can rightly be judged to be caring and considerate and as we get to know each other better it's likely that good neighbourliness will become an even more valued feature of living in Westminster Park. This could particularly apply to those who are living alone or find themselves solo in a social situation.

Just a quick survey of WPRC committee members led to a big list of suggestions of clubs, meeting places, sources of support and information plus personal endorsements for the friendliness and assured welcome to be found at those organisations regularly mentioned in the newsletter:

Evergreen 55+; Handbridge WI; NWR; exercise, social and sports clubs at the Community Centre; Sundays with Incredible Edible; Wednesdays with the Friends of Westminster Park; the Gardening Club to name but a few that feature regularly in this newsletter.

Even so, it can feel daunting to go along to an organised gathering with some groups only offering one trial visit before expecting you to join so it could be a good idea to find your feet at a variety of informal, drop-in sessions first. Happily, we are extremely lucky to have on hand the **Lache Park Avenue Library** where entertainment, computers, access to wifi and friendly company can be found. During the 5 days that the library is open (open hours printed below) you can take part in:

- **Sociable Scrabble** on Mondays 10am-12.30pm
- **Craft and Chat** on Tuesdays 2.15-3.13pm - bring your own knitting, crochet or sewing
- **Relish Reading** on Fridays 10-11am - read the short story provided and talk about it afterwards, or just listen!
- **Colouring and Coffee** on Fridays 2.30-3.30pm - for adults, patterns and pencils provided, or bring your own

- **Book Club** on first Monday of the month 2.30-3.30pm - just call into the Library to reserve the book

For parents and carers with children:

- **Lego Club** on Saturdays 10-11 for over-6s to get creative with fellow builders (adult supervision required)
- **Baby Explorers** on Tuesdays in term time, 10.30-11.30 for new parents to introduce their little ones to sensory play
- **Rhymetime** on Thursdays in term time, 2.15-2.45pm for babies and toddlers to play with musical instruments, toys, songs and rhymes

All of these sessions are FREE. Where refreshments are offered, a small charge is made.

The Library is also a great starting point if you need help or guidance on welfare, health, digital assistance; it offers signposts to organisations that can advise on social services, benefits, housing options, transport and staying independent. You can find the help you need from the many posters and leaflets within the library or talk to one of the library assistants who are able to make referrals to relevant supporting bodies whilst offering a sympathetic listening ear.

Lache Library hours:

Monday 9.30-1pm, 2-7pm
Tuesday 9.30-1pm, 2-5pm
Wednesday CLOSED
Thursday 9.30-1pm, 2-7pm
Friday 9.30-1pm, 2-5pm
Saturday 9.30-1pm
Sunday CLOSED.

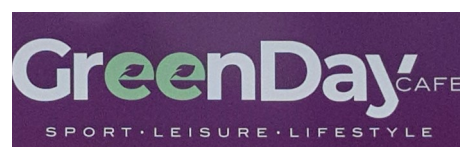
This is a good moment to mention that Cheshire West and Chester Council is currently consulting on library and museum provision within the borough and you are invited to comment on its proposals which largely centre on changing opening hours. To read the proposals and complete a survey visit:

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/librariesandmuseums. If you prefer a paper copy of the proposals, they are available from libraries and museums in the area.

Other local venues for companionship and conversation are **St Mary's in Handbridge Warm Welcome Space** on Mondays 1-4pm which is running until April and **St Mark's Places of Welcome and Café** on Thursday



mornings (check website for times - stmarkssaltney.org.uk/calendar/). Both offer free refreshments and various activities plus friendly chat.



If you would like to combine a chat with a visit to the Park, **Green Day Café** has just become a **Chatty Café** venue. This is an award-winning scheme that creates a space for people to talk; whether it is for five minutes while you drink a brew, or an hour of good conversation.

Initially, there will be a table or two designated for those who have come into the café looking for a chat in addition to a drink, but Green Day would like to have volunteers who will come in regularly to sit at the table for a while to host a conversation session with customers who take a seat.

There is a training programme designed by Chatty Cafe which can be found on their website: thechattycafescheme.co.uk and, of course, volunteering is another very worthwhile way of getting out and about to meet people.



Specifically for older people, there is also the much-valued **Silver Line**, run by Age UK, which offers information and support over the telephone, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. It's

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Getting out there (cont'd)

a solid and comforting starting point, particularly if you are feeling overwhelmed and unsure of which way to turn for advice. Calls are free: 0800 4 70 80 90 and there's a lot more detail on the website, too - thesilverline.org.uk/helping-you/



If you are reading this and thinking 'why didn't they include XXXXXX?' then please get in touch and we'll do our best to add to this bank of information. Is there someone – or a few people – out there who would like to cover this topic for the newsletter – a sort of Social Activities Champion? Please step forward

Scouting for a Volunteer

Do you have good organisational skills and enjoy team working?

If so you may be just the person we are looking for to join our **Board of Trustees!** Stuart, Susan, Jane, Maureen, Terry and Zoe currently make up the Board of Trustees for the 18th Chester St Mary's Scout Group who have their HQ here in Manor Road in Westminster Park.

No experience of Scouting is necessary – just an ability to get stuck in, do some admin and make things happen. A variety of skills and backgrounds only strengthens us. A short online course is designed to give you the training you'd need. It's nowhere near as formal as it sounds! What we need are people with local knowledge and contacts who can help us to do things like making sure the Scout Hut is well maintained and safe to be in.

As well as standard board members we are currently looking for someone to act as **Minutes Secretary**. We meet once a term plus holding a (very short!) AGM in the Autumn.

It's a rewarding, flexible way to make a difference to the young people and wider community here in Westminster Park without a week-in-week-out commitment. And of course it would look great on your next job application!

We'd be more than happy to speak to you about how you could get involved. Email us at: info.westminster.park.scouts@gmail.com

and we will be delighted to dedicate a regular column towards Neighbourliness. You don't need to be abreast of all the initiatives in the area, just willing to follow up leads and help promote community spirit in Westminster Park. Contact the Chair or the editor and we'll be happy to meet up 'for a chat'!

Help always needed

We are hoping that you will be able to come along to our AGM on Wednesday 1 May to find out about our activities over the past year. But perhaps in advance of that you could give some consideration to joining our committee or offering to be a volunteer at one of our events?

We are always looking for more people to join us and currently have two vacancies on our committee. It is not hard work and keeps you in the loop about what is happening in the local area.

Similarly, it is a huge help, when we are organising an event such as the Christmas Lights Switch On or the Summer Picnic & Fun Day, to have a list of volunteers who are happy to offer a bit of help for an hour or two.

If you would like to find out more, please contact Jennifer Crew (07752 854383) or email chair@wp-ra.org.uk.

WP News is published by the **Westminster Park Residents' Association** with the understanding that from the information presented therein, there can be no responsibility as to the accuracy or legality of the content on the part of the WPRA. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor or Committee of the WPRA.

Glan Aber Tennis Club

We are looking forward to some drier weather as we move into spring and a new season of tennis. The rain has definitely impacted our winter season but we all continue to play whenever possible.

Pay & Play drop-in sessions are due to re-start on Saturdays from 2 March with minis (4-6 years) at 09.30-10.00 (£3) and juniors (7-10 years) at 10.00-11.00 (£5). Sessions can be booked using the All Court Tennis Academy app (ACTA).

Easter tennis camps for juniors will run 25-28 March and 2-5 April, 9-12 or all day from 9-4pm.

Please contact Aidan for booking details (07808 657765).

Ladies – Beginners Tennis for fun, fitness and friendships. Learn how to play and enjoy some laughs along the way.

There's currently a waiting list for the Wednesday evenings but a daytime session could be set up if there is demand— contact Aidan.

Glan Aber Tennis Club welcomes new members – visit our website www.glanaber.com for more details.



Tuition

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A group of approximately 20 children and adults are posing for a photo on an ice skating rink. Several children are wearing large, black and white penguin costumes. One adult on the left is wearing a red Santa hat and a red jacket. The group is standing in front of a glass wall, and the ice surface is visible in the foreground.

Brownies will host an Easter Bingo to raise funds for Hearing Dogs and Ruth is bringing her Hearing Dog, Iker, to a meeting beforehand to explain how his help is invaluable to her independence.

The Great Outdoors at Belgrave School

Whatever the weather, students from Reception class to Year 6 really enjoy any opportunity to explore and play in the natural world, developing confidence, independence and resilience from their creative hands-on experiences and this is reflected in their enthusiastic feedback and their smiling faces.



Community Noticeboards

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



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Women Together

NWR (National Women's Register) is a registered charity operating throughout Great Britain connecting women through discussions and activities. Members enjoy conversation, friendship and fun through participating in online, local, regional and national events, ranging from local group meetings to online book groups to national conferences. All of our events are informal and social and we meet locally, mainly in members' homes. There are 350 + groups in the UK and the local group for our area is Chester Grosvenor.

We choose our own programme with topics including discussions, book reviews, talks, walks, quizzes and social get-togethers.



As a prospective member you can try up to two 'taster events' free of charge before deciding to join. NWR members are open minded, welcoming, friendly, respectful and interested in all issues. We are not political, religious, judgmental or a pressure group. We do not campaign or fund raise. For more about the Chester Grosvenor NWR group email Mary Pole: pole.mary@gmail.com or see www.nwr.org.uk

Get happy!

Chester Operatic Society invite you to 'Get Happy' as they sing songs from the Great American Songbook, including music from Gershwin, Berlin, Porter and Rogers & Hammerstein, to name but a few. Concerts are on Friday 12 and Saturday 13 April at the Town Hall and tickets cost £18. Seating is 'cabaret style' at tables and if a table of 10 is booked, one seat is free, so bring friends!

This special offer is time limited and early purchase is recommended. Tickets available from Brian Westcott 01244 675431.

Fizzing at 50—Handbridge WI

There was music from The Handbag of Harmonies and cake (naturally!) at the party



to celebrate the 50 th birthday of Handbridge WI. Meanwhile, the 2024 programme continues with talks on 'The History of Libraries' in March and 'An Embroiderer's Tale' in April, plus a film night and meal at

Chez Jules and a walk along the canal for lunch at the Cheshire Cat.

A warm welcome is guaranteed at meetings on the first Tuesday of the month, 7.30pm in St Mary's Centre. Contact Maureen on 01244 671304 for more details.

Model railway club

Chester

Model Railway Club

Exhibition and Open Day

Spring Plant Sale

Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th May 2024

10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m. both days

- 5 Layouts - including one you can control!
- Children's Railway Corner
- Model Railway Surgery
- Expert Advice - how to build a layout from scratch
- Refreshments
- Church Refurbished - including new kitchen and toilets
- Spring Planting Sale
- Well Stocked Sales Stall
- We buy model railway collections



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Grosvenor Museum Society


The GMS season of talks concludes with three interesting speakers:

Thursday 7 March, 2.30 (doors open 2pm, tea and coffee served) 'A Bodyguard's Story' by Barry Cave who will recount seldom heard tales from within a protection officers' team who had responsibility for many well known people including Diana, Princess of Wales and Margaret Thatcher, to name but two.


Tuesday 9 April, 2.30 (doors open 2pm, tea & coffee served) 'The Origin of Nursery Rhymes' by Jean Finney who will talk about familiar poems that reveal history in a different fashion.

Tuesday 7 May, 7.30pm (doors open 7pm) 'The Sinking of the Thetis' by Derek Arnold who gives a unique insight into the dangers and tragedies experienced by submariners when boundaries are pushed. This will be preceded by the AGM with a glass of wine or juice for all who attend. Tickets: £3 members / £5 guests.

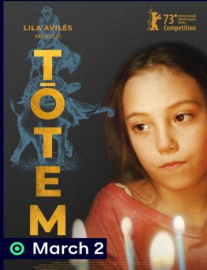
Local international cinema




Chester International Film Festival
March 1st-8th 2024
The Chester Animation Festival
CIFF is sponsored by University of Chester



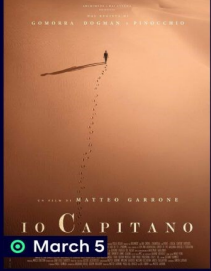
MONSTER
怪獣
March 1




TOTEM
March 2




Chester International Animation Festival
March 3




IO CAPITANO
March 5



TARRAC
March 6



GREEN BORDER
March 7



The Teachers' Lounge
March 8

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In partnership with **STORYHOUSE**

Chester International Film Festival is underway at Storyhouse, running until 8 March. Highlighting the very best in international cinema (including pre-release previews) and incorporating the Animation Festival, it's curated by Chester Film Society in partnership with Storyhouse and The University of Chester. Tickets cost £7, £4 for under-25s; card payments only.

There will be no trailers and each film will be introduced by a lecturer from the University of Chester's Department of Languages and Cultures. The Audience Awards will be presented to best film in the season and best entry to the Animation Festival.

Proposal for Mental Health Hospital on Chester Business Park

Plans have been submitted to the Council by Cygnet Health Care for the establishment of a new mental health hospital and pharmaceutical store at One Lakeside, a large building adjacent to the ponds at the Park & Ride Roundabout.

The intention is to convert it into a specialist mental health hospital, with supporting offices, pharmacy, IT and archive facility. The applicants claim that it will "bring social value through employment, investment and environmental benefit to the local area".

The hospital will provide a mental health care facility offering 52 en suite urgent admission beds to meet the acute needs of men and women requiring access to mental health services, including intensive care in a Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). Local facilities are in short supply with many patients currently being cared for outside of the local area.

The proposed facility will not have an A&E department. The numbers of patients arriving and leaving the hospital will be far fewer than a typical hospital, but 427 staff will be required to care for them.

Cygnet state that whilst people may be concerned about individuals requiring mental health care, "we can offer our assurance that this is not a place of containment (sometimes referred to as a low or medium secure unit), rather it is a place of sanctuary," and that "security standards are in place for the safety of the individuals who stay and receive care on site".

Comments submitted to the Council have focused on the safety of local people, the safety of patients (given the close proximity of the site to the 50mph Wrexham Road and 70mph A55), the lack of local amenities and the inappropriateness of changing the use of the building on the Business Park from high

quality office space to a healthcare facility. In addition, it is some distance away from the other acute mental health facilities in the local area.

WPRA are keen to ascertain the views of local residents which will be used to develop the residents' association's response. Please email comments to chair@wp-ra.org.uk or post in our box in Bebbington's.

Local history group

Lache and Westminster Park History Group

'Same Way Back'

The Rescue Attempt at Gresford Colliery 1934

A talk by Vic Tyler Jones

The Venue (Lache Community Centre) Hawthorn Road Chester CH4 8HX

Wednesday 13th March, 2024, 7.30pm

All welcome, no need to book.

£2 per person on the door

Refreshments available as usual

Linda Shuttleworth, Secretary

shuttleworths@talktalk.net

01244 679791 or text 07726 425847

What's on at Westminster Park Community Centre

New activities pop up all the time on the calendar at Westminster Park Community Centre – keep an eye on their Facebook page to make sure you know about them all.

Open Mic Nights

Calling all local performing artistes! There is a free Friday Open Mic night happening at WPCC where everyone is welcome – singers, musicians, comedians, poets, storytellers.

It's different every time and you never know who is going to appear behind the mic. There is a stage, a great sounding music system, lighting and also assistance for performers with mobility issues who might want to perform. Depending on how many acts turn up, performers should get two spots each plus the chance for musicians to play collaboratively.

Needless to say, everyone is invited to join the audience – whether they are performing or not - and there have already been some spine-tingling sessions in the autumn. Doors open at 7.30 with first performance at 8pm and there's parking outside the centre. The bar is open and each performer receives a free drink! So come along on one of the future dates:

15 March, 19 April, 17 May

and step into the spotlight!



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www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/your-bin-collection/collection-day.

Alternatively, you can secure your 2024 permit and calendar in person from the Lache Library or by calling: 0300 123 7026. Remember that the annual cost (£50) applies whenever you apply during the year, so make sure that you get the full benefit by applying as soon as possible.



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Flooding

Autumn and winter this year have been particularly wet and I think that all of us are suffering from sodden gardens. However, if your garden is flooded to a far greater extent than usual, we would like to know about it, especially if your property is close to the Wrexham Road Development.

WPRA have been in regular communication with Taylor Wimpey about the flooding on and adjacent to their site and they have responded and installed pumps to move the water away from the boundaries.

If you do suffer from unusual flooding, please get in touch with me as soon as possible so that I can take action on your behalf.

Please take photographs of the floods as evidence. You can contact me by email: chair@wp-ra.org.uk or phone 07752 854383.

Jennifer Crew



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
Website Co-ordinator: Dave Craggs
682407 webmaster@wp-ra.org.uk

Other Committee members

Olwen Bellis 678719; Pauline Brown 679823; Tracey Casey; Susan Eva 676697; Karen Liddle; Annemarie Macfadyen; Sandra Magilton 677373; Brian Westcott 675431; Anne Ord Sykes 07973151410 anneordsykes@gmail.com

Councillor Razia Daniels 07481234411
razia.daniels@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Councillor Matt Carter: 07415 689178

Facebook Page: 'Cllr Matt Carter, Handbridge Park Ward'

matt.carter@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

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
Digital Friends Terena McGarr 07784 442424
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 Group: 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
WI, Handbridge: Maureen 671304
SCOUTING:

Joining & general enquiries:
info.westminster.park.scouts@gmail.com
Hall booking enquiries:
hut.hire.westminster.park.scouts@gmail.com

GUIDING:

Rainbows (Wednesday): Krystina Littlehales 07860 845402
Brownies (Tuesday): Janne Hooper 674701
Guides: Krystina Littlehales (see above)
(Please let the Editor know if details are incorrect or you have an organisation to list.)

Our local businesses



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