



WHEELY GREAT!

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Community Support Officers based at Hinckley Road have received a boost from the public in the shape of seven new bicycles.

The mountain bikes, three of which were funded from the Western Park Ward Budget and the other four from council and private sources bring the total number available to officers to fifteen.

The top of the range 21 gear white Carrera Fury mountain bikes, carry a distinctive police livery and should help officers patrol more efficiently and replace older bikes which are suffering wear and tear.



Mel Baily, Michelle Christie, Diana Chadfield, Sally Ann Morgan

Make a Splash!

The Western Park Gazette

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Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the August issue of the Gazette.

Okay, so hordes of hooded gibbons and knuckle-draggers may have feebly attempted to trash the City Centre, but it's been business as usual in West Leicester. They left us alone. Probably a bit far for them to walk without their mummies and our local bobbies have shiny new bikes, to chase them on, so they're on a loser around here.

To celebrate this fact, we will ignore them and concentrate on Helen Knott who's ranting at Blackberry pickers. Not the ones who pinch from town centre phone shops, the other sort. Roger Blackmore tells us about one of Leicester's greatest architects; Tony Huxley wraps his green fingers around some common poisonous plants; Richard Perry takes a look at some more of the best free software around and we're joined by Dawn Howard, who's had her first tattoo!

Contributions are always welcome, so if you've ever fancied writing for a magazine or you have some local news, please get in touch.

And if you're new to the Gazette, visit the back issues at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk.

Sharon e: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

20 MPH Zones?

The City Council is asking local residents about plans to introduce new 20mph zones in six areas of the city including the West End. The Council proposes to introduce new zones early next year across the Tudor Road area, Westcotes and Western Road area.

Letters detailing the plans are being delivered to residents in the proposed areas and will be available to view on the council's website. If approved, the plans will significantly extend the network of city highways covered by the 20mph speed limit.

Currently, 20mph zones cover 231 streets and almost 50km of road. The new schemes would include an additional 114 streets and 26km of highway.

Cllr Rory Palmer, Deputy City Mayor and cabinet lead on transport, said: "Reducing speed limits from 30mph to 20mph in busy residential areas helps improve road safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Reducing the speed of vehicles can have a very positive impact on the quality of life for local people and their community."

Details of the proposed schemes, and information about how to comment on the plans, are available online by clicking the link at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

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COUNCILLOR'S SURGERIES

Fosse Cllrs Surgery Monthly, first Sat (10.30-11.30) Fosse Neighborhood Centre. and last Sat (10-11.30am) Woodgate Residents Association.

Westcotes Cllrs Surgeries Westcotes Library, 1st Sat each month, 10.30 - 11.30am and 3rd Fri each month, 5.30 - 6.30pm. West End Neighborhood Centre, 4th Tues each month 1.30 - 2.30pm.

Western Park Cllrs Surgery Monthly-2nd Thursday, St. Paul's Church Rooms, Kirby Road. 7-8.00pm. To find out when and where, your local

Ward Meetings are click the link at - www.westernparkgazette.co.uk

Events Diary

Zumba Class Tues 6.45-7.45 & 8-9.00pm at New College. Call Sarah 07810 307 113.

Free Computer Courses: Westcotes Library: 0116 299 5510.

Dora the Explorer: 22nd Aug: For Kids. High-cross. 10-3pm. Free.

Children's Arts & Crafts: 23rd Aug. St. Mary De Castro Church. 10-12. Free

Jimmy Eat World: 23rd Aug. O2 Academy. 7-11pm. £17.50. www.o2academyleicester.co.uk

Teddy Bears Picnic: 23rd Aug. 11.30-3.30pm. Newarke Houses. £2.50 or activities.

Leic Horticulture Show: 29th Aug. Aylestone Leisure Centre. 10-4.40pm.

Bands in Western Park: 21st Aug. Enderby Youth Band. 3.00pm. Bring a chair! Free.

Farmer's Market: 1st Sept. Humberstone Gate West. 10.00-4.00pm.

Leicester Pride: 4th Sept. City centre parade and Victoria Park. 1.00pm-8.00pm.

Family Food Festival: 27th Aug. Cathedral. 10.00-4.00pm. Free.

National Trust Leicester Association: Illustrated talk on Lyveden New Bield. Highpoint Conference Centre. 13th Sept. 7.30pm. 0116 222 9133.

Fosse Camera Club: Fridays from Sept. St. Peter's Church Rooms. 7.45pm. 0116 299 2230.

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The Western Park Gazette

Ernest Gimson was one of England's greatest artist craftsman and architect. His work can be found all over Leicester and beyond ...

Leicester's Greatest Architect

Here in West Leicester, most of us are familiar with Gimson Road, where the former Co-op Dairy stood until Fred Dibner demolished the chimney in 1993. But few are aware that the nearby Gimson family home had its top storey removed before becoming the Christ The King Primary School we know today.

Ernest Gimson, born in Leicester in 1864 was to gain a world wide reputation as an architect and furniture designer.

He was a younger son of Josiah Gimson, the engineer, whose Leicester Vulcan Works gained an international reputation. Young Ernest started off as an architect articled to local city architect Isaac Barradale and attended classes at Leicester School of Art. It was his attendance, aged 20, at a meeting in Humberstone Gate, addressed by William Morris, the pioneer of the Arts and Crafts Movement, that was to prove a defining moment in young Gimson's life.

Recommended by Morris to train further with a London practice, Ernest Gimson went on to de-

sign a number of classic houses in both Stoneygate and the Charnwood Forest area before migrating to the Cotswolds where he was to spend the rest of his life concentrating more and more on furniture design.

As a young man in 1885 he had won a silver medal in a National Competition for a set of drawings of furniture and it was with the Barnsley Brothers in Gloucestershire that he went on to develop the "Cotswold style" of furniture. These pieces can fetch many thousands of pound today.

In keeping with the ideals of the Art and Craft Movement, his furniture was always practical and described as "not too good for ordinary use" and he is regarded by many as the most influential such designer of the twentieth century.

Both Ernest and his wife Emmie were also very musical and are known to have possessed excellent singing voices. Sadly, Ernest died of cancer at a comparatively young age of 55 in 1919 at his home at Sapperton in his beloved Cotswolds.

Roger Blackmore



KNOTT'S LANDING

Helen Knott

Foraging is the buzzword on everyone's lips these days. It's the new in way to shop. No-one goes to the supermarket; they forage for bargains, or the best local produce or shop. If you are really committed then you forage in the local wilderness to find useful stuff to eat. It's a noble idea but it's getting kind of crowded these days. I went blackberrying on Western Park the other day and found a chap lugging buckets (I kid you not) of blackberries



away. When I smiled and asked if he'd left any for the rest of us he just grunted. I noticed that Entropy restaurant are encouraging people to find them brambles in exchange for cocktails. It's going to be hard to find any local berries at this rate.

I used to be just a wild food kind of forager but increasingly I find myself becoming a shopping forager, mostly because my local shops are all closing and I have to forage around the edges of our area to find things. Thankfully the greengrocer's is still within reach and although we have lost the bakers on Hinckley Road, the Polish delis there have stepped into the breach nicely.

Meat is my latest problem. I hate supermarket meat. Buy mince and you get pints of water thrown in for good measure. Buy bacon and, well the less said about the weird slimy juice supermarket bacon exudes the better. I did have a fantastic butcher on Hinckley Road but then he went and passed away and I was forced to widen my circle. Down to King Richards Road I went to Lane's Pork Butchers, but then they retired after 73 years. Recently, I have turned to the Halal butchers down on Narborough Road. I have a few squeamish reservations about the way Halal meat is slaughtered, but I want to limit my food miles so I have to put them aside. If I wanted to go anywhere else my foraging has revealed that it's over to New Parks or up Hinckley Road to Leicester Forest East or perhaps Woodgate. The reason people like to forage is that its fun and when it becomes hard work like finding a butcher it's a lot less appealing. Although maybe that could work to our advantage if the council installed some fences, make it harder to get to the brambles, then bucket man might be deterred and we could all share the bounty.

Castle Park Festival

Now in it's 22nd year Castle Park Heritage & Arts Festival features a huge range of family-friendly events in the heart of Leicester's 'Old Town' and kicks off on the 22nd of August.

This week long festival celebrates the history and heritage of Leicester as well as presenting guided walks, special visits, concerts and family entertainment. This year's highlights include a concert by Chumbawamba at The Cathedral on Thursday 25th, special tours of buildings and locations on a hidden gems trail on Saturday 27th and the annual family day at Castle Gardens on Bank Holiday Monday 29th.



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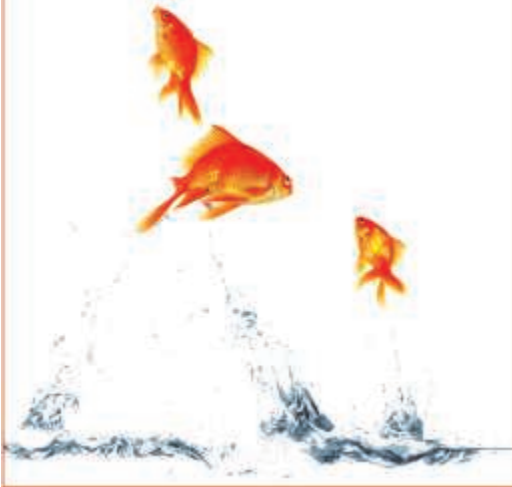
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Steve's Challenge

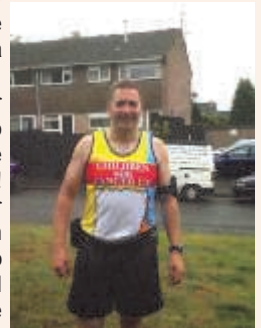
West End resident Steve Doughty is pounding the pavement as he prepares for the Great North Run on September 18th in Newcastle.

Steve, who runs a local plastering company, has never run a half marathon before and the challenge is quite a daunting one.

Steve says: "I've never ran before, except to get the tools out of the van when it's raining! But I turned 40 last year and sadly lost my mum to cancer. I wanted to raise some money and at the same time give myself a challenge, so I

decided to join up with the Children with Cancer charity and have been trying to persuade people to spare a few pounds for such a worthy cause. I know times are hard, but they're even harder for children with leukaemia."

You can sponsor Steve here- www.uk.virginmoneygiving.com



Events in the Parish

St. Anne's, St. Paul's and St. Augustine's

At St. Anne's Church Hall -

Mon - Fri Sandhurst Playgroup 285 7440.

Mon: 5.30 - 7.00pm: W.E.A. Yoga 255 6614.

7.15 - 9.00pm: Tai Chi. Call Rick 285 5159.

2nd Tue: 2.00 - 4.00pm: MU Speakers

3rd Tue: 7.30 - 9.30pm: W.P. Gardening Club.

Wed: 5.00 - 8.00pm: Weightwatchers.

Wed: 8.00 - 9.00pm: Tai Chi with Rick.

1st Wed: 2.30 - 4.00pm: Wednesday Club.

4th Wed: 7.00 - 9.00pm: MU Speakers.

Thurs: 9.00 -10.00am: Pilates for fitness.

1.30 - 3.30pm: Pram Club. (Term time)

6.30 - 8.00pm: Rebounder Aerobics

Fri: 10.00am: Coffee Morning.

1st Fri: 1.30 - 1.00pm: Lunch club.

2 & 4th Fri: 2.00 - 4.00pm: Folk dancing.

Tuesdays 10.00am: Mums and Toddlers: Over 60's Club. 12.30 (**St. Paul's**)

Church OF THE MARTYRS

JULY EVENTS Westcotes Drive Leicester

Tomatoes cafe church with live music Sat 10th and 24th Sept -10am-12pm.

Shake Rattle & Roll for babies toddlers & carers

every Thursday in term time - 9.30-11.30am.

Martyrs Football Training every Weds eve. 6.30pm at Nelson Mandela Park.

In the Martyrs Community Hall

Craft Group 8pm 11th Aug and 8th Sept.

Taekwondo 7.30-8.30pm every Monday.

Karate 6pm-7pm every Friday.

Zumba 6.30pm every Tuesday.

Rainbows 5.15pm Mon, **Brownies** 6.30pm Mon and Thurs 6.30pm, **Guides** 7pm Tues.

Details of events and services can be found at www.martyrs.org.uk

Parish of St. Peter

21 Hinckley Road Leicester

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Like them or loath them, tattoos are becoming more popular and not just for the young and trendy, as Westender Dawn Howard found out!

Tat's For Me!

With my redundancy money burning a hole in my bank, after it had first visited the lovely mortgage people, I had summoned up the courage to finally have a tattoo.

My son, neighbours and friends thought it was all part of the usual "mid life crisis" more commonly exhibited by men with new toys-cars and Harley Davidson's, but I felt I now had the opportunity to have it done and was ignoring the jibes!

I had scoped out a number of parlours but didn't have much to go on other than external presentation; not much I know, bearing in mind what they were going to do would have a lasting and permanent impact upon my body.

I had vaguely decided upon a design; an Art Deco sunrise to chime with my name and took this idea to Devils Own Tattoos in Braunstone Gate. They presented as being very professional and looked on the iPad for improved images other than my scrawled design. We agreed on a price and date, although having had the courage to go into the shop, I was hoping to have it done there and then, but my appointment was for 10am the following Tuesday.

I was understandably nervous that morning and had left home far too early. I found myself half way down Hinckley Road with still another half an hour until my appointment and there is only so much window shopping that can be done! My anxiety had been compounded by a temporary crown that had come out the night before and I couldn't get another dental appointment until later that afternoon, so I had tried to keep it in place with some chewing gum... very classy!

I had visions of either swallowing it or spitting it out whilst being drawn on! Again very classy.

Luckily, when I finally got to the parlour, still 15 minutes early, I was advised that the tattooist who was due to do it wasn't available and I would have to come back tomorrow. I have never been so pleased to have been stood up before. I said to the guy that was going to do it: "You had better be good!" And then spent the night worrying that I had offended him and he would extract his revenge on my skin!

I needn't have worried. The journey there was much more relaxed with my tooth back in place. In fact, I may have even been a little late.

I was still nervous about the amount of pain I was going to experience but the tattooist doing it was very calming, professional and kind.

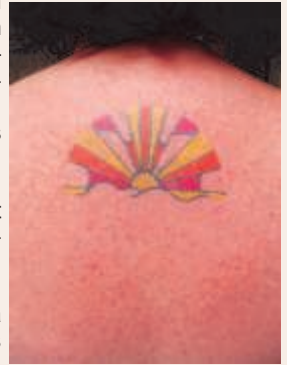
he even got the very loud thrash metal music changed. I thought it had been put on to hide the screams!

The pain wasn't that bad really and I managed to share jokes as well as discussions on Art Deco, Surrealism, Gaudi and Barcelona with my guy. The whole process took about an hour. I thought it was going to be longer and felt a vague disappointment when he said that he'd finished.

It has been nearly a week now and it has settled down nicely -

I am still showing it off - and people take some convincing that its real and not just a transfer. They are impressed with the design and brightness of the colours.

I am pleased with it too and would encourage others who enjoy art to take the plunge. It's not just for 20 something's - us "mid life crisis" folks can also play!



National Trust Leicester Association

The National Trust Leicester Association is a "club" for NT members in Leicestershire.

Due to the popularity of their evening meetings they are moving to the Highpoint Conference Centre, 165 Glenfield Road, Leicester and visitors are welcome to attend.

In addition to evening and afternoon meetings the Association also arranges a programme of lecture lunches, coach outings and other social events and issues a newsletter.

See the Events Diary for meeting details and for more information please call, 0116 2229133.

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August Police Update

Detectives from Hinckley Road local policing unit are appealing for witnesses after a 26-year-old man was robbed and knocked unconscious in Tudor Road near the entrance to the Rally Park.

The victim's iPhone was stolen during the incident which happened around 1am on Sunday June 26.

Detective Constable Chrissie Hitchin said, any information could help move the investigation forward, "We would urge anyone who was in the area during the early hours of Sunday morning to contact us if they remember seeing anyone acting suspiciously or witnessed the incident itself.

Anyone with any information is asked to contact DC 4331 Chrissie Hitchin on Leicester (0116) 222 2222.

A 30 year old man has been arrested during investigations into an altercation on Braunstone Gate on July 27th.

The incident involved two groups of men, believed to be three black and at least three white men who made off down Narborough Road. The group of black men were believed to be carrying

two air rifles.

Nobody was injured during the incident and no shots were fired.

The 30 year old arrested in connection with the incident has been released on police bail pending further enquiries.

Increased police patrols and the installation of a mosquito alarm have reduced the amount of anti social behaviour occurring in the Central Road area of Woodgate.

As a result of feedback from local residents, the police have been working with the council's Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Street Wardens and housing providers to address the problem.

Residents are urged to report any anti-social activity to the local Beat Team based at Hinckley Road and the Mantle Road Community Centre.

The Westcotes Ward neighbourhood team are working with LCFC to address the problem of inconsiderate parking on match days.

The club is publicising car park locations on their website and programmes, but anyone experiencing a parking issue on match days should contact Hinckley Road, so officers can attend and assess the situation. Police will ticket and tow away any offending vehicles.

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Spin it!

On 24th September, Eco House will be hosting "Spin It - a Day of Movement Action"; a day of action to encourage people to reduce their dependence on fossil fuels and learn to love their bikes more!

It will be run in conjunction with GreenLight and will involve a wide range of bike related activities: a bike powered generator, photos of you and your bike, mini group cycle rides around the park and freebies to collect. The GroundWork Bike Doctor's surgery will also be open allowing you to have a check up done and blow the cobwebs off your old machine.

Come and be inspired and celebrate the ability to move without the need to use fossil fuels.

To find out more about the day of action go to www.moving-planet.org or contact Anne Scott for more details on 0116 2232 622)



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squaring the circle

Richard Perry continues his delve through the best free software around.

Nice Box - What's in it? Richard Perry

Most of us have surfed the internet using the world's most popular web browser, Windows Explorer, mainly because it's already on the computer - but its not the only choice. There's Firefox, Google Chrome, Opera and many others, all connecting us to the world wide web.

Despite recent online psychometric testing which somehow "proved" Internet Explorer users were a bit thick, when compared to those who use other browsers, the new version, Explorer 9, is much improved. It's more stable, intuitive with improved features and fluidity than its predecessors, so it could make up a lot of lost ground.

Since Explorer's market share has dropped from almost 90% to around 55% - the alternatives must be as good or better?



Firefox which has around 22% of the browser market carries with it smooth and fast browsing, security, spell check, customisation and a pile of add-ons. You can even add sticky notes to webpages and they'll still be there when you return. It is considered to be the best of the bunch in terms of features and there's also a version for your phone as well.

Google Chrome is quick, simple and straight forward with a bag full of useful features. There's stealth browsing which deletes cookies and passwords when you've finished; the ability to drag text into a browser window is particularly useful. Security is pretty good, protecting and warning against pop-ups, viruses and malware.

Opera is acclaimed as being the fastest web browser and it certainly has a few tricks up its sleeve. It has a turbo mode which speeds up even slow connections. You can navigate the web by talking to it and it will even read text for you. Very cool! You can surf using mouse gestures and there are tonnes of skins and widgets to play with. (Widgets are small programmes for games and tools and skins let you change the colour and layout of the browser)

Security is up to scratch, but the only slight worry is that Opera isn't as well known as Firefox or Explorer, so some websites aren't compatible. Nevertheless, its well worth downloading and can only improve.

Letterbox



Dear Editor,

Who would have believed it! I know Hunstanton is popular with families from Western Park, and we always expect to bump into someone we know, but FIVE families met in the sand dunes in July. The 10 children, who all attend Dovelands School, had a great time running about together playing side and seek. Can anyone break that record?



From left: Katy, Alice, Ava, Dillon, Will, Elliot, Hannah, Molly, Charlie and Daisy

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Tony Huxley's Garden Tidings



Few things are more likely to create a media storm than the combination of freak weather and nature out to kill. Recently the press was in a minor tizz over “deadly” hemlock reaching frightening proportions due to ideal growing conditions.

Hemlock looks like its relative, cow parsley but has irregular dark red blotches on the stems and a rather grim odour. Legend has it that hemlock was used to kill the Greek philosopher Socrates. Experts are warning about the dangers of “foraging”.

Let's not get too carried away. Would you ingest a wild plant without being certain it's edible? Do you rummage around in hedgerows then put sap covered fingers in your mouth? The plant world is a poisoners dream. *Conium maculatum* or Hemlock is a native plant. Its water loving nephew *Oenanthe crocata* (Water Dropwort) is even more toxic, yet



Hemlock

deaths through naive salad consumption are rare to the point of near myth.

If your phobia is toxicity then stay indoors. Ragwort, a pretty yellow flowered but poisonous weed kills cattle and horses every year. Yew could kill a horse with one mouthful! Its berries hide a venomous pip, deadly in even small numbers.



Ragwort

Prunus laurocerasus (Cherry laurel) releases cyanide when crushed. Cyanide derived toxins exist in many plants including apple pips, but you'd need to eat a bucket full to do any harm. Most *ranunculus* plants are toxic including delphinium, aconitum even buttercup. So are foxgloves, hellebores, laburnum, penstemon, and so on and on. How have we managed to survived? Because most poisonous plants look, smell and taste toxic and need consuming in quantity to kill. And if common sense doesn't prevail they often cause vomiting, expelling the toxin before major harm is done. In fact death by plant usually occurs when a tree falls on someone's head!

BRAIN TAZERS

- What number appears next in the line?
2, 6, 16, 54, 162, __?
- Rearrange the letters of “ZOMLABA CAFITURI” to give three holiday islands.
- What have the following words got in common? DENIM, LIAR, WAR, STEP, GULP?
- Why are 1984 bottles of malt scotch more valuable than 1976 bottles?
- A plain carrying 60 EU civil servants from every country in Europe crashes on the borders of Columbia, Brazil and Venezuela. Under international law, where should the survivors be buried?
- Put the same letter into the middle of these words to give another. FLAKED, GARISH, TURKEY, BRIDLE.
- A man looking out of a window is desperate to open it, but he knows it will kill him. How does he know?

(Answers at www.westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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