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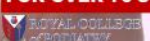
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Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the December issue of the Western Park Gazette.

So, we've just about got through 2022. It's not been a great year all around. We've had near economic collapse, two new Prime Ministers, sky high energy prices, increasing interest rates, freezing temperatures and a bloody war in Ukraine bringing us the closest we've been to nuclear annihilation in sixty years. It's been great... and yes, that's sarcasm.

The Gazette is still trundling on, probably down to luck rather than judgement, so we'd like to extend our thanks to everyone who supports us, be they advertisers, contributors or readers.

In our regular features, Carey Tunstall has been doing a bit of last minute pruning, there's the latest updates from the police and Project Hive and a local artist gets her work shown in a city centre exhibition. And there's the traditional Bigly Crossword on the back page.

Have a very Cool Yule and New Year, and we'll be back in January.

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Events Diary

Free Thurs Club: 2pm. **Meet & Eat:** Weds 5pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narborough Rd.

Fosse Camera Club: For details visit Facebook page or fossecoopcameraclub.co.uk

Hall @ St Anne's, Letchworth Rd: Knit & Natter: 1.30pm, 4th Tues. **Weds Club:** 2.30pm, 1st Weds.

Musical Memory Box: 1st Tues 2pm **Pram Club:** Weds 9.15-11.30am. **Women's Taekwondo:** Thurs 8-9pm taekwondo4all.com **Fri Coffee Morn:** 10am

Free Tea/Coffee @ St Paul's Worship Ctr / Community Hub, Kirby Rd Weds, 2- 4pm. T-Top sale. 2nd Sat.

Family Friends: Term time 4th Mon. St Paul's & St Augustine's Centre, Kirby Rd. 2nd Sat at New Parks Methodist Ch. Contact Sarah on 07465 431 585.

Free drop-in Coffee Morns: Tues. 10-12 noon. St. Andrew's Methodist Church, Glenfield Rd East.

@Curve: Wizard Of Oz 19 Nov-8 Jan. **Very Hungry Caterpillar** 16-31 Dec. **Death Drop** 19-21 Jan.

@DM Hall: Cinderella Until 2 Jan. **Leic Comedy Fest Preview** 6 Jan. **Classic Rock Show** 24 Jan.

@Little Theatre: Aladdin 15 Dec-18 Same Faces (Comedy fundraiser) 14 Jan.

Upstairs@thewestern: Jason Neale's Comedy Workshops 16, 23, 30 Jan.

Leic Museum & Art Gallery: Leicester & The Queen Exhibition until 31 Jan.

O2 Academy: Holding Absence 20 Jan. **New wave of Classic Rock** 2 21 Jan.

Email editor@westernparkgazette with your event

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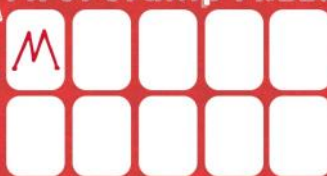
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ANDY'S ART EXHIBITION

Newfoundpool based artist **Andrea Banks-Staszak** has held one of the last exhibitions on Churchgate's Beta X ahead of its closure next year. Andrea, who completed two years of Fine Art part time study at DMU, said: "I have always loved art and being creative, but life got in the way. I eventually pursued my love of painting around five years ago and have had my work shown as part of a larger presentation, but this is the first time I have been lucky enough to have my own exhibition."



The work on display is acrylic, but she's tried most mediums and styles, "I love the endless possibilities posed by creating something, but have discovered that colour and detail are prominent in my work."

Andrea was involved in the L.O.V.E Art Exhibition which ended recently. She was on the judging panel and helped curate the displays. One of the six venues to host the exhibition was Beta X, where she invigilated for three weeks. Ady Alexander, who runs Bera X, offered her room for two weeks to exhibit her work. She continued: "My little exhibition ran from the 21st of Nov to the 4th

of Dec. I had a really great Sunday opening night with a total of eight paintings on display and I'm delighted to have sold some of them."

Andrea's work can be viewed on Facebook by searching for **Art by Andy Banks-Staszak**.



WOODGATE COMMUNITY FOOD AT XMAS
Woodgate Community Food will be running as normal over Christmas at Rally House with a session on Saturday 24th December.

The foodbank will be moving in the New Year to the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre on Mantle Rd. Watch out for more info on their social media and website soon: woodgatecommunityfood.org.uk

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NEW HOMES PLANNED

Western Park could soon be the sight for sixteen houses and four flats if City Council planners give the go-ahead in February next year.

The derelict land was once home to the Fosse Riders Club, Groundworks and the Constance Jackson Centre and is near to the main gate and car park on Hinckley Road.

WPEH Limited wants to demolish the existing buildings which, they say, have no historical value and require major work to repair.



The plans include 2 bedroom homes, four of which are classed as affordable, alongside eight 4 beds and four 3 beds. Four 1 bed apartments would also be built alongside car parking, landscaping and drainage. Fencing and gates to maintain the safety of residents are also planned.

WPEH say five different styles of houses will be built designed to fit in with the architectural style of the area. In the panning document they stated: "...Each house type is designed to meet the differing needs of various social/ demographic groups."

FOOTPATH UPGRADE

Neighbourhood parking spaces across Leicester and a new footpath in the Western ward are being created in a series of schemes designed to improve parking and safety.

Locally, work has taken place to create a new footpath between Hinckley Road and Ainsdale Road, on a piece of unadopted land which has become a right of way over the years. The 75-metre pathway cost about £50k to install.

Local residents are pleased. One said: "I'm glad the work's being done because it used to get really overgrown and the ground was very uneven. You had to really watch yourself walking down there. It got quite dodgy at night too."



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PROJECT *Update* hive

Project Hive is run by the WWCE, a group of local residents raising funds to redevelop the former Eco House into a community space.

We have really enjoyed kicking off this year's festive season with our community around us. The Christmas Craft Fair and Family Party at St. Anne's Church Hall were great opportunities to catch up with both new and familiar faces and we all feel grateful for the continued support for the project more than five years since it started.

Going into 2023 we are looking to recruit a couple of enthusiastic and reliable new members to take on the specific roles of treasurer and secretary. At the point we have reached in the project these roles will be of rapidly growing importance as we begin bidding for the finance that will get spades in the ground. If you feel that you have the necessary skills and experience and would like to get involved get in touch. **KN**



NEW COLLEGE WINS AWARD

New College has been awarded the Quality in Careers Standard Gold Award for the fourth successive time in recognition of the quality and breadth of its careers provision.

The Quality in Careers Standard is the national quality award for careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) in secondary schools, colleges and work-based learning. Following an in-depth external assessment, the assessor reported that the college raises "student aspiration through activities which develop ambition, self-confidence, communication and employability skills."

Jane Brown, Principal of New College Leicester, comments: "We are committed to breaking the cycle of disadvantage within New Parks by ensuring that our students leave New College with choices, be that to enter employment or go on to further education and training. Excellent careers provision is therefore central to our curriculum. Across all subjects, our staff continually focus on how the subject can be used in the 'real world' and how it can help our students go on to achieve their ambitions. We are thrilled that our Career Mark assessment has successfully passed the verification process again. It's a credit to our entire team to have consistently achieved the high standard demanded by the award."

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TRACKS OF THE YEARS

The part-pedestrianisation work on Braunstone Gate unearthed a piece of Leicester's transport history in November, as 100-year-old tram tracks were uncovered by contractors.

Leicester's electric tram service ran for 45 years, and ended in 1949 but some tram tracks stayed hidden, under layers of tarmac, due to the difficulty and cost of removal.

There were 17 tram routes in Leicester starting with horse drawn operations in 1874 before electrification took place in 1904 on the fleet of 94 double-deckers. The West End routes began that year and were steadily rolled out until 1915.

There were three possible local trips available. 1: Braunston Circle to Hinckley Road and Western Park 2: Braunston Circle to Narborough Road. 3: Hinckley Road to Fosse Road, Woodgate, Great Central Street and High Street. 4: Fosse Road to Braunstone Gate. It was easily possible to tram-hop into or across the city.

The picture below was posted on the Twitter account of local resident Paul Hindle and shows the remains of a cobbled road and the tracks ahead of their disappearance under block paving.



Photo: Paul Hindle



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CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINMENT

We may be in a financial straight jacket at the moment, but that hasn't stopped us letting our hair down and enjoying a Father Christmas sized sack of family fun.

Traditional seasonal entertainment is everywhere, so here's our rundown of this year's festive fun!

Curve: They've pulled out all the stops with their dazzling production of The Wizard Of Oz which runs until 8th January. And for the younger ones, The Very Hungry Caterpillar Christmas Show is on until 31st December. curveonline.co.uk

De Montfort Hall: Have their traditionally silly pantomime. This year it's Cinderella starring TV's Evie Pickerill, AJ and Curtis Pritchard which runs until 2nd January. demontforthall.co.uk

The Little Theatre: Always guaranteed to put on a good show, The Leicester Drama Society's Aladdin is on until 8th Jan. thelittletheatre.co.uk

Loughborough Town Hall: Their excellent seasonal offering is Sleeping Beauty on until 2nd January. They also have Santa's Grotto until 24th Dec. loughborouhtownhall.co.uk

Belvoir Castle: Glossy and posh, it's Cinderella at Belvoir on until Jan 2nd. belvoircastle.com



Winter Wonderland: Twinlakes get all Christmassy until 24th Dec, but their Light Nights continue until Jan 7th. twinlakespark.co.uk

The Xmas Wheel of Light:

For a mere £7 you can ride Leicester's big wheel on Jubilee Square and look at the back of the Holiday Inn... On until 2 Jan.

Jubilee Square Ice Rink: Good fun for anybody with a sense of balance. On until 2 Jan.

Humberstone Gate Fun Fair: On until Jan 2nd.

Santa in Town Hall Square: He's got elves and free kids' gifts. Various times until Dec 23rd

Metal Monocle: They rock in the New Year with Metal Fatigue on Dec 31st. metalmonocle.com

2 Funky Music Café: Aba Shanti-i and Iration Steppas- Boxing Day Sound System on 26 Dec. 2funkycomplex.co.uk



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Dec Police Update

As you probably saw in the news there were instances of disorder in other areas of Leicester that had a huge impact on all of us within Leicestershire Police. It is fair to say that things are returning to normal, and you will be seeing your neighbourhood officers back on the beat, hopefully smiling as well! When you see us out and about, please say hello.

I'm sure you will be aware of the serious assault on Dumitru-Nicolae Cherascu, which later resulted in his death. This happened on Tudor Road at around 9pm on Tuesday 29th November. 41-year-old Marian Botea, from Cranmer Street, has been charged with murder and appeared at Leicester Magistrates' Court on Monday 5 December. I want to reassure you that incidents such as this are rare, but when they do occur we need the help of the public to bring those responsible to justice. We are appealing for anyone with more information about the incident to come forward if they have not already done so. Any details you're able to provide could help and you can pass info onto the investigation team via <https://mipp.police.uk/operation/33EM22120-PO1> or call 101.

We are experiencing the seasonal rise in burglary and theft offences. Make sure your doors and windows are locked. If you are expecting a delivery, please tell the delivery company of your nominated safe place or neighbour where they can deposit your parcels. We have 'things in place' and are working hard to catch those responsible, if you are one of those people and reading this you've been warned!

With Christmas around the corner, consider how you dispose of packaging from new expensive items. Whilst we all love to recycle, the big branded box, that your new pride and joy has arrived in, is also an advert that you have it!

If Santa is bringing you or the children bikes for Christmas, we will be holding further bike registry events in the new year. The previous one at the end of October was a great success, so please keep your eyes peeled for updates on Facebook @West Leicester Police and Neighbourhood Link, if you haven't signed up already then please do so at neighbourhoodlink.co.uk

As the weather gets colder, please don't be tempted to leave your car running on the drive warming up or defrosting even for a minute. This is an open invite for thieves and in most cases your insurance will not cover your loss.

Finally, two people from Leicester were charged last month after a large quantity of cannabis and cash was found at two city addresses.

Manoj Kumar and Baljit Dhillion-Kumar have both been charged with five offences following the discovery, in Braunstone Gate and Carisbrooke Avenue.

Matt Hutton

CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



This month I've spent some time planting amaryllis bulbs, unfortunately they won't be flowering for Christmas as they take between 6 to 8 weeks to come into flower. I soaked the bulbs for a couple of hours, which rehydrates them, giving them a head start in forming their growing shoots. The bulbs prefer being pot bound, so I planted them in quite small pots filled with compost mixed with grit. They do like good drainage, so I popped them in a bright area avoiding direct sun and draughts.

Outside I've been pruning apple and pear trees, whilst they are dormant, (between November and March). The ideal shape is an open goblet ideally with five main branches. Initially, I remove any crossed, damaged, diseased and damaged branches. I then shorten any branches which are too long whilst removing any underside growing



spurs, as these will not receive enough light giving poor fruit production. I kept the small twigs that I removed to use as pea sticks and shredded other small waste, where possible, to add to my compost bin and give the compost better structure.

The grass is still growing so I'm continuing to mow the lawns but will make sure that I don't damage the grass by working/walking on it during heavy frost or snow. In addition, I'm still removing any fallen leaves from the lawns as the reduction of light on the grass causes dead patches. In the next few weeks, I'll sharpen or replace my cutting blades on the mower too as blunt or chipped blades can also damage grass.

It is now a great time to plant roses, whilst they are dormant. I planted bare root roses; they can be much cheaper when bought like this and I find there is a much wider variety to choose from. I started by digging holes where they needed to be placed and incorporated into the soil removed some chicken manure pellets and well-rotted compost. I put more chicken manure pellets into the hole and firmed this down. After which I placed the rose in the hole so its base would be below the final level of soil and back filled with the soil mixture. This was heeled in and covered with mulch. Finally, bird feeders were placed nearby as the birds will happily devour any pests spotted nearby.

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BIGLY XWORD

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1 Across: Copy **1 Down:** Musical instrument of wooden bars **2D:** Parsonage **3D:** Anti foreigners **4D:** Without due regard **5A:** Concise **6A:** Not good as in, "It's a bit..." **7A:** Writing implement **8A:** Kimono sash or Jedi Master **9A:** Farthest from ordinary **10D:** Psychologically painful **11A:** Glass piece **12A:** Mother **13D:** Flaxen **14A:** Early 20th Century Hollywood director **15A:** Alliance of parties **16A:** Sugar pockets © Paul Towers 2022

Answers at w:westernparkgazette.co.uk

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