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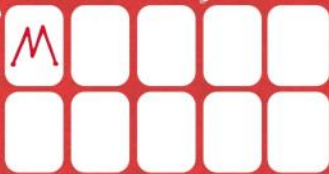
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Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the February edition of the Western Park Gazette.

In this issue, having valiantly fought off the production PC's blue screen of death, by waiting for it to fix itself, we dive headlong into the not very interesting world of roadworks. Yes, our editorial has come to that... Unfortunately, some of these roadworks are going to with us for quite some time and will radically change routes in and around Westcotes and the Fosse areas.

In other news, there's a few beer related activities planned for the Hall @ St. Annes, a local environmentalist gets angry at the amount of fly-tipping left on the streets, mainly because he's been picking it up, the local HMO scheme has been extended and we could soon be paying to park in Woodgate.

Carey Tunstall has been sharpening her tools in this month's gardening update, Matt Hutton, from the Local Policing Unit, has been very busy with his colleagues making our neighbourhoods safer, and the evil Brain Tazers lie in wait at the back.

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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

Pop-up Pubs: 24 Feb/31 March. 6pm-11pm. **Fair Trade Coffee Morn:** March 4th. 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. Hall @ St. Anne's.

Mother's Day Tea: 17 March, Team Hub, New Parks Com Centre, St. Oswald Rd. 1-2.30pm.

@Curve: Annie 25 Feb-4 March.

@DM Hall: Suzanne Vega 28 Feb,

@Little Theatre: Bedroom Farce: 6-11 March.

Upstairs@thewestern: Leic Comedy Fest till 26 Feb.

Y Theatre: Leic Comedy Fest Until 26 Feb.

Newarke Houses Mus: The Tiger Who Came To Tea Exhibition: until 21 March.

O2 Academy: Pigsx7: 5 March.

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DIGGING IT ALL UP!

Motorists and pedestrians in Westcotes and the Fosse are in for an interesting year as important arterial roads in the area undergo a major transformation.

Work on Braunstone Gate will continue until the middle of March to create a 'Mini Holland' scheme aimed at improving pedestrian safety and comfort by widening pavements and reducing car access, but the biggest road change is to Woodgate.

As part of that project, the city council are overhauling the busy FiveWays junction which links Blackbird Road, Woodgate, Fosse Road North, Groby Road and Buckminster Road.

Work is being carried out in phases to help minimise disruption, and the overall project is expected to be complete by spring 2024.

During the initial phase, part of Blackbird Road and Buckminster Road are closed to through traffic with local diversions in place.

The experimental road closure on Buckminster Road was removed at the start of the FiveWays redevelopment. A review and surveys will be carried out, after the highway works are completed, to fully understand the impact of the new junction on traffic flow on Buckminster Road and the surrounding streets.

A second phase which will involve improvements to

Fosse Road North between the FiveWays junction and Stephenson Drive has started. This involves removing the existing mini roundabout at the junction of Fosse Road North and Stephenson Road and replacing it with a signalised junction; widening the road to help provide a new bus only lane on Fosse Road North on the approach to FiveWays junction. A new cycle track will be created and raised table crossings will be installed across Bonchurch Street and Central Road to improve pedestrian safety. Access to Rally Park will also be improved.

Work on Fosse Road North is expected to take around 14 weeks to finish and is closed to south-bound traffic which now runs in a one-way direction towards the FiveWays junction between Stephenson Drive and the FiveWays junction. Well signed diversions is in place, but some bus services are also affected, with diversions and nearby alternative routes in place.



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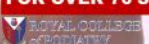
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LETTER BOX

Dear Editor: I have lived on Westcotes Drive for 10 years but in the past year our streets are not being cleaned regularly. This is causing drains to be blocked and it's generally looking a dump and dangerous to ride a bicycle on as you can slip on the build-up of wet leaves, which I have done.

The streets used to be cleared every few weeks, but nothing has been done for at least 8 months.

We're not asking for too much, just that our streets are cleaned on a regular basis.

My friends visited from Clarendon Park and commented on the messy streets in this area; it was embarrassing.

Local Resident



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ADRIAN SWATS FLY-TIPPERS

West End residents have long been concerned about the amount of rubbish and litter dumped on their streets, in spite of the city council's efforts to keep it clean and the hefty fines imposed on fly-tippers.

It's an on-going problem, and one that a local environmental campaigner has been tackling head on over the last few weeks.

Adrian Ablett says he's spent hours picking up rubbish from the Fosse and Westcotes areas: He commented: "Last weekend on Little Holme Street and the Glenfield Road East carpark, I picked up 25 bags of rubbish and 5 bags of recyclables, plus the bigger stuff like mirrors and car tyres, and 39 large nitrous oxide (laughing gas) canisters. Then I call the Cleansing Department who come and pick it all up within a day."

Adrian finds the process soul destroying: "There's no respect for the area. I spend all that time clearing up one road and 24 hours later the rubbish is back. It shocks me to see how much I can find in one little space and how quickly it fills up again."



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But here's the good news – Choosing Fairtrade products can help to save our favourite foods!

Come and find out how and enjoy delicious Fairtrade refreshments and kids & family activities between 10am-12.30 on Saturday March 4th at The Hall @ St. Anne's on Letchworth Road.

Rev'd Sharon Plant

POPPING OFF TO THE POP-UP PUBS

Regular 'Friday Social Pop-up Pubs' are being held on the last Friday of the month at the Hall @ St. Anne's From 6pm to 8pm.

They're run by Western Park based Huxley's Bar, owned by Ady Alexander, who said: "The idea of the Friday Social is to give people the chance to get together and get out again after a difficult three years. Chilled nights with a pleasant vibe."

The fully licensed bar features real ale, beer, wine and spirits along with local street food.

The next Pop-up date is 31st March with children allowed in until 8pm.



WESTERN PARK BEER FEST UPDATE

Volunteers at the Western Park Beer Festival have reached the impressive milestone of raising £50,000 for local charities.

The landmark moment came after they raised £7,500 for three charities - b-inspired, The Laura Centre and Home-Start Horizons - at their latest festival in September 2022.

The Western Park Beer Festival was born in 2015 after a chat among local residents in a pub - where else! And since then volunteers have run six festivals and many pop-ups pubs.

Who knew that eight years later, and with a pandemic in between, the not-for-profit group would reach the milestone of handing over the impressive total of £50,000 to a number of charities in our area!

"We are extremely proud of this achievement," said chair Selina Conroy.

"We are very grateful to our generous sponsors and everyone who has come along to support our events and, in turn, supported amazing charities during a tough few year for them."

The planning is now underway for the September 2023 festival - and new members are always welcome. If you want to get involved, email:

info@westernparkbeerfestival.org or find us on Facebook by searching for 'Western Park Beer Festival'
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HMO SCHEME EXPANDED

New controls to the number of homes being converted into Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in West Leicester came into effect on February 17th. This followed a public consultation with city residents who raised concerns about parking problems, litter, antisocial behaviour, and noise linked to high numbers of HMOs in their neighbourhoods.

Under current legislation, planning consent is not needed to convert a house into an HMO designed for between three and six people to live in. However, where there is evidence that high numbers of HMOs in a particular area is having a negative impact, councils can introduce an Article 4 Direction, which would mean planning permission is needed for the change of use.

An Article 4 Direction has already been in place in several areas of the city, including West Leicester, to control the number of HMOs.

The latest move sees Leicester City Council expanding, and in some cases joining together, those areas to include thousands more houses in zones where high numbers of HMOs exist.

The previous Article 4 Direction covered parts of Leicester's West End and has now been stretched to include Rowley Fields, to Westcotes, Newfoundpool and parts of the Waterside area.

WOODGATE PAY TO PARK

Woodgate residents are being asked for their views on a proposed scheme which has been drawn up to tackle the problem of all day commuter parking in the area.

Initial engagement work with residents showed strong support for parking controls to be brought in. Residents favoured a scheme which would operate 24/7, with short-term parking provided close to shops and businesses. Now detailed proposals have been drawn up for residents and businesses to consider, so that a decision can be made on whether or not to implement them.

A drop-in exhibition will be taking place during the consultation, which runs until March 20th, giving residents and businesses the chance to find out more.

Info here: <https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/>

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Feb Police Update

The increased police presence, that may have been noticed over recent weeks, has been rewarded with over 50 people arrested and 30 charged with drugs offences, this was part of a force wide policing operation. I can promise you that all the police vehicles that were parked at Tesco's on Narborough Road have not been there because of a 'special offer' on doughnuts, they have been proactively targeting and denying criminals the use of the road network.

Locally, we have continued to execute search warrants at premises suspected to be growing cannabis. The production and sale of cannabis generates large amounts of money for criminal organisations. These premises and criminal groups bypass the electricity meter, making the locations inherently dangerous, and can lead to fires breaking out. Suspicious activity can be reported by telephoning 101, visiting the Leicestershire police website or reporting your concerns anonymously to CrimeStoppers.

The local teams have been busy addressing the issues raised to us by the communities we police. We have received numerous complaints regarding inconsiderate parking in and around most school sites. Please park considerately as the 'engage and explain' phase is now mostly completed and offenders could now find themselves subject to £30 fixed penalty notices where they are obstructing the highway (this includes parking on double yellow lines). We are aware that in certain areas customers using local businesses contribute to the problems. We have been working with our partners and local business to educate people but stopping to make a quick purchase will become considerably more expensive.

Complaints have also been received of speeding vehicles around the Glenfield Road area which is being addressed with the Road Safety Partnership and targeted policing operations over the coming months especially with the closure of Fosse Road North at Groby Road.

The patrols completed in relation to the previous rise in burglary offences have worked, the number of offences is decreasing and we will continue with the operation. Where vulnerable premises or people are identified, work with partners to increase security and safety continues.

The bike registry event held in January at the Team HUB on St Oswalds Road was a success. Registering your bike won't stop it being stolen, but it makes it possible for us to identify it as such and return it to you if we come across it.

There are upcoming beat surgeries, patch walks and community engagement events advertised on police.uk, neighbourhoodlink.co.uk and also on [@WestLeicesterPolice](https://www.facebook.com/WestLeicesterPolice) Facebook page. Please visit as we regularly update. **Sgt. Matt Hutton**

CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



This month I've treated myself and had all of my garden tools professionally sharpened. The price was very reasonable and it's saved me a lot of time, especially with the chainsaw!

I've now been using my newly honed tools to cut back vigorous shrubs such as buddleia and elder to keep them at a reasonable size. I have also pruned my beech hedge; it had become too big and was blocking out a lot of light. It needed to be pruned when there was no risk of frost, but also before the birds started nesting in it usually around March. Keep in mind that it's an offence to damage or disturb any wild bird nests. I have cut back dogwoods too to ensure good stem colour for next winter. I've also been tidying up hellebores, cutting back the old leaves, especially those with damage or black spot and I've covered the base of the plants with a home-made mulch.



I've also been sowing sweet peas and placed them in an area indoors that gives them a lot of light. In addition, I've sown some seeds in propagators, this helps to keep them moist and the soil at the right temperature. The seeds I've used include nigella, zinnia, rudbeckia, and antirrhinums. Sowing this early means that they will mature early, especially with the added heat. Once they have germinated, I will ensure to keep turning the propagators so that the seedlings don't become leggy, as they always grow toward the light.

Turning my compost was a big heavy job, the medium was quite wet, so I added shredded cardboard and paper. Doing this allows opening up and aeration to take place. If it was too dry I would add more kitchen waste to the bin such as vegetable peelings and occasionally some rainwater.

And finally, I've added a few splashes of colour to the garden by planting little pots of tete a tete, violas, bellis and primulas.

As spring nears and thirsty/hungry hedgehogs come out of hibernation, don't forget to leave out a dish of fresh water and cat food! **Carey Tunstall**



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