



## KIDS' PLAYGROUND? DANGEROUS DERELICT LAND IN WOODGATE



More on Page 4



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## Hello From The Editor

Welcome to 2022, or as we like to call it, an extension of 2020 and 2021.

It's always the same for the Gazette in January. New Year is done and dusted, but local news is sparse and our regular advertisers haven't quite woken up from their Yuletide slumber. It's a matter of just getting the issue out, come what may!

So, in a slimmer than usual January edition, we lead with a dangerous mess on the derelict ground at the end of Central Road and Bonchurch Street in Woodgate - children are playing there. Helen Knott's having the month off to sharpen her pen but Alex Tunstall joins us for a January ghost story based on the West Leicester legend of Black Annis. We have the policing update from Sgt Shauna Ashton, January's gardening advice from Carey and the Brain Tazering crossword and sudoku await your little grey cells.

We are always looking for contributors, so if you have an interesting local story to tell, or perhaps you'd like to write a regular column, then please get in touch. Happy New Year! And let's hope it's better than 2021!

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# Events Diary

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

**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 9.30-11.00am. **Fri Coffee Morns:** 10.00am.

**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 Ctr, 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.

**Perfectly Edible UK's** Community Shop. Fri & Sat. Fri 11-2/3pm. West End Centre, Andrewes Street.

**@Curve: Bedknobs & Broomsticks** 9-13 Feb.

**@DM Hall: Queen Extravaganza** – 1st Feb, **Musical Box (Genesis tribute)** - 13 Feb.

**@Y Theatre: Sound & Vision of Bowie** - 28 Jan. **Shaparak Khorshandi** - 29 Jan

**@Little Theatre: Handbagged** - 31 Jan-5 Feb. **Abba Sensation** 5 Feb.

**Upstairs@ The Western: Roti Moon** Until 2nd Jan, **Comedy Workshop** 10th Jan.

**Humpty Dumpty: New College.** 27-29 Jan. Glenfield Drama Group: 07704 991 334

**Snowman & The Snowdog:** Newark Houses till 20 Feb.

**Leicester Comedy Festival:** 2-20 Feb. 560 shows at 64 venues in Leicester. Info: comedy-festival.co.uk

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# KIDS' PLAYGROUND?

**Needles, dumped furniture, fly tipping, graffiti and the results of arson are all on display when walking across the derelict industrial land opposite Repton Street in Woodgate.**

In 2019, the City Council identified the 8.6 acre site, between Repton Street and the River Soar as a suitable location for 250 houses and flats.



Sue Hudson, Chair of the Woodgate Residents Association Ltd said: "An outline plan was presented at a public meeting at the Resources Centre, for terraced housing and apartments, to incorporate the Rally House site. A 3-to-4-year project for the environment agency to sort out the flood risk and raise the ground by one metre was pro-

posed. To date we have received no concrete information on what is happening and the site has been left poorly secured and a magnet for fly tipping both on the site and in the street. Also, the derelict brick facade is a poor outlook for residents living opposite.

"The Residents Association are frustrated at the lack of action on a site earmarked for quality housing but which now is spoiling the area."

Work has already started on the regeneration project, but it hasn't reached the former industrial site which used to house two dye works and a foundry.

This now dangerous area is easy to access and has become a playground for local children in spite of the extreme danger of dumped needles, other sharps and unstable buildings.

Our videographer took a look around to see how bad it has become.

Visit the Gazette's Facebook page @ourgazette to see the video.



Photos & video by Can Man

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# BLACK ANNIS

New Year ghost stories have been a British tradition dating as far back to the late 1800's. People would gather around the fireplace to tell macabre stories of chilling horror! Here in Leicester, we're lucky (or unlucky) enough to have a horror story of our very own – the tale of Black Annis.

If you're particularly brave – or particularly silly, depending on who you ask – you might venture down to the Dane Hills or Western Park in search of an old cave, partially hidden by a gnarled oak tree. This is the cave of Black Annis.

Annis is said to be monstrously tall, with a sickly blue face and just one bulging, bloodshot eye. Her fangs are long and yellow, perfect for drinking the blood of naughty children, and she has razor-like talons which she uses to dig the very cave that she lurks in. Upon the great tree outside, she hangs the skins of victims to dry, so that she might fashion them into a skirt to wear whilst she performs her dreadful rites.

Many years ago, some children set out to collect firewood in the forests of Leicestershire. As the sun crept its way beneath the horizon, a ghostly chill



descended upon the woods, and it wasn't long before the children heard an ominous grinding.

'What's that?' asked the youngest, a stick branched warily in his hand.

'Nothing, nothing,' replied his sister, determined that if they ignored it, it would simply go away.

But it did not go away.

'There it is again!' the little boy exclaimed, really starting to wish he was at home. His sister held her breath as an icy terror gripped her heart – there was only one thing this sound could be – the terrible grinding of Black Annis's teeth!

'Run!' she screamed, and the children groped their way between the dense, dark trees.

The grinding grew louder and louder as they scrambled desperately towards home – they couldn't possibly outrun her!

'Drop the firewood!' yelled the girl. A horrendous screech tore through the forest as Annis stumbled over the logs, giving the children just enough time to barrel into their house. Completely furious, Annis pounded upon the door, snarling with rage until the children's father hoisted it open and, in one swift movement, hit her full in the face with his axe.

'Blood! Blood!' she gargled in horror, staggering off into the darkness. Some say she died that night, whilst others say she haunts the outskirts of Leicester to this very day, searching for unruly children.

*Alexandra Tunstall*



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## 6 MONTHS OF ROADWORKS

The next phase of a rolling programme to repair and improve pavements, street furniture and bollards along Narborough Road has got underway.

Leicester City Council is carrying out the scheme to spruce up public areas for local businesses and residents, and will involve replacing broken slabs with concrete blocks, improved drainage, repairs to pavement damage caused by tree roots and installing new bollards, as well as new cycle racks where possible to prevent vehicles parking on the pavement.

The first phase of works in March 2020 saw £145,000 spent on repairs in the area between Narborough Road's junctions with Upperton Road and Equity Road. This latest section of work, costing £130,000, will take eight weeks.

Traffic restrictions will be in place for six months as another major highway's improvement scheme gets underway at Abbey Lane and its busy junction with Abbey Park Road and Blackbird Road.

As part of the improvements being carried out, the junction will be reconfigured to allow traffic to turn right onto Abbey Lane from two of the three lanes at the junction of Abbey Park Road. Existing pedestrian crossings in the immediate area will also be upgraded and footpaths widened to provide more space for pedestrians and cyclists. Driv-

ers are advised to consider using Anstey Lane or Melton Road/Belgrave Road as alternative routes to avoid potential delays.

## CHANGE TO OUR DELIVERY

We have made the decision to change the Gazette's distribution footprint.

From February, this will effect the roads between Winchester Avenue and Imperial Avenue (Wilmington, Nuffield and Chartley, Roads). Sweetbriar and Lavender Roads have already been removed from distribution. Canterbury Terrace, Imperial Av and Fosse Rd South will continue to receive copies.

The freed up 150 or so copies will be redistributed in New Parks and the edge of Braunstone, closer to the Western Park area.

This is to ensure that the Gazette's footprint is more focused and easier for our deliverers.

Readers in the effected area who wish to continue receiving the Gazette can contact [editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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Editor



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# LETTER BOX



Hello, I just wondered if any of your other readers love the tree-lined railway embankment that runs behind Dorchester Road and Ainsdale Road as much as myself and my partner. One of the reasons we bought the house, where we live now, was because of this 'linear woodland' that stands at the bottom of our garden. Since living here we've witnessed tawny owls, foxes, bats and an astonishingly rich range of birdlife, from long-tailed tits to goldcrests. I even witnessed two pairs of buzzards, soaring on the thermals that were rising up from the hardcore and steel of the railway lines; and recently I also saw a little egret flying over.

I've noticed a growing trend on the part of some of my neighbours to request that Network Rail clear trees from the area behind their gardens. This obviously has nothing to do with track safety which of course must be paramount, but seems to stem from the fact that the trees overshadow the rear portion of their gardens. I feel that this is an enormous shame as the wildlife diversity that the area enjoys could easily be compromised by this act



of clearing. I wonder if keen gardeners find that the reduction of natural light is detrimental to their plants. If this is the case, isn't it possible to plant shade-loving species? There are many native plants that have specifically evolved to grow in such low light conditions, cuckoo pint and foxgloves to name but two.

In this time of global warming and considering the hugely beneficial effects that trees have on the environment, shouldn't we be preserving and even planting trees, rather than requesting their removal. **S.H**

## LEICESTER COMEDY FESTIVAL RETURNS

**Leicester Comedy Festival, Europe's biggest and longest running comedy festival is back and celebrating British comedy again in February.** The line-up of the 29<sup>th</sup> festival features over 560 shows, over 800 performances and 64 venues.

The festival hosts TV names, performing solo shows and the 2022 line-up will see a veritable who's-who of comedy stars take to stages across the city – including Angela Barnes, Ahir Shah, Catherine Bohart, Ed Gamble, Henning Wehn, Katherine Ryan, Maisie Adam, Mark Watson, Nabil Abdulrashid, Nick Helm, Pam Ayres, Rachel Parris, Ria Lina, Richard Herring, Rosie Jones, Ross Noble, Seann Walsh, Stewart Lee, Suzi Ruffell, Tony Slattery & many more. Details at: [comedy-festival.co.uk](http://comedy-festival.co.uk)



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## Jan Police Update

Unfortunately, we start the first update of 2022 with the charging of two men with murder following the death of a 41-year-old man on Monday 27 December.

Shadon Archer, 32, of Bassett Street in Woodgate, and Marcus Henry, 32, of Morpeth Avenue, Leicester have been jointly charged with the murder of Raju Modhwadia.

Mr Modhwadia was found with significant stab wound injuries in Hamilton Street in the city on 27th December and died later in hospital.

An investigation is continuing after a 25-year-old man was found with a stab wound injury in the New Parks area at around 8.30pm on Monday evening (3 January).

He was taken to hospital for treatment at the time and has since been discharged.

A 17-year-old female, from Leicester, was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder. She has since been released on police bail while enquiries continue.

Enquiries have been ongoing including house-to-house visits and analysing CCTV footage.

Anyone with any information should contact police quoting incident 22\*46660; online at www.leics.police.uk or by calling 101.

We had a very busy period in the run up to Christmas and New Year with lots happening on the beats.

Police Officers executed a search warrant on Braunstone Gate where two men were arrested for PWITS (possession with intent to supply) of Class B drugs. They have now been evicted from the address and released on investigation.

A possession order for an address on Andrews Street, off Hincley Road, was secured by Leicester City Council due to anti-social behaviour and drug taking. The tenancy has been revoked and the address closed.

A male was arrested for breaching his restraining order to protect a victim of domestic abuse.

A total of 5 vehicles have been seized for no Insurance.

Police added additional foot patrols as part of the safer routes, which ran until 30<sup>th</sup> December 2021, across the area. This was very well received by members of the public that spoke to officers on route.

A male was threatening people on Rally Park on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January which resulted in him being subdued by taser. He is on bail to stay out of the park.

Finally, I would like to highlight to the public there has been a spike in theft from motor vehicles parked on residential streets. Please can I urge the public to remove any items on display such as purses, bags, wallets – prevention is better than cure.

**Sgt Shauna Ashton**

# CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



**Happy New Year fellow gardeners! It's time to get busy in the garden after the holiday period.**

I've been continuing to deadhead my winter bedding, such as violas, pansies, and cyclamen. Doing this stops them from setting seed so there is a continuation of flowers. In addition, I've been cutting down my perennial grasses to a few centimetres, including my *Miscanthus sinensis*, before the new growth emerges.

I've spent time going through seed catalogues, in particular looking at first early seed potatoes. These can start to be chitted from the end of January and take about six weeks for two-centimetre roots to grow. I really like the Aaran Pilot and swift varieties. They can be ready to harvest in as little as 10 weeks and become flourier the longer they are left in the ground. I place the seed potatoes in an egg box with the eye end facing upwards and in plenty of light. If you're itching to get your veggies growing you can grow a few things under cover now such as cabbage, broad beans, spinach, cauliflower, and onions. Salad and herb leaves can be grown indoors on a windowsill. If veggies are not your thing, there are numerous

seeds you can sow now for flowering either in the greenhouse or indoors, including scented sweet pea, or basket staples: *Lobelia pendula*, *Pelargonium* and *Dianthus*.

If the ground is not too frosty or waterlogged, it's also a good time to plant bare root fruit trees as they are often a lot cheaper than pot grown specimens.

It's a good idea to give your tools the once over before the season starts in earnest. I've been using a multipurpose tool to sharpen secateurs, loppers, scissors, and shears, but a medium grade whet stone is also good for this purpose. I use a flat file to sharpen dull hedge trimmer and lawn mower blades. This is a lot easier than it sounds and if done regularly doesn't take too long.

I'm continuing to look after wildlife, leaving some areas overgrown for protection until Spring, putting food out for our hungry furry friends and ensuring the bird baths and water stations are not frozen during these cold months. **Carey Tunstall**



Trailing Lobelia





# Martin Page

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# BRAIN TAZERS

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**1 Across:** New Year **1 Down:** Top Prize **2D:** Nil  
**3D:** Spray **4D:** Surrendered **5A:** Energy producing food  
**6A:** Approved **7D:** Or all **8A:** Plaything **9A:** Top of a saucepan © Paul Towers 2022

Answers at [w:westernparkgazette.co.uk](http://w:westernparkgazette.co.uk)

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		8	7			2	1
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