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STORM HENK WELCOMES IN NEW YEAR

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Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the January edition of the **Western Park Gazette**. 2024? Really – already?

We've tweaked the Gazette's distribution a little out of Westcotes but added other parts of Braunstone and New Parks. The magazine can still be downloaded from our socials and website. More copies are available in the local libraries, pubs and community centres.

It's a bit quiet on the news front, so in this issue we braved the rain and took photos of water. There was a lot of it. Fosse Rd North got flooded and the river Soar nearly burst its banks but the swans loved it.

In our regular features, Carey Tunstall's monthly gardening advice focuses on winter preparations, there's the local policing update and Helen Knott, it turns out, has a less than magical touch when it comes to technology.

We would like to wish our readers and contributors a prosperous and safe 2024

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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 & 3rd Tues 2pm Pram Club:

Weds 9.15-11.30am. **Women's Taekwondo:**

Thurs 8-9pm taekwondo4all.com **Fri Coffee: 10am**

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

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

Newarke Houses & Westcotes Library: Popping To The Shops (About Narborough Rd) 27 Jan-28 April.

De Montfort Hall: Wet Wet Wet & Go West: 30 Jan. What's Love Got To Do With It? 31 Jan.

@ Curve: Evita til - 31 Jan. Sister Act: 31 Jan-10 Feb.

David Suchet 4 Feb, Jesus Christ S Star 12-17 Feb.

@ Little Theatre: April in Paris 22-27 Jan. The Good Life 5-10 Feb. Upbeat Beatles 11 Feb.

Aladdin 31 Jan-3 Feb. Oadby Baptist Ch. 7.15pm

Y Theatre: Daily Comedy Fest acts 7-25 Feb.

Upstairs @ The Western: Comedy Fest 7-25 Feb.

Last Friday: Street Food/drinks, LBC Courtyard, 31 Rutland St, 26 Jan 5-10pm.

Leics Comedy Fest: 7-25 Feb. Various city venues. Tickets and line-up from comedy-festival.co.uk

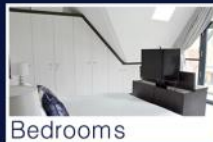
Pop-up Pub: Last Friday Monthly. Hall @ St Anne's.

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It might have felt like it rained for 40 days and 40 nights in early January but, those 72 hours of torrential rain caused havoc and immense property damage across the city.

December was an unusually wet month, but as we welcomed in the New Year, Storm Henk piled on the misery, wreaking its vengeance across the country, causing nationwide disruption in the process. In Leicestershire's lower lying floodplains, particularly in the north of the city, the River Soar and Grand Union Canal burst its banks spewing litter, cans, plastic bottles and larger rubbish high across the tow paths and river banks. The clean-up will take months.

The Soar rose to the highest it had been for years which, along with the torrential rain and previously waterlogged ground, overwhelmed the drainage systems causing flooding across lower areas of Leicester.

In the west of the city we fared slightly better than Thurstaston Road and Mountsorrel where residents had to be evacuated for their own safety. Locally, the Soar breached its banks, by at least a foot under West Bridge and Fosse Road North became briefly impassable under the foot bridge near Stephenson's Drive.

Visit our FB page for the Shaky-Cam video.



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Exhibiting The Narb

Stories from one of the most ethnically diverse roads in the country will be told in two exhibitions later this month.

Popping to the Shops shines a spotlight on Narborough Road, looking back at its past and talking to some of the people who live and work in the area today.

At Newarke Houses Museum, the exhibition will focus on the history of the area, featuring panoramic photos taken by local photographer Paul James and interviews with people whose memories go back to the early 1960s.

Other interviews featured in the exhibition reflect the changing make-up of the Narborough Road population. Kate Malloy works at Westcotes Library, which has been part of the Narborough Road street scene since 1889. She said: "While the types of businesses on Narborough Road haven't changed much over the years, the people who run them and the products they're selling are noticeably different." Objects and memorabilia from past and present shops, including a teaching key-



board used at IntaSound and a pricing gun from Wilko, which opened on Narborough Road in 1949 but closed in April 2022, will also be on display at Newarke Houses Museum.

A second exhibition at Westcotes Library will use archive photographs of the area, together with a brief history of the local shops.

UP FOR A LAUGH!

Leicester Comedy Festival returns from 7th-25th of February.

It is one of the longest running comedy festivals in the UK. For the past 30 years it has celebrated British comedy and has been dedicated to supporting and nurturing emerging talent.

The festival was started in 1994 with 40 events at 23 venues over 7 days. In 1994 it attracted an audience of 5,000 and enjoyed a modest amount of media attention but a high profile within the community. Since then, the festival had grown to be Europe's biggest and longest running Comedy Festival.

It has attracted comedy's biggest stand-up names including Jimmy Carr, Frankie Boyle, Dara O' Braine, Lee Mac and this year is no exception with 708 shows on the docket. This year's entertainment starts off with Ramesh Ranganathan, Ross Noble, Stewart Lee and Sophie McCartney at the De Montfort Hall. **Visit comedy-festival.co.uk** for more.



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KNOTT'S LANDING

Technology hates me. Put me in a room with any kind of tech in it and it will go wrong pretty soon after I start breathing the same air as the contraption. The exercise bike went wrong shortly after I climbed aboard, the blender is on the fritz and weird stuff is happening on my tv. I do nothing other than try to operate the gadget appropriately but it's like I have some kind of aura that kills the tech dead. I truly believe there are people for whom electricity and machines just behave. They run properly, do the job they are supposed to do and perform optimally. My husband is one such person. He has an almost magical ability to fix stuff, sometimes just by walking into the room with the offending gadget inside. He aligns the meridians, soothes Alexa, smooths the passage of the force through the gadget which somehow knows he's trying to help it and so rights itself. I hate him for his skill.

His brother is much the opposite. This is the man who couldn't wear a watch until the quartz movements arrived in the 70s. The watch would just stop, never to go again, and he would sigh and ask for a pen in his next letter to Santa. The

grandfather clock at their mother's house used to stop when he walked into the room. His skill didn't go away with old age. Nope. No clock in his home is safe unless it's digital and then only if he doesn't actually touch it. We have reminded him of the song about the Grandfather's clock that stopped, short, never to go again when the old man died. He seems entirely unmoved by it.



Part of me now thinks this is just nature. The yin and yang meeting of opposites or a Zen flow of electricity. It is something I should just let go. Another part of me wants to pound the button with a pointy finger while growling through gritted teeth as I switch it off and on trying to make it do the thing I want it to do.

Helen Knott

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LETTER BOX

Dear Editor: Enormous thanks to the residents of Ainsdale Road (with help from Dorchester Road and Oakthorpe Avenue) who came good again at Christmas with another generous foodbank donation.

Donating kicked off by braving the cold and having mince pies and mulled wine in the street. The groceries and goodies kept on coming, right up to delivering to the foodbank in time for their Christmas collections.

Our community gave very generously. A huge amount of food essentials, toiletries and Christmas treats were received by the wonderful, hard-working team at the Alice Hawkins Community Projects who run the foodbank. The foodbank has now moved to Mantle Road and was previously known as Woodgate Community Food.

Visit: alicehawkinscp.org/foodbank for information about donating.

Jason Wilson



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Jan Police Update

Well, a Happy new Year to you all from the Fosse and Western Ward police teams.

Once again, over Christmas, what a jolly time we had finding a few more cannabis grows in properties within the area. Great work by the team for locating, obtaining search warrants and recovering thousands of pounds worth of cannabis. I know some may have the view to legalise it, but that's not the law yet and we are stopping organised gangs from exploiting the vulnerable who can suffer at their hands. If you do have any information or suspect a nearby cannabis grow, please report it. We can check; nothing is lost if it is all clear.

The team have been listening to your feedback and proactively targeted some traffic related issues. We have seized 3 cars whose drivers had no licence or insurance and reported them for summons to the court.

Another vehicle failed to stop for police and after being found abandoned, was also recovered. To the driver who got away on this occasion, those boots are made for walking!

Along with the festive season came those wishing to put others at risk by drink driving, of which we had 3 local test who were over the limit.

Unfortunately, there have been several overnight burglaries in the area, so make sure you check doors and windows are secured with keys put away and out of sight. One male was arrested and is on bail pending enquiries.

I would also ask that you keep belongings out of sight in vehicles, this encourages criminals to smash windows and take what is not theirs.

As it looks as though we may get a cold snap after all of the rain. Please, please do not leave cars running to de-ice them whilst you go inside. People steal your car and you may not be insured for this.

An investigation is ongoing following a report of a dog attack near Narborough Road and Equity Road at around 10.00pm on 4th January.

Police were called following reports that the dog (a Cane Corso) had attacked 4 people. The victims received treatment for dog bites at the scene. The dog was safely seized by police and is currently being cared for in a secure kennel.

Two people; a 51-year-old man and a 44-year-old woman, have been arrested on suspicion of allowing a dog to be dangerously out of control in a public place.

On a final note, I'd like to wish PCS0 6624 CROUCH well on his new career as a Police Officer. Whilst he has only been with us for a short time, we will miss his enthusiasm and willingness to learn. He has become our inhouse paparazzi, taking our social media snaps at every opportunity to show you what we get up to.

So here we go 2024. The team at Fosse wish you all well and a safe year. **Sgt Lee Cannings**

CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



At the start of the year, the garden may appear dormant, but there are still important tasks to undertake to prepare it for the upcoming growing season.

Gardening is a great way to work off the excess festive podginess and January is an excellent time to burn off those excess calories!

Pruning deciduous trees and shrubs is where I start. I begin by removing dead or diseased wood and shape the plants to encourage healthy growth. I've been pruning fruit trees to encourage an open structure, allowing light and air to penetrate. This helps prevent disease and promotes healthy fruit production.

I also check and repair any damaged structures like fences, trellises, or garden furniture and I am continuing to clear away fallen leaves, debris, and any dead plant material. This helps prevent the spread of diseases and pests and prepares the garden for spring growth. Compost the suitable material to enrich your compost pile. I have put



out new bird feeders and continue to provide fresh water to support local wildlife during the colder months.

I'm planting more early-flowering bulbs like snowdrops to attract pollinators as they emerge and I have managed to get some growing in pots. I like taking advantage of mild days to work on the soil too. If the ground isn't frozen, I dig over beds to expose pests to the cold and air, helping to control populations. Adding well-rotted compost or manure improves soil structure and fertility.

If we are suffering from bad weather though, and we've had a lot of that, I use this time to plan my garden layout for the coming season. I've been raiding the internet to order seeds, bulbs, and plants so I have everything ready for spring planting. I've started indoor sowing of crops that need a longer growing season, such as tomatoes and peppers. This gives them a head start before transplanting them outdoors in the spring.

Remember, gardening in January is about preparation and setting the stage for the upcoming growing season. Even though it may seem quiet, these tasks contribute to a successful and vibrant garden later in the year.



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Can You Solve The Word Wang? Hidden in the above box are the following words:

Advocaat, Diet, Hangover, Presents, Traffic, Bored, Ice, Children, Drink, Hogmanay, Rain, Wind, Getaway, Snow.

Answers: westernparkgazette.co.uk

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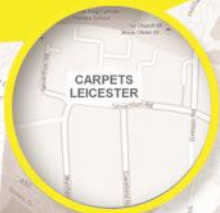
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