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## Hello From The Editor

Season's greetings and welcome to the Gazette's  
December edition.

It's quiet news month, what with all those demented  
rounds of shopping, visiting, partying and the general  
demob happy atmos ruining any chance of finding  
ground breaking news... So we didn't even try.

But there is a look back at the work going on to bring  
the derelict Western Park buildings back to life and a  
local hairdresser, who moonlights as an artist, has  
been chosen to exhibit her work in a prestigious city  
gallery. And as it's Christmas we tore up two boxes  
of crackers and printed the jokes.

In our regular features: Roger Blackmore, gazes at  
Leicester's lost architecture. Helen Knott muses on  
the delights of a quiet Christmas, In Compost Corner,  
Emma Blanchard (who's never made a Christmas  
wreath in her life and still hasn't) finds out how to do  
it and Mark Brennan from Hinckley Road police has  
their monthly update.

And there's an extra large and torturous crossword  
lurks on the back page.

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Published by Rapsallion Media

62 Ainsdale Rd  
Leicester LE3 0UA

Printed by Flexpress Ltd  
6 Coal Cart Road, Interchange,  
Birstall, Leicester, LE4 3YB





# Events Diary

**Fosse Co-op Camera Club:** Fri. St Peter's Ch Centre, Westholme St. 7.30pm. [fossecoopcameraclub.co.uk](http://fossecoopcameraclub.co.uk)

**Free Thurs Club:** 2-4pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narb' Rd.

**West End Pay As You Feel Café:** Thurs 7-8.30pm. Tues, Fri & Sat 11-3pm. WE Centre, Andrewes St.

**Coffee Mornings:** Fridays 10-12 noon. St Anne's Hall.

**Walking Group:** Sundays. 2pm. 96 Deg. B-Gate.

**Dru Yoga Sessions with Emma:** Restarts Sun Jan 6th. 7.15-8.30pm. St Anne's Hall. 07393 811150.

**Free Children's Art Club:** Saturdays 10.30-12.00. Fosse Neighbourhood Centre. Mantle Rd.

**Upstairs at the Western: Now.Here.This.** - Until 22nd Dec, **Uncle Armando** - 9th Jan, **High Vis** - 19th Jan, **Choir Night** - 23rd Jan.

**Christmas in the Gardens:** until Dec 22nd. 5-10pm Leicester Cathedral gardens.

**Santa in the Square:** Until 23rd Dec. 11am-6pm New Market Sq.

**A Christmas Carol:** 23 Dec. 7pm-10pm. Guildhall.

**Xmas Eve Quiz:** West End Brewery. Braunstone Gate. 7.70pm.

**De Mont Hall:** Peter Pan Until 6th Jan.

**Mother Goose:** Little Theatre. Until 6th Jan.

**Treasure Island:** Haymarket Theatre. Until- Jan 6.

**Curve Theatre:** White Christmas - Until 13th Jan. Cat in the Hat - Until 12th Jan.

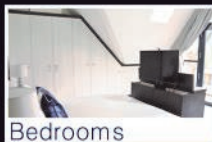
**Xmas Wheel of Light & covered ice rink:** Jubilee Square. Ice rink: 5pm-9pm. W/E 11am-9pm. Wheel: Mon-Thurs 11am-9pm W/E 11am-11pm. To 6th Jan

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# WWCE Insider

Cast your minds back just over two years. Leicester City Council had just announced the successful bidders for the redevelopment of the dilapidated buildings and otherwise brownfield land on the Hinckley Road edge of Western Park. At that time, you may have heard about plans to bring the former Eco House back into public use as a space for the community. That was us. Ready and raring to go, an eager team of volunteers from the local area. Small business owners, teachers, healthcare professionals, local councillors, shop workers, mums, dads. The Western Ward Community Enterprise (or WWCE for short).



What's happened since then? If you visited the site, you might think the answer is nothing.

Nature is slowly reclaiming the land and frequent acts of vandalism are taking their toll on the structure itself. In truth, while we have waited for the formal exchange of contracts, we have all felt frustration and learnt that the cogs of the council machine can often move very slowly, but things are moving forward. You may have enjoyed one of our community events, rolled a pumpkin with us in the park or seen our stand at the West-

ern Park Festival. We have been talking to lots of you about what you want from the building and how it can bring our community together.

**Project Hive** will officially start in the spring. We will be entering an exciting new chapter in the redevelopment when we launch the first phase of crowdfunding with a series of exciting community events which we are busy planning at the moment. We really hope that we can count on your support for this crucial stage of the project, the first proper step in getting the space back into use. There are also plans afoot to get out there and talk to even more local residents and community groups about our plans and how they can help in more detail.

There will be regular updates on what's going on with Project Hive both here in the Gazette and through our social media channels. Our website is in the process of being overhauled, and will be relaunched soon.

Do you want to make a positive and lasting difference in the place you live? Can you spare a little time on a regular basis? We are hoping to recruit more people who, like us, are ready to get stuck in and drive this project forward. People who can take an idea and run with it and maybe pick up some new skills along the way. No experience is necessary, just plenty of enthusiasm and a "can do" attitude. Drop us an email at [info@wwce.org.uk](mailto:info@wwce.org.uk) or message us on Facebook and we'll be in touch. If you are part of a local group that would like us to visit you and talk in more detail about the plans then contact us in the same way.

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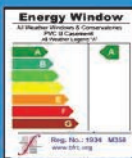
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## Building on Change

In Norwich recently I visited the Bridewell city museum. This was a former women's prison and it reminded me how many historic buildings have changed use, often several times, in our own city.

A good example in West Leicester is the former Braunstone Hall, once a family mansion, then a school, now, after standing derelict for twenty years, transformed into a boutique hotel and restaurant. It is a fact too that our City Museum and Art Gallery on New Walk also started life as a school, as did the nearby Belmont Hotel.

Many of Leicester's former factories and industrial workshops have obviously fallen out of use for their original purpose. Thus a former suitcase factory has taken on a new life, somewhat appropriately, as The Case Restaurant, whilst a knitwear factory in High-cross Street is now the Cosy Club bar and restaurant. Indeed inside it still resembles a hosiery factory, maintaining many of the features. Another hosiery factory that underwent drastic renovation following years of neglect was the Fiveways factory on Tudor Road; now student accommodation.

Wygston's House, formerly Wyggeston House, on Jubilee Square has gone through various changes of use in the last 400 years, including a period as a Costume Museum, recently opening up as a bar and restaurant.

Another historic range of buildings make up the former Trinity Hospital which was purchased by De Montfort University for use as exhibition space and the Vice Chancellor's residence. This was a major addition to the University's campus, whilst the Hospital was relocated a few yards away on a site adjacent to the River Soar, providing a much more modern home for the elderly residents.

Those looking for the Empire Hotel at the bottom of Newfoundpool will find a Lidl supermarket in its place, whilst several redundant churches have been converted into residential apartments.

And of course, visitors from all over the world visit the renowned Richard the Third Visitor Centre, housed in what was once part of Alderman Newton's School.

Gazette Readers will be able to think of many other examples of such changes throughout the city.

**Roger Blackmore**



The Empire Newport St.

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# KNOTT'S LANDING

Ever noticed how all the language after Crimbo switches to talk of movement, travel, journeys (spiritual and physical) and paths. It's crazy when all we actually want to do is stop. Just stop and be for a little while (preferably with a gin and tonic in hand and someone else cooking).

Christmas was over on December 26<sup>th</sup> and the Easter Eggs were on sale the day after. The headlines shriek move onwards, move along, move more! These are all mantras which will haunt our days and our dreams and it got me thinking. Sometimes it's OK to just stop, put everything on pause, and just be. It's very much OK to do this for more than just one day.

This idea is an anathema in the modern world where we must be connected to work 24/7 and have a vocation rather than a career. Back in history, Christmas was a 12 day festival lasting from Christmas Eve to Epiphany on January 6<sup>th</sup>. A proper pause in the calendar. Yes farms still had to operate (animals need feeding, cows need milking) and in homes and palaces the kitchens still have to be manned (people always seem to need food) but there was a sense of a restorative moment where we stayed inside, celebrated what we had and looked forward to what we might do in the

coming days. We gazed into the fire and wondered. We thought idle thoughts, like whether I've correctly used an anathema or is it just anathema? It was normal to do these things.

Our bodies know it's time to stop because now is the time when suddenly everyone will get that dreadful cold. It may well be because we are in close proximity with others over the festive period but a bit of me likes to think my immune system is downing tools and having a couple of days off. This means the virus can get through. This means I get sick, which means I have to have a couple of days off, and suddenly a much needed break is happening.

Having a break should be something we choose to do, rather than something imposed by a virus, and we should not feel guilty about it. Time spent with family and friends, time spent doing something you love is never wasted. We should probably change the mind set that has us thinking that it is. Kick that to the kerb for 2019. For a few days, decide to leave that behind along with all the fresh starts, the journeys and the career paths. Just be you, just be with your family, just be doing something you love. In the words of Mr Punch – the king of chaos – that's the way to do it!

**Helen Knott**



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## Painting - It's a Snip!

A Newfoundpool hairdresser who put down her scissors and picked up a paintbrush has just had her work accepted for a prestigious city art exhibition.

Andrea Banks-Staszak beat hundreds of hopefuls to be chosen to show her work at New Walk Museum and Art Gallery's 29th Open Exhibition.

Andrea said: I always loved art at school but it wasn't until a couple of years ago that I decided I needed to paint. I use various techniques the main one being acrylic pouring.

I usually have an idea of what I want it to be. When the paint is dry, the creative part begins of turning the pour into something recognisable that's good to look at! Deciding that I had nothing to lose, I entered this picture into an annual exhibition and was delighted to receive the news that my picture has been selected to be a part of The Open Art Exhibition!"

The exhibition runs until 2nd February at the New Walk Museum and Art Gallery.



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**What happens to elves when they're naughty?** Santa gives them the sack.

**What's the difference between the Love Island villa and the stable where Jesus was born?** The stable has had some wise men in it.

**What is a snowman's favourite breakfast?** Ice Crispies.

**Who hides in the bakery at Christmas?** A mince spy!

**What do you call a greedy elf?** Elfish.

**What do zombies eat with their Christmas dinner?** Grave-y.

**Who delivers presents to baby sharks at Christmas?** Santa Jaws!

**What did one snowman say to the other snowman?** Can you smell carrot?

**What's the best Christmas Present?** A broken drum - you can't beat it.

**Which of Santa's reindeer has bad manners?** Rude-alph!

**Why did Santa put a clock in his sleigh?** He wanted to see time fly!

**What does Santa suffer from if he gets stuck in a chimney?** Claustrophobia!

**Why has Boris Johnson bought mistletoe this year?** Because he's tired of being in the single market.

**Why does Santa have three gardens?** So he can ho, ho, ho.

**What do snowmen eat for lunch?** Iceburgers!

**Why are Christmas trees so bad at sewing?** They always drop their needles!

**What happened to the thief who stole a Christmas Advent Calendar?** He got 25 days!

**What is a skunks favourite Christmas song?** Jingle smells!

**Why did Donald Trump invite Kanye West round to help with his Christmas presents?** Because Kanye is Trump's favourite wrapper.

**When do sheep practice their new dance?** While shepherds watched them floss by night,







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## Dec Police Update

Your local priorities for the West Leicester Neighbourhood Policing are to prevent knife crime, to tackle the use and supply of drugs by organised criminals and to reduce instances of burglary and car crime. I am pleased to say that we have had some great results over the past month in relation to all of these priorities!

We complete weekly dedicated patrols across the area specifically targeting those believed to be carrying knives. One such patrol on Noel Street led to a large hunting knife being seized and the carrier being charged with an offence. We shall continue this work and look for your support in identifying those who you believe carry knives in public.

The Westcotes beat team have closed down a number of cannabis in the West End during the last month taking well over £100,000 worth of drugs out of the hand of serious organised criminals. Their work has also protected two streets in the area from the fire risk of living close to such factories! Please continue to report your suspicions by telephoning 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111

In the past few days the Fosse Ward team have arrested two people trying to get away having just broken into a car on King Richards Road. This means two prolific criminals are now off the streets! Please remove all your valuables from your car when unattended as we try to reduce this crime.

We have now moved to a new police station on our own existing site on the corner of Hinckley Road and Norfolk Street. Our front office is open 10am-4pm Monday to Friday as usual and the same local policing teams covering the Westcotes, Fosse and New Parks are based here.

Finally congratulations to PC 557 Matt Eld who this year won the much coveted Leicestershire Police 'Beat Bobby of The Year' award. This is suitable reward for Matt's consistent excellent work and dedication to the community of the Westcotes Ward. Well done Matt! The Westcotes neighbourhood policing team were also highly commended in the beat team of the year award so again well done to Sergeant Spencer Dyer and team!

As we approach the Christmas period please think of your local policing team who work throughout the holiday period so that you and your community are kept safe over Christmas.

Thank you for your ongoing support and I wish you and your families a very merry Christmas and a prosperous and Happy New Year.

**Sgt Mark Brennan**



## Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



**Lets not call them Christmas wreaths; its so depressing.** Garlands is a much less funereal way of describing these traditional seasonal decorations.

Having scoped them out on EBay and Amazon; not to mention a few garden centres, the price can vary from a few pounds to over two hundred. Why someone would spend that much? They can't be that difficult to make, can they?

Yes they can... Especially if you want to go hard-core and upmarket. To do this you will have to forage and scavenge bits at farm shops or florists and have the knack for craft work, which I don't. If I did, this is how I would make a Christmas garland.

**Step 1:** Get a fistful of bendy flexible, stripped branches from, say, a weeping willow and weave them together into a circle of about 18 inches across to make the base or, for the simple life, just buy a wire frame from a florist or garden centre.

**Step 2:** Tightly wrap the circle with moss, binding it with wire but leave enough to bend into a hoop to use as a hanger. The hoop is the top of the design.

**Step 3:** Attach a plastic wrap to protect the back by folding together and securing with U pins.

**Step 4:** Select your decorative evergreen foliage.

There's lots to choose from like Spruce, Cedar and Cyprus. Bunch them together into fans with the larger pieces at the back and repeat until there's enough to cover the base.

**Step 5:** secure and overlay the bunches to the base with wire making sure the greenery covers the wire. Alternatively use smaller pieces and poke them into the moss, bend back and repeat until the base is covered.

**Step 5:** Indulge your inner decorator. For the traditional look wire in pine cones, holly berries, rosehips, old man's beard or artificial decorations. Other options could include dried oranges, apples or cinnamon sticks for that yuletide sparkle... Simple!?



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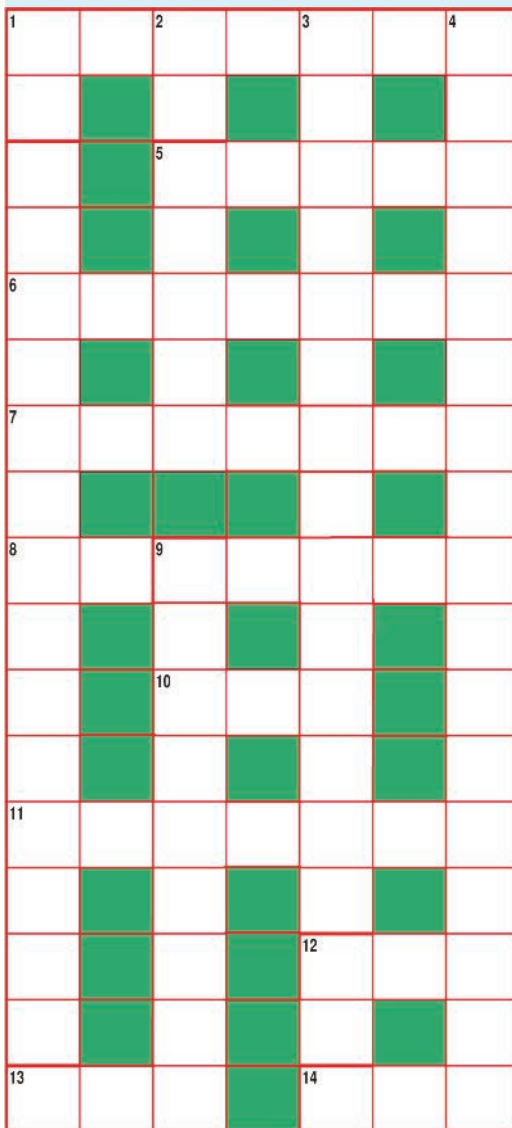
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## BIGISH XWORD



**1 Across:** An English Cheese **1 Down:** The emphasis of the profitability of a product **2:** To enlighten **3:** Relocating the Tardis **4:** Wireless programming **5:** Added calcium oxide **6:** 8 page book or pamphlet **7:** Provider of food **8:** South Eastern American state **9:** Set of rules, especially for sorting data **10:** Graphical user interface **11:** Car safety features **12:** Former British chemical company **13:** Abbreviated nomination **14:** Festive egg drink  
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