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News and Views for Western Park • Westcotes • The Fosse

ROAD TO THE FUTURE?



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Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the February edition of the Western Park Gazette.

We kick off with all the national press coverage Narborough Road's received after a report by the London School of Economics. The Pop-up Pub comes to St. Anne's Community Centre and the Leicester Theatre Group breathes new life into the Newfoundpool Neighbourhood Centre. We also have our regular update from De Montfort University's Square Mile Project.

This month, the local Boys in Blue have had their hands full as they tackle a spate of burglaries and arrest suspects right, left and centre, Roger Blackmore visits the Queen Consort's Tree on Bradgate Park, Helen Knott has the knives out for inconsiderate drivers on the school run and Green Goblin, Tony Huxley, finds something nasty, slimy and antipodean in the garden.

And just to keep your brain working, or to annoy you (Could be either) we have the Sudoku and Crossword on the inside back page.

Please like our Facebook and Twitter pages where we also keep you up to date with local news and anything else that piques our interest.

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If you've got a local news story then email:
editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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Events Diary

Fosse Singers: Fosse N'hood Centre. Weds. 7pm.

International Folk Dancing: Monthly 2nd & 4th Fri. St Anne's Hall. 2-4pm. Tel: Geoff on 0116 285 8352.

Peter Crebbin's Cool Swing Band: 1st Sun Monthly. Café Chino at Hilton Hotel, Meridian. 1-3.30pm

Thursday Club: Thursdays. 2-4pm. Robert Hall, 147 Narborough Rd.

West End Pay As You Feel Café: Thursdays 6-8.30pm. West End Centre. Andrewes St. LE3 5PA.

Heritage Sundays: Monthly last Sun. Mediaeval city open days/tours. 11-3pm. go.leicestershire.com

Fat Girls Don't Dance: 25th Feb. Upstairs at the Western. 7.30pm. upstairsatthewestern.com

Western Park's Got Talent: 27th Feb. St. Anne's Com Centre. 2.30-5.30pm.

The Ghost Of Dracula: 27th Feb. Guildhall. 8pm. £10. visitleicester.info/museums

Astronaut Visit: 27th Feb. Nat Space Cen. 10am.

Pirates Of Penzance: 25 Feb -5 March. Little Theatre. littletheatre.net

Whole Lotta Led (Tribute Band): 29th March. Y Theatre. 9.00pm. leicesterymca.co.uk

Menphys Fashion Show: 3rd March. St Martin's House. Peacock Lane. 7.00pm. £6. 01455 230 012.

Breakfast At Tiffany's: 3-12th March. Curve.

Western Park Pop-up Pub: 4th March. St. Anne's Church Hall. From 5.00pm.

St Pat's Day Celeb: 13th March. Holy Cross. 12.00.

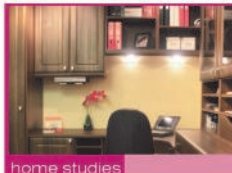
The Bodyguard: 15 - 26th March. De Montfort Hall.

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ROAD TO THE FUTURE?

West Leicester came under the national press spotlight after The London School of Economics published a paper on 'super-diverse streets'... With Narborough Road turning out to be the most diverse of the lot.

Academics interviewed business owners at 70% of the 222 shops, café's, bars and restaurants along the mile stretch of road and were surprised to find entrepreneurs from 22 countries, including the UK, in their sample.

The purpose of the survey was to find out how local economies are shaped by immigration.



The Narborough Road "staggered" them with its diversity, friendliness and atmosphere despite the lack of any meaningful central or local government financial help or major regeneration.

Within a day of the LSE report's publication, reporters from the national press, including the Daily Mail, Express, Sun and Star descended on Narborough Road with cameras and notebooks in hand. Kereen Nelson (Front page photo) who has run Nelson's Soul Food for the last four years said: "The publicity for the road has been amazing, I've even been on Radio 5! It can only be good thing for people to get together and build a sense of community".

The LSE academics say that Narborough Road, as the country's most multi-national street, could be the first of many. With little or no cash coming in from government sources, local entrepreneurs have had to invest themselves and have created a busy micro-economy on a mile long stretch of road.

Narborough Road may not look pretty but it's working.



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Queen Consort's Tree

She was born Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen in 1792 and was to wed the future King William 4th of England. They married at the same time as the bridegroom's brother, Edward Duke of Kent, with the double wedding taking place at Kew Palace. Adelaide was considerably younger than her royal husband. Perhaps surprisingly, the couple decided to live in Germany for several years after their marriage.

Adelaide was a serious and very religious character who became Queen Consort when her husband succeeded to the throne on the death of his brother, George 4th, in 1830. She was particularly unlucky in that many of her pregnancies ended prematurely or in stillbirths. And the two children who were born alive died within a matter of days. Ironically, William had a number of children by his mistress, a Mrs Jordan, but these were of course illegitimate and could not succeed to the throne. Fortunately Adelaide had a good relationship with her young niece Victoria who was to go on to succeed her husband as Monarch in 1837.

Besides giving her name to the capital city of South Australia, Queen Adelaide became very fond of Leicestershire as the years rolled by. Interestingly the Royal Hotel in Ashby de la Zouch seems to have been renamed (it was formerly the

Hastings Hotel) in 1836, shortly after a visit by King William and Queen Adelaide. The Queen also gave her name to a village near Ely and also to Queen Street in Measham. A pub in Appleby Magna, in the north of the county, also bore her name, although it is no longer trading. Incidentally the Nautical William public house in Wigston is named after her husband.

Adelaide made many visits to our county and one of her favourite picnic spots was in front of the ruins of Bradgate House in Bradgate Park, where Queen Adelaide's Oak is still to be seen, with its commemorative plaque. The plaque tells of her comments on the picnic fare under the old oak tree. "The venison was good so were the trout and last but not least the crayfish". The Queen clearly appreciated the local menu!

The former Queen died in 1849 at the age of fifty seven, long enough to see her niece, Queen Victoria, give her own eldest daughter the name Adelaide as one of her middle names.

Roger Blackmore



Queen Adelaide's Oak

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KNOTT'S LANDING

Walking the kids to school is becoming an issue. It's getting harder to do because of the numbers of cars on the roads. Not the people driving straight past us into town, I'm talking about the parents who use their cars to drop off and collect their kids.

I know sometimes you have to do it. I live five minutes away but I use my car to drop my child off at school, usually when I'm on my way to work. When that happens, I park my car a couple of streets away and walk him the last few hundred yards into school. What I don't do is double park; park on double yellow lines or park on the zig-zag markings outside the school gates; I don't block people's drives and businesses. It seems though, a minority of people seem to think they are super special so the law doesn't apply to them.

One local school, because of their admissions policy, have a lot of kids whose parents live too far away to walk them to school, so cars are the only option. Unfortunately, quite a number of those parents think it's OK to block the roads and park wherever and however they choose. Another school has busy roads all around it but parents want to drop their children straight from their car door into reception so they double park and 'drop' the kids off. They park on the zig zag outside school so they can walk 10 yards

to the playground to get their child. They block the pavements by parking up on them just to get a bit closer.

When I've asked people to move their illegally parked cars to a safer place I've been shouted at, sworn at in front of children. Classy! On Letchworth Road and Glenfield Road, I know people who have been blocked into their own driveways, who have been verbally abused when they tried to get across the road with their own kids, who have had their vehicles damaged by the cars of parents on the school run.

The only people who can park on double yellow lines are disabled drivers who know exactly where they can park and have a badge. If you have a sore ankle, tummy upset, a bit of a cold, it is not an excuse to park wherever you want.

If you park illegally or drive badly near a school you are being a selfish ass. You are demonstrating by your behaviour: that it's OK to treat the law with contempt; that you think it is OK to do what you like; that you think all the other kids and parents aren't worth keeping safe. Your kids will assume that if it's OK for you to think like that, it's OK for them to be that selfish and entitled. Great parenting on your part!

Here's the truth. Breaking the law is breaking the law if there is a policeman watching or not. Get over yourselves, drive considerately, park your car safely on a nearby side street and walk.

Helen Knott



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Do you have talent? Play an instrument? Sing? Dance? Act? Cheerlead? Tell jokes?

Western Park's Got Talent 2016 is back on Saturday 27th February in St Anne's Church Hall from 2.30 - 5pm followed by an after-show party and 'bring and share' meal!

Whether you are solo or part of a group, get in touch and book your act in for a place on the line up! Places are limited so contact **Anna McAuley on 07813 324 818** for more details!

All acts receive a medal and a certificate with finalists invited to perform at this year's Western Park Festival!

To add to the fun we have demonstrations from Kids Zumba group and fabulous raffle prizes. If taking part isn't your thing, then why not come along for an afternoon of pure entertainment and support young local people living their dream!

M and M Hair Celebrate

M and M Hair on Narborough Road have celebrated their 25th anniversary with a salon party for their clients and staff.

M and M Hair was established in 1995 by partners Matthew Middleton and Pasha Streather.

Matthew worked as area trainer for Glenby International in Leicester, London and Manchester and Pasha's career included media make-up artist and three times winner of the national Hair and Beauty Awards.



They've both worked hard to build up their team of top stylists and their ongoing program of training and education re-enforces their reputation as one of Leicester's leading salons. This has been reflected in their five stars rating with the industry's leading magazine, The Good Salon Guide.

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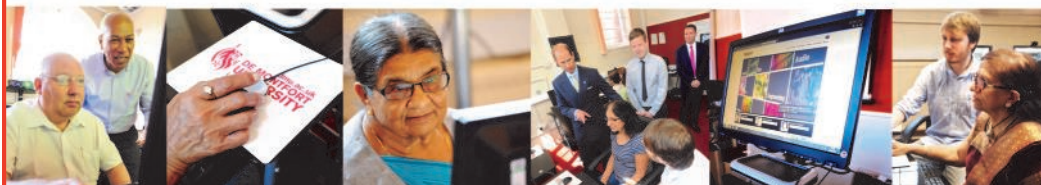
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DMU Square Mile News

Community Christmas Lunch 2015



On December 12th 2015, DMU Square Mile hosted a Community Christmas Lunch for any elderly person in Leicester who may have felt isolated or alone during the Christmas period. The event was created as a result of community members wanting an inclusive and festive event and their idea proved to be a wonderful success, full to the brim with Christmas joy. It was attended by over 100 elderly community members.

The Community Christmas Lunch took place at the LCiL West End Neighbourhood Centre, which was transformed into a magical Christmas grotto of suspended paper snowflakes and tables sprinkled with holly. The transformed grotto was soon full of excitable chatter and laughter as the familiar Christmas chords chimed through the air.



The delicious Christmas lunch was prepared by the amazing Real Junk Food Project. The project intercepts waste food and cooks it up into tasty, nutritious meals to combat food poverty. Plates were piled high and served to the guests by the DMU Square Mile Volunteers. Live music from the Citizens of Swing band encouraged everyone into clapping along between mouthfuls of gravy smothered roast potatoes and veg.

As the last crumbs of the mince pies were eaten, the afternoon of exciting activities began. More live music was provided through folk song and a banjo, which got the DMU Square Mile volunteers dancing along. The raffle including prizes that ranged from the beloved Christmas puddings to soft scarfs to keep guests warm long past the festive period. The show stopper of the activities was an intense game of bingo with a deluxe hamper up for grabs. There were two winners in the end, but one guest donated her half, which resulted in eruption a well-deserved round of applause.





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CODE TRY AGAIN

After City Councillors booted out CODE's plans for hundreds of new student flats on Western Road, few of the 700 objectors thought that was the end of the matter.

Now the developers have resubmitted the proposals and are appealing the original ruling. They say the Council got their sums wrong on the actual numbers of students living in the area.

CODE state the maximum height of the new building would be 9 floors, not 14 as originally planned and there are less students in Westcotes than the council claims, therefore the cumulative impact of the flats would be far less than feared.

People now have to resend all their previous objections to the council's planning office through www.leicester.gov.uk



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Pop-up For A Pint or Two!

A pop-up pub will be appearing in the Western Park community for one night only on Friday, March 4th.

The idea is the brainchild of the people behind the Western Park Beer Festival, who will also be organising another beer festival in the summer, after last year's successful inaugural event raised over £6,000 for charity.

The community event (between 5pm-midnight, free admission) will feature a wide range of craft beers and real ales - all £3 a pint - as well as cider, wine, traditional pub snacks and live music from local acts Highly Strung Guitar Duo and John Fryer.



Mat Mabe, chairman of the Western Park Beer Festival, said: "The community came out in droves to support last year's beer festival and made it a massive success, so we really wanted to continue that with some smaller one-night events for the community before this summer's beer festival. Furthermore, it is a great way to raise a glass and say goodbye to the old Tin Annie before her reconstruction".

The WPBF team also has plans to bring a micropub and potentially even a brewery to the area, with Mat adding: "The feedback we've received suggests there really is a demand for more community venues and specifically a micropub in Western Park. We are already in talks about bringing a community venture like this to the area".

Anyone wishing to volunteer, or to find out more please contact the team on:
Email: info@westernparkbeerfestival.org
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NFP Neighbourhood Centre Reopens

The Newfoundpool Neighbourhood Centre on Poole Road is now back in business and in the hands of the Leicester Theatre Group, a youth charity helping young people enjoy the performing arts.

Excellent quality training is available from 2 to 18 in Dance, acting and singing. There will be activities in the holidays too. The group performs at least 6 shows a year and is run by professionals with West End experience but has created a warm and friendly environment for kids.

Recent productions have included Fame, Into The Woods, Bugsy Malone and Avenue Q.



The centre is offering a variety of classes for adults too including BoxFit, Zumba, circuit training, dance, karate and Kung Fu. There is space for more classes and they would like to hear from groups or teachers looking for a space. There will also soon be a nursery school in residence.

Kids' parties are also very welcome and the theatre group offers a variety of themes, food or just a room to use at very reasonable rates. Anyone is welcome any time from 9am to 8pm to visit as it will be manned full time now. The group is engaging with local schools offering free classes and trying to offer the area things to do and a place to do it.

Contact Karl on 07500 900737 or just drop in.
Visit www.leicester-theatre-group.co.uk

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Feb Police Update

In January, we were at the peak of a burglary problem which saw 120 offences across the whole of the West Leicester NPA, which includes the areas of Abbey, Beaumont Leys, Braunstone, Fosse, New Parks, Westcotes and Western Park. We launched Operation Visibility, which is a multi-department campaign consisting of patrols undertaken by both high visibility and plain clothes officers on a combination of foot, bike and mobile patrols, making arrests and enforcements on houses linked to suspects.

Consequently, we have made over 20 burglary related arrests since, with numerous individuals being remanded into custody due to the strength of the evidence against them and the risk posed to re-offending. We also rolled out our Floodlit briefing scheme on Woodgate which has been set up by PS 315 Chris Brown. This project consists of a large projector lighting up a wide section of the wall with crime prevention advice and also encouraged people to come and speak to us. Our mobile beat bus was parked up next to it and we handed out light timers to those who approached us. Since our actions we have seen a significant reduction in offences on the area. Op Visibility will continue until I am fully satisfied that the problem has been solved.



To highlight some good work, one of the arrests was made by Western Park's very own Dedicated Neighbourhood Officer PC 241 Crisp and SC 5501 Deveney, who on spotting a motorbike parked up at the side of the road, realised it was one stolen from a burglary. When PC Crisp and SC Deveney pulled over in their car, the individual with the motorbike ran away and hid. Officers from Hinckley Road Police Station tipped out to assist and the area was covered in seconds. Fortunately one of our PCSOs managed to find said individual after treading on him as he was hiding in a nearby front garden! He was promptly arrested.

Finally, the previously mentioned ward boundary changes will be happening imminently, therefore please keep an eye on the Force Website for an update on the changes.

Mike Hooper

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



Horror! I've discovered my first Australian flatworm! Okay, a slight over reaction, but if you're an earthworm one could seriously ruin your day. They crawl across the soil, usually at night, looking for passing worms which they slither onto, releasing mucus that digests them from the outside before sucking up the sloppy remains. Earthworms are incredibly important for improving the soil and ecologists fear over predation by flatworms could turn soil sterile.

About a dozen invasive non-native flatworm species have been introduced into Britain, most likely arriving with imported plants. The Australian flatworm was first reported in 1981 and has since spread steadily across Britain. Its bigger and even nastier New Zealand cousin was arrived in the 60's.

Should we be worried? So far there is no evidence of a horticultural Armageddon. Flatworms are actually quite delicate and need to stay moist and cool to survive. This limits their spread. There's also anecdotal evidence that frogs and ground beetles find them a tasty snack. Flatworms don't burrow so they're unlikely to eradicate all the earthworms in a given area. In the end they'll

probably reach some sort of equilibrium, but I'm sure some wet-land and woodland areas will be badly affected.



You can limit their spread by carefully checking all new plants, especially inside the pots. They love hiding among damp leaf litter, in moist compost bins, under stones and pots etc. Flatworms are slimmer than earthworms and lack segments. Also they're not round but flat, of course, with a paler underside. There's no known way to control them, other than manually finding them (at night with a torch is said to work best) and dispatching them with a good squish or dropping them into salty water. Don't chop them up as this is often how they multiply! Take care if you have sensitive skin as their mucus can sometimes be an irritant, and try not to have nightmares! *Tony Huxley*

Martin Page

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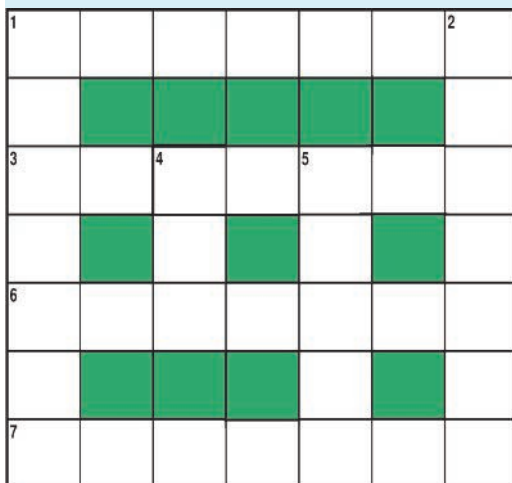
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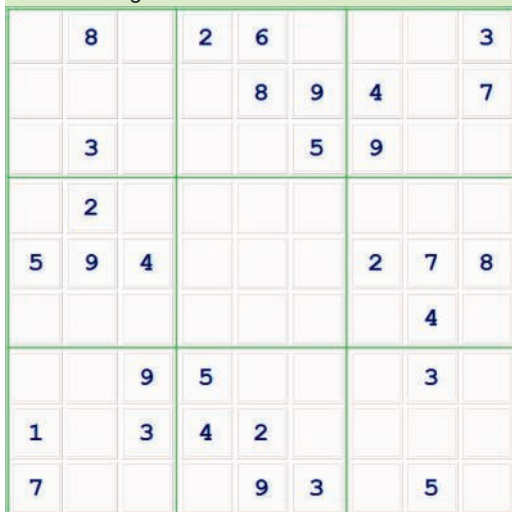
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