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Hello From The Editor

Happy New Year and welcome the first Gazette of 2019. I think we've all woken up from the Christmas and New Year celebrations... It was a struggle though!

So what have we got for you? First of all, the old Mencap building on Western Park has been bulldozed after it was burned down. The Gazette doesn't normally run an opinion editorial, but we have this time. There have been a number of arson attacks on the derelict park buildings over the last few years and this was the latest. There is also an increase in the amount of graffiti and tagging in our area; and not the good artful type either. It's all down to one or two dunces who live in the Western Park area.

In our regular features: Roger Blackmore, goes ballooning, Helen Knott muses on the delights of "Januhairy", Tony Huxley has some advice on what to do with unwanted Christmas flowers and Mark Brennan from Hinckley Road police has had a few hard days nights as featured in his update.

And the crossword and Sudoku squat menacingly on the back page.

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Events Diary

Fosse Co-op Camera Club: Fri. St Peter's Ch Centre, Westholme St. 7.30pm. fossecoopcameraclub.co.uk

St Anne's Weds Club: Monthly, 1st Weds. St Anne's Hall. Letchworth Rd. 2.30-4pm.

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: 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.

Leicester Comedy Festival: 6th-24th Feb. *Upstairs at the Western, Curve Theatre, Little Theatre, The Y, DM Hall* & other city venues. Visit websites for details or www.comedy-festival.co.uk

Ghost The Musical: 29 Jan-2 Feb. Curve Theatre.

Ain't it Funky 6: 2 Feb. The Y Theatre.

Simon & Garfunkel (Tribute): 3 Feb. Y Theatre.

It's a Wonderful Life: 4-9 Feb. Little Theatre.

Classic Rock Show: 5 Feb. DM Hall.

Thunder: 9th Feb. DM Hall.

Cinderella / The Nutcracker / Swan Lake: 22-24 Feb. DM Hall.

The Girl on The Train: 4-9 March. Curve Theatre.

Pop-up Beer Fest: March 15th. Eve. St Anne's Hall

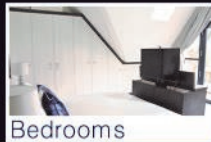
Pop-up Tea Room: March 16th. 10.30-2.00pm. St Anne's Hall.

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BULLDOZED

The derelict Mencap building by the Hinckley Road gates on Western Park went up in flames just before Christmas. On December 20th the burnt out shell of the building was bulldozed flat.

The cause of the fire is believed to have been arson caused either by squatters or by youths who were regularly breaking in.

In spite of regular security patrols, the park has become a target for arsonist and vandals in recent years with the former Open Air School being attacked on a number of occasions.



The Eco House, Mencap, Fosse Riders clubhouse, Groundworks, Open Air School and the land they

occupy has been provisionally sold by Leicester City Council to Parmer Properties. The company, along with the Western Ward Community Enterprise, hope to bring the sites back into full use for residential, business and community proposes. (Find out about Project Hive on page 18)

At the current rate of progress, this much needed development has to be few years away leaving the park even more vulnerable to general vandalism - which brings us onto the horrendous amount of bad graffiti and tagging appearing across our area.



The above tag is mostly in the Western Park neighbourhood. The particularly naff robot head later appeared fully formed in dayglow blue on Westcotes Drive. The cost in time and money in cleaning this crud off bricks and street furniture is ridiculous and as Council Tax payers we all end up footing the bill. So if you suspect your child has zero artistic ability and a large collection of aerosol paint - have a word before somebody in a dark blue pointy hat does.

Editor

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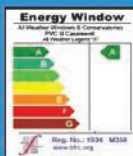
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Balloonatics!

It was the satirical journal "Punch" that first described the people of Leicester as "Balloonatics" back in 1864. That was the year of the Great Balloon riot in the city.

Long before Richard Branson, Elon Musk or even the Wright Brothers, the human fascination with flight took hold in Leicester 155 years ago and then nosedived even before take off.

Even Jules Verne could not have dreamed this one up! It was on a balmy summer day in 1864 that an excited crowd, estimated at over 50,000, were gathered on Leicester Racecourse, now Victoria Park. They had come to watch the celebrated showman and aeronaut, Henry Coxwell who, it was said, would be showing off his latest, greatest and biggest balloon to date.

Henry became a professional balloonist in 1848 and made many ascents across Europe to demonstrate their versatility. On one occasion he passed out while on an experimental flight which reached an altitude of five miles. He only survived because he managed to pull the deflation valve with his teeth as his hands had frozen at that extreme height.



None of this daring-do prepared him for Leicester. What happened here is not entirely clear. It seems that one or two members of the crowd began to claim that the craft was not as impressive as Coxwell had advertised and began muttering to that effect. The muttering soon turned angrier as various rumours spread among the crowd.

A mob formed that threatened to attack the, by now, terrified showman. It stormed the balloon, setting fire to both balloon and basket. Coxwell himself was forced to seek shelter in the home of the Town Clerk as the crowd went on the rampage.

The crowd became more and more unruly and as the rioters spread further into the town, the police were unable to cope with them until reinforcements arrived. By that time, a group of women were attempting to dismantle the main door of the prison, so much had disorder spread.

Things eventually calmed down but news of the great balloon riot circulated. Visitors to the city were widely blamed. "Excursionists from Nottingham" were often cited as responsible by Leicester locals. (Nothing new then).

Roger Blackmore

COMEDY FESTIVAL IS BACK

Leicester Comedy Festival returns to the city for the 26th year; once again featuring a dizzying array of shows, events and projects designed to raise a smile and pummel the funny bone.

This year there will be over 70 venues across the city and county featuring a record number of shows and events. Some of the biggest names in comedy will appear (Including Arthur Smith, Johnny Vegas, Zoe Lyons, Jason Manford, Nish Kumar, Tom Allen, Dave Gorman, Jo Brand & Russell Howard) The festival also presents some of the best new and emerging comedians as well as some exclusive events which can't be seen anywhere else.

This year also sees the launch of The UK Kids' Comedy Festival – a new sister festival for families and children which will run throughout the Festival. With an ever growing programme of events aimed at families and children, organisers say it's the perfect time to launch a brand new



side to the Festival.

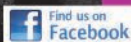
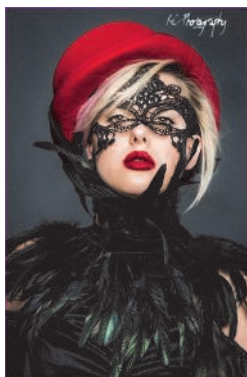
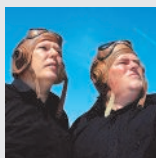
Leicester Comedy Festival is produced by registered charity Big Difference Company with the aim of supporting new & emerging talent; celebrate British comedy and support comedians, promoters and venues to put on the best shows and events.

The festival increasingly relies on donations for support and receive these from a number of businesses, comedians and members of the public who value the uniqueness of the project.

Locally, Upstairs at the Western above the Western Pub, off Narborough Road, plays host to over twenty comedy acts throughout the festival. Visit their website www.upstairsatthewestern.com for a rundown.

96 Degrees coffee shop and the Black Horse on Braunstone Gate also have shows.

The Leicester Comedy Festival runs from 6th to 24th Feb at various locations across the city. To find out more go to the Festival's social media pages or visit: www.comedy-festival.co.uk



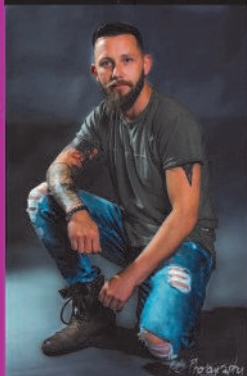
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KNOTT'S LANDING

Shhh! Tell no one. I have inadvertently put myself at the forefront of one of these 'do something freaky to your body to raise money for charity' movements. Januhairy is a thing, like Movember, but less visible! Women are getting in on the hair growing act and growing and showing their body hair. It's all so they can 'accept and empower themselves while challenging the view that female body hair is abnormal and something to be ashamed of'. Right on sisters!

To be fair, I had no idea that my own abject laziness when it comes to body hair and the winter months would be something to be lauded but I'm happy to take the praise and leap upon a positive bandwagon when one rides itself into my lane, stops in front of me and shouts – 'climb aboard and join the young people, they probably have gin and party poppers!'. If I were being brutally honest I might admit that, at the point where it's too cold for summer clothes, I stop bothering to prune! I mean seriously, what is the point? I'm wearing long sleeves, trousers or tights, which are so dense and dark they



are made of tiny black holes, ALL the time. My body may as well be stitched into a sealskin suit for winter like the Inuit do. This skin is not seeing the light of day until the thermometer hits 20C again.

Clearly, I struggle with regularly implementing the smallest of personal grooming tasks but my other half is just as bad. He has a weird razor ball that he uses to cut his own hair, he trims his beard into a semblance of neatness, but basically I live with the wolf man. He wouldn't dream of demanding that I epilate because he wouldn't dream of shaving the vast shag of body hair that covers his skin. I watched a TV show where they were waxing young men into varying stages of bald, smoothness and it looked horrifically time consuming and painful. There were tears! Why would you do that to yourself?

I guess it means I'm in the right relationship. No right thinking woman has ever decided she couldn't date someone she liked because they were too hairy. Any bloke who is allowed anywhere near the armpit of someone he likes should be honoured and keep his criticisms to himself. Most importantly, if body hair is a reason for leaving someone then I have news for you, it wasn't a relationship that was going to work. So actually, body hair is a fair test to see if your prospective partner is a keeper. Add to that all the free time you suddenly have because you aren't shaving and we have a result people! Januhairy be praised. Come join the party.

Helen Knott

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NEW POLICE STATION OPENS

Local community member and Chair of Project Polska, a Polish community support group, officially opened the new Hinckley Road Police Station.

Barbara Czyznikowska was joined by the Chief Constable Simon Cole and the Police and Crime Commissioner, Lord Willy Bach. Leicester West MP, Liz Kendall, was also there.



Officers moved into the new building last November. It was built on the site of the old building which had become too big for modern policing purposes, was expensive to run and costly to repair. The old building is in the process of being sold on the open market.

The new station has a Front Enquiry Office which is open to members of the public from 10am to 4pm Monday to Friday. The move does not mean there will be less officers in the area, the local policing presence will remain the same.

Chief Constable Simon Cole said: "It was a pleasure to be at the official opening of our newest building today. The old police station had become too big for us and needed a lot of money spending on it so it made financial sense to move into a modern smaller building. I am delighted that a member of the local community opened the station for us".

Police and Crime Commissioner, Lord Willy Bach, added: "As we promised, this building keeps a public facing police station based in the heart of the community, which is what local people told us they wanted.

"Importantly these new premises are designed around the needs of a modern police force, one where service delivery has changed dramatically over the years. The modern building delivers good value for money for the taxpayer as it will be fit for purpose for the foreseeable future, providing well-equipped accommodation for both the workforce and the public, which is a key part of our ongoing estates strategy."

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It's Christmas



DMU
LOCAL

**Four-page picture special as 100 enjoy
festive De Montfort University lunch**



Christmas lunch



ELDERLY people from all over Leicester were treated to a Christmas party run by student volunteers from De Montfort University.

#DMUlocal, which runs activities all over the city to support communities, laid on a traditional Christmas dinner as well as entertainment including a performance from the DMU Square Mile Community Choir singing carols.

There was even a visit from Father Christmas.

The venue at LCIL community centre in Leicester's West End was transformed into a winter wonderland by students and

staff from #DMUlocal, while the Real Junk Food Project team cooked turkey and all the trimmings, or a vegetarian alternative.

Older people's clubs from Leicester city centre, Beaumont Leys, Thurnby Lodge and Highfields were among those who came along to the event including Age UK and Thurnby Lodge Pop-Up Café.

Among them was DMU alumna Kathleen Morris – who went back to school in 2008 when she turned 60 to do a foundation art course at DMU.

"I loved it at DMU," said the mum-of-five. "I got to go to New York with the students



as student volunteers help out at major event

DMU
LOCAL

fun for everyone

and the experience was fantastic. It was the best time of my life outside of having my children!"

Kathleen's love of art has continued and she now helps run creative classes for Age UK.

Among the student volunteers were 10 members of DMU's hockey teams who helped set up the venue, serve dinners and chat to guests.

DMU Women's Hockey captain Helen White said: "As a club we have made the decision to do more for charity and to help different causes and this is probably our biggest charity event before

Christmas. We've had so much fun helping here today."

Tennessee Renvoize, a Computer Science student, spoke about why she decided to volunteer. She said: "Every year, I go home and my parents have cooked a massive Christmas dinner, bought loads of presents, everything is all laid out for me, and I always feel guilty that I don't help. So I thought I would try to help others and reach out to the community here."

Liticia Gyawu, a third year Criminology student, said: "Volunteering is about giving back. It's been lovely to talk to the older people."



...and we're all looking forward to next year



Beer Festival Raises Over £10K

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors and attendees, the fourth Western Park Beer Festival raised over £10,000 in 2018 for its chosen charities. The festival provided a lovingly curated line-up of 22 real ales and craft beers accompanied by a selection of ciders, wines and cocktails, which all rapidly disappeared over the course of September's festival weekend.

This year the funds raised have been split across four good causes. Action Homeless and The Bridge Hopelessness to Hope have each received £4,000 to support their vital work in the city and county, including emergency shelter and meals for those finding themselves homeless on our streets.

Ellidh Stringer, Funding Manager at Action Homeless, said: "Thanks to the support of Western Park Beer Festival and their customers, we have more funds available to provide homes to people that need them."

Steve Owen, Chair at The Bridge, said "The money raised will help to alleviate the suffering of some of the most vulnerable in our society... We will be able to provide warmth, food, clothing and friendship and continue to help our guests on their individual journeys."

The festival has also donated £1,250 to the Sepsis Trust UK in honour of a local man who developed sepsis and who, if not for the NHS and its

staff, would not be here today. A further £1,250 has gone towards the Western Ward Community Enterprise's efforts to create a community space for everyone at the former Eco House in Western Park.

"We are absolutely over the moon with the amount raised – a new record for the festival – and for that we say a big thanks to our generous festival sponsors Everards and Geo-Matters as well as to our many bar and firkin sponsors" said Matt Pearce, Chair of the Western Park Beer Festival committee.

The next Pop-up beer festival is on March

15th and the main Beer Festival is on 6th & 7th Sept.

Find the WP Beer Festival on Facebook @westernparkbeerfestival to stay in touch with all of the Festival's latest news and views.

Alternatively, visit www.westernparkbeerfestival.org or you can follow on Twitter @WesternParkLeic or Instagram @westernparkbeerfestival



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Award For New College

New College Leicester is celebrating their success at the National Citizen Service Champion Schools Awards held at the King Power Stadium. The College is the winner of the Silver Award for high level participation in 2018. The National Citizen Service (NCS) is a government-backed youth programme that runs across England and Northern Ireland.

The award reflects the high number of young people in Year 11 and Post-16 that took part in either the four week summer programme or the bespoke induction programme carried out in Post-16. The young people involved took part in a variety of activities including social actions projects giving back to the local community.

Nicky Tomkins, Head of Post 16, (pictured receiving award) said: 'We are delighted to have achieved the Silver award which reflects the commitment and enthusiasm that our students showed engaging with the project. We are keen to grow and develop our community links and are continually looking for new ways to meet the needs of the wider community. The NCS encompasses that'.



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THERE'S A BUZZ IN THE AIR

Happy New Year from the WWCE team. We are hoping that 2019 will see some big strides forward in our efforts to create a new community space in Western Park.

With the new year, we are making a few changes, the work we are doing will have a new name. Project Hive.

Events are starting to gather momentum and we thought it was about time we gave the project to bring the former Eco House back into use a name of its own. Something that will make it identifiable and easier to talk about with your friends, neighbours and the wider community. Let's face it, Western Ward Community Enterprise doesn't roll off the tongue.

It's our ambition that when one of our team speak to local groups and clubs, someone there will have already heard about Project Hive. We would really appreciate your help spreading the word in a very simple way. We ask that you tell two people, direct them to our Facebook page [wwceleicester](https://www.facebook.com/wwceleicester) or website wwce.org.uk. Keep an eye out for the launch of our crowdfunding and community events that should be starting in the spring.



spring 2019

wwce.org.uk

Do you have a local story?

Holding an event in West Leicester?

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Jan Police Update

Happy 2019 from me to you!

It feels like our local policing teams have been working 8 days a week over the Christmas and New Year period with many a hard day's night put in to fight crime and anti-social behaviour!

With a little help from my friends at Leicester City Council's Criminal and Anti-Social Behaviour Unit and the local community a series of targeted actions on Kate Street have occurred this month including a stolen vehicle recovered, a drugs warrant and arrests made at one address and a three month extension to a closure order at another address. I hope locals will agree things are getting better there all the time!



We would like to thank local residents on Hinckley Road and Stretton Road who have come together to offer significant help to the Westcotes beat team arrest 2 persons for a series of house burglaries across the west and city areas of Leicester. A number of stolen items were recovered and the 2 arrested persons are now in prison custody. We encourage you all to report to us if you see something suspicious.

Tackling anti-social behaviour and crime connected to motor vehicles has been an issue on the long and winding roads of the New Parks. As of yesterday 28 vehicles have been taken off the road since 1st November for a variety of issues such as not having the correct documentation or suspected being stolen. Those using the vehicles will now need a ticket to ride the buses from now!

As you get back to your routines after Christmas let it be known that you can now report crime online using this link <https://leics.police.uk/report-online> - Just follow the instructions on screen and then we can work it out!

Thanks for reading and if you have managed to work out the theme running through this update then well done to you! If not then, "Ob la de, Ob la da" I shall let you know next month!

Sgt Mark I.M.A Walrus Brennan

(Find us on Facebook @ Fosse, The West End and New Parks Police)

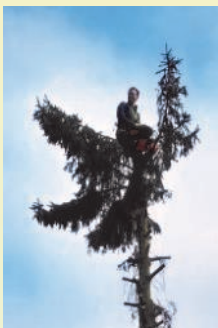
Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



Happy New Year readers. I started 2019 looking like an overgrown fairy on top of a 60 ft tall Norway Spruce!

30 odd years ago, it was in someone's living room covered with tinsel, before being interred at the bottom of the garden. From my bird's eye view, I could see it was not the only outcast from a Christmas past. Other festive plant purchases are unlikely to require tree surgery to bring under control, but they may need a little extra TLC if you want them looking good for next Christmas.

Poinsettias are a Christmas favourite, but they rarely last past Easter. They need regular watering when in flower but are prone to rot if you leave them standing in water. In the spring, repot your Poinsettia, cutting back the stems to around 15cm and put it in a sunny spot. It could happily spend the summer outside. To get it to colour up for



Christmas, put it somewhere cool and reduce exposure to daylight down to 10 hours or less from the autumn. Getting poinsettias to flower again is not easy, which is why garden centres are so confident of repeat annual sales.

In comparison, the Phalaenopsis orchid you've been enjoying all Christmas is a doddle. Water regularly, preferably with rain water, but never leave them paddling. Feed with orchid fertilizer and avoid strong sunlight that can scorch the leaves. Cut back old flower stems to just above their basal node to encourage repeat flowering. Phalaenopsis love a bit of humidity which is why they grow so well in bathrooms.



By now that Christmas Amaryllis will be looking rather sorry for itself. When the flower dies off, cut the stem back to the base and place in a sunny spot. Water and feed regularly. You can place them outside in the summer. From the middle of August, reduce watering. When the leaves die back, cut them off and lift the bulb, removing the soil and trimming the roots. Place it somewhere cool and dark for at least 6 weeks, before restarting the cycle. And before you know it, it'll be Christmas all over again!

Tony Huxley



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5							
6							
7							

1 Across: Sausages **1 Down:** Father of computing **2:** Easts small bits **3:** Comforted **4:** Fulfil needs **5:** Child care **6:** Refer to indirectly **7:** More than just happiness © Paul Towers

	2	1	9				
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Local Story or Event?

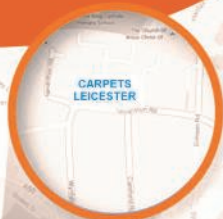
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