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Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the July/August edition of the Western Park Gazette.

In this issue we went underneath the Braunstone Gate arches for an arts and craft event on Bede Street. One local pub landlord bought a very expensive motorbike and managed to keep hold of it for just 45 minutes before someone stole it off the front of his pub. The Leicester Cycling Circuit on Oswald Rd, in New Parks, is offering a monthly family Bike Fest and adult sessions every Monday. If you're still feeling sporty, the West Field Tennis Club are offering beginners sessions throughout the summer.

In our normal features we have Carey Tunstall with some summer advice on how to protect the garden from very hot weather and we have the latest police news.

Feeling foggy? So keep the little grey cells occupied with the crossword and sudoku on the back page?

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Events Diary

Hall @ St Anne's, Letchworth Rd: Knit & Natter: 1.30pm, 4th Tues. **Weds Club:** 2.30pm, 1st Weds. **Pram Club:** Weds 9.15-11.30am. **Women's Taekwondo:** Thurs 8-9pm. **Fri Coffee:** 10am.

Musical Memory Box: 1st & 3rd Tues 2pm. The Grove, Braunstone.

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

@ Leic Museum & Art Gallery: **May The Toys Be With You.** Free Star Wars exhibit until 6 Sept.

Wonderful Walks on Western Park: Monthly 3rd Sunday. 9.30am start at Hinckley Rd gates.

@ Metal Monocle: **Medea Project 7 Aug. V8 8 Aug. Dogs of Rock / Then it Exploded 14 Aug.**

@ The International: **Senser + Collapsed Lung 7 Aug. Simon Hickling 9 Aug. The Rollin' Stoned 22 Aug.**

@ Leic Racecourse: **Picknick at the Races 9 Aug. @ Abbey Park: Leic Food & Music Fest 8/9 Aug.**

Leic Mela: 15/16 Aug. leicestermela.co.uk

Bosworth Medieval Fest: 22/23 Aug. Tix from £11.

@ Curve: **Silence of The Lambs: 1-15 Aug. Toto The Ninja Cat 4-9 Aug. Barnum 4-5 Sept.**

@ Little Theatre: **Play in a Week Summer School 10 -14 Aug Girl on The Train 7-12 Sept.**

@ The Y Theatre: **Ain't it Funky Reloaded 8 Aug. Kanan Gill 3 Sept. Carl Hutchinson: 14 Sept.**

WP Charity Beer Fest: 4/5 Sept. St Anne's Hall. .

Wistow Maze: Open until 13 Sept. wistow.com.

Twycross Zoo: Zoolapalooza. Up to 6 Sept.

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ART IN THE ARCHES

Tucked away a stone's throw from the Tesco superstore on New Park Street you'll find the Braunstone Gate Archways on Bede Street.

This former industrial unit, next to the Great Central Way, has become a hive of art, craft, food, gardening and community activity. A creative space and garden which burst into life, attracting visitors from all over the area, on a sunny July Saturday afternoon.

Westcotes resident Traci Howard is the mind behind it and she says: "It all began early one spring. I took myself off to the Archway. It was dank and mouldy and neglected.

"I imagined how I would fill the space, who I wanted inside and how I would go about doing it.

"The garden next door always has a plant giveaway in July. I decided I would make an event to coincide with this.

"Two years ago, we had a mini market in the garden. This time, I wanted to do something to put us on the map.



Traci Howard

"I applied for ward funding from Leicester City Council. They were incredibly supportive and I couldn't have done the event without them.

"I've been selling my art in markets for the past year and have met some amazing artists and craft people. I was spoiled for choice but I wanted a varied selection of talent and even brought in the fantastic foodie - Matt Glover.

"There is a special kind of magic that happens when creative people come together."

Over 100 people joined in. There were crafts for children in the garden, free plants given to the public and in the covered Archway the mini market buzzed with artistic talent and curious visitors.



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Why Do You Need More Light to Read Than You Used To?

Ever found yourself holding a restaurant menu directly underneath the table lamp? Or perhaps you've started switching on extra lights at home just to read the newspaper comfortably. If so, you're certainly not alone.

One of the most common comments we hear at the start of an eye examination is: "I think I need stronger glasses for reading."

While that can sometimes be true, the reality is often more interesting. As we get older, several small changes occur within our eyes. Our pupils naturally become smaller, meaning less light reaches the back of the eye, particularly in dim conditions. The eye's natural lens also gradually becomes less transparent, reducing contrast and making print appear less crisp than it once did. Neither of these changes is necessarily a cause for concern; they are simply part of the normal ageing process.

Modern homes can make matters worse. Many living rooms are designed around atmosphere rather than practical tasks. Decorative lighting may create a beautiful space, but it doesn't always provide enough concentrated light for reading. A good reading lamp positioned correctly can sometimes make a bigger difference than people expect.



ALAN BELLAMY

Alan Bellamy is the senior optometrist at Bellamy Eyecare, serving Leicester and Irthlingborough communities for over 22 years.

Dry eyes can also play a role. Many people assume dry eyes should feel gritty or uncomfortable, but often the first symptom is that reading becomes harder work. Words may seem less sharp after twenty minutes and concentration can become more difficult.

Sometimes the solution is better task lighting. Sometimes it involves treating dry eyes. Sometimes a change in spectacles or lens design can make reading far more comfortable.

Whether you're reading a menu, following a recipe, checking a supermarket label or sharing a bedtime story with a grandchild, vision should help you enjoy life's moments rather than struggle through them.

If reading has become harder work recently, it is worth finding out why. The answer is not always stronger glasses, there is often a practical and very simple solution.

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Summer Cycling

Summer is here and although petrol prices have dropped, why not still dump the car for local journeys? And why not travel for free and get fit at the same time with family and friends? All you need is a sense of balance!

If your answers yes, then the Leicester Cycle Circuit, on St Oswald Road behind Herewoode Academy, could be the start of your journey.

Louise Hughes is the Community Cycling Coach in Leicester, working for British Cycling in partnership with Leicester City Council who is an organiser of a free family-friendly event called Bike Fest on the last Saturday of each month from 1pm to 4pm through to October.

Louise says: "It's a relaxed, welcoming afternoon with a huge variety of bikes to try, including adapted bikes from Leicester Wheels for All, the quirky and creative bikes from Cyclone Works, Dr Bike checks from B-Buddies, and access bikes from British Cycling. Our Ride Leicester team are also on hand offering rickshaw rides and sharing information about the wider programme of cycling activities across the city. Families are encouraged to bring a picnic, enjoy the traffic-free circuit, and either bring their own bikes or try one of the many available."

The Adult Learn to Ride and Joy Rides sessions

run every Monday until 24th August 2026, excluding Bank Holidays. These sessions are free, no booking is required, and bikes and helmets can be provided. Anyone wanting more information can email cycle-city@leicester.gov.uk.

There is also a regular children's cycling club at the circuit, run by Leicester Forest Rockets. Their sessions take place every other Monday from 6:15pm to 7:45pm. The first session is free, and ongoing sessions are free for members.



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Woodgate Community Centre 36 Woodgate, LE3 5GE. Monthly 1st Saturday 11.00am – 12 noon at Fosse Library, Mantle Rd. 3rd Saturday of each month 11.00am – 12 noon. Fosse Community Meeting, 13 Nov 6pm & Mantle Rd. No surgeries BH weekends, Easter or Xmas.

Western Ward: George Cole, Vi Dempster, Molly O'Neill. T: 07891 232 672, 07976 348 325 & 07742 766 462.

New Parks Library, 321 Aikman Ave, LE3 9PW First Saturday of each month 11.00am – 12 noon

Westcotes Ward: Cllrs Adam Clarke & Sarah Russell. T: 0116 454 0034 & 07814 532 928

Surgery: Westcotes Library, Narborough Road, LE3 0BQ, 2nd Saturday of each month, 11.00am – 12.00 noon.

Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields Ward: Cllrs Susan Barton, Elaine Halford, Kulwinder Singh Johal

Cllr Singh Johal Surgery: Contact by phone or email to make appointment. T: 07736 194 824.

Riverside Football Ground, Braunstone Lane East, LE3 2FD. Saturdays 9.00am to 10.00 am

Cllr Halford Surgery: B-inspired, 39 Gallard's Hill LE31QR. T: 07736 194813.

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Anyone for Tennis?



Wimbledon may be over but Westfields Tennis Club's recent open day proved to be very successful, providing coaching for those new to tennis, resulting in a swell of numbers to the beginners session.

These are currently being held on a Monday night 6pm – 7.15pm. Geri, the coach, can be contacted on 07827 221 001, should anyone wish to take up a racket and join in.

The club can be found in the cul-de-sac of Eastfield Road, tucked away behind the houses, providing a perfect backdrop for developing tennis for juniors and adults. We are fully accessible and there is at present

a HaveAGo session on the first Wednesday in the month for those with prosthetics to learn to play. Contact Cathy on 07434 662 805 for details.

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CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



July and August can be challenging months for gardeners in the UK, as higher temperatures and more frequent dry spells place extra stress on plants. However, with careful planning and regular maintenance, gardens can continue to thrive throughout the summer.

Watering is one of the most important tasks during hot weather. Plants should be watered deeply either early in the morning or late in the evening when temperatures are cooler. This reduces evaporation and allows moisture to reach the roots effectively. Rather than giving plants small amounts of water every day, it is better to water thoroughly a few times each week to encourage stronger root growth.

Applying mulch around plants is another excellent way to protect the garden. A layer of compost, bark chips or well-rotted manure helps retain soil moisture, suppress weeds and keep roots cool. Mulching can significantly reduce the amount of watering needed during prolonged warm periods.

Lawns often become dry and brown in summer, but this is usually temporary. Avoid cutting grass too short, as longer blades provide shade for the soil and help conserve moisture.

Raising the mower blades slightly during heatwaves can also keep lawns healthier.

July and August are also ideal months for harvesting crops such as tomatoes, courgettes, beans and early potatoes. Regular picking encourages many vegetables and flowering plants to continue producing. Dead-heading faded flowers, including roses and bedding plants, will promote further blooms and keep displays looking attractive.

Container plants require special attention because pots dry out much faster than garden borders. Check them daily and consider moving delicate plants into partial shade during exceptionally hot spells. Placing pots together in groups can also help to reduce moisture loss and saucers placed underneath individual pots helps to reduce water wastage.

Finally, keep an eye out for pests and diseases, which can spread rapidly in warm weather. Inspect plants regularly for signs of aphids, powdery mildew or wilting, and deal with problems promptly.

With sensible watering, mulching and regular care our gardens can remain colourful and productive throughout the hottest months of summer. Happy gardening!

Carey Tunstall



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July Police Update
Detectives have made arrests following an armed robbery at the One Stop store on Stephenson Drive, New Parks on July 2nd.

Two masked men entered the premises, threatened staff with a pistol, hitting one on the head and made off with cash.

A 33-year-old man has been charged with 8 offences, including 2 counts of possessing a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence relating to one robbery on Lower Parliament Street and the other on Stephenson Drive. A 58 year-old man has been charged with 5 robberies in Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire including one in Glenfield and on Stephenson Drive.

Two men have been charged as part of a police investigation into firearm discharges in Leicester.

The investigation remains ongoing in relation to offences on 2nd June in Cort Crescent, Braunstone, and two incidents on 9th June in Newbold Verdon and Glenfield.

Daniel Bateman, 29, and Tom Law, 38, of, were both charged with possession of a firearm with intent to cause fear of violence and possession of a firearm by a person prohibited for life. They have been remanded in custody. 2 other men and 2 women are also under investigation for firearm offences.

Officers from Fosse have been working to deal with antisocial behaviour on Warwick Street, Tetuan Road and Hinckley Road. This has included issuing community resolutions and warning letters as part of the ASB incremental approach and visiting some of the affected locations to formulate a plan for lasting improvements. Police are also supporting football related initiatives on The Rally.

The fly-tipping problem remains. The police have no powers to enforce action and encourage the public to report it to Leicester City Council via the "Love Clean Streets" app. They can deal with this issue by way of fines of up to £50,000 for the dumping and clean-up costs.

Several shops have reported an increase in ASB from children. In response officers have been patrolling potential hotspots during the reported times of the disturbances to act as a deterrent during the summer break.

Hotspot patrols in Braunstone and Western Parks continue to tackle ABS issues. Additionally, these patrols have deterred some drug users from gathering at the play area near the corner of Kirby Road and Glenfield Rd East. With the aid of the city council, a makeshift encampment has been cleared away, making the area safer to use.

GONE IN 30 SECONDS

Everything was looking Rosy for Neil Tuite. He had fulfilled a lifetime's dream of running his own pub, The Black Horse in Braunstone Gate and he had just fulfilled another – The purchase of a classic Ducati 600 SuperSport track bike. A bike that took part in the 1989 Isle of Mann TT and one he had desperately wanted for 3 years. The plan was to display it in pride of place in the games room, having first given it a good thrashing or two around a track.



On this particular day England were about to beat Norway 2-1 in the Quarter Final of the World Cup, and he was looking forward to a great night's trade. But it was not to be. Neil says: "I bought the

bike at 3 in the afternoon, but I'd got a delivery at 4, so I pushed it outside and locked it up. Literally minutes later it was stolen from outside my pub.

"I was flabbergasted speechless! 45 minutes I owned it and it was stolen in 30 seconds in broad daylight... With customers outside!

"One of them came in and asked if I had got someone to pick up the bike, but it had already gone by then. The thief just jammed something into it and rode off!"

"It breaks my heart, it really does. It's the Ferrari of motorbikes"

The distinctive red bike, worth around £3000 has been registered as stolen with Ducati Owners Club. The bike has the chassis number etched onto all the major parts, so it will be difficult to break down or sell on.

If you know where the bike is or can point Neil or the police in the right direction, contact Neil at the Black Horse or the Police on 101, quoting crime number 010726-0638



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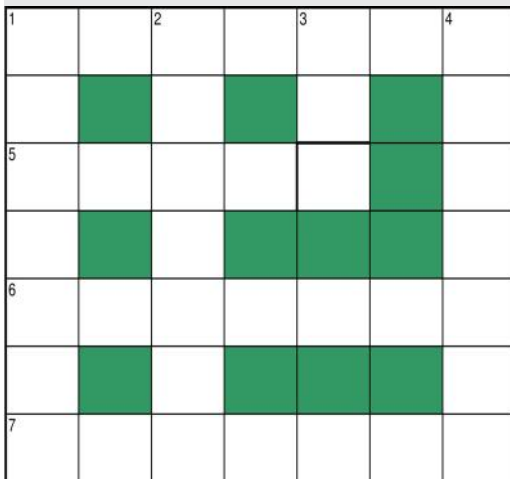
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