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Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the October edition of the Western Park Gazette.

We have completed the changes to the Gazette's delivery footprint and have removed copies from the Tudor Rd area and moved them into parts of Braunstone and Rowley Fields, along with a small reduction in the number of copies we print. It's still 9700 copies which is a huge amount for a local magazine.

In this edition we feature Gurmit Singh Flora who has gone from car sales to carving walking sticks for charity, the Western Park Beer Festival raises £10,000 and the New Parks Leisure Centre could join the Fosse Neighbourhood Centre in closing down for good.

In our regular features, Carey Tunstall takes a look at the best type of tools to use in the garden as autumn takes hold and there has been a lot happening across our neighbourhoods according to the policing update.

Brain feeling foggy? Keep the little grey cells busy with the crossword and sudoku on the back page.

As always - a big thanks to our advertisers!

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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. **Pop-up Pub Monthly** last Fri from 6pm.
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.**
Wonderful Walks on Western Park: Monthly 3rd Sunday. 9.30am start at Hinckley Rd gates.
@ Grove Com Hub: Walking Football £2 pp Thurs 11am -12 Men's Dens Weds. 10am-12 Keep Moving With Care £4 Tues 10-11.30am.
@ Metal Monocle: Motorkill 31 Oct. Azalais, Euphoric, Invicta 6 Nov. Foo Fights Sat 7 Nov.
@ The International: Frank Carducci 3 Nov. Baskary 4 Nov. Jagged Little Pill 6 Nov. Fu-Fu Sailors 13 Nov.
@ Curve: Blood Brothers 27-31 Oct. The Littlest Yak 11-13 Nov. Private Peaceful 17-19 Nov.
@ DeMont Hall: Michael (Ben) 30 Oct. Chris Ramsey 31 Oct. Stylistics 3 Nov. Chris Packham 4 Nov.
@ Little Theatre: Night Must Fall 26-31 Oct Seasons Greetings 9-14 Nov Mother Goose 11 Dec-3 Jan.
@ The Y Theatre: Grace Petrie 30 Oct. Nosferatu a Symphony of Horrors 1 Nov.
@Martyrs Ch: Xmas Market Nov 4. 7.30-9.15pm.
Abbey Park Firework Display: 7 Nov. From 5pm.
City Xmas Lights Switch-on: 18 Nov. Clock Tower

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GURMIT STICKS WITH IT

He's moved from selling cars to shaving wood and at 75 years old, Gurmit Singh Flora should be putting his feet up and enjoying retirement, but nothing could be further from the truth.

After a cancer diagnosis in 2023 and following a long road to recovery, Gurmit is now in remission; determined to put something back into society and help a major cancer charity at the same time.

He still puts a few hours a week in at the family business, Flora Motors on Fosse Road South, but his focus is on his crowded office which has been turned into a carpenter's workshop, full of tools and random bits of wood strewn everywhere.

Gurmit said: "I had 9 months of chemotherapy and we were closed until 2025, but the help of medical staff, my family and friends kept me positive."

For Gurmit, engineering is in his blood, including stints at Adcock and Shipley in Leicester and Dunlop Aerospace in Coventry, before opening a gar-



age workshop in 1979 with his brothers in Woodgate. But he says it's not just metal and gears that interests him, he's got quite good with a chisel and sand paper too: "I came back to work but got bored, so I started woodworking, just with a bench and a few tools, as a type of therapy."

"Then I thought that as a cancer survivor, why not help Macmillan at the same time?"

"I'd made a hiking stick for my granddaughter, but thought I could do a bit better. So, what if I could make walking sticks to support McMillan? And that's what I've been doing for the last year or so, with reclaimed wood and a few donated tools."

"I must have made 50 sticks, shoehorns, telephone stands and desk ornaments so far. And every penny I make will go to Macmillans – the total is heading towards £2000!"

"If you need a hand made walking or hiking stick, come in and see me and help Macmillan at the same time!"



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Finding the Right Glasses Can Be Easier Than You Think

Have you ever tried on a pair of glasses that looked fantastic on somebody else, only to find that they did not have quite the same effect on you? It is not necessarily the frame. The difference may be the way its shape, size and colour work with your individual features.

Your face shape is a useful starting point when choosing glasses. Angular frames can add definition to softer, rounder features, while round or oval frames can soften a more defined jawline. However, these are helpful suggestions rather than strict rules. The most important thing is how the glasses make you feel when you look in the mirror.

To get a general idea of your face shape, stand in front of a mirror with your hair moved away from your face. Look at the outline from your hairline to your chin and consider whether your face is longer than it is wide. Notice whether your forehead, cheekbones or jawline is the widest part. You do not need to fit perfectly into one category. Many people have a combination of features.

Proportion matters too. A frame should be wide enough to sit comfortably across your face without pressing against your temples, but not so wide that it overwhelms your features. The depth of the lenses can also influence the overall impression. Deeper frames may help balance a longer face, while a more compact style may be better suited to a stronger prescription.

It is worth comparing several versions of a similar shape. Two rectangular frames, for example, can look completely different if one has softened corners, a fine rim and a lighter colour while the other is deeper, darker and more substantial.

Trying one frame and deciding that a particular shape does not suit you may mean overlooking a style that would work beautifully in a different size or colour.



ALAN BELLAMY

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

Colour can transform the way a frame looks. Darker or heavier rims create a stronger outline, while translucent, metallic or lighter shades can appear softer. Warm tortoiseshell, honey and gold may complement warmer colouring, while silver, blue, plum and cooler shades are worth trying with cooler colouring. These are starting points, not restrictions.

Comfort and fit are just as important as appearance. The bridge should support the glasses securely on your nose, the sides should sit comfortably around your ears, and the lenses need to be positioned correctly for your prescription. This is particularly important with varifocal lenses or stronger prescriptions. A frame that looks attractive but continually slips or pinches will never be a satisfying choice.

You do not need to know your exact face shape before you begin. You simply need to be open to trying a few possibilities. Sometimes the frame you would never have chosen for yourself is the one that feels most like you once you put it on.

Not sure which glasses suit your face? Scan the QR code to download our free guide, Choosing the Right Glasses for Your Face Shape.

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ROCKIN' THE CASK BAR

September's two day Western Park Beer Festival at St Anne's Hall, attracted 400+ people over two days. Over 1000 pints of beer were converted into approximately £10,000 for charity, thanks to thirsty West Leicester communities.

In total, the volunteers poured 1,036 pints of beer, as well as 122 pints of cider, and served 535 samosas in aid of this year's main charity Help The Homeless in Leicester.

Visitors also enjoyed burgers and pizza and the popular Saturday afternoon session was as busy as ever, with live music and entertainment.

Western Park Beer Festival's David McAuley said: "Once again, it was an amazing weekend and we would like to thank our sponsors and everyone who came along and showed their support."

The organisers have put together an online feedback form; all views and ideas are welcome. Just scan the QR code into your phone.



To support next year's Western Park Beer Festival, as a main sponsor, bar or beer sponsor, email info@westernparkbeerfestival.org **PH**

B-INSPIRED WINS VAL AWARD

The VAL Awards (Voluntary Action Leicester) 2026 took place in early October, at Winstanley House on Braunstone Park. Over 310 guests celebrated the achievements of the local voluntary, community, and social enterprise sector, along with community leaders and volunteers. 11 local charities and voluntary organisations were honoured including The City of The Year Charity award going to B-Inspired, the social help organisation based in the Grove Community Hub in Braunstone and at Gallards Hill.



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LEISURE CENTRE COULD CLOSE

The New Parks Leisure Centre is under threat as Leicester City Council launches a public consultation on its potential closure along with an £8million investment in the Leicester Leys Leisure Centre.

The upgrades to Leicester Leys, would include a new library, enhanced swimming facilities, gym, a new dance and wellbeing studio, and improved community spaces.

The consultation also wants views on the proposed shuttering of New Parks Leisure Centre, which needs significant maintenance investment. It currently has lower levels of usage and income in comparison to the city's other leisure centres.

Critics say the closure could have a huge impact on those nearby and is one of the only accessible ways to take part in swimming and sport. The council responded that many residents are using alternative facilities and that following any closure, activities would be relocated to other leisure centres. A programme of



exercise and group fitness would be developed and delivered from community buildings within New Parks.

No final decision has been made and comments can be made until 2 November at: consultations.leicester.gov.uk

FOSSE LIBRARY CLOSES

The library in Fosse Neighbourhood Centre on Mantle Road closed its doors on October 5th. This follows Leicester City Council's decision to sell off the building due to huge repair costs, estimated at £2.6 million, and declining usage. It is part of the council's plan to claw back £1.5 million in savings.

The Alice Hawkins Community Project, which runs the weekly food bank at the centre, will stay there until December when it will be relocated.

The Leicester Social Enterprise Network (LSEN) said they wanted to take over the building, get it listed as of community value and run it as a community hub. They hope to run a café and rent out office space for studios and retail units to offset costs.

The sale is currently scheduled for January 2027.



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CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



Autumn is a wonderful time to get out into the garden, enjoy the crisp fresh air and prepare your outdoor space for the chillier months ahead. As leaves turn golden and temperatures begin to drop, the right gardening tools can make seasonal jobs easier, quicker and far more enjoyable. Whether you are an experienced gardener or just starting out, a few trusty essentials will help you make the most of this colourful season.

One of the most useful tools for autumn is a strong, lightweight leaf rake. Falling leaves can quickly cover lawns, patios and flowerbeds, so a good rake is invaluable for keeping paths tidy and grass healthy. A fan-shaped rake with flexible tines is ideal for gathering leaves without damaging delicate plants. Better still, collected leaves can be turned into leaf mould, providing a fantastic natural soil improver for future seasons.

A reliable pair of secateurs is another autumn essential. Use them to remove dead stems, trim back suita-



ble perennials and tidy shrubs where necessary. Sharp, comfortable secateurs make cleaner cuts and reduce strain on your hands. Remember to clean the blades after use to help prevent the spread of plant diseases.

For planting bulbs and preparing flowerbeds, a sturdy garden trowel and hand fork are indispensable. These simple tools make light work of loosening soil, removing weeds and planting spring-flowering favourites such as daffodils, tulips and crocuses. Planting bulbs in autumn is a lovely way to look forward to a burst of colour when winter finally gives way to spring.

A good-quality spade or garden fork is perfect for turning compost, improving soil and preparing vegetable beds. Choose a comfortable handle and a durable head to make digging less tiring. Meanwhile, a wheelbarrow is a real back-saver when transporting fallen leaves, compost, pots and garden waste.

Finally, do not overlook a sturdy pair of gardening gloves. They protect your hands from thorns, damp soil and blisters while keeping you comfortable during longer gardening sessions.

With these dependable tools close at hand, autumn gardening becomes less of a chore and more of a pleasure. Every cleared bed, planted bulb and collected leaf is an investment in next year's garden.

Embrace the season, enjoy the changing colours and remember that a little preparation now can bring a spectacular display of new life when spring arrives. Happy gardening!

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Oct Police Update

Five people were arrested in late September as part of an investigation into slavery and human trafficking following a raid on Angels massage parlour on Hinckley Rd.

A 37-year-old man and a woman were arrested on suspicion of controlling prostitution and drugs offences. The man was also arrested on suspicion of arranging or facilitating travel of another person with a view to exploitation.

Two men were also arrested on suspicion of holding a person in slavery or servitude and a 16-year-old was also detained on suspicion of arranging or facilitating travel of another person with a view to exploitation.

The Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service shut the building down due to fire risks.

Three men and one woman have been charged in connection to a shooting in Mulberry Avenue, near Liberty Road in February 2024.

Officers had been called following a report of a firearm discharge into a stationary car. A man in the car, who is in his 30s, sustained a minor injury following the incident.

A man and a woman were both charged with conspiracy to murder and possession of a firearm with intent. One man was charged with possession of a firearm with intent, assisting/encouraging offences and possession of a prohibited weapon. They have all been remanded into custody. Another man was charged with encouraging/assisting an offender and has been released on bail ahead of a magistrate's hearing.

Project Guardian, a major push to reduce knife crime and serious violence in Leicester, has received Home Office approval and funding for a series of targeted interventions in Bede Park, the Rally/Tudor Rd, Evington Rd and the city centre.

The project uses an evidence-based problem-solving approach, alongside targeted local patrols, community engagement and prevention activities designed to address the root causes of violence and improve community safety.

Drug growing and dealing remains one of the biggest issues for local residents in the Fosse.

Officers stopped 3 men in a vehicle, believed to be linked to drugs supply, near Henley Rd. After a search several quantities of cannabis were found and seized - their arrests followed.

Officers raided a house on Vernon St in the Fosse, on Oct 15th, to uncover a cannabis grow worth £40,000 and make one arrest.

35 were arrested on October 8th on Meridian Way in Braunstone, on suspicion of Section 13 of the Terrorism Act 2000 (to wear clothing or carry articles in public which arouse reasonable suspicion that an individual is a member or supporter of Palestine Action) have been released on conditional bail pending additional enquiries. One of the 35 was further arrested on a suspicion of racially aggravated public order offence.

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Answers at w:westernparkgazette.co.uk

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