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Pedals to The Medals on Western Park

More on Page 4

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Hello From The Editor

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

This month we enjoyed the sights and sounds of very fit people of all ages pedalling very fast through Western Park at the local Cyclo-cross meeting.

We mourn the loss of former local councillor, City Leader and Lord Mayor, Roger Blackmore who passed away earlier this month. Roger wrote his local history articles for us over many years. He was a great friend and will be missed by many.

There's an appeal for help in tracing the people whose ashes were scattered in the garden at St Paul's church, the Eco House was attacked by arsonists again and Project Hive update us on their plans to build a community café in the open school development on Western Park. And how much was drunk at last beer festival at St Anne's? We have the answer!

In our regular features, Carey Tunstall has some autumn planting advice, there's the latest policing update as well as the Brain Tazers on the inside back page. You'll find the answers on our website.

X @mygazette & Facebook @ourgazette

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Events Diary

@ Robert Hall: Free Thurs Club 2pm. Meet & Eat Weds 5pm. 147 Narborough Road.

Hall @ St Anne's, Letchworth Rd: Knit & Natter: 1.30pm, 4th Tues. **Weds Club:** 2.30pm, 1st Weds. **Musical Memory Box:** 1st & 3rd Tues 2pm **Pram Club:** Weds 9.15-11.30am. **Women's Taekwondo:** Thurs 8-9pm taekwondo4all.com **Fri Coffee:** 10am

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

@ De Montfort Hall: Jimmy Carr: 2 Oct, **Meatloaf Story:** 3 Oct, **Ministry of Science Live:** 5 Oct.

@ Curve: Ghost The Musical: 8-12 Oct. **Sweet Caroline:** 13 Oct, **Murder on The Orient Exp:** 15-19 Oct.

@ Little Theatre: Relative Values: 30 Sept-5 Oct. **Wizard of Oz:** 8-12 Oct. **Gaslight (Thriller):** 21-26 Oct.

@ Y Theatre: Count Binface: 3 Oct. **Tez Ilyas:** 4 Oct, **Desi Central (Com):** 5 Oct. **COBO (Com):** 5 Oct

Fire Walk (Fundraiser): 4 Oct. Glenfield Hospital, Groby Rd, Tel 0116 249 5780.

@ The Musician: The Breeze 3 Oct. **The Small Fakers:** 4 Oct, **5 Guys NOT Bruce 2:** 5 Oct.

The Truth About Jack The Ripper: 11 Oct 7.30pm. The Guildhall. Tickets from Leics Museum website.

@ The 02 Academy: The Doors Alive, 11 Oct from 7pm. **Skindred + Support:** 26 Oct from 7pm.

@ The Metal Monocle: Frog Lord, Morad Tongue, Shadowvale: 4 Oct, **Tool Shed:** 18 Oct.

Diwali Day: 31 Oct, Belgrave Road.

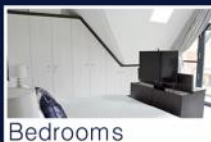
Abbey Park Fireworks: 2nd Nov. 5-9pm.

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PEDAL POWER ON THE PARK

Cyclo-cross riders from across Leicestershire and beyond descended on Western Park to take part in a series of events designed to test speed and stamina over grass, pavement, obstacle and hill.

The 15th of September saw 233 of the city and county's best cyclo-cross riders, of all ages, speed around the park course in 6 concurrent races in Round 1 of the Leicester Cyclocross League (LCXL).



The sport has increased in popularity since 2000 with the Leicester League growing to 250 members following a dip in interest. This was down to the increased popularity of sometimes cheaper mountain bikes rather than the lighter, faster custom engineered, but often more expensive cyclo-cross sport bikes. The event was organised by Gary Coltman who remembers winning races on the park back in

the 80's. Followed by a successful career with both British Cycling and as Cycling Scotland's Head of Performance. He says of cyclo-cross: "It's great; a good family pastime and we've had very positive comments from visitors today."

"We're hoping to engage with more local people and offer a training and advice session the day before the race next year."

This is the fourth time the races have been held on Western Park and is sponsored by Leicester Cycle Circuit, British Cycling, Leicestershire Road Club and Ride Leicester along with cycling industry sponsors.

The Leicester Cyclocross League is open to cycling clubs and non-league riders wanting to compete.

Find out more @ [facebook.com/LCXLeague](https://www.facebook.com/LCXLeague)



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SCAN ME

ROGER BLACKMORE PASSES AWAY

Roger Blackmore, long time Western Park resident and towering figure in Leicester politics passed away in his sleep on Friday morning 6th of September.

Roger was born in Oxfordshire and grew up on the family farm in North Devon. He came to Leicester University and gained a BA in Social Sciences in 1963. He went on to become a Personnel and Training Officer with the Imperial Typewriter Company. In 1968 he was appointed to the post of Lecturer at Charles Keene College where he taught for 27 years, becoming Head of Adult Training in 1984. He also taught at Wyggeston Queen Elizabeth College and De Montfort University.

Roger was elected to Leicestershire County Council for Western Park in 1993, and then to Leicester City Council for the same ward in 1995. In 2000 he became leader of the Liberal Democrat group on the council. After the 2003 local elections, the Lib Dems became the largest party on the council, and Roger became leader in May 2003, leading a Lib Dem/Conservative coalition. He became Lord Mayor in



2009 to 2010. Roger stood down from the council in 2011.

He was a Parliamentary candidate on six occasions during the 1970s and 1980s, fighting Gainsborough and North Devon. He campaigned extensively on environmental and renewable energy issues.

Roger was a passionate and caring local politician, a gifted raconteur, inveterate socialiser and communicator with a deep interest in photography, literature, nature and history. For over ten years he regularly contributed to the Gazette, delving into Leicester's historic past.

On a personal note, I knew Roger for around four decades and spent many happy hours, slowly getting drunk with him discussing everything from local politics to apples, Bastille Day and his beloved Devon. On one occasion, and in spite of it being incredibly inconvenient for him, he lent me his battered old Austin Montego because my car had been totalled. Not many people would have done that, but Roger did.

In recent years, as his health deteriorated, I missed our sometimes boozy chats, the apple picking parties, his enthusiasm and his insight.

Roger was a unique political character, less concerned with the trappings of power and more interested in how much good he could do for his constituents.

Deepest condolences to Hillary and family

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MEMORIAL GARDEN APPEAL

St Paul's Memorial Garden on the corner of Kirby Road and Glenfield Road is suffering from the ravages of time.

Many of the plaques on the wall of the small Garden of Remembrance at St Paul's Church have started to disintegrate and have become illegible over the decades.

The plan is to remove them and erect a memorial with a list of those whose ashes were scattered at the site. The call has gone out to local residents for information about relatives or friends whose names appear on the plaques.

If you can help with this project email:

stpaulscommunity@outlook.com putting 'Memorial Gardens' as the subject header.



PROJECT

hive Update

Project Hive is an on-going local community enterprise group aiming to eventually redevelop the Eco House on Western Park into a social hub. In the meantime, work has begun on the community café sited by the promenade in the park. Organisers say: "Exciting times lay ahead... You might have noticed that work is now underway at the former open-air school site. As you may know, part of this site has been set aside for our use on a 999-year lease. We will soon be ready to tell you how you can be directly involved in getting this community café building up and running.

"We are also delighted to share the news with you that we have received funding from The National Lottery Community Fund that will enable us to go forward with an inclusive community engagement programme.

"Thank you to everyone that has stuck with us and helped get us to this point and to National Lottery players for providing the funds."

For the latest info, head to Facebook page [@projectHiveLeicester](https://facebook.com/projectHiveLeicester)



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ECO HOUSE BURNS

The Eco House on Western Park went up in flames on the evening of September 11th causing Hinckley Road to be blocked off from Winstanley Drive as the emergency services tackled the blaze.

Five appliances and an aerial ladder platform were used to deal with the fire on the first floor of the building.

The fire had been dampened down by 9.00pm. The Eco House has fallen into neglect over the years and has been the target of vandalism and arson before. The last time the building was deliberately set on fire was in July 2018.

Local community group Project Hive are hoping to renovate the Eco House and turn it into a community hub when funds allow.



Pic Kerry Williams

BEER CHEER

450 people enjoyed this year's Western Park Beer Festival downing about 1,400 pints and half pints, over 800 samosas and 110 pizzas.

The committee are still in the process of sorting out the outstanding invoices for the festival on September 6th and 7th, so once that has been completed, they will be able to confirm how much was raised for the chosen charities.

WPBF chair David McAuley said: "We wanted to say a big thank you to everyone who came along and to our wonderful sponsors.

"It is an event we and our local community look forward to every year and we received lots of positive feedback."



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Sept Police Update

A 40-year-old woman has been arrested in connection with a stabbing in Narborough Road on 19th August.

The woman was arrested on suspicion of conspiracy to commit murder and has since been released on bail.

A 47-year-old woman and 36-year-old man who were arrested on suspicion of assisting an offender also remain on bail.

Police were called to the incident just after 5.30pm. A man in his 30s was taken to hospital to be treated for a stab wound injury.

Detectives are investigating 11 incidents where high-value headphones have been taken from people in Leicester.

In each incident, the suspect or suspects has been riding an electric pushbike, taking the headphones from the victim's head and riding off. All the incidents are believed to be linked with a number taking place in west Leicester during the late afternoon or early evenings.

The local incidents happened at: Marlow Road, Westcotes on 23 July, Duns Lane, Braunstone Gate on 28 July, Magazine Square on 28 July, The Gateway, near De Montfort University on 29 July, Upperton Road, Westcotes on 1 August, Gooding Avenue, Braunstone on 6 August. If you can help call 101 reference 24* 459048

Spiking Intensification Week ran between 16th-22nd September. This week of action was a national initiative primarily aimed at raising awareness of the signs to look out for that may indicate you've been spiked, and what to do in that situation.

Spiking can happen to anyone, no matter their age, gender, sexuality or ethnicity. It can be carried out by strangers or by people you know.

Symptoms can include, nausea, confusion, paranoia, poor coordination, loss of communications skills and unconsciousness.

If you think you, or someone you know, has been spiked, and it has just happened, please tell the bar staff, call the police, or report it online <http://leicspolice.link/dbWiu>**Anyone in possession of a zombie-style knife or machete should have surrendered it by now.** Under a new Home Office scheme, these weapons have been added to the list of prohibited offensive weapons.

The amendment to the Criminal Justice Act 1988 came into force on 24 September 2024, and it is now an offence to possess such weapons.

Efforts to remove unregistered cars from our roads continues. One result on Fosse Road South lead to the discovery of a large amount of drugs and cash being seized and another vehicle being seized due to the driver not having a valid licence and insurance.

CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



September marks the transition into autumn, but it's still a productive time for gardeners.

Cooler temperatures and shorter days create ideal conditions for planting a variety of hardy vegetables that will thrive over winter or be ready for an early spring harvest. Here are some of the best vegetables to plant in your garden over the next few weeks, weather permitting.

Garlic is one of the easiest crops to plant in September. The cloves are sown directly into well-drained soil in a sunny spot. Over winter, they establish roots, and by next summer, you'll have a bumper crop of garlic bulbs. Choose hardy varieties like 'Solent Wight' for best results. Winter onion sets can also be planted in September for a reliable harvest in late spring or early summer. Varieties such as 'Radar' and 'Electric' are well-suited to our climate. These onions are planted as small bulbs, allowing them to overwinter and develop slowly.

Nice cropping greens like spinach is a good cool-season cropper, making September the perfect time for planting. It is fast-growing and hardy, if conditions are right, it can provide a fresh harvest

within a few weeks. It can also withstand light frosts, making it ideal for an autumn or winter crop. You can also plant young spring cabbage plants in September for a harvest next spring. Varieties like 'April' and 'Wintergreen' are designed to withstand cold temperatures, ensuring a robust crop in the coming months.

If you fancy being exotic; how about pak choi? Seeds can be sown in a poly tunnel or in a greenhouse and takes around a month and a half to grow, but can take longer if it starts to get colder.

I find radishes grow quickly this time of year and can be sown in early September for an autumn harvest. They prefer cool, moist soil and will be ready to eat within four to six weeks.

Finally, hardy varieties of broad beans, such as 'Aquadulce Claudia,' can be sown in September. They will overwinter and give you an early crop the following spring.

So, once you have harvested most of your summer crops September and early October, if it stays fine, is the perfect time to get ahead of the next growing season and enjoy some fresh autumn produce. **Carey Tunstall**



Martin Page

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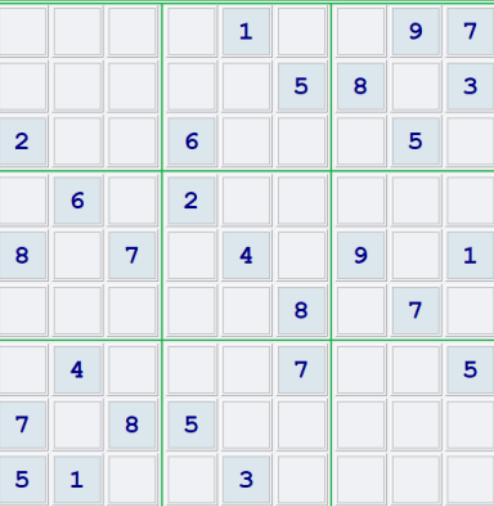
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Can You Solve The Word Wang? Hidden in the
above box are the following words:

Fishing, Autumn, Dogs, Elm, Snow, Willow, Excursion,
Pond, Sleet, Rain, Oak, Woodland, River, Leaves, Cold.

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