The Gazette

No.180 September 2025 westernparkgazette.co.uk News & Views for Western Park & Surrounding Area •10,000 Copies











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Hello From The Editor

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

The big yearly event in Western Park's social calendar is the charity beer festival at the end of August. Letchworth Road was locked off on Saturday to allow the happily inebriated to spill across the road while avoiding the kids on bikes. It was all in a good cause raising funds for the Baldwin Trust. Sorry about the naff front page headline, but I ran out of bad beer based puns and scraped the bottom of the barrel...

In our regular features: We've now entered the season of mellow fruitfulness so our green guru, Carey Tunstall, looks at what you can plant in the garden, right now. As the nights draw in, Helen Knott has thoughts about women's safety, if on foot in the dark.

And there's the latest policing update including a couple of nasty incidents on Western Park and the Rally, one of which involved armed officers.

As always the crossword and sudoku are on the inside back page with the answers on our website. You'll find us on Facebook, X and now Bluesky.

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Published by Rapscallion Media
62 Ainsdale Rd
Leicester LE3 0UA

Printed by Flexpress Ltd 6 Coal Cart Road, Interchange, Birstall, Leicester, LE4 3YB



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 taekwondo4all.com 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. Drop-in Talk: @ St Paul's Worship Ctr. Talk to local police & support orgs. 1st Tue monthly 10-12 noon. Wonderful Walks on Western Park: Monthly 3rd Sunday. 9.30am start at Hinckley Rd gates.

@ Metal Monocle: V8: 27 Sept. Cult Fiction: 3 Oct. OpenSight, Solars & Sinuous: 4 Oct. @ The International: James Oliver Band 1 Oct. Night For Neil 3 3 Oct. Small Fakers (Tribute) 4 Oct. @ De Mont Hall: Sandi Toksvig 27 Sept. Dinosaur That Pooped: 28 Sept. Sophie McCartney 2 Oct. @ Curve: Matilda The Musical: 6-25 Oct. Noel & Gerti: 8-11 Oct. Who's Afraid of Virginia Wolf?: 18 Oct-8 Nov. @ Y Theatre: Phil Beer Trio 28 Sept, Eddi Kadi: 2 Oct. & Still I Rise 3 Oct. Comedy Shutdown 4 Oct. @ Little Theatre: The Unfriend: 29 Sept-4 Oct. Swing That Music: 5 Oct. Come From Away 14-18 Oct. Concert Showcase: 11 Oct. 6.30pm St. Anne's Hall. Tickets £12.00. Bookings 01162 856 217. @ O2 Academy: Red Rum Club 3 Oct. Lightning

Seeds: 10 Oct. Those Damn Crows 17 Oct.

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BREW-TIFUL SUCCESS

Hundreds of thirsty punters enjoyed the tenth anniversary of the Western Park Beer Festival over the weekend of August 29-30th.

In total, more than 400 people came through the doors at St Anne's Church Hall during both of the Friday and Saturday sessions - and drank over 1,200 pints.

While it is too early to find out exactly how much was raised, the committee hopes to have raised a sizeable amount for charity.



This year's beneficiary is The Baldwin Trust, which provides narrowboat cruises in our county

for people experiencing loneliness and isolation. The festival, which has been going since 2015 and has raised tens of thousands of pounds for local charities, once again offered a great selection of beers, ciders and food, with a live Cèilidh band and cycling activities during the busy family session on Saturday afternoon.

Western Park Beer Festival chairman David

McAuley said: "Once again, the community came out in force and both days were very busy. We would like to thank everyone who came along and we hope you enjoyed it as much as we did

"The event would not be possible without our wonderful sponsors so thank you to all of them, especially our main festival sponsors Merrick Platts

Financial Services and MPH Construction & Carpentry LTD."

Anyone wishing to help out with sponsorship for next year can visit **westernparkbeerfestival.org** and look for the sponsor page. Alternatively email **info@westernparkbeerfestival.org PH**

Westcotes Library

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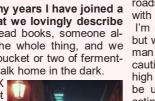
KNOTT'S LANDII

Every few weeks for many years I have joined a group of friends for what we lovingly describe as Book Club. We do read books, someone always manages to read the whole thing, and we talk about it along with a bucket or two of fermented grape juice. Then we walk home in the dark.

We are mostly Gen X women, so we are not novices at this. There is a protocol. Leave in groups and walk together, mobile phones and keys in hand. Stick to main roads if possible and everyone checks in on the WhatsApp group when they get home by saying thank you to the host.

When I explain this to some men, they seem surprised. I guess they've

never felt threatened walking home. Sensible women know they will need to actively protect themselves if they are out alone in the dark. Most of my book group lovelies have to walk on an A





road for at least some of the journey. There are cyclists, walkers and drivers who aren't local who travel along this stretch, sometimes even at the speed limit. Then there are the jitties and side roads, where it's quiet. A perfect spot for those with ill intent to confront a woman.

I'm not, for one second, saying all men are bad, but when women get attacked it's almost always a man that does the attacking. So women take precautions. Precautions like not putting your hair in a high ponytail when running or walking as they can be used to grab you easily. Walking in groups, acting confidently. No headphones to mask the sound of someone approaching. Walking with your keys poking out between your fingers so you can use them to defend yourself and get them ready for the door lock quickly.

If this is a surprise to you then ask the women around you to tell you about the time they were harassed on the street. Everyone has a story. Then maybe think about how you could change your behaviour to make women feel more comfortable walking in their hometown. Teach it to your sons. Then hopefully one day our daughters won't need to follow the protocol.

To comment on any of the stories or articles published in the Gazette please email: editor@westernparkgazette.co.uk

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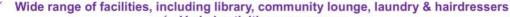


Wyggestons & Trinity Almshouses are two purpose built sites providing a range of self-contained apartments for the over 60's

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A new Government scheme is available to households with an old "Non-Condensing" boiler. The manufacture of these Non-Condensing boilers was stopped in 2005 as they are very inefficient and will be costing you £100s a year in wasted energy, also parts for Non-condensing boilers are becoming increasingly unavailable.

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COUNCILLORS SURGERIES & MEETINGS Fosse Ward: Cllrs Susan Waddington, Syed Zaman.

Surgery: 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 at Mantle Rd. No surgeries BH weekends, Easter or Xmas.

Western Ward: Cllrs George Cole, Vi Dempster, Molly O'Neill.

For future community surgeries and ward meetcontact: Member and Civic City Hall, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ.

Westcotes Ward: Clirs Adam Clarke & Sarah Russell.

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

Braunstone Park & Rowley Fields: Cllrs Susan to indulgent three-course Barton, Elaine Halford, Kulwinder Singh Johal Cllr Singh Johal Surgery: Contact by phone or email to make appointment.

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.

Monthly 1st Wednesday 11.00am - 12.00 noon.

FORKS AT THE READY!

Leicester Restaurant Week is back for the 5th time. Each year it expands to include more restaurants and quality food outlets and this year's 2-week food fix is no exception. Running across the city centre from Monday 20th October to Sunday 2nd November, there will be plenty of time to experience the best of Leicester's dynamic and diverse food and drink culture.

Leicester Restaurant Week has become an important event on the city's culinary calendar, giving diners the opportunity to explore cuisine from around the world discovering new favourites. and revisiting local haunts across the city's vibrant food scene.

From budget-friendly bites menus. Leicester Restau-

ter's culinary hotspots.



So far, over 30 venues have confirmed their participation, with more expected to be added as the weeks progress. To find out what's cooking and where visit: leicesterrestaurantweek.co.uk



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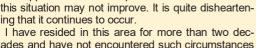
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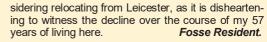
I found the article on the fly tipping issue in August's Gazette to be quite interesting.

I have noticed it is an ongoing problem in Woodgate as some residents are always dumping their rubbish on the street.

It appears that there is a concern regarding the effectiveness of the council's measures to prevent fly tipping. The lack of nighttime surveillance capabilities is perceived as a contributing factor to the difficulty in apprehending offenders. It would be beneficial to implement some form of patrolling in the area to effectively monitor and apprehend these culprits. I am concerned that this situation may not improve. It is guite dishearten-



before. It is truly remarkable how pristine the areas, housing, gardens, and shops appeared in the cinefilms my brother recorded during the 1970s and 1980s. The changes are so concerning that I am even con-



On the 10th September 2025 at around 08:16, my Shih Tzu, Daisy, who is nearly nine years old, was deliberately kicked in Western Park by a man after she ran up barking. I had my back turned getting treats from the car when I heard Daisy cry out.

When I confronted the man, he openly admitted it, saying, "Yeah, I did." I was left shocked and furious that a grown middle-aged man would think it acceptable to kick a tiny, elderly dog.

This incident, and description of the man and the woman he was with, has been reported to the police, but I am appealing for witnesses to come forward. If you have any information, please contact Leicestershire Police on 101 quoting reference LEP-100925-0143.

No dog deserves to be treated this way. Daisy was left hurt and shaken, and I want to make sure no other pet is targeted like this.

I've always appreciated how Western Park brings people together, dog walkers, cyclists, children, runners. Everyone usually shares the space in harmony. That's why this incident was so shocking, and why I feel it's important to raise awareness so we can keep the park safe and welcoming for all. (SP)

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DUNS LANE ROADWORKS CONTINUE

Work has started on a second phase of improvements to Duns Lane, behind the Tesco Superstore, to create new cycle tracks and improve footpaths along the full length of the road.

As a result, Duns Lane is currently restricted to one-way traffic, from Braunstone Gate to St Augustine Road.

Work is expected to take up to three months including a planned break of up to five weeks, while heavy construction work is carried out on an adjacent office development.

Businesses, including the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre and the Westbridge Industrial Park will stay open as normal during the roadworks.

It follows a first phase of work carried out earlier this year, which saw a new cycle path created and footpaths improved on the opposite side of the road.

Full resurfacing of the main carriageway of Duns Lane, including its junction with New Park Street and Western Boulevard, is also planned.

The Duns Lane improvements scheme will cost around £600,000 and will be funded as part of the Connecting Leicester programme which is supported by the Department for Transport's Transforming Cities Fund.



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CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER

As the days grow shorter and the air takes on that crisp autumn feel, it can be tempting to think the gardening year is drawing to a close. In fact, September and October are wonderful months to sow seeds, ensuring fresh flavours and colourful displays well into the cooler months and even preparing for an abundant spring. With the soil still holding onto summer's warmth, seedlings get a strong start before winter slows their growth.

For the vegetable grower, hardy greens are the stars of the season. Spinach, winter lettuce and rocket can all be sown now, providing you with tender leaves through autumn and early winter. Lamb's lettuce and mizuna are other reliable choices, coping well with cooler temperatures and rewarding you with tasty harvests. If you have cloches or a cold frame, they'll appreciate the extra protection, but many of these crops will happily keep going outdoors. Garlic and overwintering onion sets can also go in during October, quietly rooting themselves over winter before bursting into growth next spring. Broad beans are another favourite for autumn sowing, giving you an early crop ahead of spring-planted ones.

Flower lovers don't need to miss out either. Hardy annuals such as cornflowers (Edible cornflowers are a surprisingly versatile culinary ingredient),

nigella and calendula can be sown in September to establish strong root systems before winter. These will reward you with earlier blooms next year, often sturdier and more prolific than those sown in spring. Sweet peas are another classic autumn choice; sown now and overwintered in a cool greenhouse or cold frame, they produce vigorous plants



with an abundance of fragrant flowers come early summer.

If you're keen to brighten the colder months, don't overlook the joy of planting bulbs. While technically not seed sowing, tucking daffodils, tulips and crocuses into the soil in September and October is a seasonal ritual that pays off with a dazzling spring display.

So rather than packing away your tools, embrace the slower rhythm of autumn sowing. With a little planning, your garden will continue to thrive, and you'll be rewarded with leafy greens in the kitchen and colourful flowers when you need them most. Happy gardening!

Carey Tunstall



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Sept Police Update

Two teenage boys have been arrested by officers who responded to a report of a robbery in Western Park on Thursday 4th of September.

Just before 5.45pm a 14-year-old boy reported that had been threatened with a knife and had his pushbike taken by a group riding dirt bikes.

In the interest of public and police safety, armed officers were deployed to carry out a search of the area. Assistance was provided by the National Police Air Service (NPAS) and the riders of two dirt bikes were identified. Following a pursuit by officers on the ground, two boys aged 16 were arrested on suspicion of robbery. They have since been released on bail. If you have information or camera footage please call 101 quoting reference 25*522588.

Detectives investigating a knifepoint robbery, in The Rally by Tudor Road, are appealing for two people who helped the victims to come forward.

The incident, involving two 15-year-old boys, happened at about 5pm on Saturday 6th September. The boys were approached around 5pm by a group of youths who started to search their pockets. The victims were threatened with a knife and one of them sustained a minor stab wound which was treated in hospital. Bank cards, jewellery and mobile phones were stolen during the incident.

If you were in the park and approached the victims to check on them, please get in touch. quoting crime number 25*526596.

Operation PedalFast continues to crack down on Illegal E-Bikes & Scooters in the Western ward. Community safety remains a top priority and as a result unregistered, uninsured, or modified vehicles and those deemed as being used to commit crime have been seized.

These vehicles pose serious risks to pedestrians, road users, and the riders themselves. Officers are working hard to keep our streets safe and ensure that those using e-bikes and scooters are doing so legally and responsibly. If you know of illegal use report it via 101 or online. Let's keep our communities safe together.

A man who was arrested following a report of a burglar attempting to break into a shop on King Richards Road, using an angle grinder, has been jailed for over four years.

49 year-old Matthew Ryan from Equity Road was found and arrested on July the 4th following a search of the area.

Enquiries revealed that he is a prolific local bugler having struck on Grasmere Street and Clarendon Street stealing laptops, personal items and a bank card.

He was sentenced to 54 months imprisonment on 21st August.

Screen Use - Will You Get Square Eyes?

Screens are everywhere—at work, at home, and even in our pockets. But what impact is this having on our eyes?

We see more patients than ever struggling with symptoms linked to excessive screen use. Dry eyes, blurred vision, headaches and difficulty focusing are all signs of digital eye strain—a common result of prolonged time on phones, tablets, and computers.

When we focus on screens, we blink less (sometimes 60% less), which leads to dryness and discomfort. The eye muscles also get overworked from sustained close-up focusing. Add in glare, screen brightness and poor posture, and it's no surprise our eyes feel tired by the end of the day.

For children, the risks are even more significant. Excessive screen time, especially without outdoor breaks, is linked to the rise in myopia (short-sightedness). This can worsen as children grow, potentially increasing their risk of eye disease later in life.

Recommended screen time for children: Under 2 - None.

2 to 5 Max 1 hour

6 to 12 - Max 2 hours on top of school work and with breaks

Over 13 - No limit but must not interfere with sleep



ALAN BELLAMY

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

What can you do about it?

- Follow the **20-20-20 rule**: every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.
- Use ocular lubricant gel to keep the eyes moist.
- Ensure screens are positioned properly (arms length and top of screen just below eye level) and lighting is soft and indirect.
- Encourage children to put the phone down and pick up a ball. Good luck!
- Consider **custom spectacle lenses** with anti-reflective coatings. Some people find blue light filters to be more comfortable and there are specialist lenses designed for the particular focussing requirements of screen/office use.

With these few simple steps you can make screen use more comfortable.

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

Autumn, Foxes, Pay, River, Rise, To, Brown, Ivy, Rain Squirrels, Wind, Flowers, Work, Leaves, Return, Storm.

Answers: westernparkgazette.co.uk © Paul Towers

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Mondays, 2.00 - 4.00pm. Cost £3.00 per session. Contact Centre or just turn up

Senior Citizens Keep Fit

Mon 10.30-11.30am. Thurs 11.00am-Noon. £1.00 per session. Includes Tea/Coffee

Lunch Club

Thurs12.30-1.30pm. £3.00 for a main course, pudding, tea or coffee. Ring to book

Our Co-op Friendship Group

Tues 10.00 -Noon. £1.00 per session. Learn new craft activities & meet new friends

Yoga

Mondays 6.00-7.15pm. £5.00 per session (£4.50 unwaged). Please ring to book

Asian Classical Dance

Sats Children 11.45am -12.45pm, 2.45-3.45pm and 3.45-4.45pm. Adults Saturdays 12.45 -1.45pm. £30 per month. Call 07442002411 or 07500737087 for further details

Arabic Lessons for Children

Mondays to Fridays 5.00-7.00pm. Contact 07965347216 for further details

JKS Shotojuku Karate Club for Children

Sats & Suns 9.00-11.00am. 07886504516/07944689401 for more details

Tetsudo

Suns 11.00am-1.00pm. Adults and children 13 plus. £5.00. Instructors provided Phone Glen, 07900476846 for details

War Games

Thursdays 7.30-11.00pm. £4.00 per session. Contact 07568370811 for details

THE CENTRE IS AVAIABLE FOR BOOKINGS

There are three rooms. The main room is suitable for children's parties & family events. The small rooms are suited for meetings and training events.

Contact Centre for rates and availability.

Special rates for community group block bookings.

For more information contact the Woodgate Residents Association



Woodgate Community Centre, 36 Woodgate, Leicester LE3 5GE

Tel. No: 0116 253 0717 e:office@woodgateresidents.org / www.woodgateresidents.org



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