



LOCAL BUILDINGS OFF AT RISK LIST



More on page 4



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Hello From The Editor

Welcome to the October edition of the Western Park Gazette.

As the pandemic grinds on and we enter the new netherworld before Bonfire Night, Diwali and Christmas, the prospect of the next few months becoming progressively more hellish raises its head.

Nevertheless our regular contributors, in full hazmat suits and wellies, are soldiering on! Helen Knott's already fed up and working out how to outmanoeuvre covid at Christmas and it's not even Halloween yet, Roger Blackmore heads out into Leicestershire to discover more about a lesser known British architect with a county connection. Tony Huxley explores the delights of quince and there's the latest policing update from Ed Jones.

Our main stories feature two local buildings, both within walking distance, which are now off an at risk register and the WWCE have released a 2021 calendar full of photos taken by local photographers.

As always the ever annoying Sudoku and Crossword lie in wait on the inside back page.

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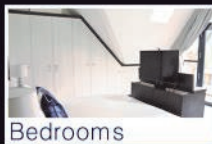
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LOCAL BUILDINGS OFF AT RISK LIST

Efforts to preserve Leicester's rich architectural heritage have resulted in 25 properties, including Braunstone Hall, being removed from a local list of endangered historic buildings.

The Leicester Heritage at Risk Register, first published in October 2017, originally listed 68 local properties that had been identified as being at risk due to long term vacancy and neglect.

Since then, extensive investment and efforts to repair, conserve and find new uses for these historic local assets have seen over one third of the buildings and structures restored and removed from the list.

The latest version of the register now lists 56 properties, including 12 new entries which have been identified as needing intervention from the council's building conservation team.

One of the oldest properties off the list is the Turret Gateway (pic) on Castle View, which dates back to 1422. Specialist repair



works commissioned by the council were completed in early 2019 and the structure is now in good condition and fully accessible to the public.

Other examples include the grade II-listed Braunstone Hall following its ambitious redevelopment as the Winstanley House hotel complex.

Another property removed from the list is the North Bridge Mills factory in Frog Island with others pending removal including the Magazine Gateway which dates back to c1410.



Councillor Adam Clarke, city council heritage champion said: "By working closely with local stakeholders, including our two universities, we are continuing to attract major investment into the city. This is a vital part of our commitment to preserving and cherishing the city's historic buildings and the valuable contribution they make to Leicester's rich architectural heritage."

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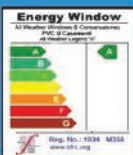
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KNOTT'S LANDING

One tier level, two tier level, three tier level, four...

Five tier level, six tier level, a national lockdown more!

Over 120 days since we were locked down in Leicester while everyone else was allowed to roam and we are still stuck in what seems like a never-ending lockdown. The great green laser in the sky marked 100 days and we looked up at it wistfully from the ground.



© Priya Kuriyan

Never one to mope about though, life must go on and that means all the planning for Halloween, Diwali, Bonfire Night and Christmas. Clearly these

events in the calendar must be marked but in a socially responsible way. Thankfully someone has come up with a plan for Halloween. We can dress up the houses but this time, parents are responsible for providing their children's own sweets. A pumpkin trail is being set up and maps will be available.

Planning for Christmas and Diwali must be smaller this year and already tensions are heightened over who can visit who and when. Diaries are out and co-ordination is happening on a military scale. Changes for COVID have to be factored in and no you can't bloody leave it until the week before Christmas. If women ran the government we would already have an eight week programme of rolling lockdowns and tier changes when cases, hospital admissions and ITU occupancy reach specific numbers. This would culminate in Christmas.

Clearly our great cabinet of leaders have no idea about this. Most of them have no idea what Diwali is. Christmas is more familiar territory but they just roll in from work to the smell of Turkey roasting. All the presents from them have been bought and wrapped; relatives have been collected and delivered where necessary, cards written and sent and mince pies procured. Christmas has been entirely sorted by their better halves.

It's alright for some.

Helen Knott

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DETMAR BLOW

Born in 1865, into a Scottish family, Detmar Blow possessed both a distinctive name and a distinctive talent. He was heavily influenced by the Arts and Craft movement, admiring such figures as John Ruskin and Holman Hunt.

With connections in Leicestershire, he was approached by Edward Gimson who was planning a summer holiday cottage for his family on the edge of Charnwood Forest. To this end, Gimson appointed Blow as architect of the somewhat eccentric cottage, set in 11 acres of woodland at Stonewell, near Ulverscroft. A few years ago Stonewell was bought by the National Trust from the Gimson family and is open to an increasing number of visitors each year.



Stonewell Cottage

As a result of Detmar's architecture and knowledge as a master mason, the work was carried out in the years immediately leading up to the First World War between 1911 and 1913.

At about the same time, Blow worked on remodelling the attractive Queen Anne style front of Peatling Parva Hall in the south of our county. The distinguished architectural writer, Niklaus Pevsner is very complimentary about this work.

The Second Duke of Westminster became a patron of Blow but problems and squabbles within the Westminster household did not help the relationship to flourish. Blow was wrongly accused of embezzlement and sacked. Unfortunately his career was already in decline as a result of the time spent on his job managing the Westminster estates.

Blow was responsible for various works in the East Midlands including Grimsthorpe Castle. Also in Lincolnshire, he carried out various work at Gate Burton Hall near Gainsborough. Regarding the latter, it was once rumoured that Princess Anne was considering this as a royal residence. It however may have been merely an idea loosely floated by the local Gainsborough News.

Blow's death in 1939 followed an interesting life, which included many projects and schemes all over the country as well as his work in Leicestershire.

Roger Blackmore

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Project Hive is run by the WWCE who are local residents raising funds to redevelop the old Eco House into a community space.

Thank you to everyone that entered our (Western) Parklife calendar competition. The fantastic photographs that we received certainly covered an eclectic mix of subject matters! After much deliberation over Zoom, the independent judging panel chose their favourite twelve that we are now transforming into the Park Life 2021 calendar. We are taking pre-orders through our website and on social media channels, so don't miss out on your chance to own the very first calendar created by the Western Park community!

With the nights fast drawing in and the clocks back an hour, we are in the early planning stages of our last community event of this challenging year. "Light Up Western Park" aims to bring some festive cheer to the streets of area, all at a social distance. We will be teaming up with St. Anne's church for an advent display and there are plans for craft stalls, mulled wine, mince pies, and a best seasonal light display competition - more about that next month.

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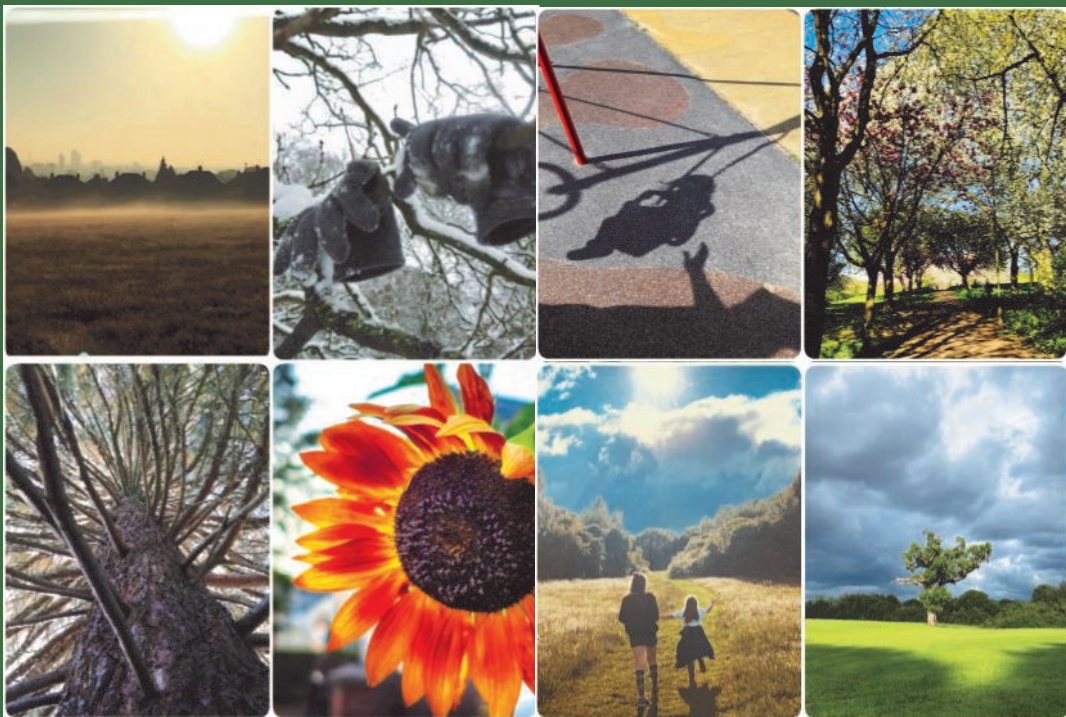
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New College Leicester is celebrating achieving the Career Mark Gold Award for a third successive time. Career Mark is a Licensed Awarding Body for the Quality in Careers Standard — the national careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) award. It recognises excellence in Careers, Employability and Enterprise and is linked to the Gatsby Benchmarks.

The review took place during the Covid-19 pandemic and was conducted remotely with staff and students using Zoom video conferencing. An internal audit of careers related activities and curriculum learning linked to careers around the school was gathered to provide evidence for the award submission. External assessor, Mrs Janet Hutchinson, had visited the school during a pre-assessment visit in February 2020.

Mrs Rogers, Careers Leader at New College Leicester, said: 'Our students, as ever, showed great resilience taking part in assessment interviews via zoom. This award is closely aligned with the College's recently published Careers & Employability Strategy. We believe that by upholding high expectations and further raising aspirations, we encourage our students to challenge their beliefs around who they are and what they can achieve by way of their intellectual ambitions and career choices'.

STREET SNAPS

Many years ago broadcaster Terry Wogan used to wax lyrical about the BBC Director General's commode. But what happened to it? It appears that Tony Shelley has found it in West Leicester. He said: "Over the past few months of photographing the various periods of Lockdown in the West End, I've come across some unusual items on our streets and byways. But this well worn commode was by far the most unusual."



"Mattresses yes, various oddments of self assembly furniture yes, but not this. It's gone now but my cameras are always at the ready for pavement finds. Whether I will top this is debatable, watch this space as they say".

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BOG STANDARD NO MORE!

The toilets in Western park are set to be fully refurbished following proposals to upgrade facilities in seven Leicester parks to the tune of £138,000.

The city council scheme would also upgrade the facilities in Abbey Park, Aylestone recreation ground, Humberstone Park, Knighton Park, Nelson Mandela Park and Spinney Hill Park.

New toilets would be installed, new external doors and grab rails fitted and ventilation improved – while a coat of paint would freshen up all seven facilities.

Deputy city mayor Cllr Piara Singh Clair said: “We want our parks to be places where people enjoy spending their leisure time, so it’s really important that all the facilities on site are of a good standard.

“This investment in the toilet facilities in these parks is much-needed, and I’m sure the improvements will be appreciated by the hundreds of people who visit our parks every day.”

Work to refurbish the toilets could get under way in January, with all seven facilities due to be completed by the spring.



ANIMAL AID XMAS APPEAL

The residents at Leicester & Leicestershire Animal Aid already know what’s on top of their Christmas list - a new loving family and a home to call their own. But we

will still be with us over the festive period and are asking for your help to make this happen by donating what you can. £5 or £6 will mean a dog and cat at LAA will each receive a special treat and your gift will help our four-legged friends feel the joy of Christmas.

Any extra donations will be used to buy residents the things they need to brighten the winter months. There are many ways to donate that are quick, easy and safe including at <https://www.leicesteranimalaid.org.uk/donate> via Facebook or by calling the Centre on 01455 888 257.





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CIMA

Oct Police Update

Leicester's local lockdown now falls under a national three tier system. We sit at tier 2, where the local COVID alert is set at high (www.gov.uk/coronavirus) As neighbouring counties follow suit, I am conscious that Leicester has never enjoyed the freedoms afforded to other areas during the easing of the initial lockdown. It is testament to the character of the people of Leicester and surrounding conurbations, that we continue to go about our daily lives with a steely determination to make the best of what is a difficult time. Sadly, there are those who seem to believe the law does not apply to them, and we are now at a stage where fines are being dispensed more readily. This has included hefty £10,000 fines, for breaches of such magnitude that border on utter lunacy.

Continuing the theme of lunatic behaviour, we are aware the issues around mopeds driving erratically on the payments and in the parks. These invariably involve young people without helmets riding at speed, the inevitable outcome seemingly obvious to all but them. We have put extra resources into the problem, utilising a number of different tactics. This will continue in the weeks to come. If you're a parent and you suspect your child to be embroiled in this activity, now is a good time to have a conversation with them. We ask the community to keep reporting such ASB and to get recording. Video footage helps us identify those involved. However, do so safely so that you don't become a victim yourself. If you are a moped owner, then I advise vigilance, ensuring that you use good quality bike locks and, where you can, keep your vehicle out of sight.

As the darker nights draw in, we often see an increase in burglaries. My key message is to make sure that your home looks occupied by using timer switches to turn lights on when it gets dark, and let a trusted neighbour know if you are going away. Burglars don't like external security lights, make sure you use these during the darker nights. Avoid leaving packaging from expensive items outside your home, take it to be recycled or put it in the bin. For further advice visit <https://www.leics.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/residential-burglary/>

Don't forget, if you have not already done so, to register with neighbourhood link in order to keep up with policing news in your area. Leicestershire Police are recruiting right now, so visit our website for more details and career opportunities. In the meantime Keep safe, keep healthy and be a good neighbour

Sgt Ed Jones

Tony Huxley's Compost Corner



Earlier in the year I was wowed by the sight of a pretty little tree with lush fresh green foliage that was festooned with oversized apple blossom. I came back to this tree just a week ago, but now its boughs had broken under a mass of large, yellow, pear like fruits. I removed two wheelbarrow loads to reduce the worst of the overloading. It would take even the hungriest nursery rhyme owl and pussycat several lifetimes to get through that much quince!



I find it strange that such a wonderful tree is seldom grown these days. When people hear the

name they usually think of scrambling thorny bush *Chaenomeles japonica*. The quince I'm referring to is *Cydonia oblonga* which probably originates in Turkey. Records of its cultivation in Britain go back to 1275 and the court of Edward the 1st. Traditionally, large orchards would have one or two quince trees mixed in.

The quince may have fallen out of favour with gardeners, because the fruit usually can't be eaten raw. A few varieties can be eaten fresh from the tree but these favour warmer more southerly climes, where the fruit has longer to ripen. Here the fruit needs to be cooked before it's edible. But when it is, the sweet and fragrant pear-like flesh is well worth the effort, as the tart tatin my wife cooked at the weekend proved. They're high in pectin, making them perfect for jams and jellies. And they're often added to other fruit preserves to improve setting.

Modern quince are grafted onto rootstocks that limit their size, making them ideal as specimen trees for a small garden. They're tolerant of most soils and no harder to grow than apple trees. Dwarf varieties can even be grown in pots. Just be sure to prune yours regularly, thinning side shoots and reducing branches to maintain a manageable size. And don't be greedy - thin out large crops to prevent broken branches. After all, there are only so many quinces you can fit in a beautiful pea green boat!

Tony Huxley



Martin Page

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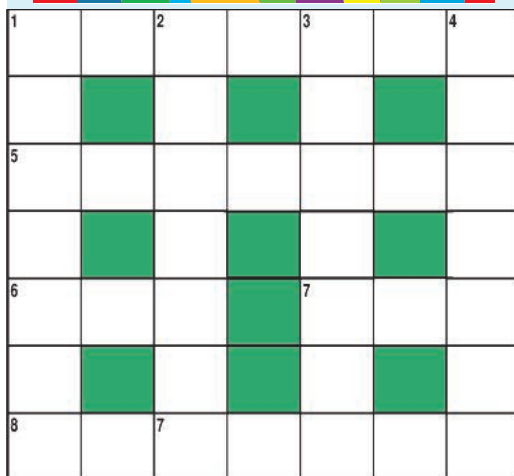
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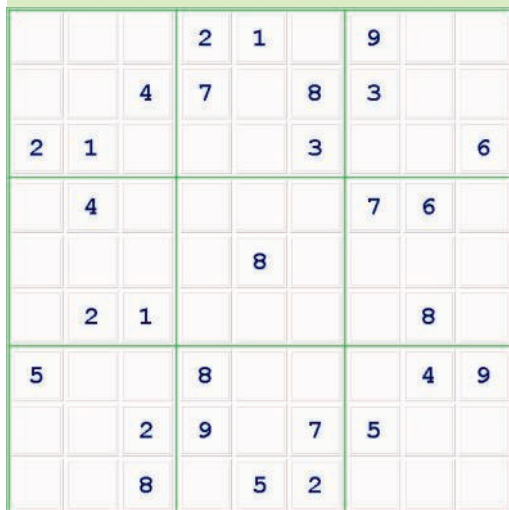
BRAIN TAZERS



1 Across: Song based show **1 Down:** Secret **2D:** Murderous doctor **3D:** Toilet **4D:** Chinese fruit **5A:** Earth shattering **6A:** Tree **7A:** Poem **8A:** Not the Confederates.

Paul Towers 2020

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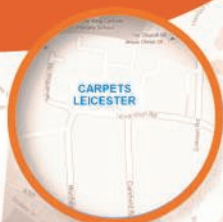
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