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# Editor's Comment

**AFTER a devastating start to the year for many with the flood waters across various parts of Warrington and the bursting of the banks of the Bridgewater Canal near Lymm, it was a tough start for many.**

It would appear no matter how much money is spent on flood defence works; the problem persists in the usual hot spots.

I know our MPs and elected members are making noises for more funding and it was good to see a positive response to help those most in need.

But with higher-than-average rainfalls now becoming the norm and more properties being built, putting additional pressures on the town's drainage system, I fear the flooding problems are not going to disappear anytime soon.

As well as additional flood defence works, we also need to ensure the town's drains and gullies are cleaned on a regular basis. Time and time again I hear reports that the council has not been clearing the drains and

gullies. This should be a top priority.

Meanwhile, on a positive note, there is plenty of good news stories to report on.

Firstly, congratulations to Luke Littler on his fantastic achievement of being crowned the youngest-ever Darts World Champion, aged just 17. A truly incredible achievement.

Secondly, congratulations to everyone at Warrington & Vale Royal College on their "best ever" Ofsted inspection report. We have worked closely with the college for many years and it is fantastic to be able to celebrate the Good Ofsted in this month's edition.

Thirdly, well done to all the volunteers in the Warrington Litter Networks, who collected an incredible 8,660 bags of litter across the town. Again, another fantastic



achievement.

We were delighted to be able to support the Litter Network with one of our COVID Legacy grants and it is great to see the organisation going from strength to strength.

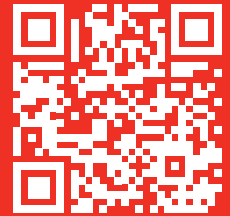
Finally, congratulations to the Holy Trinity Coffee Bar in Warrington town centre on securing an incredible £255k lottery grant to ensure it can open extra hours and continue to help support some of those most in need in our town.

It's very rewarding to be able to focus on some positive news stories in our town.

Well done to all those involved. Keep up the good work!



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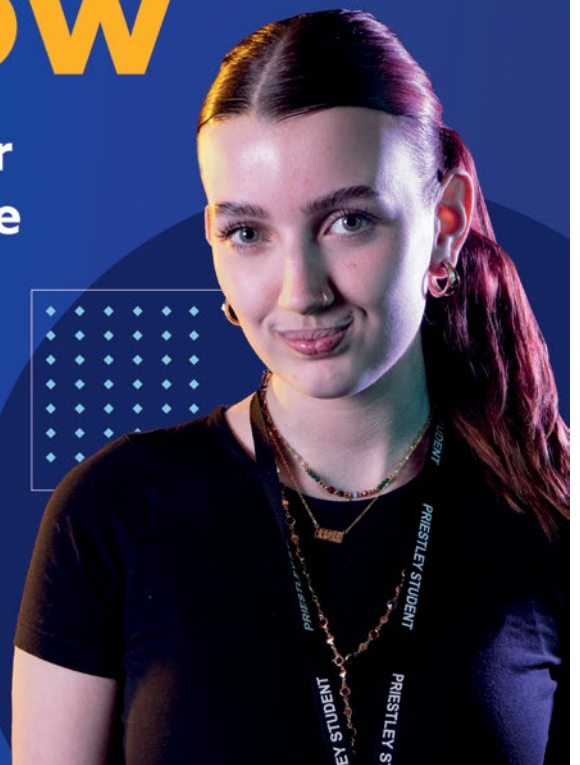
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# College celebrating 'best ever' Ofsted inspection

**WARRINGTON & Vale Royal College is thrilled to announce that it has been rated 'Good' by Ofsted following an inspection in November 2024.**

The four-day inspection marked a milestone for the college, with two areas – Behaviour and Attitudes, and Personal Development – earning 'Outstanding' grades. The college also attained the highest possible grade for its 'strong' response to skills. All other areas of the college's provision maintained a solid 'Good' rating, reflecting the college's hard work and commitment. This exceptional achievement highlights the dedication of the college's staff and students and is indicative of the college's continued strength in technical excellence.

A team of eleven Ofsted Inspectors witnessed first-hand the college's strengths, commenting that leaders "set a clear direction for 'careers not courses', and use this to shape their curriculum offer to meet the skills needs of employers and industry." The report continues: "Teachers and Assessor Coaches are highly skilled professionals who continue to work in industry. They use their expertise successfully to teach students and apprentices relevant and current knowledge and skills."

The report further praised the college's commitment to career-readiness, stating: "Students benefit from an extensive range of enrichment opportunities linked

to their curriculum, next steps and personal development. They routinely participate in very high-quality course-related enrichment activity, including workshops, competitions and visits."

An overarching theme in the report is the strong relationships with employers that shapes the curriculum and prepares students well for their careers in industry. Ofsted said: "Leaders and managers ensure that an extensive network of relevant stakeholders contribute very effectively to design and implement curriculums that prepare students and apprentices very well for future education, employment and work." As a result, students and apprentices "know what they want to do next and what they need to do to get there."

On the 'outstanding' behaviours and attitudes of students, the report says: "Students and apprentices have highly positive attitudes to their learning. They are well motivated and strive to do their best." The report goes on to say: "They represent themselves, their college and their employers exceptionally well." To summarise: "Students' and apprentices' behaviour is exemplary."

Principal & CEO Nichola Newton said: "Our recent Ofsted outcome

is a testament to the incredible dedication and hard work of our staff and students. It has been a great privilege and pleasure to lead this exceptional college since 2015, the college community and the culture we have so painstakingly curated really matters to us and I think that shone through in this inspection. Inspectors noted that the college is very clear on its purpose and aims, we really know who we are and what we are about, that is to say: to deliver excellence in technical education and skills training through an inclusive curriculum, taught well. Our strapline, 'Careers not Courses' and the transformative, life-changing power of the work we do means absolutely everything to us. I believe the team of Ofsted inspectors saw the college's heart

and its character and witnessed first-hand the high expectations and aspirations we have for our students and how well they are supported to fulfill their potential. I believe this college is very special indeed and, as one of our stakeholders said to inspectors, a pillar of the communities we serve."

Prof. Steven Broomhead, recently appointed Chair of Governors, also commented: "What a proud moment for Warrington & Vale Royal College. It highlights the outstanding efforts of our staff, students and Governors and is reflective of the wonderful work taking place at the college each and every day. On behalf of the Board of Governors, I congratulate everyone involved in achieving this well-deserved recognition."



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# Client testimonials for Alba Spinal Health Centre

"During the program of Chiropractic treatment, I also received massages from Debbie who is brilliant at what she does, I felt such an improvement because of my massages alongside my chiro treatment. I would not hesitate to recommend Debbie for her practical care."

"I came in with a trapped nerve and a sore back – Jordan has worked wonders in resolving my pain and lack of movement. 5\* service."

"Whilst suffering with neck, shoulder, upper back pain and a bad posture. I decided to visit Alba where I was assessed, and it didn't take them long

to work out what the problem was and what was required to correct the problem. From day 1 I knew I was in good hands. Everyone at Alba made me feel so welcome and were helpful with organising the treatment days and keeping me informed. I now suffer no aches and have a better posture. I certainly will recommend others to visit Alba."

"I came to Alba following a history of back problems. I was initially seen by Alex who was empathetic, knowledgeable and confident he could help. Following an initial assessment, I was put on an intensive

3-month program combining chiropractic adjustments, deep tissue massages and home strengthening exercises. It has been a tough ordeal, but I can now say that 3 months later I can walk unaided, I'm not relying on family and friends to assist me with day-to-day tasks and I'm now almost pain free. I still have more work to do, but I can honestly say that without the help of Alex and the team, I wouldn't be where I am now. So thank you Alex, Timi, Kyle and all the staff for everything."

"I attended the practice after experiencing pain and discomfort in my neck and shoulders. My consultation appointment was very thorough and well explained so I continued a course of adjustments. This has resulted in the removal of pain and with the aid of suggested exercises a complete recovery of all movement in the neck area. The subsequent massages of my shoulders and back have removed any tightness and discomfort which enable me to enjoy life again. Many thanks to the team at Alba."

"I have been having sports massages due to glute pain and back pain. Lucy is extremely professional, knowledgeable and makes me feel comfortable by explaining exactly what she is doing. Lucy appears to genuinely care and wants to improve my pain. The massage works deep into the muscle, and I can feel immediate relief. The massages allow me to carry on exercising

and the stretching exercises she gives me strengthen my back and help to protect further injury. I will recommend Alba to family and friends."

"Staff are always helpful and friendly. They listen and offer advice that suits my schedule and situation. I have been coming to Alba for several years now and having regular treatment has certainly improved my quality of life. Would recommend them!"

"I've been going to Alba Spinal Health Centre for many years now and have had both chiropractic and massage treatments.

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# Spire Cheshire Hospital awarded for commitment to patient safety

**Spire Cheshire Hospital has been awarded by the National Joint Registry for its commitment to patient safety.**

The NJR monitors the performance of hip, knee, ankle, elbow and shoulder joint replacement procedures to support work to improve the clinical outcomes for the benefit of patients, but also to provide feedback on surgical performance to orthopaedic clinicians and joint replacement implant manufacturers.

The registry collects high quality orthopaedic data in order to support patient safety, standards in quality of care, and overall value in joint replacement surgery. The NJR Quality Data Provider' certificate scheme was introduced to offer hospitals a blueprint for reaching high quality standards relating to patient safety and to reward those who have met the registry's high targets in the achievement of the quality of the data collected.

The NJR Data Quality Audit compares the number of joint replacement procedures submitted to the registry to the number carried out and recorded in the local hospital Patient Administration System. The audit ensures that the NJR is collecting and reporting upon the most complete, accurate data possible across all hospitals performing joint replacement

operations, including Spire Cheshire Hospital.

Ben White, Hospital Director at Spire Cheshire Hospital, said: "Improving patient safety is of the utmost importance and something all staff at Spire Cheshire Hospital take very seriously. We fully support the National Joint Registry's work in

facilitating improvement in clinical outcomes for the benefit of joint replacement patients and we're delighted to be awarded as an 'NJR Quality Data Provider'."

Medical Director of the National Joint Registry, Mr Tim Wilton, said: "Congratulations to colleagues at Spire Cheshire Hospital. As well as being a fundamental driver to inform improved quality of care for patients, registry data provides

an important source of evidence for regulators, such as the Care Quality Commission, to inform their judgements about the quality of health services."

The Quality Data Provider Award received by the team demonstrates the high standards being met towards ensuring compliance with the NJR and is a reflection of strong departmental efforts to achieve such status.



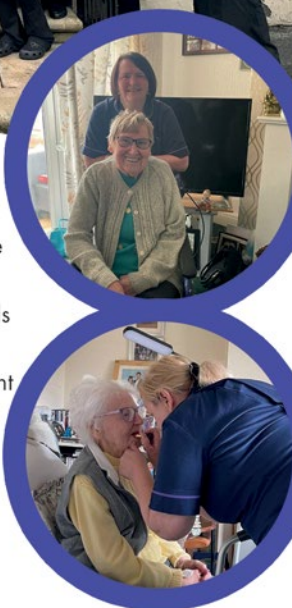
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# Farewell January, roll on Spring

by Stephen Fitzsimons - Warrington Chamber of Commerce

**John Laverick has moved on from Warrington & Co, however his legacy will continue, with the £142m Town Square development testament to the vision of his team and others during the previous decade.**

Regeneration is a tricky business because it's not easy to balance the old and the new. Warrington

town planners in the 1970s were very excited when they built New Town House and Quattro, however



not many residents mourned its demolition in 2022. The ideal solution is to take an historic building like the Hive (pictured) and inject some modernity to prolong its appeal for another generation. We'd never want the approach seen in many Chinese cities where old is bad and new is good, losing cultural assets forever. This is why the height of new developments is so sensitive - Warrington has no ambition to look like Manchester city centre!

2025 could and should be a big year for Warrington as we proceed with Cheshires East and West towards devolution and a potential mayor. This might not be everyone's preferred democracy, however it was the only show in town for the previous government and again for the new one. Metro Mayors Steve Rotherham and Andy Burnham have very high profiles which help to bring investment and focus on their respective city regions. We cannot afford to sit in the shadows between our nearest neighbours, although we know Culcheth raised and Wolves fan Andy will always keep an eye out for us. Cheshire is the strongest economy in the North of England and we need to be able to shout louder about it.

Warrington & Co launched the Business Exchange in the spring



The partnership for driving growth



Stephen Fitzsimons  
01925 715150

[stephen.fitzsimons@warrington-chamber.co.uk](mailto:stephen.fitzsimons@warrington-chamber.co.uk)

on 2017 and it quickly became the largest business network in the town, organising the first Business Conference in 2018 which was highly successful again last October with nearly 250 guests. Jackie Emson was key to this achievement and she took her well earned retirement at the end of year. I went to visit her in November to change her mind, however the hills and valley of Denbighshire were too tough to compete against! Thank you Jackie and Warrington's loss is a gain for North Wales.

Goodbye January and roll on to the Spring!  
Stephen

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## Divorce Column

By Peter Wilkinson  
Divorce Lawyer at Chambers Fletcher Solicitors

### Do I need a Solicitor to get divorced?

This is a question which is sometimes asked and often, understandably, due to financial concerns regarding legal fees.

The short answer is that you do not have to have a solicitor to get divorced – but beware false economy. Saving some expense on fees in the short term can result in more money being spent, or lost, in the long term. This could be on taking corrective action to put right something which has gone wrong or perhaps by settling a financial claim at an undervalue.

You are entitled to 'have a go' at acting for yourself and if you do you will be known as a litigant in person. Some litigants in person will find it easier than others to navigate their way through a legal process but rarely does a litigant in person properly understand all that's involved and how best to deal with all aspects. In particular a litigant in person can soon find themselves out of their depth dealing with ancillary matters such as financial issues and child arrangements.

It can be a costly mistake to underestimate the benefit of having legal representation. Also, I think it's fair to say that where one party is legally represented but the other is not then the playing field is not a level one.

Getting divorced is a legal process and it usually involves more than just the actual divorce itself. Often there will be financial or children's matters to deal with and while some cases might appear to the layman to be straightforward the reality is that most are not. Family law is complicated and without a proper understanding of the law, practice and procedure it is likely that at some point you will come unstuck. Disagreements or complications are common and having a solicitor on your side can help in protecting your interests and in achieving best possible outcomes.

For advice and assistance regarding divorce and related matters please get in touch - we are experienced and expert in this area of law.

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# Cinderella provides Panto fun for all the family



By Hannah Skentelbery

**PANTO time at Warrington Parr Hall provided fun for all the family with the timeless classic Cinderella.**

Featuring Anne Hegerty from ITV's *The Chase* as the Fairy Godmother, this panto has all the fun, magic, and laughter you expect from a classic fairy tale.

The show follows the familiar story of Cinderella as she tries to win Prince Charming's heart with some help from her best friend Buttons and the magical Fairy Godmother. Anne Hegerty is fantastic as the Fairy Godmother, adding lots of humour and charm to the role. Her witty lines and magical moments had the audience laughing out loud.

Starring Stockton Heath's own Christopher Pym as Prince Charming, the show also sees the return of Daniel Dean as Buttons, who is back by popular demand. Buttons is full of energy and humour, making him the perfect sidekick for Cinderella. His playful interactions with the audience and lovable antics kept everyone smiling. The Ugly Sisters are wonderfully silly and over-the-top, providing plenty of laughs as they engaged with the audience.

The show was packed with catchy songs, funny jokes, and lots

of audience interaction, making it fun for all the family, from young kids to grandparents. The set and costumes were bright and colourful, creating a magical fairy-tale world that everyone will love.

With a mix of fun, laughter, and a little bit of magic, *Cinderella* at Parr Hall was the perfect way to spend a family day out.



Pictures: Lydia Hughes



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ZETMET LTD is also extremely proud to be continuing its long-standing partnership with Warrington Wolves by becoming a primary kit sponsor for this year's 2025 Super League campaign.

With Sam Burgess at the helm headlining a potential grand final charge, it has never been a more exciting time to extend their involvement. They will also be part of the history-making fixture when Warrington Wolves take on the Wigan Warriors in Las Vegas! This provides incredible coverage and prestige for their business.

Their sponsorship of exciting, home-grown winger Josh Thewllis has also continued into the 2025 season. A natural winger with a devastating turn of pace; Josh scored 15 tries in 24 games during the 2024 campaign. He is highly regarded across the competition and recently signed a contract extension until 2028.

"We wish Josh and the rest of the team good luck for the season ahead. Come on The Wire!"



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# Life-changing blood test revealed genetic condition causing liver disease

By Helen Bennicke

**UNTIL he had a blood test with Warrington-based BAPP, Luke Perret had no idea that he had a life-changing liver condition which was affecting his health.**

The 30-year-old owner of ITechU phone technology shop on Knutsford Road, had a chat with John Lyons, whose Elements Cyro spa is near to his business. John explained he was setting up the blood analysis business BAPP.

Back in August, Luke had his blood tested at BAPP. It was the first time since 2019 that he'd had blood tests. Luke said: "When the results came back, John said there was something with the liver results that was quite high.

"He asked me if I drank a lot of alcohol and I didn't. And if I was on steroids - I'm not. John recommended me to go and see my GP with the results to discuss them. I was quite surprised at first but I went to see my GP at Lakeside in Lymm.

"The GP sent me for an ultrasound on my liver and the checks revealed that I had non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. I have always been a lover of food - I will eat absolutely everything and anything and haven't been focussing on my diet. Luckily for me, I've been able to take actions with my diet to address the issues with my liver. I was also diagnosed with Gilbert's Syndrome, a genetic condition, which affects

the liver. It means I have too much of the enzyme bilirubin in my blood.

"What I have done is cut out all the sugar in my diet. I literally have gone zero sugar and without exercise, I've lost 10kg. I am getting a blood test next February and I am hoping to have reversed the non-fatty liver disease.

"When I went to the doctor with the results, the first thing I was asked about was lifestyle and drinking alcohol and I don't really drink. I just viewed the blood test I had with John as like a car MOT for my own health. I had no symptoms of the condition I was living with.

"But then when I look back, I do get dehydrated easily and I used to get a lot of headaches and migraines. I have issues with my circulation with Reynaud's and I can't stay in the sun for long as I get dehydrated. I didn't think anything of it.

"It was a big shock when it came to my health and being so young, but I feel I am able to reverse it before it gets too late with the BAPP blood test. I wasn't particularly overweight, but I've completely changed my diet. I used to have lots of sugar in my coffees and cups of tea but now I don't. I used to eat lots of sweets and

chocolate - now I don't."

Luke also uses an app which identifies the nutritional value of every food and drink that he consumes.

"If I have a craving for sugar, I will eat two or three dates a day", he added. "Or maybe some honey if my body is screaming for sugar. I used to be a chef so I am used to grabbing food whenever I can, often late at night, and not eating healthily. Now, I don't eat after 8.30pm at night and the last thing I have is some hot milk with cinnamon.

"Since the blood test and making the changes, I feel 100 percent better mentally, physically and with my energy levels. My partner, Han Dan, may argue that she could see the telltale signs before the blood test, but I couldn't!

"I mentioned the liver results to my two brothers and my dad, to get their bloods tested. Luckily my dad is ok. I really feel like I've dodged a bullet

and I feel so lucky and grateful. If it was not for John, I'd have no idea about this and eventually my liver would have got to a point where the issues were not reversible."

For more details on how to arrange a blood test visit [www.bappbloodanalysis.com](http://www.bappbloodanalysis.com) or call 01925 591928.



## Museum of Policing receives £8,300 donation



THE Warrington-based Museum of Policing, which preserves and researches the heritage of policing in Cheshire, has received a £8,300 donation as part of an initiative to support worthwhile county-based charities and organisations.

Chief Constable Mark Roberts announced £50k was to be donated across six Cheshire-based charitable organisations, whose work helps protect and safeguard the vulnerable and provide education and community engagement for local residents.

This £50k worth of donations is Mr Roberts' way for the Constabulary to give back to the people of Cheshire it serves and protects every day.

Over £41k worth of donations have been made on behalf of the Constabulary to the South Cheshire Amateur Boxing Club in Crewe, the county-wide Rape and Sexual Assault Support Centres (RASAC), Youth Fed, Warrington Youth Zone and the veterans support charity Forces Employment.

Now Mr Roberts has presented volunteers from the Cheshire Museum of Policing with a cheque for £8,300 to reward their efforts in supporting and engaging with the local community and preserving the force's upstanding reputation.

Based on Arpley Street,

Warrington, and housed within the walls of Warrington Police Station, the Cheshire Museum of Policing is a fully-registered charity funded by donations and run entirely by volunteers.

Museum manager Peter Hampson, said: "It is a great honour to receive the grant as an endorsement that the Chief Constable values what we do.

"The grant will help us support the hundreds of children across the county who come to visit us for educational trips to learn more about their local force, along with the members of our local community who pass through our doors for numerous engagement events.

"The money will also go towards conservation of items in our extensive collection. This is important, as if we do not maintain valuable artefacts in good condition, they will deteriorate."

Opening its Tardis-style doors into a 19th-century police station in 2006, the museum welcomes thousands of visitors from all over the country through its door every year, with new force recruits, retired senior officers, schools and even ghost hunters taking a trip back in time to see how the county was policed in bygone years.

For more information about the museum call 01606 365803.

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# New year flood waters see community nurses travel by raft to reach patient's home

Two community nurses from Bridgewater Community Healthcare began 2025 on a raft after flood waters blocked the Warrington home of a vulnerable patient they needed to visit.

Community nurses Michelle Hall and Suzanne Taylor were left worried and wondering what to do when a mass of waist-high water greeted them around the Bewsey area of Warrington on New Year's Day.

Questioning how the pair would reach the patient's home to deliver their care, Michelle and Suzanne spotted a nearby firefighter. Explaining their concern and urgency; both were quickly transported by raft.

Speaking about the experience, Michelle said: "We knew that we needed to get to the patient quickly, but safely. I would never have imagined at the start of my shift that I'd be travelling down a flooded road by raft.

"We would like to say a very big thank you to Cheshire Fire and Rescue Service who were amazing.

Suzanne added: "Time was of the essence to deliver medication to the patient we were visiting. Thankfully all went well, but what a start to

2025. It will certainly be something I won't forget in a hurry."

As well as treating the patient with their urgent medication needed, Michelle and Suzanne also ensured they were warm, safe and had enough food until the flood waters subsided.

Nikhil Khashu, Joint Chief Executive Officer of Bridgewater Community Healthcare and Warrington and Halton Teaching Hospitals, said: "I'm sure this will be a New Year's Day that both Michelle and Suzanne will remember for a long time.

"Their quick thinking really demonstrates the extent that our community teams will go to when delivering care away from our busy hospitals and into patient homes.

"I would like to thank them both for making the speedy, but safe decision to ask for help. A true example of our emergency service teams working together in what continues to be a very testing start to 2025 for us all."



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# Strictly St Rocco's 10th anniversary event raises £52,000

The recent annual Strictly St Rocco's event at Haydock Park Racecourse marked the 10th anniversary of the glitzy dance contest and the seven brave supporters certainly helped to make it a night to remember.

In the run-up to the event, amateur dancers were paired with a professional dancer from Cadmans Dance Centre, Sale and had a series of lessons to learn their routine.

Charlotte Smith, a self-employed Marketing Consultant, was crowned the winner and took home the coveted glitter ball trophy after receiving a perfect score from guest judges and the most public votes on the night. Elsa Ward, Owner of Palmyra Cocktail Bar, received the runner-up award with Ann Evans, a volunteer at St. Rocco's, winning the top fundraiser award after raising over £5,000 through various events and activities this year.

Also dancing the night away were contestants Paul Williams (Healthcare Assistant at St. Rocco's), Mitchell Maloney (Leisure Membership Advisor at The Village Hotel), Sarah McLoughlin (Head of Academy at the TUCO Foundation), and Paul Collier (Sales Manager at B-Engineering).

Charlotte (Senior Events Manager, St. Rocco's Hospice) said, 'I am incredibly proud that Strictly St. Rocco's has reached its 10-year anniversary. It is our biggest event of the year, and we

love seeing how committed our dancers are and the progress they make during their lessons. This year we have raised over £52,000 which is incredible. This money will help fund patient care at our hospice and will help us continue to look after those in the Warrington community facing a life-limiting diagnosis. We would like to thank every single person who has made this event a success.

The event was live streamed on social media with supporters cheering on the dancers from living rooms across Warrington. There was also the option to text to vote this year which was a huge success.

St. Rocco's would like to thank everyone involved in helping to make the event a success including drinks sponsor Greenall's; Cadmans Dance Centre for training and supporting the amateur dancers and corporate table sponsors LMS and Palmyra Cocktail Bar. Thanks also to guest judges Laura Appleton, Elle Preston and Simon Riley, to hosts Ian Lawson and Hayley Jones, guest speaker Russ Scanlon, Saxophonist Tina Wells for her performance and DJ Nigel Vaughan. Also supporting the event were volunteer photographers Brian Touhey and



Moore Camera Club, The Make Up Coach Rayner and Sean Preston Hair for the dancers' makeovers and to Personalised Awards for the dancer medals and trophies. Thank you to Mike and the team at MJD Events for AV support and Living Colour and Huddle Hospitality for table centres and to our volunteers including the team from RBS Bank. Without all your support, we could not run an event like this. We would also like to thank everyone who donated prizes to the raffle and auction and, of course, to our seven contestants who have worked incredibly hard and show exceptional support and commitment to St. Rocco's.

Over the last decade, Strictly St. Rocco's has raised £700,000

towards patient care at the hospice. This money has had a huge impact on the care and services delivered to people with a terminal diagnosis across Warrington. During this time, St. Rocco's has cared for over 2,000 patients on their inpatient ward, answered tens of thousands of calls to our palliative care hub and delivered many other appointments, drop-in sessions, and counselling services. This specialist care would not be possible without the generosity of the Warrington community and the dedication of those that support us.

If you would like to get involved in Strictly St. Rocco's 2025, please contact Charlotte on 01925 57578 or email [events@stroccos.org.uk](mailto:events@stroccos.org.uk)

## Sponsor a St. Rocco's Nurse and help make every day count

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# Mind, Movement, Menopause



LiveWire Warrington has developed a 6 week support programme to help women who are experiencing the different stages of menopause. The programme includes both NHS guidance and other alternative approaches covering topics such as:

- What is menopause?
- Symptoms and lesser known symptoms
- Nutrition & Weight Management
- Exercise
- HRT
- Psychological impact
- Coping strategies

The programme consists of 45 minutes of exercise with a focus on a full workout for heart and bone health and a combination of core and muscle tone exercises followed by 45 minutes of education and support talks to share personal experiences.

Embedded in the programme are a number of guest speakers including a local Warrington GP and a Clinical Psychologist.

The programme provides a safe environment to enable you to talk about the challenges of menopause and provide you with the guidance in making better informed choices.

The programme is held at Orford Jubilee Neighbourhood Hub on Wednesday evenings, for more details please contact the Lifestyles Team on:  
[lifestyles@livewirewarrington.org](mailto:lifestyles@livewirewarrington.org)

For more information see: <https://livewirewarrington.co.uk/news/menopause>

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# Nearly 30 years on, sports pavilion to get major renovation



**NEARLY 30 years after it was built, a sports pavilion in Warrington looks set to undergo a major restoration.**

The Pewterspear Green Trust, a charity established in 1995 on an 18-hectare site partly in Appleton and partly in Stretton, has won planning permission to carry out the work.

The pavilion is surrounded by amenity grassland, full-size football, mini soccer pitches, and a currently unused cricket pitch.

Access is mainly from Beamish Close.

Borough planning chiefs decided to grant permission for the development after hearing the aim of the scheme was to enhance access and security, increase natural light and external views, and improve durability and ease of maintenance while complementing the building's appearance.

This would be achieved by installing new doors and windows and roller shutters. An access ramp to the changing facilities would also be provided from outside the building.

The proposed works focus on replacing windows and doors to enhance the building's aesthetic and functional performance. Modern materials and energy-efficient solutions, such as double-glazed windows and durable, secure doors, will improve natural lighting, insulation, and ventilation. These upgrades will not only modernise the exterior but also ensure long-term durability, low maintenance, and enhanced environmental



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# Another record-breaking year for Warrington Litter Networks

**WARRINGTON'S** volunteer litter networks are celebrating another record-breaking year collecting 8,660 bags of litter.

Working closely with Warrington Borough Council the powerful collaboration against litter, resulted in 2024 being the litter networks most successful year.

Volunteer Team Litter Bag Counts (January-December 2024)

- Tuesday Litter Team (including Latchford Village Saturday Team) 6,295
- Winwick Litter Network\* 577
- Fairfield & Howley Litter Team\* 500
- Poulton-with-Fearnhead Litter Network\* 495
- Orford Litter Team\* 195
- Westbrook CUMC: Clean Up My Community 144
- Sunday Litter Team\* 163
- Lymm Litter Network 136
- Croft Litter Network 84
- Thomas Risley Church Locking stumps: TReco 18

The litter volunteers' total Warrington litter bag count for 2024 was 8,660 bags of litter.

Tony Dixon, Tuesday Litter Team, Keep Britain Tidy Litterheroes Ambassador said: "This represents a magnificent town-wide effort from all of the volunteer teams and many associated solo pickers, all working together.

"We finished the year with "Christmas Hat" litterpicks in Latchford and Orford Lane.

"Last year, 2024 has been an

"all-time\* record year" for the volunteer teams of Warrington (\*since they started in 2019).

"Our previous best year was 8,295 bags in 2022, and we have exceeded this by over 350 bags this year."

**Aluminium Recycling.** About 5% of the above bag total are bags of squashed Aluminium cans. This year over 57,000 aluminium cans were collected (by the teams asterisked above\*) and recycled at Novelis Recycling in Latchford. This raised around £1400 for their charity, to support the Orford Veterans Hub.

**Other Metal recycling.** A further £400 (equivalent to around 80,000 cans) was raised for litter picking kit by the same teams, recycling of other Aluminium and some other metals (as listed below) at Sterling Metals in Wilderspool. These other metals included steel or aluminium NO2 canisters, alloy bicycle wheels, aluminium bike frames, and small components including lead and copper.

Since August 2022, Warrington's volunteer litter teams have recycled approximately 239,000 aluminium cans. As the town's population is 211,000 people, that's equivalent to more than one can recycled per Warrington resident.

Tony added: "In the last five



years, Warrington's volunteers have picked over 33,000 bags of litter. One could say that Warrington is shaping up as the premier litter-picking town in the North West.

"The above litter teams have been supported by Warrington Borough Council, the Co-op Community Fund and by Novelis Recycling, Latchford for the 2023 Coronation Crown Litter Pick. The teams also have some kit available for loan to schools and youth groups on request.

Commenting on the achievements Deputy Mayor of Warrington, Cllr. Mo Hussain said: "The Warrington Litter Volunteers are making an incredible difference to our community, keeping every corner of our town clean and free from litter. This amazing group of volunteers, led by Tony Dixon and his dedicated team, truly embodies the best of Warrington's community

spirit. I've had the privilege of joining them on occasion and have seen first-hand the remarkable impact they're having. Their hard work and passion are an inspiration to us all, and we owe them our heartfelt thanks."

Tony Dixon added, "This is something really good happening here in Warrington. Litter picking is an enjoyable form of mindful outdoor exercise, and it's open to all. Team litter picks bring a diverse range of people together to improve our local environment. If **Warrington Worldwide** readers would like to get involved, they can see photo reports of our litter picks at [Litternetworks.org.uk](http://Litternetworks.org.uk) This website links to all 22 Facebook pages where Warrington's litter teams can be messaged directly. We are all happy to welcome new volunteers."

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# Holy Trinity's Coffee Bar receives £255k of National Lottery funding



**Holy Trinity's Coffee Bar in Warrington town centre is celebrating after being awarded National Lottery funding of £255,490 over five years to support and develop its work supporting local residents.**

Based in Holy Trinity Church on the corner of Market Gate and Sankey Street, the Coffee Bar will use the money to support and expand existing activities as well as to recruit a new role of Capacity, Partnerships & Funding Coordinator.

Coffee Bar has been a cherished part of the community for almost 40 years. Initially set up as a low-cost café, it has evolved into a vital place of support, acceptance and belonging which is known for working collaboratively with statutory agencies and other VCFSEs to support people in need.

Coffee Bar is staffed by Rev Jill Wheatley, Steve Wright (Pastoral Support Worker & Coffee Bar Coordinator) and by a committed team of volunteers. It currently opens on Mondays and Wednesdays between 10am and noon and on Fridays between 10am and 1pm. Coffee Bar makes a real difference in people's lives by:

- serving hot & cold refreshments at no charge
- being accessible and welcoming to all
- offering pastoral and practical care and support
- being a person-centred space with no pressure to engage
- facilitating a very popular crafts & activities table
- nurturing community
- keeping an emergency stock of food, hygiene and clothing supplies
- connecting people with statutory and other VCFSE services
- providing volunteering opportunities, unlocking skills and confidence, and helping people to live fuller lives
- maintaining a strong safeguarding environment

National Lottery Community Fund, which distributes money raised by National Lottery players for good causes and is the largest community funder in the UK, will enable Coffee Bar to fund a new post of Capacity, Partnerships & Funding Coordinator, undertake some energy saving improvements and open one extra day. This will enable Coffee Bar to help more people in more ways, and hopefully mean Coffee Bar is still thriving in 2065!

Steve Wright (Pastoral Support Worker & Coffee Bar Coordinator) says: "We're delighted that The National Lottery Community Fund has recognised our work in this way. We have achieved so much by sheer grit and determination, and through the tireless dedication of our volunteers. However, since Covid, demand for our services has grown and we've been running at an unsustainable loss – like most charities, we've been hit by rising costs and falling donations as the cost-of-living crisis has become embedded in everyday life. Now, thanks to National Lottery players we will be able to maintain and develop our offering, enabling us to help more people in more ways to fulfil their potential, live well and lead fuller lives."

One of Coffee Bar's valued volunteers shared the following: "The Team here helped me through such a difficult time in my life. Once I got back on my feet, I knew I wanted to volunteer to help others the same way I was helped. Now I assist in Coffee Bar and it's so rewarding to support people facing similar struggles."

Coffee Bar is a Warm Welcome Space, a Place of Welcome, a Network of Kindness Hub, a Warrington in Mind member and is quality accredited by Warrington Borough Council's EQIS scheme.

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## Tax planning becomes crucial as Pension pots face up to 60% Inheritance Tax from 2027

The recent announcement in the October Budget that pension funds will no longer be exempt from inheritance tax (IHT) has left many baby boomers, who have carefully built-up substantial pension pots, reeling. For years, they were advised to preserve their pensions as a tax-efficient legacy. Now, with these funds facing IHT rates of up to 60% starting in April 2027, strategic tax planning has never been more essential.

### The Budget Shock

One of the most significant changes introduced in the Budget is the imposition of IHT on unspent pension pots. From April 2027, passing on a pension upon death could trigger an effective IHT rate as high as 60%, due to the tapering of the residence nil rate band (RNRB). Additionally, beneficiaries who inherit a pension will also be liable for income tax on withdrawals, potentially leading to an overall tax burden of up to 90% in extreme cases.

This new reality may prompt some

taxpayers to reassess their approach to pension withdrawals. Many might consider withdrawing more from their pensions next year—either to spend or to make financial gifts to their family.

### Leveraging Qualifying Gifts

One strategy being explored involves drawing down on pensions and making regular gifts to relatives from surplus income. These “qualifying gifts” are immediately exempt from IHT, bypassing the usual seven-year rule. However, the income tax implications of such withdrawals cannot be overlooked.

Excluding the tax-free lump sum, pension withdrawals are taxed at the individual’s marginal income tax rate. This could result in effective tax rates of up to 60% (or 67.5% for Scottish taxpayers), making this approach less attractive without proper planning.

### Supporting the Next Generation

An alternative option involves drawing down from pensions to

make contributions directly to the pensions of children, grandchildren, or other family members. For this to be effective, the recipient must have sufficient UK earnings and an available annual allowance (currently capped at £60,000 per year). Even without relevant earnings, individuals can still make contributions of up to £3,600 annually and receive tax relief.

The tax advantages of this strategy are significant. Recipients can claim income tax relief on contributions, potentially offsetting or even exceeding the tax paid by the donor, depending on their marginal tax rate.

For example, if a basic rate taxpayer withdraws funds from their pension at a 20% tax rate and gifts them to a higher rate taxpayer who then claims 40% tax relief, the gift could result in an overall tax gain for the family.



Thomas Coyne and Stuart Barr

### Exploring Tax-Efficient Investments

Where pension contributions are not feasible, recipients of financial gifts might consider alternative tax-efficient investment vehicles. Options such as the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) or Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme (SEIS) offer generous income tax and capital gains tax (CGT) reliefs, enabling further tax efficiency.

### Strategic Planning for the Future

While these changes present new challenges, careful planning can still ensure pension wealth is passed down effectively. By consulting a financial advisor and spreading gifts across multiple beneficiaries over several years, it remains possible to transfer substantial pension pots with minimal tax liabilities.

For those affected by these developments, proactive and informed decision-making is key to preserving wealth for future generations.

## Taxing Interest and Dividends: What you need to know

Taxing interest and dividends might appear straightforward, but a mix of rules and exemptions adds complexity. Here’s an overview of how these types of income are taxed in the UK.

**Interest income** is taxed on the full amount received during the tax year, regardless of whether it comes from UK or non-UK sources. Standard income tax rates apply:

20% for basic rate taxpayers, 40% for higher rate, and 45% for additional rate. However, many individuals qualify for a Personal Savings Allowance (PSA). This allows basic rate taxpayers to earn up to £1,000 of interest tax-free, while higher rate taxpayers can earn up to £500 tax-free. Additional rate taxpayers do not receive a PSA. Additionally, there is a 0%

starting rate for the first £5,000 of savings income, but this only applies if other income is below £17,570.

**Dividend income**, paid by companies from profits already taxed under corporation tax, is taxed after a Dividend Allowance. For 2024/25, this allowance is £500. Dividend income exceeding this amount is taxed at 8.75% for

basic rate taxpayers, 33.75% for higher rate taxpayers, and 39.35% for additional rate taxpayers.

Tax bands prioritize employment income, followed by interest and then dividends. Couples may benefit from transferring assets to maximize allowances. For complex cases, expert advice is essential.

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Please note that these ideas are intended to inform rather than advise and you should always obtain professional advice before taking any action.

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# Luke Littler's incredible journey to Darts World Champion



**WARRINGTON wonder kid Luke Littler admits he only started to take darts seriously around six years ago believing football was his true calling.**

Now the Manchester United fan has been crowned Darts World Champion and landed his biggest prize of £500,000 and still aged just 17!

Over 18 years ago, a 17-year-old Michael van Gerwen burst onto the darts scene with a historic victory at the World Masters. Fast forward nearly two decades, and van Gerwen found himself facing Luke Littler, another 17-year-old prodigy who wasn't even born when MVG made his mark.

Their clash at Alexandra Palace symbolised a generational showdown, with Littler aiming to become the youngest PDC World Champion in history – a record held by van Gerwen since 2014.

The final began with Littler seizing control, breaking MVG's throw and storming to a commanding 4-0 lead as the Dutch legend struggled with missed doubles. Although van Gerwen briefly rallied with a stunning 132 checkout to claim his first set, the Warrington Wonderkid displayed maturity beyond his years.

Littler ultimately closed out the match with a 7-3 victory, securing

his place in history as the youngest world champion. Dominant and composed throughout, Littler fulfilled his immense promise and etched his name onto the Sid Waddell Trophy, heralding the dawn of a new era in darts.

The 17-year-old's journey to the top has been remarkable. Not only is he now a world champion, but he also clinched an extraordinary £500,000 in prize money – by far the largest sum of his young career.

When asked if he'd already thought about treating himself after his record-breaking win, Littler's response reflected his grounded character.

"They probably will be when I finally get my head around how much money I've just picked up, but it's not about the money, it's the trophy," he said.

"I don't really like talking about the money, it's just there."

With the Sid Waddell Trophy now in his possession, the sky is the limit for the Warrington Wonderkid as he continues with what promises to be an extraordinary and record shattering career.

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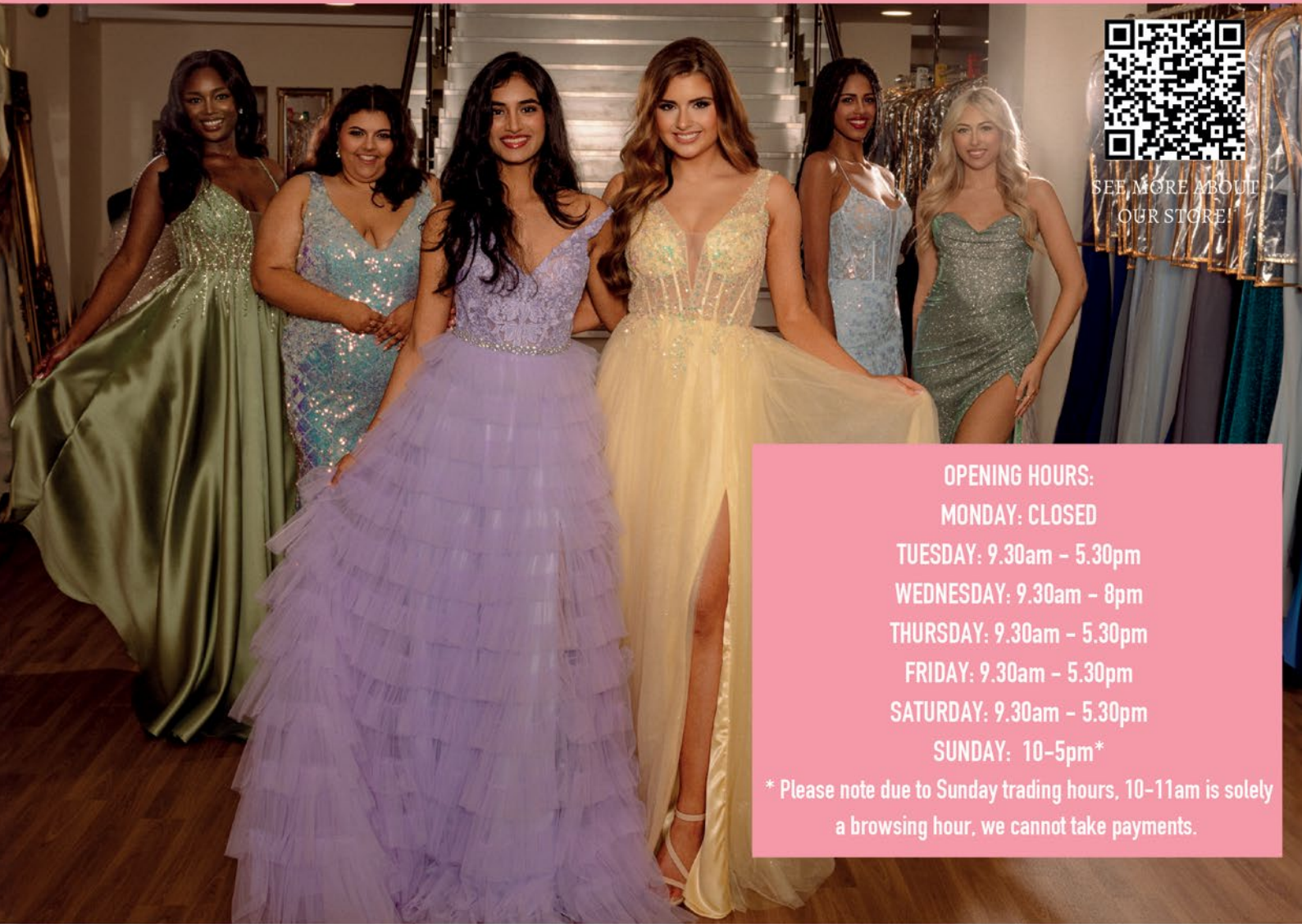
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