

Culcheth *Life*

Magazine

ISSUE 231 | NOVEMBER 2022
FREE EVERY MONTH

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Picture: Matt Dempsey

**Campaign to
save the Raven
nears critical
stage!**

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All the latest news: www.culchethlife.com

Editor's Comment



Editor
Gary Skentelbery

Production
James Bryan

Advertising
James Balme
01925 631592 opt 1

Editorial
01925 631592 opt 2

Email
info@culchethlife.com

Websites
www.culchethlife.com
www.frodshamlife.co.uk
www.lymmlife.co.uk
www.warrington-worldwide.co.uk
www.warrington.tv

Address
New Media Centre
Old Road Warrington
WA4 1AT

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CONGRATULATIONS to the team at the Raven Inn, not only for saving the historic community pub – but for all the hard ongoing work to bring it back into use.

Having followed the story from day one, it has been a truly remarkable achievement – and a huge thank you to the two families who gambled their own money to secure the premises and save them from the bulldozers.

Already more than £120,000 has been raised from the local community and beyond to help

towards the costs required to complete the journey, with the aim of opening up the pub next year.

Let's hope the funds continue to roll in to meet the required target to complete the work.

On a personal note I must also thank campaign spokesperson Peter Sturman for his help in communicating the ongoing news. We are only a small team here at Culcheth Life and need the support of community minded people like Peter to help keep us in touch with what is going on.

I truly can't wait to toast the success of this project sometime next year. But there is still a lot of hard work ahead – and I am sure the hardworking volunteers who

have been rolling up their sleeves, would welcome more support.

So let's dig deep folks and hope the dream comes true! Not only is this pub an important community hub – but a remarkable piece of our history.

I am sure this success story will help inspire others and save other historic pubs up and down the country during these unprecedented times!

Deadline for the December issue of Culcheth Life is November 22

Christmas Market

CULCHETH'S Christmas Market will be held on Saturday, November 26 – in and around the village centre.

Organised by Culcheth and Glazebury Parish Council, the event starts at 11am and continues until 5pm.

The village's Christmas Lights at the Millennium Gardens will be switched on at about 4.15pm where there will be some community carol singing.

A number of stalls are still available, so businesses who would like to get involved to sell their wares or promote themselves can still do so by contacting Cllr Susan Bland on 01925 766641.

Christmas fairs will be held on the same day at Culcheth Methodist Church and Newchurch Parish Hall.



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Campaign to save the Raven Inn reaching critical stage!

AFTER nearly four years, the fight to save the Raven Inn at Glazebury, will reach a critical stage towards the end of November.

After years of campaigning the Raven was purchased by two local families in March, in order to save it from demolition. Since then, volunteers have been hard at work clearing and stripping out the pub.

Work is close to being completed in repairing and strengthening the roof, along with structural work in the pub.

In addition, a Georgian fireplace has been recreated and the old chimney opened up, in order to house a double-sided wood burner.

The point has now been reached where full renovation can begin.

To that end, the management committee, which will be responsible for overseeing the Raven, launched a community shares offer in October, which has so far raised more than £120,000. That offer is due to conclude on the 28th November.

Spokesperson Peter Sturman commented: "This really is crunch time for the Raven. Our community has swept us along to the point where securing the long term future of the Raven is within our grasp.

"We need to raise an optimum

amount of £243,000 in order to renovate and set up the Raven.

"We are doing this by a tried and trusted method of asking our community to buy 'community shares' in the enterprise.

"We have made a very good start, raising over £100,000 in the first four days. It is vitally important that we get it over the line. We cannot come so far to then fall at the last hurdle.

"Having achieved what we have, since January 2019, this is now about securing the long term future of the Raven.

"We ask everyone to seriously consider investing in the future of the Raven. To actually become part of the history of the Raven.

There are benefits too.

If you become a shareholder you stand to get at least 30% tax relief on your investment. You also become a member of the cooperative running the Raven – you can have your say in the Raven's future. If you invest £500 or more, you will receive 10% discount on drinks and food, at the Raven.

Peter added: "We have said before, "let's get the job done."

"Come on everybody. Just a small investment from a lot of people will play such a big part in our continuing history and heritage."

You can get more information via the Raven website: www.theraveninn.org

Or via crowdfunder: <https://crowdfunder.co.uk/p/the-raven-inn-community-pub>



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Where is the "secret vineyard" near Culcheth?

WHERE is the "secret vineyard" only three miles from Culcheth?

That's the question members of Culcheth Wine Circle were asking when they gathered to meet wine expert Jordan Kehoe – and taste a few wines.

The meeting was organised jointly by Culcheth Wine Circle and the Rotary Club. Although primarily a social occasion, more than £250 was raised to support local charities and deserving causes.

Jordan Kehoe gave an informative and interesting presentation, describing how to recognise the particular merits of five different wines and providing a generous glass of each to taste.

The wines he brought came from different parts of the world, Australia, Spain, France and he described how quality wines are now beginning to be produced in less well-known areas.

He illustrated this by presenting two wines from Romania which were well-liked.

The wine club – which dates from the 1950s and was originally called the Daten Wine Circle – has around 60 members.

In its early years they made their own wine to take to the club for others to try and offer an opinion. More recently it meets at Culcheth

Village Club and members present wines they have discovered on their travels.

Wine experts are on occasions invited to present their favourite wines.

Recently members have learned of a "secret vineyard" only three miles from Culcheth and this is something they would very much like to find the location of.



Chelsea is the jazz "breakthrough act of the year"



FORMER Culcheth High School pupil Chelsea Carmichael has won the title "Breakthrough Act of the Year" in the annual Jazz FM Awards.

Tenor saxophonist Chelsea Carmichael picked up the award at a star-studded presentation night in London.

Big name artists who also appeared in the awards list included Jools Holland (Impact Award) and singer Norma Winstone (Lifetime Achievement Award).

Chelsea was brought up in Culcheth and originally aspired to play the violin. But she eventually developed a taste for jazz and persuaded her dad, Winston, to buy her a saxophone. The rest is history.

After playing in the Culcheth High School Big Band and the Wigan Youth Jazz Orchestra, Chelsea moved to London where she is now well-known on the jazz circuit.

She currently plays in a number of groups, including the popular Outlooks Orchestra and her own Chelsea Carmichael Ensemble, which sold-out Ronnie Scott's Club with their tribute to John Coltrane's "Giant Steps" album on its 60th anniversary.

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Steering group aims to restore the jewel in Culcheth's crown

A NEW steering group has taken over management of Culcheth Sports Club with the avowed intention of restoring to its former glory as "the jewel in Culcheth's crown."

In less than a month since a community meeting at the Charnock Road club on September 26, the team of enthusiastic volunteers has created a detailed project plan, based on community demand.

Chairman Gary Monaghan said: "We have received great support from the community. There was a huge attendance at our community meeting and everyone agreed that we had to do something to ensure the club keeps going, now and in the future.

"We are now optimistic that the club has a great future. Our bank balance is rising and people and organisations are coming back to the club."

The club – formerly known as The Daten Club – suffered badly as a result of having to close because of COVID. At one stage it was given no better than a 50-50 chance of surviving.

But now, thanks to the efforts of the steering committee and other volunteers, the future looks bright.

The car park has been re-marked and potholes have been filled, the club's main office has been moved to the front of the building, a health and safety inspection has been carried out to ensure compliance, exterior lighting has been repaired,

defibrillators have been installed, outside areas have been tidied up, a database of volunteers created and a financial plan drawn up.

Free keep-fit and dance sessions have also started.

A pool team has been launched, a darts area created and a regular series of quiz nights started. Family events have re-started, including a Halloween event which sold-out in 36 hours. There are also regular dance classes.

But more is to come – hopefully within the next six months.

The steering group is to work with the Ukrainian Hub to make a café area which will be open and accessible daily. The car park will be enlarged, the main hall will be renovated for multi-sport use as well as an event space. A catering service is to be launched for in-house events. Funding will be secured to improve toilet accommodation.

A greater variety of sports will be encouraged, regular events for all age-groups started. Long-term strategic partnerships are planned with local businesses.

In the longer term, a children's play area, youth zone, affordable gym and a multi-sport barn are planned.



Steering committee member Alex Lee said: "We would like to say a huge thank you to the community for their feedback and support so far. The steering group, with the help of Culcheth Sports Club staff and some fantastic volunteers have been working hard to make changes and we hope people are

beginning to see them."

Mr Monaghan added: "I think we have achieved a great deal in a very short time. We know there is a lot more to do – but I am sure we can revive the club. Culcheth is very lucky to have such a facility – it really can be the jewel in the village's crown."

Art exhibition

CULCHETH Art Group will be holding their annual exhibition at the Culcheth Centre, on Jackson Avenue, on Saturday, November 26 from 10am to 4pm.

Paintings and other works of art created by members during the year will be on show and available for purchase, offering an opportunity to find that elusive "different" Christmas present.

Admission will be 50p, or by programme and tea and coffee will be available.



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Where Learning is Fun!

Local schools donate Harvest Festival collection to Helping Hands

FOR the third year running schools in Culcheth and Croft have selected Helping Hands Culcheth Glazebury & Croft as one of the local community groups to donate their Harvest Festival collection to.

Volunteers collected the goodies from Twiss Green Primary and Croft Primary School which will now be distributed throughout WA3.

Diane Eastburn commented: "I've been volunteering with Helping Hands CG&C since it was founded during the 2020 lockdown and have got to know our service users

very well.

"It's lovely going back to the schools at Harvest Festival time and seeing the children and staff. They seem to really enjoy being involved and ask a lot of questions. They know why we are collecting and where the donations are going to."

Cllr Wendy Maisey added: "We

are always incredibly grateful for large donations like we've received this week. It's wonderful that the schools in Culcheth, Glazebury and Croft have strong links within their community. At a time when the cost-of-living crisis is having an impact on many residents, it's so incredibly heart-warming that parents are still giving to others.

"None of this would be possible without such generosity and the commitment from the volunteers who are on the ground daily. They do an incredible job throughout Warrington and I pay tribute to them all."

Helping Hands CIC was founded by Carole Kilgannon and is based in Orford.

If you want to make a food donation, please contact www.helpinghandsoph.co.uk/contact-us/



Charlotte Nichols MP
Warrington North

If you live in Warrington North and have an issue you need help with or would like to book a surgery appointment, please get in touch.

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Christmas unwrapped at Bents!



THE wait is over and this year's beautifully themed displays have been unveiled for Christmas at Bents!

Once again, the team from Bents have worked their magic to create a festive wonderland, ready to be discovered.

For the first time since the pandemic, the opening event returned to the real look tree forest where Fat Cat Brass, a brass band with a difference, brought a modern twist to the festive favourites, marking the start of Christmas at Glazebury-based Bents with a burst of sound and celebration.

The Christmas opening is just one of this year's celebrations as the family owned and run Centre is also marking its 85th anniversary; 85 years since Alfred and Margaret Bent started growing roses from the front garden of their terraced house

located just metres away from the current location.

Matthew Bent, Managing Director, said: "Christmas has been a part of our family business for as long as I can remember and this year it is even more special for us as we are celebrating our 85th anniversary. We've come a long way since my grandparents started to grow and sell their roses, creating a destination that is full of inspiration and never more so than at Christmas time."

There's lots to see and do at Bents in the run up to the festive period, including Father Christmas's official arrival on Thursday 10th November at 4pm.

Further information on all festive events can be found at bents.co.uk

The Gardening Guide



Now the winter rains have arrived remember to ensure better drainage in your pots and containers.

Simon Bax,
Plant Area Specialist

- There are a surprising number of plants that perform well over the winter period, often they are well scented - examples include Sarcococca, Hamamelis and Mahonia
- Areas of the border, that are currently empty, can be dug over and enriched with blended manure for next year's planting
- Cut down any herbaceous plants that have finished flowering and that do not have a strong winter structure. Weed and fork gently between them

Bents Garden & Home, Warrington Road, Glazebury, Cheshire WA3 5NT. 01942 266300. Check online for seasonal opening times.

For the latest events and online shopping visit bents.co.uk



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Freedom Fibre's lightning-fast, full-fibre broadband network is now available in Culcheth, Croft, Winwick, and Glazebury!

In the borough of Warrington, Culcheth and the surrounding villages were the first locations to benefit from the rollout of Freedom Fibre's lightning-fast broadband network. Now, approximately 5,000 households have access to broadband speeds of up to 900Mb/s through Freedom Fibre's partnership with the UK's third largest internet service provider, TalkTalk.

Freedom Fibre has been working tirelessly to convert the existing copper network to full fibre, actively working towards the UK government's target of having Gigabit broadband available nationwide by 2030. Many providers in the sector tend to build networks in larger, more densely populated areas. However, Freedom Fibre believes wholeheartedly in its mission to make high-speed broadband available to everyone, no matter how rural the location. Speaking on the build progress in across the North West, Tony Moore, Chief Delivery Officer commented,

"Our engineers and build partners are working flat-out to deliver this state-of-the-art broadband technology to rural and urban communities in the North West. We're delighted that residents and businesses in Culcheth are now able to experience our gigabit-capable services through TalkTalk".

The retirement of the old copper network has been a long time coming. The signal from copper deteriorates over distance and is affected by the environment, reducing speeds and causing a weaker, unreliable connection. In comparison, full-fibre networks (FTTP) cut out copper and use fibreoptic technology that is delivered straight into your home or business, providing reliability and unrivalled speed. With many areas in the UK still using copper, even via standard fibre (FTTC) networks, it is important that these are replaced with full-fibre technology that will futureproof homes and businesses when copper is phased out in the near future.

Already, Freedom Fibre has had positive feedback from Culcheth locals, with one resident, Mrs. Thompson, saying, "I welcomed the news that Freedom Fibre was connecting

properties to fibre in Culcheth as I needed the security of a fast and reliable broadband connection to enable me to work effectively from home. The team from Freedom Fibre were very professional and helpful, even calling back after a few days to check if everything was working well".

Residents and businesses in Culcheth wanting to make the move

over to full fibre connectivity can register their interest on the Freedom Fibre website www.freedomfibre.com/connect and will be informed of the process.

With more and more households in the UK needing the reliability of a full-fibre network and a clear government target for the roll out, one thing is clear. The future is Fibre.



Croft Parish Council News



Paul Campbell
(Chairman)
07944 899059
cllrpaulcampbell@gmail.com



Philip Sharpe
(Vice Chairman)
07973 208384
cllrphilipsharpe@gmail.com



Valerie Allen MBE
01925 767274
val@valallen.co.uk



Keith Bland MBE
01925 766641
keithbland1@gmail.com



Norman Partington
01925 765144
normanpartington@gmail.com



Gary Farnsworth
garyianfarnsworth@gmail.com

Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

It was with great sadness that the whole world heard about the death of our Queen. It was only in June that the residents of Croft joined with the rest of the country in celebration of the Queens Platinum Jubilee by lighting a Beacon followed by a Picnic in the Park. Now we remember her with special memories of her duty and sacrifice for over 70 years. We have a new monarch King Charles III, and we wish him well for the future and send our condolences on the death of his mother our Queen. God Save the King.

Local Issues

There are several local issues being planned or carried out by the Parish Council some of which will be completed before this Magazine has been circulated.

1. Kick rails and an entrance gate will be installed around the Car Park at the CYAC building to prevent illegal parking/encampment.
2. The Play Equipment and Benches in the Play area will be painted.
3. A review will be taken of all other existing Benches throughout the Village to identify where repairs are needed to be repaired, repainted, and replaced if needed.
4. A Bench in Remembrance of Queen Elizabeth II will be installed on the path outside the Bowling Green.
5. The Borough Council will carry out a traffic and speed survey throughout the village and report back to the Parish Council. In the meantime the PC are looking to upgrade the Speed Display Signs on Heath Lane and outside Croft Primary School. We are also looking at the possibility of installing Display signs on Kenyon Lane.
6. We hope to plant seven trees possibly on the playing field border in remembrance of Queen Elizabeth II with special reference to her Platinum Jubilee.
7. Work will continue to complete the repairs on the Public Toilet Block.

Croft Carnival

It was great to welcome back the famous Croft Carnival in July after Lockdown rules had been lifted. The day was full of fun and the crowd bigger than ever. A big thanks goes to everyone involved especially the Croft Carnival Committee for helping to bring back this annual event which we hope will continue for many years to come.

Christmas Tree Switch-On

Our Christmas Tree switch-on will take place at the Car Park on Smithy Lane on Friday 25th November beginning at 5pm. The car park will be closed to vehicle parking on the day to allow for the event to take place in safety. Looking forward to seeing you all.

As this will be our last notices for 2022 the Parish Council would like to take this opportunity to wish all the residents of Croft a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Residents may contact Croft Parish Council's Clerk on Email: croftparishcouncil@gmail.com
The Parish Council issues updates and information on Twitter: [@croftparish](https://twitter.com/croftparish)
Web: www.croftparishcheshire.org.uk

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The Culcheth Cup is back raising over £4k for the Christie!



AFTER two years of postponements due to COVID the Culcheth Walking Football Group managed to resurrect its 2020 tournament, which was due on the 21st of March of that year, when the first lockdown started.

This year, some of the same teams plus new ones, gathered for a day of football and fun at Culcheth High School. In all, 19 teams participated, four of which were from Culcheth (the Walkers, the Strollers, the Amblers and the Wanderers), six others from the Warrington area and the rest from around the North West and North Wales.

All teams played at least four games each in their groups, refereed by Walking Football Association referees with all four Culcheth teams making it to the quarter-finals.

Unfortunately, they were then drawn to play each other, so only two made it to the semis and only Culcheth Walkers in the Final.

The cup eventually went to Bolton's Arena Wanderers, who were clearly a cut above the rest, winning all seven of their games with an aggregate goals tally of 29 - 0!

But it wasn't just the football the 200 or so players (men as well women) excelled at!

The Culcheth Cup tournament was also a charity fundraiser, sponsored by local companies, Adana construction, Careys, Edmundson electrical, Spibey

electrical, B-engineering group, Fazackerley's of Leigh, and The Culcheth Arms.

This year's funds were raised for The Christie cancer hospital in Manchester.

All teams were added to an online donating site www.justgiving.com/team/CulchethCup2022 and players and their friends and families donated to the charity by sponsoring their teams.

In all £4,047.25 was raised for The Christie who gratefully delivered a presentation cheque to the club.

Walking football is a growing sport for the over-50s, helping the 'kid inside' them wake up again and prolong the enjoyment of kicking a ball, being part of a team, having the usual footie banter and generally enjoying it, while maintaining fitness in later life, both physical and mental.

Culcheth's club started in November 2017 with just seven players and it now has 56 playing members. They meet at 7pm on Tuesday evenings at Culcheth High School.

For any more information visit www.facebook.com/culchethwalkers

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Cricket club to hold its AGM

GLAZEBURY Cricket Club is to hold its annual general meeting (AGM) at the George and Dragon pub on Thursday, November 24 starting at 7pm - followed by the annual trophy presentation.

All members - including junior members and their parents - are invited to attend and have a say on any matters important to them and the club.

Among items on the agenda will be the selection of captains and other club officials to serve on the executive committee.

Any proposals should be submitted by email to club secretary John Acton at ej8614@gmail.com before the date of the meeting.

Glazebury 1st XI enjoyed a successful season in the UKFast Cheshire Cricket League, coming fourth in division three.

The 2nd XI - which some weeks struggled for players - fared less well, coming bottom of their division.

New members are always welcome at the Hurst Lane club.

Joanne's tough time in World IPO championships

A FORMER Croft girl – now a grandmother – has returned from Denmark after taking part in the World Championships of the internationally recognised sport of IPO.

It was the second time Joanne Bridge had won a place in the UK team and on the first occasion, in Spain, she helped the team finish in eighth place – the highest position it had ever achieved.

This year conditions were very difficult with bad weather and very tough terrain.

But despite this, Joanne and her German Shepherd Xam helped the five-strong UK team to finish 18th overall, with Joanne in 41st place – a creditable performance in the circumstances.

IPO is a three phase sport which involves tracking, obedience and protection work for working dogs and their owners. It originates in Germany more than 100 years ago but is now practised in 46 countries. It can be described as canine three-day eventing.

Next year the event is in Hungary near the beautiful city of Budapest and Joanne and Xam will be doing their best to get in the team again – and hit the top 20 again!

The former St Lewis' Primary and St Aelred's Secondary School pupil and her husband, Chris Bows, have been involved in IPO

for many years and train at the South Cheshire IPO Club near their home in Moore – one of the most successful clubs in the UK.



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