

Bear Necessities

With News from Congleton Town Council & Community Groups
Spring 2014



Queen's Commonwealth Baton to Visit Congleton!

Thousands are expected to flock to Congleton Park on Saturday 31 May to see the Queen's Commonwealth Baton. Congleton and Manchester are the only two venues in the North West to host a baton visit - so it's a great honour for the town and a fabulous chance to showcase Congleton and our community!

The Baton celebrations will start at 11am and continue until 3pm over the three areas of Congleton Park, Hankinson's Field and Congleton Leisure centre- the baton will remain at the Park for a couple of hours- so there's plenty of time to join in the festivities. Although

it will be a free event, entry will be by ticket only so look out for announcements in the local press and at www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/sport. For safety reasons some local roads in the immediate area may need to be closed to traffic. Residents and Businesses will get a letter explaining.

The baton relay is all about participation, sport, youth and getting behind Team England ahead of the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow. As Bear Necessities went to print there were some exciting plans for activities and events in the Park, Hankinson's Field and the Leisure Centre. The event is being organised by Cheshire East Council with the support of Congleton Town Council and Team Congleton.

Congleton Artisan and Vintage Market

Congleton is to have its own Artisan and Vintage Market starting on Sunday 13 April. The Artisan style market will be set up in the pedestrian area from 10am - 3pm and promises to be a fabulous monthly event for the local community and visitors to the town. The market will have a great mix of stall holders selling top quality specialist food, drink and produce from local growers, producers and businesses together with vintage, handmade and artisan crafts and products.

The pedestrian area will



Railway Station Friends

A new Friends of Congleton Railway Station is in the process of setting up. The friends group is looking to work with the station to improve the planting and general appearance of the station. Improvements are likely to include some community mosaic artwork for the walls, some new planters, usable cycle storage and overhaul the plant beds.

You can help create the mosaic art work for the station by joining in FREE public workshops in the Electric Picture House, Cross Street, on Tuesday 8th, Wednesday 9th and Friday 11th April from 10am to 4pm and Saturday 12th April from 10am to 3pm.



To find out more or get involved contact Glen Williams on 01260 277384. A separate group is looking at improving the canal tow path and access to the railway station by foot and bike. For more information about this group contact the Partnership Officer Mike Smith on 01260 270350, Ext 3.

Bear Necessities is produced by Congleton Town Council. The next newsletter will be delivered around 7 July. All contributions should be sent by 9 June to Jackie MacArthur at Congleton Town Hall, High Street Congleton CW12 1BN, Tel 01260 270350 or email jm@congletontowncouncil.co.uk



Know Your Councillor

Congleton is divided into two wards, East and West. As a rough guide East Ward covers Buglawton, Bromley Farm, Mossley and Lower Heath. West Ward covers the Town Centre, West Heath and Newcastle Road. Each ward is represented by 10 Councillors.

All Councillors can be contacted through the Town Council and further details can be seen at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk Your Councillors elected or co-opted to serve until May 2015 are:



Dawn Allen,
C



Gordon Baxendale,
C



John Saville Crowther,
IVC



Robbie Brightwell,
C



Louise Bours,
UKIP



Amanda Martin,
C



Denis Murphy,
LD (Deputy Mayor)



Jean Parry,
C



Neville Price,
I



Elizabeth Wardlaw,
C

West Ward
Councillors

East Ward
Councillors



Larry Barker,
C



David Brown,
C (Deputy Leader)



Paul Bates,
C



Bob Edwards,
C (Council Leader)



Guy Brittain,
C



George Hayes,
C (Mayor)



Sally Ann Holland,
C



Douglas Parker,
C



Glen Williams,
C



Rebecca Williams,
C

C= Conservative; LD = Liberal Democrat; I = Independent;
IVC = Independent Voice of Congleton;
UKIP = UK Independence Party

Congleton Town Council Takes On More Services



Streetscape services for Congleton are now managed by the Town Council. This makes the Town Council responsible for maintaining green open spaces owned by Cheshire East Council, planting and maintenance of key areas such as roundabouts, Congleton Park and other recognised public open spaces, litter picking and removal, emptying public litter and dog bins (at least 120 a day), cleaning Market Street and Market toilets, looking after 11 play areas in Congleton and one in Brereton and grounds maintenance in Congleton

and the five neighbouring parishes.

The Town Council has invested in new equipment to help the 11 members of staff carry out their

tasks. The next few months will be extra busy for the team as in addition to their other duties they will be helping prepare and clean-up after the town's festivities, plant and water thousands of flowers as part of the Britain in Bloom campaign and prepare the town for judging.

To contact the Town Council about any of the Streetscape Services:

1. **Tel:** 01260 270350, Extension 5

2. **Email:** rb@congletontowncouncil.co.uk

3. **Visit:** www.congleton-tc.gov.uk

LOCAL PLAN FOR CHESHIRE EAST

After three years and over 36,000 responses from members of the public Cheshire East Council has now approved its Local Plan and has published a Submission Version. The plan provides a blueprint for development in Cheshire East until 2030 and includes the final list of 37 proposed sites and nine strategic locations for expansion. For Congleton this includes the Link Road and talks of 3,500 new homes in the area as well as new employment opportunities.

The new Local Plan covers issues such as how much employment land is needed and where it should be provided, protecting and improving important open areas and providing new ones, how many new homes will be required and where they should be located, providing new transport infrastructure including roads, cycle routes and footpaths and how town centres and community facilities in the borough could be improved.

Local people, businesses and organisations have until 5pm on the 25th April to make any representations regarding the legal compliance and soundness of the Submission Version of the Local Plan. Any representations along with the Submission Version and associated documents will be sent to the Secretary of State ready for public examination. Reference copies are available in the libraries at Crewe and Macclesfield Town Halls and on-line see www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning

Lots to book through Congleton TIC



You probably know that Congleton Tourist Information Centre, based on the ground floor of the Town Hall, is a fantastic place to find out about local attractions, where to stay, where to eat and public transport information. You may know that it sells postcards, stamps, souvenirs, OS Maps, walking and cycling guides and local history books. But did you know that the Tourist Information also sells discount tickets for Alton Towers, Chester Zoo, Blackpool attractions, Gullivers Theme Parks, Legoland and Sealife Centre in Manchester, Blue Planet at Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, Nantwich, Bakewell and Tatton Shows and Shrewsbury, Southport and Harrogate Flower Shows? The TIC can also book you tickets for performances at Daneside Theatre, Buxton Opera House, Regent Theatre, Victoria Hall, New Vic Theatre, Crewe Lyceum, Clonter Opera and Gawsorth Hall Open Air Theatre.

The Tourist Information Centre is open Monday - Friday from 9am - 5pm and Summer Saturdays from 10am - 4pm. Tel 01260 271095. Save yourself time, effort and money by supporting this important local service.

Hankinson's Field Will NOT Be Sold!



Cheshire East Council has confirmed that it is not, and has never had any intention to sell Hankinson's Field, in Congleton. Speculation and confusion arose following an advert for the disposal of land and buildings in the local press. Councillor David Brown, Deputy Leader of Cheshire East and a Town Councillor explained: "We will introduce a sports leisure trust that will deliver an enhanced sports offer, encompassing new leisure provision whilst ensuring that Cheshire East Council retains freehold ownership of the land and buildings. We are not and have never had any intention to sell Hankinson's Field in Congleton. The public notice contains statutory wording which can appear confusing."

Leisure Centres, swimming pools and leisure development services that were run by Cheshire East Council will be provided by Everybody Sport and Leisure Trust. Cheshire East has given the trust a lease on the property and associated land.



Ruby's Sensory Centre Update



The volunteers behind Ruby's Fund are working hard to transform its new premises in Roe Street, Congleton from a warehouse into a Sensory Centre for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities. The centre will offer a safe, stimulating environment, giving individuals and groups the chance to explore and develop in an inclusive setting, which is also ideal for therapy, relaxation, education, friendship and fun. An opening date will be announced in the local press and via Ruby's Fund website www.rubysfund.co.uk

If you are interested in volunteering at the centre or have a fundraising idea please email info@rubysfund.co.uk

News In Brief...

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

Residents are invited to an Annual Town Meeting in the Town Hall on Thursday 8th May at 7pm. This is an opportunity to hear about events affecting Congleton and to pick up a copy of the Council's Annual Report. It is not a Council Meeting. If Councillors choose to attend they do so as a resident.

WEEKDAY ROOMS AVAILABLE AT THE TOWN HALL

During the weekends the Town Hall is often fully booked, but there is room for more bookings during the week. There's a choice of three rooms which can be set in a variety of styles to cater for 2 to 250 people. Prices start at just £15 per hour. For more information see www.congleton-tc.gov.uk or tel 270350, Ext 6.

MAYOR MAKING

Will take place in the Town Hall on Thursday 15th May starting at 7pm. The Town Councillors will elect a councillor to serve as Mayor for 2014-15. The usual protocol is for the Deputy Mayor to become Mayor the following year. This meeting is open to the public.

IMPROVED CYCLE/FOOTPATH

Congleton Partnership is working with a number of partners to get an improved safe route for cyclist and walkers from the Town Centre to the Railway Station and beyond to Buglawton. Phase 1 was completed in March with an improved path from Townsend Road to the Thames Close (parallel to Park Lane)

SEED SWAP - ASTBURY MERE

Congleton Sustainability Group will be holding a Seed Swap day at Astbury Mere on Sunday 27 April from 2pm – 4pm. It's free to come along – bring surplus plants and seeds and swap or sell. There will be refreshments and a chance to buy some Congleton Apple Juice – get it now while stocks last!

COMMUNITY CREDIT UNION

Congleton Community Credit Union is a local savings and loan cooperative, regulated and approved by The Financial Conduct Authority, for those who live or work in the CW12 area.

The organisation is run by a board of volunteer directors and all profits come back to members in an annual dividend. Members save what they can afford and can borrow up to three times the amount they have saved. Repayments are planned within your budget so there is no risk of you being over stretched and getting into a spiral of debt.

The collection point is staffed on a Saturday morning between 10-11am on the ground floor of Congleton library. To find out more you can come to the collection point or ring Graham on 07504 184902.



St Peters - A Georgian Church in the Heart of Congleton

Work on the roof of St. Peter's started in January and in spite of bad weather and unexpected additional stone and timber work, the work is on course to be finished at the end of April. Raising the Roof is the first in a three phase project called Key to the Future.

Phase three - Unlocking the Future for All will realise a vision to sensitively update parts of the interior to improve provision, access and inclusiveness to ensure the building is open and sustainable.

St. Peter's has been described as arguably the most important and complete Georgian town church in Cheshire, of exceptional architectural and art historical significance. You can visit this lovely church in the centre of Congleton on Saturdays from 10am - 2pm until the end of October and on Tuesdays from 10am - 2pm until the end of July. Sunday morning worship takes place at 10am.

The Tuesdays@Ten programme includes family history, informal services, talks and music - just call in! Students from Chetham's School of Music will perform on May 6th. Programmes are available from the Tourist Information Centre, the Library, the Church and the Parish office.



The second phase - Letting in the Light - will involve restoring the cast iron window frames and glass, and help conserve heat. Funds for this work have yet to be raised.

Congleton's Summer Fes



Congleton Food & Drink Festival

Sunday 15th June
10.30am - 4.30pm, Town Centre

Now in its sixth year, Congleton's popular Food and Drink Festival promises to be another great day in town where everyone can enjoy top quality local and regional produce, a fantastic range of global street food, kids' activities, magic, music and street entertainment – all creating a great atmosphere and a fabulous day out for everyone to enjoy.

Congleton Community Projects and a volunteer team which organises the Festival selects the stalls on the quality of the ingredients, production, locality, individuality and more than anything, passion for their product. This year the team is inviting people with a passion for making or baking, and a desire to set up their own business to speak to them about the

possibilities of having a subsidised stall and use of a professional kitchen to prepare food for sale on the day.

Last year Swan Bank and Mill Street in addition to the High Street were closed to traffic to accommodate more stalls. Space in the pedestrian area had reduced to enable more shops and cafes to open and take advantage of the thousands of people who visit the Festival. The closures were very successful and will be repeated this year with even more activities on the road!

If you would like to join the Food and Drink team in pre-organisational work, sharing ideas or just helping on the day call our new number 01260 270908 or 07833 742200.

Watch the press for more details, visit our website www.foodanddrinkfestival.net

Cool Down at the Pool!

Congleton's Paddling Pool, in Park Road, will open daily from 10am - 6pm from Saturday 24 May until early September. The Paddling Pool is owned and managed by Congleton Town Council and has been enjoyed by the younger generation for decades! In 2013 the Paddling Pool was awarded a Little Gem Award by Cheshire Community Action.

The Paddling Pool is designed for children aged 11 and under. A member of staff will be present, but all children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Car parking on the roads surrounding the Pool is time-limited and restrictive. Daneside Theatre car park is private, so users are advised to walk, cycle, travel on the bus or park in the Town Centre car parks.



Teddy Bear's Picnic



If you go down to Congleton Park on Thursday June 19th you're sure for a big surprise! For that's the day the Teddy Bears - and their pre-school owners have their picnic! This free event is organised by Congleton Town Council and friends as part of tasty town week. Local youngsters are invited to bring a picnic, teddy and an adult and join in some free fun including story time, rhythm time, dancing, games, music and a chance to meet some 'character bears'. The fun starts at 12.30 and finishes at 2.30pm – which is in plenty of time to pick up older brothers and sisters from school!

For more details, please check out our website: www.congleton-tc.gov.uk

**ELECTRIC PICTURE
HOUSE**

artists co-operative

Lots to See at the Electric Picture House

Congleton's Electric Picture House has a packed summer programme of art and drama! The Arts Centre in Cross Street, Congleton is open daily from Monday - Saturday from 10am - 5pm. Highlights of the coming months include:

An Exhibition of Paint, Print & Pattern

by Di Harding and Claire Harding: from Friday 4 to Saturday 26 April

Trio Gitan - Evocative Eastern European Folk: Sat 5 April 7.30pm tickets £7

Transmutation Exhibition by Petra Lea: 2 to 17 May

Old Herbaeous, an unexpected love story: Thursday 8 May, tickets £8

John Wilkinson - solo exhibition: 23 May to 7 June

The Forest - group exhibition: 13 June to 12 July

Hard Times - an original production of the Charles Dickens Classic: 20 June at 7.30pm, £9

For more information, tel 270908 or see www.electricpicturehouse.com

JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

Jesus Christ Superstar is being performed at Daneside Theatre by Trinity Amateur Operatic Society from Tuesday 8 April until Saturday 12th April.

The rock opera by Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice tells the story of the final days of Jesus' life, largely from the Judas' perspective. It contains the famous songs, 'I Don't Know How To Love Him', 'Everything's Alright' and 'Superstar'.

Performances are at 7.30pm and the ticket prices range from £8-£12. Tickets available from Mrs E Feriday, tel 276371 or Congleton Tourist Information Centre in the Town Hall, tel 270195.

tival of Fun...



Get Prepared for Congleton Carnival!

Carnival comes to town from 11th- 13th July - and there's still time for you to enter a float, have a stall on the field, apply to be Carnival King or Queen or just plan for a great weekend in Congleton!

The festivities will begin on Friday 11th July with 'Holler' musical event on Hankinson's Field with many top local acts. Tickets £5. Saturday is Carnival Day! The procession will start at 11am from Bromley Road. The procession of floats, bands, dancers, people in fancy dress, vintage cars, bikes and much more will make its way through the town and to the Park where there will be stalls, food and drink, fair rides, entertainment and lots of fun for all ages! In the evening the



Party in the Park has some top tribute bands from the 70s - tickets will be sold via the Tourist Information Centre and at other venues.

On Sunday Congleton will host 'It's a Knockout' in the Park. You can join in the fun of watching teams tackling some challenging obstacles with plenty of water and foam involved - if you are interested in entering a team, please email your enquiry to glen1971@hotmail.co.uk

If you would like to join in the procession, have a stall at the Park, find out more about It's a Knockout, be considered for Carnival King or Queen or offer your services to help on the day or in advance please give your name, address, contacts and details about your idea to Congleton Tourist Information Centre in Congleton Town Hall or email carnival@congletontowncouncil.co.uk or check out CongletonCarnival on facebook.

Celebrating 100 Years of Congleton Bandstand

A fantastic afternoon of music is being planned to celebrate the centenary of the opening of Congleton's Bandstand. The free 'Brass on the Grass' concert will take



place on Sunday, June 8 from 1-5pm. The event has been organised by Friends of Congleton Park in conjunction with Congleton Town Council, Cheshire East Council and Cheshire Borders Independent. The line-up for the afternoon includes Rode Hall Brass Band, Macclesfield Silver Band, The Can't Sing Choir, U3A Ukulele Band and Salt City Jazz Band. Families are welcome to bring a picnic and make a day of it as the park is filled with songs from yesteryear including some of the old wartime sing-a-long favourites. There will be prizes for the best fancy dressed who wears costumes from the era. Refreshments will be available.

Dates for your diary

April

- 3 CTC Planning Committee, 7pm
- 4-26 Pattern, Print & Paint Exhibition - Electric Picture House
- 4 Northern Soul & Motown, Lion and Swan, 8pm to Midnight, £5 on the door
- 5 Know Your Blood Pressure, Bulls Head, 10am-12 noon Rotary Club of Congleton
- 5 Trio Gitan, Gypsy Jazz Trio, Electric Picture House, tickets £7
- 5 Congleton Choral Society Concert, Town Hall, 7.30pm
- 6 Museum Walk 'In search of Georgian Congleton' - I.Doughty - 2pm
- 8-12 Jesus Christ Superstar, Daneside, 7.30pm
- 13 Sunday Market - Congleton Town Centre
- 14 National Blood Service, Town Hall, 2-4pm, 5.30-7.30pm
- 16 The Sandow Clowns, Town Hall, 11.30 & 2.00pm, £3.50 (under 2 free)
- 17 CTC Full Council Meeting, Town Hall, 7pm
- 18 GOOD FRIDAY - Churches Together Service Town Centre
- 23-26 Congleton Players - Waiting For Godot, Daneside Theatre
- 27 Seedling Swap, Astbury Mere Visitor Centre, 2pm
- 27 Free Heart Start - Basic life support course, 10.30am - 1pm, tel 07931 748902

May

- 2 Night at The Opera- United Reform Church, 7pm, £15; £20 inc Cake & Wine reception
- 2-17 Transmutation, Solo Exhibition, Petra Lea, Electric Picture House
- 4 Museum Walk - 'Ancient Places', I.Doughty, 2pm
- 8 Annual Town Meeting, Town Hall, 7pm
- 8 Free Heart Start - Basic life support course, 7pm, tel 07931 748902
- 8 Old Herbaceous, Electric Picture House
- 10 With Brass & Voice, Sir Richard Arkwright's Masson Mill Band, Town Hall, 7.30pm
- 11 Artisan Market, Town Centre, 10am-3pm
- 13 National Blood Service, Town Hall, 2-4pm, 5.30-7.30pm
- 15 Mayor Making Ceremony, Town Hall, 7.00 to 9.30pm
- 15-17 Selection of Grimm's Tales, Congleton Amateur Youth Theatre, Daneside Theatre
- 17 Astbury May Day, Astbury School
- 20 Charles Dickens Classic 'Hard Times', Electric Picture Hse
- 23 to 7 June, John Wilkinson Exhibition, Electric Picture Hse
- 24 Paddling pool opens for Summer season
- 25 Film at Daneside, 7.00pm
- 31 Air Training Corps Coffee Morning, Congleton Library
- 31 Commonwealth Torch Relay, Congleton Park, 11-3.00pm

June

- 1 Museum Walk 'Pub Crawl through Time', L.Murgatroyd -2pm
- 3 National Blood Service, Town Hall, 2-4pm, 5.30-7.30pm
- 7 Primary Schools Music Event, Town Hall, 2.30 to 5.30pm
- 8 Brass on the Grass - Congleton Park, 100 years of Bandstand
- 10 Focal Point, Floral Demo by Jonathan Moseley, Daneside Theatre 7.30pm
- 15 Food and Drink Festival, Town Centre, 10.30 - 4.30pm
- 15 Film at Daneside
- 19 Teddy Bears Picnic- Congleton Park, 12.30 - 2.30pm
- 19 National Blood Service, Town Hall, 2-4pm, 5.30-7.30pm
- 20 Charles Dickens' Hard Times, Electric Picture House, 7.30pm, £9
- 22 Lions Youth Brass Band - Congleton Park Bandstand
- 24 Midsummer Sunset Walk - Rangers - Timbersbrook/ B.V.Way

Members of the public are welcome to attend Congleton Town Council (CTC) meetings, and may ask a question at full council. To do this you are requested to advise the Town Clerk in writing or by e-mail at least 7 working days before the day of meeting. Please note there could be items towards the end of the meeting, which by law, require the press and public to be excluded.

For Daneside Theatre productions contact Congleton Tourist Information 01260 271095.

For Congleton Town Council (CTC) contact 01260 270350. For more events see www.congleton-tc.gov.uk

CONGLETON IN BLOOM

National Finalist 2014

50 YEARS
RHS BRITAIN IN BLOOM
Finalist 2014

Congleton has the honour of representing the North West in the Britain in Bloom competition in 2014. We are finalists through winning the North West in Bloom competition in 2013. The national judges will visit Congleton for a three hour visit at the end of July/beginning of August.

During this visit they will be looking at community participation, environmental responsibility and horticultural achievements. Congleton will be compared to some major towns across the Country – such as Truro in Cornwall, Colwyn Bay in Wales, Perth in Scotland and Durham in the North East.

During the visit the judges will consider everything they see at the key attractions and on route. Congleton in Bloom team is looking for as much support as possible for this competition and to make the town look its very best for our residents, workers

and visitors this summer. The route is still being planned but is likely to include: HEATHVIEW, ASTBURY MERE, NEW LIFE CHURCH, ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, CONGLETON PARK, RIVERSIDE BUSINESS CENTRE, TOWN CENTRE AND COMMUNITY GARDENS, and BROMLEY FARM COMMUNITY CENTRE.

Congleton in Bloom has achieved the top GOLD standard for the past three years. The In Bloom campaign is about continuous improvement – as well as sustaining that improvement!



Improvements over the past couple of years include:

- New planted area at Capitol Walk
- New footpath from Eaton Bank estate to Congleton Park
- Hanging baskets from shops and flower towers in the town
- New planting along the River Dane Walkway
- New rose garden and arches for the Community Garden
- New allotments at New Life Church.

Improvements already carried out for this year:

- Clearing/ weeding and planting 50 golden carpet roses and 500 daffodils along by the bowling wall on West Road
- Planting roses and daffodils by the Welcome to Congleton signs
- Clearing and Planting the area at the back of the Fairground Carpark
- Planting 43 new Rowan Trees at gateways to Congleton.



More help needed, please...

Congleton Railway Station: is looking unloved! A brand new Friends of Congleton Railway Station is being set up with the aim of introducing some colour and care at the station. Funding has been found for some planting and permission is being sort to attach mosaic artwork. Collective muscle power is needed!

Area Litter Picks: The Town Council has invested in new litter pickers and hoops and these are available for local groups and organisations to borrow free of charge. Look out for dates of co-ordinated litter picks.

Friends of Congleton Park have a tidy-up day on Saturday 6 April – meet at the office behind the Pavilion at 10am

Growing and Planting Sunflowers: As part of our Going for Gold campaign we will be planting up 100s of sunflowers – volunteers needed!

Repainting the Recycling Bears: Does anyone have the time and skills to help? Bears located at the fairground site.

In Bloom Collection: At the Artisan Market, 13 April – can you spare some time to help?

If you can help with any of these tasks, please contact the **In Bloom** group on 01260 270350 or email jm@congletontowncouncil.co.uk or via our Facebook page, Congleton in Bloom.

