

Bear Necessities

With News from Congleton Town Council & Community Groups

Autumn 2020

Show Respect- Remember at Home!



The Town Council is aiming to host a wreath-laying ceremony at the cenotaph on Sunday 8th November with the Congleton branch of the British Legion – but is warning that **ONLY** those registered to lay a wreath should attend. Everyone else is urged to stay away and join in the two minute silence at home, visiting the new-look cenotaph later in the day or week.

The plan is to work with a local media company to show live footage of the short service via social media, and then to release a copy for Remembrance Day. Road closures and risk assessments have been submitted. If the situation changes, the planned event may need to be cancelled at short notice.

Local people can still support the work of the British Legion by purchasing poppies at the following locations: McColl's West Heath and Buglawton, High Town Post Office, Morrisons, Tesco Barn Road, Visitor Information Centre, Co-op at Bromley Road and schools. After 12th November you can recycle your poppies at Sainsbury's.

Stay Alert to COVID-19

Please play your part in protecting yourselves, your family, your friends and your community this autumn and winter.

As numbers of local COVID-19 cases rise, follow Government advice on COVID-19:



HANDS

- Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds or more



FACE

- Wear a face covering when in an enclosed public space



SPACE

- Keep 2m away (or 1m with additional measures) from anyone not in your household or support bubble

AND DO NOT MEET IN GROUPS OF MORE THAN 6 PEOPLE.

Latest figures for COVID-19 in your area can be found online. If you have any of the following symptoms you should get a test and self-isolate with other members of your household:

- A high temperature
- New continuous cough
- Loss of sense of smell or taste

If you are asked by Track and Trace to self-isolate and get a test, you must do so. This is a legal requirement. If you are contacted by someone purporting to be from Track and Trace and you are asked to pay any money, this is a SCAM. Track and Trace will not charge for testing. Congleton Town Council will continue to put the latest information online at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk You can download the NHS Track and Trace app for your smart phone.

Supporting Christmas!

Congleton will shine this Christmas with new Christmas lights purchased to brighten up the pedestrian area, Victoria Street, Market Street and West Street and give the town that extra Christmassy glow!

Although people will not be able to witness the switch-on in the usual fashion, it is hoped that local people will support their local town and come into the centre to enjoy the lights and support the local shops and



businesses during the festive season. Many shops are already planning some great windows, and there will be a chance to experience and grab a selfie with a reindeer ice sculpture on Saturday 12th December.

Bear Necessities is produced by Congleton Town Council.

The next newsletter will be delivered around 20th January. All contributions should be sent by 11th December to Jackie MacArthur at Congleton Town Hall, High St., Congleton, CW12 1BN; or Tel 01260 270350; or email jackie.macarthur@congleton-tc.gov.uk

Know Your Councillor

CONGLETON is divided into two wards, East and West. As a rough guide East Ward covers Buglawton, Bromley Farm and Mossley. West Ward covers the Town Centre, West Heath, Lower 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 to serve until May 2023 are:



Duncan Amies (I)



David Brown (C)



Robert Douglas (LD)



George Hayes (C)



Sally Ann Holland,
Mayor (C)



Rob Moreton (I)



Denis Murphy,
Deputy Mayor (LD)



Mark Rogan (I)



James Smith (LD)



Kay Wesley (WEP)

East Ward
Councillors

West Ward
Councillors



Suzie Akers Smith
(I)



Dawn Allen (C)



Martin Amies (I)



Russell Chadwick
(I)



Paul Duffy (LD)



Suzy Firkin (LD)



Margaret Gartside
(LD)



Robert Hemsley
(LD)



Amanda Martin (C)



Jean Parry (C)

C = Conservative; LD = Liberal Democrat;
I = Independent; WEP = Womens Equality Party.

Speaking Out Against Violence



Congleton Town Council's work on reducing male violence and making more people aware of the need to never commit, excuse or ignore abuse and violence has been recognised nationally. The Town Council is one of around 100 organisations across the UK to be awarded White Ribbon Accreditation.

The Council was awarded the status raising awareness of the issues within the local community including hosting market stalls, awareness training with councillors and

staff and working with Cheshire Without Abuse and Cheshire Police to introduce a monthly Domestic Abuse and Support Clinic in Congleton. In Congleton there is the equivalent of one domestic abuse incident reported daily.

Members of the White Ribbon working group will be at the Makers Market on Saturday 28th November. Pledges can be made at www.whiteribbon.org.uk

A Cenotaph Remembering All

Congleton Town Council and the Partnership would like to thank all those who have worked on the new-look Congleton Cenotaph, which now records the names of 590 local service personnel who died serving their country – 239 more than the previous site.

Friends of the Cenotaph, who have supported the project through finance or in kind, will be acknowledged on a board at the site and at a dedication service to be arranged when mass gatherings are possible.

Friends include: Congleton Town Council, Congleton Lions, Congleton Partnership, Congleton Rotary Club, Cheshire East Council, Congleton Football Club, Congleton Rugby Club, Inclosure Trust, Town Trust, William Dean Trust, Tesco Bags Of Help, Hammond McNulty, Diamond Electronics, Friends of Congleton Park, Timothy A Brown, Three Way Travel, Parish of Congleton, History Society, Letters of War, C. Jennings garden open day, Congleton residents and relatives of those who gave their lives.

Policing in the Community



Congleton town is covered by two Safer Neighbourhood Teams.

- **Congleton East:** PC Helen Weeks and PCSOs Ashleigh Jones and Karen Linton. PCSO David Bell will leave in November to train as a PC.
- **Congleton West:** PC Helen Hood, PC Iain Bell and PCSOs Ben Hooper and Amy Heath.
- The surrounding parishes have their own dedicated teams.

The teams will continue to prioritise tackling crime and known anti-social

behaviour in their localities, carrying out targeted operations. Operations and resources are targeted and intelligence driven. You can help by reporting issues in your area via 101, online or by phone. Details about crimes reported in your area can be seen at www.police.uk In August, the four most-reported crimes for both wards were: violence and sexual assault (94 cases), anti-social behaviour (47 cases), public order (32 cases) and criminal damage and arson (19 cases).

Bonfire & Firework Safety

Fire and police chiefs are urging people to take extra care around bonfire night and other festivities and not to put unnecessary strain on blue-light and A&E services.

Usually thousands of people in Congleton congregate at organised public displays to enjoy the safety of professionally organised events. As mass gatherings are currently not possible, there is concern that more people will put on their own garden displays.

If you are planning a small firework display you should...

- Only buy fireworks with the CE mark
- Follow all the instructions to the letter, including safe distances
- Keep fireworks in a closed box
- Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
- Do not put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
- Never return to a firework once it's been lit
- Never set off fireworks after 11pm
- Keep pets indoors
- Remember the rule of 6 – it is illegal for groups of more than 6 to meet in your house or garden.

For more advice on fire safety see: www.cheshirefire.gov.uk

Congleton Green

– Creating a More Environmentally-Friendly Congleton

Congleton Town Council declared a climate emergency in September 2019. Initial work has focussed on what the Town Council can do to reduce its carbon footprint. The top 10 areas are being worked on. The group is working closely with Congleton's Sustainability Group to develop an e-learning platform, opportunities for carbon offsetting and creating a town-wide environmental footprint reduction plan. Both Green Fayres planned for 2020 were cancelled, but it is hoped that local podcasts covering key subjects will be launched soon.

Working Towards a Plastic Free Congleton

Plastic Free Congleton remains busy helping Congleton become a Plastic Free Community, an accolade given by the ocean conservation group Surfers Against Sewage. Getting rid of single-use plastics is not an easy task. The team welcomed the news that single-use plastic straws, cotton buds and stirrers were banned from sale and distribution in the UK earlier this month.

Nine Congleton businesses have now become Plastic Free Champions and will shortly get their plaques from Plastic Free Congleton. The businesses, which have removed at least three items of single-use plastic from their premises, are: No 1 West Street Hair Salon

(now on High Street), Gather, The Craft Room, The Young Pretender, Wild & Wild, Sugar Plum Hair Salon, Cheshire Brew House, Bare Health and The Old Saw Mill. Three Congleton schools and one nursery have also signed up

to the scheme: Daven Primary, Quinta Primary, Congleton High School, and Friendly Faces day nursery. The community spaces champions are Bromley Farm Community Centre, St. John's Community Centre in

Buglawton, Congleton Museum, and the Cricket and Bowling Club on West Street.

To find out more, see Plastic Free Congleton via their Facebook Page or send an email to heather.seddon2@btinternet.com



30,000 Trees for Congleton

Around 200 Congleton volunteers have already planted 1,400 trees at 12 sites in and around the town. The Trees for Congleton group has identified a number of sites on which 'to plant' and are busy getting permissions and plans drawn up for trees, hedgerows and new community orchards.

The team is looking for larger sites on which to plant substantial numbers of trees/hedgerows and are keen to hear if people:

- know of any potential sites
- have any tree saplings they would like to plant or have planted
- have planted any trees in your own garden since October 2019 so that they can be added to the tree totaliser.

You can contact the team via:
treesforcongleton@gmail.com

Active Travel

Active Travel is a Community Interest Company which was set up to encourage and enable more people to make more journeys by foot or by bike, recognising the important benefits that this has on individual and community health and wellbeing. The group has developed a dedicated website www.atcongleton.uk where you can find out more and suggest improvements that would make walking or cycling to your destination more achievable. The group is working with the Town Council's Integrated Transport Working Group on initiatives to make it more attractive for people to walk and cycle, including lobbying for 20's Plenty in the town centre and advanced stop lines for cyclists at junctions.



RECYCLING

Are you reusing and recycling as much as you could? Cheshire East's recycling rates are above the national average, but more needs to be done! Most households have silver bins. Products in the silver bins should be left loose, not bagged. Many products can be rinsed and placed in your silver bin including:

*aerosols without lids, *bubble wrap, *cans, *cardboard, *cartons, *foil, *clean aluminium trays, *fruit & vegetable punnets, *glass & plastic bottles, *jars, *microwave film, *paper, envelopes and non-glittery wrapping paper and cards, *polythene, *soup & sauce pots, *waxed tea and coffee cups, and yoghurt pots.



Terracycle sites take products that are more difficult to recycle. There are a number of sites in Congleton that are collecting products that can't go in your silver bin. For example, you can take:

- any brand of bread bag or crisp packet to Buglawton Scout Hut
- soft contact lenses to the Boots store on Bridge Street

Plastic Free Congleton has provided a list of local sites where hard-to-recycle items can be taken and opportunities to be a centre. This is displayed at:
www.congleton-tc.gov.uk/climate-emergency



Congleton's Draft Neighbourhood Plan

– The Next Steps

The Congleton Neighbourhood Plan team has been working hard to strengthen the town's draft Neighbourhood Plan so that it can reflect the concerns that you shared with us and help the town to develop in the way you wanted it to develop. The draft plan will be out for consultation soon, and we wanted you to know more about it!

You still have two main roles to play:

1. Give us feedback on the plan for the next stage of consultation.
2. Vote at a referendum on the plan next year – 2021.

Congleton's Neighbourhood Plan has been a long a time in the making, which is largely a reflection on the complexity of the plan. The Congleton Neighbourhood Plan can only consider the geographical area of Congleton Town Council. However, as a plan reflecting the views and needs of the community for the future of the town, the plan cannot ignore the impact that the considerable growth of housing and population in the parishes will have on the town centre. The additional population, estimated to be around 10,000 by 2030, will use Congleton as its key service centre for everyday needs. The draft Neighbourhood Plan, which will be out for consultation later this year, has included policies to reflect this.

The key strands in the 2020 draft Neighbourhood Plan have not radically changed since the earlier version in 2018. The difference is that there is more certainty around the Cheshire East Local Plan, which the Neighbourhood Plan must reflect, and the policies within the plan can echo the stronger environmental policies and guidance which were not in place during the earlier consultation. Government legislation has also changed, and the revised plan reflects these changes. There has also been more evidence gathering to support the local policies.

At the core of the plan is:

- Considering the climate change crisis and taking a lead in responding to this.
- Ensuring Congleton thrives economically and socially as an historic market town.
- Protecting and enhancing the town's character, variety of buildings and natural environment.
- Supporting and delivering the facilities and infrastructure that Congleton requires to grow and prosper.
- Maintaining Congleton's strong sense of community as it grows.

The process from here:

1. A minimum of six weeks' consultation during which national and local organisations with a registered interest and anyone else interested in the plan can comment on the plan (regulation 14). This will be announced on social media and in the press. A full version of the plan will be available at www.mycongleton.org along with all the supporting evidence.
2. Time for the Neighbourhood Plan team to consider the comments made and adjust or respond accordingly.
3. Congleton will submit the revised draft plan to CEC as the plan that the town would like to take to referendum.
4. Cheshire East Council will check that the draft Neighbourhood Plan meets all the basic conditions and is not in conflict with its own policies. CEC will initiate a further round of consultation (Regulation 16).
5. Cheshire East will discuss the results of this consultation with the Congleton team.

6. The draft plan will be sent to an Independent Planning Inspector for examination. At this stage the Inspector can move the plan to a Public Examination or come back to the team for clarification. The Inspector will remove or modify any policies that cannot be implemented due to uncertainty of how a planning officer would implement them, or because the policy goes beyond national or regional law or guidance.
7. If the plan passes the Public Examination with the Planning Inspector, it will be returned to the local authority who will organise a referendum where everyone of voting age and living in Congleton will be asked to say if they accept or reject the plan.
8. If approved, the Congleton Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for Congleton and sit alongside the Local Plan and Site Allocations and Development Policies Document.
9. If rejected, developers will still have to meet the policies in Cheshire East's Local Plan, but not the additional direction from the town's plan.

In 2018 the team reached stage 6. After discussions with the Examiner, the team chose to withdraw and amend the plan, as it seemed clear that much of the emphasis that the community had wanted to place on protecting the green spaces and environment policies would be removed due to being unenforceable or going beyond the policy at that time.

A summary of the plan:

Creating a Neighbourhood Plan has been a detailed and long process. It started with questionnaires and surveys back in 2015 and along the way has involved numerous workshops, face-to-face meetings and detailed work with sections of the community. The final document is around 70 pages and will be available at www.mycongleton.org along with evidence documents. Paper editions of the plan will also be available in the library and Visitor Information Centre when the consultation begins.



To give you a flavour of the draft plan, the key objectives are:

Climate Change

- Develop a framework to tackle the growing impacts of climate change on the town.
- Work with the local community to tackle climate change.

Stimulating Local Employment

- Support existing businesses and promote opportunities for new employment opportunities in the town.
- Work with local schools and businesses to improve the skill base in the town.

Providing for an Ageing Population

- Encourage the provision of a variety of accommodation in the town to meet the needs of the current and future population including healthcare and leisure facilities.

Traffic

- Promote sustainable travel for all residents by provision of new and improved footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths.
- Improve air quality in the town.

Town Centre

- Regenerate the town centre by making it an attractive, welcoming and interesting area with broad retail, leisure and business offerings.
- Create a place where people wish to visit, work, live, shop, experience the local heritage and be entertained during the daytime and evening.
- Develop and expand the Key Service Centre role of the town.

Housing

- Make sure that new housing development is sustainable and meets the needs of existing and future residents.
- Ensure that new housing, commercial buildings, streets and spaces are of a high quality and reflect the established character of the town.

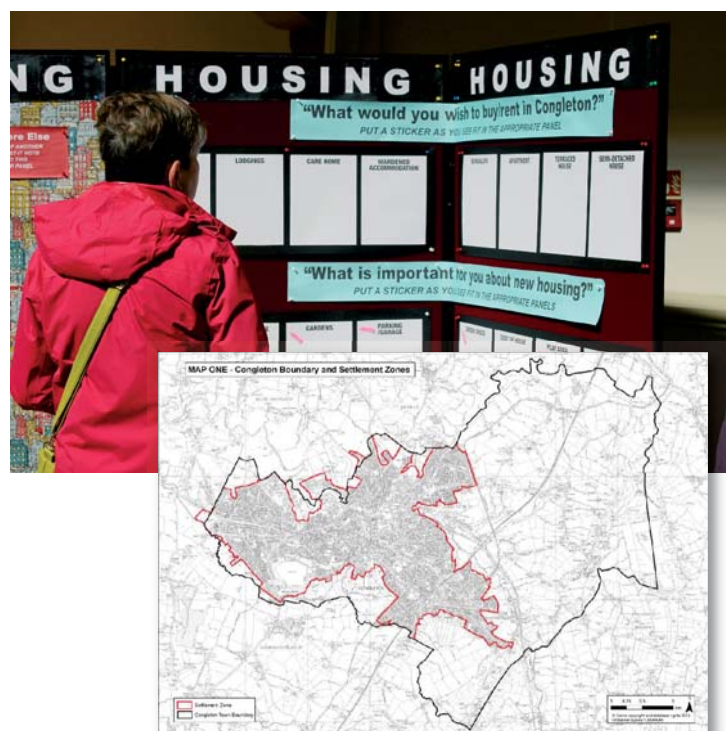
Protecting and Enhancing the Environment

Congleton is a special place with a variety of green spaces including river and canal corridors as well as access into the surrounding countryside. All new development should protect the current green infrastructure and where possible create new green spaces for the town's residents to enjoy and to fulfil the role of green networks in climate change adaptation.

- The existing green infrastructure should be connected by easy and safe links through and across the town.
- All new development should be carbon-neutral or provide compensation for unavoidable emissions and be encouraged to incorporate renewable energy technology. Retrofitting of older buildings should also be a priority.
- Local food production should be encouraged, including the provision of more allotments on urban sites to correct the current large deficit.
- Natural floodplains and watercourses should be restored when opportunities arise, with no further development on floodplains.

Health, Education and Wellbeing

- Ensure that Congleton has health and leisure facilities that are suitable, available, affordable and accessible for everyone in the community.
- Encourage state-of-the-art education facilities for all sections of the community that can support the expanding population of the town and the surrounding area.
- Retention of the existing hospital within the town, particularly as the local population increases.



More details on the Neighbourhood Plan can be seen at www.mycongleton.org

KEEP IT LOCAL

...KEEP IT SAFE!

CONGLETON has many fantastic businesses that are working hard to keep their heads above water and serve our local community. This Christmas why not save the hassle, petrol and extra risk of going to a larger town and buy from local stores. Research has shown that for every £1 spent locally, 63p stays in the local community.

Congleton has more than 90 retail shops, 85 service businesses and 50 places to eat and drink in the town centre, and they are looking forward to helping you find great gifts, get pampered and celebrate Christmas this year.

Shops and businesses have a duty to keep their customers and staff safe. They must

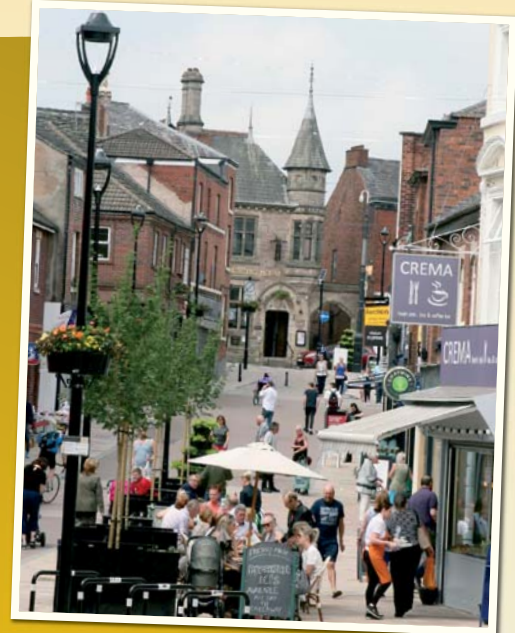
follow Government rules or risk fines. Mask wearing, maximum numbers, hand sanitising, one-way systems and check-in at hospitality places are for everyone's safety. Please do not take out your frustrations on staff who are trying to find their way through this tough situation.

Town Council Backs Town Centre Businesses

Congleton Business Working Group is a new group set up with the aim of helping and supporting Congleton businesses. The Town Council has set aside £20k to support town centre initiatives aimed at helping Congleton businesses. The Town is also working with Cheshire East and others on a town vitality plan with the aim of unlocking larger funding pots to regenerate Congleton. www.congleton-tc.gov.uk

Pubs Working Together to Keep Congleton Safe

Congleton's pubs are working together to make sure that Congleton can thrive and remain a pleasant place to visit, day or night. At monthly meetings, which are supported by the police and Town Council, the landlords can agree to ban those who are abusive, aggressive or are found to be using or carrying drugs. This ban then applies to all pubs in the group. There are currently 19 people on a Pub Watch Ban. Pub Watch Chair Mick Luke said: "We have many fantastic venues in Congleton, and we are determined to keep it that way. There is no room for drug pushers or rude and aggressive people in our pubs, and we stand united in saying we don't want their business."



CHRISTMAS in CONGLETON

Ice Cool Reindeer

If you come into town on Saturday 12th December you could snap a cool selfie with an ice reindeer! The ice artist will start creating the sculpture at 10.30am in the pedestrian area. It will be completed around three hours later and will remain in place for selfies until it melts away!



Shoe Box Appeal

2020 has been a difficult year for communities across the world. New Life Church is helping to co-ordinate the Operation Christmas Child Shoebox Appeal where boxes of gifts are delivered to children aged 2 – 14. Your Christmas shoe boxes can be dropped off 9am – 4pm between 9th – 16th November at the church on West Road. Visit www.samaritans-purse.org.uk for gift suggestions and what not to include.

As part of the project a £5 donation per box is required.

For further questions contact:
shoeboxes.congleton@gmail.com

Spooky & Festive Shop Windows

Look out for some spooktacular windows in Congleton this half-term! From 26th October many shops in the town will be dressing to impress fans of Halloween with some weird and wonderful displays. We will be sharing the best of them at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk This will be followed by some fabulous festive displays from early December, with prizes and certificates for the best ones!



East Cheshire Hospice Christmas Trees

You can help this charity by giving a donation to its volunteers to take away your Christmas tree in the new year.

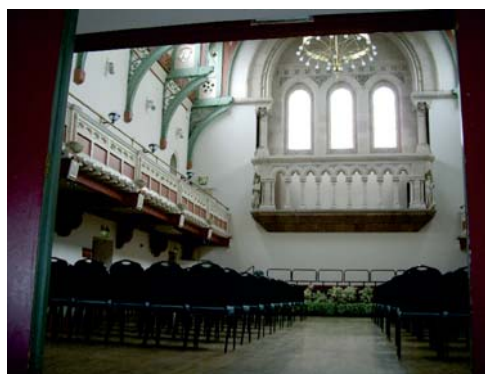
Tree collections will be on 11th and 12th January. Details of how to register are at www.eastcheshirehospice.org.uk/echtrees or tel 01625 433477.

Congleton Food Bank Appeal

On top of the usual food parcels, New Life Church are creating Christmas food hampers for people in our own community who are struggling this Christmas. Any donations that you can give such as Christmas puddings, mince pies etc would be welcome. Cash donations are also welcome.

Support **YOUR** Town Hall

The Town Hall, like venues across the country, has been affected by a drop in bookings due to COVID-19 restrictions. Normally the Grand Hall, Bridestones and Spencer Suite would



have plenty of bookings for events, parties, training sessions, talks, meetings, enquiries and concerts. Where bookings are possible, the Council works with the organisers to ensure events or meetings are as COVID-19 secure as possible.

The Grand Hall offers one of the largest spaces to rent in the town centre, which has led to new bookings such as winter flu vaccinations or socially distanced meeting using the sound system. Bookings can be made up to a year in advance, and full refunds are given if the booking is cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Find out more at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk or call 01260 270350.

LINK ROAD

GRAHAM, the contractor on the Congleton Link Road scheme has made good progress despite challenges in relation to COVID-19 and the inclement weather. GRAHAM has completed the new roundabout on the Sandbach Road as well as the bridge at Giantswood Lane. They have also tarmacked approximately 3.2km of the 5.75km route, with the subbase and structures in place for the rest. Work on the scheme is due to be completed in early 2021 and it is expected to take much of the through traffic currently clogging up the A34 and Clayton by-pass. It is hoped this diversion of through traffic will enable the local community to rethink how best they can navigate a more pedestrian, environmentally and safety friendly Congleton town.

The scheme includes 8 roundabouts, and discussions recently began between Congleton Town Council and the Parishes to design these roundabouts. The intention is to develop designs which will require minimal maintenance.

For more information and updates on the Congleton Link Road scheme, visit www.graham.co.uk/congleton-link-road



Congleton Pride Wants Everyone's Views

The Congleton Pride group has been meeting by Zoom during lockdown and considering how to engage and support the LGBTQ+ community and allies without an official Pride event this year. The team is planning two surveys to gain a greater understanding of LGBTQ+ life in Congleton. One will be for LGBTQ+ people to complete, and another for the general public. Look out for these surveys on social media and in the press, and please add your experience and views to help create a true picture. The Pride team is also looking for volunteers to support with social media and events. If you're interested in helping out, search for Congleton Pride on Facebook or go to www.congletonpride.co.uk

Leisure Centre

Cheshire East Council has advised the Town Council that the planned redevelopment of the Leisure Centre is on hold due to the uncertainty over the financial impact of COVID-19, which impacts on all proposed investment on leisure projects across Cheshire East. There is a contract in place for the approved redevelopment of the current site on Hankinson's Field. Cheshire East Council is reviewing all leisure projects during October. Look out for updates in the press!

News In Brief...

CONGLETON PARK

As Bear Necessities went to print, we learnt that Congleton Park is to be awarded a prestigious Heritage Accreditation to go along with the Congleton Park Green Flag Award 2020. This is a great credit to all involved with the park and a fabulous boost ahead of the 150th anniversary in 2021.

TRANSPORT CONSULTATION

Look out for an important Congleton Local Transport Plan delivery consultation later this year. The Cheshire East run consultation is likely to take place from early November until late January and will highlight how the plans in the CEC Local Transport Plan can relate to Congleton.

TOWN GUIDE

Congleton Town Council is working with the team behind Beartown Voice to produce a new Town Guide for Congleton. The aim is for the guide to be out before the end of the year and you will be getting one through your door.

CONGLETON APP

Have you downloaded the new Congleton App yet? It has been produced by the team at Canalside Radio and contains a wealth of information about Congleton businesses, shops, attractions and appropriate events.

Search **Congleton App** in the App Store.

BEARS IN HIBERNATION

Thank you to everyone who has expressed an interest in purchasing a bear. A proactive traders marketing team is looking at setting up a Community Interest Company to manage this project with the intention of bringing the bears back on Sunday 21st March 2021.

THREE DAYS OF FREE PARKING IN THREE CAR PARKS

To make it easier for you to stay longer and enjoy Congleton this Christmas, Congleton will use three of its four 'free' parking days on Saturday 5th, 12th and Tuesday 22nd December. On these days local people can park for free AFTER 10am in Princess Street Car Park, Back Park Street Car Park (the one behind Lawton Street) and Fairground Car Park. Note that Fairground Car Park still has a three-hour limit for parking. Back Park Street Car Park is free after 3pm every day.

SPOT THE GUY FAWKES

Look out for Guys in front gardens and drives around Congleton. Congleton Rotary has organised a fun competition. Guys need to be at least 1m tall and visible from the roadside. Register by 22nd October. Judging late October. www.congletonrotary.co.uk

Congleton Visitor Information Centre

Congleton Visitor Information Centre, in the Town Hall, has some lovely Christmas baubles, cards, calendars and other locally-made gifts that make the ideal present. It also stocks a range of local books, walking and cycling guides.
Open: Mon–Fri, 10am–4pm; Sat, 10am–2pm

Congleton Museum

Congleton Museum plans to open its doors on Friday 16th October after a thorough clean and comprehensive review of all its practices and processes to protect its volunteers and visitors. The museum will open Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays with one-hour time slots between 11am and 3pm. Bookings for a single group of up to 6 people can be made via the website www.congletonmuseum.co.uk or by calling 01260 276360.

Admission will remain free although donations would be welcome.

Lantern-Making Workshops

Although there will not be a Christmas Lights Switch-on event or lantern parade in town this year, Congleton Community Projects is still organising the popular and traditional lantern-making workshops for families. Instead of a parade, it is hoped that children can switch on their lantern at home at an agreed time.

Workshops will be limited in numbers, will last 75 minutes and booking is essential. Social distancing and health and safety arrangements will be in place. The rule of six will apply or any new advice that comes out nearer the time. Workshops are planned to take place at the Electric Picture House in Spindle Mill on Saturdays 7th, 14th and 21st November in 75-minute slots starting from 10.30am with the last slot at 3pm. Please call us on 01260 270908 or, if no reply, on 07833 742200 or you can email: jo@congletoncommunityprojects.org to book your slot and find out further details.



A Living Tree of Light



Following the success of last year's Tree of Light, Congleton Rotary, with the help of the Town Council and the William Dean Trust, is delighted to be able to make this an annual, sustainable event with a living Christmas tree planted in the Community Garden. Now, every December, the tree will come alive when it is illuminated by hundreds of fairy lights and surrounded by stars to remember those who are not with us this Christmas.

The special weatherproof stars, priced £5 each, can be purchased from the Visitor

Information Centre at the Town Hall and the four Congleton funeral firms, retailers and other outlets in the town centre that display the Tree of Light posters in their windows. Stars are on sale from now until early December. Stars can also be ordered online at Rotary's "Just Giving" page via their website to make a minimum £5 donation and leave a message. The address is www.congletonrotary.co.uk

Once a star has been purchased, a simple message can be written to the person or persons that you want to think of at Christmas. Special marker pens with waterproof ink and the star will be available to use at venues selling the stars. There is also a chance to leave a message to add to the webpage. Money raised from the sale of stars will be used to benefit Rotary good causes locally.

Local Affordable Art for Christmas

Looking for a different gift this Christmas? Why not pop along to view the Christmas Affordable Art Exhibition at the Electric Picture House, 1st Floor, Spindle Mill, Spindle Street, Congleton, CW12 1QN. The Exhibition is open from Saturday 31st October until Saturday 9th January and offers a great opportunity to buy unique Christmas gifts created by local artists. Preview Friday 30th October 6.30pm.

For further info please contact the EHP on 01260 270908 or email: electricpicturehouse@gmail.com

- All COVID-19 social distancing and latest hygiene measures will be in place.



Extra Tuition in The Town Hall

Conexus Tuition are offering exam-focused after-school tuition for 11- to 16-year-olds at Congleton Town Hall from the beginning of November. For small groups, the sessions, linked to the curriculum, and consisting of English, maths and science, will be delivered by fully qualified highly skilled tutors who are exam markers and

ex-heads of department, all conversant with the exam boards used by local schools. They will also be offering free mock exams which will serve to highlight areas where your child is in need of improvement. For more details contact Alan Salter on 07974 098696 or alan@conexustuition.co.uk

One Night In Beartown

Following his successful campaign to raise £3,500, award-winning local author, Nick Jones, has been able to fund his latest children's picture book, One Night in Beartown. The funds raised are being used to pay for the illustrations and printing costs. In the story, a bear-obsessed little girl from Buglawton

spends a magical night in Congleton Park with the Bearmania 2011 bear statues who all come to life. The book is now being illustrated and Nick is hoping to publish the book in late October/early November. For the latest updates on the book, please visit Nick's website: www.onenightinbeartown.co.uk