

Bear Necessities

With News from Congleton Town Council & Community Groups

Winter 2021

Town Hall Vaccination Hub

Congleton Town Hall is the vaccination centre for patients from the Congleton and Holmes Chapel doctors' surgeries. Patients are being prioritised in accordance with the Government criteria. The over 80s were the first through the door. 80-year-old Peter Clewlow from Congleton, pictured below, was delighted to receive his injection in week two.

Although the NHS, volunteer helpers and venue are prepared to open for as often and long as possible, the centre can only operate when it has vaccines available. In the first two weeks the centre was operational for four days

and the GP practices were able to vaccinate around 2,800 people. This includes people within care homes, older people in residential settings and health and care workers.

As Bear Necessities went to press, the surgeries were hoping to start contacting the over 75s as the next cohort to receive the vaccinations. This will be followed by those aged 70+ and clinically extremely vulnerable people, followed by those aged 65+, adults aged 16-65 with underlying health conditions, all those aged over 60, then 55+, 50+ followed by the rest of the population in an order still to be determined.



The GP practices will contact patients to offer a vaccination. You may be contacted by text, letter or phone call. This is a FREE NHS service. There is no charge for the vaccination. You are asked not to call your GP. They will contact you. For more information on the vaccine see www.nhs.uk/covid-vaccination. If you wish to volunteer to help at the vaccination centre contact 01260 270350 or email info@congleton-tc.gov.uk

Protect Your Community

PLEASE continue to play your part in protecting yourself, your family, your friends, your community and the NHS. The vaccines offer real hope, but even if you have received your vaccination you need to stay safe and continue to follow Government advice on COVID-19.

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. If you need support whilst isolating call the Congleton Community COVID-19 line on 01260 541815.



HANDS



FACE



SPACE

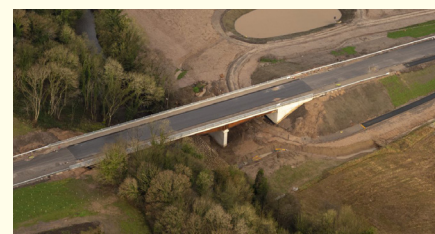
- Wash your hands regularly for 20 seconds or more
- Wear a face covering when in an enclosed public space
- Keep 2m away from anyone not in your household or support bubble



Congleton Link Road

GRAHAM CONSTRUCTION has reported that great progress has been made across the Congleton Link Road scheme, with the project due to be completed in the Spring. Approximately 5km of the 5.7km of new carriageway has been tarmacked, with road foundation works to be completed on the remaining sections over the coming weeks. Construction of the combined footpath and cycleway along the route is also ongoing.

In October 2020 they began landscaping the area, and to-date, in excess of 2000 new trees have been planted in the new native woodland plots, along with roughly 7000 other species of shrubs and hedgerows. The completion of the tree and shrub planting, along with the creation of approximately 33 hectares of new grassland and 16km of new hedgerows, will help to increase biodiversity, providing an important habitat for wildlife, as well as preventing soil erosion and reducing flooding and pollution in the years to come.



Bear Necessities is produced by Congleton Town Council. The next newsletter will be delivered around **20th April**. All contributions should be sent by **9th April** 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)



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.

Big Heart Lunch Club!

PEOPLE IN CONGLETON who for a variety of reasons may be struggling to cook a good hearty meal for themselves may be able to receive a meal once a week to their door, thanks to an extended offer from Congleton's Big Heart Lunch Club. The subsidised club was set up in Spring 2020 to provide a meal for those who would normally attend the Congleton luncheon clubs operating from the United Reformed Church and St John's Community Centre in Buglawton.



Since June 2020 the meals have been prepared by the Old Saw Mill Community Café in Back River Street and delivered by Congleton Town Council on a Friday morning. There is a meat or vegetarian

option plus a dessert. The meals arrive chilled ready to be heated up in the microwave or oven. Thanks to some additional funding by Congleton

Inclosure Trust and Cheshire East

Community Fund the Big Heart Lunch Club is confident that it can double its offer from around 50 to 100 meals per week. The meals are usually offered at the subsidised cost of £4 per person, although there is some scope for greater help for those most in need.

To find out more call Congleton Town Council on 01260 270350 ext 1. This service is limited to people living in Congleton and will require a conversation with the person who will be receiving the meal.



Cheshire East commits to Congleton Leisure Centre Refurbishment

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL (CEC) will begin the refurbishment of the Congleton's Leisure Centre in the spring -subject to obtaining planning approvals- and will then deliver on its promise to provide a modern gym, exercise and swimming facility for the town. The commitment for revised £11 million project was confirmed by CEC in December. The 15-month build project has been awarded to a local contractor and will mean that the centre will have to close for much of the building work. Plans to upgrade the skate park will happen at a later date. The rugby facilities will not be affected.

Domestic Abuse Clinics secured for another year

THANKS to additional funding from the CRH CharitableTrust, My Cheshire Without Abuse will continue to offer weekly Domestic Abuse Advice Clinics in Congleton to provide help, support and guidance. Once a month the clinics will be held in collaboration with specialist domestic abuse officers from Cheshire Police who can provide advice and support in relation to new complaints, Claire's Law disclosures or updates on existing cases.

COVID 19, lockdowns and the impact on the economy is causing additional

pressures on families. My Cheshire Without Abuse (CWA) want to reassure those affected by domestic abuse that they are still able to access help and support and that the team are in the local community and here to help.

As not everyone will want or be able to see the team in person, clinic appointments are also available virtually or by phone. To book an appointment call My CWA 01270 250390. If you feel you are at risk of immediate harm call 999. Cheshire East Domestic Abuse HUB 0300 123 5101 is also available 24/7 for advice.



Be alert to scams

Age UK Cheshire East has partnered with Cheshire East Council's Trading Standards to raise awareness of scams and doorstep crime amongst local older people, as well as providing much needed aftercare for older people who have been victims of such crimes.

Over 50% of the over 65s have been targeted by scammers. This project aims to reduce this number by empowering older people to avoid being victims of scams. Being a victim of a scam can affect quality of life and wellbeing as well as cause anxiety, embarrassments and depression. You can find out more about the project, and copies of the monthly newsletter at the Age UK's website www.ageuk.org.uk/cheshireeast/our-services/scams-awareness



- Be alert to vaccine fraud. Vaccines are being rolled out FREE OF CHARGE by the NHS. You will NEVER BE ASKED TO PAY for a vaccine or be asked for bank details.
- If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk. Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the free text number 7726.

Congleton Cares about its Community

A MASSIVE thank you to everyone who helped to make Christmas that little bit better for others in Congleton.

- The NSPCC/ Chronicle Toy Appeal was delighted with the generosity of local people donating a record number of new toys, well over 500– but also saddened by the record number of referrals. All the toys were received by local families.
- Congleton Community Projects worked with other groups to create Congleton Cares About You gift bags containing locally made produce and Christmas cards made by school children for more than 750 people who needed a bit of community Christmas cheer.
- Congleton Hubbers delivered more than 50 food hampers, 10 emergency

food packages and 750 Christmas gift boxes to people across the town.

- Congleton Storehouse at New Life Church delivered around 400 food hampers and 400 bags of joy to families and individuals.
- Numerous calls were made by befriending volunteers and special efforts made by neighbours and communities to look after neighbours.



If you want to offer to support, or if you could do with some support please contact the Congleton Community COVID-19 line on 01260 541815 from Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm or call the Cheshire East People Helping People line 0300 123 5034. You can also register at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk/COVID-19 helping people pages.

NEWS IN BRIEF...

CAR PARKING AND TRANSPORT PLANS

Please take time to respond to Cheshire East Council's consultations into policies for car parks and plans for delivering the Local Transport Plan. Congleton Town Council's responses to both consultations can be seen at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk.

POST OFFICE FOR THE TOWN

Congleton Town Council continues to explore all the avenues for getting a post office counter service based in the Town Centre. This is proving extremely difficult, and even more so in the current climate. Work continues behind the scenes.

CENOTAPH

Congleton Partnership and Town Council would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Cenotaph Project. The plan is to do an official opening of the site with military and local organisations and dignitaries in September.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The team behind the Neighbourhood Plan continues to make slow progress on redrafting sections of the Neighbourhood Plan. Although the Town Council is still very keen to see the plan progress through to full consultation, focus has needed to be on addressing more immediate matters over the past few months.

TOWN GUIDE

Residents living in CW12 should have received a Town Guide through their door before Christmas. This 82-page booklet has been produced by the Town Council in partnership with the Beartown Voice to help showcase what a great town we live in. Thank you to all the advertisers that made the guide possible. Copies are available in the Tourist Information Centre.

GRANTS AVAILABLE

Congleton based charities or not for profit organisations that need additional funds to benefit local people can apply to the Town Council for grants. The final meeting of this financial year will be held on the 25th of March. Applications must be received by the 17th March. The average grant is around £250. Grant application forms available at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk or info@congleton-tc.gov.uk or tel 01260 270350, ext 1.

CONGLETON PRECEPT

From April, the Town Council will increase its precept by 1.99%. This means the average band D property will pay £91.09 per year, or £1.75 per week - 4p per week more than last year. Time and funding resources will be focussed on activities set out in the 2020-2023 Business Plan and helping supporting Congleton through the COVID-19 pandemic.

SUPPORTING LOCAL SHOPS AND BUSINESSES

AS BEAR NECESSITIES went to print, we were still in England Lockdown and all but essential shops were closed to try and help reduce the spread of the Coronavirus.

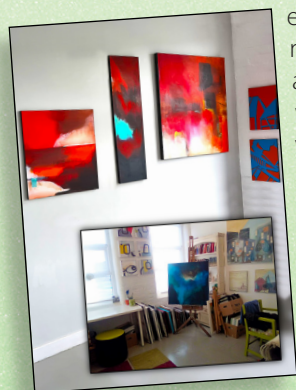
The exceptions are food retailers, pharmacies, hardware shops, corner shops, petrol stations, banks, newsagents, laundrettes and pet shops. Food places and take away establishments can remain open for collection and delivery only. It has been the most difficult year for local businesses, and we know they have been grateful for the continued support of local people.

A list of the local shops and businesses offering local shopping and delivery options can be found at www.congleton-tc.gov.uk/corona-virus. Updates to this page should be sent to martha.hayes@congleton-tc.gov.uk.



Congleton's Artists look forward to welcoming the Community!

THE ELECTRIC PICTURE HOUSE Artists' Cooperative has recently been refurbished ready for the heady days of normality! It aims to host fantastic contemporary art



exhibitions, theatre, music and adults' and children's workshops in the very near future! In the meantime its internationally and nationally known artists are happy to help with art advice, creating artworks to your size

and specifications and talking you through owning original art. Contact The Electric Picture House, 1st Floor, Spindle Mill, Spindle Street, Congleton, CW12 1QN, tel. 01260 270908, electricpicturehouse@gmail.com or see www.electricpicturehouse.online. The EPH is not accepting visitors but will be open to the public as soon as restrictions are lifted.



Congleton Park is 150 Years Old!

CONGLETON'S multi award-winning park is 150 years old! The park was officially opened on the 29th of May 1871 and has been enjoyed by thousands over the years! The land between the Town Wood and the River Dane was purchased by the Town Council in 1856. Parks were a matter of public pride in Victorian times and their design was as important as that of public buildings. (The Town Hall was opened in 1866) Congleton Park was designed by Edward Kemp, who had worked under the supervision of Joseph Paxton at Chatsworth. Later Kemp was consulted on the designs for Central Park in New York!

Congleton Park was fully restored in 2004/5. It is owned by Cheshire East Council and

maintained by Congleton Town Council. A Friends of Congleton Park group supports the work in the park, organises regular clean-ups and helps to put on events. More volunteers are always welcome! The Friends also organise summer Sunday concerts in the bandstand, and it is hoped that these may be able to return this summer.

The 150th celebrations started at the end of 2020 when the park was awarded its 13th Green Flag and a Green Heritage Site accreditation for the management of its historic features. Congleton Park is one of only 10 in the North West who have been given this award. Look out for more celebrations and new features added throughout 2021 see www.friendsofcongletonpark.co.uk

Congleton Live is unplugged for March

ORGANISERS of Congleton Unplugged have confirmed that it is cancelling this year's festival. Traditionally Unplugged takes place during the first weekend in March to blow away the winter blues. The Congleton Live team is reviewing the option to film or show some band performances, as it did for Jazz and Blues in 2020.

It is hoped that the Congleton Jazz and Blues Festival will be able to go ahead on

Saturday and Sunday the 28th and 29th August and that the music and community spirit will be able to shine through at this fabulous town centre event. The Congleton Live team hope it can be a venue-based festival and will continue to monitor government guidance, advice and policy for requirements on live music events. You can keep up to date with plans at Facebook [congoblues](https://www.facebook.com/congoblues) and www.congletonjazzandblues.co.uk.

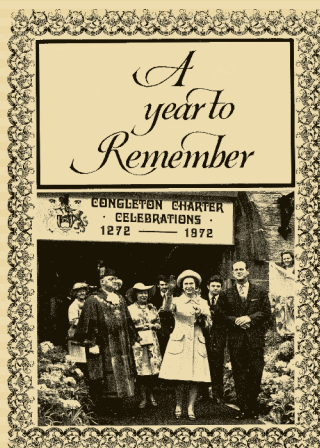
New Look for Live

In March 2020 Congleton Jazz and Blues and Congleton Unplugged organising volunteer team led by Vince Cutcliffe became a Community Interest Company (CIC), Congleton Live CIC Ltd. This was with a view to becoming more operationally transparent for the public, sponsors and supporters and in recognition that the group is more than Jazz and Blues and Unplugged. The new logo depicts the Town Hall with loudspeakers in place of the clock faces.



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We are not able to give you a list of events for Congleton for this year, due to the uncertainty of when it will be possible and safe for the community to come together in large numbers either indoors or outdoors. The groups are keen to put on events when its possible!



Can you help make 2022 as memorable as 1972?

Next year is 750th Charter Year!

IT IS LESS THAN A YEAR until Congleton celebrates the 750th Anniversary of its charter, allowing men of the town the right to hold land through the payment of rent rather than by personal service to the Lord of the Manor. It also gave the inhabitants of the town the right to elect a Mayor (and an ale taster!)

Work has started on a programme of events for the year – but Congleton Community Projects and Congleton Town Council are keen to hear from more local groups, organisations, businesses, schools and residents about what they would like to see and do in 2022.

To get involved or register an interest, please contact jo@congletoncommunityprojects.org or info@congleton-tc.gov.uk Alternatively, you can call 07833 742200 or 01260 270350.