

Bear Necessities

With News from Congleton Town Council & Community Groups

Spring 2022



Supporting Ukrainian Guests

UKRAINIAN visitors are starting to arrive in Congleton and the surrounding parishes to start life with their host families following weeks of anxious waiting for visas. As Bear Necessities went to print we were aware of 20 host families in our area who had been successfully matched, with many more having expressed an interest in hosting or helping. Cheshire East Council, in liaison with central Government, is leading on key issues such as safeguarding, house and people checks, access to finances, social services, schooling, homelessness, universal credit and essential services. The role of town and parish councils and support organisations is around supporting the host families and their guests to feel welcome and supported in our community.

Thank you to everyone who has donated or helped with goods to be sent out to Ukraine and surrounding countries and offering support and goods for guests in our area. If you may be able to offer accommodation, friendship, goods, work or lifts for Ukrainians please register your interest at info@congleton-tc.gov.uk ref Ukraine and we will be in contact with you.

Annual Town Meeting: 17 May

CONGLETON residents are invited to attend an Annual Town Meeting in Congleton Town Hall on Tuesday 17 May. This is not a council meeting, but a meeting that must be held annually for local people to find out about key issues in the town and to raise any issues. The meeting starts at 7pm and will finish for 8.30pm. No need to book – just come along!

Platinum Jubilee Party in Congleton Park

LOCAL PEOPLE are invited to grab a picnic and enjoy an afternoon of music and games in Congleton Park as part of the Queen's 70th Jubilee celebrations on Thursday 2 June. The fun is from 1pm-5.30pm with The Encores playing 50s and 60s music to start and finishing with Audley Brass Band playing rousing tunes! Elizabeth's Group will put on a fabulous Punch and Judy show, the local RSPCA group is running a Dog Show and there's a chance to join in games and crafts. Entry is free and there will be a chance to buy food and drink from stalls. Mill Green and Park Road will be closed to traffic, with access for residents only. There will be limited disability parking at the end of Park Road.

The Town Council has also sponsored 70 Cherry Trees planted across the town as part of the Queen's Green Canopy for the Platinum Jubilee.



New housing estates will be classed as 'rural'

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL has been reviewing the boundaries and governance of the borough and the areas covered by town or parish councils. During campaigning for the new link road, the 2020 Cheshire East Local Plan development and the consultation on the boundary review, the Link Road was always identified as the new boundary for Congleton. This was supported by the Town Council. It was always expected that the 2,500 new homes and 26 acres of employment land would become part of Congleton. In an about-turn based on seven objections from one Parish Council and 45 objections from another, Cheshire East is now recommending leaving the boundaries where they are and placing new homes and businesses in the rural parishes.

This means that Congleton will lose out on around £250,000 a year in local tax income which could have boosted regeneration in the town, and the new residents who may think they live in Congleton will not get a say in the governance of the town. The Town Council strongly believes

that residents in the new developments within the link road should contribute via their precept towards the costs of the town that they will use – parks, green open spaces, paddling pool, CCTV, PCSO support, town events, community support, grants, greening Congleton, Citizens Advice services, blood donation facility etc. The Town Council will continue to contest this illogical decision which is detrimental to all in the town. You can help by giving your views to info@congleton-tc.gov.uk or writing to the Town Council.

Bear Necessities is produced by Congleton Town Council. The next newsletter will be delivered around **1st August** All contributions should be sent by **16th July** 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 (C)



Rob Moreton (I)



Denis Murphy, 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 Deputy Mayor (LD)*



Robert Hemsley (LD)



Amanda Martin (C)



Jean Parry (C)

* Mayor and Deputy Mayor – will change 12/5/2022

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

Excitement building for the 750 Events

CONGLETON has been gaining national attention with the appointment of Benedict Goodale, aka Paul Boswell, as its Ale Taster! The Ale Taster was one of four roles that the Town was allowed to appoint when it got its first charter in 1272. The others were a Mayor, Town Crier and Catchpole! You can meet these characters at events around the town this summer! Including...

- A Goodale Ale Taster Trail due to be launched this May!
- A 'Behind Closed Doors' Living History Event in the Town Hall in July – this will be open to schools from the 5 – 8 July – and open to the public for a ticketed evening talk on Friday 8 July and a public open session on Saturday 9 July from 10 – 2pm.



- A Medieval Festival in the Park on Saturday 13 August – with Jousting, Dragons, medieval music, food, drink and much more!
- A Medieval Banquet in the Town Hall on Friday 30 September.
- At a proposed Beer Festival in the Town Hall in late October.
- For more about the 750 events see www.Congleton750.org or visit the Congleton Information Centre where you will also find a selection of 750 merchandise.

Congleton Food and Drink Festival is back!

FESTIVITIES at the 13th Food and Drink Festival in Congleton begin at 10.30am on Sunday June 12 with a fantastic variety of street food from all corners of the globe and tasty tipples, including craft beers, cider and artisan liquors.

Enjoy 100 stalls of top-quality produce - meats, pies, cheese, chutneys, cakes, crepes, biscuits and farm ice cream. Stalls also include sustainable and environmental organisations including the Cycling Campaign with free safe bike parking on Market Street. All to a background of live music, street entertainment and kids' activities.

To keep our 20,000+ visitors safe, High Street, Mill Street and Swan Bank will be closed to traffic from 7am – 6pm. The town is very busy during the day so if possible please consider leaving your dog at home for its own safety and comfort.

This event is organised by Congleton Community Projects, and a wonderful team of volunteers. To volunteer contact Jo Money on **01260 270908** or email: jo@congletoncommunityprojects.org and visit www.foodanddrinkfestival.net. Big thank you to Congleton Town Council, the William Dean Trust, Congleton Inclosure Trust and Congleton Town Trust for their funding and support.

Community Benefits from grants

THE MARGARET WILLIAMSON FOUNDATION, bolstered by funds from the Congleton Hydro Scheme, has distributed £8,365 worth of grants into environmental, cultural and educational projects to benefit Congleton. Twenty-one groups and organisations applied for grants worth a total of £14,851.50. After some debating, the advisors to the group approved funding for 18 of the groups. Groups benefiting are: 6th Congleton

Scout Group, Congleton Air Quality, Congleton Choral Society, Congleton Christmas Crackers, Congleton Climate Action Group, Congleton Community Projects, Congleton Live CIC, Congleton Musical Theatre, Congleton Partnership, Congleton Pride, Congleton Repair Café, Dive-in Education, Friends for Leisure, Friends of Congleton Park, Our Gang, Sol Theatre, Electric Picture House Artists and Beartown Rickshaw.

More work for the Elizabeth's Group

WITH THE SUCCESSFUL UNVEILING of "Our Elizabeth" in Congleton Town Centre by Baroness Hale of Richmond on International Women's Day, people may have thought that Elizabeth's Group had completed its mission. Not so! The group has plenty more it wishes to achieve, campaigning, educating and researching Elizabeth's life and works. The group is developing its Elizabeth's Walking Trail and will be running organised walks throughout the summer as it needs to continue fundraising for the upkeep of the successful website and schools' programme. Long-term the group is interested in acquiring a building or part of a building to house a permanent display about Elizabeth and her work so look out for the suffragettes around Congleton!

Blooming Marvellous Congleton

CONGLETON'S REPUTATION as a leading In Bloom town continues with Congleton in Bloom being chosen to represent the North West in the Best Large Town category of the National in Bloom finals for the 5th time in 8 years! Run by the Royal Horticultural Society, the competition focuses on sustainability and community as well as horticultural excellence. Judging will be on Tuesday 2 August.

An exciting new feature for 2022 is a Bee Garden in Congleton Park. This has been designed by Annabel Jackson from Congleton High School who was one of 20 finalists chosen from thousands of entries

in a national Radio 2 competition. Congleton in Bloom is using her design as the basis for the new garden.



Town Tidies continue...

Saturday 7 May 10am: 12 noon at Congleton Park
Saturday 11 June 10am: 12 noon at Astbury Mere

Help to make Congleton cleaner and greener and meet new people at the same time! Jobs include: litter picking, weeding and wiping down!

All equipment provided. Please wear appropriate clothing & footwear. See the Congleton In Bloom Facebook page or contact info@congleton-tc.gov.uk

#Congleton Green

THE NATURE AND CLIMATE

emergencies facing the world are enormous – and can't be ignored! Governments, businesses and individuals all need to act. Congleton Town Council is actively seeking to reduce its own carbon footprint and is creating site-specific biodiversity plans for 30 areas where the council has some influence. Every month the Council

and partners will be focussing on an environmental issue and would like you to contribute your hints and tips via social media using #CongletonGreen. Take a short video on your phone and show others what you're doing about:

- May: No Mow May and Biodiversity
- June: Walking and Cycling
- July: Plastic Free

Poppy Appeal

THE LOCAL BRANCH of the Royal British Legion is looking for additional helpers for this year's Poppy Appeal. Although they may be young at heart, some of the members of the RBL are finding it difficult to deliver the poppy appeal boxes and stand in supermarkets collecting. If you could volunteer this autumn please email info@congleton-tc.gov.uk and we'll pass on your details.

Congleton Rickshaw

WHAT COULD BE NICER than to be taken for a free ride around Congleton Park, Astbury Mere, Congleton town centre or along the Biddulph Valley Way in a rickshaw? Sit back, admire the view, and feel the wind in your hair.

The Beartown Rickshaw is now operational and taking people of any age who don't get out very often. To book a ride please email info@btrickshaw.uk or call www.btrickshaw.uk or call **07927 969169**



NEWS IN BRIEF...

CONGLETON LEISURE CENTRE

On a recent tour Town Councillors had a chance to see inside the impressive new centre which should be open before Christmas.

MAYOR MAKING

Congleton will elect a new Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2022-2023 at the Annual Town Council Meeting to be held on Thursday 12 May in the Town Hall. Cllr Denis Murphy will step down after a successful year as Mayor.

MAYOR'S CIVIC PARADE

Local groups and organisations are encouraged to join in the Mayor's Civic Parade on Sunday 19 June. The Parade will form-up behind the Town Hall at 2.30pm ready to parade along the High Street to St Peter's Church.

E-LEARNING

Find out about ways to reduce your Environmental Footprint through the food you eat, energy you use, products you purchase and ways you travel by taking part on a free online learning Sustainable Congleton course created by Congleton Town Council and Congleton Partnership. See learn.congleton-tc.gov.uk

WASTE RECYCLING

Congleton Councillors are continuing to mount pressure on Cheshire East for a Household Waste Recycling Centre in Congleton. Cheshire East Council agreed to defer making a decision about investigating a new site for Congleton until a meeting in August, where it will also be discussing the new CEC Waste contract. If you have strong feelings on this matter make sure CEC is aware of it before August.



No Mow May

JOIN LEGIONS OF GARDENERS and say "no" to the mow this May to help the bees, butterflies, wildlife and us! Plantlife's No Mow May campaign asks for lawnmowers to be locked up for May so that wildflowers can bloom and provide a feast of nectar for hungry pollinators.

97% of British wildflower meadows have disappeared since the 1930s. By not mowing in May you can help nature. In May the Town Council will only mow where it needs to on safety grounds.

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Paddling Pool opens for Summer

CONGLETON'S wonderful Paddling Pool is scheduled to reopen on Saturday 28 May. Just like last year, visitors will need to book their free spaces at the pool in advance via www.congleton-tc.gov.uk with the option of a morning session (10am – 1pm) or an afternoon session (2pm – 5pm). The pool will be cleaned and filtered between sessions.

The Paddling Pool will be open to the public from Wednesday to Sunday and closed on a Monday and Tuesday. Numbers are limited to 140 per session – this is to include all children in the group. Parking in the area continues to be difficult and visitors are asked to park in the town centre car parks and walk the short distance to the pool.



A Glimpse of Congleton in 1272!

LIFE IN CONGLETON In 1272, when the town gained its first charter, would have been unrecognisable! Fire or the sun provided heat and light. Travel was by foot, horse or cart. Plague, pestilence and infectious diseases saw many people die early. People couldn't afford to waste anything. Punishments were brutal. Life expectancy was just 31 years – but if you were a man and made it to 20

you stood a good chance of reaching 45. The Congleton750 group will be offering a flavour of life in Congleton in 1272 in an exhibition in the Town Hall. It will be open to schools in the week, but there will be a ticketed event with a talk on Friday 8 July and a chance to pop in and explore the exhibition from 10am – 2pm on Saturday 9 July. See www.congleton750.org

Dates for Your Diary

MAY 2022

- 12-14** Around the World in 80 Days, Daneside Theatre
- 20** Pinked Floyd - Tribute Band, Daneside Theatre
- 21** Audley Male Voice Choir, Trinity Church
- 28** Congleton Makers Market, Town Centre
- 31** Hidden Talents Kids Workshop,* Electric Picture House

JUNE 2022

- 1-2** Hidden Talents Kids Workshop,* Electric Picture House
- 2** Platinum Jubilee Picnic & Music, Congleton Park
- 12** Food & Drink Festival, Town Centre
- 14-18** The Hound of the Baskervilles, Daneside Theatre
- 24-26** Patchwork & Quilters Exhibition, Town Hall
- 25** Congleton Makers Market, Town Centre
- 26** Congleton Lions Duck Race, Congleton Park

JULY 2022

- 3** Lions Youth Brass Band, Congleton Park
- 5-9** Medieval Living History Exhibition, Town Hall**
- 21-23** Bouncers & Shakers, Daneside Theatre
- 23** PRIDE, Town Centre
- 30** Congleton Makers Market, Town Centre

*Booking Essential (7-12 yrs) **Schools midweek

Pride in our Community

JOIN CONGLETON PRIDE from 10am on Saturday 23 July for food and drink stalls run by Congleton's Makers Market, as well as fabulous live entertainment throughout the day organised by Congleton Pride.

Once the glitter has settled on the afternoon, prepare for an 18+ evening event, from 7pm at Congleton Town Hall - bigger and better than ever. Be wowed



by Abba tribute act Abbasolute Dreams, performing all of ABBA's greatest hits, local rock band, No Fit State. Acrobatic performance from Rowen Kimpton, as well as Congleton's two resident drag sisters; Stella Black & Fonda D, both offering camp and high energy performances.

Evening event is ticketed at £10. More at www.congletonpride.co.uk

Walk and Learn with Congleton Museum

CONGLETON museum's programme of successful and informative Sunday guided walks continues. All walks leave at 2pm from Congleton Museum. Cost adults £4, children £1, Friends of the Museum £2.50. The next three walks are:

- Sunday 5 June – A route to the Past
- Sunday 3 July – The River Dane
- Sunday 2 August – From Weaver to Wearer

Park will be alive with the Sound of Music

CONGLETON PARK is the place to be on Sunday afternoons from 2.30pm – 4.30pm in July! Friends of Congleton Park are delighted to invite you the following free concerts

- July 3 Lions Youth Band
- July 10 Roberts Bakery Brass Band
- July 17 Rode Hall Brass Band
- July 24 Barnton Brass Band
- July 31 The Encores

Mental Wellbeing with Music

CONGLETON CRICKET CLUB will host another Disco for people with disabilities on Sunday 29 May from 7pm – 9.30pm. Tickets are just £2 with free entry for carers attending with someone with a disability. Food is available for an extra £2 per person! See Mental Wellbeing with Music on Facebook.

Priestly Walk in Aid of Town Mayor and Church

FOLLOW in the footsteps of priests from centuries ago as they walked between Congleton and the main church at Astbury on a guided walk on Sunday 3 July. Then enjoy tea, cakes activities and a tour of Astbury St Mary's. Tickets £7.50 for adults and £2.50 for children available from the Congleton Information Centre. Funds towards Astbury Church and Town Mayor's Charities.