

# Bear Necessities

With News from Congleton Town Council & Community Groups

Autumn 2024

## Congleton Countdown to Christmas

**EXCITEMENT IS BUILDING** for the much-anticipated Christmas Lights Switch-On, set for **Friday 29 November**. This beloved annual celebration marks the official start of the festive season, drawing thousands of residents and visitors into the town centre.

**The festivities kick off at 4pm with the big switch-on at 6pm.** The evening promises to be filled with free entertainment and plenty of Christmas cheer. Highlights include a **Taylor Swift** tribute act on the main stage and musical entertainment from the **Rode Hall Silver Band**.

Families can enjoy a host of activities, including a free Santa's Grotto at Radley's (Lion & Swan), face painting, food and drink vendors, community stalls, crafts, and the popular Lantern Parade. **Fairground rides** will add to the excitement, and the community stage on Swan Bank will showcase performances from local schools, clubs, and groups. Visitors can also explore the special Christmas Market at **Congleton Market Quarter**, where entertainment and festive fun await.

New for 2024 is an **Inclusivity Area** on Mill Street and a quiet space, kindly provided by TMC, for families wishing to enjoy the festivities in a calmer environment. The lights switch-on is always a fantastic event, everyone is encouraged to come together to enjoy this magical occasion and officially kick off the countdown to Christmas!

We are looking for more volunteers to help out on the night. If you're interested in joining the festivities and supporting your community, we would love to hear from you.



## Remembrance Sunday

**CONGLETON WILL MARK REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY** with a parade and service organised by the Congleton Branch of the Royal British Legion and the town council. The parade will form up at West Street Car Park from 10am, leaving at 10.30am. The procession will pass through West Street, Swan Bank, the Pedestrian Area, High Street, and Market Square before arriving at the Cenotaph on Lawton Street for the 11am outdoor service, conducted by Rev. Ian Enticott of All Saints Congleton. We are delighted to welcome back members of the Prinses Irene Brigade travelling over from Holland to take part in the occasion.

**On Armistice Day** (11 November), the Royal British Legion will hold a short service at the Cenotaph at 11am. All are welcome to attend.

Volunteers for the **Congleton Poppy Appeal** will be collecting daily at Tesco and Morrisons, and West Heath Shopping Centre at weekends until 9 November.



## Congleton Welcomes Its New Town Crier!

**LOCAL RESIDENT VICKY PULMAN** has been appointed to represent the town in the prestigious role of Town Crier. A lifelong member of the community, Vicky is deeply connected to the town's history and traditions. Keep an eye out for Vicky as she prepares to perform at many of the town's key celebrations, including civic ceremonies, festivals, and public events bringing a vibrant presence to each occasion.

In addition to her local duties, Vicky will have the opportunity to join the **Ancient and Honourable Guild of Town Criers** and compete in both regional and national competitions, representing Congleton on a broader stage. Local historian and costume maker Jenny Unsworth has been commissioned to create her traditional Town Crier outfit.

With her enthusiasm and deep links to Congleton, Vicky is set to continue the longstanding tradition of the Town Crier, helping to ensure that this significant role remains a vital part of the town's heritage.



Scan the QR code on your mobile device to read this issue of Bear Necessities online.

Bear Necessities is produced by Congleton Town Council. The next newsletter will be delivered from **27 January**. All contributions to be sent by **16 December** to [debbie.coxon@congleton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.coxon@congleton-tc.gov.uk)

Congleton Town Council - Congleton Town Hall, High Street, Congleton CW12 1BN.

☎ 01260 270350

@ [info@congleton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:info@congleton-tc.gov.uk)

🌐 [www.congleton-tc.gov.uk](http://www.congleton-tc.gov.uk)

# Know Your Local Councillors

The public elected 22 councillors to serve on the town council until May 2027. They have been elected into five wards.

Below are the pictures and names of your councillors. More details can be found on the town council website. Councillor emails are [cllfirstname.surname@congleton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:cllfirstname.surname@congleton-tc.gov.uk)

## South East Ward

Mossley,  
High Town,  
Timbersbrook



David Brown  
(C)



Charles  
Booth (C)

## North East Ward

Bromley,  
Buglawton



Arabella  
Holland (C)



Sally Ann  
Holland (C)



Susan Mead  
(WEP)



Rob Moreton  
(I)



Heather  
Pearce (I)



Kay Wesley  
(WEP) - Mayor



Shaun  
Radcliffe (I)



Glen Williams  
(C)

## North Ward

Lower  
Heath



Dawn Allen  
(C)

## West Ward

West  
Heath



Suzie Akers  
Smith (I)

## Central Ward

Town Centre,  
Newcastle Rd



Mark  
Edwardson (I)



Russell  
Chadwick (C)



Robert Brittain  
(C) - Deputy Mayor



Heather  
Seddon (L)



Emma Hall  
(C)



Robert  
Douglas (LD)



Richard  
Walton (L)



Amanda  
Martin (C)



Suzy Firkin  
(LD)



Liz Wardlaw  
(C)

(C) = Conservative (L) = Labour (I) = Independent  
(LD) = Liberal Democrat (WEP) = Women's Equality Party

## Town Council and Police Join Forces

**PARTNERING WITH CONGLETON POLICE**, the town council is backing efforts to tackle retail crime in the town centre. Following two successful 'Days of Action', the Congleton Local Policing Unit will continue engaging with local businesses, especially in the run up to Christmas offering advice on crime prevention, fraud, and how to report crimes effectively.

To assist businesses, the police are promoting the use of 'Nice Investigate', an online tool designed to streamline the reporting process and make sharing digital evidence, such as CCTV, easier and more secure. Information packs will be distributed to businesses, providing guidance on using the tool and demonstrating how it can help bring offenders to justice.

By using Nice Investigate, businesses can securely submit digital evidence, helping to speed up investigations. The tool is particularly valuable in addressing retail crimes like shoplifting, especially with the integration of facial recognition technology.

The town council fully supports this initiative and urges all local businesses to take advantage of the resources available. You can report crime by calling 101 or going to [www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us](http://www.cheshire.police.uk/tell-us). If you are in danger or a crime is taking place call 999.



## Love Where You Live Campaign Launched



**STREETSCAPE** is excited to introduce the "Love Where You Live" campaign, encouraging residents to take pride in the community and help keep it clean and tidy. Through the 'Adopt a Street' initiative, individuals, schools, businesses, and community groups can adopt a specific area of public land, whether it's a local park, green space, or the street outside their home.

Participants will **sign a pledge** promising to litter pick and maintain their chosen site at least three times a year, on dates that suit their schedule. The goal is to recruit dedicated volunteers to create a safer, cleaner environment for everyone in Congleton.

To support volunteers, the Streetscape team will provide litter-picking equipment, gardening tools, health and safety advice, and guidance on reporting issues in their adopted areas. A **marketing pack** will also be available to encourage more neighbours to join the initiative. While the campaign is in its initial stages, the council believes that fostering community spirit is crucial for maintaining Congleton's streets amidst ongoing financial challenges for Cheshire East Council.

For more information, email: [ruth.burgess@congleton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.burgess@congleton-tc.gov.uk)

## Committed to Improving Accessibility

**FOLLOWING A REPORT FROM ITS EQUAL ACCESS ADVISORY GROUP**, the council has pledged several measures to enhance accessibility in the town, allowing disabled individuals to plan visits to Congleton with greater confidence.

The Community Committee unanimously supported the group's recommendations, which include creating a comprehensive 'Disability Guide to Congleton', featuring an accessibility map, and information on shops, restaurants, toilets, and transport options. The introduction of a 'Disability Welcome' scheme for local businesses and a 'Public Awareness' campaign to promote inclusivity.

While improving accessibility in Congleton poses challenges due to the age of many shops and buildings, the council believes positive changes can be made.

By working together, the town can become a more welcoming place for all, regardless of physical ability.





# Congleton Takes a Stand

**AS A WHITE RIBBON TOWN COUNCIL**, Congleton's goal is to 'eradicate men's violence against women and all gender-based violence and abuse.' The town council proudly promotes the values of White Ribbon UK, a charity founded in 2005 which is part of a global movement, working with men and boys to challenge male cultures that lead to harassment, abuse, and violence. This year, **White Ribbon Day** falls on **Monday 25 November**, marking the start of the annual 16-day campaign with the theme "It Starts with Men." The White Ribbon Group will produce a short film, central to its social media campaign, set up street stalls, display white ribbons around the town, and deliver talks to groups and schools. Anyone interested in getting involved or hosting a talk at their workplace or business is guaranteed a warm welcome. Contact the town council for more information.



## Help Share the Love of Books

**CONGLETON LIBRARY** is looking for Home Library Service Volunteers. Join a small enthusiastic group delivering books for readers who cannot access the library themselves. Deliveries are usually on Thursdays. You will need your own car and insurance and a small amount of time. Pick up an application form in the library.

## Stay Warm and Connected

**BROMLEY FARM WELLBEING HUB** offers a warm and welcoming space **every Tuesday from noon** at Parnell Square. Run by dedicated volunteers, the friendly group provides a supportive environment for anyone facing social isolation, mental health challenges, or the rising cost of living. However, everyone is welcome to join! Visitors can drop in for a cuppa and cake, lunch, and fun activities, with access to computers and helpful signposting support. Over the winter months, the group has also distributed duvets and winter woollies to help residents stay warm. For the younger members of the community, the **Stay and Play** toddler group meets **every Friday from 10am-11.30am**. Visit: [facebook.com/groups/bromleyfarmhub](https://www.facebook.com/groups/bromleyfarmhub) or **tel: 07873 653 408**.



## Pensioners Urged to Check Eligibility

**CONGLETON PENSIONERS** are being urged to check if they qualify for a pension top-up that could help them offset cuts to energy bill support. An estimated 880,000 low-income pensioner households across the UK are missing out on pension credit, which is worth an average of £3,900 a year. The deadline to apply for backdated claims is **21 December**.

Pension credit not only boosts income but also provides access to other financial help, such as winter fuel payments, council tax relief, and housing support. Recent government cuts will reduce winter fuel payments for many, but those on pension credit will still receive it.

Local residents whose weekly income is below £218.15 (single) or £332.95 (couples) should check their eligibility. Congleton residents are encouraged to act soon to secure support during the colder months.

## Support for Male Victims of Domestic Abuse

**CONGLETON TOWN COUNCIL** is supporting **Male Victims of Domestic Abuse Day on 7 November** to encourage men affected by domestic abuse to seek help. Local support groups, such as Mentell ([www.mentell.org.uk](http://www.mentell.org.uk)) and the Domestic Abuse Clinic (**24/7 helpline tel: 0300 123 5101**) provide valuable services for men in need. Additionally, national resources like the Men's Advice Line and the Mankind Initiative charity offer confidential advice and support. Visit: [www.mankind.org.uk](http://www.mankind.org.uk)

## Be Spike Aware

**REPORTS OF SPIKING** have increased in Congleton. Spiking, whether through drinks or needles, is a serious crime, and carries a prison sentence and mandatory registration as a sex offender. If you think you or someone else has been spiked, call 999 and ask for the Police and Ambulance services. Prompt action is essential, as police can conduct forensic testing for over 100 substances in body fluids; hospital tests alone are unlikely to provide enough evidence for a conviction.

## News in Brief

**IN BLOOM RESULTS:** At the time of going to print, Congleton is eagerly awaiting the results of the RHS in Bloom competition. Good luck to all the It's Your Neighbourhoods, in Bloom Businesses, and the Congleton in Bloom team! A special thank you evening will be held at the Town Hall in November to celebrate the amazing volunteers.

**DIABETES AWARENESS:** As part of Diabetes Month this November, representatives from Congleton Lions and Diabetes UK will host an information stand in Tesco, Barn Road on **12 November**. To raise awareness and provide valuable resources about this important health issue!

**BARCLAYS BANK:** Has moved from Congleton Library to The Space at TMC, High Street. Open **Tuesday to Thursday from 10am-4.30pm** (closed 12.30pm-1pm). Get one-to-one help with managing your account, digital banking and more. Search 'Barclays local' online for directions or to book an appointment. There's no cash service but you can use the Post Office for anything to do with cash or cheques (limits may apply).

**STAY SAFE THIS WINTER:** Cheshire East Council has pre-planned gritting routes that will be treated when icy conditions are forecasted. Only the designated roads receive gritting. To view the gritting map, receive updates, or report any issues to Highways, visit: [www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/highways](http://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/highways)

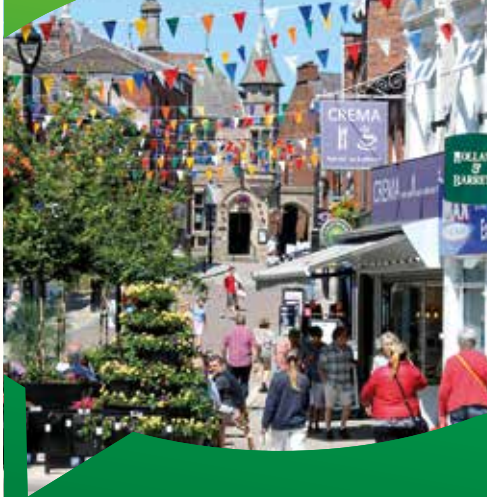
**JOIN THE BIG CLOTHES MOVEMENT:** For a 'preloved' event in Congleton Town Hall on **25 January** from 10am-11.30am. Good quality women's and children's clothes, shoes and accessories, including niche items such as maternity wear and sleepsuits. With free entry, fill a large shopping bag, paying £2 on exit. Visit their Facebook page or: [www.thebigclothesmovement.co.uk](http://www.thebigclothesmovement.co.uk)

**RUBY'S WINTER WALK:** Get ready for a fantastic family day with the town mayor at Ruby's Winter Walk on **18 February**. The sponsored walk around Astbury Mere will feature crafts, nature spotting, and plenty of fun activities. Enjoy the great outdoors while supporting a fantastic local cause.

**THE TOWN MAYOR'S CHARITY BALL** is set for **Friday 14 March**. Enjoy a delightful three-course dinner, live band, and entertainment. Support the mayor's charities while enjoying a fantastic night out! Tickets available in the New Year!

**CHARGES FOR PARKING TEXTS:** Residents who use the parking app 'RingGo' to pay for parking in Cheshire East Car Parks will be charged 15p per text from the app unless they choose to opt out of texts.

# Your chance to influence Congle



## Congleton Neighbourhood Plan

REGULATION 14 CONSULTATION VERSION

Consultation period – 14 October to 9 December 2024

Plan period until 2030

## Why a Neighbourhood Plan?

### CONGLETON'S DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN IS CURRENTLY OUT FOR CONSULTATION.

The consultation runs until 9 December 2024 and the town council is keen that as many people as possible take the time to consider the plan and give their feedback.

The aim is to create a document that will help guide future development and regeneration of Congleton in a way that meets the approval of local people. If the plan is made (there should be a referendum next year when everyone registered to vote in Congleton will have the opportunity to accept or reject the plan) it will become an official planning document.

The plan provides a vision for Congleton and sets out planning policies to achieve this vision. National Planning Policies and planning policies included in the Cheshire East Local Plan must be taken into consideration. Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan cannot contradict national and local plans.

Congleton Neighbourhood Plan covers the Congleton Town Council area. Much of the recent housebuilding is in the neighbouring parishes and our plan cannot make policies to cover land outside the plan area. The draft plan takes account of the additional pressures that the new housing has on services, green spaces and facilities in our town.



## The Policies (P) and Aspirations (A)

28 policies across six key areas are being considered in our draft Neighbourhood Plan. Below is a quick guide to the policies.

More details on all the policies, their justifications and evidence base can be seen at: [www.CongletonNeighbourhoodPlan.co.uk](http://www.CongletonNeighbourhoodPlan.co.uk)

### STRATEGIC SUSTAINABILITY POLICY

**P1 Congleton for Everyone Now and in the Future** – making sure all planning approvals contribute positively to the quality of life and a sustainable future



### TOWN CENTRE AND RETAIL

**P7 Ensuring a Vibrant Town Centre** - policies to retain the importance of the town centre and to ensure accessibility

**P8 Tourism and Leisure in the Town Centre** - encouraging greater tourism, extended hours and leisure activities

**P9 Leisure Development Outside the Town Centre** - encouraging more leisure activities for residents and visitors across the area

**P10 Local Retail Locations** - highlighting the importance of smaller retail areas within Congleton which should be protected and enhanced

### DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

**P2 Brownfield Land First** - encouraging developers to redevelop previously developed land

**P3 Householder Conversions and Extensions** - supporting applications for use of upper floors or extending homes to meet family needs

**P4 Conversion and Protection of Traditional Mill Buildings** - protecting our history by encouraging the repurposing of important buildings

**A5 Celebrating Congleton's Market** - retaining our historic role as a market town

**P6 Timbersbrook Village** - seeking to protect the area by establishing a limited area for infill development



### KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

**P27 Pop-up Uses in the Town Centre** – strongly supporting short term (less than five years) temporary uses and structures with a positive benefit

**P28 Areas for Improvement across the Town** – eight areas where interventions to improve the look, feel and purpose of the area would be encouraged



## Get Involved

**YOU ARE BEING INVITED TO HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE CONGLETON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.** We want your views on the 28 policies and aspirations. You can comment on them all, or just one or two that are the most important to you. Because the Congleton Neighbourhood Plan has been a long time in the making, it is important that we hear from you and understand if the policies are still the most important to you. All comments will be considered and the plan modified before it is delivered to Cheshire East Council for further scrutiny. You can get involved by:

- Reading a copy of the plan. Available online: **[www.CongletonNeighbourhoodPlan.co.uk](http://www.CongletonNeighbourhoodPlan.co.uk)**. Paper copies are available on request or can be viewed in Congleton Library and the Congleton Information Centre
- Responding to the questionnaire – download by scanning the QR code, visiting the website or filling in a paper form. Paper copies are available from Congleton Library, Congleton Information Centre, Congleton Leisure Centre, Bromley Farm Hub, St John's Parish Centre, New Life Church and other locations
- Responding to mini surveys on social media
- Attending drop-in sessions (see local press and social media for details)
- Email comments to: **[congnp@congleton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:congnp@congleton-tc.gov.uk)**
- Write to: Congleton Neighbourhood Plan, Congleton Town Hall, High Street, Congleton CW12 1BN
- The evidence used to create this draft neighbourhood plan is available at: **[www.CongletonNeighbourhoodPlan.co.uk](http://www.CongletonNeighbourhoodPlan.co.uk)**

## Chance to Win!

**AS AN INCENTIVE**, Congleton Town Council will reward three random people who respond to the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire with **£100, £50 and £40!** To be in with a chance of winning you need to add your contact details at the end of the correspondence.

N.B. Councillors and Officers working for Congleton Town Council cannot be awarded a prize.



### COMMUNITY WELLBEING

**P11 Walking and Cycling Strategy** - seeks to promote the creation of safe and accessible walking and cycling routes in and around the town

**P12 Sustainable and Public Transport** - active engagement between developers and the town council is being promoted in order to encourage better public transport provision across Congleton

**A13 Active Travel and Connectivity Improvements** - specific opportunities for active travel improvements within the town which the town council will seek to deliver in conjunction with other development which may come forward

**P14 Local Ecological Networks** - encouraging applications that enhance biodiversity, wildlife corridors and local ecology

**P15 Accessibility to Health and Wellbeing** - strongly supporting applications to improve facilities and services for all but especially the elderly and those with additional physical or sensory needs

**P16 Education Development** - actively supporting applications helping deliver educational facilities from nurseries to colleges

**P17 The Future of Local Community Facilities** - the town council will not support the loss of facilities unless proven surplus to requirements

### LANDSCAPE AND TOWNSCAPE

**P18 Congleton's Unique Character** - protecting and enhancing character through the promotion of the Congleton Design Guide

**P19 Designated and Non-Designated Heritage Assets** – protecting non-designated heritage assets, conservation areas and listed buildings

**A20 Congleton's Green Spaces** – protecting valuable green spaces from development

**P21 Congleton's Landscape Character** – respecting the special characteristics that make up various zones of Congleton

**P22 Design for Small-Scale Residential Development** – protecting bungalows and encouraging small-scale, specialist, accessible and affordable housing

**P23 Design at the Settlement Edge** - ensuring a sensitive transition from countryside to estates with appropriate gateways and greening

**P24 Views, Vistas and Gateways** - protecting key views that make Congleton special

**P25 Biodiversity Net Gain and Improvement** - supporting applications which supply wildlife habitats of biodiversity value

**P26 Tree Protection and Planting** - protecting current trees and encouraging additional planting





# Join us for a magical evening of free entertainment and festive cheer for the entire family as we celebrate the Christmas Lights Switch-On Friday 29 November!

**A DEDICATED SPACE FOR ALL:** The new **Inclusivity Area** has been designed in collaboration with the town council's Equal Access Support Group and feedback from last year's festivities. This dedicated space, located away from the crowds, will feature a large screen on Mill Street for **live streaming** from the main stage. Congleton Rotary has generously contributed £750 to support this! The large area has space to accommodate families, prams, mobility scooters, and wheelchair users.

Additionally, a **quiet space** within **TMC** will be available, while **Santa's Grotto** at Radley's (Lion & Swan) will host an inclusive session from 4pm-5pm. This year, single-sided stalls will be set up along the pedestrian area, creating more room for pedestrians and enhancing accessibility. The community stage has also been relocated to Swan Bank to alleviate congestion near the Elizabeth statue.

**LANTERN PARADE SPECTACLE:** Led by the lively Karamba Band, the traditional parade will gather at Cross Street/Mill Street at 5.15pm, setting off at 5.35pm to guide Santa in his sleigh to the main stage at NatWest for the big Switch-On at 6pm. Be sure to wave goodbye to Santa as he departs for the North Pole from the roof of TMC!

**ROAD CLOSURES – PLAN AHEAD:** To ensure the event runs smoothly, road closures will be in place on High Street (12 noon-10pm), Mill Street and Swan Bank. Motorists will still be able to use Market Street to access Morrisons and the Fairground Car Park. The bus and taxi rank will operate as normal but with all routes exiting via Mountbatten Way. Vehicles on Canal Street will only be able to turn right onto Lawton Street. No access from Moody Street to High Street. Please allow extra travel time and, if possible, walk into town. Due to large crowds, it's best to leave pets at home!

Grab an event guide at the Congleton Information Centre or download it online. Don't forget to follow our social media for the latest special announcements and updates!



## Lantern Making Workshops

**CONGLETON COMMUNITY PROJECTS** is once again hosting its popular workshops in preparation for the Christmas Switch-On. Lantern carriers will join the Grand Parade alongside Santa in his sleigh!

The workshops are scheduled for **Saturday 9, 16, and 23 November** from 10.30am-3.30pm at the Electric Picture House, Spindle Mill, near the Beartown Brewery. No booking required - just drop in! An **accessible** workshop will be held on **26 November**, 4pm-6pm, in the Town Hall (**booking essential**). Contact Jo Money on **07833 742200** or email: [jo@congletoncommunityprojects.org](mailto:jo@congletoncommunityprojects.org) to reserve a place. Professional artists lead these free family-friendly workshops, with all materials provided. Donations of £1.50 are appreciated.



## Become a Christmas Sponsor

**LOCAL BUSINESSES ARE INVITED** to participate in the Christmas Extravaganza as event sponsors. This offers an excellent opportunity for companies to show their support for the community and gain valuable exposure under the twinkling town centre lights!

Sponsorship packages include Platinum (£1000 + VAT), Gold (£500 + VAT), Silver (£300 + VAT), and Bronze (£50 + VAT).

Sponsors will be recognised in publicity materials, with top-tier sponsors featuring their name and logo on a plaque near the Christmas Tree.

Email: [rachel.mccarthy@congleton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.mccarthy@congleton-tc.gov.uk) or tel: **01260 270350** ext. 3.

## Congleton is set to dazzle with a variety of festive activities planned by the town council. There's something for everyone to enjoy!

**CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION:** Local businesses will transform their shop windows into festive masterpieces, competing for the title of 'Best Christmas Window Display.' The competition brings festive cheer and supports local independent traders. Businesses interested in entering can email: [rachel.mccarthy@congleton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.mccarthy@congleton-tc.gov.uk) or call: **01260 270350** ext. 3.

**FREE PARKING DAYS:** To make it easier for shoppers to stay longer and enjoy Congleton this Christmas, Congleton Town Council is funding three 'free' parking days on **Saturday 7, 14, and 21 December**. Park for free AFTER 10am in Princess Street car park (market), Back Street car park (behind Lawton Street) and Fairground car park. The Fairground car park still has a three-hour upper limit for parking. Back Park Street car park remains free every day after 3pm.

**TOWN CENTRE TO SHINE:** Town centre shops will be adorned with 100 beautiful Christmas trees, thanks to the support of local traders. The town's festive lights will remain on until the New Year, and the Town Hall will be illuminated with a stunning festive projection from 16 December to 1 January, 4.30pm-9.30pm, provided by Lightech. Special thanks to Reeds Rains for their office space to make this possible.





# Christmas Events and Activities

**CONGLETON IS BRIMMING WITH FESTIVE FUN!  
HERE ARE SOME OF THE CHRISTMAS HIGHLIGHTS YOU WON'T WANT TO MISS...**

## **MEET SANTA WITH CONGLETON LIONS**

Join Congleton Lions for a festive "Meet & Greet" with Santa Claus at Astbury Garden Centre. Starting Saturday 23 November from 11am-4pm and continuing every weekend until 22 December. Children and families can enjoy a magical meeting with the jolly man himself. This delightful event is free, and donations are warmly welcomed to help raise funds for local charities.



## **NSPCC TOY APPEAL FOR CONGLETON**

The town council, NSPCC, Congleton Chronicle, Boots Barn Road and Plus Dane Housing\*, are once again teaming up to organise the Congleton toy appeal. Last year, local residents generously donated around 500 toys! This year, we need NEW toys and gifts suitable for all ages, from babies to teens. Donations can be dropped off from 11 November-16 December at the partner locations mentioned above. \*Plus Dane will only accept donations on Thursdays from 10am-2pm. Please do not wrap the presents.



## **STOREHOUSE FOOD BANK APPEAL**

New Life Church is working to create 300 bags of "Christmas Joy" and is seeking festive food donations, including Christmas puddings, mince pies, and other seasonal treats. Cash donations are also welcome to help support this local initiative.



## **NEW LIFE CHURCH CAROL SERVICE**

Wrap up warm and join the Christmas cheer at an outdoor carol service on Saturday 14 December, 11am-12noon at the Bridestones Shopping Centre, near Specsavers. All donations will go to the Town Mayor's Charities (Ruby's, Congleton Pride and MyCWA).



## **CHARITY CHRISTMAS PARY**

Cllr Rob Moreton presents an 80s and 90s Christmas party on Saturday 23 November at Congleton Cricket Club from 7.30pm. Tickets cost £10 and include food. All proceeds will go towards Ruby's. Tickets available from the Congleton Information Centre, Congleton Cricket Club or by calling Rob on 07597 085396.



## **ROTARY TREE OF LIGHT AND LIFE**

The light up ceremony will take place in the Community Garden, Lawton Street, on Saturday 30 November at 4pm. The service will feature poems and festive songs by a school choir. Festive shapes to write personalised messages can be purchased for a minimum donation of £1 from the Congleton Information Centre, and a Rotary stall in the town centre on 29 and 30 November with proceeds supporting local causes. The tree will stay lit until the 12th Night. [www.congletonrotary.co.uk](http://www.congletonrotary.co.uk)



## **CONGLETON SANTA'S FESTIVE TOUR**

Congleton Santa tours the town every Christmas, spreading festive cheer and raising funds for local charities. This year's tour begins on Sunday 24 November. To find out when Santa and his sleigh will visit your street, follow 'congletonsanta' on Facebook and Instagram. There are many ways to donate, visit Santa's website at: [congletonsanta.org.uk/donate](http://congletonsanta.org.uk/donate) for more details.



## **FESTIVITIES AT CROSS STREET CHURCH**

'Christmas Cracker' is a free family event on Sunday 15 December, 4pm-5.30pm featuring the Christmas story, singing, games, and lots of craft activities for all ages. Join the festive spirit again at 'Carols by Candlelight' on Sunday 22 December, 6pm led by the Rode Hall Silver Band. Tea, coffee, and mince pies will be served after the service. Arrive early for a good seat. Free entry!



## **COMMUNITY CAROL SERVICE**

Congleton's Candlelit Community Carol Service will be held at St. Peter's Church, Chapel Street, on Thursday 19 December at 7.30 pm. Join the Beartown Singers for traditional carols, followed by seasonal refreshments. Additionally, a reflective service, "Christmas Without a Loved One," will take place on Sunday 22nd December at 3.30 pm.



## **EAST CHESHIRE HOSPICE CHRISTMAS TREE COLLECTION**

2025 marks the 25th Anniversary of collections! Support this important charity by donating to have your Christmas tree collected on 11 and 12 January. All proceeds help fund vital hospice services. It's a wonderful way to give back after the festive season. To register: [www.eastcheshirehospice.org.uk/echtrees](http://www.eastcheshirehospice.org.uk/echtrees) or call 01625 708939. Help celebrate 25 years of making a difference!



## Festive Fun at Congleton Museum

**CONGLETON MUSEUM** is hosting a range of festive events for families to enjoy this season. For the first time ever, the museum is offering a **Santa's Grotto Experience** on **30 November, 1 and 2 December**. Children can meet Santa, receive a special gift, make a Christingle, and explore a festive museum trail—all for just £6. Optional extras include hot chocolate and a mini photo with Santa. Tickets are available at: [www.congletonmuseum.co.uk](http://www.congletonmuseum.co.uk). To help create a magical winter wonderland, the museum is accepting donations of Christmas decorations during opening hours.

In addition to the festive fun, the museum will host **Threads of Remembrance**, a heartfelt community-made exhibition featuring 2,000 knitted and crocheted forget-me-nots, commemorating the 110th anniversary of World War I. This stunning display offers a moment of reflection amidst the celebrations.



## Fantastic Events in the Heart of Town!

**CONGLETON TOWN HALL** is the place to be for top-notch tribute entertainment. Don't miss these fantastic events, tickets are available via TicketSource (scan the QR code) or in person at the Congleton Information Centre.

### Rule The World – Take That Tribute Band

Friday 1 November 2024, 8.30pm

### The Jam'd

Friday 7 February 2025, 8.30pm

### An Evening of Clairvoyance with Medium Steve Holbrook

Tuesday 25 February 2025, 7pm



## Celebrate the Season with Local Talent

**DANESIDE**, the independent theatre on Park Road is excited to present an exceptional lineup of performances that highlight the town's incredible talent.

This season's feel-good festive favourites include:

**Our Gang 2024**, performed by the Scouts and Guides of Congleton from **30 November to 7 December**. The Rotary Christmas Concert on **14 December**, followed by the enchanting Cinderella, presented by Congleton Pantomime from **11 to 18 January**.

Tickets are available from Congleton Information Centre or online at: [www.danesidetheatre.co.uk](http://www.danesidetheatre.co.uk)

## Rotary Christmas Concert

**THE BELOVED ROTARY CHRISTMAS CONCERT** is set to return on **Saturday 14 December**, promising to be an unforgettable highlight of the festive season.

This year, the concert will take place at the Daneside Theatre, featuring the talented Silk Brass Band alongside pupils from the Eaton Bank Encore Choir. The concert will include seasonal favourites like "Sleigh Ride" and "Jingle Bells," ensuring a joyous start to Christmas. Tickets are available at Congleton Information Centre and online at: [www.danesidetheatre.co.uk](http://www.danesidetheatre.co.uk)



## Congleton Youth Orchestra Celebrates 30th Anniversary

**ON SATURDAY 23 NOVEMBER**, Congleton Town Hall will host the **30th Anniversary Concert** of the Congleton Youth Orchestra, at 6.30pm.

The Trustees of the Orchestra are thrilled to mark this significant milestone, celebrating 30 years of musical achievement and community involvement.

Founded in 1994 with just 16 members, the Youth Orchestra has grown significantly over the years, welcoming hundreds of young musicians into its ranks. Currently, the orchestra boasts around 80 members, including new trainees who joined in September.

This special concert promises to be a memorable occasion as the orchestra performs a selection of music from its extensive repertoire, including pieces that were featured in the very first concert held in March 1995.

Tickets are available from Congleton Information Centre or: [www.congleton-youth-orchestra.org](http://www.congleton-youth-orchestra.org)

## Jackie Macarthur Bids Farewell

### AFTER 18 YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE,

the founder of Bear Necessities, Jackie Macarthur, has stepped down from her role at the town council to pursue new opportunities.

Jackie made an exceptional contribution to the newsletter and was a valued member of staff throughout her career. Her commitment, creativity, and hard work have left a lasting impact on the community.

The team wishes Jackie all the best for her future and extends heartfelt thanks for everything she has done.

