

## MUSIC FOR TINY EARS

**Free concerts for babies and parents**

**Page 3**

## SCHOOLS' FUTURE

**Don't miss your chance to speak out**

**Page 8**

## READERS' COMP

**Win a meal with a Japanese flavour**

**page 4**

# Cut by half

**Anti-social behaviour falls across Lancashire**

## Trouble on the run since 2004

Percentage of people in 2007 rating factor as very big or fairly big problem.

	2004	2007
Abandoned/burned-out cars	22	4
Noisy neighbours/loud parties	16	13
Drunkenness/rowdiness	46	27
Vandalism/graffiti	58	31
People using/dealing drugs	63	41
Rubbish/litter	56	48

**Going down!**

**THE scourge of anti-social behaviour is on the retreat in Lancashire.**

Latest figures show a 19 per cent drop in people's concerns about public drunkenness and rowdiness since 2004, an 18 per cent fall in concerns about abandoned and burned-out cars, and a 27 per cent drop in worries about vandalism and graffiti.

The questions – conducted for the Home Office among 1,350 Lancashire residents – also show similar startling drops in the number of people citing drug dealing, vandalism, graffiti and litter.

Initiatives ranging from “guides” on the buses to preventing illegal booze sales, from better streetlighting and family support to tackling truancy have put the louts on the run across the county.

“Two in 10 Lancashire people say anti-social behaviour is now a problem, compared to nearly four in 10 in 2004,” said County Councillor Chris Cheetham.

“You can never totally win – but these figures prove that anti-social behaviour is now less of a problem than it has been for years.

“Some people say that anti-social behaviour is exaggerated, but it is a major issue in many areas. People are sick to death of people promising action while nothing actually seems to happen.

“The figures have turned decisively in Lancashire. Tens of thousands of people can now relax in their own homes thanks to the action we have taken.”

Partnerships involving police, probation officers, youth and community workers, Lancashire County Council, district councils,

voluntary groups and ordinary residents can each claim credit.

Police and Community Teams now meet regularly across the county, giving everyone the chance to point out areas of concern – and demand action.

The new statistics show that yobs are in retreat in almost every part of Lancashire. The county as a whole shows that 20 per cent of people now perceive a high level of anti-social behaviour – down from 38 per cent in 2004.

Even so, large disparities exist between different parts of Lancashire. More than six in 10 Pendle people, for example, complain about litter – compared to just one in

three in West Lancashire.

Councillor Cheetham, the county council's Cabinet member for Adult and Community Services, added: “No single organisation can work on its own to tackle this problem.

“There is a great deal of hard work being done in every part of the county – work that will continue so we can diminish the problem still further.”

The Best Value Performance Indicator figures were researched for the Home Office's Respect task group. More local information on anti-social behaviour can be seen on the online Vision at: [www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision)

**A cassette version of Vision is now available for visually impaired people from Galloway's Society for the Blind by calling 01772 744148**



A full job description  
of all vacancies is available  
on our website

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/vacancies](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/vacancies)



# Ask Shirley

## ASK THE EXPERT

Questions  
answered  
by your  
friend in  
the know

### £30 for studies

*I am 29 and would like to go back to college to study for my A-levels. I started a family when I was quite young and now both of my children are at school I feel it is time for me to get back into education and gain more qualifications. I am a single mum and I'm worried about the financial strain of going back to college.*

AW, Chorley

As part of a new government initiative to encourage and support adults wanting to return to education, the Learning and Skills Council launched a grant scheme that was successfully piloted in Lancashire in 2003. The Adult Learning Grant gives up to £30 per week to adult learners studying full time to help with costs.

To find out if you are eligible you can contact Lancashire Student Services on 01772 530430 or visit [www.direct.gov.uk/alg](http://www.direct.gov.uk/alg)

### Bullying problem

*An incident happened at my son's school a few weeks ago and I'm not very happy about the way in which it's been dealt with.*

*How can I make a complaint about this, as it involves students and teachers and I am very concerned that it is looked into properly?*

Mrs P, Fleetwood

A concern or complaint should be made



● WINTER gritting explained: see "True grit" below.

in person, by telephone or in writing to the headteacher at the school.

If the complaint is about the headteacher or a governor it should be referred to the chair of governors of the school. A complaint made to a governor, local authority officer or councillor, the Children and Young People's Directorate at County Hall or to a local Area Education Office will be referred to the headteacher or chair of governors, as appropriate, for investigation. Anonymous complaints cannot be dealt with unless they are about very serious matters. The aim of the complaints procedure is to resolve the matter as speedily as possible.

### Shopping rights

*I recently took two items of clothing back to a shop within 14 days of purchase. The shop assistant refused to give me a refund on the items and I was wondering if she was within her rights?*

*Please could you tell me who I can get some advice from regarding such matters?*

Miss C, Preston

It does depend on why you want to return the goods. If you have changed your mind, then the shop doesn't have to do anything. But if the goods are faulty, incorrectly described or not fit for purpose, then you are entitled to your money back (provided you act quickly), and you certainly don't have to take a credit note.

If you do accept a credit note in these circumstances, watch out, as there may be restrictions on their use.

If the shop displays a sign stating they only give credit notes instead of refunds, they might be breaking the law and you could report them to your local Trading Standards department. For more in-depth information, please contact Consumer Direct on 0845 4040506 or email [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk](mailto:www.consumerdirect.gov.uk)

### True grit

*As the colder weather approaches once again I get very worried about the conditions of the roads. Last year some of the roads became treacherous due to the large patches of ice.*

*Can you tell me who I need to contact to request that specific roads are gritted and, if this isn't possible, to request a grit bin to enable residents to do it themselves.*

Mr R, Rossendale

When deciding which roads in Lancashire are to be gritted, it is divided into two priority routes.

Priority 1 - county motorways and principle "A" roads which are looked after by the Highways Agency. Priority 2 - All "B" roads and other roads between or through large centres of population; roads serving hospitals, ambulance and fire stations; roads leading to main centres of employment and on important commuter routes; roads leading to important industrial and military establishments; roads that are single access to villages. Estate and other minor roads without appreciable slopes/hills are not gritted in Lancashire, as there would be too many roads to grit. Most sites meeting the criteria for grit bins have already been identified and bins provided.

Therefore in general, it is not expected that bins will be provided at new sites. You can contact Highways Customer Services on 0845 0530011 or email [highways@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@lancashire.gov.uk)

### Bottom line

*I am about to give birth to my third child and as we hear more about the environmental issues that are affecting us I thought I may consider using cotton nappies with this baby. I have heard Lancashire County Council may run a discount scheme to help with this. Do you have any more details?*

Mrs P, Croston

Lancashire County Council runs the Bottom Line Real Nappy Project, and in conjunction with local nappy businesses they are offering you £45 towards the cost of real nappies or £70 for two or more children (subject to availability), making them more affordable to try. We'll also give you all the information, support and advice you need to get started. To apply for your £45 voucher or for more information, go to <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk> or contact the Helpline on 0845 0500957.

## DON'T FORGET

You county councillor will be keen to help. Contact details are available on 0845 0530000 or at [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)

You can also try your area's County Information Centre where staff are trained to help the public

# Savings sought on tax bills

PLANS are being considered to minimise any increase in next year's Council Tax.

Cabinet members have endorsed plans to protect frontline services by continuing a successful programme of efficiency savings.

Proposals put forward would mean an increase in council tax of no more than 4.89 per cent.

The budget will finally be agreed in February but views are now being sought from business leaders, Lancashire Local committees, trade unions and members of the public who sit on the Life in Lancashire panel.

County Councillor Anne Brown, Cabinet member for Resources and Performance, said: "I know how much people value the county council's services so our budget proposals are designed to protect them."

"I also recognise that many people struggle to afford their Council Tax and I do not want to make this more difficult."

"There are ever-increasing pressures on our finances but the best way to minimise any impact on services is by spending more efficiently and effectively."

"Efficiency savings mean we are in a stronger-than-expected position. We have a number of options but, if we receive an increase in government grant, which will be announced later this month, we may have the choice not to change services."

"Our current proposals assume no increase in government grant."

Options have also been put forward to save £1.5m by withdrawing the subsidy for park and ride bus services, reducing the subsidy for the least economic bus services and limiting inflation increases in charges by independent sector care providers.

The budget proposals can be viewed at <http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/council/meetings/displayFile.asp?FTYPE=A&FILEID=25986>

A 4-star council  
Awarded top marks by the Audit Commission



## LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

### REVIEW OF APPROVED LIST OF BUILDING; MECHANICAL; ELECTRICAL; DEMOUNTABLE ACCOMMODATION; LANDSCAPING/PLAYING FIELDS AND DEMOLITION CONTRACTORS

Lancashire County Council operates Approved Lists of Contractors for all works exceeding £50,000 in value and the Lists are due to be reviewed with the new Lists taking effect on 1 April, 2008. Lancashire County Council develops and maintains approximately 2,579 buildings on 1,450 sites throughout the County

The Director of Property is proposing to operate the following lists and financial categories for a four year period from April, 2008:

New build and refurbishment works:	a) £50,000 to £250,000
	b) £150,000 to £500,000
	c) £400,000 to £1 million
	d) £850,000 to EU threshold
Mechanical installations	£50,000 to EU threshold
Electrical installations	£50,000 to EU threshold
Demountable accommodation	£50,000 to EU threshold
Landscaping/Playing Fields	£50,000 to EU threshold
Demolition Works	Any value to EU threshold

Only contractors who are registered with the National Register of Contractors (Constructionline) need apply. The Authority has also set a criteria that all contractors who undertake work must be CHAS (Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme) registered. Other technical criteria will need to be satisfied for certain lists.

Application forms for consideration for inclusion on these lists are available on Lancashire County Council's In-tend web site [www.in-tendhost.com/lancsc](http://www.in-tendhost.com/lancsc).

Please note that registration with Constructionline, CHAS and successful application to be included on an approved list will in no way guarantee tender opportunities with the County Council.

Completed applications must be received by Friday 18 January 2008.





# Straight talk

**RESIDENTS** are increasingly embracing technology to access Lancashire County Council services, according to new figures.

Contact with the county council, via the internet, has almost doubled in the last year from an average of 30,000 enquiries per week in 2006, to 52,000 enquiries per week in 2007 - according to new county council figures.

The county council's website now includes 140 forms - such as forms for applying for a primary school place - allowing the public to seek help and access services directly through the internet.

County Councillor Doreen Pollitt, Lancashire County Council, deputy leader, said: "Residents are increasingly choosing new ways to contact organisations, such as the county council.

"We recognise this change and are working to provide residents with their preferred means of contacting us.

"This includes new face to face contact, via our Contact Centre and even online."

In addition to new technology, other forms of contact have also

## 225,000 phone calls show help is only seconds away

By Stephen Axon

shown significant progress, including the telephone and face-to-face contact.

The number of telephone calls answered in the Contact Centre has also increased from 116,897 between April and September 2006, to 224,688 for the same period in 2007.

Councillor Pollitt added: "By providing a single telephone number we are making it easier to contact the county council. In the past, it could have taken a few calls to find the correct department to answer your enquiry.

"This new system means people can make one call to get to many

### How to seek help

We're ready and waiting to help you.

Ring 0845 0530000

Email enquiries@css.lancsc.gov.uk

Visit www.lancashire.gov.uk

different services."

The figures are expected to increase as other county council services are added to the Contact Centre in 2008.

They will include Blue Badges, cashiers, certificate services, childcare information services, concessionary travel including NoW cards, council job vacancies, general enquiries, interpretation and translation services, highways, registrars, the Safer Travel Line, school admission, school transport, social care and the waste helpline.

A trial for face-to-face contact is due to finish this month.

Venues for the trial have included libraries, children's centres, post offices, supermarkets and district council "one-stop shops".

The trial has been aided by new technology which allows council staff to visit new venues, while still having access to office-based information.

## Mysterious shoppers keep staff on their toes

**MYSTERY** shoppers will soon be testing the helpfulness of Lancashire County Council staff in a bid to ensure that members of the public get the help they deserve.

The "shoppers" are frequently used in all types of enterprises, so that bosses will know that their organisations are actually seen by members of the public.

The shoppers will be contacting the council face-to-face, in writing, via email and over the phone.

## Mini-Mozart gigs for tiny ears



●FREE treat: mum Louise Thompson with daughter Parry.

A SERIES of interactive music concerts for babies has been unveiled for December.

The Mini-Mozart concerts are run by the county council-backed Lancashire Sinfonietta - and designed especially for babies.

The concerts are a light-hearted introduction to the world of music for tiny ears - a fun place where babies and parents can share the joy of music together.

More than 40 concerts are planned

for Lancashire children's centres.

The concerts will introduce classical music to the tiniest ears and encourage parents and carers to learn about how music can help their child's development, nurture a closer relationship and even tackle underachievement in later years.

The string-quartet sessions are free, thanks to sponsorship from Classic FM and Lancashire County Council. Every baby takes home "My First Classical CD".

**Mon 10 December**  
10am, 11.15am.  
Ribblesdale  
Nursery School  
and Children's  
Centre, Clitheroe.  
Tel 01200 423672

**Wed 12 December**  
10am, 11.15am.  
Firbank Children's  
Centre, Lancaster.  
Tel 01524 845319

**Mon 17 December**  
10am, 11.15am.  
Whitgate  
Children's Centre,  
Padiham. Tel  
01282 772283

**Sat 12 January**  
10am, 11.15am.  
Poulton Children's  
Centre,  
Morecambe. Tel  
01524 833644

**Call your nearest  
children's centre  
to reserve your  
place**

S U R E S T A R T , E A R L Y Y E A R S S C H I L D C A R E S E R V I C E

## LANCASHIRE CHILDCARE INFORMATION SERVICE

Providing you with

- Guidance on choosing the right childcare
- Advice on paying for childcare
- Details of childcare providers near you
- Information about the regulation of childcare
- Advice on different types of childcare (such as nurseries, childminders, pre-schools, out of school care)

For information and advice on all aspects of childcare in Lancashire.

**We can help! Contact us on Freephone**

**0800  
195 0137**

**Lancashire**  
County Council

## Exploding the Myths about the Early Years Professional Status and the Transformation Fund in Lancashire

**Do you work in Childcare in Lancashire?**

1. Would you like to know more about the Early Years Professional Status (EYPS)?
2. Do you have queries about applying for the Transformation Fund or would you like to know what types of funding are available to you?

If your answer to any of these questions is 'yes' and you work in early years and childcare in Lancashire then come along to one of our FREE information sessions which will be running across the county between September 2007 and January 2008.

You will be able to consult with professionals from Edge Hill University and CETAD at Lancaster University and meet with EYPS participants from the current courses and those who have already completed the validation

route. In addition, you will be able to find out more about the Transformation Fund, whether you can apply for funding or get help with a current application.

To book your place please contact either Francesca Walker or Laura Nicholson telephone: **01772 531113** or **532985**

Date:  
**Thursday 10th January 2008**  
Time: **6pm-9pm**  
Venue: **Edge Hill University,  
Ormskirk**



**WIN****Spectacular  
Japanese  
meals for two**

A THEATRE of steam, flames, aroma – the recently opened Sakura restaurant is bringing the spectacle of Japanese cuisine to Lancashire.

The entertainment starts as soon as you sit down. You do not just sit and wait for food to arrive as one of the Sakura's 10 expert chefs comes and cooks at your table.

Eating Japanese-style is double the fun. As well as enjoying the food, you will enjoy the spectacle of the chefs cooking in front of your eyes.

It is something you will talk about for days after. And there is more to Japanese food than sushi. The Sakura, conveniently located on Fishergate, Preston (opposite the train station) serves sushi and noodles – but also the lesser-known teppanyaki, which is grilled on an iron plate before each table.

The cuisine can satisfy palates ranging from the most conservative to the most adventurous. It is never dull, always tasty...and always fresh. It's best to allow two to three hours to eat!

Some meals have three or four courses. You can have as many or as few as you like. Meals range from £5.95 for the buffet to £75 per person for special occasions.

Host Jimmy Ho has 25 years of experience in running restaurants across the country – and top chef Albert has been cooking for, and entertaining customers, for 15.

Vision is teaming up with the Sakura to offer five set meals for two, each worth £28 per person.

Simply answer the following question:

The Sakura has how many top chefs?

The winners must take their prize Monday to Thursday in January. For more details, visit: [www.sakura.co.uk](http://www.sakura.co.uk). Entries must be returned by 17 December, to: Sakura competition, Vision, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ. You can also enter online at: [www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision). Lancashire County Council employees are not allowed to enter.

# Every little helps



● CAN I help?  
Andrew at work  
in Tesco.

**He is the friendly face at the check-out - but a job is more than just a job for Andrew**

**CHRISTMAS just wouldn't be Christmas without shopping - but for Andrew Walton, shopping has become a way of life and work.**

Andrew (22) has a learning disability yet likes nothing more than helping shoppers through his work in his local Tesco.

Enterprising Andrew landed himself a job as a customer services assistant in Burscough's Tesco - a job he does with support from Lancashire County Council outreach staff.

A job is more than just a job for Andrew. It means help at the check-out for customers - and a paid route to independence for Andrew.

"This is my second Christmas working at Tesco and I love every minute", Andrew said.

"Christmas is very busy but I love working with the rest of the staff and helping customers. Being in work is very important for me - it means I can earn my own money!"

Andrew is only one of hundreds of people across Lancashire helped to a new life by the county council. They now live their lives as everyone else does!

Richard Jones, executive director of Adult and Community Services at Lancashire County Council, said: "Good social care aims to help people live the life they want."

"Most people have a view about what they want out of life and the sort of support they need."

"People with a disability are not a separate group of people and should not be excluded from the same life chances and opportunities as other people."

Lancashire recently hosted a meeting of the National Employment Panel at which Anne McGuire, Minister for Disabled People, urged more employers to see the business benefits of diversifying their workforce.

The county council supports over 2,500 adults with a learning disability to live at home.

## Commission's top marks for social care

LANCASHIRE County Council has retained its top three stars in this year's national performance rating of social care services for adults and older people in Lancashire.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), the independent regulatory body for all social care in England, has again ranked the county council as one of the best performing councils in the country.

By Andrew Lynn

The "star-ratings", as they are known, range from zero to three stars. Each rating is a summary of each local authority's performance in delivering social care services and support in 2006/07.

County Councillor Chris Cheetham, Cabinet member for Adult and Community Services, said: "We invest over £381m per year on adult social care, providing services

to over 30,000 adults across the county.

"Like all local authorities, there is increasing demand on services year on year particularly given that people are living longer. This inevitably puts a strain on resources."

"We have a duty to promote the health and well-being of all adults in Lancashire by ensuring a wide range of support is available to help maintain their independence and improve their quality of life."

## You're telling us!

Send your letters to:

The Editor, Vision, Corporate Communications Group, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ. [neil.graham@css.lancscc.gov.uk](mailto:neil.graham@css.lancscc.gov.uk)

### Easy travel

ALL improvements to Accrington train station (Vision, October) are obviously welcome, but no such work would be complete without some kind of bus interchange – a bit like the one at Clitheroe train station.

Accrington's bus and train stations are about half a mile apart and many people must find it difficult carrying shopping between the two. Perhaps, if there is enough demand, some kind of shuttle bus could be arranged between both stations.

At the moment there is nowhere at Accrington train station for a bus to pull up.

Change is long overdue.

Accrington is a large town. Perhaps there should be a survey of people using both stations to see if there is enough demand for a shuttle service.

**MR M STEPHENS**  
Haslingden

■ The county council is keen to promote integrated transport where possible. At new interchanges in Chorley and Clitheroe it has been relatively easy to locate the bus station adjacent to the rail station.

As for Accrington, we are currently investigating longer-term options for the bus station in Accrington as an integral part of Hyndburn Council's Masterplan for Accrington with a view to improving access between the bus and

rail stations - **Chris Anslow, public transport policy officer.**

### Co-op more than just a shop

THE recent article about Co-ops (Vision, November) brought back many memories of my wartime childhood.

I have many memories of the Herman Street Co-op in Preston where the manager was Mr Mottershead and the first-hand was Mr Thornley.

Each week, my mother would write her order in a book and I would take it to the shop. The order would arrive on a horse and cart the next day and the dark grey, thick paper sack delivered to our kitchen table by a man called Caleb.

I got to know the Co-op better when I got older and started running errands for my grandma. I remember the sawdust on the floor and the gum sheets which were used for sticking on the yellow cheques – we used to purloin it to stick coins into our albums.

I also remember the brass cups on overhead wires which sent the money and the cheque whizzing to the cashier at the back of the shop.

Nothing was pre-packed, except the bread and tinned goods, which went under the name of Wheatsheaf.

Butter was weighed and stamped after first being formed by wooden butter paddles. Biscuits, tea and sugar were all packed and weighed on the spot.

"Divvy day" came once or twice a year and everyone took their gum sheets full of little, yellow receipt cheques to be totalled and to get the dividend entered into their bank books.

In the 1940s the "divvy" was about two shillings in the pound – a very welcome bonus to working people.

We had Co-op Field Day once a year. All the members' children were invited and we gathered at our respective Co-ops, complete with the obligatory cup or mug and we fell in behind the children from other Co-ops as a brass band led us to Moor Park.

Free coffee and enormous bath buns were provided. Games were organised by the stewards.

**KATHLEEN JACKSON**  
Preston

Letters containing a name and address will be given priority in publication. Letters may be edited.

### The Co-op - just my cup of tea



I FOUND the article on the Co-op very interesting (Vision, November).

I have a Co-op commemorative plate and teapot, both of which were handed down to me by my auntie Maud.

The plate shows the old Co-op on Railway Road, Brinscall, Withnell Mill, School Lane, Brinscall and Bolton Road, Abbey Village.

Both show the jubilee of the Withnell Industrial Co-operative Society Ltd (1861-1911).

All four of the Co-op's buildings are still there, three still being shop

outlets and the fourth being housing.

I remember my auntie telling me that the house on Bury Lane had two large cupboard doors, which were stacked high with pottery.

She said that every week her own aunt used to make her and my mum take all the teapots, cups, saucers etc out and clean it all.

The artefacts were two of just a few items which were kept and passed on to the family.

The Co-op has very deep roots.

**JANET CHAPLIN**  
Abbey Village



NEWS IN  
BRIEFBook tells  
plane truth

A COUNTY council publication might seem an unusual choice of Christmas present but plane fans may like "Triplane to Typhoon: Aircraft produced by Factories in Lancashire and the North West of England from 1910".

Published by Lancashire County Developments Ltd, the book is an account of all aircraft manufactured in Lancashire and the North West since the earliest days of flight.

The 350-page hardback book costs £19.99 and is available from bookshops (ISBN 1899907971) or direct from Lancashire County Council – phone Ann Weaver on 01772 534147.

## Desk giveaway

A RECEPTION desk is being given away by Chorley's Woodlands centre.

The centre has recently refurbished its reception area and the previous reception desk – still attractive – is to be given away to anyone who wants it.

The desk will have to be collected. Contact Philip Marsden on 01257 517154/517189.

# Teen smokers in spotlight

**TEEN smokers are being urged to "stub it out" after a major survey revealed that they were the second heaviest tobacco users in their age group in the north west.**

Nearly 12,000 people, mainly aged between 14 and 16, from the region were questioned with nearly 800 responses coming from Lancashire. Participants were asked about their attitudes to smoking, how often they smoked and where they got cigarettes.

County council trading standards officers are promising to continue their vigorous pursuit of shopkeepers who flout the law by selling cigarettes to people below the legal age.

County Councillor Jean Battle, Lancashire County Council's Cabinet member for Community Planning and Partnerships, said: "The new age change from 16 to 18 is a positive step towards preventing young people from starting to smoke, and traders must work hard to make sure the new regulations work."

## Action continues to help the 22 per cent who smoke

By Martin Crabtree

"The vast majority of traders in the county follow the rules very strictly and I hope that the new legal age of 18 will help sales staff weed out even more illegal purchasers."

"The main aim of the survey was to identify how and where youngsters obtain cigarettes to help plan intelligence-led operations. The findings will now go to government chiefs to inform future tobacco enforcement strategies."

The survey found that 22 per cent of Lancashire's 14 to 17-year-olds claim to smoke.

David Johnnie, Lancashire County Council trading standards officer who also chairs the Trading Standards North West Underage Sales Focus Group, said: "We are concerned about the prevalence of

smoking amongst young people and we must continue the fight against underage sales, especially as the legal age has risen from 16 to 18."

"Increasingly, as shown by the survey results, young people are purchasing counterfeit tobacco products which could contain an unknown cocktail of highly dangerous chemicals."

"We have had several seizures of counterfeit tobacco products in Lancashire and a number of successful prosecutions against retailers that have failed test-purchase operations."

"We will continue to pursue rigorously those unscrupulous retailers that are either stocking counterfeit tobacco products or selling cigarettes to the underage."

County Councillor Vali Patel, Cabinet member for schools, added that county schools have use of a tobacco control toolkit.

# Bob's your uncle for apprentice Bob



A YOUNG county council mechanic is one of the top apprentices in the country – and that's official.

Apprentice mechanic Bob Gregg (22) has worked on gritting wagons, minibuses, cars and vans since starting work for Lancashire County Engineering Services two years ago.

Last month, he reached the final six on a nationwide shortlist to find the country's top apprentice.

Judges from the Association of Public Service Excellence assessed candidates on the basis of day-to-day work in the workshop, an assessment by a line manager and reports from college.

Bob works at the new transport depot in Hapton, near Burnley, where more than 300 vehicles are kept in good working order.

County Councillor Tony Martin, Cabinet member for Sustainable Development, said: "Bob does a great job for the Lancashire public."

"All the vehicles that fix holes in the road and keep them clear of snow and ice rely on staff at this new depot to keep them going."

"Together with the new highways, street lighting and winter services depot at Heasandford, this adds up to a £5m investment in Burnley."

"It will be an extremely busy workshop, responsible for

maintaining hundreds of county council vehicles and plant items as well as MOT testing Burnley's entire taxi fleet."

A 4-star council  
Awarded top marks by the Audit Commission

Lancashire  
County Council

## Resources

The following 2 posts are required 37 hours a week, 1 February 2008 at County Hall, Preston with hot desks/home working and site based work.

The core value of the Resource Directorate Property Group is to provide an excellent, professional, property service to internal and external clients, and ensure projects are delivered safely, on time, within budget and to the quality specified.

### Health and Safety and quality co-ordinator

£29,859 to £32,487 a year.

Ref: R00070SW

You will provide an office and site based inspection and monitoring service which ensures projects comply fully with client requirements and relevant construction legislation with particular reference to the CDM Regulations 2007. You will also be responsible for co-ordinating and checking Quality, Site Safety and CDM regulatory issues across multi-disciplinary teams within Property Group under the direction of the chief architect. Duties include acting as, or assisting CDM co-ordinators in the preparation of pre-construction information and Health and Safety Files and monitoring the provision of this information. You will also carry out the role of building clerk of works and assist the team manager in the supervision of the site management team.

**Essential:** You must have: Membership of the Association for Project Safety or CDM Co-ordinator competency; HNC in Building or Equivalent; extensive in-depth construction Health and Safety experience; and significant supervisory experience in construction field.

**Interview date:** 16 January 2008.

### Site building supervisor

£23,175 to £26,928 a year.

Ref: R00069SW

You will be responsible for carrying out day to day Clerk of Works site inspections on a variety of projects involving both in house and external design teams. You will provide Building Clerk of Works and other project related supervisory services including ensuring materials and workmanship comply with the specification and contract requirements, recording and reporting all essential facts relating to the works, ensuring contractors comply with Health and Safety Legislation and representing the contract administrator in all site matters.

**Essential:** You must have extensive site experience in the construction field and good experience of site supervisory work.

**Interview date:** 14 January 2008.

The above 2 posts are covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exemption) Act 1975. If successful, you will be required to apply to the Criminal Records Bureau for a 'disclosure'. These are essential car-user's post, set at band 1199cc. However, we may consider you if you cannot drive because of a disability. We are conducting a job evaluation exercise and as a result the salary of the above 2 posts may increase or decrease, or stay the same.

**Apply online or tel: 0845 053 0008.**

**Closing date:** 21 December 2007.

We are an equal opportunities employer welcoming applications from all sections of the community. Applications from ethnic minorities are welcome. You must be committed to equality and diversity in the workplace.

Apply online at: [www.lancashire.gov.uk/vacancies](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/vacancies)

## Did you know?

From **October 2007** you must be **18 or over** to buy tobacco.

Age increases from 16 to 18.

You may need to prove your age. Carry a PASS (Proof of Age Standard Scheme) ID card / passport / photo driving licence.

Shops can be fined up to £2500 if they sell to under 18s.

Want to quit – call 0800 169 0 169 or visit [www.gosmokefree.co.uk](http://www.gosmokefree.co.uk)

Did you know, smoking a pack a day costs over £150 a month? Just think what you could do with that kind of money...



Lancashire  
County Council

[www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/lancashire](http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/lancashire)

## No longer home alone.

Telecare offers 24/7 care and attention to vulnerable or elderly people via a series of home sensors linked to a continually manned Telecare monitoring centre. It means there's always someone watching out for them. Depending on your situation Telecare could be FREE! To find out more, contact Telecare today.

Call us now on **01772 530 098**

or alternatively visit our website at

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/telecare](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/telecare)



Because you care, we care.





# LOOK LIVELY

A WELL-maintained car and extra driving care will pay off in winter, according to road-safety campaigners.

Top tips from Lancashire County Council's Road Safety Group are:

● Check tyres for tread and pressure.

● Check your wipers and lights.

● Check your anti-freeze. Top up your screen wash bottle.

● React to the conditions you face – ice on the road means it

can take 10 times as long to stop. ● Use the highest gear possible to avoid wheel spin.

● Manoeuvre gently, avoiding sudden braking or acceleration.

You can now buy gift vouchers for "Drive On" refresher driving sessions which assess driving skills and provide helpful advice.

The two-hour sessions, costing £65, are held on a one-to-one basis.

For further information or to purchase a gift voucher please contact 01772 530316 or email roadsafety@env.lancscg.gov.uk

## New start for past

A NEW trainee has started to learn the skills needed to preserve Lancashire's historic records for the future.

Old birth, death and marriage certificates, church documents, land records and industrial records – some going back to the Middle Ages – are in danger of crumbling unless they receive constant expert care.

And that is where Zoe Stewart comes in. . .

Advancing years of existing staff mean a risk of losing the skills needed in the future – so Zoe has been recruited by the Institute of Conservation (ICON) to keep the skills alive.

Graduate Zoe said: "We have documents ranging from church and population records – to paperwork about doctors and molecatchers."

"It all gives a vital insight into Lancashire life over the years, to say nothing of being a god-send to people research-



● NEXT generation: Zoe is one of a handful of people nationwide learning conservation.

ing family history.

"The trouble is that the records will deteriorate unless cared for at the correct temperature and humidity."

"Some of the oldest documents already need repairing – and that is a skill we should never lose."

In her 12 months with Lancashire County

Council, Zoe will work mainly in the Record Office – with time also spent in county council museums.

Collagen, the same material used in sausage skins, is used to repair parchment. Japanese papers and tissues are used to repair paper documents. First they need to be

cleaned.

Zoe adds: "Working in archives is an insight into yesteryear's way of life."

"Stored and restored properly, these documents will last for many hundreds of years more."

Zoe's internship is one of 12 nationally funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund via ICON.

## Don't waste your chance to have your say!

We all recognise the importance to our everyday lives of extracting minerals and managing waste.

Minerals are essential raw materials to our industries, and to building of our roads, homes, schools, and offices.

Managing waste is important to our quality of life as it relies on the safe, clean and effective recycling, recovery and disposal of the waste we all produce.

Lancashire County Council, Blackpool Borough Council and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council (the 'Joint Authorities') have set out the Core Strategy in a report entitled 'Managing our Waste and Natural Resources'.

Managing our Waste and Natural Resources sets out the approach we think we should take to extracting minerals and managing waste in the future.

We have produced this Core Strategy to try to minimise any conflicts as best we can, and to ensure that the wider community can enjoy the benefits of good minerals and waste planning both now and in many years to come.

We have now reached the point where we believe we have a sound and robust strategy to guide minerals and waste planning in our Plan area to 2021. We have submitted this Core Strategy for independent examination to the Secretary of State. This provides the opportunity for you to give further views, for or against what we present.

You can comment on this strategy during the six week period from 29th November 2007 until 10th January 2008.

Find out more and pick up a copy...

...at town halls

...at all main libraries

...county information centres

...on [www.lancsmwdf.com](http://www.lancsmwdf.com)

...by phoning (01772) 530695 or

...emailing [lmw@env.lancscg.gov.uk](mailto:lmw@env.lancscg.gov.uk)



## See Aztec 'days of dead' in new exhibition

THE colour, energy and surprises of Mexico are being displayed in Lancashire at the new Viva Mexico! exhibition.

Imagery and tales of the reputed "day of the dead", Mexico's merging of Aztec and Spanish culture, craft displays, ceramic masterpieces by artists Tiburcio and Israel Soteno bring together

the brilliant colours and stunning designs of Mexico's craftspeople.

The exhibition, at the Museum of Lancashire in Preston, includes a full programme of workshops and events – including a series of stunning photographs by guest curator Chloe Sayer and photographer David Lavender.

The photographs show many of

the creators of the exhibits.

The Viva Mexico! exhibition is on until after Christmas.

For more details, visit:

[www.vivartsmexico.co.uk](http://www.vivartsmexico.co.uk)



### TIRED OF TRAFFIC?

## Travel Differently!

[www.sharedwheels.co.uk](http://www.sharedwheels.co.uk)

For information about car sharing

[www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info)

For details of all local public transport services

[www.transportforlancashire.com](http://www.transportforlancashire.com)

For information about public transport, walking and cycling

Lancashire County Council

## Pupil numbers dictate school numbers



Ian, school planning and reorganisation manager, looks at pupil numbers

DECIDING whether or not we need to review and re-organise primary or secondary schools in an area is an art rather than a science. It's not

quite Harry Potter wizardry, but it does involve an element of trying to predict the future!

The process is underpinned by an examination of present and projected pupil numbers.

Each year, an analysis is undertaken which starts with the annual census of pupils in all Lancashire schools. The results of the census and those of the previous three years are analysed to assess the movement of pupils in and out of each area.

In addition, the numbers of births in each local-authority ward are collated to provide an estimate of how many children will need places in future years. Added to the mix are approved housing developments and a calculation is undertaken to estimate how many children are likely to be attracted to the area as a result of the new housing.

This gives an indication of likely levels of pupil num-

bers for each district for the next five years for children up to 12 years old.

If the results give us cause for concern, then a more in-depth analysis is undertaken which attempts to give an indication as to the demand for places in a smaller area, or even at individual school level.

At this point other factors such as the location of schools in rural areas, pattern and choice of provision are considered before a decision is made to review an area.

Reviews can be triggered by other factors such as schools that are struggling, major investment programmes like Building Schools for the Future and area re-generation initiatives.

All reviews involve extensive consultation and decisions are made taking all the responses to the consultation into account and by following a procedure set down by government guidelines.





## Film idol's 'Frank talk' about bus safety

THERE'S a new superhero fighting for the good of public transport in a new film produced especially for bus drivers.

The unlikely idol, known as Frank Foster, is already causing a stir in the transport industry thanks to his down-to-earth advice on how to be a better driver.

Frank, the creation of Lancashire County Council's Safer Travel Unit, is the star of "Frank Foster Superstar?" a brand new training DVD aimed at the county's 4,000 bus drivers.

The film is the latest in a series of innovations pioneered in Lancashire to make travelling on public transport a better experience for all.

And, despite only just leaving the editing studio, the film looks set to be a blockbuster with interest and approval already coming from the public transport industry.

Rick Wilson, Lancashire County Council Safer Travel Unit manager, said: "This is the first time anything like this has been done on this scale in the UK and we have been amazed by the enthusiasm that's been shown so far.

"We started off with an idea to produce a DVD as a way to tackle all the important issues that bus drivers face each day.

"But the project has now developed into a comprehensive package of resources that bus companies can use to train their drivers.

"Although it was initially aimed at bus drivers we are finding that police officers are now keen to take part in the checks we carry out on buses as they get to see them in action."

Training videos can often be unrealistic with actors playing unfamiliar parts. But Frank Foster is actually played by Tim Paley, someone who has 20 years experience of driving buses in Lancashire as well as having parts in Emmerdale, Heartbeat and Phoenix Nights.

The DVD, which cost £10,000 to produce and distribute, is directed by upcoming film director Michael Booth and co-produced by Rick Wilson who worked for several years in the bus industry.

# Let's work together for children

By Andy Swain

**BETWEEN January and April 2008, Lancashire will introduce radical changes in the way services for children, young people and families are planned for and delivered across the county.**

These Children's Trust arrangements will enable more integrated working between all agencies involved in dealing with children and young people, building on some of

the great work already taking place across the county, such as the Home School Mentor project at Moorside Primary School in Skelmersdale.

Here in Lancashire our trust arrangements will work on two levels, giving a strategic overview while addressing local needs.

Lancashire's Children and Young People's trust arrangements will bring together all partners in Lancashire's Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, to

define the strategic vision, undertake needs analysis and commission services that will provide better outcomes for children and young people.

At the same time, Local Children and Young People's Trust Partnerships will ensure that integrated services, relevant to the local community, are delivered in all 12 of Lancashire's districts.

To find out more, visit [www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/every\\_child\\_matters](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/every_child_matters)

## Put local mums in driving seat - headteacher

### CASE STUDY:

Home school mentor project

THE new children's trust arrangements across Lancashire build on many examples of agencies working together to provide excellent services for children, young people and their families.

The Home-School Mentor project at Moorside Primary School in Skelmersdale is a case in point.

Set up with funding from the Lancashire Children's Fund, its services have developed to meet the needs of children and families in the local community.

Moorside includes areas of real deprivation with its related problems. In 2002 the school's then headteacher realised how much time he spent supporting parents and applied for a grant from the Lancashire Children's Fund to tackle the issue.

"When the project started we knew there was a need for support for families," said mentor Karen Kyriacou.

"To find out exactly what that need was, we sent out questionnaires and spoke to parents about what was important to them.

"Everything we've developed since has been driven by local people's needs."

Working with colleagues from services including Health, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Educational Welfare, the project has developed a wide range of services, including a breakfast club, education courses for parents, a community association and setting up a nurture group to support children with specific needs and their families.

"It's absolutely brilliant," added Karen. "We've been able to support children and

Find out more at: [www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/every\\_child\\_matters](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/every_child_matters)

families with real problems. "We have a great relationship with all of the other agencies and work really closely to make sure that the children and their families get the support they need."



●SCHOOL support: breakfast club assistant Joanne Maxwell with home-school liaison boss Karen at Skelmersdale's Moorside Primary School.



## Tree experts may not be what they seem, says trading standards officer Julian Edwards

SOMEONE knocked at my door yesterday offering to cut down a tree outside my house. I was tempted, but declined the offer as they wanted to do it there and then and I had to go out.

At this time of year problems with trees often occur. Because we all put off dealing with problems, there is a great risk that householders will agree to work when an "expert" points it out.

While the vast majority of contractors are honest and trustworthy there are some dubious businesses offering tree

services. The expert may have no justification for this status other than having "tree services" printed on his van.

Good tradesmen do not need to tout for work in this way and in any event would never be offended if checks were carried out.

The best advice is to avoid any businesses cold calling at your home to offer carrying out work on trees.

Trees are the responsibility of the person where the tree is growing. If you have concerns that you might need tree work carrying out, you need to ensure

that you are employing the right person for the job who will comply with any controls that may be in place.

If you require work you should follow the following advice:

- Check whether the tree is subject to any preservation order or planning controls with your district council.
- Use a suitably qualified competent tradesman for the work necessary.
- The more complex the work the more likely you will need a professional tree surgeon.
- Obtain at least two quotes that clearly detail the work, including who is liable for removing the material from your land.
- If you are elderly or disabled consider contacting your local council which may have information on schemes to assist with garden maintenance.
- It is important to ensure the work is

carried out safely.

- Ensure that the business has appropriate liability insurance. Ask to see the certificate.
- Never pay upfront, and be more cautious of any contractors who insist in dealing in cash.
- Never use contractors who call at your door.
- If you find yourself in dispute, do not pay until you have taken advice.

If a tree, not on your land, is causing problems you should at first take the matter up with the landowner concerned.

While you can take action with branches overhanging your property you are still obliged to ensure that there are no preservation orders or planning controls in place. If the tree is on public land the first point of contact should be your district council.



# Changing communities

Active citizenship is what keeps society healthy. We would all be worse off without the county's many voluntary groups. Lancashire Local committees in all 12 districts of the county work hard to devolve power downwards. Each county councillor member also has a small pot of money to water the 'grassroots' in his or her area.

## WYRE: Champion sound



●TUNES: Councillor Riley with Daniella Delpiano and Warren Doherty using the CD mixing deck.

**WOULD-BE DJs at Fleetwood's Beehive Centre are hitting the high notes with a CD mixing kit.**

Mixing music is great fun for the DJ, entertaining for the listener - and pays a small fortune for those talented or lucky enough to make it into a profession.

But the electronic equipment is pricey - so County Councillor Keith Riley handed £250 from his Lancashire Local fund to the Warren Farm Community Association which works across Fleetwood.

Councillor Riley said: "The community association does great work in bringing everyone together, including young people who love to make their own music."

## LANCASTER: Bike boom for Carnforth's children

TINY bikes are just the ticket for teaching tiny tots in Carnforth.

A £250 Lancashire Local grant was used to buy a pint-sized tandem and even a bike you pedal with your hands at Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School.

The pre-school children love to play at the Activity Time sessions - and youngsters learn best when having fun.

Volunteer Rebecca Parker said: "As well as enjoying playing, they learn all about social values such as sharing and talking. Not all families can afford such toys."

The grant came from County Councillor Sarah Fishwick's Lancashire Local "pot" which, like all such local grants, was established to support grassroots good citizenship.



●WHEEL FUN: Councillor Fishwick with pre-school children trying out their new equipment.

## PRESTON: Extra time granted for football fun

FAIR chances all round is the goal for a group of disabled soccer enthusiasts in Preston.

Between 10 and 15 disabled children attend Preston Soccer Development Centre each week - and organisers say football is more than a game.

County Councillor Norman Abram, who gave the group £1,000 from his Lancashire Local allocation, said: "It brings children together - and that's the most important thing of all."

"The centre provides professional coaching, equipment and trips to football clubs which nearly all young people enjoy. "Football helps chil-



●SCORE: Councillor Abram (back row, third from left) meets the young footballers.

dren in many ways. It helps socially, it helps in terms of developing people's abilities to work and play together - and makes children feel involved."

"Disabled children shouldn't feel left out when they see their

brothers and sisters enjoying sports."

Team members meet every Saturday morning at Cottam Sports Arena.

For more details contact Kath Mason on 07730 570 688.

## SOUTH RIBBLE: Chess aces get on board



●CHECK: County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson with chess club member James Walsh.

MEMBERS of Leyland Chess Club have all the pieces in place for victory after receiving £100 from the local grants fund.

The club put the money towards equipping several local schools with chess sets and buying clocks to use during club tournaments.

But local suppliers have been so generous in discounting chess sets that the club now has too many and is on the lookout for more schools to put them to good use.

Club Chairman Bob Tinton explained: "We encourage youngsters to take up the game by running coaching sessions in local schools."

"Knowing this, our suppliers have kindly overwhelmed us. If schools would like free sets, I would ask them to get in touch."

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, said: "The chess club has been going for nearly 40 years - it's a stalwart of the community."

"The grant is not for a great deal of money but we're willing to consider applications for whatever people need - no amount is too small to be put to good use."

The club meets every Tuesday at 7.30pm in the Broadfield Arms, Leyland Lane, Leyland. Contact Steve Hughes on 01772 455 121 for more information.

## Time left to share school views

Don't miss the chance to have your say about proposed changes to secondary education in parts of Lancashire.

Three consultations are currently underway - about the creation of an Accrington academy, and in Preston and Lancaster about the closure of under-subscribed secondary schools.

Accrington residents will need to be quick to take part in the final stages of the consultation to close Moorhead Sports College and re-open it as an academy in September 2008, as the consultation period closes on 12 December.

The Preston consultation runs until 31 December and is about the proposals to close Tulketh Community Sports College from August 2008 and enlarge Fulwood High School and Arts College.

In Lancaster, the consultation - also until 31 December - is on the proposed closure of Hornby and Skerton High Schools from August 2008 and the enlargement of Central Lancaster High School.

Consultation documents have been made available at the schools, libraries and on the county council's own website.

To find out more information visit:

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/consultations](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/education/consultations)

Alternatively telephone 01772 531 815 or email your views to: [spot@ed.lancscsc.gov.uk](mailto:spot@ed.lancscsc.gov.uk)

## Free Part Time Nursery Education places in Lancashire for 3 and 4 year olds

If you have a child born on or between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2004 your child is entitled to a free part-time pre-school nursery education place from the start of the Spring Term 2008 commencing in January.

A free place consists of a maximum of five sessions per week and no more than fifty five sessions for the Spring term. A free session is for a period of 2.5 hours in length. There are three terms in the year, covering a total of 38 weeks.

Places are available from any of Lancashire County Council's eligible providers of pre-school nursery education.

These can be Local Authority (LA) maintained nursery schools and nursery classes, providers in the independent, private and voluntary sectors or accredited childminders on an approved National Childminding Association (NCMA) Children Come First Network.

Further information including a Parent Guide and a list of eligible providers within your area may be obtained from the Childcare Information Service on Freephone 0800 195 0137.



**SureStart**

**Lancashire**  
County Council

Investment and  
regeneration  
for individuals,  
communities  
and businesses.

**We  
change  
lives**

Call us to see how we can help you  
01772 536600 : [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)

**Lancashire**  
County Council  
Lancashire County Development Ltd