

FOSTER JOY

The pleasure
and heartache

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track for new term

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NOW WE'RE IN BUSINESS

Careful investment has turned £8m to £80m and helped nearly 4,000 firms to a brighter future

By Mark McAdam

AN impressive 1,800 jobs have been created thanks to Lancashire County Council, latest figures reveal.

Investment has been steered into nearly 4,000 firms in the last four years - meaning thousands of Lancashire families now enjoy a brighter future.

The figures presented to Lancashire County Council's Cabinet show that careful investment has turned the council's £8m into £80m of economic activity in the last four years.

Initiatives have included micro-finance loans of up to £5,000 for small firms, the Rosebud loan scheme for medium-sized firms and also investment in town centres to boost local-level activity.

County Councillor Niki Penney said: "This is about real jobs for real people - and that means families.

"Evidence shows that getting and keeping people in work has all sorts of benefits. A life of enforced worklessness is damaging for everyone.

"Lancashire has a tremendous amount to offer - from transport infrastructure to creative and hard-working people.

"The council is recognising what needs to be done for Lancashire people."

Player

The investment is steered through Lancashire County Developments Ltd (LCDL), the county council's economic development department.

LCDL is a major player in tourism and in organisations such as the Lancashire Economic Partnership.

Its Rosebud scheme has won the Lancashire Dealmakers' Fund of the Year award three times in a row.

Major success has been enjoyed by LCDL "customers" such as Farmhouse Fayre and Leyland-based Premier Hose Technologies Ltd.

Councillor Penney, LCDL chair, added: "Economic development is one of the county council's key priorities.



●SEEDS for success: (left to right) Ralph Henderson, Stephanie Griffin, David Griffin and County Councillor Niki Penney, with Tes Griffin (front) at Bay View Garden Centre who received a grant. Pictured right are cyclists at east Lancashire's recent Adrenaline Live event - supported by Lancashire County Council.

"These results show that we are right in there, fighting for the prosperity of the county.

"The county council is a strong voice in saying that the county is a place worth investing in, whether it is from businesses, Whitehall or Europe.

"It can be direct help, or it can be providing office space and advice. They are the things that entrepreneurs need.

"It is all about giving people the opportunities to flourish."



THE latest examples of business success (above, left) are a garden centre, a beauty spa and an equestrian centre in north Lancashire.

The Rosebud grant of £134,000 was given by Lancashire County Developments Limited, the county council's economic development department. This was matched by other organisations to bring a total of £600,000 to businesses in the local area.

A total of nine projects were supported by the funding which will help them expand and grow.

Eagle eye on costs saves £57m

HOUSEHOLDERS are now getting better value than ever as latest figures reveal savings of £57m in county council budgets.

The savings have been made in a three-year drive to reduce bureaucracy, change working styles and make services more accessible.

The figure is one of the highest produced by any council anywhere in the country.

The council had been expected to save £45m over the period.

County Councillor Tony Martin, Cabinet member for resources and performance, said: "We have been firmly focused on providing better value for money to ensure we provide value in things such as care for older people, schools and libraries.

"There have been real pressures on the budget due to rising costs in a number of areas including fuel, energy bills and the price of providing care services. It is a real achievement to have reduced our spending at the same time as increasing investment in frontline services.

"I'm really pleased that everyone at Lancashire County Council has proved they can go the extra mile in the search for value."

Lancashire County Council was awarded four out of four for Use of Resources by the Audit Commission earlier this year.



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

www.lancashire.gov.uk/vacancies



Ask Shirley

**Don't know who
to contact when
you need help?**

**Baffled by
bureaucracy?**

Ring Shirley on
0845 053 0000 or email
Shirley on csc.enquiries@lancashire.gov.uk

Write to:
Ask Shirley
Customer Service Centre
The Red Rose Hub
Bluebell Way
Preston
PR2 5PZ



ASK THE EXPERT

Questions
answered
by your
friend in
the know

Woof times

My neighbour next door to me has two dogs which bark all day long. They are noisy in the house when my neighbour is out at work and also when they are left in the garden. This has been going on for some time now. I find the noise unbearable and I need someone to help me with this problem.

Mrs R Harrison, Bamber Bridge

The environmental health department at your local district council deals with all aspects of noise nuisance and this includes noise caused by barking dogs. For anyone experiencing similar problems to this you need to contact your district council and ask to speak to their environmental health department.

Can we sort it?

As a family we like to do as much recycling as possible. We have quite a lot of cans such as drinks cans and thought we could make some money out of these as I know there are places that will pay a small amount for these. I was wondering if you know of anyone around the Cleveleys area where we would be grateful for any help you could give us on this matter.

Mrs L Glennon, Thornton Cleveleys

Lancashire recycling centres do have units whereby cans can be disposed of, however this is a free of charge service. There is no charge to dispose



●HELPING hand: See "Waste of a trip".

of the cans and no payment is given to members of the public. To find out more you can contact the Lancashire County Council's waste helpline on **0845 0500 957** or visit the county council website at: www.lancashire.gov.uk

Help wanted

I am writing on behalf of my elderly parents who live alone in a single storey house. As the years have gone by, the mobility of both my parents has deteriorated. They struggle with moving around the house, especially in the bathroom when getting in and out of the shower. I was wondering if there is any help or equipment available to make this easier for them?

Mrs L Naylor, Whitworth

You would need to contact your local social care team as they will be able to advise what your parents may be eligible for. The county council's social care team is available on **0845 0530009**.

On the menu

My child attends primary school and is currently in year two. I have heard from the other parents that my daughter may qualify for free school meals. I am writing to find out the criteria and how I would apply.

Miss P Burrows, Forton

Your child may be entitled to free school meals if you receive:

- Income support
- Income-based Job Seekers' Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit or Child Tax

Credits without working Tax Credit and within an annual income of under £15,575.

You can get a copy of the application form at your local area education office, your child's school, local libraries or download it direct from the council's website: www.lancashire.gov.uk

Waste of a trip

Last week I went to my local household waste recycling centre. When I approached the gates I was informed that I needed a permit. This was apparently because I had a trailer full of household rubbish. As there was a large queue, I didn't have time to enquire about this at the time. Could you please advise of how to apply for a waste permit?

Mr K, Mellor

There are two types of permits - a general permit and a recyclable permit.

A general permit is valid for a month and allows one visit to the recycling centre per month. The recyclable permit is valid for a year. Depending on the type of waste you wish to take, you will need to contact a customer service officer to ensure you get the right permit.

Only certain types of vehicle can be taken onto our household waste sites. To apply for a waste permit, or for more information, contact the council's waste helpline on **0845 0500 957**. Further details can also be found on the county council's website: www.lancashire.gov.uk

£250m school scheme opens its (many) doors

Multi-million pound schools project rings bell for new academic year

SEVEN new schools and a big public library will open in September as the first stage of a £250m investment programme by Lancashire County Council.

The government-backed Building Schools for the Future project has constructed state-of-the-art facilities in **Burnley, Nelson, and Padiham.**

Six more sites in East Lancashire will be developed by 2010 - and a programme of refurbishing the rest of the county's secondary schools will continue after that.

The work so far has been done in partnership with a consortium of private companies led by developers Catalyst Lend Lease.

County Councillor Vali Patel, Cabinet member for schools, said: "I really want to thank teachers, other school staff, and students for their magnificent efforts to deal with change, and the neighbours of the sites who have put up with disruption for the good of us all."

"Building Schools for the Future has brought in investment for regeneration, created jobs, provided opportunities for local suppliers, and left us with a legacy of improved opportunities for our children and the wider community."

"People in East Lancashire will be better educated and more prosperous as a result."

The three newly-opened sites are:

- Shuttleworth College on Burnley Road, Padiham; a secondary school for 1,050 pupils aged 11 to 16.

- Pendle Vale College and Pendle Community High School, on Oxford Road, Nelson; a secondary school for 1,050 pupils aged 11 to 16, and a special secondary school for 11 to 19 year olds, with specialist facilities for disabled sport.

- Burnley Campus on Barden Lane which houses: Thomas Whitham Sixth Form, Barden Primary School, Reedley Hallows Nursery School and Children's Centre, Holly Grove School, Burnley and Pendle Faith Centre, a 14,000 item public library, community sports facilities, and a coffee bar.

Urban designs right up their street

GREEN-fingered Lancastrians still have time to dash over to a Manchester exhibition on urban gardening.

Urbis, Manchester's exhibition centre of city life, is hosting a free Urban Garden exhibition until Sunday 7 September - encouraging people to take up gardening.

The Lancashire Backyard Project, developed by the county council's Environmental Projects Team, is featured in the exhibition.

Their popular Edible Garden design gives



●ON show: members of the Backyard Project team.

practical tips on how to transform your backyard into a sustainable urban oasis.

The exhibition offers advice for people who

are interested in growing their own fruit and vegetables, creating a space for relaxing or providing a natural sanctuary for wildlife.

Help at hand for families

FAMILIES going through difficult times have a welcoming new centre where they can get help.

The brand new million-pound Pendle Children and Parenting Support Service on Burnley Road in **Colne** will help prevent family breakdown and children going into care.

County Councillor Marcus Johnstone, cabinet member for children and young people, said: "Bringing up children is a challenge at the best of times. Sometimes families face extra pressures and need practical help to stop a difficult situation from deteriorating into breakdown or neglect."

"They will find a relaxed, non-judg-

mental atmosphere and get help to tackle any problems they face."

Service manager Diane Booth said: "The previous building didn't meet our needs, but the new one is light and airy and welcoming."

"There are new rooms laid out like an ordinary home, which give us the chance to work with families in a comfortable atmosphere. People come here knowing they will not be judged and will be accepted for who they are."

The service caters for families with children aged up to 18 and provides direct support such as parenting classes, separate sessions for teenagers, and behavioural contract work.

Bollywood send-off for unwanted classroom furniture

BOLLYWOOD-style dancers entertained crowds at Burnley FC's Turf Moor for the launch of a county council-backed charity – Furniture for Education Worldwide.

The aim of the project is to send second-hand furniture from Lancashire to schools around the world that don't have any.

Containers of aid have already arrived in Pakistan, and some is earmarked for Ghana.

The furniture becomes available when Lancashire students start using purpose-built equipment as part of the Building Schools for the Future programme - currently improving schools in Burnley and Pendle.

The recycled furniture would otherwise be sent to landfill sites – with the transport paid for out of the BSF budget.

Sponsors so far include Unite – the trade union, the University of Central Lancashire, and school builder Bovis.

Community groups in Lancashire can also ask for the furniture if they need it.

Anyone who wants to donate or suggest a beneficiary for the charity should ring County Councillor Terry Burns on 07976 611119.



●FUND-RAISING to pay to send unwanted desks and chairs abroad. Dancers Henna Rai, left, and Raneesha Manoharan with, back, from left, Burnley headteacher Mike Tull and County Councillors John Cavanagh and Terry Burns.

Fare's fair on the bus

PEAK-time bus travel for people with disabilities will become cheaper in Lancashire.

Bus travel at peak times will now cost just 50p, regardless of the journey length.

The decision, by Lancashire County Council, will apply to people who have a Disabled NoWcard concessionary travel pass.

The county council is also setting up a scheme for severely disabled people, who cannot use public transport unaided, to obtain a Companion Card. This will allow them to be accompanied by a carer who will also travel free.

County Councillor Hazel Harding, leader of the county council, said: "People contacted us to say that they were having difficulty getting around. We listened to their concerns and then asked our staff to look at a solution."

"The cash to fund the new 50p flat rate was identified by the county council from our own resources, even

Extra concessions will make some bus travel cheaper

though we have no responsibility for the funding of concessionary transport.

"If we had the funding, we would open this up to all NoWcard holders."

"Unfortunately this is not possible for everyone, but we have been able to find the money to help some people in Lancashire to get support, training and get to work. This will provide support to some of the most vulnerable people in Lancashire."

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, Cabinet member for sustainable development, said: "We have listened to those residents who are most affected by the decision of the district councils to withdraw this funding and we are delighted to be able to help. "We are hoping to be able to put the 50p scheme in place by the beginning of October."

Since the introduction of the new national concessionary travel scheme in April 2008, holders of Disabled

NoWcard concessionary passes have not been able to use them before 9.30am.

This was down to a decision made by district councils due to the increased costs of providing off-peak concessions.

As well as local buses, Lancashire residents can also use their passes on most community transport schemes within the county, such as Dial-a-ride, as well as the Blackpool tramway and the Fleetwood to Knott End ferry.

NEWS BRIEFS

Cash boost for county roads

LANCASHIRE'S highways are set to benefit from an extra £5m.

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, Cabinet member for sustainable development, has handed the money over to the 12 Lancashire Local committees and asked them to decide where it should be spent.

He explained: "I've handed the cash to Lancashire Local committees in each district so that the decisions can be made by the people who live there. Councillors from the county and district councils will be meeting shortly to look at how they would like to invest the money in their area."

"The committees could decide to carry out some extra road resurfacing, grass-cutting, sign-cleaning or lighting column repainting."

"I must stress that the £5m is over and above what we are already spending on our day-to-day highway maintenance, improvement and safety projects. It will allow the Lancashire Locals to target some of the lower priority issues."

Work together

THE artistic work of disabled people in the Preston area is to be recorded in a book and on DVD, thanks to a £1,000 grant.

The participatory project is being run by Preston Disability Service Centre.

Local look will keep up standards

COUNCILLORS are to be subjected to increased peer review in a bid to further boost public probity.

Legal changes mean that complaints against councillors will now be heard locally, rather than in London as in the past.

Conflict of interest, manners, standards of behaviour – all will be adjudged by the county council's Standards Committee.

Heather Massie, the committee's independent chair and formerly a top civil servant, said: "Standards in Lancashire are already very high."

"Members of the public deserve that their elected representatives do a good job and they can now complain locally if they think their member has acted incorrectly."

"Local members of the committee mean we can investigate complaints in the light of local circumstances."

Sanctions against wayward councillors can include a requirement for them to apologise – but can ultimately

lead to suspension from office.

More serious misdemeanours will still be referred to a panel in London.

Heather, from Edenfield, added: "Councillors are overwhelmingly honest and hardworking. It is in the interest of democracy itself that people have that confidence."

HOW TO COMPLAIN

If you believe your councillor has behaved incorrectly, you can visit the new Standard Committee's website.

Go to www.lancashire.gov.uk and, on the A-Z, click on C for "complaints about a county councillor".

You can also telephone 01772 533394 or write to: Standards Committee, County Secretary and Solicitor, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ.

Lancashire Adult Learning

The county council's adult learning service

A wide range of courses are starting in your area soon.

For more info visit www.lal.lancashire.gov.uk

To enrol call now!

Preston, Lancaster, Fylde, Wyre:
01524 581269

Chorley, West Lancashire, South Ribble:
0845 600 1331

Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley, Rossendale:
0845 056 1886

alston hall
Lancashire Adult Learning

THE ADULT COLLEGE
LANCASTER
Lancashire Adult Learning

Lancashire College
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Send your letters to:
The Editor, Vision,
Corporate Communications Group,
County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ
neil.graham@lancashire.gov.uk

Travel abuse?

AS a pensioner and car owner I still make use of "free travel" on local buses. I note the abuse of frequent travel to the seaside by some people, which will run up large bills.

Is it not time to introduce tokens, to be used with the bus pass, for longer journeys?

This would ration such trips while not stopping them altogether. Some action is needed or this excellent scheme will fail entirely.

Allowance will be needed for those in remote villages who, of necessity, will have more long journeys.

L WILLAN
Great Harwood

■ *What do other readers think of the recently introduced free bus travel? Let Vision know.*

Overall, 250,000 NoWcard bus passes have been issued in Lancashire so far, suggesting it is a big success. Travel to the seaside is a legitimate bonus. Indeed, people can go anywhere they like in the country so long as they use local buses.

Two changes are planned (see p3). Firstly, peak-time travel (before 9.30am, Mon-Fri) is being reintroduced for disabled travellers at a cost of 50p. It will still be free after 9.30am. Secondly, there will be free travel for carer companions of disabled people – editor.

Grate expectations

WITH the price of scrap metal being what it is, there have been recent thefts of street grates (Vision, August) leaving dangerous holes in the road.

My idea is to replace these with recycled plastic grates. Replacement is necessary and plastic, hopefully, will be less attractive to thieves.

A replacement programme may also create jobs and make thieving unprofitable.

I also think that such grates could be designed with drainage holes so as to help cyclists.

GRATE GUY
Great Harwood

■ *Grates have to be strong enough to take massive weights, so metal is the preferred option now. Using plastic for "street furniture" is still in its infancy but councils are seriously looking at it for the future.*

For now we replace stolen grates with a fitting which has near-negligible scrap value – editor.

Book me in

LIBRARIES have improved greatly since my childhood.

Gone are the signs: "Silence Please" and "Expectation is Forbidden" – I had to ask my mother what the latter meant.

We are lucky in Fleetwood in having a modern and welcoming county library. Ian Williams, one of our librarians, recently asked our Women's Institute members to take part in a project entitled "Our Reading Heroes". Those participating were invited to read a widely acclaimed first novel by American author Jed Rubenfeld entitled "The Interpretation of Murder".

On completion of this enthralling story, we each submitted a critique, which was used for publicity purposes.

The aim is to encourage more people to use our library services.

If Vision's readers have not used their local one for some years, I would urge them to pay it a visit.

It is surprising what is on offer.
FRANCES CONNOLLY
Fleetwood Women's Institute

Sing the blues

I WOULD just like to say a very big thank you to the Blue Badge team at Preston for all their help with my husband's Blue Badge application. Sue was especially helpful.

We appreciate all their help and kindness and want people to know how helpful they are.

I HOLDEN
Rishton

THE Preston by-pass, now the M6, was Britain's first motorway and has changed Lancashire socially and economically. It is 50 years old later this year and an exhibition is to be staged at the Museum of Lancashire. Readers have lots of memories...

Looking back at driving's golden age

YOUR article on the 50th birthday (Vision, August) of the M6 brought back many memories.

I was an RAC patrolman from 1963 to 1968 and worked the M6 and the area around it, from Thelwall in the south to where it ended at Carnforth in the north. I first patrolled on a motorcycle combination through rain, snow, fog – you name it! – and then got a van and Landrover.

At certain times in the early days the motorway was so quiet that I could walk across the carriageway to check breakdowns on the other side. It saved a lot of mileage and fuel by simply crossing the road.

The main problem was vehicle maintenance. In those days there was none!

People heading to the south coast from Scotland would load their cars with everything bar the kitchen sink, but an oil change and new filter were not on the agenda.

There was no speed limit on the new M6, so drivers would drive hard to see what their vehicles could do and then blow up around Preston. The northbound drivers generally blew up around Shap on the A6.

The result? All the families got stuck, sometimes in the middle of the night, with no money and no credit cards.

I had to get them accommodation and get their car to a garage.

The garages around Preston were full of items left in lieu of money for repairs. Some people even wanted to leave members of the family! I think divorce was on the cards later.

There were cases of drivers stopping to picnic on the hard shoulder, or stopping to admire the view.

There were accidents, of course, and there was no central crash barrier in those days, so drivers did U-turns!

Looking back I was single and I enjoyed working long hours. I had some good mates and I made lifelong friendships with the garage owners. It felt good to get people on their way again or get them accommodation until they could sort out their repairs.

R PICKUP
Poulton-le-Fylde

ME and a pal drove up the old A6 to take a look at the newly opened Preston by-pass.

The new road, now the M6, offered the prospect of unrestricted travel for a few miles around Preston.

Alas, hang on a minute...there



● M6 patrol memories - Mr Pickup (see letter, left) who was an RAC man on the day the M6 opened.

was a tailback at the Tickled Trout hotel. It seemed there had been an accident – a motorist had stopped in the outside lane to talk to a motorcyclist on the central reservation. Another car ran into the back of the first car and flipped over.

I remember the occupants all bandaged up and waiting to get into the ambulance. One car was a Standard Vanguard while the offending car, stopped in the outside lane, was a police car!

We all had things to learn about motorway driving in those days.

Only six years later they started to make the two lanes into three as part of the extended M6. I wonder why they didn't do three in the first place.

The press reported that these new roads would be known as motorways. I remember thinking that that was a silly name!

A ANDREWS
St Annes

I STILL have my first recollection of the M6 like a film in my brain. I remember it vividly and I can still play it back in my mind!

I used to be a member of a rambling club in Morecambe and every second Saturday we used to get on a Ribble coach with a very good driver called Jim. We were on our way home from the Lakes when a driver misjudged his overtaking. He ended up crossing the central reservation and careered down the wrong side of the motorway.

I remember watching the driver fighting for control, first on two wheels and then on the other two wheels. He managed to stop on the central reservation. The two men inside looked stunned.

It was a miracle there had been no oncoming traffic.

Readers may have realised that it was before crash barriers became the norm. It was a case of "live and learn".

J M GARDNER
Heysham

THE August edition of Vision requested memories of the M6 – I remember the work well.

At the time I was living in Ribbleson and used to fish on the River Ribble at Samlesbury.

I fished at Higher Brockholes Farm, farmed by Mr Joe Wright, just below Red Scar Wood down to Samlesbury Church.

I saw most of the work in progress as we had to use a lane to the farm under the bridge.

I also drove the length of the road on the first day it opened.

JOSEPH WILLIAMS
Ashton

Young, bored, nothing to do?

ACTIVITIES galore are now listed for young people on a new website.

The new site enables people aged 11 to 25 to find a huge range of things to do in their area. Activities include sports, hobbies, arts, crafts, education and music activities.

The Go4itsite, at www.lancashire.gov.uk/yps, also offers young people the chance to find places to go and people to talk to.

There are also links to sources of information, advice and guidance on all manner of issues of interest to young people.

Possible cash help for groups is also detailed. Groups to be funded so far include Shell's Belles in Burnley, and Pendle Cheerleading Squad, who both performed at the launch.

County Councillor Jennifer Mein, Cabinet member for Children and Young People, said: "The site is terrific – it's very interactive, allowing young people to tell us of further activities."

WHAT YOU SAY:
'They have to be kept busy'



SOCIALLY useful work such as gardening for elderly neighbours is the way ahead for young people, according to Susan Hewitt.

Susan, of Lower Penwortham, said: "The elderly would benefit and the youngsters would gain a skill for the future."

"It would also integrate the generations."

"Many young people seem to have lost the ability to entertain themselves. They benefit from being encouraged to do useful activities – rather than just having everything provided for them."



ROBERT Ashworth, of Lostock Hall, said:

"When I was a teenager people belonged to youth clubs and scouts. Now, there is a problem of young people hanging around on corners."

"They do need things to do – but I think they like just hanging around."



PLENTY of lively activities are needed for young people, according to Jane Sherliker of Lostock Hall.

She said: "Parents fear not knowing what their children are doing."

"My own son used to enjoy things such as juggling and skateboarding."

"A website listing activities is a good thing."

TO CELEBRATE the third annual Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture we are offering readers the chance to win a scrumptious hamper crammed full of tasty Lancashire treats.

Entries can be made online at: www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision

The festival, selected by Enjoy England as one of the country's top tourism events, offers an exciting array of activities for all the family across the Pennine Lancashire districts of Blackburn with Darwen, Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle, Ribble Valley and Rossendale.

Events and experiences at the festival range from gourmet short breaks, culinary canal cruises and pony trekking picnics to steam train lunches, champagne balloon flights, ale trails and brewery tours.

Come rain or shine thousands of food lovers will experience gastronomic adventures across the county as the area celebrates its fantastic food and culture like never before.

With over 60 mouth watering events taking place over the course of the festival there really is something for everybody to get their teeth into. The festival looks forward to welcoming one and all to sample the delights of Lancashire's larder and sample the county's famous hospitality.

Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food & Culture

www.penninelancashirefood.co.uk



Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture is supported by many local businesses, the councils of Pennine Lancashire, and Lancashire County Council.

Festival programmes featuring all the events are available at Pennine Lancashire's Tourist Information Centres as well as online at www.penninelancashirefood.co.uk

Main Festival Information Desks, Blackburn Visitor Centre 01254 688040, Discover Pendle Centre 01282 856186. Brochures and some tickets are also available from Burnley TIC 01282 664421, Hyndburn Information Centre 01254 872595 and Ribble Valley TIC 01200 425566, Rossendale Information Centre 01706 227911.

Pennine Lancashire festival of Food and Culture is organised by Elevate on behalf of all partners and is sponsored by Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board and North West Development Agency.

To be in with a chance of winning this delicious hamper just answer this simple question.

Which organisation has just selected the Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture as one of their top tourism events?

Entries, by Wednesday 17 September, to be sent to: Pennine Food Competition, Vision, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ.

NEWS BRIEFS

Library is open to all

CHORLEY Library has been named "the most disability-friendly local public service" in Chorley and South Ribble.

The Harold Rimmer Memorial Award was presented by Chorley and South Ribble Disability Forum.

The award, created in honour of one of the forum's founding members and long-term chairman who died last year, is given to shops, businesses or a public service that shows excellence in understanding the needs of disabled customers.

Green pupils

POLICE and county council staff worked together to spread the message of green issues and safety in **Pendle** schools.

Seven schools met at Higham St John's CE Primary School and pupils learned how to reduce their carbon footprint. The lessons also involved learning literacy and children were also taught about cycle safety.

Berlin visit

YOUNG people from **Rosendale** have been making friends in Berlin.

Aimed at spreading international friendship, the visit included music-making, dance, theatre, photography and sports.

Spook ambassadors beat the book blues

By Neil Graham

A BOOK with a definitely spooky feel is being adopted by dozens of Lancashire "ambassadors" to encourage people to read.

The Spook's Apprentice, by **Wyre** author Joseph Delaney, appeals to children and adults alike with its universally popular – but dark – themes of folklore, history, and ghosts.

A number of Lancashire towns appear in the book – think of Priestown for **Preston** and Chippingdon for **Chipping**. The book takes the reader into cathedral catacombs in search of warlocks and spooks – wherever could they be!

Every library in the county is recruiting local celebrities to read and adopt the book and then be ambassadors for the pleasure of reading. Recruits so far include soccer ace Sir Tom Finney and dozens of county councillors and local personalities.

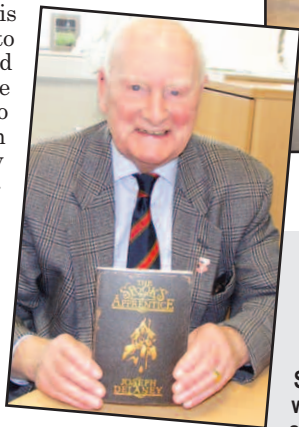
The Lancashire Reads project is part of a wider programme to get people learning and reading.

Between September and October there will be a series of library events, including author visits, cookery demonstrations, writing workshops and spooky story sessions in county libraries.

Libraries will be the main focal point, but the programme will also include the county's Record Office, **Helmshore** Mills Textile Museum and **Padiham's** Gawthorpe Hall.



●WRITE approach: County Councillor Tim Ashton, Lytham Library's ambassador. Inset is Sir Tom Finney, former Preston North End and England soccer ace.



LIBRARY EVENTS

Scary stories, competitions, craft and writing workshops – librarians plan something for everyone on the theme of reading the Spook's Apprentice. Dozens of events are planned – the following are just examples:

■1-3pm. 27 Sept. Apprentice workshop, suitable for ages 5-11. **Helmshore** Mills Textile Museum. Entry £1.

■1-4pm. 26 Oct. Halloween happenings and ghostly games. Gawthorpe Hall, **Padiham**. Entry £1.
■10.30-11.30am. 1 Nov. Make a Spook's Apprentice craft session. **Ormskirk** library.
■10-11am. 10 Nov. Spooky play morning, for pre-school children and carers. **Tarleton** library.

There are many more events. You can check your local library (there are 76 in the county) or visit: www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries/events

NEWS BRIEFS

Gypsy culture on display

TALES of Appleby Fair and caravan life were on the curriculum when gypsies met schoolchildren in **Hyndburn**.

The gypsy, Roma and traveller celebrations were held as part of a nationwide drive to explain gypsy culture and history.

A day's activities were held in **Oswaldtwistle**, with support from Lancashire County Council's Traveller Education Service.

Co-ordinator Gill Cookson said: "Few people understand how gypsies live their lives."

"In the field of education, for instance, gypsy children find it hard to attend school regularly as their family way of life involves many moves."

"Some schools can adapt to that, but few gypsy children stay at school until they are 16."

The celebrations included gypsy cooking.

On the mat

SENIOR county council decision-makers will be open to public questions at two Cabinet Question Times this month.

The first session will be at 7.15pm on Thursday 4 September at **Burnley** Youth Theatre on Queen's Park Road, Burnley.

The second will be at 7.15pm on Tuesday 30 September at **Barton** Village Hall on Garstang Road, Barton.

POW! ZAP! WAM! KAPOW!

SUPERMANNY

CHILDCARE HERO

PHONE:

0800 195 0137

WWW.LANCASHIRE.GOV.UK/CHILDCARE

Lancashire
County Council

...THIS LOOKS LIKE A JOB FOR...

CALL NOW!...

...FOR ADVICE ABOUT CAREERS IN CHILDCARE...

Do you know what to do in an emergency?

EVERYONE knows that calling 999 will connect you with the emergency services, but what else can you do when an incident means that you must remain in your home?



How to prepare for an emergency...

- Keep a list of useful numbers such as your GP and local hospital.
- Keep a stock of essential items such as a battery-powered radio, torch, first aid kit, canned food and bottled water.
- Make sure you and your family know where all these items are kept.

A NEW credit-card sized information card has been produced to remind you about important details, that may help you during such events.

On the card you can find telephone contact numbers for NHS direct and the Environment Agency floodline, along with useful websites and the various frequencies for BBC Radio Lancashire.

It is small enough to fit into a wallet or purse, or even to leave next to the telephone.

The card has been produced by the Lancashire Resilience Forum, which includes representatives from local government, the emergency services, health bodies and other key local organisations.

Andy Cooke, Assistant Chief Constable and Chair of the forum, said: "Sometimes it can take a major incident for people to start thinking about preparing for an emergency. It's important to have a few basic items in your house such as a torch and a first aid kit.

"This card provides some hints and tips, along with useful telephone numbers that you might need. It's a simple and effective way to remember important details that could make a difference to your family's safety."

Copies of the card will be available from September in venues such as pharmacies, district council buildings, police stations, fire stations and county council buildings, such as libraries.

For more information, visit the Lancashire Resilience Forum website at www.lancsresilience.org.uk

Dialling 999 for the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service

WITH 1,300 firefighters, 60 fire engines and 39 fire stations in Lancashire, help is always at hand in an emergency.

But when a major incident is underway - such as extensive flooding or a major fire - even those resources can be at full stretch.

Don't hesitate to dial 999 to contact the fire service but please be sure that it is a "life or death" situation to save life or prevent serious property damage before dialling.

All fires justify a 999 response, because even a small fire can develop into a major blaze if left to burn.

Flooding could require a 999 call, but only if someone's trapped because of flooding, or floodwater is approaching electrical installations.

High winds can topple chimneys and tear off loose roof tiles. These situations might need firefighters to make things safe and prevent masonry falling down.

Taking care on darker nights

CRIME in Lancashire has fallen over the past few years, but longer winter nights can make some people worry more about crime and personal safety.

Lancashire Constabulary has put together the following safety tips as the nights start drawing in:

Looking after your home

Alarms

Fit visible burglar alarms and good outside lighting to put burglars off. Test it frequently to make sure it works.

Locks

Lock all doors and windows, even if you are at home. When you go out, always lock the door and close the windows - even if you are just going out for a short time. Fit dead locks to the doors and don't leave the keys where they can be seen. Remember to lock the side gate and shed.

Lights

Remember to draw the curtains when you go out at night and leave a light on.

Install security lights to illuminate the front porch and/or the garden.

Also bear in mind

- Mark important and expensive items with your postcode and house number using special security markers. Keep a record of the make, model and serial numbers of all electrical equipment.
- Keep shrubs, hedges and large plants cut back. They can provide a screen for thieves to work behind.
- Keep your boundary fences, walls and gates in good repair as they provide a barrier to would-be thieves.
- Buy home insurance. It's cheaper than paying out to replace any stolen possessions.



Flood risk

FLOODING can pose a serious hazard to lives and property. By taking simple precautions you can minimise the damage caused by flooding.

The Environment Agency can tell you if your home or business is at risk of flooding from rivers or the sea; simply call the Floodline on 0845 988 1188 or log on to www.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood

If you are at risk the Environment Agency's Floodline can give you advice on what to do before, during and after a flood.

The Environment Agency also offers direct flood warnings to homes and business at high risk. To find out if you are eligible for this service, call the Floodline on 0845 988 1188.



Staying safe, staying healthy

DURING emergencies and incidents which lead to you remaining in your home, it is useful to keep a first aid kit and include non-prescription medicines such as paracetamol.

This is useful for dealing with minor illnesses, such as a cold, headache etc. Always remember to follow the official advice and directions when taking medicine.

If forced to remain at home, due to circumstance, you won't be able to simply head out to the shops.

Influenza's influences

Would you know what to do if a flu pandemic struck?

An influenza pandemic would involve a new version of the flu virus, which could spread relatively quickly and lead to more severe symptoms than normal.

The health service and other public organisations are prepared for this

eventuality, but a flu pandemic would affect how certain services can be delivered.

If a flu-pandemic developed, you are asked to follow official advice issued through the media. In the event of pandemic, the advice would be to stay at home if you have flu. Don't try to be a hero by going into work as you could spread it further.

Flu pandemics do not happen very frequently. There were only three in the last century, but it is important to know what to do if one should happen.

There is also a national stock of medication that may help to reduce the spread of the virus and possibly shorten the duration of the illness.

In preparation for a pandemic it is a good idea to identify a "flu friend" who may be able to collect your medication if you are ill and carry out other small tasks.

For help in an emergency...

Dial **999** for Police, Fire and Ambulance

For advice...

- Call NHS Direct for health advice
0845 4647 or visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk
- Call the Environment Agency's Floodline on
0845 988 1188 for flood advice or visit
www.environment-agency.gov.uk/flood



Home from home

A special type of person is always needed to invite others into their homes. Fortunately, Lancashire is not short of open-hearted helpers

MANY people would agree that those who foster children have a heart of gold.

But did you know about couples who foster or support disabled adults to live in their own homes?

Here, Andrew Lynn talks to a couple from Oswaldtwistle and explores how the Adult Placement Service works for both carers and individuals with disabilities.

LIVING in a 300-year-old rustic country farmhouse in rural Lancashire with an open log fire and stone walls could be deemed the dream house for most people.

For Donna and Jane, both aged 32, this is exactly where they live. But it's more than a house – it's home from home.

Donna has lived here for 13 years and Jane for six years. Both have learning disabilities and need full-time support. They both live with Lynda Winrow and Katrina Bird after being placed by Lancashire County Council's Adult Placement Service.

Lynda, a senior youth worker, supports Donna and Jane along with Katrina, their full-time carer. Katrina also looks after her elderly mother at home.

"Before Donna and Jane came to live with us we looked after three other disabled people in addition to a number of

respite and short-break placements", explains Lynda.

"Kelly and Colin eventually got their own flat in a supported living scheme in Accrington. Linda went to another carer."

The county council's Adult Placement Service recruits carers from the general public to provide long-term placements or short-term breaks for people with learning disabilities. The type and length of placement depends on the skills and circumstances of the carers.

The placement offers disabled people the opportunity to develop their social skills, increase confidence, broaden their experience and build relationships with, and receive appropriate support from, approved carers.

For carers, it can be extremely rewarding and often means a full-time career for many.

"Matching and placing disabled people with a carer that best meets their needs, their circumstances, their wishes and aspirations is the most important aspect of the placement", says Lynda.

"Both the person and the carer have to be comfortable with each other and happy with the situation. It's all well and good wanting to live here in a cottage farmhouse, for example, but not if you don't like dogs and animals!"

Although Donna and Jane don't need help with personal care, they do need full-time support. They are encouraged to be as independent as possible and this often means giving them a lift or arranging a



↑ HOME sweet home: Lynda Winrow helps two other people in life by opening up her Oswaldtwistle home.

taxi so they can meet friends, attend college or a day centre, or supporting them to take part in leisure activities.

"We have spent a lot of time helping Donna and Jane build an adult life for themselves," says Lynda.

"This has meant a lot of initial hard work opening up opportunities for them to meet their social needs and putting things in place so they are able to do the things they want to do to like go bowling, shopping, go to the cinema or meet friends if they wish.

"Donna and Jane are very much part of our family. They go to our family weddings, parties and even to my work Christmas do," quips Lynda.

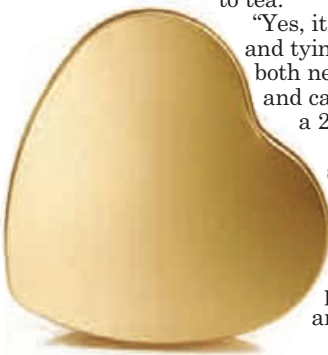
"Obviously they have their own family who we get on very well with".

All carers undergo police and health checks and are approved following an extensive assessment, approval process and training. The county council then provides ongoing support for carers through its Adult Placement service. It arranges respite, short breaks, advises on current legislation, and discusses any problems.

"For me, the main reward is to see people grow in confidence, blossom and develop as ordinary members of society", says Lynda. "It's wonderful to see them flourish – to be able to make their own decisions, manage their own money, take part in social and leisure activities, and invite friends to tea.

"Yes, it can be challenging and tying at times as they both need full-time support and can't really be left. It's a 24/7 job.

"However, every person is different and has different needs. We get paid but it's not about the money. I would encourage people to consider it and give it a go."



YOU CAN HELP

You can make a real difference to someone's life by sharing your life and your home. It's nice to make a difference - even better to make new friends!

For more information about the Adult Placement Service please contact 01257 248116 or e-mail: adult.placement@ssd.lancscc.gov.uk



Loan arranger

With the general cost of living on the rise I'm struggling to make ends meet. A friend has offered to put me in touch with someone who lends money to people in my situation but I'm unsure whether to go ahead? Something just doesn't seem right.

Businesses that lend money must be licensed by the Office of Fair Trading and if they are not then they are committing an offence.

Such businesses are often referred to as "Loan Sharks". They generally operate by charging extortionate interest rates and may use threatening or violent behaviour if payments are late.

If you are thinking of taking out a loan then make sure you borrow from a licensed moneylender and make sure you shop around.

Also think very carefully if the loan requires you to put your house up as secu-

urity for the loan. If you become unable to repay the loan you may lose your home.

There are a number of organisations which offer free, impartial advice for people with debt problems so it is always worth seeking advice before going ahead.

Citizens' Advice Bureau – details of your local CAB can be found in the phonebook or by visiting www.citizensadvice.org.uk
National Debt Line - 0808 808 4000
Consumer Credit Counselling Service - 0800 138 1111

For general consumer advice contact Consumer Direct on 08454 040506



Mendelssohn Intermezzo; Nocturne; Scherzo from Midsummer Night's Dream

Michael Cutting Premiere (Young Composer in Residence)

Britten Simple Symphony

Mozart Serenata Notturna

Beethoven Symphony No.1

Performances by Lancashire's Professional Orchestra The Lancashire Sinfonietta, **Director Lyn Fletcher.**

Saturday 11th October
The Minster, Preston

Sunday 12th October
The Platform, Morecambe.

Lancashire Sinfonietta

Tickets: £8.50 (£5.00 conc.) Box Office: **01257 516444** (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm) for Preston
Box Office: **01524 582803** for Morecambe



New look for schools? It's child's play

CLASS ACT

You can find out more about the work of the Environmental Projects Team and developing school grounds online at: www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/envproj or call (01772) 534197 for more information.

SCHOOL grounds are becoming vibrant places to learn, play, rest and socialise thanks to the work of the county council's Environmental Projects Team.

Our team of specialists has worked with countless schools to turn green but uninspiring fields and functional but boring yards into everything from wildlife havens to learning "amphitheatres".

Many of the projects include a raft of individual elements creating vibrant school sites that have a purpose throughout the school day.

The final project can include almost anything from small planting areas to larger adventure playgrounds or fitness zones.

Areas such as nature gardens that provide a nice place to sit at lunchtime can become living outdoor classrooms later in the day where pupils can learn about nature. And seating areas where pupils are dropped off by parents in the morning double-up as outdoor classrooms and performance areas.

As environmental projects officer Rosie Pritchard explains, the inspiration comes from the children, parents and teachers: "These are whole school projects and as such the whole school community plays a part in the process."

"Participants say what they would really like and we explore how these ideas will fit in and add value to school life."

"Our role is to use their enthusiasm and work with the school to produce a professional plan, help put together bids for external funding and stay with the project until all the work is completed."

"No two projects ever look the same but they all bring very positive benefits."

TOP RIGHT → Hillside Primary School, Skelmersdale – a willow tunnel makes an interesting alternative activity for pupils not using the fitness "trim trail" elsewhere in the school grounds, learning about horticulture in the newly created planting zones or relaxing in the quiet garden at the front of the school.

RIGHT → Gillibrand Primary School, Chorley – children here can get back to nature in an allotment, vegetable plot and bog garden. Or sit out in style under a covered pergola or try out their dramatic ideas on the stage area.

BOTTOM LEFT ↓ Carnforth High School – has created a number of habitat areas including a pond, bog garden, wildflower meadow and fruit and vegetable patches alongside a central seating and meeting area.

BOTTOM RIGHT ↓ St James Primary School, Skelmersdale – ever had a lesson in an outdoor amphitheatre? For children at this West Lancashire school it's an almost everyday event and parents can use it as a seating area too!

"We provide the expertise and support and work with the schools to secure the funding, yet the time and money is repaid many times over thanks to the way in which the projects contribute to school life."

"At its simplest level a small garden area can become a wildlife haven, a place for children to relax and learn, food can be grown there and it can also greatly improve the appearance of the school from the outside."

The partnership between the county council and schools on these projects bring countless benefits. These include:

- Exciting new opportunities to learn and enhance the school's curriculum
- Enhanced environments for play, rest and socialising
- New partnerships between the school and the wider community with many facilities being available for extra curricular use.



Visit our fun, new world of knowledge

A WHOLE new world of friendship and activity is now available at the click of a button.

Hundreds of local community groups, clubs and societies across the county are now listed in one place. Lancashire Lantern wiCI, part of the county council's Library and Information Service, is a new facility with information and contact details for over a thousand non-profit organisations, community, faith, voluntary and support groups, clubs and societies.

Whether you are looking to join a tennis or cricket club, take part in a yoga or dance class, attend a baby group, trace your family tree, or want advice from a support or self-help group, you can now find information at a click of a button or by contacting your local library.

The data has been pulled together, updated and made available to the public via an interactive website replacing the traditional card index system previously held in libraries.

The information will be available to library staff and the public on the internet.

David Lightfoot, head of Library and Information Service, explained: "The introduction of Lantern wiCI is the first step in an overhaul of the Lancashire Lantern – our local studies web resource."

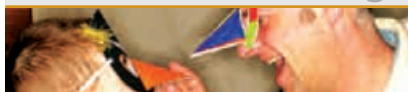
"This system is about making information about local groups more available to local people, whatever their interests."

Organisations wishing to be listed can register for free and submit their own details online or by visiting their local library.

GET BUSY, START ENJOYING

Volunteering, clubs, social activities...it is all available at your library or via: www.lancashire.gov.uk/lanternwiCI

Summer listings



Wed 3 September
10.30-1.30. Around the **Wycoller** Valley. Moderate walk. Meet Pepper Hill Barn, Wycoller.

Sat 6 September
10.30-4.45. Boulsworth and Crow Hill. Hard walk, bring packed lunch. Panoramic views of majestic moorland. Meet Pepper Hill Barn, **Wycoller**.
1.30-3.30. Super Saturday: Natural Curiosity. **Lancaster** City Museum.

Sun 7 September
11-3. **Wyre** estuary wonder walk with rangers. Moderate walk. Meet Wyre Estuary Country Park. Adults £3, concessions £1.50. Book on 01995 602125.

Sat 13 September
12-5. Heritage Doors Open Day. Children's activity 2-4pm. **Turton Tower**.

Sun 14 September
11-11.45am. Historic vehicle cavalcade. **Turton Tower**.
12-5. Heritage open day – free admission. Queen St Mill Textile Museum, **Burnley**.
12-5. Heritage open day. Free admission. **Helmshore** Mills Textile Museum.
12.15-1. Historic vehicle cavalcade. **Helmshore** Mills Textile Museum.
1-5. Heritage open day – free admission. Gawthorpe Hall, **Padiham**.
1.30-2.15. Historic vehicle cavalcade. Gawthorpe Hall, **Padiham**.

2.30-3.30. Historic vehicle cavalcade. Queen St Mill Textile Museum, **Burnley**.

Sat 20 September
11-1; 2-4. Boat Wars! **Lancaster** Maritime Museum. Small additional charge. Pre-booking required – tel 01524 64637.
12-4. Exhibition of **Padiham** archives, inc 100 years of photography. Padiham Town Hall ballroom. Refreshments available. Admission £1. Proceeds go to Padiham Town Council Archives Fund.
12-5. Sat and Sun Victorian weekend. **Helmshore** Mills Textile Museum. Charge for admission.
1-4. Behind the scenes – a Victorian childhood. Judges' Lodgings, **Lancaster**. Pre-booking required.
1.30-4. Moderate walk, moors and beautiful **Tarnbrook** Valley. Trumper friendly (book on 01995 640557). Meet Tarnbrook, Forest of Bowland.

Sun 21 September
12-4. Exhibition of **Padiham** archives, inc 100 years of photography. Padiham Town Hall ballroom. Refreshments available. Admission £1. Proceeds go to Padiham Town Council Archives Fund.
1-4. Behind the scenes – a Victorian childhood. Judges' Lodgings, **Lancaster**. Pre-booking required.

Sat 27 September
9.30-3.30. Walk of the Wild Side. Guided walk beyond Boulsworth Hill looking at moorland management. Hard walk. Bring packed lunch. Meet Pepper Hill Barn, **Wycoller**. Book on 01282 870253.
2-3. Keeper's Tour. **Helmshore** Mills Textile Museum. Small extra charge, pre-booking required.

Sun 28 September
1, 2, 3. Meet the butler and housekeeper. Gawthorpe Hall, **Padiham**. Small extra charge.

You can find lots of information about events on:

www.lancsmuseums.gov.uk and at www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside

Useful phone numbers

Bowland Visitor Centre, **Beacon Fell**
Country Park 01995 640557
Wycoller Country Park
01282 870253
Spring Wood Picnic Site
01254 825187
Lancashire Countryside Service main office
01772 534709
Museums' main office
01772 534061
Museum of Lancashire 01772 534075.
Lancaster Maritime Museum
01524 382264.
Judges' Lodgings 01524 32808.
Lancaster Castle 01524 64998.
Lancaster City Museum 01524 64637.
Helmshore Mills Textile Museum
01706 226459.
Fleetwood Museum 01253 8766221.

LOOK LIVELY

Trash art is great fun!

CHILDREN and families are being invited to experience and sense the unusual display of recycled sculptures on display in Preston.

The Museum of Lancashire on Stanley Street in Preston is currently hosting the All Round Art exhibition by artist Jan Niedojadlo.

All Round Art, which has enjoyed success across Britain and Europe, is made up of huge interactive sculptures, or "podules", inspired by nature and made from a range of recycled materials.

In what artist Jan calls "Art to be...experienced with your whole body", visitors are invited to climb inside the podules and explore the distinct worlds that have been created.

Children can clamber inside the "shell" podule, inspired by a daydream on a beach or be transported to outer space through the space-themed podule, "Orbit".

Smells

Charlotte Steels, assistant keeper at Lancashire County Council's Museum of Lancashire, said: "These fantastic sculptures will stimulate the senses and fire your imagination as you experience the many different textures, lights, sounds and smells encased within each podule."

The exhibition runs until 31 October. For information on museum art and activities, visit www.lancashire.gov.uk/museums

Double go-ahead

■ **PLANS** for a new purpose-built register office in Burnley were given the go-ahead after planning permission was granted.

The office, provided by Lancashire County Council, will modernise all registration events – such as weddings and partnerships – for people in the area.

County Councillor Marcus Johnstone, Cabinet member for Community Planning and Partnerships,

said: "The site will provide sufficient parking and transport links.

"This will 'future proof' the Registration Service for the residents of Burnley."

■ **A DANCE** troupe will be running workshops in Burnley and Bacup, thanks to a Lancashire County Council grant.

Performances and workshops by the Kathakali troupe are being supported by a £1,000 grant.

Pupils power to battery success



● **THE BEST** battery recyclers in Lancashire are pupils at Winmarleigh CE Primary School in Wyre. Pupils at the school collected a huge 3.2 kg of batteries per pupil and won first prize in the county council competition.

The pupils are pictured receiving their laptop-computer prize from County Councillor John Shedwick, Wyre Lancashire Local chair, and Councillor Ronald Shuan, vice-chair.

A HUGE 421,666 batteries have been diverted from county tips by an army of school children.

The primary school pupils collected batteries from toys, parents and neighbours as part of Lancashire County Council's "Tune in to Battery Recycling" scheme.

Each primary school has a clear plastic 10-litre tube that pupils and their family can put the batteries into. Once they are filled they are also given a plastic bag they can fill ready for the collection.

Andrea Cox, county council

By Chelsea Wigmore

waste management officer said: "Children love being helpful and they love to collect.

"We are marrying up both activities for the benefit of the environment. What people don't realise is that pollution from old batteries can be a major risk unless handled correctly.

"Children love pestering their parents into recycling. They are the environment's secret army."

The children have been collecting used batteries in the hope of winning a digital camcorder, laptop or digital camera

for their school.

The collections are made every term so that the batteries can be weighed for the competition. The county is split into areas so there are 12 chances to win.

To find out the schools which had collected the most batteries the total tonnage of batteries was divided by the number of pupils ensuring the school with the most batteries per pupil was rewarded.

During the last two years of the project, pupils over Lancashire have collectively recycled a massive amount of batteries weighing about 12.65 tonnes.

the opposite.

It sparkles with surprises and humour as each mother and son rediscover each other and learn unsuspected revelations which bring a new perspective, enlightenment and refreshment to their stale lives.

It made me laugh, cry, happy and sad, but never dull...

Review: Stephen Beswick, of Harris Library.

Whatever Makes You Happy is available in Lancashire libraries

VOICE OF VISION



*Fiona Sinclair
Sinfonietta manager*

The Lancashire Sinfonietta is a unique professional orchestra in the UK and is supported by the county council to bring great music to people.

In addition to an annual programme of evening concerts, it also supports a range of education and community projects.

Here Fiona Sinclair, general manager for the Lancashire Sinfonietta, explains her passion for classical music and why the county should be proud of its musical talent.

Who joins the Lancashire Sinfonietta?

The sinfonietta is made up of over 80 "home-grown" professional musicians who are also members of orchestras all over the UK. Most of the players were educated in Lancashire and were inspired by their music teachers to enter the world of classical music.

How long have you worked at the sinfonietta?

As general manager I've worked for the sinfonietta for eight years. We have a small team which runs artistic and education programmes.

What does your job involve?

"General" manager is a good and fitting description! My job involves everything from organising and marketing the concerts with our music directors, to creating projects with local groups.

What musical instrument do you play?

I'm a viola player. It's not the most glamorous instrument - violins and flutes get all the high-profile virtuoso stuff.

But violas make up the substance of the orchestra and fill in the heart of the harmony.

What is the most popular musical instrument children are choosing these days?

I think violins, flutes and clarinets are probably still among the most popular. It's becoming very cool to play one of the non-glamorous instruments though such as violas and bassoons.

What advice would you give aspiring musicians?

Keep listening to music and going to concerts.

Where does the sinfonietta perform?

We play all over the county; from schools and libraries to churches and children's centres.

What motivates you?

Helping people to enjoy our music.

What makes you smile?

Mini-Mozart concerts we hold for babies! Imagine a room full of babies taking part in their first ever musical experience with our own musicians. Some are tiny newborns and sleep all the way through. Others are completely transfixed - some even cry when the music stops!

The Lancashire Sinfonietta is unveiling its new concert season programme this month. For more information visit online at

www.lancs-sinf.com

SUMMER BOOKS

Whatever Makes You Happy By WILLIAM SUTCLIFFE

THIS is a book about relationships between mothers and their sons.

A group of mothers who are neighbours and friends each have one son, all roughly in their mid-30s, who all grew up as friends but have now left the family home, moved away, carved out relatively

successful careers and virtually have lost touch with their mums.

These "mums" feel that the mainspring and purpose to their lives has finally gone, and are relatively bored with their husbands and lives.

They feel somewhat betrayed and unappreciated by their neglectful offspring, so devise a radical plan to reconnect with them by arriving unannounced at their respective homes.

They move in for one whole week, using the element of

surprise which gains them an invitation into the lives of their sons which would otherwise have been denied. And it is around this one week of parent, child and self-discovery that the story unfolds.

The narrative is fast and punchy, an intelligent and witty indictment to the current political and social culture in which the young people of today move, about how out-of-step parents relate to their children and vice-versa.

But it is not downbeat or without hope, in fact quite

NEWS BRIEFS

Conference celebrates change

THE Lancashire Carers' Forum is holding its annual conference at the Woodlands Conference Centre in Chorley on Wednesday 10 September.

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the forum, and with this in mind, this year's conference will be a celebration event to celebrate a "decade of driving forward positive change for carers".

Carers and the county council will be recognising carers that have demonstrated courageous commitment and dedication in looking after sick, frail or disabled family or friends.

Lancashire County Council works in partnership with other agencies and the voluntary sector in providing a range of services to support carers across the county. These include short breaks, residential short breaks, day care, home care and community support. In addition, it funds local carer projects in providing local information and support.

For more information visit online at www.lancashire.gov.uk/carers

'More control' on booze - plea

COUNCILLORS will get to grips with underage drinking this month after a new report called for action to tackle teenage alcohol abuse.

A proposed plan from an Overview and Scrutiny "watch-dog" group calls for tougher labelling and advertising standards, limits on the sale of alcohol in supermarkets and new efforts to curb sales to under-18s.

Foster carers win a voice where it matters

FOSTER carers are being consulted with a view to improving the help they receive.

The county council recently embarked on a major consultation with all of Lancashire's 500-plus foster carers, to ensure that they receive the best service possible.

They were invited to a series of

consultations across the county and also received a questionnaire. Topics explored included practical and emotional support, financial matters, implementing care plans for children and young people and support in making decisions.

County Councillor Jennifer

Mein, Cabinet member for children and young people, said: "We are hugely grateful to our foster carers, who make a real difference to the lives of children and young people – offering a family for children who really need one and will benefit from one."

"We recognise that foster carers

have a wealth of knowledge we want to draw on to help improve our service.

"This consultation is part of an ongoing conversation to ensure that foster carers receive the support they need and children and young people receive the best possible care."

I say I'm Marilyn - but they call me mum

YOU CAN SHARE FOSTER JOY

People can get more information on fostering at www.lancashire.gov.uk/fostering or on 0800 1951183.

Foster carers look after one or more children of varying ages. A paid allowance, and ongoing support, is available.

AT an age when most women would be starting to take things easy, Marilyn Halstead is gearing up for the arrival of a new baby, complete with night-time bottles and nappy changes.

That's in between feeding and keeping an eye on her four lively teenagers.

Marilyn (58) is one of Lancashire County Council's 500-plus foster carers who open their homes and hearts to children who can't remain with their own families.

She admits that life at her Nelson home can be chaotic with four teenagers and a baby, as well as frequent visits from her three daughters and 10 grandchildren.

Marilyn has now been fostering for 16 years and has lost count of how many children she's looked after. Husband Peter takes it all in his stride, though he has his own sitting room for those tranquil moments.

"I try to give my foster children what I'd give my own kids," Marilyn said. "I

By Sue Becker

don't see why children in care should be any different.

"People might think we're crazy to have a house full of teenagers, but they're good kids and we get on well. They have all been here quite a long time, anyway. It all feels normal to me!"

Marilyn began considering fostering many years ago and finally decided to take the plunge after talking to one of the customers at her hairdressing salon, a senior social worker.

There have been sad times, including the loss of a fostered baby who died last year.

"But the support I got from the fostering service was brilliant," Marilyn said.

"And the rewards are huge. You get so much back from these kids, especially if they've had a bad start, when you can see them develop and start to show emotion and learn to stay within the boundaries we set.

"When they arrive, I tell them I'm Marilyn. But they all call me mum."



●MUM'S the word: card-carrying foster carer Marilyn from Nelson.

Let us know if you foster

DO you have someone else's child living with you? Or is anyone else caring for your child?

If so, and it lasts longer than four weeks, it could be a private fostering arrangement and by law you must let Lancashire County Council know.

Private fostering is when a child lives with someone who is not a close relative. A close relative would be a brother, sister, aunt, uncle, or grandparent.

Lancashire County Council needs to know of private fostering in order to offer help to those involved.

County Councillor Jennifer Mein, Cabinet member for children and young people, said: "It's our responsibility to check on child welfare and to offer support both to the private foster carer, the parent and the child."

For more information, contact Children's Integrated Services on: freephone 0800 195183.

SURE START, EARLY YEARS & CHILDCARE SERVICE

Would you like to work in childcare but don't have any qualifications? Then Making Choices could be the course for you!

We will be running courses as follows:

East Lancashire

Date: Tuesday 16th September

Time: 9.30 to 12.30

Venue: **Fairfield Children's Centre**, Fairfield Street, Accrington.

How long: 5 weeks (3 hours per week)

Date: Friday 19th September

Time: 9.30 to 12.30

Venue: **Burnley Football Club**, Harry Potts Way, Burnley.

How long: 5 weeks (3 hours per week)

Preston Area

Date: Tuesday 16th September

Time: 9.30 to 12.00

Venue: **Preston West Children's Centre**, Ashton Primary School, Ainsdale Drive, Ashton, Preston.

How long: 6 weeks (2.5 hours per week)



To find out more about this FREE course or to book a place please contact Mike Barnes on 0800 195 0137.

You can book online via our website www.lancashire.gov.uk/childcare and follow the Recruitment link to Making Choices and booking form.



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

If you have a child born on or between 1 September 2003 and 31 August 2005 your child is entitled to a free part-time pre-school nursery education place from the start of the Autumn Term 2008 commencing in September.

A free place consists of a maximum of five sessions per week and no more than seventy sessions for the Autumn 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



New chapter starts for revamp of libraries

Modernisation of libraries on the books with £1.1m plan for local venues across Lancashire

LOCAL libraries across the county have been earmarked for major refurbishment.

County Councillor Anne Brown, cabinet member for Adult and Community Services, has approved the investment of an additional £1.1 million to transform and modernise library buildings across the county.

The project is the second phase of Lancashire County Council's Library Regenerate Programme.

The aim of the scheme is to create modern, attractive and flexible spaces to deliver the wide range of new and traditional services.

Councillor Brown, said: "Our libraries are going through a period of huge investment and modernisation.

"We are investing heavily in developing our libraries service so it is fit for the 21st century and, more importantly, it meets the needs and aspirations of local communities.

"Our libraries should be at the heart of local communities and benefit everyone, young and old alike, not just those

who like to borrow books.

"On the completion of this second phase of our regenerate programme, ten libraries covering ten districts will have been refurbished."

Libraries in **Carnforth**, **Ingol** and **Poulton** have already been refurbished as part of the programme and £400,000 has been set aside to redevelop **Crawshawbooth** Library.

In October last year, the county council also announced a successful bid for a £1.39m grant from the Big Lottery Fund to extend and refurbish **Colne**, (£325,000), **Haslingden** (£325,000) and **Lancaster** (£650,000) libraries as part of its YourSpace community project.

rSpace is designed to attract new people, young and old, and local groups into libraries.

Public consultation will take place for each library redevelopment.

For more information about the library service or to find your local library, visit their website at: www.lancashire.gov.uk/libraries

It's blooming great

Rosebud's finance boost for business



●ROSY: (left to right) County Councillor Niki Penney with company owner Nadia Yousuf and County Councillor Vali Patel.

LANCASHIRE businesses are blooming with help and financial support from Rosebud Finance.

Companies across the county, ranging from a deli to a bridal design shop, have received help from Lancashire County Council.

The Rosebud scheme, managed by the council's economic development department, Lancashire County Developments Limited (LCDL), is helping companies to achieve success.

Preston-based bridal-wear shop Dil Pasand received Rosebud finance to help Nadia Yousuf open the business which brings together eastern and

western influences to wedding dress design.

Lancashire Deli Limited, based in Leyland, offers a delicious range of food including homemade soups and baguettes. Many of their products are sourced locally to further help investment in the area.

In **Fylde**, Garden Doctor is providing landscaping, professional maintenance and design services.

These three companies are examples of the 300 businesses that have been helped by Rosebud Finance.

The award-winning scheme provides loans of £5,000 upwards to new and existing businesses at competitive rates.

All types of businesses are eligible as long as they are based in, or relocating to, the county.

County Councillor Niki Penney, chair of LCDL, said: "These companies are just a few of the diverse businesses that Rosebud has supported and show how much talent there is within Lancashire.

"Rosebud listens and invests in people's ideas. It taps into the entrepreneurial spirit found within the county that has seen so many of our Rosebud companies go on to tremendous success."

To find out more about Rosebud contact **01772 536652** or visit www.lcdl.co.uk

Small science

ALBANY Science College, **Chorley**, has been given a £3,000 boost by one of the country's leading scientific academies.

The grant, from the Royal Society, has been used to fund a specially tailored microbiology project for pupils.

Twelve pupils from years nine and 10 completed a series of laboratory sessions to introduce them to practical microbiology skills.

The school was also able to buy a variety of specialist equipment.

Science teacher Christian Towers said: "This really has been a unique experience for the pupils.

"This equipment isn't normally available in secondary schools."

NEWS BRIEFS

Folk boost

LANCASHIRE lovers of folk music and dance are winners with a £4,000 grant to support their activities.

Fleetwood-based Folkus are to stage a programme across Lancashire of folk music, song and dance.

The group runs workshops, live events and provides free advice to less-established folk groups. Members will run a residential week of music-making in the Ribbles Valley in 2009.

Lottery joy

THE Friends of the Museum of Lancashire in Preston has received a grant for £4,400 from the National Lottery Fund Awards for All.

The grant will be used to buy equipment to support workshops linked to the current All Round Art exhibition.

The grant will help community groups, including a disabled group, a group with visual impairment and a youth group, to learn about the exhibition.

The groups will be working with two artists specialising in ceramics and audio-visual production from community development company PRESCAP.

SCHOOL ADMISSIONS IN LANCASHIRE SEPTEMBER 2009

SECONDARY SCHOOLS

If your child is currently in his/her final year at primary school (Year 6) then you must apply for a secondary school place for September 2009 during September and early October 2008.

If you are a Lancashire resident you must apply on-line or complete Lancashire's secondary application form (even if you prefer a secondary school situated in another Local Authority).

THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 17/10/08.

Late applications may not be included in the initial allocation process for school places.

APPLY ON-LINE:
www.lancashire.gov.uk/e-admissions

Last year 4,485 Lancashire parents applied on-line. (17.4% of applications). The system is quick, easy to use and secure. It also has links to school websites and Ofsted information.

If you do not receive information about secondary school admissions for September 2009 during early September 2008, then you must urgently contact your child's current primary school or your Area Education Office (see below).

Advice/information is available from:	
North Lancashire	01524 581163
South Lancashire	01772 531813 / 531819
East Lancashire	01254 220708

Voluntary Aided and Foundation schools also require a supplementary form to be completed. Parents may obtain this from the school for which they have expressed a preference.



The new lady of the manor

A GROUP of disabled people are celebrating their new life and independence after moving into their own "extra care" flats in **Fleetwood**.

Laidleys Manor, a new three-storey building on the seafront, consists of 18 self-contained tenanted flats, each designed for disabled people who need a moderate to high level of personal care and 24 hour support. As well as individual flats, residents also have communal areas.

New resident Glenys, 61, is now receiving an Individualised Budget payment from the county

council which she is able to spend on support. This includes personal care, access to leisure services, hobbies, and adult education courses.

Glenys said: "I am moving into my own flat and will have my own front door key. The flats overlook the sea - it's wonderful.

"I have chosen the organisation that will support me. I am going to use my budget to employ someone to support me at college to take a computer course.

"I am also going to get some voluntary work and I want to learn to swim."

"For the first time in 61 years I am in control of my own life and it is a great feeling."

County Councillor Anne Brown, Cabinet member for Adult and Community Services, said: "These flats enable residents who might otherwise need to consider residential care more choice and the opportunity to live independently in their own home."

The £1.9m scheme has been developed by Lancashire County Council in partnership with New Fylde Housing, Wyre Borough Council and building contractor Richardson Projects.