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LOCAL SERVICE, BETTER VALUE

We're fighting to localise services *AND* save you money in nationwide first for Lancashire communities

TAILOR-MADE policies and priorities are being drawn up for individual parts of Lancashire in a groundbreaking move that is attracting national attention.

Public transport, education, highways... any local government services could feature in new annual blueprints, drawn up at local level to shape services for each community.

The Locality Plans will unite the county council and district councils in planning precisely what each authority will do for local people in the coming year.

Lancashire is the only county council in England to introduce this type of plan.

County Councillor Hazel Harding, county council leader, said: "These plans will be like a contract with the man and woman in the street. We will custom-build services that fit their needs."

Area by area

"Currently no other councils in England are doing what we're doing, which is to clearly tell local people what we will do over the next year to improve their district."

"More importantly, this is a transparent process and means that people can hold us to account to ensure that we honour our commitments."

The plans are being rolled out on a district-by-district basis and are voluntarily agreed with respective district councils.

To date these have been finalised in Burnley, Chorley, Pendle, Rossendale and South Ribble. Other Locality

By Stephen Axon

Plans are expected to be completed shortly. Plans are at various stages in most districts.

Although other councils across the country have developed their own Locality Plans, this is the first time that plans have been agreed in this way between districts and county councils.

The change comes at a time when Lancashire is

Save money

also strengthening its voice, under the banner of Team Lancashire. This pioneering project involves all council chief executives and political leaders from the county

council, districts and the two unitary councils in Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen.

Team Lancashire, to be launched in July, has set out an action plan in which all councils will work towards the same goals. A key aim is to make sure that council services are joined up, more accessible and provide value for money.

Opportunities will be explored to share certain services between councils, in a bid to save money or improve services for the public.

Councillor Harding said: "Lancashire is such a diverse county, and we recognise the need to join up, where we can, to improve our services and the quality of life for local people."

"Team Lancashire will also help the area to develop a strong and consistent voice at a regional and national level, to develop the areas where we live and work."



HAZEL Harding: local plans, lower costs.

RETURNING SOLDIERS: WELCOME HOME



ROCKET attacks, roadside bombs, close combat - members of the Duke of Lancaster Battle Group experienced the sharp end of conflict on their recent tour of duty in Iraq.

Their efforts and bravery were publicly honoured when

they returned and met County Councillor Alan Whittaker, chair of Lancashire County Council.

See p2 for story.

●Pictured, from left, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Deakin, Alan Whittaker, RSM Carl Tomkinson.



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of all vacancies is available
on our website

www.lancashire.gov.uk/vacancies



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to contact when
you need help?

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bureaucracy?

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0845 053 0000 or email
Shirley on [enquiries@
css.lancscc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@css.lancscc.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

On the right route

I rarely use my car and am considering selling it to save money. It will mean greater use of public transport, but I am totally out of touch with things such as routes and times. Can you help?

Public transport user

There are lots of ways to access public transport information, without even leaving your home. Visit

www.transportforlancashire.com to use the online journey planner or download bus timetables, or if you would like someone to plan your journey for you, call Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 (calls from landlines cost 10p per minute, plus your usual network charges). You can also pick up timetables free of charge from your local County Information Centre, interchange or library.

For timetables in other formats email: timetableorders@lancashire.gov.uk

Adding up

I am 78 and it seems that each year the increases in my income do not keep up with my bills. My only income is the State Pension plus a small works pension, but when I tried to claim a rebate on my Council Tax I was told that I couldn't get any help because I have more than £16,000 in savings. Now I've read in the paper



●PUBLIC transport advice: see On the right route

that big increases in our utility bills may be on the way and I was wondering if there is any other financial help for people in my position.

Name withheld

You may be able to claim Pension Credit to top up your State Pension, even if you have more than £16,000 in savings. For more information contact Lancashire County Council's Welfare Rights Service on 01772 533 504 or write to: Lancashire County Council, Welfare Rights Service, FREEPOST, Preston PR1 8BR.

Parking problem

I am a blue badge holder and can never seem to park outside my house due to the number of cars in our area. This means I have to park a long way down the road making it a daily struggle just to get into my house.

I have recently spotted a bay at the front of someone's house on another road and on closer inspection realised it was a disabled parking bay. Would it be possible for me to apply for a disabled parking bay outside my house?

Mr Hall, Lostock Hall

You can apply for a disabled parking bay, using application forms which are available from the local library or any council offices, if you are a disabled person having trouble parking outside your home. Alternatively you can telephone 0845 053 0011 and one of our customer advisors will be able to put in a request for you to the local highways inspector, who will contact you regarding the matter.

Marriage plans

My fiancée and I are planning on getting married this Christmas. I know that we need to contact the ceremonies

officer in order to provisionally book the registrar, but one of my friends said I need to speak to someone about the reading of banns.

Miss C, Bickerstaffe

You will need to contact the registrar in the district in which you both live to arrange an appointment to give your Notice of Marriage. This is the legal process which anyone who plans to marry must go through, to give notice of their intention to marry and prove that they are legally free to do so.

There is a cost of £30 per person to give Notice of Marriage and is valid for one year from the date you give the notice. To speak to your local registrars contact 0845 053 0021.

Help for Dad

My wife is eight months pregnant and I would like some information regarding paternity leave and what benefits we may be entitled to? Who would I contact to get this information?

Mr H, Grimsargh

Contact Parent Direct on 0800 195 0137. They can provide help on employment legislation, support available for working parents and information on balancing home and work life. As well as childcare, the service covers maternity and paternity rights; and flexible working. Parent Direct can also give advice on tax credits, grants, benefits and support.

DON'T FORGET

Your county councillor will be keen to help. Contact details are available on 0845 053 0000 or at: www.lancashire.gov.uk

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

A novel approach to holiday reading

By Andrew Lynn

THE credit crunch can be beaten - by borrowing your holiday reading from a county council library.

Bills may be going up, but good books always go down nicely on holiday, so why not borrow them instead of buying them.

While reading is a popular activity for relaxing on holiday, buying new books for the whole family can prove expensive.

But this is a cost everyone can easily avoid by borrowing books free from their local library.

Lancashire's libraries are competing with the high-street in offering all the summer best-sellers - such as Faces by

Melinda Cole or Sepulchre by Kate Mosse - and a variety of books for all ages and tastes.

According to the county council's online library catalogue, nine out of the current top 10 best sellers are available for loan.

From the latest fiction novels, biographies, crime stories, children's books and comics to pass the time on the train, plane or to read at the beach, to travel guides, dictionaries and history books to prepare for your travels - local libraries have them all.

Libraries not only offer books. DVDs, CDs, audio books and books in different languages are also available for the whole family.

Anyone can register for a library membership card for free.

Books can be borrowed for three weeks and are renewable.

Praise for county soldiers

From p1

BRAVE soldiers from Lancashire have returned home to a welcome from Lancashire County Council.

Members of The Duke of Lancaster's Battle Group, visited County Hall when they returned from their six-month tour of duty in Iraq.

They were special guests of County Councillor Alan Whittaker, county council chair, who said: "It is hugely important to recognise the work of people who serve their country as mem-

bers of our armed forces.

"To place your life on the line in this way, to help other people whose own lives are at risk, is a very brave thing. I would like to pass on my appreciation as chair of the county council to all soldiers, whether Lancastrian or not, who are serving their country and working to bring peace to war-torn countries.

"The group were very appreciative of the support they had received from the region, in particular from our county."

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Lancashire County Council

NEWS BRIEFS

Praise for £4m road

LANCASHIRE County Council's Eaves Green Link Road scheme has been named North Western Transportation Project of the Year 2008 by the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT).

The scheme was constructed between December 2006 and November 2007.

Its value was £4m and included a new near-one-mile road and a three-span bridge over the River Yarrow. It was opened 15 weeks early with over 100,000 accident-free man hours worked.

Parts of the project were redesigned to reduce construction time and there was significant use of recycled materials. Local environmental enhancements included creation of habitats for great crested newts and installation of bat boxes.

Castle joins London Eye

LANCASTER'S Castle and Lancaster Maritime Museum have joined other visitor attractions such as Kew Gardens, the London Eye and Castle Howard after being named a Quality Assured Visitor Attraction by Visit Britain - the official site of the British Tourist Authority.

The Museum of Lancashire in Preston won the award in March.

The success now allows the two Lancaster museums to display the Visit Britain quality logo outside their buildings and on all promotional literature.

For further details visit Lancashire Museums online at: www.lancsmuseums.gov.uk

Play time

NURSERY pupils at Great Harwood Community Primary School now have a new playground.

Climbing frames, soft "rubberised" surfaces, a sand area, flowerbeds and a sheltered area have been added after parents started to raise money from a variety of sources.

It is now hoped to improve the infants' play area.

Summer study at university

LANCASTER University is running a summer school this month - offering 70 courses for people of all ages and abilities.

Courses include car maintenance, family history, jewellery, photography and music and run from 28 July to 8 August. Fees start at £65.

Details from the university on 01524 592623/4 or at: <http://summerprogramme.lancs.ac.uk>

Free for bikers

MOTORCYCLISTS can book a free rider assessment by a professional riding instructor in a safety scheme offered by Lancashire County Council.

Written reports and recommendations will be given to riders on the 90-minute appraisal.

Ring Rob Winn on 01772 533086 to book.

Get steamy

PUBS across Lancashire will be screening a new film this summer in a bid to beat drink-driving.

Steamed Up is aimed at younger drivers and is supported by Lancashire Partnership for Road Safety.

Studio project sends pupils to top of BBC class

By Sue Becker

YOUNG broadcasters from Accrington Moorhead Sports College have been praised for their work by the BBC.

Pupils broadcast a climate-change report for the BBC's School Report Day, and were the only North-West school to be invited to London to receive their "highly commended" certificates.

"It was quite a journey, and I don't just mean getting up at 4am to catch the train from Preston to London to visit Broadcasting House," said geography teacher Martyn Langan, who along with technician Mark Duxbury helped pupils complete the broadcast.

Pupils used satellite technology to interview broadcaster and science writer Gabrielle "The Hot Topic" Walker, while she was on board HMS Endurance in the Antarctic.

They also spoke to children's broadcaster Johnny Ball and MP Greg Pope.

All the footage is included in the school's multi-award winning broadcast, which you can see at <http://www.moorhead.lancsngfl.ac.uk/>



●SPEAKING out: Laura French, Chelsea Nichols and Carrie Ingham in the studio.

Survey supports improved council

Boost in public perception of council's 'value for money' and service provision

By Neil Graham

LANCASHIRE County Council is bucking the national trend in terms of public satisfaction and public perceptions of value for money.

More than 2,400 Lancashire people were surveyed by independent Ipsos MORI researchers - and 62 per cent of people said they were satisfied with Lancashire County Council, with 13 per cent saying they were dissatisfied.

A growing number of people believe the council gives residents good value for money and the council is also seen as modern, caring for local people and deserving of public trust.

The number of people feeling "informed" has also increased.

Voice

On a negative note, people remain concerned about road maintenance, traffic levels and facilities for young people.

"This is a fascinating insight into how people see the council," said County Councillor Hazel Harding, county council leader.

"The days when people had to put up with whatever services were provided are long gone - and rightly so. For years, we have been seeking to make the county council more flexible, responsive and less impersonal. This survey reflects and justifies that drive.

"What really pleases me is the strong decline in the proportion of people seeing the council as remote - everyone pays their tax, so everyone deserves to be heard.

"The number of people saying they are satisfied with the county council is now higher than ever. That is even more striking when you consider that councils nationwide are struggling on that score."

Similar surveys were conducted in 2000 and 2003. Results from each survey are used to drive forward changes in the way

AT A GLANCE

Satisfaction figures for all services are for service users, with the exception of streetlighting and road maintenance.

62 per cent of people are satisfied with Lancashire County Council. 13 per cent say they are dissatisfied.

■41 per cent of people say they are 'at least' fairly well informed about the council. The 2000 figure was 28 per cent and 37 per cent in 2003.

63 per cent of residents agree that the overall quality of county council services is good, compared with 58 per cent in 2003.

■44 per cent of people say they trust Lancashire County Council. 21 per cent say they don't.

41 per cent believe the county council is more modern than it used to be. 6 per cent disagree.

■57 per cent of people believe the county council is relevant to them. 18 per cent disagree.

Just over one in three say the county council is too impersonal - a strong drop since 2003 and 2000.

■34 per cent say the county council gives residents good value for money, compared with 30 per cent disagreeing.

42 per cent say the county council does a

good job of caring for local people, compared with 19 per cent who disagree.

■People over 65 are most likely to trust the county council. Those aged 16-24 are the people next most likely to trust the council, with 46 per cent trusting and 12 per cent distrusting.

51 per cent agree that Vision lets them know what the council is doing. 14 per cent disagree. Readership has almost doubled since 2003.

■79 per cent are satisfied with streetlighting. 13 per cent are dissatisfied.

46 per cent are satisfied with road maintenance. 38 per cent are not.

■91 per cent are happy with primary schools.

90 per cent are happy with nursery schools.

■84 per cent are happy with secondary schools.

78 per cent are happy with local bus services.

■87 per cent are happy with adult education.

70 per cent are happy with services for older people.

■72 per cent are happy with Trading Standards.

Source: Ipsos MORI, 2,451 respondents.

the county council is run.

One major change since 2000 has been in perceptions of bus services. Only 14 per cent of users are unhappy with local bus services, down from 25 per cent in 2000.

Nurseries

Lancashire's record in education is highly regarded with 91 per cent of users expressing satisfaction with primary schools, 90 per cent being happy with nursery schools and 84 per cent being happy with secondary schools.

Councillor Harding added: "Public perceptions and service requirements vary

from area to area.

"That is something we are addressing by devolving service provision down to a local level through Lancashire Local committees and also through Locality Plans which will tailor services to each district.

"You have to see yourself as others see you - and this survey is a huge help."

Satisfaction figures for all services are for service users, with the exception of streetlighting and road maintenance.

■Technical note: 2,451 Lancashire residents aged 16-plus were interviewed face-to-face by Ipsos MORI between 15 September and 15 December 2007. Results are weighted to the profile of the Lancashire population.

Free goodies for your home

HOUSEHOLDERS across Lancashire are being offered free smoke alarms, fire safety checks, cooking timers and extension leads in a bid to prevent fire in the home.

Just one phone call is needed to prompt firefighters and fire-safety advisers to visit people's homes to conduct a Home Fire Safety Check.

While there they will supply and fit smoke alarms upstairs and downstairs, identify escape routes, and advise on fire risk.

Station commander Tony Crook said: "This offer is open to absolutely anyone.

"It is important to fight fire - but just as important to prevent fire in the first place."

The extension leads are being given away to stop people overloading plug sockets.

Free offer

The free offer applies to the whole of Lancashire. Research in Rossendale, however, has shown that a disproportionate number of fires are related to cooking.

Rossendale residents are being offered Home Fire Safety Check Extra - the same checks that are carried out countywide with the addition of advice on safe cooking.

It is hoped to extend the Rossendale "extra" scheme to the rest of the county if it proves to be a success.

■Free Home Fire Safety Checks can be arranged on 0800 1691125.

WIN A LUXURY BREAK

Combine the seaside with the countryside and win a holiday at Ribby Hall Village, 10 minutes from Blackpool in the quiet countryside.

Take time out at the fabulous Ribby Hall Village – which has a choice of accommodation including private cottages, unique pine lodges and a luxury hotel.

And with a £1m cottage refurbishment due for completion this summer, the timing could not be better. Fifty cottages have been completely redesigned with more still to come.

The competition is to win a mid-week break in a standard self-catering cottage for six people and can be taken any time before January 2009 – subject to availability, excluding school and bank holidays.

Ribby Hall Village is family run and prides itself on the standard of accommodation offered. The cottages have a comfortable living room and kitchen, master bedroom with en-suite and two separate bedrooms and family bathroom. They also feature facilities such as DVD players, dishwashers and BBQs with private parking and patio areas.

Ribby Hall Village also offers the latest in luxury holidays in their pine lodges, which include outdoor hot tubs, private balconies and luxury features such as state of the art kitchens and large plasma screen televisions in each bedroom.

Ribby Hall Village is only 10 minutes from Blackpool but set within 100 acres of countryside offering you the best of both worlds with activities such as;

- Adult pool and family fun pool
- A choice of restaurants and bars
- A health & beauty spa and hairdressers
- Nine-hole and mini golf courses
- Children's holiday club and crèche
- Horse riding
- Racquet sports

Visit www.ribbyhall.co.uk for a virtual tour or to check availability and book on-line. Alternatively call 0800 085 1717 8.00am-8.00pm, seven days a week quoting RHV 169

ENTER: WIN A RIBBY HALL VILLAGE BREAK

Ribby Hall Village is set within how many acres of countryside?

Answer Name

Address

Email

Entry to be returned by Thursday 17 July to Holiday competition, Vision, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8XJ. You can also enter online at: www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision. Tick box if you do not want to be sent Ribby Hall Village details ☐



Pupils tackle Great War controversy

PUPILS across Lancashire are taking part in a project to study the First World War.

Almost every town and village in the county has a war memorial and most people can still remember when First World War veterans lived on nearly every street.

Schools across Lancashire are marking the 90th anniversary of the Armistice by asking year 9 and year 10 pupils to write newspaper-style articles about the conflict.

They will be assessed on the article's structure, the flow of language, the article's understanding of the events, reasons and cause and effects – a subject that exercises the minds of leading historians to this day.


Everyone has heard of the tragic Accrington Pals. How many realise that many of them were from other Lancashire towns? Or that many towns had their own pals' brigades?

Who recalls that Zeppelin airships flew over Lancashire towns and that one town, reputedly, has a First World War tank buried in a park?

Articles, on the topic of "The Major Events of 1918", should be approximately 2,000 words and prizes are being offered by the North Lancashire branch of the Western Front Association which is sponsoring the contest.

WRITE NOW

Further details on 01772 864182 or via: competition@wfanlancs.co.uk or via website: www.wfanlancs.co.uk





You're telling us

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

Well done on road COUNCILS

get lots of emails asking for things or complaining, so I just wanted to say thank you for authorising the repairs to Hundred End Lane PR4.

I attended the council's Question Time session in Hesketh Bank last year when I spoke to a county councillor about it and it was then reported in the local papers.

I appreciate you could have spent this money 100 times over in the county to upgrade other moss roads but I can assure it was money well spent. The lane carries a huge amount of traffic and has made an incredible difference to us all.

The work was carried out to a very high standard and with minimum disruption to residents and businesses. This route will help sustain the distribution link for many businesses. Thank you again.

MRS C ANDONEGUI

Polluting buses?

I WAS interested to read in Vision (June 08) about Lancashire County Council's signing up to the Carbon Trust and "making changes to our vehicle fleet".

Why then in Burnley during every school run are we forced to suffer clouds of black, oily fumes emitted by school buses, presumably hired by the county council. Most of them seem to be around 20 years old or more, with emissions to match.

Our neighbouring authority, Calderdale, uses a fleet of nearly new purpose-built yellow school buses, with modern engines and no black smoke at all. Why must Burnley citizens endure a fleet of "scrapyard specials"?

ALAN ROADLEY

■ **Contractors provide 22 school buses in Burnley on the county council's behalf. There are spot-checks at schools to ensure that vehicles meet legal requirements and that standards are maintained. The last academic year saw 134 such tests with 590 buses inspected. People can contact us with their concerns and we will investigate. Buses in Calderdale were boosted with an £18.7m Whitehall grant for 100 yellow school buses— editor.**

In Maxwell's house

I RECYCLE as much as I can, but I can't use low-energy bulbs as I am profoundly deaf and need ordinary light-bulbs to flash when there is someone at the door or on the phone.

I am still recycling paper, cardboard, plastic, metal, glass and garden refuse for the council and myself. I also reuse carrier bags or give them to charity shops, so I try not to waste too much.

I have a green bin in the kitchen for the fruit and vegetable peelings and the teabags. They all go into my compost bin.

I am only an ordinary citizen – and would urge other citizens also to do their best.

R MAXWELL
Coppull

Choose with care

THE "Property Puzzler" advice column by trading standards expert Julian Edwards (Vision, May) was well-aimed. It is, indeed, wise to employ tradespeople who are qualified and registered with recognised bodies.

There are many such bodies – not just FENSA, NICE-IC, ECA and CORGI as listed. Members of the National Association of Professional Inspectors and Testers (NAPIT) are qualified and registered to complete and install electrical work around the home and can complete and notify all work to local building control, as required by law, and will do all work with a six-year guarantee.

J GAUNT
NAPIT

■ **Yes: the issue for householders is to ensure that the tradesman is properly registered with an appropriate organisation so that the tradesman has the**

competence to carry out work and to notify district council building control for approval – editor.

Say 'thanks' with Legion

WHILE I wholeheartedly agree with Mrs Daniels's support for serving soldiers (Vision, May) I must point out, as a war-disabled ex-RN veteran, that it is not only soldiers that are serving in the places she mentioned.

The Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Air Force have had serious casualties in all those theatres of war.

People in Lancashire can show their support by selling poppies for the Royal British Legion. Get in touch with the Royal British Legion at the county office (it's in the phone book) and they will put you in touch with your local branch.

DAVID F EDWARDS
Welfare representative, Chorley branch, Royal British Legion

Spay that cat

THE number of stray and unwanted kittens is a growing problem. Owners have a lack of education about the problem.

Feline Rescue (Furry Tails) is working with the Cat Protection League to provide a free neutering and spaying programme in the Fylde area.

We can be contacted on 07905 074353 or at the address below,

L KING
Furry Tails Feline Rescue, Stockydale Road, Marton

Paper puzzler

I WONDER what to do with old wrapping paper and greeting cards.

When I get recycling plastic bags from the binmen, they say there is to be no wrapping paper and greeting cards.

Christmas will come round again and, those of us who like to recycle, will be wondering what to do. We don't want to contravene the instructions and annoy the men who do such a good job.

L HOWARTH
Hutton

■ **Cards can be recycled through the Woodland Trust collections you see at many retailers. You can also use them as gift tags! Much wrapping paper is not recycleable due to coatings and finishes. You can reuse it or opt for reusable gift bags or cardboard boxes – editor**

Holiday activities

MRS Lawrence asks what activities there are in Lancashire in the school holidays (Vision, June).

She will find a magazine, the Family Noticeboard, in the library and Tourist Information Office and council office in Garstang, in various outlets in Lancaster, Morecambe, Kendal and surrounding areas and also at www.thefamilynoticeboard.co.uk

S MAGUIRE

● **SNAP: a couple are pictured near Abbeystead.**

Cycle, click and win a bike

CYCLISTS can win a £250 new bike just by taking photographs while out and about.

Leading cyclist Chris Jackson is judging the contest.

East Lancashire-based shop On Yer Bike is offering a £250 voucher for a new bike or bike equipment for the winner.

Lancashire County Council is organising the competition to show there is more to cycling than minimising travel costs – people can have great fun on their bikes.

Pictures must be cycling-related, although they need not actually feature bikes.

With more than 160 miles of off-road cycleway available – and thousands of miles of roads and tracks – cyclists have plenty of scenes to snap.

Send entries to: Cycle Photo Competition, PO Box 9, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston PR1 8RD. Images can be emailed to: cyclecompetition@lancashire.gov.uk.

Entries to be submitted on the basis that they may be used in county council publications.

Jobs hope as deep-sea firm chases new orders

By Julie Dobson

A DEEP-SEA engineering company can now compete for motor industry and aerospace orders - thanks to help from Lancashire County Council.

It is six years since company director Justin Birtwistle first started marketing high-pressure sub-sea couplings.

Production of couplings was sub-contracted to suppliers, but a low-cost loan now allows flexible and swift in-house production.

Justin, of Lomax Offshore Couplings Ltd, said: "I have contracts from some of the world's leading companies, but want to give my business the best chance of success by manufacturing on my own premises.

"This will reduce turnaround time - a huge help to customers - and help me get into new markets.

The county council's help for the Accrington firm came in the form of Rosebud finance from Lancashire County Development Ltd (LCDL).

The hope is that improved flexibility and customer service will



● FLEXIBILITY is key to business future: Doreen Pollitt and Lomax boss Justin Birtwistle.

help Justin win new orders - and holds out the hope of more high-tech jobs for Lancashire.

County Councillor Doreen Pollitt, Lancashire County Council deputy leader, visited the business recently and said: "Each order this business receives requires a customised design and they have supplied a variety of products used on oil rigs, oil ships and sub-sea well heads over the past six years.

"This is very specialised high-level engi-

neering and I am delighted that Rosebud Finance has helped Justin to take his business to a new level.

Justin has already created one new job and hopefully this will increase as his business goes from strength to strength."

WHAT IS ROSEBUD?

MORE than 300 companies have gained from Rosebud. Loans and equity funding range from £5,000 to £750,000. Loan rates are competitive: normally 2 per cent above Bank of England base rate. Rosebud finance is available for businesses based in Lancashire or those relocating here. Rosebud loans are usually over a term of up to five years. Capital repayment holidays may be arranged. Clients also benefit from professional advice and help. For details, ring 01772 536652 or visit LCDL's website at www.lcdl.co.uk

Action on dirty roads - see p6
Ready for all emergencies - p6



Lancashire Constabulary
police and communities together



MAPPA Lay Adviser

Reference HR08/102

Are you looking to give something back to your community? Could you spare the time to help make your area a better, safer place to live?

MAPPA (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements) is the process through which the Police, Probation and Prison Services work together with other agencies to manage the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders.

The Mappa Strategic Management Board is looking for someone who has a keen interest in community issues, preferably with a track record of community involvement who would be able to provide a local perspective. The successful applicant would need to have the ability to confidently reflect and express the views of the public in respect of sensitive public protection issues.

Lay Advisers play a crucial role in Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangement processes and will express these views by attending

MAPPA Senior Management Board Meetings to ensure a balanced perspective.

This is an unpaid part-time post. You will need to be able to travel within your local area and to undertake the reading required to enable you to understand and contribute.

If you require further information on this key role please contact Sue Fiddler on 01772 412428.

To download an application pack, please go to www.lancashire.police.uk or please write to Lancashire Constabulary HQ Operations, Human Resources, PO Box 77, Hutton, Preston PR4 5SB.

The closing date for receipt of completed application is 12pm on Friday 25th July 2008.

Applications are welcomed from all sections of the community and a No Smoking at work policy is in operation.

Care watchdogs aim to simplify cost quagmire

THE complex web of income, benefits and social care will be explored in a county council probe into the needs of older people.

Research on the best way to provide an additional 1,000-plus "extra-care" homes began earlier this year.

But it is now to be widened after Whitehall announced plans to look at people's savings and their entitlement to free or subsidised care.

"More extra-care homes will be vital for the next generation of older people," said County Councillor Bob Pendleton, Overview and Scrutiny task group chairman.

"There are problems in terms of getting planning permission and funding which we need to explore.

"But the newest thing is that of clients' money - even quite small savings mean that people have to pay

their own way, so that social care is very expensive for most people.

"It is a web that Whitehall will be looking at - and we want to express our views early in that process."

The extra-care concept is a halfway house between helping people live in their own home - which most prefer - and going into a care home. It means there is extra support available for people living either in purpose-built complexes or in neighbourhoods.

O and S members have already met staff and residents at a number of care establishments across the country.

One issue that has arisen is funding for people with Alzheimer's Disease. Overview and scrutiny members will be asking if it should be an NHS or a council matter.

Experts from the planning system, the NHS, and also residents will be interviewed before a report is issued later this year.

Free transport

A NEW Trampler mobility buggy is now available for use in Upholland's Beacon Country Park.

The park, not to be confused with Longridge's Beacon Fell Country Park, has been improved by West Lancashire Council, Groundwork and the county council.

A number of new

NEWS BRIEFS

Trampler Trails have been created.

The electric vehicle will be available free of charge from July. It will also be on display at the Green Fayre at Beacon Country Park on 18 and 19 July. For details, ring 01695 622794

or email beacon.park@westlancsdc.gov.uk

School safety

CHILDREN at 54 schools have benefited from pedestrian-safety training in the last year.

The county council programme has now been taught in a total of 243 Lancashire schools.

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County Council

LOOK LIVELY

VOICE OF VISION

Thousands of people owe something to David – but they may not know it. He will retire next month after 20 years of helping plan for emergencies – anything from oil spills, gas explosions and floods to preparing the county for possible terrorist outrages.



David Brown
Emergency Planner

What does a typical day involve?

We don't handle emergencies every day, but we are always preparing for them.

It is all about being ready for just about anything. In any disaster, the 999 services will do their job and local government will look after people in terms of providing emergency housing, food, changes of clothes, transport etc. People expect that support and we have to be ready to provide it.

How do you plan for such a range of difficulties?

We look at possible flashpoints – such as the existence of chemical plants, for example – and get plans ready. We have dozens of such plans.

If we find there is a risk, we prepare evacuation plans. There must be enough staff to get people out, there must be alternative accommodation, food and rest facilities. The aftermath of such an incident can last for months, so we need to look at people's longer-term needs such as schools for the children.

How has the job changed over the years?

There is still a lot of multi-agency working to be done these days but it is more focussed on planning, training and exercising the joint emergency plans that are overseen by the Lancashire Resilience Forum.

We work with the whole range of agencies that could be involved in responding to emergencies – from the NHS, utility companies, police, fire, schools, voluntary agencies, welfare rights through to transport companies and local authorities.

Much of the work is precautionary. We always need to be ready.

Emergency planning used to be very much a Cold War baby in that we prepared for a nuclear holocaust. We still are prepared for such disaster, but we now take a long-term as well as an immediate view.

Do you find the job rewarding?

Yes. It is always varied and I take satisfaction in knowing that my work is helping people.

It is also frustrating: a German general once said that action plans rarely survived the first contact with the enemy! Events are always unpredictable and you have to be flexible.

Is it enjoyable?

Yes, but the hours can be difficult. I was called out at 5.30am the other week when there was a fire on the Riverdance ferry on Blackpool sands.

We have been involved with the Riverdance on a daily basis since it first beached in January – when we were ready to provide accommodation, food and clothing to the mainly Polish crew and also prepared for a possible oil spill.

What will you do when you retire?

I'm looking forward to walking the Pyrenees and going on extended cycle trips.

I could also be back in my job as retired emergency planners are kept on a list in case of particular major incident problems in the future!

Your chance to join top recruit Mercia

A THOROUGH training and an intelligent approach to work have won a top award for one of Lancashire County Council's apprentices.

Mercia Woest (19), presently working as a project management support officer, won the Lancashire award as Advanced Apprentice of the Year from the Learning and Skills Council.

In two years, Mercia has gained formal training and on-the-job experience in a variety of posts as one of over 100 of apprentices working for Lancashire County Council.

Mercia said: "Every day is different as an apprentice. It has given me a very good grounding without having to go to university and incur debts!"

Now in her second year

with the county council, Mercia already manages three young apprentices for one day per week.

One highlight of her work has been working on a project to reduce spending on agency staff – by more use of apprentices such as herself!

■To find out about future apprentice opportunities with Lancashire County Council, contact: mike.baron@lancashire.gov.uk



Pc Keith and road chiefs beat danger

By Neil Graham

ROADS are cleaner and safer in north Lancashire – thanks to teamwork between farmers, a police officer and county council highways engineers.

Pc Keith Collins noticed mud and other obstructions on the roads on his Caton beat after farmers left the fields in their tractors.

So he raised thousands of pounds to devise portable road signs and then liaised with Lancashire County Council so that the county is now the first in the country to use the lightweight, portable signs.

Keith, whose efforts won him a major Lancashire Constabulary award, said: "I noticed that the road-casualty statistics went up at certain times of the year.



●BIG idea: Pc Keith Collins teamed up with county highways chiefs to beat mud on the roads.

could erect at the side of the road to warn drivers of possible dangers ahead."

Motorists complained of obstructions on the roads 48 times two years ago – a figure that fell to just three last year.

Keith added: "Everyone has worked together, including the county council's highways engineers who gave advice on the legal issues surrounding temporary signs.

"Each farmer now has two signs. Everyone has been involved and everyone has gained."

Vision videos

Visit the Vision website to see an exclusive video on the story.
www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision

"Just handling complaints from members of the public about mud on the road was costing £14,500 per year in police and council time.

"Part of the problem was educating the farmers and part of the problem was telling motorists of the dangers that lay ahead.

"We produced leaflets for motorcyclists and also lightweight signs which farmers

SUMMER READING

The Tenderness of Wolves
By Stef Penney

THIS is a wonderful debut novel set in the icy wilderness of 1867 Canada.

In the isolated settlement of Dove River, a French Canadian trapper is brutally murdered in his cabin.

At the time of the murder a 17-year-old boy goes missing.

His mother set out to follow the tracks leading from the dead man's cabin into the forest and the desolate tundra that lies beyond, just as winter takes its icy grip.

She is determined to find her son and clear his name.

Although the central theme is the murder, the book develops into a tender love story, a history of the times and brilliant

Bye bye, baby bird

NATURE is red and tooth and claw – and very uncomfortable if you are a hen harrier chick in Bowland.

The hen harrier nest is being webcast to the world, but caused a shock when the mum fed one of the chicks to her four other offspring.

The filming can be seen live on the internet and also at the county council's Bowland Visitor Centre at Beacon Fell.

Nick Osborne, the county council's Countryside Service chief, said: "Nature can be a hard master.

"She found the chick had died

and decided not to let it totally go to waste."

Live filming can be seen – until the chicks have fledged – at: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision> and click on the video button.

The project is supported by Lancashire County Council, the RSPB, United Utilities and Natural England.

Vision videos

Visit the Vision website to see an exclusive video on the story.
www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision

analysis of how people behave in far way isolated communities in the grip of a prolonged and severe winter.

As I read the book I could feel the icy chill the characters had to endure in their trek across the frozen landscape.

Stef Penney is a good and compelling writer with very believable characters and well worth a read.

Review: Tom Burns

The Tenderness of Wolves is available in Lancashire libraries

Escape to nature this summer

Enjoy a peaceful wildlife walk in Ribble Valley

PICTURESQUE Downham has hardly changed over the past two centuries. Its landscape has been shaped by the activities of man over thousands of years.

The area is abundant in wildlife including roe deer, badgers and the tiny but beautiful common blue butterfly. On a spring day you will be serenaded by curlew, skylark, willow warbler and redstart.

The walk begins and ends at Downham visitors' car park and is approximately four miles. Allow 2-3 hours for the walk.

LEAVE the car park through the small gate near the toilets and head towards the road bridge. Do not cross the bridge but follow the road and bear left to follow Downham Beck.

Pass the cottages right to the end of the lane and go into the field through a kissing gate.

Follow the beck upstream, bearing right at the wooden waymark post. Cross the field to where the fence meets the beck and go through the kissing gate. Keeping the beck on your left, cross a stone stile and follow the way-marker to cross a wooden footbridge.

Follow the path through the trees and cross the farm track by a stile. Continue uphill, keeping to the edge of the field, until you reach a small barn. Turn left in front of the barn, cross a small gully, and follow the signed route towards Hecklin Farm.

Follow the waymarker across the large field and cross the track to Hollins Farm via a steep stone stile. Continue straight ahead, cross a further stone stile down in the dip and then follow the fence past the Nutshaw farm buildings on your left.

Head towards Hecklin Farm but turn left at the end of the wall 50 metres before reaching the farmyard. Cross over the stone stile ahead of you.

Keep to the edge of the field, cross a further stile and



DOWNLOAD A 'PODCAST'

of this walk and enjoy an additional commentary using your mp3 player as you wander through some of the best of Lancashire's countryside. To enjoy an audio tour of Downham or to download the commentary visit www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside

DOWNHAM CIRCULAR WALK 2

Public transport: Downham is accessible by bus. For information Tel. 0871 2002233 or visit www.lancashire.gov.uk and click on journey planner.

Please take care not to disturb livestock or ground nesting birds please keep your dog under close control, preferably on a lead.

Don't go without a map. The leaflet is available from www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside or from local shops. OS map OL14 Forest of Bowland and Ribblesdale.

head for another stile at the top of the hill. Follow the faint line of an ancient track across Haysett Hill, waymarked with small boulders.

At the wall at the foot of the hill turn right and cross a stile next to a gate. Keep to the field's edge, follow the fence, and over a stile onto an old green lane.

Follow the track to turn sharp right where it opens out into a meadow. Follow the hedge downhill, crossing a further stile. Just before reaching Twiston Beck turn right and follow the beck to cross by a wooden footbridge.

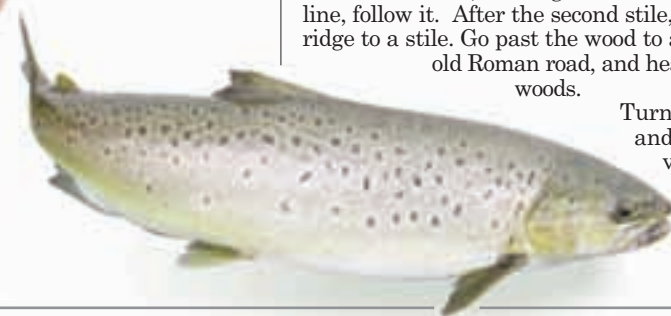
Twiston Beck is one of the cleanest streams in Lancashire and is one of the major spawning grounds for the elusive sea trout. Turn left towards Twiston Mill pond and pass between the beck and the pond onto Twiston Lane. Turn right and follow the road to a stone stile on the left before the farm buildings.

Pass through the stile and head downstream along Twiston Beck, until a wooden footbridge is reached. Cross the beck and head uphill until bearing left to cross the stile in front of Springs farmhouse. Pass between the house and the buildings on the main track and then turn right, over two stiles bearing left uphill towards a group of large trees.

Cross the stone stile and follow the old trackway. At the small disused quarry, cross the stone stile and bear right across the meadow, aiming for a stone stile in the wall to the left of Hey House.

Cross the stile, bear right and on reaching the fence/hedge line, follow it. After the second stile, continue following the ridge to a stile. Go past the wood to a wide ridge, the route of the old Roman road, and head for the centre of the woods.

Turn left on reaching the wood and head down towards the village. At a small wooden gate, turn right and follow the road past the Assheton Arms pub to the car park.



Win a quality fleece jacket

Preston's newest outdoor and travel superstore is offering Vision readers the chance to win a top-quality fleece jacket.

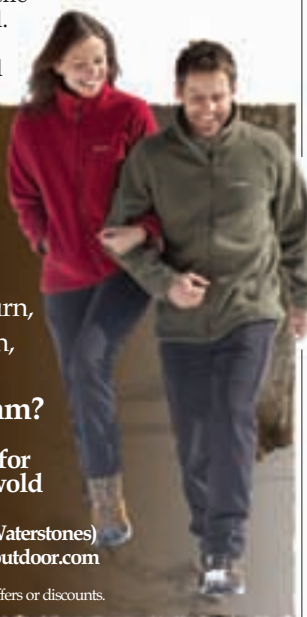
Simply answer the following question and return, by Thursday 17 July, to Cotswold competition, Vision, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ:
What is the name of the pub in Downham?



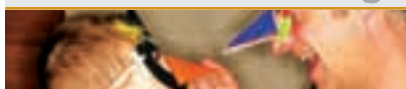
Present this voucher for 15% discount at Cotswold Outdoor Preston

135 Fishergate, Preston (opposite Waterstones)
Tel: 01772 270910 www.cotswoldoutdoor.com

*Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers or discounts.



Summer listings



Sat 5 July
10.30-12. Junior rangers Beacon Fell. Wildlife club for children aged 6-14. Meet Bowland Visitor Centre, Beacon Fell. Book on 01995 640557.
1.30-3.30. Super Saturday: photography. Lancaster City Museum.
11-3. Longridge Fell Trampler day. Longridge Fell Temple End car park. Forestry tracks etc. Moderate walk. Book Trampers on 01995 640557.

Sat 12 July
2-3. Keeper's tour. Helmshore Mills Textile Museum. Book on 01706 226459. Small charge.
10.30-4. Garden party and craft fair. Gawthorpe Hall, Padiham.
10.30-3.30. Conservation Crew, Beacon Fell. Want to gain experience of the work of a ranger? Aged 14-18? Bring lunch and suitable clothing. Carwags, Beacon Fell Country Park. Book on 01995 640557.
11-1. Herbal walk. Join a medicinal herbalist and look at plants on Fleetwood Marsh. Family fun and Trampler friendly. Meet at Fleetwood Marsh Nature Park. Book on 01995 640557.
10.30-3.30. The Pendle Way. Wonderful moorland. Moderate walk. Meet at Trawden bus turning circle. Book on 01995 640557.

Sat 19 July
1-4. Warton Crag butterflies. Moderate walk overlook-

ing Morecambe Bay. Meet Warton Crag car park. 1-4. Archaeology day – see a dig in action. Trampler friendly. Trampler users to book on 01995 640557.

Mon 21 July, Wed 23 July, Fri 25 July, Mon 28, Wed 30 July
12.30-3.30. Fabulous Fleetwood: arts and crafts activities (suitable age 4-11). Book on 01253 876621.

Thur 24 July
2-4. Going Ribbit! Turton Tower. Small charge.

Sat 26 July
11-1. Scrapheap Challenge. Museum of Lancashire, Preston (suitable age 4-11). Book on 01772 534075.

Mon 28 July
2-5. On the Ropes. Lancaster Maritime Museum.
10.30-5. 1950s shopping and lifestyles. (suitable children aged 4-11). Museum of Lancashire, Preston.
10.30-12.30; 1.30-3.30. Fishes in the River. Lancaster Maritime Museum. Book on 01524 382264.

Wed 30 July
10.30-12.30, 1.30-3.30. Art and craft workshop. Judges' Lodgings, Lancaster. Pre-book 01524 32808.
2. Kids' activity tours (under-12). Lancaster Castle. Book on 01524 64992.
10.30-12.30, 1.30-3.30. Family craft activities (suitable children aged 4-11). Museum of Lancashire, Preston. Book on 01772 534075.

Thur 31 July
10.30-12.30, 1.30-3.30. Natural Curiosity. Lancaster City Museum. Book on 01524 64637.
2-4. Costume cards. Turton Tower. Small 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.

Lancashire Museums

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*except Lancaster Castle

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Lancashire County Council

Chefs cook up a welcome treat

LANCASHIRE'S great food and drink is being used to lure visitors into the area from Liverpool's year-long Capital of Culture activities.

Tens of thousands of visitors are flocking to Liverpool, so organisers of Taste Lancashire 08 are promoting Lancashire as a place well worth visiting.

Taste Lancashire 08 features a wide range of events and promotions, including championing up-and-coming young chefs and raising the quality of eateries in the area.

The year-long celebration of food and drink is co-ordinated by Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board. Highlights include:

- Picnic month in August.
- North West Fine Food Lovers' Festival at Stonyhurst College 2-3 August.
- Pennine Lancashire Festival of Food and Culture 18 August to 14 September.
- Producers Month in October.

Lancashire is already renowned for its shrimps from Morecambe Bay, local beers, cheeses, black pudding and, of course, Lancashire hotpot. This reputation for its range of produce is not surprising considering the county has two areas of outstanding natural beauty - the Forest of Bowland and Arnside and Silverdale, not to mention the West Pennine Moors and 137 miles of coastline including the world famous resort of Blackpool.

Visit www.tastelancashire08.com for more details - and information on how you could win a meal for two in one of the Taste Lancashire-accredited restaurants.



WINNING MEALS

You could win a meal for two, up to a value of £100, in one of the Taste Lancashire-accredited restaurants. Taste Lancashire is awarded to establishments which provide a consistently high-quality eating experience. Over 100 restaurants, pubs and tea rooms in Lancashire have successfully achieved the Taste Lancashire mark of quality. Visit tastelancashire08.com for a full list.

Write up to 30 words on a great eating-out experience you have had in Lancashire in the last six months. Let us know when and where it was and what was particularly special about your visit. Entries, by the end of July, to: Barbara Howorth, Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, St George's House, St George's Street, Chorley PR7 2AA; or visit www.tastelancashire08.com and complete the on-line form.

Terms and conditions
Entry to the competition is open to UK and overseas residents over 18 years old before the closing date.
No purchase is required.
Those employed by Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, tourism representatives in Lancashire County Council and any district councils in Lancashire, respective advertising/promotional agencies and partners involved in the campaign are not eligible to enter this competition.

Only one competition entry per person will be accepted. The draw will take place within a month of the closing date, with the winner being selected at random and notified directly by post.
The prize is a meal for two people at one of the Taste Lancashire quality-assured restaurants, excluding drinks, up to a maximum value of £100. The prize is subject to availability and must be taken by 31 December 2008. No cash alternative will be offered.

Winners must be able to participate in any public relations activity as organised by Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board and its partners. Response may be included on the tastelancashire08.com food and drink blog. Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board takes no responsibility for lost forms or incomplete entries. Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board reserves the right to amend the rules of competition or cancel it at any time without prior notice.

Bowled over with £1,000



●AUGHTON Town Green Bowling Club received help for better drainage on the bowling green. From left, Harold Barlow, Peter Scott, County Councillor Francis Williams, Robert Cummings, Frank Cosgrove and Martin Jones.

A BOWLING club is on a roll after benefiting from a grant scheme to the tune of £1,000.

The county council's Local Grants Fund is calling for fresh applications and Aughton Town Green Bowling Club is just one of hundreds of small community groups to benefit so far.

All sorts of organisations have won money for activities and equipment by

applying to their county councillor.

Every county councillor has £1,250 to spend through the Local Grants Fund which is run through Lancashire Local committees.

The aim of local grants is to support the many small groups which are the lifeblood of Lancashire's communities.

■To find out more, contact your local county councillor or call Misbah Bhatti on 01772 530818.

Mental health shake-up urged

MENTAL health services for children and adolescents in Lancashire need a shake-up, according to a watchdog.

An Overview and Scrutiny probe has reported after more than two years of interviewing witnesses – and points out inconsistencies in such services for the young.

The system is run predominantly by the NHS. But, the report says,

schools and social workers need extra time and training if they are to refer children with difficulties to the service.

Findings include claims of bottlenecks in the service and confusion for families who find the system too complex.

Recommendations include better training for people such as teachers and social workers and a better range of modern accommodation.

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are you in the picture?

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Contact the Lancashire Childcare Information Service on freephone

0800 195 0137

Lancashire Childcare Information Service (CIS) provides free, quality, accessible and impartial information and guidance on a full range of childcare services, resources and issues.

Choosing childcare

Choosing childcare and early education is a big step for you and your child.

The CIS maintains information on all registered childcare provision in Lancashire, and will be pleased to provide you with details of childcare provision in your area.

The CIS can tell you about:

■ Opening hours

■ Prices

■ Catering for special diets/special educational needs

■ Collections and drop offs at local schools

■ Many other details.

Where information on an enquiry is not held or where specific guidance is needed which cannot be provided by the CIS, the service sign-posts customers to the appropriate information point.

Paying for childcare

The CIS can also provide you with details on paying for childcare including information about:

■ Child/Working Tax Credits

■ Free places for 3 and 4 year olds

■ Childcare vouchers

■ Other help for working parents.

So, for details of registered childcare in your area and paying for childcare get in touch with the Lancashire Childcare Information Service on:

Freephone: 0800 195 0137

E-mail: LancsCIS@ed.lancscc.gov.uk

Or alternatively you can search for childcare in Lancashire online at www.lancashire.gov.uk/childcare and then go to the Childcare Information Service section.

Lancashire Childcare Information Service

0800 195 0137