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Nation's newest sporting venue

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Gillow's piece back in home town

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# COUNCIL TAX RISE BELOW INFLATION



●INVESTMENT: Care



●INVESTMENT: Library improvements



●INVESTMENT: Waste management

**More** money for services  
as tax rises by only 2.95%  
- **less** than cost of living

**LANCASHIRE** County Council is investing millions in highways, social care and the environment while still delivering an inflation-beating Council Tax increase of just 2.95 per cent.

And council bosses have pledged to save even more money, with £859,000 being carved from the budget on top of £8.6m already planned efficiencies. This would bring the savings to £9.5m, without reducing frontline services.

An extra £11m for highways over the next three years, an additional £4.5m for older people's care and a £2.5m boost for waste and recycling were approved by the full council.

The spending announcement comes shortly after the council topped government performance tables by retaining its four-star status for the fourth year running.

County Councillor Anne Brown, Cabinet member for Resources and Performance, said: "This budget is good news for everyone in Lancashire. We are putting more money into the services that are

most important to people while keeping council tax firmly in check.

"Strong financial management over recent years has allowed us to protect services and become more efficient as an organisation. I'm delighted we can now invest even more in the things that people really value such as care for both our older people and vulnerable youngsters, highways and the environment.

"I have announced that we will save even more money in the next year which is a sign of my determination that we must continue to find better ways of working."

Investment will be made in:

●Care for vulnerable adults - people with "moderate" needs will continue to receive care and there will be more money for care providers to deliver high-quality services.

●Roads - councillors will use their local knowledge to direct an additional £11m to where it is most needed for road repairs over the next three years. Decisions will take into account local priorities.

●Waste and recycling - the price of sending waste to landfill is increasing dramatically. Cash has been set aside towards the future costs of high-tech waste management plants which will recycle more

waste and help to prevent escalating bills for council tax payers. £2.5m will be set aside this year, with plans for a further £3m in each of the two following years.

●Children's services - £570,000 will provide extra resources to some of Lancashire's most vulnerable children in schools and local authority care.

Work to further streamline the way the council operates with a £500,000 investment to fund a team of project managers and business analysts to push ahead with projects and deliver savings. The investment aims to save a further £10m each year.

County Councillor Hazel Harding, leader of Lancashire County Council, added: "The county council was among only nine of the 46 councils in the North West to score top marks in a recent Audit Commission assessment of our use of resources.

"We have made great strides to make our services more efficient and offer good value for money which has helped us to deliver this below inflation increase in council tax.

"We could have kept Council Tax even lower but instead chose to further improve services which make a real difference to people's quality of life."



●INVESTMENT: Highway repairs



●INVESTMENT: Schools



●INVESTMENT: Vulnerable children



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

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



# Ask Shirley

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

Baffled by  
bureaucracy?

Ring Shirley on  
0845 0530000 or email  
Shirley on [enquiries@css.lancsc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@css.lancsc.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

### Apply within

*I have recently moved to Lancashire and was wondering where I look for jobs with Lancashire County Council?*

Mrs J, Colne

Lancashire County Council advertises all of its vacancies in local papers throughout Lancashire. All details of job vacancies with us are also available on our website at:

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vacancies/](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vacancies/)  
Please visit this site for up-to-date job vacancy information and contact details.

### Blocked gully

*Due to the terrible weather we have experienced lately, the gully outside my house is blocked and unable to take the amount of rain. I am worried that the water is going to start making its way up the driveway and close to the front door. Who should I contact about this?*

Mrs K, Barrowford

You can call the Lancashire County Council Highways Service on 0845 0530011, where they will report the problem for you to a highways officer, who will investigate the problem further. Alternatively you can email Lancashire Highways at [highways@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:highways@lancashire.gov.uk). If sandbags are needed urgently



●ONE of Lancashire's newest residents: see "Mum the word" (below).

you can obtain these from any supplier, or builders' merchant

### Free travel

*I have recently sent back all the information regarding my Nowcard. I understand that the cards are changing in April of this year to a National Concession Card and the concessions on the cards are changing too. Can I now use the new Nowcard on the train, as a friend of mine said this was possible?*

Mr S, Pilling

The Nowcard scheme that is provided by Lancashire County Council can only be used on local bus services and not rail services. As you are aware the concessions on the cards are changing, meaning that every Nowcard holder in Lancashire is eligible for free off-peak travel in England, on all local buses, between the hours of 9:30am and 11pm. If you have any further queries regarding this please contact the Nowcard helpline on 0845 0581096.

### Mum the word

*I had my first baby three weeks ago, and need to register the birth. I am not married to the baby's father and I'm wondering whether his details are going to be on the birth certificate automatically?*

Miss C, Tarleton

The father's details will not be on the birth certificate automatically because you are not married, in order to have his details on the certificate he will need to be present at the time of registration. If

the mother and the father of the baby are married, then both parents' details will be on the certificate automatically and either parent can register. To book an appointment for a registration office within Lancashire call 0845 0530021.

### Free tipping

*I need to drop some rubbish off at my local tip and will be using a car with a trailer on it. Will I require a tip permit and will there be a charge?*

Mrs D, Barton

If you are taking a van, pickup or double-axelled trailer to a Household Waste Recycling Centre you will require a tip permit. There is no cost for the permit and it allows one visit. The permit can be obtained by calling Lancashire Waste Helpline on 0845 0500957. You can also apply online by visiting [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)

### Blue Badges

February's edition of Ask Shirley listed the incorrect number for Blue Badge applications. The number should have been 0845 0530049. We apologise for any confusion.

## DON'T FORGET

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

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

# Could you share in cash bonanza?

By Andrew Lynn

**THREE** quarters of a million pounds in Pension Credit and Income Support was paid out to Lancashire people last year, thanks to Lancashire County Council's Welfare Rights Service.

A total of 304 new claims for Pension Credit and 248 for Income Support were generated for people in Preston, Pendle, Chorley, Lancaster, South Ribble, Wyre, Burnley and Ribbles Valley, with an extra £13,929 now paid out each week.

The district councils work with the county council to identify potential claimants through housing and council tax records, and write advising them to make a claim by filling in a coupon and returning it to the Welfare Rights Service in a freepost envelope.

The Welfare Rights Service then forwards the coupon to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) who contact potential claimants via the post, phone or, in the case of pensioners, with follow-up home visits.

The Welfare Rights Service then writes to those who sent in coupons to

ascertain whether their claims were successful.

County Councillor Jean Battle, Cabinet member for Community Planning and Partnerships, said: "Last year saw a significant benefit gain by county residents."

"A total of 552 new claims to Income Support and Pension Credit were generated last year, resulting in £724,308 being made in benefit payments."

"During the monitoring exercise other potential benefit claims were identified and £38,145 was handed out in new claims for Attendance Allowance."

"So it is safe to say that this year just over £750,000 in total has been raised for Lancashire residents."

This year's results bring the total number of successful claims since 1992 when the project started to 14,542; and the total annual sum in payments generated to just under £12m.

To contact the Welfare Rights Service, ring 01772 533504 or visit online at [www.lancashire.gov.uk/welfarerights](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/welfarerights)

# Lost souls on write track



●HISTORIC "missing children" posters are inspiring youngsters at the county's Record Office. Author Livi Michael is pictured with James King (10) and Cara Jessop (11).

THE real-life tale of an abandoned baby, a selection of "wanted" posters and the true-life story of a 19th-century orphan are bringing history and creativity to life in Lancashire.

"Wanted" posters of missing adults and children seem inconceivable now – but Lancashire's Record Office is teaming up with librarians and writers to use them in a new project to inspire learning.

"We have about 800 'wanted' posters for missing children and adults who vanished without trace," said Jacquie Crosby, Lancashire Record Office's assistant county archivist.

"Things like that really catch people's imagination and that's the first step to learning."

The Young Cultural Creator Project

involves opening up county archives to encourage reading and writing for pleasure.

Children's author Livi Michael visited to tell children how real-life history inspires her to write. She examined archive material with the children – and then start writing.

Children will also visit one of the county's largest libraries. If successful, the project will be used as a template for future work between schools, librarians and archivists.

Jacquie adds: "Human nature never changes and this project will give us a glimpse into what life was like for people in Lancashire nearly 200 years ago."

The project is backed by the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council in the North West.



## NEWS BRIEFS

### On the mat

MEMBERS of the public will get the chance to give senior councillors a grilling at a Cabinet Question Time in March. The 18 March event in Croston will feature leader Hazel Harding, deputy leader Doreen Politt, organisational supremo Tom Burns, sustainable development boss Tony Martin and highways chief Matthew Tomlinson. All can be quizzed by members of the public. The 7.15pm event will be held at Croston Old School, Church Street.

### Poll result

THE new county councillor for Thornton Cleveleys Central is Conservative Jim Lawrenson. He was elected in a by-election on 7 February. The seat was previously held by Keith Tebbs, who died last year.

### Junior boffins

YOUNGSTERS across Lancashire will be inventors for a day at the county's annual technology tournament. About 300 teams, including teams of teachers, will get together at a variety of venues for the Rotary-backed challenge – they are given instructions and materials and expected to build things such as cars, planes and rockets.

# Don't miss out on free bus travel

A RECENT revolution in public transport means that many Lancashire residents will be able to travel by bus for free.

Anyone who is entitled to a NoW card – the Lancashire-wide concessionary travel card – will be able to catch buses all around England at no cost.

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, Cabinet member for environment and transportation, said:

"This is good news for many Lancashire residents as the system is so simple and easy to use.

"Thanks to national funding and the work the county council has done to establish the NoW card system everything is in place to allow people to get on the buses without having to fiddle with change or worry about when they cross a particular border.

"There are also potential spin-offs for the environment as there is even

By Martin Crabtree

more reason for people to use public transport rather than use their car for a variety of journeys."

Anyone with a NoW card will be receiving all the information they need to start claiming their entitlement from 1 April.

All of the county's bus operators are gearing up to make sure the scheme launches with the minimum of fuss.

The entitlement will be available after 9.30am during the week and all day on Saturdays and Sundays.

Councillor Tomlinson explained: "This improvement is being made available thanks to the close partnership working between Lancashire County Council and the district and borough councils.

"It is good for families, good for shoppers – and good for anyone who likes to stay in touch."

## FREE BUSES

More information on the scheme is available by visiting [www.nowcard.org](http://www.nowcard.org) or by telephoning

0845 0581096

From April NoW card holders will be able to travel for free after 9.30am on weekdays and all day on Saturdays and Sundays.



●TASTY: staff at Albany High School hone their cooking skills.

## Healthy food on the school curriculum

PRIMARY school children in Lancashire are top of the class when it comes to learning to cook.

Inspired by new training provided by the county council, teachers are showing their young charges how to make dishes from fruit and vegetables, prepare sandwiches and bake bread and biscuits.

And food is being used to play a part in all areas of the curriculum such as design technology, numeracy, literacy, and even history and geography.

Annette McNeil, healthy schools'

teacher adviser, said: 'It's amazing how many lessons can be enriched by using food and recipes. It helps children learn through real-life experience.

"We are delighted by the way teachers have responded to this training with comments such as it's the best training they've ever been on.

"Many schools have been inspired to use the training to enhance their curriculum provision and establish cookery clubs. This will help to support the next generation with this vital life skill."

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

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

To find out more about this FREE course or to book a place please contact Mike Barnes on 01772 532217.



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

Lancashire  
County Council

We will be running courses as follows:

### East Lancashire

Date: Tuesday 22nd April 2008  
Time: 9.15am to 12.15pm  
Venue: **Fairfield Children's Centre**  
Fairfield Street  
Accrington  
BB5 0LD  
How long: 5 weeks (3 hours per week)

Date: Friday 25th April 2008  
Time: 9.15am to 12.15pm  
Venue: **Burnley Football Club**  
Harry Potts Way  
Burnley  
BB10 4BX  
How long: 5 weeks (3 hours per week)

### Preston/Kirkham

Date: Tuesday 1st April 2008  
Time: 9.30am to 12.00pm  
Venue: **Preston West Children's Centre**  
Ashton Primary School  
Ainsdale Drive  
Ashton  
Preston  
PR2 1TU  
How long: 6 weeks (2.5 hours per week)

Date: Thursday 3rd April 2008  
Time: 9.30am to 12.00pm  
Venue: **Pear Tree School**  
29 Station Road  
Kirkham  
PR4 2HA  
How long: 6 weeks (2.5 hours per week)



## Win a SUPERB break!

### THE charm of the 14th century meets the efficiency of the 21st century at historic Borwick Hall

Educational and team development courses, romantic weddings and civil partnerships – there is something for everyone at the beautiful north Lancashire hall.

Set in 18 acres of idyllic grounds and open countryside, the outdoor education facility has easy access to both the Lake District and the hills of Yorkshire.

Superb meeting rooms and conference facilities are available, offering modern technology in a historic setting. Comprising the original Manor House dating back to the 14th Century, East, West and North Beckside Lodges, the Stables, the Gatehouse and the Bungalow, the complex exudes history and character.

While Borwick Hall is a truly great place to visit, the dedicated staff are definitely 21st-century material. All of them are fully qualified with your safety and enjoyment being the main priority.

From canoeing to celebrating, from cycling to mountain-biking – and only a few miles from the M6 and near to Carnforth, Leighton Hall and Leighton Hall Nature Reserve.

The Lancaster Canal can be reached through its grounds.

Planning a special occasion? Civil weddings, civil partnership ceremonies, naming ceremonies, renewal of vows and receptions for all occasions are all catered for with overnight accommodation in the Manor House for guests and the romantic gatehouse for the wedding couple.

Two licensed bars also make it ideal for all types of special occasions and staff functions.

Two lucky Vision readers can enjoy a two-night weekend stay in Borwick Hall's comfortable Gatehouse.

To win, simply answer the following question:

#### How many acres of grounds is Borwick Hall set in?

The self-catering stay is to be taken at a date to be agreed. Send your entry, by Wednesday 20 February, to Borwick competition, Vision, County Hall PR1 8XJ. You can also enter online at: [www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/vision).

For further details visit:

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



## Enjoy an Easter train trip

EASTER heralds the return of one of the north-west's most popular rail scenic services.

The first DalesRail train sets off on Easter Sunday, 23 March, to travel some of the most picturesque areas of Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cumbria.

Lancashire residents can catch it from Blackpool, Preston, Blackburn or

Clitheroe, before it heads on the famous Settle-Carlisle Line. There's always plenty to do along the way for those who want to venture beyond the platform once they reach the destination.

For more information, call 01200 429832. You can also pick up a timetable from your local County Information Centre, Tourist Information Centre or railway station.

# All change on parking charges

**A CAMPAIGN is being launched to keep Lancashire's road users up-to-date with changes to parking rules and regulations.**

New national regulations are shortly to come into force which will mean that a sliding scale will come into play for anyone going against parking rules.

County Councillor Matthew Tomlinson, Cabinet member for environment and transportation, said: "In many ways nothing has changed as there will be no fines whatsoever for the people who park correctly.

"But the new national rules, which are coming in as part of the Traffic Management Act, mean that there will be a range of charges depending on the offence.

"This means that we will move away from a 'one size fits all'

## Added flexibility will target most serious offences

By Martin Crabtree

approach towards penalties that aim to reflect the type of offence committed."

What will the changes mean? Differential charging will come into force meaning drivers could pay less, or more, depending on the contravention – the more serious, the higher the charge.

The new levels will be either £50 (£25 if paid in 14 days) for less serious contraventions such as overstaying Pay and Display time or £70 (£35 if paid within 14 days) for contraventions like parking on double yellow lines.

The new legislation will mean

parking attendants will now be known as "civil enforcement officers" and will have new powers to issue Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) to motorists parked on zig zag lines at pedestrian crossings.

In order to reduce the number of vehicle drive-aways (where the motorists drive off to avoid being issued with a PCN) motorists can now be issued with PCNs through the post after the contravention has been committed.

More detailed information on the changes will be publicised through the local media and via ParkWise's website at [www.parkwise.org.uk](http://www.parkwise.org.uk) over the coming weeks.

## Rosebud backing for Japan fame bid

A FASHION designer is heading east thanks to Rosebud finance

Sarah Locke has set up her own fashion label which appeals to the Japanese market and will now travel to Japan to sell her designs thanks to Rosebud finance.

Sarah, pictured on the right with County Councillor Niki Penney, has built her business up over three years and has attended three



Paris fashion shows.

She specialises in designs that use silk and cotton, materials which are very popular in the Far East. Sarah is now planning to visit Japan to find buyers. Sarah said: "I am

committed to working in Lancashire and will continue to have my business based in Lancashire. I also try and source my materials from the county and my cotton supplies come from Nelson."

## CASH HELP

Versatile Rosebud help is available for sums from £5,000 upwards. It is supplied by Lancashire County Developments Ltd. Loan rates are competitive and repayment terms can be flexible.

To find out more, ring:

01772 536652



## Bus timetables: help needed

I WAS interested to see the Vision article on the ways we can use public transport more and our cars less.

I applaud the idea. There are too many short and unnecessary car trips made by people perfectly capable of walking – especially schoolchildren.

I am a member of the South Ribbles Pensioners' Association, many members of which are infirm. Local shops are closing everywhere and many members have to travel several miles to supermarkets in order to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle.

Public transport is important to us and it will be much appreciated when we gain free travel on the buses in April. Many, however, will find it difficult to work out timetables – many of us do not have access to the internet.

It will be nice to plan day trips without having to worry about the cost – but it may be difficult to work out the times and routes!

Getting out and about is a great benefit in many ways – but we need to know how, where and when.

P FELL  
Penwortham

■Bus timetables can be obtained from County Information Centres and also most local libraries and other local outlets. Bus information is sited at many bus stops in the county and information can be obtained by phone from Traveline (0871 2002233) or via SMS with the code on the information at your local stop. Timetables can also be obtained from Lancashire County Council free of charge by writing to: Strategic Planning and Transport,

## Send your letters to:

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

Environment Directorate, Lancashire County Council, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston, PR1 8RD - editor.

## Stand up for dinner

I THINK K Michael has it right in the debate about dinner, lunch and tea (Vision, February).

If dinner is taken at teatime (4-6pm), then there can be no "teatime" – only either morning tea or "elevenses".

Dinner, according to the dictionary, is the main meal of the day to be eaten at midday or in the evening.

As evening is post-teatime (that is, after 6pm), there is no reason for the snobs to convert tea into dinner and to then convert dinner into lunch.

It is a middle-class attempt to distance themselves from the – to them – lower working class.

So K Michael enjoy your noon dinner and 4-6pm tea.

D PRATT  
Accrington

## ...or lunch

USE of lunch and dinner, rather than dinner and tea, is not a matter of snobbishness (You're Telling Us! February).

Dinner is the main meal of the day; lunch is a sandwich or something light to eat, and also a drink, at midday.

Dinner is the meal that mums traditionally made when everyone is home from work and school. If you have your main meal at midday, then your tea will be late afternoon.

When people worked regular hours, such as 7.30am to 5.30pm, they usually went home for the dinner hour. Tea was the meal taken after work. To say otherwise is not a slur on Lancashire – it is a sign of the times.

I know several dinner ladies who work at lunch time.

B PROCTER  
Lancaster

## Keep councils local

A GOVERNMENT White Paper a year or so ago gave councils the opportunity to

alter boundaries.

It is gratifying to record that, as recorded in Vision, the county rejected the idea of any change. The prospect of any district council wanting to acquire or amalgamate, either in whole or in part, with another was regarded as unacceptable.

However, there would be no objection to talks to consider amalgamation of some services.

Lancashire's district councils have a strong affinity with local communities and traditions that need preservation at all costs.

We should not have change for the sake of change. Please, no more changes in Lancashire.

G FALLOWS  
Lytham

■Authorities were invited to put forward proposals for change last year.

Lancashire County Council along with Lancashire district councils have suggested instead ways all authorities in Lancashire can work closer together for the benefit of Lancashire residents.

In some other parts of the country outside Lancashire, however, boundaries will be changing - editor.

# Adrenaline rush for Gateway

**CONSTRUCTION has started on turning Rossendale's Lee Quarry into one of Europe's premier mountain bike venues.**

The construction is part of the Adrenaline Gateway Project which aims to develop an adrenaline sport and leisure gateway centred in Rossendale.

Local construction company Terra Firma Environmental Ltd have been appointed to design, develop and construct mountain bike trails and trial areas. Eight kilometres of challenging cross-country trails are being developed with trial areas being developed to enable championship events to be held at the site.

Announcing the start of construction Hazel Harding, the leader of Lancashire County Council, said: "I am delighted to be here at the start of a very exciting project for Rossendale. Regenerating land to turn it into a leading sports venue shows the innovation and commitment to develop-

ment that both Lancashire County Council and its partners have in ensuring the long term prosperity of the county."

Councillor Tony Swain, leader of Rossendale Council, said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for Rossendale and one we are proud to be partners in."

"The Adrenaline Gateway Project will bolster Rossendale's economy through increased tourism and leisure activities whilst also raising the area's profile both nationally and internationally through future mountain bike championship events."

Construction of the new sections is likely to be completed by the end of April. The Adrenaline Gateway Project is a partnership involving Lancashire County Council's economic development department Lancashire County Developments Limited, Rossendale Council, Rossendale Leisure Trust and the North West Regional Development Agency and part funded by Natural England through Whitehall's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund.

● **ADRENALINE:** County Councillor Hazel Harding, leader of the county council, with Councillor Tony Swain, leader of Rossendale Council.



## Nationality checking service launched

LANCASHIRE'S Registration Service has launched a nationality checking service for members of the community applying for British citizenship.

The new service is a partnership between the county council, the government's Home Office and the Office of the Immigration Service Commissioner. The service allows people to submit their application for British citizenship at the Lancashire Register Office in Preston.

It is hoped the service will help make the process easier for applicants and promote integration and citizenship in a bid to reflect the multi-cultural diversity and multi-racial society

Lancashire has become.

Gill Greeson, superintendent registrar for Lancashire County Council, said: "Applying for British citizenship can be difficult and can often take a long time. The advantage of using our service is that your original documents, including your passport, remain in your safekeeping and are not held by the Home Office for the duration of your application."

The county council has also produced a leaflet which is available in register offices. For information on any of its services, please contact the Lancashire Registration Service on 0845 053 0021 or visit [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk)

## Parents' praise



● **CLASS act:** (left to right) Clare Williams, Maureen Nash, Angela Aspinwall-Livesey and Judith Halton with the award.

FOUR Lancashire schools are in a class of their own when it comes to involving parents.

More than 20 schools have signed up to the Leading Parent Partnership project which aims to get mums and dads supporting children's learning.

Teacher adviser Maureen Nash said: "Parental involvement is the most important factor in a child's education. 'You are half way there as soon as you get the parents on board.'"

Schools in Nelson, Haslingden, Skelmersdale and Kirkham have already landed the Leading Parent

Partnership Award - and more are expected to be in the pipeline.

The programme has involved literacy and computer courses for parents while schools also invite mums and dads in to discuss educational progress.

Parents are also expected to help teach their children at home.

The four schools to have landed the award are: St John's RC Primary School, Skelmersdale; Pear Tree School, Kirkham; Hillside School, Haslingden; Marsden Primary School, Nelson.

## Council's top marks

County council is awarded highest-possible four-star rating for the fourth consecutive time

LANCASHIRE County Council has topped performance tables for the fourth year running.

The authority has been awarded the highest possible four stars by the Audit Commission and rated 'improving well' on its potential for future improvement.

County Councillor Hazel Harding, leader of Lancashire County Council, said: "This is good news for everyone in Lancashire as it means they are receiving some of the best local government services in the country."

"We have achieved this by focusing clearly on the things that are most important to people and I'm pleased the inspectors found we are performing particularly well

in providing transport, care for vulnerable adults and improving education and prospects for children."

"Running a council is not all about winning awards but this endorsement from the Audit Commission proves we are amongst the best."

The Audit Commission also praised the county council for promoting healthy lifestyles, working well with partner organisations to cut crime and boosting the economy.

Inspectors said managers were firmly focused on saving money through improved efficiency, confirming last week's announcement that the authority has also achieved top marks for its use of resources.

Initiatives to connect with com-

munities at a local level and provide better access to services were also singled out as ways the council is continuing to improve.

Councillor Harding added: "Our Lancashire Local meetings have been very successful in giving councillors more power to make decisions based on their local knowledge."

"We are also coming up with really innovative ways to make it easier for people to receive services through use of technology in libraries and via the internet and telephone."

"We will use the Audit Commission's findings to continue to improve our services. Our top rating means we are amongst the best and we will keep giving 100 per cent effort to serve the public of Lancashire."

## 'Lollipop' appeal

AN appeal has been launched asking people to sign up as school crossing patrols.

There are currently 22 vacancies across the county and an additional six in Blackburn with Darwen, which is also run by Lancashire County Commercial Services - the county's provider.

County Councillor Tom Burns, Cabinet member for Sustainable Development, said: "There is a national shortage, so this problem is not exclusive to Lancashire. If you think you might be suitable, please contact us."

For details, call 01772 646810 or visit [www.serving.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.serving.lancashire.gov.uk)

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

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

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

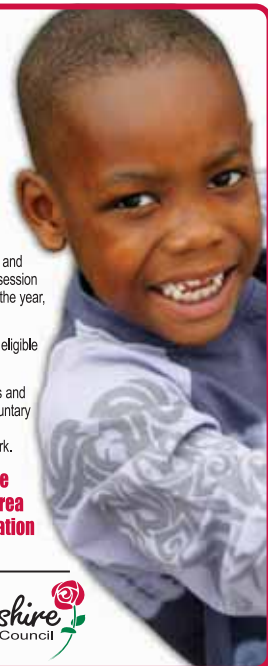
Places are available from any of Lancashire County Council's eligible providers of pre-school nursery education.

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

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

**SureStart**

**Lancashire**  
County Council





NEWS  
BRIEFSFinancial  
support for  
rural areas

RURAL areas across Lancashire are to gain after support was agreed by the county council's Champion for Parishes.

County Councillor Albert Atkinson is charged with helping the civic and social life of such areas.

The latest areas to win support include Catterall, Withnell, Caton-with-Littledale and various parish councils in Ribble Valley.

£1,000 is to go to Catterall Parish Council which hopes to install CCTV cameras to survey the memorial garden, sheltered-accommodation bungalows, the Post Office and arterial roads into Garstang.

Installation of welcome signs into Withnell will be supported by £500, while Caton-with-Littledale Parish Council is gaining £750 for CCTV at Victoria Institute.

Various parish councils in Ribble Valley will benefit by gaining training on legal and planning services.

Pedestrian  
safety cash

DOZENS of new pedestrian safety schemes have been approved across Lancashire.

Improvements for pedestrians include extra pelican-style crossing controls, improved footways, new pedestrian refuges and extra zebra crossings.

Areas to benefit include Colne, Pilling, Balderstone, Lytham, Lancaster, Barnoldswick, Preston and Nelson.

Cycleway link  
for schools

A NEW cycle route is to be built between Whitworth and Britannia in Rossendale.

The route will mainly use old stretches of railway line - but will also use sections of minor road.

The scheme will link to an existing cycle route into Rochdale - and, it is hoped, it will help children travel to and from a secondary school and local primary schools.

Shine a light  
on criminality

MORE than £200,000 has been allocated to improve streetlighting across the county.

The extra lights will be installed in areas affected by crime - the hope is that better lighting will deter criminality.

One of the schemes includes a contribution towards the costs of CCTV cameras.

Crime and Disorder Partnerships - which include district and borough councils - across Lancashire have been involved in making bids for cash support.

## Champion! Older people gain direct line to Whitehall

OLDER people in Lancashire now have a hotline to Whitehall after a meeting between a government minister and the county council's Champion for Older People.

The needs of older people

in Lancashire were explained when County Councillor Dorothy Westell met Mike O'Brien in Manchester - and explained the work of Older People's Champions across the North West.

Councillor Westell, who in Partnership with Better

Government for Older People established a 22-strong network of similar champions, said: "National government needs to know what older people want - and I hope our meeting will open future avenues into Whitehall for people."

"Older people have specific needs and Champions across the North West are there to ensure their voice is heard."

The meeting was called at the request of Mr O'Brien, Minister for Pensions Reform at the Department for Work and Pensions.

Councillor Westell added: "We told the minister how older people need to be heard at the highest level."

"It means that Lancashire older people will have a role on a national stage in the future."

## 'Sensible drink' campaign pays off

Team approach shows 36 per cent fall in night-time disorder

## SPECIAL REPORT

By KATIE HEATON  
on work experience  
with Vision

LANCASHIRE County Council recently joined forces with the emergency services to raise alcohol awareness in Fylde.

Alongside Lancashire Constabulary, the county council targeted parents in the district asking them the question: Do you know where your children are?

The aim of the project was to warn of health risks associated with alcohol, how it can lead to anti-social behaviour and other dangers.

The council's mobile unit was out on the day and representatives worked with local police and Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service providing information and advice.

The multi-agency scheme is just one part of wider work being carried out by the county council, but how much do you know about what is being done in your county?

Last year's Christmas celebrations were overseen by Operation Night Safe.

## Family damage

The nationwide scheme, which started in Lancashire, involves a number of key partners including the county council which teamed up to reduce drink-fuelled crime.

An important part of Operation Night Safe involved the county council, along with Lancashire Constabulary, speaking with licensees about problems across the district.

Councillor Councillor Hazel Harding, leader of the county council, said: "Recent schemes like Operation Night Safe have seen significant reductions in anti-social behaviour."

"Working closely with the police, fire and rescue service, the ambulance service, primary care trusts and other groups saw the number of night-time disorders decrease by 36 per cent across Lancashire."

## Violent crime

In July 2007, Operation Summer Nights saw the county council join with organisations such as Central Lancashire Primary Care Trust to tackle binge drinking and make streets safer during the holiday period, by promoting healthy alcohol consumption.

Summer Nights continues to be a successful cam-



●DRINK sensibly: County Councillor Bernard Whittle, County Councillor Tim Ashton and police community support officer Ian Larmouth at Fylde's alcohol awareness day.

paign, following trends of previous years, which have seen the county council help reduce violent crime by 13 per cent.

The council's Trading Standards department played a huge role by visiting over 5,400 licensed premises and making more than 200 test purchases to ensure that retailers are complying with the law.

## 'Spit kits'

Councillor Harding added: "Anti-social behaviour is an issue across the region and we feel it's important that the county council is involved in projects like these to improve our communities."

Across the region the county council has also been working to combat crime on buses, using its Safer Travel Unit.

By providing safer transport, the county council has reduced reported incidents by 33 per cent

in just two years.

The county council is not just looking out for passengers: staff safety is also paramount.

Across the county 4,000 bus drivers have been issued with DNA kits making it easy to trace and prosecute attackers who spit at them, a scheme supported fully by Lancashire Constabulary.

Councillor Harding continued: "These are just some examples of the hard work being done."

"The county council continues to be committed to making Lancashire a safer place."

A spokesman for Lancashire Constabulary said that working alongside other agencies is important to create confident, safer and secure neighbourhoods.

He added: People know that the police and partners such as Lancashire County Council understand the issues that matter most to them and are able to tackle them together."

## Atomic Kitten back road-safety drive

ATOMIC Kitten star Natasha Hamilton is urging parents to lead by example when on the roads with their children.

Her message comes in support of the Department for Transport's (DfT) CopyCat campaign, an initiative also supported by Lancashire County Council's Road Safety Group.

Natasha, who has featured in the county council's Roadlife magazine, said: "With around 11,500 children killed or injured on

Britain's roads in 2006 as passengers, pedestrians or cyclists it's really important to teach children to stay safe."

"Children will copy what you do so make sure you follow your own rules and act safely at all times."

To help you do this the Road Safety Group has put together the following advice:

●Don't use your mobile when crossing the road. Teach your children to concentrate on the roads.

●Never cross when the red man shows.

●Always wear your seatbelt. Children will follow your lead and if you aren't wearing your seatbelt why should they?

●Finally, remember that you are the adult and children will follow your lead. Always follow your own rules and keep yourself and your children safe.

Atomic Kitten's new single "Anyone Who Had a Heart" is available to download from their website [atomic.kitten.com](http://atomic.kitten.com) and Natasha has kindly donated a signed picture of the band along with a signed copy of Roadlife magazine for one lucky winner.

You could win signed Atomic Kitten memorabilia:

When should you wear a seatbelt a) never b) sometimes c) always

Send your answer and name, address and telephone number to: Atomic Kitten competition, Lancashire County Council Road Safety Group, Guild House, Cross Street, Preston PR1 8RD or email [roadsafety@env.lancsc.gov.uk](mailto:roadsafety@env.lancsc.gov.uk) Closing date: 14 March

# Home taskforce hits the road

By Neil Graham

**CARE home projects in York, St Helens and Bootle were visited last month as part of a long-term scheme to increase the number of "extra-care" homes in Lancashire.**

About 1,400 extra-care home places will be needed within the next 10 years in Lancashire to provide for an ageing population – so county councillors are studying the best way ahead in terms of winning funding and planning permission.

A Lancashire County Council overview and scrutiny taskgroup is expected to report by late summer on how other areas are establishing and running similar projects.

County Councillor Bob Pendleton, taskgroup chair, said: "This is a hugely important piece of work that will benefit thousands of people in the future."

"Getting funding and planning permission requires working together between the county council, district councils, health trusts and the Housing Corporation."

"A number of potential schemes in Lancashire have failed to get off the ground, so we must look at how things are being done differently elsewhere."

## Extra-care homes should be among the nation's best

Both the York and St Helens schemes are "retirement villages" which feature apartments and bungalows and attractions such as coffee bars, shops and hairdressers' salons.

The extra-sheltered concept is a halfway house between helping people live in their own home – which most people prefer – and going into a registered residential care home.

It means there is extra

support available for people living either in purpose-built complexes or in the surrounding neighbourhood.

About 330 "very sheltered" places now exist county-wide in 18 separate schemes.

Councillor Pendleton added: "It is vital that we get this right."

"Absolutely anyone may need this extra help at some point in the future, so we need to start work now."

### ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

Councillors from across Lancashire and from a variety of parties are working together to boost extra-care housing:

**County Councillor Bob Pendleton – West Lancs**  
01695 728198  
bob.pendleton@cc.lancscc.gov.uk

**County Councillor Tim Ormrod – Pendle**  
01282 866389  
tim.ormrod@cc.lancscc.gov.uk



**County Councillor Mary Wilson – Ribbles Valley**  
01772 784934  
mary.wilson@cc.lancscc.gov.uk



**County Councillor Sonia Robinson – Pendle**  
01282 661343  
sonia.robinson@cc.lancscc.gov.uk

District council reps: Councillor Peter Robinson, Lancaster; Councillor Anne Cheetham, Rossendale; Councillor Alice Collinson, Wyre.



●YOUR children could be as happy as this cheerful bunch, pictured with their parents, at St Mary's Primary School, Osbaldeston.

## Action on school safety

ENTHUSIASTIC pupils at St Mary's Primary School in Osbaldeston are caring for the environment while setting a good example for other youngsters in Lancashire.

The children, whose school has invested more than £4,000 in implementing a School Travel Plan, regularly hold themed events to mark occasions like Valentines Day and Easter to make travel fun.

Dorothy Crane from the School Travel Plan team, said: "One element of the school's travel plan was a need to improve safety on the A59."

"Our Safer Routes to School programme funded an extension to the footpath on one side of this busy road. "St Mary's have not only secured

the funding, but also make sure that safer travel is a feature of their pupils' daily routine."

Each primary school with a travel plan will receive £3,750 plus £5 per pupil and each secondary school £5,000 plus £5 per pupil.

A total of 322 schools in Lancashire have already received in excess of £1.7m between them since June 2004. Grants will be available, to schools that have not yet received funding and with an approved travel plan in place, until March 2010.

For further details about School Travel Plans please contact Dorothy Crane on 01772 532212 or visit the Lancashire County Council website and select S for School Travel in the A-Z.

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

## CELEBRATING CHILDMINDING in Lancashire

Some of Lancashire's 1200 childminders recently attended their annual conference 'Let's Work Together' at Woodlands Conference Centre, Chorley. This gave an opportunity for childminders to meet, share good practice and celebrate their professional childcare service.

Seven of the county's childminders who were awarded an 'outstanding' grading from Ofsted received a certificate and book in appreciation of their hard work and commitment presented by Pat Jefferson, Executive Director for Children & Young People.

Val Farrow, Head of Sure Start Early Years & Childcare praised the childminders and stressed how crucial they are to the county's childcare strategy, both now and in the future.

If you want any further information on childcare in Lancashire please contact Lancashire Childcare Information Service on **0800 195 0137**.



Lancashire  
Childcare  
Information  
Service  
0800 195 0137

**SureStart**

**Lancashire**  
County Council



# Pupils tune into sound of success

Music and sport are more than just fun - they are increasingly being put to work in the curriculum

**S**CHOOL children across Lancashire and Cumbria will be learning lessons from lions, tigers and elephants next term, thanks to an exciting new interactive music education project.

The Carnival of the Animals is a joint venture between the Lancashire Sinfonietta, Lancashire County Council and Cumbria County Council.

Le Carnaval des Animaux is a musical composition of 14 orchestral pieces by the French Romantic composer Camille Saint-Saëns, each of which interprets and portrays a particular animal and its behaviour.

Inspired by the classical piece, first written in 1886, the Tuned-in.org website offers a unique resource for teachers using CD Rom, DVD, podcasts, online material and video-conferencing to create a fun and unique way of teaching the national primary curriculum to children, aged 4-11.

The resource is also available to teachers through the Cumbria and Lancashire Education Online (CLEO) broadband internet network.

"Our aim, through the Carnival of the Animals, is to excite and encourage children and their teachers to become involved with a wide range of musicians, not just in the traditional way, but by using modern technology to enhance the work they do", explains Jim Grisdale, head of the Music Service at Lancashire County Council.

**T**he music has been recorded by the Lancashire Sinfonietta – a unique professional chamber orchestra supported by the county council.

"The musical resources can help teachers to cover a huge range of cross-curricular subjects

from French to science, art and geography.

Conservation issues are at the heart of the project", adds Helen Quayle, leader of



(Right) → Callum Danson and Molly Burrows-Smith, both 7. Sarah Whewell and Helen Bywater



the Lancashire Sinfonietta's school project.

"Classes can also learn about the science and sound of our instruments with the help of live musicians."

**T**eaching materials can be brought to life in the classroom with visits from professional musicians of the Sinfonietta, African drummers, an Indian dancer and even a hip-hop performance poet.

The project is also being supported through interaction with real animals with day visits to safari parks and aquariums led by animal experts.

Pauline Tate, headteacher at St. Johns CE Primary School in Pilling explained what the project means for her pupils.

The said:

"This is something the whole school has been able to get involved in and it's great that we can draw on the expertise and resources of the Sinfonietta. The children have already begun work, producing tapestry, artwork and creative writing as part of the Carnival of the Animals project."

The children will also be staging their own musical performances inspired by the project. The school has its own swing band and all the pupils in year 3 to year 6 have the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument.

The pinnacle of the project ends with a musical concert involving over 2,000 children across the two counties in Preston's Guild Hall planned this month at 1.30pm on 17 March 2008.

For more information visit online at [www.lancs-sinf.com](http://www.lancs-sinf.com)

## Schools cross national barriers in sports project

LANCASHIRE'S latest export is an unusual one – expertise in physical education and school sport.

The county council's consultant for this area of work, Susan Cooke, travelled to India to share her knowledge and experience with government officials, teachers and students.

The visit was part of a wider programme with the Youth Sport Trust.

Locations included Delhi and Gwalior, where discussions centred on sport, teacher training and coaching teenagers as young leaders.

The visit was a development from the Youth Sport Trust's "Dreams and Teams" project which links schools around the world. It is active in 34 countries.

A number of Lancashire secondary schools have linked up with schools in Latvia, Slovakia, Hungary and Russia and are developing their own learning programmes where young people and staff are benefiting from the projects in place.

Susan said: "The trip had a hectic timetable so we packed a lot in."

"Indian schools have traditionally placed a very strong emphasis on academic achievement but now they want to bring physical education more firmly into the curriculum and use it to support other areas of learning such as leadership."

"The work of our delegation has kick-started the process and now the Youth Sports Trust will follow this up with resources and support. I look forward to the university students coming to visit Lancashire and spending time in some of our schools as part of their training."

## Sporting chance for young

SCHOOL PE staff are putting the bounce into learning – even in traditionally academic subjects like the three Rs.

Preston School Sports Partnership, along with colleagues in Knowsley and St Helens, has just won a national award for a project demonstrating how primary school teachers can use PE and physical activity to help children learn, right across the curriculum.

The techniques are particularly useful for children who struggle during literacy and numeracy lessons with conventional teaching methods – research shows they often learn better

while they are physically active.

Another benefit of the project is that it has helped schoolchildren get fitter.

Until the project began, just over three quarters of pupils in the 93 pilot schools were hitting their weekly target of two hours high-quality PE and school sport, but now 100 per cent of them are achieving it.

Craig Vickers, Lancashire County Council's partnership development manager for school sports in Preston, said: "So far more than 500 children have taken part and with our training programme plans for the next 18 months, it should rise to 18,000."

## Spring listings



**Sat 8 March**  
10.30am-3.30pm. Beacon Fell Experience Crew. Want to gain experience of the work of a ranger? Age 14-18. Meet at Carwags car park, Beacon Fell Country Park. Book on 01995 640557.

**Sun 9 March**  
1-3pm. Wycoller – a walk in the country. Family walk. Trumper friendly. Meet at Aisled Barn, Wycoller. To book Trumper, tel 01995 640557.

**Sat 15 March**  
10am-4pm. Introduction to basic map

and compass use. Moderate walk. Meet Bowland Visitor Centre, Beacon Fell Country Park. Book 01995 640557.

**Sun 23 March**  
1-4pm. Easter egg competition. Paint an egg – bring your own hardboiled egg. Meet Pepper Hill Barn, Wycoller.

**Sun 30 March**  
1-3.30pm. Walk through Lee Quarry, Bacup. A close look at the fascinating industrial archaeological trail of Lee Quarry. Suitable for Trampers – book on 01995 640557.

**22 March-July**  
Natural history – uncover nature's secrets. Explore Lancashire's geology, botany, entomology and natural history. Exhibition, Museum of Lancashire, Stanley Street, Preston. 01772 534075.

You can find lots of information about events on: [www.lancsmuseums.gov.uk](http://www.lancsmuseums.gov.uk) and at [www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside](http://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



## Life in Lancashire

## Put a spring in your step

Warmer weather is on its way, so why not get fit with the Countryside Service in the Morecambe Bay area?

By Steve Edwards

**T**HIS is an easy walk suitable for most people, but there are a few gentle climbs. There are several stiles to negotiate in the coastal section. There are a number of bench seats to rest and enjoy the views.

Start the walk at Hest Bank. Turn across the railway crossing from the A5105 coastal road to park next to the shore.

Leave the car park in a northerly direction, follow the Lancashire Coastal Way, along the top of the shore, until you reach Morecambe Lodge car park. This was the main access for the recent cockle fishing tragedy, which resulted in the deaths of the Chinese workers.

Sheep graze on the saltmarsh and the fields at Red Bank so please keep dogs under close control.

Walking north, enter a field and climb up Red Bank to enjoy excellent views of Morecambe Bay, the Cumbrian coast and the Lakeland Fells. There is an ideal viewing point near the cliff top.

Leave the field over a stile. As you approach the farm enter the small caravan park.

Bear slightly left, walking through the caravans, until you climb over an old stone stile of the corner of the farmhouse.

**F**ollow the coast past the houses on the shore along the concrete topped embankment. Warton Crag dominates the view to the north. The saltmarsh is much more extensive here, and is used by many birds at high tide. Morecambe Bay is of international importance for its birdlife.

Follow the tarmac road as it turns away from the shore past old cottages and a caravan park. The lane descends to cross the railway line at the level crossing. This was the site of Bolton-le-Sands railway station, though no sign

A map of the route can be found on the Lancashire Countryside Service web site. [www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside)

of it now exists. Climb up the lane entering Bolton-le-Sands.

Cross the A6 using the pedestrian crossing immediately to your left. Continue on St. Michael's Lane on the other side of the main road to the Lancaster Canal, passing St. Michael's Grove and the Hollows.

**J**oin the towpath and turn right, walk along the recently surfaced canal towpath, heading south towards Hest Bank village past the swing bridge.

The next bridge is Hatlex Bridge. Just down the lane from this bridge lies the Whitewalls Restaurant, a beautiful 17th century building with quaker connections.

At Bridge 118 leave the canal and head towards the coast. Ascend the steps onto the road, cross the bridge with care, and pass the Hest Bank Hotel a former coaching inn.

Follow Station Road to the right, to Coastal Road at the bottom. Cross the main road using the pedestrian crossing, and return to the start point via the railway crossing.

## PLANNED ROUTE

A 3.5-miles walk, taking in part of the north Lancashire coast and an attractive section of the Lancaster Canal. **Allow around 1.5 hours.** OS Explorer Map OL296 Lancaster and Morecambe.

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/countryside) for a map of the route.

Public transport: - the A6 is well served by buses between Lancaster, Morecambe and Carnforth.

For information, tel 0871 2002233 or visit [www.lancashire.gov.uk](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk) and click on journey planner.

## Win Walking boots worth £100

Preston's newest outdoor and travel superstore is offering Vision readers the chance to win a pair of walking boots up to the value of £100 with a personal consultation and fitting advice.



Simply answer the following question and return, by Monday 17 March, to Cotswold competition, Vision, County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ: **The Queen's Sand Pilot guides walkers across Morecambe Bay. What is his name?**

Present this voucher for 15% discount at Cotswold Outdoor Preston 135 Fishergate, Preston (opposite Waterstones) Tel: 01772 270910 [www.cotswoldoutdoor.com](http://www.cotswoldoutdoor.com)

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



## Buying cheap cars

—by all means look for a bargain, but take care not to be ripped off, says trading standards officer *Julian Edwards*

**Q:** My daughter recently passed her driving test and is keen to buy her own car. She has been saving up but, with only around £1,000 to spend, she will be buying second-hand.

We want to make sure she gets a safe car for her money. What is the best way to go about this?

**A:** If you are buying a higher-value car, good practice is to ensure you have the vehicle independently examined and check on the car's history by using services provided by a company called HPI.

While it is not cost-effective to go this far with a lower-value car, there are certain checks you can and should carry out to ensure the vehicle is safe and that you are not going to be buying a problem.

At the lower end of the market

you may be looking to buy from a second-hand dealer or a private individual. We would advise that you:

Go along to any viewing with someone who has some knowledge of cars.

Go for a thorough test drive, ideally starting the car from when it is still cold.

Check the V5 registration document to see how long the car has been owned by the current keeper.

Specifically ask the reason for the sale and if there are any

known major problems.

Have the reply put on any receipt given.

Ask to see receipts of service and work carried out in last year.

Consider having a vehicle you are interested in MOT'd. This will reveal any current safety issues which may have arisen since the last test carried out.

If you buy from a dealer, read any contracts carefully before you sign. Anything agreed between you and a dealer, such as pre-purchase repairs, should be written on the contract.

If a dealer offers to sell you an extended warranty, check the terms and conditions (particularly the exclusions) to make sure it is suitable for you.

Check the cost of insurance for the vehicle before you commit to purchase

For the money your daughter

plans to spend she CAN get a safe and relatively reliable bargain.

Equally she could get ripped-off. It is better to think twice and walk away than to make a rushed purchase.

By following this commonsense approach the risk of this can be minimised.

## CHEAP CAR

There is more information on buying second-hand cars on our website at:

<http://www.tradingstandards.gov.uk/lancashire/>

The Consumer Direct website also has a wealth of useful information you should read before venturing into the marketplace:

[http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/before\\_you\\_buy/thinking\\_about/cars/](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/before_you_buy/thinking_about/cars/)

# LOOK LIVELY

THE Lancaster and Morecambe area is one of six cycling demonstration projects nationally. The area now has one of the best networks in the country and cycle use is growing.

Star features of the city's cycle path network are the Millennium Bridge in Lancaster, and the greenway route on the old railway to Morecambe.

In summer the bridge is used by over 1,000 cyclists and 2,000 pedestrians a day.

Recent successes include the "Bike It Project" which aims to encourage more children to cycle to school.



**Katie Thompson**  
Safer Travel Unit support  
officer

#### What does your work involve?

We stop bad behaviour on buses. We work with schools, police and bus operators and our work can include undercover officers travelling on buses and identifying people responsible for anti-social behaviour. Safer Travel Unit staff and police officers will be waiting at a pre-arranged checksite.

#### Who else is involved?

A check is made on the vehicle along with passes and tickets and any anti-social behaviour would be dealt with by the police. I then visit a school for a Citizenship lesson which usually last an hour, and is aimed at all year groups. Assemblies play a large part in our education programme. We gather intelligence regarding bus travel and give a safety message involving tickets and passes, seating, seatbelts, general behaviour and safer travel away from the vehicle. We visit up to 102 high schools throughout Lancashire, Blackpool and Blackburn with Darwen.

#### Can technology help?

We can download images from our 40 mobile CCTV units which have been deployed to various bus operators. Evidence can be obtained for schools or police.

#### Do you need to be qualified?

We need a licence to monitor the activities of a member of public in a public place. Staff also need the confidence to address small or large audiences. I have also helped in the making of a driver-training DVD and had a small featured part in television's Tonight with Sir Trevor.

#### Do you enjoy your job?

Yes – and I also believe it is valuable and worthwhile. It is the job for me. I believe it is a position that can influence a culture change and really improve perceptions of transport to all. We are always moving forward and developing new ideas. Hopefully I will have more chances to learn and develop my career in the future in the fields of CCTV and partnership working.

#### What is the motivation?

I believe my work can make a difference to society. Improving public transport, I believe, makes the place we live better for everyone.

## Enterprising pupils win 'Dragons' Den' challenge

PUPILS at a Bamber Bridge school faced the Dragons' Den in a bid to raise economic awareness.

St Mary and St Benedicts RC Primary School pupils made products from recycled materials and then presented them to a Dragons' Den of business people.

Pupils from years five and six formed their own companies, appointed staff, researched and developed and then marketed a product from concept to prototype before presenting it to the panel of dragons.

The event turned the school into an "industrial park" for the day and the winning products the Fuzzy Love Bag and the Perfect Purse will go into production and be on sale in the spring.

The den was made up of high-profile businesses including Marks and Spencers, Spar,

## 'Fuzzy love bag' sets entrepreneurs of tomorrow on path to success

and Edwin Booth from Booth's supermarkets. Each member was given £25 to invest in a winning product.

Other dragons included reps from the event's sponsors Lancashire Community Recycling Network (Lancashire CRN) and Lancashire County Council's economic development company Lancashire County Developments Limited (LCDL).

Steph Smith, the school's head, said: "I wanted to create an event that enabled the children to develop writing for a variety of real-life situations. It also presents the chil-

dren with a vehicle for developing economic awareness and understanding."

Steve Dean, LCDL's managing director, said: "LCDL is proud to have sponsored such an event that teaches pupils the importance of economic development and its part in environmental and social issues."

For more information about the works project please contact Steph Smith on (01772) 336650 or to get involved in recycling activities in your community contact Alison Hughes, Lancashire CRN on (01772) 642885.

## Gillow masterpiece returns home

LANCASHIRE County Council's Museums Service is celebrating after bringing a rare 18th century bookcase made by Gillows of Lancaster back to the city.

The unique mahogany bookcase has been returned to Lancaster to be displayed at the Judges' Lodgings museum where most of its Gillow Collection of furniture is held.

Described as a "Gillow masterpiece" the bookcase was made for Mary Hutton Rawlinson, widow of wealthy Lancaster Quaker merchant, Thomas Hutton Rawlinson, in 1772 at a total cost of £17-17s-0d.

Lancashire County Council enlisted support from a number of other organisations to buy the piece which is deemed of outstanding



national significance by independent experts.

In September the government placed an export ban on the bookcase to prevent it being shipped overseas.

Edmund Southworth, county museums officer for Lancashire County Council, said: "This is one of the finest pieces of 18th century English furniture made by

Gillows in the country. "Visitors to the Judges' Lodgings will be able to judge for themselves when the museum opens again at Easter."

● **SAVED for Lancashire:** museum chief Edmund Southworth, left, and County Councillor Chris Cheetham with the historic bookcase.

*School report*



**Debbie Ormerod**  
Area pupil access officer,  
Pupil Access Team

## Dinners, buses, school uniforms...

WORKING for the Pupil Access Team is always stimulating, challenging and busy but I really love my job!

At this time of year, we are finalising the secondary school allocations for 3,500 Year 6 pupils, responding to changes in legislation around home-to-school transport and dealing with new requirements to educate pupils excluded from school for more than six days.

There is never a dull moment. The role of the Pupil Access Team is to make sure that school-age pupils can access an education.

We co-ordinate admissions to local schools, make arrangements when pupils are excluded from school, deal with school transport enquiries and check entitlement to receive free school meals.

Families, school staff and other organisa-

tions phone us for advice on all of these matters. We work closely with local schools to ensure the needs of pupils are met.

The phones are always ringing and it can be non-stop at the busiest times. You never know what you'll get when the phone rings!

The queries range from simple things such as where to purchase a school uniform through to requests to arrange education for a child who has had both home and school difficulties.

We try to assist all of our callers and help them find a positive way forward. It can be difficult sometimes if they are angry or upset and we can't give them the instant solution they may have been hoping for.

It is the icing on the cake, however, when you have supported a child and they are enjoying a successful school placement.



# £250m schools for the future

## New schools take shape as beacon for county-wide revamp

**FACILITIES for the wider community are at the heart of the first three Building Schools for the Future sites which open to the public in September.**

The new facilities in Padiham, Burnley, and Nelson have been constructed as part of a £250m investment by Lancashire County Council and will provide a blueprint for schools across the county.

The first sites to open are Shuttleworth College on Burnley Road, Padiham; Pendle Vale College and Pendle Community High School, on Oxford Road, Nelson; and Burnley Campus on Barden Lane.

Their state-of-the-art facilities - including computer suites, performance areas, lecture theatres, drama and recording studios, fitness suites, sports halls and all-weather pitches - will be available for community use during evenings and weekends.

The Burnley Campus incorporates Burnley Schools' Sixth Form, Barden Primary School, a new children's centre, Holly Grove Primary Special School, a public library and a faith centre. Activities originally operated by Barden Community Association and currently run by the sixth form will continue on the campus.

The new site in Nelson will have enhanced facilities for disabled sport paid for by a grant from the Big Lottery Fund.

Shuttleworth College will have a community café and a Microsoft academy offering people Microsoft computer qualifications.

Work is being undertaken with other local organisations including district councils. There will be community access for adult learning and training.

County councillor Vali Patel, county council Cabinet member for schools, said: "Building Schools for the Future is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make life better for the people of East Lancashire."

"The development programme is already boosting the economy. The state-of-the-art schools will provide a better education for students."

"And the community sport, performance, and learning facilities will build healthier, happier, and more prosperous neighbourhoods."

"People who play and learn side-by-side will bring communities together. We look forward to our schools being at the hub of renewed community spirit."

●(Right) SARAH Bailey, paralympic gold medalist, helps builder Sean Molloy and students from Pendle Vale College and Pendle Community High School bury a time capsule on the site of the new building.



●MODERN: the new Burnley Campus pictured in January. The Burnley and Pendle project will be repeated across Lancashire.

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO SUFFER IN SILENCE

### IF YOU ARE IN DANGER CALL 999

If you are looking for help or support and live in...

**Fylde or Wyre  
Lancaster**

01253 596699

01524 383636

01524 61747

01772 201601

0808 100 3062

01257 260200

01257 263254

01772 435865

01254 879855

01282 726000

01282 661989

01282 414130

07866 510 728

01706 830600

Mon-Fri 10-9

Mon-Fri 10-2

Mon-Fri 10-2

24 hrs

24 hrs

Mon-Fri 9-4.30

24 hrs

Mon-Fri 10-3

Mon-Fri 10-4

Refuge

24 hrs

Mon-Fri 10-5

Mon-Fri 10-4

**Preston  
West Lancashire  
Chorley**

**South Ribble  
Hyndburn and Ribble Valley  
Pendle**

**Burnley**

**Rossendale**

National Domestic Violence Helpline (Free phone 24 hr): **0808 2000 247**

The Lancashire  
Partnership

**SureStart**

Lancashire  
County Council

# Faith in the future with young people's pilot

**YOUNG** people with a shared vision for religious education (RE) and diversity have started a new pilot project in East Lancashire.

The group is the county's first Youth SACRE, or Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education, and is an offshoot of Lancashire's thriving adult SACRE which monitors and supports RE and worship in schools.

Helen Harrison, Lancashire County Council's Consultant for RE and Collective Worship who is officer to SACRE, said: "We want young people to understand how the RE curriculum works and how it can be relevant to the major issues in society today."

"We begin everything with a simple question, 'What does it mean to be human?' and then work from there, looking at what's important to people, why they do what they do, and for what reasons."

"It's a great way to share understanding of one another and also to have a lot of fun."

Young people representing different faiths have met twice so far and have chosen diversity within and among religions, and developing active learning and discussion in RE, as their initial topics for discussion.

The Youth SACRE's 20 members come from schools in Burnley, Pendle, Rossendale, Hyndburn and Ribbles Valley and represent a number of faith viewpoints including Christian, Muslim, agnostic and atheist.

The pilot came about when members of a sub-group of Lancashire SACRE, Youth Voice, decided they wanted young people to have more say on how

## FAITH PILOT

■ "We get to put our views forward in issues that matter to us."

Lee Caldecott (13)

■ "It's an ideal way of making sure all the community have a voice...and it's fun!"

Rachel Butterworth (13)

religious education was taught in schools.

Planning took place during last summer after visits to Bradford's Youth SACRE and St Augustine's High in Oldham which hosts the Oldham Young People's Faith Forum.

A SACRE Youth Conference for 60 mixed-faith 14 - 19 year olds considered the challenges of establishing a youth SACRE.

Due to the size of the county it was decided to run a pilot in just one area of Lancashire, but if successful, the project will be extended countywide.

Lancashire's adult SACRE is already a leader in its field and Helen Harrison has been called onto address other SACREs and SACRE conferences nationwide on syllabus planning, community cohesion and other matters.

It is one of the few SACREs in the country with a full membership and includes representatives from Christian denominations and other religions in the county, the Church of England, teaching associations and Lancashire County Council.

Anyone wanting to know more about SACRE or the Youth SACRE can contact Helen on 01772 531 585.

## Eye on the environment

### County councillor casts an eye over green schemes

GOING "back to the floor" meant getting back to nature for one county councillor recently when he took a guided tour of projects being developed by the county's environmental projects team.

Francis Williams, county councillor for Ormskirk West, got out and about with environmental projects officer K Horsley to see first hand some of the successful schemes the county council has helped develop through its project programme.

The day, which was part of the county council's "Back to the Floor" programme, began at the Eaves Brook Linear Park in Preston.

The £700,000 project has safeguarded a local habitat, halted flood erosion and brought nature to the heart of Preston.

Also on the schedule were visits to a commu-



●BACK to the floor: County Councillor Williams (second from left) takes a closer look at the Eaves Brook Linear Park scheme.

nity design project in Skelmersdale where a redundant courtyard will be turned into a community space and Tunley United Reform Church, Wrightington to check progress on a new pond and community garden project.

Councillor Williams said: "Back to the Floor is about councillors getting out and about to see

grass roots projects in action and to see first-hand the work that our officers do."

"I was very impressed with what has been achieved. Thanks to partnership working every pound we invest in a scheme results in more funding coming in from other organisations."

"Our work ranges from the large-scale proj-

ects like the Eaves Green linear park to very small, but equally worthwhile, initiatives to tidy up community spaces like the one I visited in Skelmersdale."

To find out about the work of the Environmental Projects Team visit their website at: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/environment/envproj>

# Adult social care gets increased investment

OLDER people and adults with disabilities will continue to receive improved social care services following increased investment by the county council.

The council budget sets out around £285m (net spend) to provide council-funded adult social care services for 2008/09 - an increase of 6.1 per cent.

In addition, around £11m of capital investment over three years has been earmarked for the development of local adult social care schemes including a proposed new respite centre for Fylde and Wyre, and the modernisation of services for adults with learning disabilities.

There is also good news for older people with moderate needs who receive care services. The county council has agreed not to raise its eligibility criteria from

'moderate' to 'substantial'. This means continuing support to those 6,500 residents assessed as 'moderate' and those in above categories ('substantial' and 'critical'), in accordance with the government's Fair Access to Care Services (FACS) guidelines.

County Councillor Chris Cheetham, Cabinet member for Adult and Community Services, said: "Given the better than expected government settlement and resources now available, we will not be forced to raise our eligibility criteria for adults receiving assessed social care services."

The county council will also be investing a further £3m in its wellbeing agenda - developing practical support and local services for the whole community.

Councillor Cheetham added: "Like all local authorities we have a new legal obligation to promote the well-being of all adults, ensur-

ing a wide range of support is available to enable people to maintain their independence and improve their quality of life, whilst at the same time ensuring we support the most vulnerable people in our communities with the highest standards of care."

The county council has also agreed to make more cash available, over and above inflation, for fees payable to independent care providers. The settlement was welcomed by the independent sector.

Sue Lace, chair of the Lancashire Care Association, said: "We have continued to work hard through the Social Care Partnership forum with the county council about funding care for the most vulnerable in Lancashire. This should be recognised as a good settlement, and one which many, if not most, other areas will not match."

## Do you like a challenge?

THE county council Chairman, Wendy Dwyer, is calling on pupils and parents to show how inventive they can be in finding new ways to be safe and healthy.

But time is running out to submit entries for this year's Chairman's Challenge and schools need to get their skates on.

Schools have been working on their

projects since autumn, but to be in with a chance of winning the £1,000 prize, their case studies must be in by 4 April.

The competition will be judged in the categories of primary, secondary and special schools and this year there is a new category for parents' groups as well.

Further information from the Healthy Schools team on 01257 226 900.

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