

Summer fun at Blacon library

Need something to keep the children occupied this summer? Look no further than a free animal-themed event at Blacon library.

The 'Get me out of here - Creepy Crawly Show' is sure to keep youngsters entertained on Monday 15 August at 10.30am.

Billed as a 'Madcap animal handling show', visitors will have the chance to get up close to some of the creatures. The event is suitable for children aged four to 12.

Blacon library is located on the ground floor of the Parade Enterprise Centre. Booking is advised to avoid disappointment. For further information or to book, call the library on 01244 976030.



The Big Friendly Read

Blacon library is also taking part in the Summer Reading Challenge, which this year takes its inspiration from Roald Dahl.

Known as the Big Friendly Read, children aged four to 11 are being encouraged to read six books before term time returns.

Youngsters can choose any books they like, including the downloading of audiobooks, and there are goodies on offer following the completion of two titles.

An awards ceremony will take place after the holidays where those reaching the target of six will be presented with a certificate and medal.

Full list of Blacon library events:

Monday 15 August: Oliver's Adventures Creepy Crawly Show (Summer Reading Challenge event) 10.30am-11.30am

Tuesday 16 August: Rhyme time 10.30am-11am

Wednesday 17 August: Job club 9.30am-noon

Thursday 18 August: Coding club 4.30pm-5.30pm

My Blacon

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Keep in touch
Keep up to date with everything that's going on in Blacon by joining the Avenue Services mailing list. All you have to do is visit avenueservices.org/contact and fill in the form.

Website: www.avenueservices.org www.facebook.com/MyBlacon [@Avenue_Services](https://twitter.com/Avenue_Services)



Welcome to the summer edition of My Blacon

Inside you'll find everything you need to know about what's happening in your community over the summer period.

It has been an exciting and eventful few months with the recent successful Blacon Awards and Blacon Festival. It is always fantastic to see the community come together on these occasions, and thousands turned out for the festival, including your local MP Chris Matheson who joined in the celebrations. You can read more about it on pages 4 and 5.

Both events are now firmly established fixtures on the calendar and the Awards, of which Avenue

Services is a sponsor, will celebrate its 20th year in 2017.

We have been supporting a number of sporting projects recently and those of you who enjoy a bit of fishing or boxing might be interested in some of our latest activities outlined in this edition.

As always, we welcome your feedback to ensure we can continue to deliver the best service possible.

To get involved in any way, please contact our Neighbourhood and Playground Officer Sandra Hewitt on 0300 123 1741 or email sandra.hewitt@sanctuary-housing.co.uk.

Enjoy reading.

Paul Knight

Paul Knight - Head of Avenue Services

Cover picture: Families enjoy fun and games at the Blacon Festival.



Boxing Club packing a punch

After years of hard work behind the scenes, Blacon Boxing Club has finally become a reality.

The club, which is based at the Barn Building at Blacon Adventure Playground in Kipling Road, already has more than 100 members despite only opening its doors to the public last month.

It is the brainchild of Ross Broadbent and has received the backing of Chester MP Chris Matheson as well as several prominent Cheshire West and Chester councillors.

Sessions, overseen by coaches, cater for those aged seven to 17 and run on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. It costs £1.50 per person.

Sandra Hewitt from Avenue Services said: "It's a pleasure to support the boxing club with the enthusiasm of the coaches making sure all children have opportunities to learn new skills and become part of a team."

Timetable - Tuesdays and Thursdays

Ages 7 to 10: 5pm
Ages 11 to 13: 6pm
Ages 14 to 17: 7pm

Anyone interested must be a member and have parental consent before they can take part but people can sign up on the night. More information is available on the Blacon Boxing Club Facebook page.



Upgrade at adventure playground

The Adventure Playground continues to be a popular feature in the community and we've been working on upgrading the facilities there recently, the latest being the fitting of a brand new kitchen.

The old kitchen dated back to the 1970s, so as you can imagine, the nine staff love their new facilities which will get lots of use during the summer.

Units and worktops were kindly donated by supplier Magnet Kitchens and fitted by Sanctuary Maintenance. The accessories have been provided by Travis Perkins.

No need to be bored in the school holidays. Why not come down to

the Adventure Playground and see all that's on offer.

Around 5,000 people visit every month to enjoy the environmental area, children's garden and urban farm, which is home to a variety of animals such as donkeys, chickens and ducks.

The adventure playground hosted activities to mark national Playday in August, joining thousands of children and their families across the country in similar events.

The adventure playground is open daily during the summer holidays and throughout the year.

You can visit us at Kipling Road, Blacon, from 11am to 7pm on weekdays and 10am to 6pm at weekends. Visit www.avenueservices.org for more details.



Go Fishing

Ever fancied trying your hand at fishing? Well, now's your chance with a series of free taster sessions throughout August.

To celebrate National Fishing Month, an introduction to the popular pastime is being offered to people of all ages and abilities.

Under the guidance of a licensed coach, Go Fish at Blacon takes place on Mondays at Bridge 129, off Blacon Avenue, on the Shropshire Union Canal.

To register, visit the Canal and River Trust website (<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/>) and search for Blacon.

The times are:
15 August: 1pm-8pm
22 August: 1pm-8pm



Energise Blacon

Yoga, boxercise and pilates have all proved popular with Blacon residents over the past few months.

Energise Blacon, part of Sanctuary Group's national Love Sport programme in partnership with Sport England, has helped bring low-cost fitness sessions to people of all ages and abilities throughout the community.

Fun and laughter at Festival

Thousands of residents braved the elements to join in the fun at Chester's biggest community-led festival.

Despite the rain, families flocked to Queen Elizabeth Fields for the annual Blacon Festival last month, taking part in a celebration themed around the Rio Olympics.



A Samba band brought the party to life with a carnival atmosphere with children from local primary schools taking part in a Brazilian-style parade.

Among the array of activities on offer included football tournaments, a children's assault course and a fun fair, while performances from local singers, dance troupe Silhouettes and Zumba also kept the crowds entertained.

Among the stars on show at the festival were Blacon schoolchildren with their performance of an original piece of theatre called Road To Rio.



Rewind Youth Theatre, a venture of Theatre in the Quarter and Cheshire Dance, told the story of a young boy determined for his dance troupe to perform at the Olympics opening ceremony in Brazil.

Festival-goers were joined by the City's MP, Chris Matheson, who officially opened the event.

"It was fantastic to see so many families join together to share in and enjoy the activities at the Blacon Festival," he said.

If anyone would like to get involved in the planning of 2017 festival, contact **Sandra Hewitt** at Sandra.hewitt@sanctuary-housing.co.uk or call **01244 305456**.



Blacon Awards

There are many people who go the extra mile to help make life better for others in Blacon.

Such contributions often go unnoticed but without their support and determination Blacon would not be the thriving place it has become.

These are the unsung heroes of our community and it is important that their efforts are celebrated. For nearly two decades the Blacon Awards has been doing just that and the 19th annual ceremony took place in June.

It was held at Blacon High School, one of the final events to take place there before the school moves to its new building.

Full list of award winners and nominees

- **Kath Evans Young Inspiration Award, winner:** Jessica Roberts; nominees: Faith Challinor, Sky Forshaw, Nathan Jones, Caleb McGregor (pictured middle left)
- **Community Team Award, winner:** Blacon Defibrillator Group; nominees: Blacon Adventure Playground, Jim Green – Chester Gladiators RLFC, Chester Used Furniture Enterprise, The 5th Blacon Scout Group, Knit and Natter Group, The Rainbow Brownies, Girl Guides and Guides Group, The Silhouettes Dance Troupe.
- **The Harold Tomlins Community Award, winner:** David Moore; nominees: Rosemary Burns, Gus Cairns, Ross Broadbent, Ann Caslin, Martin Dean, Ron Glenn, Julie Jones, Ann McGrath, Peter Newman, Dave Oxley, Kathy Parker, Helen Trainor, Gerald Watts.
- **The Extra Mile Award, winner:** Sue Yates and David Stockdale (pictured top left with Chester MP Chris Matheson); nominees: Avenue Services, Blacon High School head and staff, Blacon High School Inclusion Team, Blacon High School PE Department, Tess Carroll, Kim Coppack, Carol Cross, Naomi Brayen, Angela Green and Peter Haase, Barbera Healing, Here and Now Group, Sandra Hewitt, Wendy Leason, Angela Livingstone, Jayne Mowles, Jo Pendrey, Sophie Thompson, Kate Wars, Nic Wetton.
- **Outstanding Academic Achievement Award, winner:** Nathan Jones.
- **Joe Rose Lifetime Achievement Award, winner:** Gerald and Alwyn Watts (pictured bottom left).



Blacon in running for top award

We are delighted that the recent regeneration of Blacon has been recognised for a top national award.

The project, which involved building the new enterprise centre, 62 homes, children's play area and the upgrading of shops, has been shortlisted for Inside Housing magazine's 'Regeneration Scheme of the Year' Award.

The partners in the £16m project were Sanctuary, Cheshire West and Chester Council, the Homes and Communities Agency, and the European Regional Development Fund (for the Enterprise Centre), and it has been very much a community project.

It is thanks to your involvement and those of our partners that the regeneration of Blacon has been such a success, and we look forward to hearing the outcome at the finals in October.



Money matters



There is plenty of help with a variety of welfare issues available for Sanctuary residents seeking support in Blacon.

Every Monday, Sanctuary's income team runs a drop-in surgery in the Avenue Services offices at the Parade Enterprise Centre.

Residents can get assistance with any of the following:

- Universal Credit
- Benefit calculations
- Rent arrears
- Housing benefit forms and discretionary housing payments
- Signposting to debt support

If you're a Sanctuary resident wanting advice you can come along and speak to Income Advisor Gemma Barnes between 9am and noon at the Enterprise Centre, and she will be happy to help.

Dates for your diary

- **Tuesday 16 August:** Lache Fun Day (noon to 4pm)
- **Thursday 18 August:** Blacon Nature park fun day (1pm to 4pm)
- **Wednesday 24 August:** Glastenvenny (1pm to 4pm at Blacon Adventure Playground)
- **Saturday 8 October:** Hospice of the Good Shepherd fashion show at Enterprise Centre (2pm to 5pm)
- **Thursday 13 October:** Jobs Fair at Enterprise Centre (10am to 2pm)
- **Saturday 19 November:** Christmas Fayre at Enterprise Centre (11am to 2pm)