

MyBlacon

Winter 2018



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Welcome to the Winter edition of MyBlacon



Welcome to the winter edition of My Blacon. In just a few weeks it will be Christmas and I hope everybody is looking forward to joining together and getting in the festive spirit.

The traditional lights switch-on, which is always a wonderful occasion, takes place on Thursday 6 December so why not come along, join in the fun and enjoy a mince a pie or two? It would be great to see you there.

It will also be an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on another busy and successful 12 months for Avenue Services in Blacon.

So much has happened, including the £40,000 investment in the activity centre at the Adventure Playground. It really has transformed what is already a fine attraction for children into something we can all be proud of.

You can find out more about what's happening at 'The Venny' in this edition.

Over the summer, we had the hugely popular Blacon Festival, which was attended by hundreds of families, and the annual showpiece of the Glastonvenny musical extravaganza at the Adventure Playground. We have continued to invest in the play areas across Blacon, with the facilities at Graham Road and Cairns Crescent getting a welcome makeover.

I am also pleased to say there has been plenty of positive feedback to the exciting plans for the old Blacon Library building, our plans to extend the activity centre at the Adventure Playground and the new medical centre proposed for The Parade.

We will, of course, continue to keep you updated on the progress of these projects via our website, which can be found at

www.avenueservices.org, Facebook page, on Twitter and through the local media. Finally, may I take this opportunity to wish you, your families and friends a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Paul Knight

Paul Knight – Head of Avenue Services

What is Avenue Services?

Avenue Services is a joint venture between Sanctuary Group, a not-for-profit housing and care provider, and Cheshire West and Chester Council. Set up in 2012 and based at the Parade Enterprise Centre, it provides services such as grass cutting, caretaking and cleaning, housing management, youth services, neighbourhood planning and management of Blacon Adventure Playground.

OUR COVERSTARS: Volunteers and members of the Public Health Team at Cheshire West and Chester Council who helped paint the murals at Blacon Adventure Playground (see page 6 for details).

Thousands enjoy fun in the sun



The summer heatwave seems a world away now but it was a time that will live long in the memory with residents of all ages taking part in fun-filled activities.

An exciting programme of more than 50 events featured everything from fishing and nature activities to roller discos.

Top of the bill was the Blacon Festival, attended by more than 3,000 people at Queen Elizabeth Field, while Blacon Adventure Playground held a successful National Playday celebration as well as the annual Glastonvenny festival, which saw 1,200 residents enjoy a day of music and entertainment.

The playground, in Kipling Road, also hosted weekly 'Monday Funday' events with children enjoying exciting activities including archery, football and zorbing.

Elsewhere, people of all ages tried their hand at angling during free Let's Fish! sessions hosted by the Canal and River Trust on the Shropshire Union Canal, while children enjoyed taking part in activities at Blacon Nature Park.

Avenue Services worked closely with Cheshire West and Chester Council, Councillor Carol Gahan and partners in the local community to make the events possible.

Top: Henna tattooist, Mehzabeen Ozeerhan, with Amy and Alesha Howell.

Below: (L-R) Steve Walker, Avenue Services Caretaking and Cleaning Manager with his granddaughter, Nellie Olivia, Mark Gregg, Avenue Services Assistant Supervisor and resident, Kirsty Walker.



Help and advice with moving home



Move It surgery volunteers at Centurion House

Advice on securing a place on the housing register and bidding on homes is available to Blacon residents at weekly drop-in sessions.

'Move It' surgeries offer support with registering online with West Cheshire Homes using HomeSwapper, the national online service for people wishing to swap their social housing home. The sessions run between 10.30am and 12.30pm on Tuesdays at the Parade Enterprise Centre, as well as at Centurion House, in Northgate Street, Chester, every Thursday from 10.30am until 12.30pm

They are led by Sanctuary Housing residents with support from Cheshire West and Chester Council.

'Move It' surgeries support more than 200 people each year and new volunteers are always welcome to get involved. Anyone interested should contact Ann Dooney, Resident Involvement Officer, on **01244 305424** or ann.dooney@sanctuary-housing.co.uk.

New keep fit classes arrive in Blacon

What better way to stay healthy and banish the winter blues than with some sport and exercise classes?

Rage Leisure is running yoga and keep fit classes for people of all abilities at Blacon Adventure Playground.

A variety of classes are on offer, including 'Major Rage' group fitness classes at 7pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 'R Release' yoga sessions at 8pm on Tuesdays and 'Fit Mums' classes at 9.30am on Fridays.

Rage Leisure, which is run by ex-marine Craig Brown, also offers mentoring and personal development services, helping people to increase their confidence and improve their physical and mental wellbeing.

Sessions cost just £3 and are being run as part of Sanctuary Housing's Love Sport initiative.

Craig said: "Regular exercise is so important for both physical and mental wellbeing and we're delighted to be working with Sanctuary to offer Blacon residents the opportunity to get involved and discover the benefits."



Residents have say on Old Library plans

The old Blacon library

Residents recently had the opportunity to share their views on exciting plans to bring a new retail offering to Blacon and increase the range of facilities on offer at Blacon Adventure Playground.

Avenue Services and Cheshire West and Chester Council have agreed a proposal to sell the former Blacon Library building in Western Avenue for retail use and invest proceeds from the sale back into the community with an extension at the playground.

During October, residents were invited to express their thoughts on the plans through a variety of methods, including

a well-attended drop-in event at the Parade Enterprise Centre.

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services, said: "This was an exciting opportunity for us to talk to residents and hear their thoughts about the proposals and we'd like to say a big thank you to everyone who took the time to share their views.

"Look out for further updates in future editions of this newsletter or visit our website, www.avenueservices.org, for all the latest news."



Playground murals celebrate diversity

Colourful murals celebrating inclusivity and diversity are on display at Blacon Adventure Playground for everyone to enjoy.

Playground staff have created the eye-catching designs to promote a message of welcome and inclusion to people of all backgrounds, regardless of race, faith, gender or sexual orientation.

Volunteers and members of the Public Health Team at Cheshire West and Chester Council helped paint the murals, while children using the adventure playground created their own signs.

Sandra Hewitt, Blacon Adventure Playground Manager, said: "The playground is somewhere for everyone to enjoy and we wanted to promote the importance of respecting other people's views and embracing and celebrating our differences.

"The murals look absolutely fantastic and we'd like to say a big thank you to the council staff and our volunteers from the local community for getting stuck in and helping us bring the designs to life."

Blacon Adventure Playground is open every day of the year, including Christmas Day, from 11am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 6pm at weekends.



The volunteers at the playground with their newly-created murals

Cheshire West & Chester Council

DON'T LET THE FLU CATCH YOU

Protect yourself and those you care for by getting vaccinated.

You are eligible for a free flu vaccine if you:

- are over 65
- are pregnant
- are aged 2-9/10 years (school year 5)*
- are a health worker and social care worker**
- have a long term health condition
- live in a long stay care home
- are the main carer of an older or disabled person
- live with someone with a weakened immune system

Please contact your GP or visit your local pharmacy to arrange your free flu vaccination.

*Children aged 2-4/5/6 years are usually offered the flu spray vaccination by their GP or in school. **If you are employed by a registered care provider or hospital and work directly with people in a clinical role you are eligible for a free flu vaccination via your GP or pharmacy. All other health and social care workers should be offered the vaccination via their employer.

www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk Cheshire West and Chester



The children from Chernobyl during their visit to the Adventure Playground with Avenue Services staff member, William Picken

Chernobyl children visit Blacon

There were big smiles all round as a group of children from Belarus enjoyed a visit to Blacon Adventure Playground.

The children, who come from areas still affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, were in the UK on a four-week recuperative holiday in July, organised by the Chernobyl Children's Lifeline charity.

Staff at the Adventure Playground spent time with the young people as they tried the outdoor play equipment and met the animals on the site's city farm. The children stayed with local host families and enjoyed a full programme of activities, including trips to the seaside and zoo as well as visits to the dentist and optician. June Bamford, from Chernobyl Children's Lifeline Chester, Deeside and Ellesmere

Port Link, said: "The holidays are the trip of a lifetime for these children and it is always remarkable to see such a positive difference in their health in the space of just a month."

Anyone interested in becoming a host family for Chernobyl Children's Lifeline or supporting the charity's work can call **01244 676792** or visit **www.ccll.org.uk**



Christmas

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Friday 23 November

Christmas Market – 6pm Holy Trinity Church Hall, Norris Road

Sunday 25 November

Table Top Sale – 8am-12pm, Adventure Playground

Sunday 2 December

Table Top Sale – 8am-12pm, Adventure Playground

Thursday 6 December

Christmas Lights Switch On

4.45pm – Western Avenue with the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress

5pm – Christmas tree lit outside Parade Enterprise Centre –
enjoy a mince pie as we light up the sky

5.15pm – Performance by Theatre in the Quarter's youth group, Rewind

Warming refreshments served

Friday 14 December

Older People's Christmas Lunch – 12.30-3.30pm, Blacon Adventure
Playground Activity Centre

What's happening at the Parade Enterprise Centre?

MONDAYS	Gentle exercise	10.30am to 11.15am	Community Hall
	Freestyle Disco	4.30pm to 6.15pm (ages 3 to 7)	Community Hall
	Freestyle Disco	6.15pm to 7.30pm (over 8s)	Community Hall
TUESDAYS	Baby Ballet	9.30am to 10am	Community Room
	Slimming World	9.30am to 11.30am	Community Hall
WEDNESDAYS	Rhyme Time	10.30am to 11am	Library
	Work Zone Job Club	9.30am to noon	Library
Alternate Weeks:	Better Balance Class	10.30pm - 11.30pm	Community Room
	Line Dancing/ Tea Dance	2.30pm- 4.30pm/2pm-4pm	Community Hall
THURSDAYS	Code Club (term time only)	4.30pm to 5.30pm	Library
	Musical Theatre	4.15pm - 6.15pm	Community Hall
FRIDAYS	Ballroom and Latin dance for beginners	10am to noon	Community Hall
	Cyber Centre	1pm - 5pm	Community Room
	Lego Club	4pm to 5pm	Library
SATURDAYS	Cyber Centre	9.30pm to 1pm	Community Room
	Mental Health Group (first Saturday of the month)	10:30am - 12:30pm	Conference Room

Avenue Services will be closed from
5pm on Monday 24 December until
9am on Thursday 27 December

*These dates are subject to change. Please call us on 0300 123 1741 to check they're on

Could you become a FOSTER carer?

Cheshire West and Chester Council, together with Cheshire East Council, Halton Borough Council and Warrington Borough Council has launched a new project to help recruit more foster carers.

The service, known as Foster4, operates across the four local authorities and aims to not only recruit new foster carers, but also provide greater support, training opportunities, rewards and benefits to existing ones.

Fostering is a rewarding and flexible home-based role that can appeal to people from all walks of life. From stay at home parents or part-time workers, to retirees and those looking at alternative options to full-time work; if you're interested in fostering, Foster4 would like to hear from you.

Foster carers work on a self-employed basis and can express a preference for the type of fostering they would like to

undertake. You don't necessarily need to have a large house, just a warm and welcoming home with the space to give a child somewhere to call their own, and the time to care for them. All the training you need is provided, as well as exceptional support, allowances and benefits.

Information sessions are taking place each month in each area. The next information sessions in West Cheshire are:

- **Wednesday 28 November**, 10am
Garrett Theatre, Storyhouse, Hunter Street, Chester CH1 2AR
- **Thursday 13 December**, 10am
Dingle Recreation Centre, High Street, Winsford, CW7 2AS

If you'd like to request an information pack or find out more, please visit: www.foster4.co.uk or call **01925 444100**. You can also like [@foster4cheshire](https://www.facebook.com/foster4cheshire) on Facebook.



Blacon Lights SWITCH ON THURSDAY 6 DECEMBER

4.45pm The Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress will be switching on the lights at Western Avenue

5pm Head over to the Christmas tree outside the Parade Enterprise Centre. Enjoy a mince pie as we light up the sky

5.15pm Theatre In the Quarter's Youth group, Rawind will be performing

Warming refreshments served

Cheshire West and Chester **Avenue Services**

Winter grounds maintenance service gets underway

Our winter grounds maintenance work programme is now underway with teams out and about throughout the winter months, ensuring green spaces in our communities remain clean and tidy.

Avenue Services provides this service in communal gardens, open spaces and housing for older people schemes run by Sanctuary Housing.

Over the winter months, work involves leaf clearing, shrub pruning, hedge cutting and litter picking. In snowy and icy weather, we also grit pathways and access routes to our housing for older people schemes.

The dates for our planned winter grounds maintenance programme in Blacon are shown below. Please be aware that all dates are approximate and weather dependent.

To find out more about our grounds maintenance service, visit www.avenueservices.org/services-for-blacon/environmental-services/grounds-maintenance



Week 19 November 2018
Week 26 November 2018
Week 3 December 2018
Week 10 December 2018
Week 17 December 2018
Week 24 December 2018
Week 31 December 2018
Week 7 January 2019
Week 14 January 2019
Week 21 January 2019

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 **f** www.facebook.com/MyBlacon **t** [@Avenue_Services](https://twitter.com/Avenue_Services)

