

COMING SOON

...two new websites

Keeping up to date with everything Avenue Services is about to get even easier!

We are launching a new website packed full of information on the services we offer – from grass-cutting to running the Parade Enterprise Centre.

Here you'll also be able to access the minutes of all our meetings so you know exactly what's going on and how we are operating.

What's more, we've also created a website dedicated to Blacon Adventure Playground.

Everything you need to know, and more, can be found here so you'll be able to plan your visit down to the last detail.

Both websites are expected to be live by the end of April.

<http://www.venueservices.org/>
www.blaconadventureplayground.co.uk



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 [venueservices.org/contact](http://www.venueservices.org/contact) and fill in the form.

Website: www.venueservices.org www.facebook.com/MyBlacon @Avenue_Services



myBlacon

Spring 2018



What's inside

- Dates for the diary
- New food festival
- Success for nursery

Welcome to the spring edition of *MyBlacon*



Already it is nearly Easter, where has the time gone?

We have some really exciting times to look forward to and 2018 is shaping up to be another successful year for Blacon and Avenue Services.

Among some of the many activities planned for the months ahead is the Food Festival, a new event set up to promote healthy eating for all the family. Taking place in April, this promises to be a fantastic new addition to the calendar and there are lots more details to be found about it on page five.

Elsewhere, the makeover of Blacon's play areas is continuing apace with new play equipment, football pitches, paths and fencing being installed. Work at Meynell Place has now been completed and we are now welcoming

families to King George V Playing Fields, Graham Road and Canterbury Road.

As the weather gets warmer, we can't wait to see as many of you as possible making the most of these facilities.

And don't forget, there is also the pump track next to Blacon Adventure Playground for skating and biking enthusiasts to try out new tricks and skills.

I am also excited to announce that we will soon have two new websites going live to keep you up to date with everything Avenue Services is doing in the community.

One will also be dedicated to the Adventure Playground and its wide ranging programme of activities that take place throughout the year.

Thank you for reading.

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: Kian and Layla Spencer enjoy time at Blacon Adventure Playground.

Keeping Blacon clean and tidy

At Avenue Services, we have a dedicated 15-strong Grounds Maintenance team working tirelessly to ensure Blacon is looking its best.

Winter has proved to be a very busy period with a programme of works keeping everyone occupied.

Since the end of October, we have cut back all the shrub beds and cleared litter from all Sanctuary-owned open spaces and sheltered schemes, as well as areas owned by Cheshire West and Chester Council.

The Eco Garden in Bridgeman Road has been spruced up and bulbs have been planted along the Old Station Site at The Glen.

Now, with spring just about upon us, it is time to start cutting the grass again. Last year each of the sites we are responsible for were visited every two weeks – that equates to a record of 17 grass cuts for each one. This is again our aim for 2018 although this is, of course, dependent on the British weather!



HARD AT WORK: Pete, part of the Avenue Services Grounds Maintenance team.

We also continue to maintain the large fields and sports pitches in Blacon at Saxon Way, Shelley Road, King George V Playing Fields, Cairns Crescent, Graham Road and Kipling Road.

A free discretionary gardening service is also available for elderly Sanctuary residents who live alone and don't have family in the Chester area able to help them.

For this and all other grounds maintenance enquiries, please contact Sara Morley on **01244 305440**.

New arrivals at the Adventure Playground

With the Easter holidays fast approaching, why not head on down to Blacon Adventure Playground?

There's plenty to do for children and teenagers alike such as zip wires, rope bridges, climbing frames and slides.

The woodland area also offers the chance to explore, build dens and create nature trails.

Our popular city farm also has two new additions – Alfred and Elspeth the goats.

They have been donated by Tam O'Shanter's urban farm on the Wirral and join our existing family of donkeys, sheep, rabbits and ducks.

Avenue Services is continually investing in the farm and we hope to welcome even more animals in the months ahead for people to handle, pet and care for.

SAY HELLO: Come and meet Coco the pony.

The 'Venny' can be used as a fantastic learning resource and Avenue Services regularly welcomes local schools for activity days.

Tailored exciting events for small or large groups can revolve around circus activities, sports, arts and the environment.



ANIMAL FUN: Layla and Kian Spencer meet one of the rabbits.



By working closely with schools, staff can build up a library of activities to compliment the curriculum.

In recent weeks both Highfield Primary and Dee Point Primary have visited the Adventure Playground.

For more information about school visits, please call Gary Miller on **01244 371129** or **07778 473006**.

BLACON FOOD FEST

Next month sees the first ever Blacon Food Festival – an event promoting healthy eating, fun cooking and exercise for people of all ages.

It takes place on Wednesday 4 April from 1pm to 4pm at Blacon Adventure Playground and promises to be lots of fun.

The idea behind it is simple – keeping people fit and healthy on a budget.

There'll be cooking demonstrations featuring new recipe ideas and tips for growing your own fruit and vegetables.

Nobody likes to see food go to waste so you'll be able to find out how to make your money and meals go further.

In addition, families will be able to take part in competitions such as cooking an omelette in the quickest time and fun fitness sessions.

Tapping into the facilities at the Adventure Playground, children can try campfire cooking in the woodland area as well as imaginative

play in the mud kitchen. What's not to like?

Avenue Services has been working with a host of local groups to make this event a reality and everyone involved hopes to make it an annual date in the diary.

Among the groups are the Welcome Network, Holy Trinity Church, Love Food Hate Waste Campaign, Citizens Advice Bureau, Credit Union, Children's Centre and Mini Makery.

We look forward to seeing you on

WEDNESDAY 4 APRIL



DATES FOR THE DIARY

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
	Rhyme Time	10.30am to 11am	Library
WEDNESDAYS	Work Zone Job Club	9.30am to noon	Library
	Under 5's Book Club	10.30am to 11am	Library
THURSDAYS	Code Club	4.30pm to 5.30pm	Library
	Baby Ballet	5.15pm to 6.15pm	Community Hall
FRIDAYS	Ballroom and Latin dance for beginners	10am to noon	Community Hall
	Cyber Centre	1pm to 5pm	Community Room
	Baby Ballet	3.45pm to 4.30pm	Community Hall
	Lego Club	4pm to 5pm	Library
SATURDAYS	Cyber Centre	9.30pm to 1pm	Community Room

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

If you would like financial advice on rents or benefits, then we're here to help. Our Income Surgery takes place in the **Interview Room** every other Monday between 9am and noon. The next one is 9 April.



LOOKING AHEAD...

16 JUNE – Hospice of the Good Shepherd fashion show – Parade Enterprise Centre

7 JULY – Blacon Festival – Queen Elizabeth Playing Fields

1 AUGUST – National play day activities – Blacon Adventure Playground

11 AUGUST – Funday at Graham Road Playing Fields

18 AUGUST – Glastonvenny musical festival – Blacon Adventure Playground

30 AUGUST – End of summer party – Blacon Adventure Playground

BLACON WALKABOUTS

Come along and meet our housing team and discuss any issues or concerns you may have about your home or surrounding area. They'll be at:

28 MARCH – Stratford Road/Morton Road – meet on the corner of Cleaver Road and Morton Road at 1.30pm

6 JUNE – Welsh Roads – meet outside Dee Point School at 1.30pm

27 JUNE – Cathedral Roads – meet at corner of Carlisle Road and Durham Road at 1.30pm

Chester MP **Chris Matheson** holds a surgery in the Community Room on the **third Saturday of every month from 12.30pm until 1.30pm**.

Nursery going from strength to strength

It has been a successful year for the Ash Tree Day Nursery, working to provide quality childcare to the families of Blacon.

Based at the Dee Point Building in Blacon Point Road, it offers full-time day care for children up to five years old as well as a before and after school club.

Part of the popular Chestnut House Day Nursery in Saughall, it already caters for 130 children and expects to take on even more throughout 2018.

Since opening its doors in April, around £500,000 has also been invested in facilities at Ash Tree including a sensory room, swimming pool and 40-seater theatre and dance studio.

As well as the nursery, financial support has been provided by Avenue Services and Cheshire West and Chester Council.



A total of 12 staff work at the nursery, including two on apprenticeships, and a recent recruitment drive will help cope with the ever growing demands as well as continue to support families in the community.

Jason Ashcroft, owner of Chestnut House Day Nursery, said: "The response to the nursery from the local community has been overwhelming and it is proving to be a real asset."

Prior to April 2017 the Dee Point Building had been closed for more than a year before being refurbished thanks to financial support from Avenue Services.

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services, said: "Ash Tree Day Nursery has been a huge success story and we are proud to be working with them."

YOUTH CLUB BOOSTED BY new equipment

Young people in Blacon are benefiting from a raft of new equipment at a popular youth club in Cairns Crescent.

Avenue Services has provided the youth club at the Delta Centre Portacabin with funding for new furniture, games consoles and kitchen appliances such as kettles and toasters.

Up to 60 young people aged eight to 16 attend the club three nights a week, giving them an opportunity to relax and unwind in a safe environment.

Lisa Pritchard, a youth worker at the Delta Centre, said: "The club is popular with local young people and these new facilities will only enhance that. It has been great to see how well they have been received and we look forward to welcoming even more young people through the doors."

Chris Leicester, Neighbourhood Partnerships Manager at Avenue Services, commented: "It is important the young people of Blacon have somewhere to meet and spend quality time with their peers."

"The youth club is well established in the community and we are delighted that it continues to provide a vital service."



ALL SMILES: Will Mead and Marley Webb at the youth club at the Delta Centre.



HELPING THE POLICE TO TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Working in partnership with Sanctuary Housing, Cheshire Police have successfully obtained a closure order for a house in Blacon.



PC Joe Duckworth, local beat manager for Blacon, said: "The closure of this address is in response to the persistent and repeated calls Cheshire Police have received over a number of years.

Over a number of years, the police received complaints from those living near the address in Hatton Road and anti-social behaviour had become a big issue.

The home has now been boarded up by police after magistrates granted the order, which stops people entering a property for three months.

It is part of a raft of new measures available to police under anti-social behaviour legislation introduced in 2014.

Minibus is getting people out and about

A new Blacon-based minibus service is helping to transport people around the Chester area and beyond.



Blacon on the Move is an initiative run by Holy Trinity Church and is a way for both individuals and community groups to get out and about.

Driven by John Yaxley, the 16-seater minibus is used to transport people to activities at Holy Trinity Church on Mondays as well as Tuesday and Thursday mornings.



Outside of these times, the vehicle can be booked by not-for-profit community groups. The minibus also has the capacity to cater for two wheelchairs and is fitted with a lift.

For more details or to make a booking, call **John Yaxley on 07930 729477** or send an email to office.htblacon@btinternet.com.

BeInspired*



**Do you know
someone aged 15-24?**

Are they out of work, not looking for a job or not in education or training?

The BeInspired project can help them get back on track.

Free support is available to help young people in Cheshire and Warrington get back into education or take up an apprenticeship. They can also get help with basic skills and work preparation, like how to write a CV or develop their interview techniques.

**For more information about BeInspired, visit
www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/beinspired**



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