

MyBlacon

Spring 2019

What's inside

- Employment project delivering results
- Revamp for popular play area
- New keep fit classes at the Parade

Welcome to the spring edition of

MyBlacon



We're just a few months in and 2019 is already shaping up to be another exciting and successful year for Blacon.

As you read this, final preparations will be underway for the Blacon Community Awards.

Our residents are at the heart of our community and everything we do here at Avenue Services, and we're looking forward to celebrating the fantastic achievements of those groups and individuals who go above and beyond for the benefit of our local community.

Like those residents, we're constantly striving to make Blacon an even better place to live. In recent months we've been working with Cheshire West and Chester Council to improve and upgrade the play area at Canterbury Road.

As well as installing new play equipment, new pathways have been created and landscaping work carried out to create a pleasant and welcoming environment for local children and families to enjoy.

We hope you'll visit and make the most of the new facilities as the days start to get longer and summer arrives.

Of course, it would be impossible to mention summer in Blacon without looking ahead to one of our most popular annual events – the Blacon Festival. The date for your diaries this year is July 6 and as ever we're looking forward to residents joining us for a community celebration packed with music, entertainment and so much more for the whole family to enjoy.

Be sure to keep your eye on our Facebook and Twitter channels and our website, avenueservices.org, over the coming weeks for more details about the festival and how you can get involved.

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.

Employment project delivering results

A project to make a positive difference to community facilities and give residents a route back into work is proving a big success.



With funding from Cheshire West and Chester Council, Avenue Services is offering a series of nine-month employment opportunities to people from Blacon and Lache. Working in the grounds maintenance team and the caretaking and cleaning team, the employees gain practical skills and receive training and mentoring from experienced staff. Eight people have been employed under the scheme to date, with three going on to secure permanent positions with Avenue Services.

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services, said: "The job market is competitive, and by providing local long-term unemployed residents with work and training opportunities we are giving them the skills to succeed and secure future full-time roles. "The project is helping us deliver the best possible service to our communities while enhancing the employment prospects of the individuals involved and we are delighted that it has already led to three permanent appointments."

One local resident to find permanent employment through the scheme is Karen Ramsey, who is now a valued member of the Avenue Services cleaning and caretaking team.

Karen commented: "I really enjoy my job and have been made to feel so welcome since the very first moment I started.

"I have learned new skills and gained qualifications and I'm grateful for all the opportunities the scheme has made available to me."

Funding for the initiative is being delivered through Section 106, where private developers have had to donate money to improve the local community. Sixteen opportunities will be offered in total over a four-year period, with three people from Blacon and one from Lache being employed at any one time.

Revamp for popular Blacon play area

Refurbishment work at the popular Canterbury Road play area is on target for a spring opening. The work includes repairing and repainting the existing facilities as well as installing several new pieces of play equipment. New pedestrian pathways are also being created in the surrounding open space along with landscaping work, planting and improvements to the junior football pitches.

The refurbishment is part of a wider development programme being delivered by Avenue Services and Cheshire West and Chester Council to improve play areas across Blacon and is supported by a £40,000 grant from funding body WREN.

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services, said: "Access to play areas and open space is so important for young people and improving the facilities at Canterbury Road will bring considerable benefits for the local community. We are very excited to see the project take shape and would like to thank residents for their patience while the improvements are being carried out."

Cllr Louise Gittins, cabinet member for communities and wellbeing, said: "Cheshire West and Chester Council and Avenue Services are working together to improve the Blacon area and this development programme will

greatly enhance the popular play area for the enjoyment of all families."

WREN is a not-for-profit business that awards grants for community, biodiversity and heritage projects from funds donated by FCC Environment through the Landfill Communities Fund.

Richard Smith, WREN's grant manager for Cheshire, commented: "It's always nice to see something we have funded start to take shape. We're delighted to be supporting such a worthwhile project and look forward to the new play area benefiting young people across Blacon very soon."



The new-look activity centre at Blacon Adventure Playground is available for hire for events including children's parties, educational use and sports. Opening times are from 11am to 7pm during the week and between 10am and 6pm at weekends.



NEW KEEP FIT CLASSES AT THE PARADE

Blacon residents can have fun and get fit with new exercise classes at the Parade Enterprise Centre.

Rage Fitness Company, which already runs a variety of popular fitness classes at Blacon Adventure Playground, is running the new sessions to make its service accessible to as many residents as possible.

The weekly sessions at The Parade include Men's Over 55s Fitness at 2pm on Mondays, Stretch and Relax Yoga at 10am on Wednesdays and Core Ball at 5.15pm on Wednesdays.

Craig Brown, of Rage Fitness Company, said: "Our classes at the adventure playground are extremely popular and we wanted to extend our offering to include sessions at another important community venue in Blacon.

"We're keen to show people of all ages and abilities the benefits of being fit and active. A warm welcome is guaranteed and whether you're a complete beginner or an experienced athlete, we'll have the perfect class for you."

Chris Leicester, neighbourhood partnerships manager at Avenue Services, commented: "We're delighted to welcome



Rage Fitness Company to the Parade Enterprise Centre and look forward to its valuable service reaching even more residents in Blacon."

The classes at the Parade Enterprise Centre cost £3 and places must be booked in advance.

To book, or for more information about Rage Fitness Company and the full range of classes and services on offer in Blacon, visit www.ragefitnesscompany.com

RAGE PARTNERS WITH AVENUE SERVICES

Avenue Services has been working with Rage Fitness Company for some time to increase the company's benefit to the community - and to expand into new areas of operation. This includes working directly with the young people of Blacon through the Youth Service. One of their new key projects is delivering preventative education programmes on alcohol and drugs misuse and crime, both in the youth club at the Delta Centre and on the streets through outreach work.

BLACON COMMUNITY AWARDS 2019

BLACON SET TO CELEBRATE COMMUNITY ACHIEVEMENTS AT AWARDS

Excitement is building ahead of this year's Blacon Community Awards, now in their 21st year, which celebrate the fantastic achievements of people who live and work in Blacon.

Organised by Avenue Services and the Blacon Awards Committee, the awards will honour inspirational residents of all ages who go above and beyond to make a positive difference to the local community.

The winners will be revealed during a ceremony at Blacon High School on Friday 22 March, with awards up for grabs in five categories.

Paul Knight, Head of Avenue Services, said: "The Blacon Awards are a chance to celebrate the groups and individuals who epitomise a real sense of community spirit and help make Blacon a fantastic place to live.

It's always a special evening for Blacon residents and a wonderful opportunity to let them know how much we value and appreciate them."

Look out for more information about the award winners on the Avenue Services website following the ceremony and in the summer edition of My Blacon.

BLACON WALKABOUTS

Are you passionate about improving Blacon? Why not take part in an estate Walkabout for your street or area? Come along and meet our housing team and discuss any issues or concerns you may have about your home or the surrounding area on the following dates:

Area covered	Meeting Point	Date	Time
Stratford/ Morton Roads	Corner of Stratford Road/Morton Road	27 March 2019	1.30pm
Welsh Roads	Outside Dee Point School	05 June 2019	5.30pm
Poets Corner	Corner of Shelley Road/ Wordsworth Crescent	19 June 2019	5.30pm
Australian Roads	Outside the old Blacon Library on Western Avenue	20 June 2019	5.30pm
Cathedral Roads	Corner of Carlisle Road and Durham Road	26 June 2019	1.30pm
Stratford/ Morton Roads	Corner of Stratford Road/Morton Road	03 July 2019	5.30pm
Hatton/ Stamford Road	Parade Enterprise Centre	04 July 2019	5.30pm

What's going on at Blacon Library?

Find us inside the Parade Enterprise Centre,
14 The Parade, Chester, CH1 5HN
Call 01244 976030



WEDNESDAY

The Work Club

9.30am - 12noon, weekly

Run by Chester Work Zone, the work club offers advice and guidance on job searching, CVs, cover letters, job applications and interview techniques.

Scrabble Club

10:00am - 12noon, weekly

Refreshments available for a small donation.

TUESDAY

Rhyme and storytime

10.30am - 11am, weekly

THURSDAY

Adults reading group 2pm - 3pm, second Thursday of every month.

Easter drop-in activities

Look out for our drop-in crafts and activities which we'll be running over the Easter holidays. For more information, follow 'Cheshire West and Chester Libraries' on Facebook or check our noticeboards.



FRIDAY

Lego Club

4pm - 5pm, weekly

For ages 3+

DATE FOR
YOUR DIARY

6 JULY

BLACON FESTIVAL

QUEEN ELIZABETH FIELDS,
BLACON AVENUE



Cheshire West & Chester

ELECTIONS

2019

Local council elections: 2 May 2019

You need to be registered in order to vote. Most people are, but if you have recently moved house, changed your name or nationality, or turned 18 and are voting for the first time, it's important you check.

You can register anytime online at gov.uk/register-to-vote. It takes five minutes and all you need is your NI number. Once you're registered, you'll also be ready for general elections or referendums.

If you're unsure if you are registered, give us a call on **0300 123 7045** or email elreg@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk and we can check.

Postal voting is easy

Postal voting is a convenient way to vote – especially if you find it difficult to make it to your polling station on election day – and it is easy to apply.

For complete information on voting options or about the election in general, visit: cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/2019election.



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)

