Careers event aims to ‘Make a Difference’

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North Warwickshire’s working...

The future’s looking bright for North Warwickshire as new businesses invest in the Borough, creating hundreds of new jobs. Ocado, the online supermarket, is due to open its new, state-of-the-art Customer Fulfilment Centre (CFC) in early 2013 at Birch Coppice Business Park in Dordon (see photo left).

Over the next 12 months, Ocado hopes to fill around 2,500 vacancies, ranging from personal shoppers, team leaders and engineers to IT experts, drivers and a range of administration posts. There’s a link from the Borough Council’s website or go direct to www.ocado.com to find out more.

Students look to the future at careers event

Around 1,200 students from four North Warwickshire schools had a ‘MAD’ day at Drayton Manor in September. And although the Park’s many attractions were right next door, the young people were actually in the Tower Suite at the first ever borough-wide careers fair called ‘Make a Difference Day’.

The free event was organised by the Borough Council’s Community Development Team on behalf of the North Warwickshire Community Partnership. One of the Partnership’s key priorities is “To raise aspirations, educational attainment and skills.”

The young people from Coleshill, Hartshill and Kingsbury schools and Queen Elizabeth School, Atherstone had a unique opportunity to meet potential employers face to face. Representatives from the Army, BMW, Jaguar Landrover, Ocado, The Royal Navy and Severn Trent were on hand whilst staff from North Warwickshire and Hinckley College and South Staffordshire College gave advice on training and further education.

A teacher from Kingsbury School felt the event really had ‘made a difference’:

“Students from Kingsbury School had a fantastic day with most coming away with very positive links to future employment or college options.”

See photos above.

What the students found most useful...

“Learning about apprenticeships and skills needed for jobs”
“Knowing what qualifications are needed”
“The ability to see a lot of different career paths”
“Lots more choice than I thought “
“Taking part in activities such as floristry”
“That people care enough to help”
Get back … into work

The North Warwickshire Works programme, co-ordinated by the Borough and County Councils, has commissioned a new project to provide advice, guidance and training to people who want to fill these vacancies.

With the help of Coventry and Warwickshire Co-operative Development Agency (CDA) you’ll have help to explore career choices; prepare CVs; search online for jobs, complete applications and improve your interview techniques. CDA also offers training in confidence building, warehouse awareness, health and safety in the warehouse environment, basic IT skills and travel planning.

Advisers are working on the B.O.B. Bus and at other venues in your area. For more information and to make an appointment, call or text Leah Hutchby on 07925 352672 or email: l.hutchby@cwبدا.co.uk

If you don’t have access to a computer at home, you can visit your local B.O.B. Hub (see page 7), library or the One Stop Shop at the Council offices in Atherstone. There are also work clubs in Atherstone, Baddesley Ensor and Hartshill, where you’ll have plenty of help with completing your application.

BrightSparks

The North Warwickshire Works programme is also working with the young people to raise their aspirations and employability, so that they are ready to apply for jobs when they leave school. The programme, called BrightSparks, is being delivered by ‘Life Beyond Schools.’ This company works with young people and employers to make links between the skills employers are looking for and the young person.

BrightSparks will provide students with their own personal web space to describe achievements in their own words, attaching photographs, testimonials, certificates or other supporting evidence. Over time, students develop a personal profile, which they can include in a CV or job application.

For more information
Contact Catherine Marks on: 024 7638 7279; regenandspecialprojects@warwickshire.gov.uk
or
Julie Taylor on: 01827 719437; julietaylor@northwarks.gov.uk

European grant leads the way for North Warwickshire projects

A village shop and hub for Shustoke, a Rural Youth Worker for Piccadilly, Hurley and Wood End and a research project into Boudicca at Mancetter are just some of the projects in North Warwickshire supported by the LEADER project.

Back in 2009, North Warwickshire was awarded just over £1m of European LEADER funding to improve access to services, conserve our rural heritage, provide training and promote village renewal and development. Other success stories mean that residents in Ansley Common, Atherstone, Baddesley, Dordon, Fillongley, Hurley and Maxstoke have seen improvements to their village halls and community rooms thanks to LEADER funding.

And residents in Hartshill will soon be enjoying a new pavilion thanks to its £45,000 award.

And there’s more...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Astley Castle – heritage trails</td>
<td>£14,544</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baxterley Play Area</td>
<td>£36,345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curdworth – outdoor exercise equipment</td>
<td>£10,357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsbury Linear Park/nature reserve – improved access</td>
<td>£4,460</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mancetter Youth Futures</td>
<td>£49,166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitacre Heath – improvements to Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)</td>
<td>£10,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Orton Library and Community Centre</td>
<td>£46,688</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All ‘Expressions of Interest’ from community groups were assessed by the Leader Action Group (LAG) made up of people representing local community and voluntary groups, local businesses and statutory agencies. Although the LEADER project runs until the end of 2013, the remaining funding is now fully committed.
7 tips for sensible drinking

- Stick to your daily recommended units. Men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units of alcohol a day and women no more than 2-3 units a day.
- Try to have at least two alcohol free days per week.
- Don’t drink in rounds, drink at your own pace.
- Don’t drink on an empty stomach – eat before you go out or during the evening.
- Try to alternate between alcoholic and soft drinks to prevent yourself becoming dehydrated.
- Don’t forget that alcoholic drinks contain large amounts of ‘empty’ calories. A glass of wine has the same amount of calories as a slice of cake and a pint of lager is the calorific equivalent of a burger.
- Drinking too much can have serious consequences. It can seriously damage your health or leave you with a criminal record, which may affect your future employment or travel prospects.

Have yourself a merry little Christmas...

Everyone likes to celebrate with a drink or two over the festive season but before you get too merry on the sherry, read these tips for sensible drinking...

Guidance from the Chief Medical Officer advises that children under 15 should never drink alcohol, even in small quantities. It is healthiest for children not to drink alcohol until they are 18 years old. If 15 to 17 year olds do consume alcohol, they should do so infrequently and certainly on no more than one day a week. Young people aged 15 to 17 years should never exceed recommended adult daily limits and should always be with the guidance of a parent or carer or in a supervised environment.

If you’re worried about your drinking habits, visit your GP or:

- if you’re aged 18 or over, contact the Recovery Partnership for advice, information, treatment and support on 02476 641100.
- if you’re under 18 or concerned about someone who is, contact Compass Warwickshire on 08000 88 72 48.

Visit the Warwickshire Drug and Alcohol Action Team website at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/alcohol.

10 tips to get you through the winter

1. Fill your fridge with cottage cheese, turkey and game, as these are great for increasing serotonin - the brain’s ‘happy’ chemical.
2. Get your vitamin C as high as possible with anything from orange juice to broccoli and green peppers.
3. Increase your intake of essential fatty acids and eat mackerel and tuna or take Evening Primrose Oil. This should help protect your skin against the harsh winter weather.
4. Vitamin D found in eggs and oily fish is essential for calcium absorption.
5. Make sure you also stock up on calcium-rich, bone-building foods such as milk, yoghurt, cheese, nuts, pulses and canned fish.
6. Eat lots of warming vegetable soups and stews to stop you from worrying about gaining weight over the cold winter months.
7. Add garlic to your food, as it helps increase the body’s immune system, enabling it to be more effective in fighting winter infections.
8. 55% of your body heat is lost through your head. So if you want to get ahead, wear a hat when you’re outside!
9. Blackcurrant juice, red peppers, sunflower seeds and green vegetables are all healthy sources of antioxidants – great for getting the blood circulating and protecting against chilblains.
10. Keep exercising. Regular activity will help to enhance your mood over the next few months, which will be cold, dark and generally gloomy.
One stop for better health

Since the One Stop Health Shop opened its doors in June, the team have run 48 sessions offering residents advice and information on improving their diet, fitness levels and emotional well-being.

Healthy Lifestyle Coaches, Donna Mann and Kerry Burnett, have been running the free health drop-in every Monday morning down at Atherstone’s Memorial Hall. Each session includes…

- **health MOTs** – which have alerted some members to high blood pressure meaning a swift trip to their GP!
- **physical activity** – a taster session of armchair aerobics or Zumba anyone?
- **healthy cooking** – tips on breakfast specials, foods for a healthy heart and easy ways to get your 5 a day.

Donna and Kerry said:

“We’ve had some great feedback from people who’ve taken part and some have really persevered in getting their weight down and improving their diet.

Whatever your age, size or fitness levels, don’t feel daunted about dropping in to see us – you’ll receive a warm welcome and it’s all very informal.”

One of their customers commented on her experience:

“It reminds me each week to think about my health and to eat the right food. It’s a good social group for my mental and spiritual wellbeing.”

The One Stop Health Shop is a pilot project between Leisure and Community Development, running in sessions of six from 9.30am-11.45am until February 2013. For more information, contact Jo Rooke on 01827 719346; email joannerooke@northwarks.gov.uk

For lots more information on all aspects of health and wellbeing, go to www.northwarks.gov.uk/wellnessmatters

Pulmonary patients at Polesworth

For the second time, Polesworth Sports Centre has played host to the George Eliot Hospital and their Pulmonary Rehab Patients, whose breathing problems can include emphysema and chronic bronchitis. The scheme runs over eight weeks and the clients attend twice weekly, joining in physical activity and receiving advice on diet and everyday activities. The Physiotherapists run assessments prior to enrolling on the scheme, which helps to monitor clients’ progress.

After the scheme has finished, most of the clients enrol with the Gym Instructors through the Exercise Referral Scheme. Since this started in January 2012, specialist instructors at Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth centres have seen over 100 people. Customers receive one to one instruction and a personalised programme, so they can continue their healthy lifestyle.

The GPs in North Warwickshire have funding until March 2013 and are hoping to find similar venues to expand the project.

For more information on the schemes above, contact your local leisure centre or visit www.northwarks.gov.uk/ers

FREE OFFER FOR DECEMBER

Join Arley, Atherstone, Coleshill or Polesworth Sports and Leisure Centres by Direct Debit and receive a FREE induction and FREE use of the Lifetimes Suites in December.

Offer available until 21st December 2012. www.northwarks.gov.uk/freedecember
Green light for further work on new leisure centre for Coleshill

Work will now go ahead to ensure the future of a leisure centre in Coleshill, following the Full Council meeting held on 26th September. Coleshill Leisure Centre dates back to the 1980s and is now in need of replacement. However, the many problems with the age and structure of the building mean that a complete refurbishment would be far too expensive.

Following consultation with residents in 2009, the options were narrowed down to two possible sites at Coleshill Memorial Park or at The Coleshill School. The Borough Council engaged the services of The Sports Consultancy, specialists in leisure facility provision and development, who recommended The School as the best and most financially efficient option for meeting the needs of both local residents and school students.

Leader of North Warwickshire Borough Council, Councillor Mick Stanley said:

“We have appointed Coventry City Council to manage the Coleshill Leisure Centre replacement project. We are working closely with Coleshill School to assist in a bid for a significant grant from the Education Funding Agency, which will help substantially with the development of a new leisure centre serving both the school and local residents. It is also intended to apply for planning consent by the end of December 2012.”

A series of public information events are being held where you can meet staff from both the Borough Council and The School to discuss the project in more detail. Dates and times of these events and other news and information is at www.northwarks.gov.uk/nlc

In the meantime, Coleshill Leisure Centre will remain open until the proposed new facility has been built.

B.O.B. Hubs roll out across the Borough

Since we reported on the first B.O.B. Hub at Baddesley in the July 2012 north talk, another eight B.O.B. Hubs have been opened, in partnership with Town and Parish Councils and Warwickshire County Council. Now, residents in Ansley Common, Arley, Birchmoor, Coleshill, Hartshill, Mancetter, Shustoke and Water Orton have information at their fingertips with a simple click of the computer mouse!

The benefit of a B.O.B. Hub is that it helps local people access support, information and services in their own communities. The project has built on the success of B.O.B. the Branching Out Bus, which has been delivering advice and information to our rural communities since 2009. The B.O.B. Hubs project is key to ensuring that no-one is excluded through lack of access to technology or transport.

Even if you have your own equipment but no access to the internet at home, you can use the Hubs’ Wi-Fi environment, joining others in learning and accessing information.

All B.O.B. Hubs are different in what they offer and when they are open but all allow access to:

- one or more computers, which are free to use.
- Free calls to the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) available 9.30am-2pm Monday, Tuesday and Friday and 3.30-6.30pm on Wednesday.
- a free telephone to put you in touch with key services such as the Borough and County Council, the Credit Union and Jobcentre Plus, amongst others.
- a colour printer, which can photocopy or scan documents.
Video-conferencing

The Hubs at Arley, Coleshill Library, Hartshill and Polesworth Library also have video-conferencing, which is a bit like Skype (see photo right). You can link up through the computer and have a face to face conversation with staff at the Borough Council or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

The added advantage is that you can share and send letters and other information, electronically, at the push of a button – so there’s no need to spend time and money travelling into Atherstone! They are very easy to use so go along and try them.

B.O.B. Hubs

| Ansley Common | St John’s Community Room, St John’s Road | Jane Sands | 02476 394670 |
| Arley         | Arley and St Michael’s Community Centre | Gerry Koppenhagen | 01676 542753 |
| Baddesley     | Village Hall, in the library            | Lorna Ferguson |                |
| Birchnoor     | St John’s Mission                       | Angie Saffrey | 01827 719083 |
| Coleshill     | Coleshill Town Hall                     | David Harris | 01827 893788 |
|               | Coleshill Library                       | Adam Farrell | 01675 463307 |
| Hartshill     | Hartshill Community Centre              | Mark Griffen | 01249 392856 |
| Mancetter     | Bracebridge Centre, St Peter’s Church   | Tony Tooby | 07534 265897 |
| Polesworth    | Polesworth Library                      | Julie Talbot | 01827 892587 |
| Shustoke      | Village shop next to the Village Hall   | Carol Fox | 01675 481268 |
| Water Orton   | Water Orton Library & Community Centre  | Allan Holland | 07740 103796 |

Contact the Co-ordinators above for details of opening hours and see www.northwarks.gov.uk/hubs

The B.O.B. Hubs need you!

Volunteers are needed to help people either to get started or improve their computer skills; look for work; find better energy deals, research family trees and even shop online. As a volunteer, you will not only give something back to your community but if looking for work or to improve your chances of accessing greater opportunities, it will demonstrate to any potential employer that you are work ready, committed and keen.

No matter what your age, you can volunteer at a B.O.B. Hub

Contact Adam Farrell, Volunteer Development Co-ordinator at the Volunteer Centre North Warwickshire, Tel: 01827 717073; email: adam.farrell@vcnw.org.uk
“Employing over 800 local people, our plant at Hams Hall plays an important role in BMW Group’s global manufacturing network. We manufacture small, fuel efficient, low emission engines for BMW and MINI cars that are sold across the world.”

“We first started production in 2001 and the plant celebrated its tenth successful year of building engines in 2011 with a record year of production. Last year we also confirmed investment in the plant, continuing our commitment to the Midlands and securing jobs at our site.

“Work has already started to upgrade the factory so we will be able to build future BMW engines, which will include engines for the new BMW i8 plug-in hybrid sports car.

“People are an important part of our future plans and we are committed to developing our local workforce. Finding and nurturing new talent is key to our business and we have recently recruited a record number of young people. They will follow a structured apprenticeship programme with us during which we will develop their enthusiasm and potential, ensuring they become valued members of our team for the long-term.”

Nick Spencer, Plant Director.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY.
Apprentice Sam Hicks (pictured left) was just one of the team from BMW that supported Make a Difference Day in September at Drayton Manor Park.

APPRENTICESHIP OPPORTUNITIES AT BMW.
BMW seeks people from the age of 16 with either GSCEs or A Levels. In particular, individuals should be enthusiastic, disciplined and inquisitive, exhibit initiative and be reliable and conscientious team players. Minimum entry requirements vary according to the type of apprenticeship. As an absolute minimum you will need four GSCEs, including Maths, Science and English. For some apprenticeships, entry requirements will be higher.

APPRENTICESHIPS AT BMW PLANT HAMS HALL.
- Apprenticeships are offered in a range of disciplines.
- Apprenticeships last between three to four years.
- Apprenticeships involve academic study as well as practical work placements at the plant.
- Apprentices are paid a competitive salary and after six months service, they are eligible to join the company car scheme.

Apprenticeship opportunities are advertised on our website. All applications should be made online at www.bmwplanthamshall.co.uk
Recruitment will open in January 2013.
Employing over 800 local people, our plant at Hams Hall plays an important role in BMW Group’s global manufacturing network. We manufacture small, fuel efficient, low emission engines for BMW and MINI cars that are sold across the world.

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Nick Spencer, Plant Director.

**THE REGION.**

**MARIANNE PAYNE.**
Marianne is seventeen and lives in Coventry. She joined BMW as a laboratory apprentice in September.

“I wasn’t sure about my career path, but my strengths were maths and sciences. I applied for an apprenticeship with BMW as I thought it would open up a variety of opportunities and maybe even the chance to travel. I’m looking forward to having my own projects during my work placements and being able to make a difference.”

**ADAM JENNINGS.**
Adam, from Nuneaton, started a manufacturing craft apprenticeship in September.

“I found out about apprenticeships at BMW on the internet and was really pleased to be offered a place. It’s a chance to continue my education as well as learn a trade. I have an interest in cars and hands-on engineering, so I want to make the most of this opportunity to progress a life-long career.”

**GARETH BURDON.**
Gareth lives in Nuneaton and joined BMW as a business apprentice in 2011.

“After my A levels I wanted to gain some work experience as well as continuing my studies to a higher level. I’m in the second year of my apprenticeship now and really enjoying it. BMW is a great place, I’m getting on well with my academic studies at Aston University and I’m definitely kept busy and learning a lot in my work placements at the plant!”
Warm and well in Warks this winter!

A joint campaign run by the Borough Council and Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advice Service (WWRAS) has so far resulted in extra benefit claims of over £71,000.

As part of the Warm and Well in Warwickshire initiative, 500 households in the Borough received a letter and information during July and August. 50 responded, taking up the offer of a free benefit health check, including help on saving energy and reducing fuel bills.

Check out these top tips to keep yourself warm and well this winter...

- Check that your loft and cavity walls are insulated – it’s still not too late to take advantage of free insulation offers.
- Stay warm - set your thermostat between 18 - 21°C. Turning it down by 1° could reduce your bill by 10%
- Keep all internal doors closed to stop draughts and close curtains at dusk.
- Fit draught proofing to seal the gaps around doors and windows.
- Get your heating, radiators and boilers serviced annually by a qualified engineer.
- Sweep chimneys if you have open fires.
- Ensure you and your family members are up to date with any vaccinations.
- Buy in adequate supplies of medication and groceries in case there’s a cold spell.
- Try to have warm drinks and at least one hot meal each day.
- Layer up – several thin layers of clothing are better than one thick jumper.
- Keep active and remove hazards that may cause you to fall.
- Make sure you have an emergency contact number for a friend or neighbour in case you need help.

For more advice and practical help, contact: Act on Energy’s Freephone 0800 988 2881 or email advice@actonenergy.org.uk

Green Deal

Just as the nights are drawing in and the heating stays on for longer, comes the news that energy bills are on the rise... again.

However, the Government’s ‘Green Deal’ launched in October could help to bring down the cost of your gas and electricity. You can arrange for home improvements to make your property more energy efficient with no upfront costs, as you pay for the work with the savings on your fuel bills.

You first need to arrange an assessment, which will detail the works needed to your home.

Then comes a financial report on how to pay and you make your choice before the work gets underway.

Owner-occupiers, tenants and landlords can apply regardless of their financial circumstances so it’s not just for people on benefits.

There may be some discounts or free works available – just call the Energy Saving Advice Service on 0300 123 1234 to check. Assessments are due to start in February 2013 although some providers are taking bookings now – go to www.greendeal.org.uk
Big benefit changes in 2013

We are now on the countdown to some of the biggest changes in the Welfare Benefits system for 60 years. Whilst these changes, some of which are outlined below, will NOT affect pensioners, they will mean people of working age, who are in receipt of Housing and Council Tax Benefit will receive less money and support.

From April 2013, people living in Council or Housing Association properties will have their Housing Benefit reduced if there is an ‘under occupation of bedrooms’ in their property. There will be a maximum cap imposed on people receiving benefits of £26,000 and a new local Council Tax Support Scheme will replace Council Tax Benefit.

Over the next few months, the Borough Council will be writing to everyone, who will be affected by the changes. Make sure you read the letters and do get in touch to discuss how the changes will affect you – you can ring in using your own phone or one at a B.O.B. Hub; visit the B.O.B. bus or the One Stop Shop at the Council House in Atherstone.

There will also be a series of ‘Wraparound’ Roadshows at a number of the B.O.B. Hubs and at the Memorial Hall in Atherstone between December and March. You’ll be able to call in and over a bowl of soup and a roll, get advice and support from the Borough Council and other partners who can help you. Details will be available at www.northwarwick.gov.uk; via Facebook and Twitter by signing up to follow the Borough Council or by ringing 01827 715341. You can also get advice and information on changes and local help available at www.frontlineworkerstoolkit.org.uk

Oil heating? Save £50 per delivery

If you depend on heating oil, you’ll know how much more expensive this fuel is. This pushes many people into ‘fuel poverty’ - unable to heat their home to a healthy temperature. Warwickshire Rural Community Council operates an oil club, where you join together and make savings on every delivery.

Ring 01789 472611, email oil@ruralwarwickshire.org.uk or go to www.ruralwarwickshire.org.uk/oil

Worried about your gas, electricity and water bills?

If you are worried about your bills and need further advice, contact the CAB on 0844 855 2322 or Act on Energy’s Freephone on 0800 988 2881.

For more water saving tips, or to view a great range of free water saving products, go to www.stwater.co.uk/save or call 0845 603 4413.

Here are some ‘no’ cost and ‘low’ cost energy saving tips

- Check with your local CAB that you are not missing out on any benefits or tax credits, which could boost your income or discounts and cut bills.
- Contact your energy supplier to check you are on the cheapest possible tariff.
- Visit an accredited switching website to see if you could get your energy cheaper elsewhere.
- Use less energy - switch off lights; unplug any phone and laptop chargers; use low energy light bulbs; when filling the kettle, only boil as much water as you need.
- Take a short shower instead of a bath and turn off the tap when you brush your teeth.
- Fully load your washing machine before turning it on and fix any dripping taps.
The Borough Council and Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advice Service (WWRAS) have been working on a project this year to increase the take-up of free school meals in North Warwickshire.

Parents at six schools received letters, encouraging them to take advantage of the free benefit health check from WWRAS. This included making the application for a free school meal. The Council’s Financial Inclusion and Community Development staff talked to children and their parents to promote healthy eating messages and the importance of a free school meal.

It helps with the family’s income, the child receives a healthy free meal and the school benefits in extra money too – so everyone’s a winner!

Out of the six schools, 105 families completed the form and sent it back to WWRAS. They found that 34 were entitled to a free school meal and also helped more families claim a total of £201,592 in additional benefits. It’s not only the families who get the extra help, as the schools were able to claim £20,400 in pupil premium to support school activities.

Claim your school meal today and get extra funding for your school.

For every child entitled to a free school meal, the school is entitled to additional funding. When you successfully apply for a free school meal, the school will receive an extra £600 - even if your child does not want the meal!

Apply online now at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals
Ring 01926 742060 or email: freemeals@warwickshire.gov.uk

An estimated 310,000 households across the country are in debt to a loan shark. These illegal money lenders may appear friendly at first, but don’t be taken in. They will quickly trap you into spiralling and crippling debt with interest rates as high as 131,000% APR! You don’t receive any paperwork, so you’ll have no idea how much you’re actually paying.

Many loan sharks will resort to threats, intimidation and violence to get their money back. They have been known to take passports and driving licences as security or even bank or Post Office cards with the PIN, so they can withdraw money straight from your account.

If you are a victim of a loan shark or know of loan shark activity in your area – don’t get bitten, bite back!

Call the 24/7 confidential hotline 0300 555 2222
Text ‘loan shark + your message’ to 60003
E-mail reportaloanshark@stoploansharks.gov.uk

Private message on
www.facebook.com/stoploansharksproject
Log-on to www.direct.gov.uk/stoploansharks

Loan sharks - The Bite Back Begins...

Free school meals campaign

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www.warwickshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals
Ring 01926 742060 or email: freemeals@warwickshire.gov.uk
Money worries? Benefits being cut or withdrawn? Get free confidential advice

If you’re struggling with money or budgeting worries, free confidential advice and help is available from your local CAB. Call their Adviceline on 0844 8552322 or visit them at their offices or via a B.O.B. Hub with video links.

Want to open a bank account but not sure how? Need to borrow money or want to find a cheaper lender?

If the answer is yes but you cannot or do not want to use a high street bank, there is an alternative - speak to the staff at the New Central Credit Union. A Credit Union is a community bank, run by local people for local people. It’s an easy way to save and borrow and as a member you have a say in how it’s run. All it costs is a one-off joining fee of £5 and a £1 deposit makes you part of the Union!

You can deposit savings, make withdrawals and once you’ve built up a savings record, you’ll be eligible to apply for a loan. The amount you can borrow depends on your savings history and all lending decisions are made by a Lending Committee. Rates, it is fair to say, can be substantially less than most doorstep or payday loan advertised lenders.

Contact the New Central Credit Union at 158 Long Street, Atherstone CV9 1AE
Tel: 01827 718851. Open Thursday and Friday 9.30am-12.30pm.
Advisers are also available at the One Stop Shop in Atherstone every Tuesday 11am - 2pm.

Go paperless in 2013

Around 3,600 residents have already signed up for e-billing for their Council Tax – meaning there’s one less paper bill coming through their letterboxes! And if you take part before 1st March 2013, you’ll be in with a chance of winning a £50 gift voucher.

Once you’re set up, you’ll be able to view your bill, balance, payments and any correspondence online. It’s simple to do - just go to www.northwarks.gov.uk/accountsonline to register. You’ll need an email address and the reference number, which is on your bill or statement.

Does your bus pass expire on 31st March 2013? Have you moved house since 2008?

Warwickshire County Council is sending out new bus passes automatically, but only if:
- your address is up to date in the bus pass database.
- there is an up to date photograph for you in the database.

If you have moved in the last five years, get in touch and check that the address in the records is up to date. Staff can tell you if you need to provide a new photograph. Let them know as well if you don’t need or want your bus pass any longer. The new passes will be sent out during January and February, so please get in touch before Christmas. If you’ve received a letter asking for a photo, don’t ignore it or you won’t receive a new pass!

Call 01926 418026 to check or notify a change of address and find out if you need to provide a photo - or for any other enquiries about your bus pass.

Call in to the One Stop Shop at the Borough Council offices, Atherstone, Coleshill Library or Nuneaton Town Hall. Staff can take a photo of you free of charge and can check your address.

You can notify a change of address and send a photo to Concessionary Travel, Freepost LG111, P.O. Box 43, Shire Hall, Warwick CV34 4BR. Write your name and date of birth on the back of the photo and enclose a covering letter.

Email: concessionarytravel@warwickshire.gov.uk to check or notify a change of address – unfortunately, photos cannot be accepted by email.
HS2

HS2 is the highspeed railway line being proposed by Central Government. The Borough Council’s stance is one of objection to the principle and route of HS2. As a result, it has joined forces with other local authorities to form 51M. At the same time, however, the Borough Council has decided to work with HS2 Ltd with a view to obtaining the best possible mitigation for the residents and businesses in the Borough, if the line does go ahead. It gets involved through the HS2 Community Forums and the HS2 Planning Forum.

Community Forums
There are currently two HS2 Ltd lead Community Forums in North Warwickshire – Curdworth & Middleton and Coleshill. The Borough Council attends both of these, as well as attending the Birmingham Interchange HS2 Community Forum, which relates to the new station just outside of the Borough boundary close to the NEC.

Latest news

Legal Challenge: 51M has submitted a legal challenge and this will be considered alongside other challenges in early December. There are seven grounds in the challenge – many are technical aspects of whether the process complies with a number of legal tests. It includes a challenge on the failure to conduct a lawful consultation and basing the decision on irrational matters. In particular, as the Y route had not been announced when the consultation took place, most areas were not aware of it.

Y Route: The junction for the Y route will be close to Lea Marston and will form the start of the line to Leeds. The actual line beyond this junction has yet to be announced but will follow the route of the M42. Residents and businesses along this route are keen to establish an Action Group prior to the announcement. Anyone interested in helping should contact the Forward Planning Team at the Borough Council.

Action Groups: There are a number of existing Action Groups within the Borough that cover the published route. Please contact the Forward Planning Team if you are interested in joining them.

Consultation: The consultations on the Safeguarding Area and the Property Compensation have now been published – www.highspeedrail.dft.gov.uk/consultations-0. The closing date for comments is 5.30pm on 31st January 2013.

Look out for...
- The Secretary of State’s announcement on the actual route of the Y line to Leeds. This is likely to include a consultation on an amended Exceptional Hardship Scheme.
- Consultation on the Environmental Impact Assessment in spring 2013.

For further information and links to other websites including Action Groups, go to www.northwarks.gov.uk/hs2 or contact the Forward Planning Team on 01827 719250.

Core Strategy
The Core Strategy, which will form part of the Local Plan for North Warwickshire, is out for consultation prior to being submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. The consultation will run until 20th December 2012. For further information, contact the Forward Planning Team on 01827 719499 / 451 or view the consultation at www.northwarks.gov.uk/corestrat
Refuse and recycling collections this Christmas and New Year

**Black bins – Refuse**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Collection Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday 24th December</td>
<td>No collection – next collection 31st December *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 25th December</td>
<td>Will be collected on MONDAY 24th DECEMBER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 26th December</td>
<td>No collection – next collection 2nd January *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday 27th December</td>
<td>No collection – next collection 3rd January *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday 28th December</td>
<td>No collection – next collection 4th January *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday 31st December</td>
<td>Collections as normal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 1st January</td>
<td>No collection – next collection 8th January *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday 2nd January</td>
<td>Collections as normal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLEASE NOTE** - black bin collections due on Christmas Day will be collected the day before, on Christmas Eve. Please ensure bins are put out for collection by 7am as we are unable to return to collect your bin if it is not presented.

**Red boxes and bags – Recycling.** There will be NO collections on Christmas Day, Boxing Day or New Year's Day.

**Green bins - Garden waste.** No changes.

Please refer to your calendar for your next date of collection or go to [www.northwarks.gov.uk/recycling](http://www.northwarks.gov.uk/recycling)

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**Have a safer Christmas**

**Not everyone enters into the Christmas spirit. Make 2012 a safer Christmas for everyone**

- When out shopping, don’t leave presents on show in your car. If they can be seen, they can be stolen.
- Keep presents out of sight at home – don’t leave them on display under the Christmas tree.
- If you’re going away over Christmas, leave lights and a radio on timer switches.
- Keep your house secure – make sure all windows and doors are locked.
- Don’t leave car keys and handbags within easy reach of the door.

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**Reducing the Fear of Crime in North Warwickshire**

The North Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership has taken the following actions to reduce the fear of crime...

For more information contact Robert Beggs, Policy Support Manager Tel: 01827 719238.

- promoting Crimestoppers, to encourage reporting of information about local offenders.
- setting up shop watch and re-establishing the retail radio scheme.
- targeting high visibility police patrols.
- arresting people for conspiracy to commit robberies.
- removing graffiti tags.
- organising a drop-in session with the Assistant Chief Constable.
Want to advertise in north talk?

We’re offering very reasonable rates at £500 for a full A4 page; £250 for half a page and £125 for a quarter page.

North talk is distributed three times a year (November/December; March/April and July/August) to 27,000 households in North Warwickshire and to leisure centres, libraries and other community venues. It also appears in full on the website at www.northwarks.gov.uk/northtalk. An audio version is produced by the North Warwickshire Talking Newspaper and distributed to all their customers.

If you’re interested or want to comment on any articles in this issue, contact:

Karen Barrow, north talk editor, Telephone 01827 719309 Mobile 07970 248222 karenbarrow@northwarks.gov.uk

Bookings already being taken for the March/April 2013 issue!

Area Forums – have your say at your local meeting

The four Area Forums in North Warwickshire give you a chance to talk to Borough, County and Parish Councillors, local police officers and others about issues which matter to you.

Venues will be confirmed nearer the time. For more information go to www.northwarks.gov.uk/areaforums Further dates will appear in the March/April issue of north talk.

One Stop Shop & Contact Centre

The Council Offices, South Street, Atherstone CV9 1DE
Open Monday – Friday 8.30am – 5.15pm   Telephone 01827 715341
After 5.15pm and at weekends, you can leave a message with your details and we will ring you back on the next working day.

Christmas and New Year closing

The Council offices, Contact Centre and One Stop Shop will be closed from Tuesday 25th December - Tuesday 1st January 2013 inclusive, reopening on Wednesday 2nd January 2013.

24 hour emergency number for weekends and Bank Holidays: 01827 718086.

www.northwarks.gov.uk
Follow us on Facebook and Twitter

If you have any comments about north talk or know someone who has not received a copy, email the editor: karenbarrow@northwarks.gov.uk or ring: 01827 719309.

Produced on paper from sustainable sources. Remember to recycle your north talk!