Coleshill Leisure Centre opens for Christmas countdown

See page 5
One Stop Shop and Contact Centre

The Council Offices, South Street, Atherstone CV9 1DE
Open Monday – Friday
9am – 5pm
Tel: 01827 715341
(8.30am-5.15pm)

After 5.15pm and at weekends, you can leave a message with your details and we’ll ring you back on the next working day.

24 hours emergency number for weekends and Bank Holidays: 01827 718086
www.northwarks.gov.uk

Follow us on
Facebook and Twitter

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

Christmas and New Year refuse and recycling collections

If your usual refuse, recycling or green waste collections are due to fall on any of the following days, here are the alternative arrangements to cover the Yuletide period.

Christmas Day 25th December 2014
collections now on Saturday 26th December 2014

Boxing Day 26th December 2014
collections now on Saturday 27th December 2014

New Year’s Day 1st January 2015
collections now on Saturday 3rd January 2015

Collections on all other days over the festive period are not affected. Please make sure you leave your bins out ready for collection by 6am otherwise the chances are, they won’t be emptied! Also, as it’s the holiday period, the collection routes may vary, meaning your bins may be emptied at a different time.

www.northwarks.gov.uk/refuse

Have a safer Christmas

Not everyone enters into the Christmas spirit. Make 2014 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.

Fresh, festive fare

local food for local people

FARM SHOP
OPEN:
Friday & Saturday 9am-5pm,
Sunday 10am-4pm

Not your free magazine from North Warwickshire Borough Council and the North Warwickshire Community Partnership. It’s produced three times a year in November/December, March/April and July/August and distributed to around 27,000 homes in North Warwickshire and to leisure centres, libraries, community hubs and other venues. It’s also on the website at www.northwarks.gov.uk/northtalk

A large print version can be made available and an audio version is produced by North Warwickshire Talking Newspaper.

The next issue is March/April 2015

To enquire about advertising, contact:
Karen Barrow, north talk editor
Tel: 01827 719309
email: karenbarrow@northwarks.gov.uk

www.northwarks.gov.uk/northtalk

Call us or visit rockwarm.co.uk for more information.

www.focusoptics.eu

WILLOW CENTRE
at Focus Optics

• Top quality Bird Food:
  Nuts, Seed, Sunflower Hearts, Fat Balls and Cake
• Bird Feeders: All sizes and types
  • Bird Tables, Nest Boxes
  • Brasher Boots and Shoes
  • Books, CD’s, DVD’s
• Nikwax Waterproofing Products

We also stock leading brands:
Brasher, Bridgedale, Country Innovation, Healthy Back Bag, Paramo, Stealth Gear, Ridgeline and Tilley

Specialists in Binoculars & Telescopes

www.19gales.co.uk
Email: info.19gales@gmail.com

Fresh, festive fare

local food for local people

Grants Available: £4,000
Semi Detached Home
Customer to pay: £4,000

Grants Available: £4,000
Mid-Terrace Home
Customer to pay: £2,000

Grants Available: £4,000
End Terraced Home
Customer to pay: £2,000

Grants Available: £4,000
Flat
Customer to pay: £4,000

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Closed 1st Jan and
2nd Jan 2015

Open 24th Dec
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If you’re planning that special Christmas meal with work colleagues, friends or family, the Borough Council and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) advise you to ‘look before you book.’

Christmas is a time to enjoy good company and good food without worrying about food poisoning. But the truth is, you can’t tell a restaurant’s hygiene standards by how clean and tidy the staff look or by how busy it is. It’s the things you can’t see – like germs spread by bad hygiene practices – that you need to consider.

There’s one easy way to set your mind at rest – check the food hygiene rating. This tells you about hygiene standards in restaurants and other food businesses and is really easy to check at www.food.gov.uk/ratings. If you’re out and about, look for the green and black sticker. If you can’t see one, just ask.

The ratings are determined by the Council’s Food Safety Officers and run from 0-5, with a 5 rating meaning a very good level of food hygiene. 90% of food businesses in North Warwickshire are rated 3 (Generally Satisfactory) or better.

Stephen Whiles, Environmental Health Manager at the Borough Council commented:

“Premises within our area are continually improving with 247 now achieving the highest score of 5 as opposed to this time last year when only 183 achieved this score. It’s easy for people in North Warwickshire to check hygiene ratings online and choose a restaurant for their Christmas parties that takes food hygiene seriously. This is an important time for local businesses and a good food hygiene rating is something to be proud of. It matters to customers, so we are encouraging all businesses in North Warwickshire to display their rating and have a prosperous Christmas season.”

Catherine Brown, Chief Executive, Food Standards Agency, agrees:

“This Christmas, do this one little thing for peace of mind when eating out. Take a moment to check the food hygiene rating, pick the right place, and enjoy a great meal out.”

For more information, visit www.food.gov.uk/business-industry/caterers/hygieneratings

If you’re on a mission to get fit before the Christmas festivities, then the new Coleshill Leisure Centre has opened just in time! The facility on Packington Lane opened for business on 17th November, replacing the former centre on Park Road. A joint project between the Borough Council and The Coleshill School, the development was also funded through the Education Funding Agency and England Squash and Racketball. The Centre now offers state-of-the-art, modern facilities for people in Coleshill and the surrounding villages.

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Call in and see for yourself...

- A large multi-purpose Sports Hall for football, volleyball, netball, basketball, badminton, cricket and trampolining.
- The Dance Studio with an exciting extended class programme. It is fitted with controllable air conditioning and has mood lighting, a mirrored wall, stereo sound and projector.
- The Fitness Suite offering panoramic views over the Coleshill countryside with air conditioning, stereo sound, 50” TVs, the latest, interactive range of Life Fitness cardio and resistance machines and a free weights area.
- Two glass backed squash courts, with intercom communication and viewing area.
- A gallery on the first floor with a seating area for refreshments, allowing views of the sports hall and squash courts.
- Private parking for centre users.

The Centre is open seven days a week, from 6.30am on weekdays and 9am at weekends. Check www.northwarks.gov.uk/leisure or ring 01827 719321. Visit the Centre on Facebook and follow on Twitter for up to date information, offers and activities.
Mining heritage will leave a lasting legacy

It was a sad day for North Warwickshire with the announcement last year of the closure of the last remaining pit at Daw Mill in Arley. There is light at the end of the tunnel, however! The Borough Council has received £45,000 of government funding to investigate how mine water could heat homes and businesses. This heat network means homes and businesses do not need to generate their own heat and can share it through a network of pipes carrying hot water. The new project would boost the Council’s good track record of introducing carbon reduction initiatives, including building more energy efficient Council homes and developing a Carbon Management Action Plan with the Carbon Trust.

The application for the grant from the Department of Energy and Climate Change was made with support from consultants Down to Zero Ltd and the Clean Rivers Trust.

With the announcement on 3rd October that the bid had been successful, the Council will now be able to start the feasibility study.

Support Small Business Saturday

Did you know that every £1 you spend with a local small business puts £1.76 back into the local economy? Small Business Saturday is a national initiative, encouraging us all to use our local businesses.

Simon Darvers of 40s style eatery, The Larder, in Atherstone says:

“We’ve been open for just over a year now and the business is doing well. One of the main reasons for this is the support from the community. The idea of shopping local and supporting your community is very much at the heart of the people in North Warwickshire. The ‘Atherstone pound’ is growing and if more small businesses join in with local events, it can only get stronger.”

Look out for more events on 6th December and do some Christmas shopping locally!

Bus service to boost employment at Birch Coppice

An early morning business meeting at Birch Coppice Business Park in Dordon has resulted in a new bus service for the site and surrounding area, catering for the varied shift patterns. In July, the North Warwickshire Community Partnership, led by the Borough and County Councils, organised the meeting along with Birch Coppice developers, IM Properties, to discuss recruitment, employment and transport issues.

Key businesses attended the meeting including Stagecoach Midlands, a local bus company and Liftshare, which encourages car sharing. Following further discussions with businesses on the site and with Job Centre Plus, Stagecoach announced a new bus route from Monday 13th October.

The service runs between Nuneaton and Tamworth via Atherstone and surrounding villages, calling at Birch Coppice.

The 767 provides a very early morning and evening service Monday-Saturday plus a Sunday service, ensuring that current and potential employees can easily travel to and from their workplace. This will provide people with a new option to travel to work anywhere along this new route.

Future plans include a Birch Coppice travel website to provide information about how to access the site by car, rail, bus, cycle or on foot. The site will also link with the Warwickshire Liftshare service, which encourages people to car share on the way to work.

Funding decision awaited

Months of consultation and exploratory work went into the production of a new Local Development Strategy for North Warwickshire and Hinckley and Bosworth. The strategy was completed at the beginning of September and served as the application for LEADER funding. The next round of this European initiative, delivered through the Department for the Environment & Rural Affairs (Defra), starts in January 2015 and will focus on creating jobs and growing the local economy.

At the time of writing, the outcome of the application, which could see almost £1.7 million coming into the area, was eagerly awaited. For further information, contact Emma McKay, LEADER Development Officer on 01827 719356 or go to www.englandsruralheart.org

Rosemarie Day Unique Markets and Events

present their first market on Saturday 6th December at Coleshill Town Hall.

Christmas hampers - cakes and bakes - gifts - children’s and adults fashions - jewellery and more

www.northwarks.gov.uk/bus2work www.stagecoachbus.com or ring Stagecoach on 01604 676060
Did you know you can register with the Borough Council’s website in a matter of minutes and then receive free, regular updates on your areas of interest?

Whether it’s Planning issues, leisure centre news, developments with HS2 or even a link to the latest north talk, you can keep up to speed through email alerts, once you’ve signed up. And if you register by the end of March 2015, you could even be in with the chance of winning an iPad!

Simply go to www.northwarks.gov.uk/register and the web team will do the rest!
New look for Community Hubs

Your 12 Community Hubs, offering free phone access and free computer use, now have a new look for the New Year. The Hubs at Arley, Hartshill, Coleshill Town Hall and Coleshill and Polesworth libraries will also have video conferencing available, so you can link direct with the CAB and with the Contact Centre at the Borough Council.

A series of launch events have been planned, running from around 4-6pm – call in and you can tell Santa all you want for Christmas via a special Santa-lite link. Children can send their letters to Santa via santa@northwarks.gov.uk and receive a personalised reply all the way from the North (Warwickshire) Pole!

Baddesley Hub, Village Hall       Wednesday 10th December
Coleshill Hub, Coleshill Town Hall      Tuesday 16th December
Arley Hub, Arley and St Michael’s Community Centre  Wednesday 17th December
Hartshill Hub, Hartshill Community Centre  Thursday 18th December

www.northwarks.gov.uk/hub

Make the most of your local E-Volunteers

You can make an appointment with one of the CAB’s e-volunteers at your local Community Hub. They can help you go online to make savings on your gas, electricity and insurance bills and also help you with any paperwork for benefit applications.

The Money Matters Team is awaiting your call on 01827 712852. They will look at all aspects of money management including debt advice to help you manage your finances, cut costs and save money.

Volunteer Centre

North Warwickshire Volunteer Centre on Long Street, Atherstone has a range of opportunities for volunteering from gardening and driving to befriending and online mentoring. Volunteers are always needed at the Hubs and there is an online course running at the Centre every Friday 10am-12 noon if you need to sharpen up your IT skills.


Volunteer vacancies

For more information contact Steph Wagstaff on 01827 719271 or email walking@northwarks.gov.uk. See also www.northwarks.gov.uk and search for ‘walking groups’ or ‘like’ on Facebook www.facebook.com/northwalks

Smart-Write Tuition Services

We are a group of teachers specialising in English, Maths and Science up to GCSE level and English and Science at Advanced level. We are familiar with all the different exam boards and also do coaching for the 11+ exams. We cater for all age groups including primary and secondary.

Tutoring at Hartshill Community Centre
Thursdays 5.15-7.15pm & Fridays 4.30-6.30pm
Contact Susan on 02476 398793 or 07557 987742 or email smarttutoring@hotmail.co.uk

For more information contact Steph Wagstaff on 01827 719271 or email walking@northwarks.gov.uk. See also www.northwarks.gov.uk and search for ‘walking groups’ or ‘like’ on Facebook www.facebook.com/northwalks

Has your son/daughter considered an Apprenticeship with North Warwickshire & Hinckley College?

An Apprenticeship is a real job with training so students can earn a wage and gain a recognised qualification at the same time.

Apprenticeships are available in a variety of industries from Business & Administration and Creative Arts & Media to Health & Social Care and Sport, Fitness & Leisure.

They are available to join throughout the year!

To find out more:
024 7624 3000 • the.college@nwhc.ac.uk • www.nwhc.ac.uk

North Warks Walks!

What better way to get fit in the fresh air, blow away those winter cobwebs and make new friends? All you need is a decent and comfortable pair of shoes and then just turn up for one of these walking groups…

Atherstone
Thursdays 1.15pm at Atherstone Leisure Complex
Austrey
Fridays 10am at Austrey Baptist Church
Coleshill
Thursdays 10am at Old Market Hall, Visitors’ Centre
Dordon
Tuesdays 10am at St Leonard’s Church
Grendon
Fridays 1pm at Grendon Community Centre
Hartshill
Thursdays 1.30pm at Hartshill Community Centre
Kingsbury
Wednesdays 11am at Kingsbury Methodist Church
Mancetter
Tuesdays 10am at St Peter’s Church
Middleton
Wednesdays 1pm at Middleton Hall, RSPB car park
Old Arley
Thursdays 1pm at The Methodist Church
Ridge Lane & Birchley Heath
Mondays 1pm at The Green, Ridge Lane

Visit the website at www.nwcc.ac.uk and click on ‘money matters’. There are also useful factsheets on life events such as ‘having a baby’, ‘losing your job’, ‘redundancy’ and ‘serious illness/disability.’

Fill in the online Financial Wellbeing Assessment.

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Have you fed your green bin today?

- Recycling food waste saves Warwickshire tax payers money - if everyone in Warwickshire used their green wheeled bin for food waste, it would save nearly £2.5 million every year.
- It gets recycled into good quality soil improver and is used on local farmers fields.
- It is good for the environment - Food waste in landfill creates methane gas, thought to be a major contributor to climate change.

All food and garden waste can go in your green wheeled bin including:
- Fruit & vegetables
- Bread & pastries
- Dairy
- Fish
- Meat & bones
- Plates & serveware
- Paper & card
- Garden waste
- Cardboard
- Electricals
- Glass

Food waste can be wrapped in newspaper or contained in compostable caddy liners displaying the ‘compostable’ logo.

Caddy liners can be purchased from most supermarkets or on-line by visiting www.alfa.co.uk

Further information on food waste can be found at www.warwickshire.gov.uk/foodwaste

Trade waste collection - VAT free!

The Borough Council operates a trade refuse collection service using containers ranging from 140 litres to 1100 litres. If you remember the old style dustbins, they had a capacity of 80 litres. The charges vary according to the size of container. You’ll need to pay yearly in advance and you can pay by Direct Debit. Ring the Borough Council on 01827 715341 or email: customerservices@northwarks.gov.uk

Alternatively, you can take your refuse to the Household Waste Recycling Centre on Lower House Lane just off the A5. You can:
- Obtain a recycling permit for your recyclable waste such as cardboard, paper, soft plastics etc at a cost of just £20 for six months, visiting as often as you like.
- Purchase commercial waste bags for your non-recyclable waste at just £60 for 20 bags
- Use the ‘pay-as-you-throw’ scheme for materials such as wood, plasterboard, soil/rubble, wood/ fibre, green garden waste or non-recyclable waste. Charges start at just £10 for a car load of green garden waste.

For more information, go to www.warwickshire.gov.uk/commercialwaste To buy bags or to use the pay-as-you-throw service, please visit the recycling centre.

North Warwickshire wins gold!

It might not be a gold medal but it’s every bit as valuable for the Council’s Dog Warden team. This year, the service won the RSPCA gold award for its stray dog service, and what’s more, North Warwickshire is the only council in the County to ‘go for gold.’

The awards were introduced in 2010 to celebrate good practice and reward innovation in animal welfare. The criteria for the Stray Dogs Footprint is to have clear policies on the welfare of stray dogs during collection and kennelling; be positive in educating owners about canine care and have preventative measures to reduce straying.

In the last year, the Dog Warden service dealt with over 100 stray dogs, many of which were taken to Ninestones Kennels in Cuckworth. The majority were reunited with their owners or rehomed and only eight were put to sleep because of illness or injury.

Andrew Kirby, Dog Warden, is pictured with one of the recent strays at Ninestones Kennels. The very affectionate brindle lurcher was taken to Birmingham Dogs’ Home to be rehomed and at the time of writing, was still waiting for his ‘forever home.’ If you think you can give a dog a home, contact the Dogs’ Home on 0121 643 5211 and go to www.birminghamdogshome.org.uk

To report stray dogs, ring the Borough Council on 01827 715341 or report them online at www.northwarks.gov.uk

National recognition for Borough Care service

The Borough Care alarm service has been supporting over 3,000 older and vulnerable people in North Warwickshire for more than 22 years. Now, it has received national recognition for its work from the National Telecare Association – no mean feat for a small Borough Council! Apparently, fewer than half of the alarm-monitoring services in the UK and Ireland have gained this prestigious national industry standard.

Over two intense days, all aspects of the service were subjected to rigorous scrutiny - from working practices and admin procedures to dealing with callers promptly and effectively. The auditor watched staff working, looked at alarm records from the last 12 months and listened to recordings of calls to see how customers were dealt with.

Gary Thomas McGenity, Manager of the service said:

“Even though we are now accredited it doesn’t mean we can rest on our laurels because, in order to retain accreditation, we will be subjected to a mini audit every year and a full audit every three years. Although it involves a fair amount of work it is all very worthwhile. People can be reassured that Borough Care is providing a top quality service to loved ones, friends and neighbours to help them live safely and securely in their own homes.”

Pride of North Warwickshire celebrating local heroes

Opponents of the High Speed Rail Scheme (HS2), a retired GP who is an active Church Warden and community volunteer and the very first Mayor of North Warwickshire were amongst the 37 recipients of the 2014 North Warwickshire Community Awards.

The Awards are held every four years, when Borough Councillors are invited to nominate residents in their wards, who have been especially active in their local communities. Councillors nominated John Warren of Water Orton, Jean Thomas of Piccadilly and Ian Waddeil of Middleton for their campaign work against HS2 and Dr Paul Beavon of Hurley for his voluntary work in support of his community. Brian Tunnicliffe, formerly of Polesworth, received an award to mark his election as the very first Mayor of the newly created North Warwickshire in 1974.

The current Mayor of North Warwickshire, Councillor Ray Sweetit presided over the ceremony and presented the awards. In his welcoming speech he said: “I would like to thank all the volunteers very much for all the work they have done for the people of North Warwickshire, the joy and happiness which you have given to people, who would not be able to go shopping, get to a doctor’s appointment or attend leisure activities. So, we at North Warwickshire applaud you for the sterling work you do.”

For Warwickshire County Council
The fight against HS2 continues!

The Borough Council took its fight against the HS2 project to Parliament in October, when it appeared before the HS2 Select Committee with Warwickshire County Council. Just prior to the hearings, HS2 Ltd agreed to provide for a new primary school in Water Orton. This decision acknowledged the campaign by the Councils and local action groups that the effect on the school would be unacceptable.

The Council has also achieved greater environmental mitigation around the Kingsbury Railhead. This includes an assurance that it will return to the Green Belt when no longer needed. There will also be a dedicated team from HS2 to deal with issues during the construction of the project. Measures to control construction traffic and the overall impact on the Borough’s roads have also been proposed.

The Borough and County also asked MPs to compensate them for the true costs of involvement in the scheme, including the loss of business rates due to the impacts of the railway. Greater environmental and traffic controls were also put to the Select Committee.

Councillor Mick Stanley, Leader of the Council, said: “We are and always have been firmly opposed to HS2 and continue to voice our concerns about the detrimental effects on North Warwickshire. We believe the best thing for Water Orton school would be for it to remain on its current site – the line should be moved or not happen at all. However, we have a duty to get the best deal we can for our residents if the scheme goes ahead and Parliament has voted for this to happen. It’s not ideal but is a better option than the line going through the playing field and close to the school. We continue to work hard to get the best solutions for the residents of the Borough.”

Planning for North Warwickshire’s future

The Borough Council is celebrating the adoption of the Core Strategy, which forms part of the Local Plan for the Borough. It sets out how much housing and employment land must be provided over the next 15 years and is the result of nearly 18 months’ discussion with the Government’s Planning Inspector.

North Warwickshire is the only council in Coventry and Warwickshire to have an adopted up-to-date Strategy under the new regulations. In fact, the Inspector praised the Council for its work in preparing the Strategy, which gives more control over where new development takes place. The Plan can be challenged in the Law Courts in the six weeks after adoption but the Council can use it straight away to help direct development to the best areas. The Borough Council will continue to work on the Site Allocations Plan, which will be submitted to Government in 2015. The Core Strategy can be viewed at www.northwarwicks.gov.uk

For more information, contact the Forward Planning Team on 01827 719499/451.

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Monday 23rd Weymouth, Prince Regent Hotel
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March 5 days
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Monday 23rd Grand Ducly of Luxembourg
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A date for your diary

7th May 2015

2015 is the big election year. On 7th May, not only will you vote for your Member of Parliament (MP) in the General Election but also for your Borough Councillors for the next four years. Remember though, that you do have to be on the register of electors to be able to put your X in the box. The registration system changed this year and everyone in the household must now register individually to be eligible to vote. If you are new to the area or think you may have missed out, contact the Democratic Services Team on 01827 719221 or go to www.gov.uk/register-to-vote

The deadline for postal vote applications for the May 2015 elections is 5pm on Tuesday 21st April 2015.

Note: at the time of going to print, the new round of Area Forum dates and venues for 2015 had not been confirmed. Check out the website at www.northwarks.gov.uk/areaforum
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Saturday Dec 6th 9.30-4.30
Sunday Dec 7th 10.00-3.30

Thursday Dec 11th 4.00-7.00
Saturday Dec 13th 9.30-4.30
Sunday Dec 14th 10.00-3.30

Thursday Dec 18th 1.00-7.00
Friday Dec 19th 1.00-3.00
Saturday Dec 20th 9.30-4.30
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