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# Hello From The Editor

Hello and welcome to the December edition of the Western Park Gazette.

The season of goodwill, gifts and gluttony has finally arrived! Here at the Gazette we'll just be doing the gluttony and excess bit! It has to be done!

In this issue, we meet Kitty Lowe who is celebrating 40 years, as a nurse, at Glenfield Hospital. In fact she was there on day one when it first opened.

We ask the question: Who pinched all the plumbs? Storm Darragh raged across the city and a huge tree got blown down on Fosse Road, missing motorists by seconds. Leicester mostly escapes severe weather and we were luckier than a lot of the country again.

In our regular features, Carey Tunstall, has some ideas for last minute present for the gardener in your life, there's the latest policing update as well as our traditionally huge Bigly Crossword on the inside back page. You'll find the answers on our website.

We'd like thank everyone who has supported the Gazette over the last year and wish all a Happy Christmas and a safe and prosperous 2025.

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Published by Rapsallion Media  
62 Ainsdale Rd  
Leicester LE3 0UA

Printed by Flexpress Ltd  
6 Coal Cart Road, Interchange,  
Birstall, Leicester, LE4 3YB



# Events Diary

@ Robert Hall: Free Thurs Club 2pm. Meet & Eat Weds 5pm. 147 Narborough Road.

Hall @ St Anne's, Letchworth Rd: Knit & Natter: 1.30pm, 4th Tues. Weds Club: 2.30pm, 1st Weds.

Musical Memory Box: 1st & 3rd Tues 2pm Pram Club: Weds 9.15-11.30am. Women's Taekwondo: Thurs 8-9pm taekwondo4all.com Fri Coffee: 10am

Free Tea/Coffee @ St Paul's Worship Ctr / Community Hub, Kirby Rd Weds, 2- 4pm. T-Top sale. 2nd Sat.

Coffee & Chat Monthly Last Tues 10-2. Till Feb 25.

@ Y Theatre: Santa's Xmas Cracker: 21 Dec.

Soar Sound's Xmas Show: 21 Dec, Clock Tower. 11am -3pm. Live music & entertainment.

Candlelight Tribute To Oasis: 27 Dec & 13 Feb. Guildhall. Various times.

@ De Montfort Hall: Snow White: Til Jan 5th. Comedy Fest Gala Show: Jan 10. Jason Manford: 23 Jan.

@ Curve: My Fair Lady: Till 4 Jan. Pirates Love Underpants: Till 2 Jan, Kinky Boots: 17-25 Jan.

@ Little Theatre Sleeping Beauty: Until 5 Jan.

@ Lough Town Hall: Snow White: Until 5 Jan.

Enlightened Leicester (Outdoor light trail): Til 24 Dec. From 5pm. Info from [visitleicester.info](http://visitleicester.info)

Plumb Pudding Races: 26 Dec. Mallory Pk. 9.30am.

Xmas Market: Til 29 Dec. Gallowtree Gate.

Ice Skate Leicester + Wheel of Light & Funfair: Til 5 Jan. Jubilee Square & City Centre.

Open-The People's Exhibition: Til 31 Jan. Leic Museum & Art Gallery, New Walk. (Local artists showcase)

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New College Leicester, known for its dedication to fostering academic growth and community spirit, has welcomed James Aldred as its new Principal. Stepping into the role this academic year, Mr. Aldred brings a wealth of experience in education, with a strong vision to lead New College Leicester through an exciting period of transition.

As the second half term starts of the new academic year, Mr. Aldred reflects on a productive first half-term at the school. His arrival marks a new chapter for New College Leicester, with the school now formally aiming to become a transformational institution. His leadership style focuses on creating an inclusive and engaging environment that not only prioritises student achievements but also nurtures personal growth. "We're committed to ensuring each student feels supported, challenged, and celebrated in their journey," Mr. Aldred shared.

Last half term, Mr. Aldred held the first "Meet the Principal and Senior Leadership Team" event, providing an opportunity for the families of our students to connect directly with school leaders. Attendees praised the event for its welcoming atmosphere and open communication, setting the stage for a collaborative partnership between the school and its community. Mr. Aldred emphasized the importance of building strong relationships and listening to the insights and feedback of students and their parents, to guide the school's path forward.

To further engage students, New College Leicester has introduced several exciting new incentives. One of the standout initiatives is the "Student of the Week" program, which launched this term. Each week, one student from each year group is nominated by their Head of Year, based on a number of factors. The selected students then join Mr. Aldred for a special afternoon with tea, coffee, or hot chocolate, where they can enjoy a relaxed moment of recognition and conversation. "This is about celebrating our amazing students who come to school each day, work exceptionally hard and have positive attitudes to learning," Mr. Aldred explained. "Every student deserves to feel seen and appreciated for their efforts."

Under Mr. Aldred's leadership, the future looks bright for New College Leicester. He has already introduced a number of new projects and remains focused on driving further positive changes throughout the school. As New College Leicester continues its journey toward becoming a transformational school, students and staff alike are eager to embrace the exciting developments on the horizon.

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# 40 Years of Care

**After wheeling the very first patient through the doors of the new Glenfield Hospital, just over 40 years ago Senior Healthcare Assistant, and Western Park resident, Kitty Lowe is still proud to describe herself as a 'Glenfield girl'.**

And having worked at the hospital ever since that initial transfer of patients, she's played her part in Glenfield's development into the thriving, nationally renowned centre that exists today.

Kitty said: "I will always remember the date - 5 October 1984 - because the next day, I got married!"

"Patients came over one by one, and we brought beds, chairs and linen in to set up the new wards around them. But it was really well organised, and everyone rallied together.

"As soon as I came back from my honeymoon, I was helping the porters to move equipment so that we could open our Outpatients department."

With the hospital gradually evolving, a formal opening ceremony was not held until March 1986, with a visit from HRH Princess Michael of Kent.

"There was a big hoo-ha, all our uniforms were checked, and we stood in line to welcome her. But other than that, it was just another normal day, and we went back to caring for our patients."

To raise awareness of the new hospital, staff including Kitty, went out across the county, holding promo-

tional health screening events. Meanwhile, back at Glenfield, she was helping to set up a variety of new clinics and suggesting ways to improve services, while also completing NVQ and City and Guilds qualifications. Kitty was also the hospital's first healthcare assistant to take blood samples and carry out ECG tests.

Breast care would eventually become Kitty's passion, leading to her current role working with patients on Ward 34. She introduced the idea of a breast screening van, which she had seen used for TB during her childhood in Australia, and 'Bosom Friends', Glenfield's first peer support group for people with breast cancer.

During a 40-year 'rollercoaster' at Glenfield, Kitty built close relationships with countless colleagues at all levels. Saying the hospital has 'gone from strength to strength' since its early days. "What keeps me motivated is my hands-on work with the patients and giving them psychological support, but also my colleagues. We look after each other and that is as important as the patient care we provide."



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## BLINDED BY THE LIGHT?

Winter is here and it's the time of year when we are spending much more time driving in the dark. Which means the curse of headlight glare. I struggle with it and so do a great many of my clients. I thought I'd take a look at why this is getting worse and what we can do about it.

Well, for years cars had halogen headlights fitted which were okay but inefficient. We now have cars fitted with LEDs which emit very bright light, using little energy, but can be awful if you're driving towards them. The much newer adaptive headlights are far less glaring but will take some time to become widely available.



As our eyes age, they become more susceptible to this glare. Even a very mild cataract and changes in corneal transparency results in light scattering more within the eye. The problems can be twofold, mostly caused by a combination of the new LED lights and ageing changes in our eyes.

But what can you do to reduce the glare? Simple things like making sure your windscreen and headlights are clean and wiper blades are not excessively worn. Don't look directly at the headlights. Try to look at the white line at the side of the road. And make sure your glasses have the up-to-date prescription; are clean, unscratched and, preferably, have a Road Clear Coating. Absolutely not tinted driving glasses as they can make your vision darker at night.

Several labs have developed lens coatings which significantly reduce the discomfort from headlamps. They appear clear but they take out the intense glare by filtering out the strongest light. I wear these myself and they do make a big difference. Oncoming headlights still appear bright but not too bright, if that makes sense! My eyes don't feel strained and uncomfortable by the time I get home. I don't want to go too far into the science, but if you would like to know more, just call us 0116 253 1750

Alan at Bellamy Eye Care, Fosse Rd Nth

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## A FRUITLESS 2025?

It's far too late this year, but next autumn how about picking your own fruit and nuts for free at Leicester's community orchards, parks and open spaces across the city? If there's any left!

Mapping Edible Leicester aims to show people where the community orchards are and how easy it is to harvest the fruit and to cook and eat it.

Having a diet including fresh fruit and vegetables is important for good health and wellbeing but they can be expensive. The community orchards help families by providing fruit for free – all you have to do is pick it!

Edible Leicester are compiling a map of the city's orchards, which so far includes two within the Western Park area, but there are several more hidden away if you know where to look. Leicester tree wardens have been assessing tree health and vitality, type and position. This information is being used to tell us where we can find free fresh food and help guard the orchards for future generations.

Everybody is welcome to pick the fruit and nuts on public spaces, but please only take what's needed and leave some for others and the wildlife.

And here's the problem. Our Editor, out looking for plumbs at two local orchards, discovered that virtually all the fruit had been snaffled early. A witness said a "...group of people turned up and virtually cleared it in an afternoon. They left with bags full."

## AND DOWN CAME THE BOUGH

The Met Office issued a Red Warning and winds upwards of 90 mph hit the UK as Storm Darragh rampaged across the country causing loss of life, and £millions in damage and flooding.

Leicester was spared the brunt of the storm's fury, when compared to most of the country and it could have been a lot worse.

As the storm was at it's height, two motorists on Fosse Road North were incredibly lucky, missing death by 20 seconds as a huge tree, near Fosse recreation ground, was uprooted by the gale.

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# CAREY'S COMPOST CORNER



**Finding the perfect Christmas gift for the gardener in your life can be a rewarding experience.**

Whether they're a green-fingered novice or a seasoned horticulturist, the right present can make their gardening journey even more enjoyable. I have trawled the internet searching for some of the best presents, in my view, for all levels of gardeners.

**1. Gardening Tool Sets:** A high-quality gardening tool set is always appreciated. Look for sets with stainless steel tools, ergonomic handles, and essential items like a trowel, pruners, and a weeding fork. Many brands offer beautifully packaged options, perfect for gifting.



**2. Plant Subscription Boxes:** For year-round joy, consider a plant subscription box. Services like Bloombox Club or Lazy Flora deliver seasonal plants, care guides, and pots directly to your door, making it an ideal gift for both inside and outdoor gardening enthusiasts.

**3. Heated Propagators:** A heated propagator is a great idea for gardeners looking to start seedlings during the colder months. I particularly like the win-

dowsill version. These gadgets help maintain an ideal temperature for germination, giving plants a head start before spring.

**4. Personalised Garden Accessories:** How about shouting out your love of gardening! Personalised gifts, like engraved garden signs, bespoke kneelers, or customised seed tins, add a unique touch. Several websites offer a range of customisable options that make practical items feel extra special.

**5. Bird Feeders and Wildlife Kits:**

Biodiversity is important, no matter the size of your garden. Encourage it with bird feeders, bug hotels, or hedgehog houses. The RSPB or National Trust offer quality, eco-friendly options that help support UK wildlife.



**6. Gardening Books:** A nicely illustrated gardening book can inspire and educate. Titles like RHS Gardening Through the Year or Wildlife Gardening for Everyone and Everything can last a lifetime.

**7. Festive Planters and Decorations:** Seasonal planters filled with winter blooms like cyclamen or hellebores make a lovely addition to any garden. Combine them with solar-powered fairy lights for a festive flair.

From practical tools to attractive accessories, these gifts are sure to bring joy to any gardener this festive season. Happy gifting!

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[sales@westernparkgazette.co.uk](mailto:sales@westernparkgazette.co.uk)**Dec Police Update**

It may well be the season of goodwill to all, but not everybody sees it that way. Unfortunately, there has been an increase in burglaries across West Leicester, and not just at night, as opportunists target homes to see which properties are the easiest to get into.

Here are some common-sense tips to keep your home safer and to make it harder for burglars to ruin Christmas.

As well as making your home look occupied, there are some easy steps you can take to prevent opportunistic burglars. Keep doors and windows locked and take the key out to prevent easy access to your home or gates. Move/remove items which can provide easier access to windows, such as bins, garden furniture and ladders in particular. Burglars are known to use these to access upper windows to avoid intruder alarm sensors on the lower floors of homes. Keep your ladder out of sight, padlocked if possible, and ensure sheds, garages and outbuildings are secured.

Online shoppers lost £11.5 million to scammers last year. If you're buying online, even from well known sites remember to research the seller and make sure they're legitimate, use a credit card or secure payment platform, and only give the absolute minimum of details to complete your transaction.

Unwanted doorstep vendors or rogue traders are a problem. These are any random 'company' or individual who offers services on the doorstep, often with little or no means of identification, and go on to fleece or rip off large amounts of money from their victims.

In some cases, they can grossly overcharge and harass elderly, vulnerable or isolated victims for payment for extra work.

If you experience any suspicious traders who call at your door offering to carry out work or have been a victim of a doorstep rogue trader, please telephone 101 and report them, they're out there preying on their next victims.

On 26<sup>th</sup> November the Fosse neighbourhood team & the tactical support team conducted a warrant on Henton Road, where a cannabis grow was located and the electricity was yet again bypassed. With the support from the selective licensing team at the council, a prohibition order has been put in place at this address. This means until the property has been rectified, nobody can live here.

Western officers have conducted other operations making a number of arrests, seizing Class A & B drugs and cash while safeguarding vulnerable adults who's properties were being used to sell drugs.

Have a merry Christmas and stay safe!

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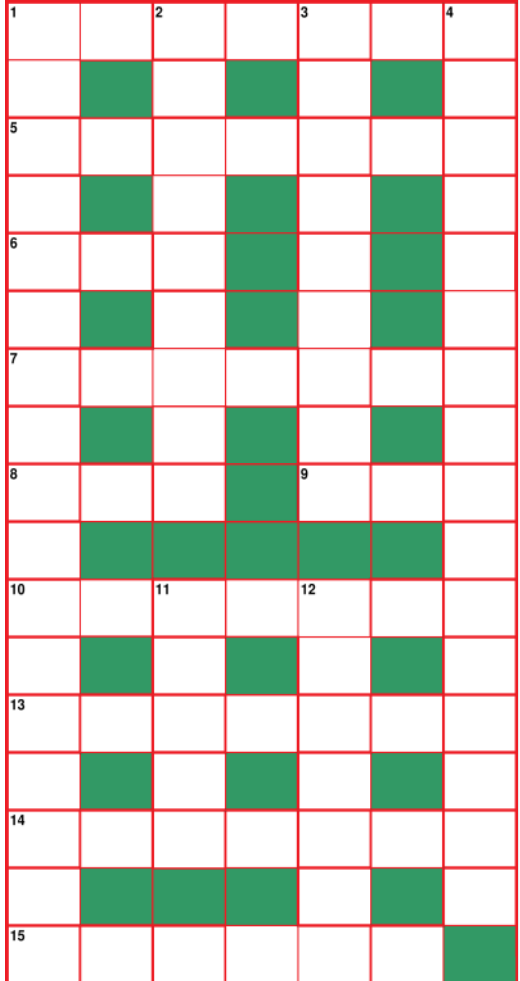
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# BIGLY XWORD



**1 Across:** Witch sniggers **1 Down:** Monetise **2D:** Two into one **3D:** An amoral person **4D:** Uncomplicated **5A:** Hotel room essential **6A:** Water snake **7A:** Online scammer **8A:** Donkey **9A:** Santa's helper **10A:** Tooth **11D:** Long legged & necked bird **12D:** Blocks the passage of liquids **13A:** Deep South state **14A:** Santa's flyover territory. **15:** Every time after dusk.

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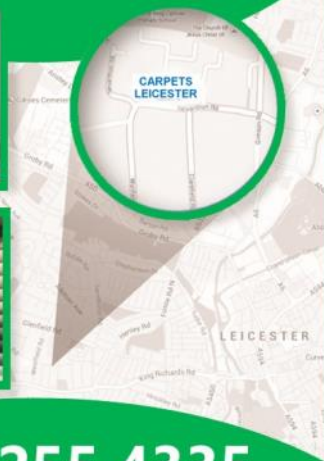
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