



Evington Echo

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

TRUSTED LOCAL MEDIA



Why it matters for social cohesion - and local life

The Government's *Protecting What Matters* puts community media in the spotlight. What it could mean for stronger local connections - and how to join a wider conversation.

Go to
page
4

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Aug./Sept.	10th July	30th July
Oct./Nov.	11th Sept.	1st Oct.

Editorial

This edition of the Evington Echo besides bringing you just one key article, which is highlighted on the front cover and page 4, also addresses readers, particularly those without internet access, who will have become aware of how many areas of local life are changing.

I wish to draw readers attention to these other 'change' articles on page 13 (Better Together) and page 10 (Building on the Stoughton Estate) and page 13 (GP Services in Evington Village). Then please note another key article on page 9, from Rango's owner who tirelessly works to remove litter. There are also interesting profile articles on page 5 (Cynthia Brown) page 6 (PC Jay Darbar), page 11 (Jagdev Kaur Gill) and page 12 (Shumaila Jaffery). Obituaries to Ian Hankey and David Pyke are on pages 7 and 12. Finally, as usual, page 14 and 15 are reserved for a list of groups, clubs and societies you might like to join.

For those of you that find the size of print hard to read, please go to the website evingtonecho.co.uk where you can enlarge the pdf document. Also the website at evingtonecho.co.uk gives much more detailed information about changes in the area. Many articles are written by John McFadyen from R.O.S.E. 'Retain Our

Services Evington'. Here is the list starting from January 2026.

**The Stoughton Grange Estate near Evington*

**Building on the Stoughton Estate Part 1*

**Building on the Stoughton Estate Part 2*

**Leicester Symphony Orchestra Concert*

**The Gloves are Off (Harborough District planning applications)*

**Obituary for Cllr. Manjula Sood*

**Local Government Reorganisation*

**Building on the Stoughton Estate Part 3*

**Planning Applications Model Planning Objective*

**Building on the Stoughton Estate Part IV why do we keep building homes?*

**Better Together – UK*

**Understanding the 2022 Violence in Leicester*

**Better Together – The Question of Civic Media*

**Better Together – Understanding the 2022 Violence in Leicester*

**Royal Mail Disruption in Evington*

**What now for the Evington Knit and Natter Group*

**Bennetts Hardware, Evington, to feature in Exhibition*

**Neighbourhood Link newsletter (Feb. March)*

**Women working in community media – a discussion for International Women's Day*

**Bennett's II and Other Main Street matters*

**Friends of the Earth and cutting pesticides nationally and locally*

**GP Services in Evington Village (The undemocratic ending of an era)*

**The Deck Chairs are Moving Yet Again (NHS restructuring)*

**Seed swap – Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire*

Friends of Evington held an AGM on 17th March to accept the minutes from the last AGM and review the accounts. The meeting learned about the governance structure of the charity and the activities that took place - the public benefit of the Evington Echo, with its six magazines in 2025, and website, and the groups that aim to reduce isolation and improve wellbeing (community work) and the groups that aim to increase participation by strengthening pride of place (community and environmental work).

The trustees of Friends of Evington wish those celebrating - 'Eid Mubarak'

Helen Pettman



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*Uppingham Close, part of Uppingham Road (39 copies)

*Byway Road (61 copies)

If you can help, please contact Chris Hossack on 2415153.

The Evington Echo apologises for an error in the February/March edition with an incorrect telephone number for Chris Hossack.

VOICES OF OUR MOTHER TONGUES: A LEICESTER EVENT FOR UNESCO WORLD MOTHER LANGUAGE DAY

On 22 February 2026, there was a gathering of people representing Friends of Evington, Soar Sound Radio and the Documentary Media Centre. They met at a venue in Bishop Street, Leicester, to mark this day and share their stories. Seven interviews were recorded that are published on the Evington Echo website, exploring what mother tongue means in everyday life, and why language still matters in a city as connected and diverse as Leicester.

The day's strongest historical grounding came from Mokhtar Hussein, originally from Bangladesh, who moved to Leicester in 1972, soon after independence.

He explained that 21 February (Ekushey February) is, for Bangladeshis, not simply a celebration but a day of remembrance for the language martyrs killed in 1952 when students in Dhaka protested for Bengali to be recognised.

Mokhtar described the midnight visits people make to the Shaheed Minar (Martyrs' Monument) and noted that memorials now exist worldwide. He expressed disappointment that Leicester—home to a significant Bangladeshi community—does not yet have its own monument, and he hoped that could change.

Those themes—language as memory, identity and power—ran through the other interviews.

Shumaila Jaffrey, a multilingual former BBC World Service journalist from

Lahore, spoke movingly about how 'prestige' languages can overshadow others. Although ethnically Punjabi, she grew up mainly in Urdu, while Punjabi was often treated as a working-class language—something she called 'tragic.'

She also connected language to today's challenges in Leicester: her PhD research looks at the 2022 unrest, the role of disinformation, and whether any local news sources are trusted across communities—or whether 'echo chambers' allow outside narratives to deepen division.

Several interviews explored language in families and across generations. Ariana Ali, who speaks English but hopes to learn Arabic, described the frustration of not being able to speak easily with her grandmother, and how heritage languages can become 'private' languages for parents in emotional moments.

Denise Ismael, from Toulouse, shared the story of Occitan, once pushed aside but now visibly revived through bilingual signs and schooling—proof that lost languages can return with pride and support.

The event also celebrated the sheer fascination of languages:

Stephen reflected on roots in Wales and the regret of not growing up bilingual, while describing learning from colleagues in Leicester and the emotional force of scripts and words. Farish, from Istanbul, traced Turkish through empire, nation-building and language reform, reminding us that language is 'like a river'—always moving—and always carrying culture.

Across seven voices, one message was clear: mother languages are not just words. They are history, family, faith, friendship—and a way of belonging.



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EVINGTON SCRABBLE GROUP AND EVINGTON SOCIAL GROUP

Scrabble Group

Evington Scrabble Group was set up as a way for the residents, including the elderly, to get out and do something. Originally, the Scrabble Group convened in Evington House, however, when it closed down they moved to the Cedars.

The Club is much enjoyed by the elderly of the community, described by members as being 'good to be with people' and hoping it improves memory, citing it is 'good to work your brain'. Members play mostly individual games, some with a competitive element.

Evington Scrabble Group meets once a week on Thursdays from 11.00am until 1.00pm.

Social Group

Like the Evington Scrabble Group the Social Group also convened in Evington House before relocating to The Cedars. The group is provided with refreshments and a community space for people to socialise and enjoy themselves. This group runs on Wednesdays from 11.00am until 1.00pm.

Ariana Ali

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LOCAL MEDIA, STRONGER COMMUNITIES



New Government focus on "Protecting What Matters" highlights the value of trusted community news — and Evington can be part of the conversation. The UK Government has recently set out a new policy direction, Protecting What Matters, with a renewed focus on **social cohesion** — how we stay connected, informed, and able to talk through the issues that affect our lives.

One message we welcome is this: trusted local and community media **matters**. In a world where misinformation spreads fast and people can feel increasingly divided, locally rooted media can help by sharing reliable information, reflecting real community experience, and creating space for respectful discussion.

Working with **Better Media**, I've written to **Steve Reed MP** (Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government) and **Ian Murray MP** (Minister for Creative Industries, Media and Arts) to support this recognition — and to encourage practical thinking about what happens next.

Now the big question

If local, civic and independent media is going to play a real role in strengthening social cohesion, **how do we organise ourselves to do it well** — and make sure local voices are heard?

Over the coming months, **Decentered Media** will be hosting **podcast conversations** and **online workshop sessions** to bring together people working in community media — including practitioners, volunteers, researchers and advocates.

Want to take part?

If you'd like to join a podcast chat or an online discussion session, we'd love to hear from you.

Dr Rob Watson Decentered Media
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CYNTHIA BROWN: GIVING LEICESTER'S PAST A VOICE



In 2014, when we, at the Evington Echo, were marking the centenary of 1914 and the start of the First World War, we were fortunate to work with local historian Cynthia Brown. Her contribution was typical of what so many groups across Leicester have come to value: careful research, clarity of explanation, and a real commitment to making history accessible—without ever sacrificing accuracy.

Cynthia is widely respected as a Leicester-based local historian, author and educator, with particular strengths in social history and oral history. Again and again, her work demonstrates how the 'big' themes of the past—migration, work, family life, childhood, celebration, and hardship—are best understood through local evidence and lived experience. Whether she is interpreting archives, photographs, or recorded memories, her approach is consistently thorough and humane.

A major strand of Cynthia's work has been adult education. Over more than twenty

years teaching for the Workers' Educational Association (WEA), she helped learners engage with history not as distant facts, but as something rooted in place, community and family memory.

Alongside teaching, Cynthia has played a significant role in local historical publishing. She has been reviews editor for the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society publication 'Leicestershire Historian', and her work reflects a strong belief that local history should be both well-researched and widely shared. Readers will also know her as a writer and editor of local history publications, including 'Leicester Voices' (2002)—a work bringing together oral testimony, photographs and archival material to capture Leicester lives and neighbourhoods—and as editor of 'The Story of the Saff'.

Cynthia's research interests are broad, but a consistent thread is everyday experience: she has explored topics such as 20th-century childhood, Victorian and Edwardian traditions (including seasonal customs), and the ways communities remember and interpret their own histories.

She is also an engaging public speaker. Many will have heard her at Evington's History and Heritage group, where she has delivered illustrated talks—most recently, for a February meeting, on Edwardian Leicester. She also contributes talks for groups such as the Leicester Victorian Society, where themes like what Christmas was like in Edwardian Leicester bring the period vividly to life, and she has delivered events in partnership with Leicester Museums.

One example of Cynthia's ability to connect local incident with larger themes is her work on the Thurnby bell-ringing dispute of 1862–63, described

memorably as 'a small civil war': a story that illuminates what can happen when poverty, penalties, and authority collide, and how public opinion can shape outcomes in ways still recognisable today. The article is available at [LH59-2023-51-55-Brown.pdf](#).

Cynthia's impact extends beyond Leicester through her leadership in oral history. She is a Trustee of the Oral History Society, is one of its Accredited Trainers, and acts as a Regional Adviser (covering Leicestershire and Rutland / East Midlands).

She began her oral history career in the 1990s within a community history unit at Leicester City Council, and in 2001 helped establish the HLF-funded East Midlands Oral History Archive (EMOHA) at the University of Leicester, serving as Project Manager for three years. Her publications in the field include work on using oral history for family history research (with Mary Stewart, published in 'Archives and Records', April 2017) and reflections on oral history and migrant communities in Britain (published in 'Oral History', Volume 34, No. 1).

Now semi-retired, Cynthia continues to research and write, and remains deeply involved in supporting oral history practice and local historical understanding. For those of us who have worked with her, her legacy is not only in what she has written and edited, but in the standard she sets: that local history deserves the same seriousness as any other history—and that community stories are worth preserving with care.

With thanks to Cynthia for checking the details and suggesting any corrections to this article before publication.

Helen Pettman

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Hello, my name is Police Constable Jay Darbar, and I am one of your Dedicated Neighbourhood Officers for the Evington and North Evington wards.

I joined Leicestershire Police in 2017 and have spent my entire policing career serving East Leicester. I began my journey as a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO) at Spinney Hill Police Station, a role that gave me a strong foundation in community engagement and problem solving.

As a PCSO, I worked closely with residents, community groups, and local businesses to address issues such as anti-social behaviour, neighbourhood disputes, and safeguarding concerns. Being visible and accessible allowed me to build trust, support vulnerable individuals, and help deliver long-term solutions that made a real difference to people's day to day lives.

In 2020, I became a Police Officer and moved into Response Policing at Keyham Lane Police Station. This gave me valuable frontline experience, attending incidents of all kinds and supporting victims during challenging, often fast-moving situations. This period strengthened my decision-making, resilience, and understanding of the wider demands placed on policing.

In 2023, I returned to my passion: Neighbourhood Policing. I took up my current role as a Beat Officer for Evington and North Evington, once again based at Spinney Hill. Returning to these wards has



From left to right: PCSO Cook, PCSO Goodey, PC Wicks, PC Makda, Sgt. Hall PC Taylor, PC Darbar, PCSO Meerun, PCSO Oleh.

allowed me to reconnect with familiar faces, catch up with residents I supported previously, and deepen my understanding of the issues that matter most to our community.

I am proud to be part of a team committed to visible, approachable, and responsive policing. My focus is on working alongside residents, partners, and local organisations to improve safety, reduce crime, and promote wellbeing across our wards. Whether it's through beat surgeries, ward meetings, school visits, or community events, I look forward to meeting more of you and continuing to strengthen the relationship between the police and the community.

If you see me out on patrol, please do stop and say hello. I'm always happy to talk.

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11:00am - 12:00pm, Mon 20 April 2026, Eden Café, Main Street, Evington, Leicester

6:00pm - 7:00pm, Thu 23 April 2026, Spinney Hill Police Station, East Park Road, Leicester

7:00pm - 8:00pm Tue 05 May 2026, Tesco, Downing Drive, Leicester

7:00pm - 8:00pm, Sat 16 May 2026, Spinney Hill Police Station, East Park Road, Leicester

12:00pm - 1:00pm, Tue 26 May 2026, Natwest Bank, East Park Road, Leicester

7:00pm - 8:00pm, Fri 29 May 2026, Tesco, Ethel Road, Leicester

11:00am - 12:00pm, Mon 08 June 2026, Evington Library, Evington Lane, Leicester

7:00pm - 8:00pm, Wed 10 June 2026, Spinney Hill Police Station, East Park Road, Leicester

10:30am - 11:30am, Mon 22 June 2026, Natwest Bank, East Park Road, Leicester

6:00pm - 7:00pm, Thu 25 June 2026, Falcon Cash & Carry, Rowllatts Hill Road, Leicester

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LETTERS BEETLE DRIVE

Great fun was had on the afternoon of Saturday 7th March at the Village Hall when families and friends played 12 rounds of the traditional pencil and paper game of Beetle.

After getting everyone settled at their tables in groups of four with their cards and pencils, we began playing. The beetle's body is drawn by players as they roll the correct number on the dice. Rolling a six and then a five gets you started with a body and a head and then a tail, legs, feelers and eyes follow with the other numbers.

The dice is passed from player to player with everyone drawing their own beetle until one person completes the picture and shouts out 'Beetle'! At half time we stopped for refreshments and some time to chat.

At the end the total scores were added up for each player – the top scorers were awarded a bag of chocolate ladybirds and wooden spoons were given to the lowest scorers!

It was an enjoyable social event but also a way for the Evington Village Fete and Show Committee to raise funds towards the costs of staging the Fete on the village Green – this year on Saturday August 8th.

For more information about the event have a look at the website evingtonvillagefete.uk

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IAN HANKEY 4th December 1947 - 31st January 2026



It is with great sadness that I report the death of my dear brother, IAN ERIC HANKEY, who died peacefully at home in Cordery Road, Evington on 31st January 2026. He had lived there since 1950.

After attending Linden Primary School and Spencefield Secondary Modern School he went to work for Spencers, Estate Agents in Halford Street, Leicester.

Eventually he followed in his father's footsteps and worked at Leicester City Council, Housing Dept. as a Rent Collector. He worked there for 33 years up until his retirement.

Ian was an avid supporter of local sports teams, namely, his beloved Leicester City, Leicester Riders and Leicester Speedway. He was also an active member of Camra, the campaign for real ale and would frequent many beer festivals across the Midlands.

He also found the time to keep his gardens immaculate again leaving things very much to how his father had laid the borders out.

Ian was a volunteer on the Burnaby Gardens project in Evington Park for a number of years before LEV (Leicester Environmental Volunteers) was formed.

He was then a valued member of the LEV volunteering community. His dedication to Evington Park left a lasting mark and he will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege to volunteer alongside him.

Ian never married and leaves a brother, David, sister-in-laws, niece and nephews and grand nieces and nephews.

His cremation took place at Great Glen Crematorium on 19th February.

David Hankey

RAMADAN KIDS CORNER

Masjid Muadh Ibn Jabal has hosted the Ramadan Kids' Corner annually for the last five years.

During Ramadan, over the course of four Saturdays, Goodwood Islamic Academy provides a space for children between the ages 6 – 14 to learn about a particular prophet and complete activities based on his life.

This Ramadan, the children are learning the story of the Prophet Musa, otherwise known as Moses. Along with the story, the children learn valuable lessons from his life, such as faith, trust and courage, and how this can apply to them.

The children are separated into their age groups and complete a main activity, which differs from week to week, such as arts and crafts or making fruit cups, in addition to wordsearches, quizzes and questions, which they can get on with while socialising with their peers and under supervision of volunteers.

Ariana Ali

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ART HOUSE LEICESTER 2026



Art House Leicester began in 2008 when a small group of local artists decided to exhibit and sell work by opening their homes to the public. In 2026, 13 houses will take part. The mix of strong local talent and the unique setting of private homes continues to attract visitors from across the UK.

Art House's tagline is "extraordinary art in ordinary houses" — but the homes are anything but ordinary. Each property has its own character and architectural style, often with gardens that are a pleasure to explore. The weekend depends on the generosity and commitment of local residents.

Visitors enjoy seeing how original art can enrich a home, and many value the chance to meet artists and learn about their wide range of work including paintings, prints, glass, textiles, ceramics, and jewellery,

Art House is open Friday 12 June, 6:00–8:30pm, and Saturday and Sunday 13–14 June, 11:00am–6:00pm. The trail spans both sides of London Road (A6); allow at least half a day, with a free hopper bus running Saturday and Sunday. Refreshments, music, and charity fundraising feature at stops including Tart House (Holmfield Road), Binary Bytes (Toller Road), and Gelato Village (Springfield Road). More details: art-house.org.uk and @ArtHouseLeics on X/Instagram/Facebook.

CUTTING PESTICIDES: A NATIONAL PUSH AND LOCAL ACTION IN EVINGTON



Friends of the Earth is campaigning nationally to reduce pesticide use because of the damage pesticides can cause to wildlife, pollinators and wider biodiversity. A major focus is protecting bees and other essential insects, and challenging the repeated use of "emergency authorisations" for neonicotinoid pesticides ("neonics") that have been restricted due to environmental concerns.

Friends of the Earth is calling for a strong UK National Action Plan on pesticides, with clear targets to cut both the amount of pesticides used and their overall toxicity. Alongside this, the campaign promotes practical support for farmers to adopt nature-friendly approaches such as Integrated Pest Management (IPM), which prioritises prevention and non-chemical methods, using chemical pesticides only as a last resort. Friends of the Earth also pressures supermarkets and retailers to raise environmental standards in supply chains and reduce reliance on pesticides.

Locally, **Leicester Friends of the Earth**—with many volunteers based in **Evington**—is calling on Leicester City Council to stop using **glyphosate** in parks and public spaces. Glyphosate is a commonly used weedkiller; campaigners argue that reducing its use would help make green spaces safer for wildlife, pets and people.

To show that alternatives are possible, Leicester Friends of the Earth is inviting residents to take a **pesticide-free pledge** for their own gardens. Supporters can receive practical tips on gardening without chemicals, and the group plans to use pledge-signers' postcodes (not linked to names) to build a map of pesticide-free gardens across the county—evidence that our communities are ready for change.

The message is simple: if residents can grow healthy gardens without pesticides, our shared parks and public spaces can be managed that way too.

Leicester Friends of the Earth email address is leicesterfoe@gmail.com
Pledge to go Pesticide free:
<https://actionnetwork.org/forms/pledge-to-go-pesticide-free>



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Leicester Friends of the Earth

Bee Picnic

Monday 21st April 2025, 12 noon
 Castle Park, Leicester LE1 5WH



Bring a picnic and join us to celebrate the bees!

Family-friendly event. Please wear yellow and brown or black if you can.
 Leicester Friends of the Earth are asking the City Council to stop using pesticides in our parks and green spaces, to protect pollinators and people. We will create a time-lapse photo at the end of the picnic to show that we don't want these chemicals in our parks.
 Can you bring a picnic provided by the bees? Here are some bee-olished foods to get you started: honey, coltsfoot, mint, watermelon, oranges, strawberries, raspberries, apricots, mulberries, grapes, blackberries, cherry, loquats. The list is not limited.

WHAT 'LOVING WHERE YOU LIVE STARTS WITH YOU' MEANS TO ME

The phrase 'Loving where you live starts with you' is powerful because it challenges us to think about our role in the places we call home. Communities don't improve by accident; they improve when people choose to care.



My name is Simon, though many know me as Rango. I'm a father to four teenagers, caretaker to a multitude of animals, and I juggle a demanding job. In my spare time, you'll often find me out in my local area, lending a hand. I strongly believe the places we live shape how we feel, how we treat one another, and how proud we are of our communities. That belief led me into community work.

My journey began with a simple frustration. While walking my dog, Rango, through local green spaces, I noticed the amount of litter around me. At first, I picked up the odd piece and put it in a bin. That soon turned into carrying a bag for life, and before I realised it, I had become



humble start of it all.

A year on, I'm now a proud Saffron Lane Litter Womble, which is where I live. I've personally collected 3,843 ninety litre sacks of rubbish across the city, including areas around the village of Evington. While that's only a small part of the 44,654 bags collected by the South Leicestershire Litter Womble team in 2025, it shows what can be achieved when people work together. Along the way, I've met inspiring individuals, many of whom I now call friends and who share the same ethos and are making a difference locally and beyond.

As my involvement grew, I realised there are many ways to show love for where you live. Alongside litter picking, I began cleaning road signs and street plaques, clearing blocked drains to reduce flooding, removing graffiti, clearing leaf-covered paths, and gritting slippery walkways in winter. Rather than waiting for someone else to act, I took responsibility where I



a litter womble. I met others doing the same and received proper equipment from the council. That was the

could. What began as occasional efforts soon became a regular commitment because the impact was immediate and visible.

People often ask, "Isn't this why we pay council tax, why would you do it?" My answer is simple. Why wouldn't I? This is where I live. It's my home.

I do this work because I care about my community and believe positive change starts with individual action. You don't need a title, funding, or an organisation behind you. Anyone can make a difference. By taking responsibility for the small things, we collectively create cleaner, safer, and more welcoming places to live.

So, if you're waiting for permission or someone else to go first then don't. Start small. Pick up one piece of litter, clear one drain, sparkle up your street plaque, take pride in one street. Those small actions add up, and they matter. Loving where you live doesn't start with councils or campaigns, it starts with you.

If you want to make a difference too, join us. Get involved with the Litter Wombles, or start in your own street or local park. Every pair of hands matters. Together, we can create cleaner, safer, and more welcoming places we're proud to call home. Because really, who doesn't want to love where they live? I know I do.

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BUILDING ON THE STOUGHTON ESTATE (SUMMARY)



Across this five-article sequence published on the Evington Echo website (Author John McFadyen) sets out a local case study—land around Stoughton and adjacent sites—while also explaining how England’s planning system and housing pressures make “creeping development” feel hard to resist.

Building on the Stoughton Estate parts (1-3) describe how farmland around Stoughton - formerly Coop land, was sold to the Welcome Trust (with significant delivery expected by 2041) contributing to a cross boundary growth area.

The series also explains the ownership and management chain. (Welcome Trust, Urban and Civil Farmcare, Bidwells) and suggests the complexity supports a strategic land approach assembling, planning, and then selling development parcels over time.

Model Planning Objections provides a template objection aimed at edge-of-settlement greenfield proposals like Bushby. It focuses on plan-led conflict, countryside/landscape harm, settlement-boundary precedent, disproportionate scale, and ‘prematurity’ while a new Local Plan is still being prepared—framing refusal around policy-based reasons rather than general dislike of development.

Part 4 (‘Why do we keep building homes?’) steps back to the national drivers: household formation rising faster than population, economic damage from shortages (high rents, constrained labour mobility, higher welfare/temporary accommodation costs), and private-market ‘failure’ to supply genuinely affordable and social housing at scale. A central concept is Land Value Uplift—the

jump in land value when planning status changes—which creates strong incentives to promote greenfield allocations and shapes local controversy about who benefits and how infrastructure is funded (e.g via Section 106).

The conclusion is that England faces a structural housing backlog plus tight constraints; governments therefore keep pushing delivery targets, while local communities experience the costs most directly—creating an enduring national-versus-local conflict and distrust about infrastructure and affordability promises.

ARMCHAIR FAN

There should never be this hoo-hah about it. Gary Rowett should keep them up, no problem.

I can understand Gary Rowett’s appointment and why they’ve made it, even though he wasn’t my ‘A’ choice.

The 2–2 draw with Stoke on 21 February is a game Leicester should have won. Stoke’s second goal was offside, and Leicester hit both the crossbar and the post in the final minute. How did Luke Thomas miss that?

A lovely flighted ball in by Mukassa, and a header in by Okoli, gave City the lead on 24 February. However, Okoli’s lame clearance led to the equaliser in stoppage time at the end of the first half — a gift for Middlesbrough. He could have hoofed it upfield; anywhere but where he put it. Daka also missed another good chance, heading a lofted through ball wide. Leicester should have won both matches.

Harry Winks — capped 10 times by England — for me, it never made any sense leaving him out. Performances have picked up since he’s been back, and he scored with a good hit against Stoke. Mukassa has made a decent start, getting off the mark quickly with two goals and an assist.

Against Norwich on 28 February, Daka hit a good chance over and volleyed another wide. He then missed the ball completely — “a striker full of confidence would connect with it,” thought a pundit. Patson Daka “gets his pass all wrong” and “Nelson gives the ball away” were phrases mentioned more than once during the

match. Norwich won 2–0.

Why they started Patson Daka instead of Mukassa against Ipswich on 7 March, I don’t know. Mukassa is in better form.

Daka, 12 yards out, scored his fourth goal of the season with a left-footed volley on 40 minutes.

Does Daka think he’s Jairzinho or summat? You’d think he’d scored 20 goals with the way he slid down in celebration — then the little gesture to God like the Brazilians used to do in those old World Cup films.

The second-half introduction of Mukassa and James promised more. Ipswich equalised in the 76th minute and the match finished 1–1. Leicester still need wins.

A lot of people seem happy to take the point and are bothered about what West Brom are doing. Who cares? Just get the wins.

In the home match with Bristol City on 10 March, a good curling effort by Mavididi after five minutes was pushed away by the Bristol keeper.

It was a bright start by Leicester’s wingers, Fatawu and Mavididi — both look a threat. Defender Ben Nelson headed home a Jordan James free-kick to score his first goal of the season and give Leicester City the lead on 13 minutes.

Mavididi hit the post after 20 minutes, and then Fatawu volleyed in his ninth goal of the season after 29 minutes to put Leicester 2–0 up.

Stolarczyk saved Bristol’s Reece’s penalty.

Steve Billingham

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A LIFE OF SERVICE: THE STORY OF A DEVOTED COMMUNITY WOMAN



Born in 1941 in Lyallpur—then part of British India and now in Pakistan—**Jagdev Kaur Gill** entered the world during a time of profound change. Just six

years later, in 1947, the Partition and independence of India and Pakistan reshaped her childhood. Her family was forced to leave their home and migrate to Machiwarra, India. Like so many families of that generation, they carried with them resilience, faith, and hope for a safer future.

In 1966, newly married and full of hope, she came to England with her husband, Harbans Gill, to begin a new life together. It was a courageous step, leaving behind familiarity and extended family to build a future from the ground up. She arrived as a trained nurse, determined to continue serving others. However, her Indian qualifications were not recognised in the UK. Undeterred, she retrained at Leicester General Hospital, completing the Health Visitors course and qualifying as a Health Visitor.

During this demanding period, she also became a mother to two sons. Balancing study, work, and raising young children in a new country was no small task, yet she carried it with strength and quiet

determination.

As a Community Health Visitor, she served families across Leicester with compassion and professionalism. Through the 1970s and 1980s—at a time when racism and discrimination were an unfortunate reality for many—she continued her work with dignity. Despite facing prejudice reflective of those times, she remained committed to caring for all families equally, offering support, guidance, and reassurance to countless parents and children.

In 1992, while still working in her professional role, a significant new chapter began. Twenty-five Sikh families in Leicester came together with the vision of establishing their own Gurdwara. That vision became Guru Amar Das Gurdwara and Leicester Sikh Centre. From its very beginnings, she took on the responsibility of Chairperson, helping to lay its foundations and guide its development with dedication and care.

That same year, in recognition of their service to the community, she and her husband were invited to a Queen's Garden Party at Buckingham Palace—a proud and memorable moment acknowledging their contribution to community life.

In 1994, she retired from her professional career as a Community Health Visitor after many years of service. Retirement, however, did not mean stepping back from community involvement. For approximately five years, she also served as a Parent Governor at Green Lane Infant School, supporting children's education and school development. She made Evington her home for 38 years, becoming a respected and familiar presence in the local area.

Her commitment to Guru Amar Das Gurdwara continued for over three

decades. For 32 years, she served as Chairperson, dedicating countless hours behind the scenes to ensure the Gurdwara remained a welcoming place of worship, support, and community gathering. In 2025, due to old age and ill health, she stepped down from her role.

Her life reflects resilience, faith, and a deep sense of responsibility to others. From rebuilding her childhood after Partition, to raising a family while retraining in a new country, to supporting families professionally and strengthening her community through voluntary service, she has always chosen to give her time and energy to others. Those who know her understand that her contribution has never been about recognition, but simply about doing what needed to be done and helping wherever she could.

Jusneek Gill

TOM FORD FOR THE BIG 'UN

Leicester's Tom Ford is a 3-time ranking finalist, 2024 Snooker shoot-out winner and 2022 UK Championship semi-finalist, going down 3-6 to Ding Junhui.

In the 2024 World Championships he was eliminated by Judd Trump 13-7 in the second round.

Maybe this could be his year. He did, after all put reigning World Champion Zhao Xintong out of the German Masters 5-3 at the 32 stage at the end of January.

I think he has a chance of winning this tournament. I hope he gets in and good luck to him.

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**POPPING TO THE SHOPS
AN EXHIBITION AT NEW
WALK MUSEUM,
53 NEW WALK, LEICESTER LE1 7EA**



A selection of large boards features shops and owner in Evington village:

Stephen Bennett from 'Bennetts', Suzy from the Eden Café Bar and Jacques Everitt from the Barber's shop, gave their background and comments about Evington.

Then moving along Evington Road, more large displays feature Oliver March from Evington Wines and Adam Navsa from Atlas Travel.

Other boards circling the large display room gave background history, including a map which shows the straight Roman Road, Devana Way, that ran through Leicester from Colchester to Chester. Evington had 37 households in Roman times, making it into the top 20% for size.

In Industrial Leicester the exhibition explains the change from the framework knitting in stockinger's cottages along

High Street, Evington to the purpose-built factories for hosiery, knitwear and shoemaking.

Near the back of the exhibition there is a place to sit and view some old photographs of the area on a big screen.



Main Street, Evington today



Evington Road today

**ANOTHER EXHIBITION AT
NEW WALK MUSEUM**

Leicester Society of Artists' Annual Exhibition is showcasing contemporary work from local professionals. This exhibition is well worth a visit, but hurry because it finishes on 11th April 2026.

SHUMAILA JAFFERY



Shumaila Jaffery is a researcher and an award winning BBC journalist with much experience. Her investigative journalism on gender, health and human rights has received national and international recognition.

Her PhD project in Leicester, funded by Leeds University, is to investigate events, focusing on how media practices shape diasporic identity and how that identity aligns with the values of host societies.

She says journalism isn't just about telling stories, it's listening too. It's creating a shared safe space where communities grow closer and trust is 'sacred'.

She says communication has the power to instigate social change. She joined 'Decentered Media' for a few months and has carried out many interviews and facilitated 'Women in Media' discussions and a presentation and discussion about the misinformation and other findings, in the 'Better Together' report, (see page 13 opposite).

From a Decentered Media podcast

**DAVID PYKE
(14 SEPTEMBER 1931 – 14
DECEMBER 2025)**



David Arthur Pyke, a much-loved Evington resident, died on 14 December 2025 aged 94. Quietly spoken, polite and mild-mannered,

David was happiest in small groups or in a one-to-one conversation, where his warmth, good humour and thoughtful nature shone through.

David married Marlene in 1957, and together they built a long and devoted life in Evington, sharing 67 years of marriage. Their home was at the heart of family life, and they raised three children, Stephen, Annette and Christopher, who were educated locally at Linden and Whitehall schools. Through changing times—and, in later years, the challenges of illness—David and Marlene's loyalty and care for one another remained constant, and deeply admired by all who knew them.

Music was one of David's great joys. A committed double bass player, he performed for more than 50 years with a number of traditional jazz bands, bringing the sounds of New Orleans jazz to local venues and gatherings. He also loved classical music, and music in the home became part of everyday family life.

David's other great passion was football—especially Leicester City. He held a season ticket for many years and followed the club with steady dedication. Away from the stage and the stadium, he was a true games enthusiast, enjoying Scrabble, Rummikub, Uno and chess. He valued the friendships formed through local groups and clubs in the area, and took a real interest in helping things run well, supporting good management and a friendly atmosphere.

David will be remembered with great affection by his family and friends.

David's favourite charity was Friends of Evington, and donations given instead of flowers raised over £100. These were gratefully received and will help the charity to continue sustainably into the future.

Christopher, Annette and David's granddaughter, Danielle.

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BETTER TOGETHER: WHAT THE LEICESTER 2022 INQUIRY FOUND



This enquiry said tensions can return unless misinformation is challenged and everyday community links are rebuilt.

The launch was chaired by Dr Subir Sinha, who explained about two and a half years of research, including about 500 interviews. The aim was to dispel myths, set out what went wrong, and make practical recommendations so Leicester does not go through this again.

A key message from the Commission was that Leicester experienced a volatile and hostile climate in the run-up to the violence, and that no single community was to blame. They said the city needs a stronger 'road map' for community cohesion, including better ways to tackle misinformation, especially online.

Local peacekeepers were praised — particularly women and young people—who worked calmly and fairly during a tense period. They needed more people listening to them. The commission said extremist views must be challenged wherever they appear and more meaningful conversations need to happen.

They also highlighted wider pressures—

economic hardship, deprivation, lack of opportunity for some young people—and warned that any community can be radicalised if relationships break down and rumours and online falsehoods go unchecked.

The report contains many recommendations, here are a few:

- *Pause before sharing any rumours online.
 - *Support a shared Evington identity
 - *Attend (or help organise) events that bring neighbours together around everyday things.
 - *Back safe community spaces for all
 - *Encourage community centres, libraries and schools to host mixed events
 - *Help young people feel seen and supported.
 - *Volunteer with a youth club, sports team, homework group, mentoring, or simply help signpost opportunities
 - *Be a calm voice in tense moments
 - *Report hate and harassment
 - *Attend problem solving discussion
 - *Ask for clear communication in emergencies
- Helen Pettman

GP SERVICES IN EVINGTON VILLAGE: THE UNDEMOCRATIC ENDING OF AN ERA

The history of GP services in Evington Village, Leicester mirrors wider changes in British primary healthcare: a shift from small, community-based surgeries to larger, multi-site NHS practices. Evington maintained a local GP presence for around 60 years, but this ended with the closure of its last branch surgery in 2024.

Before group practices became common, village doctors typically worked from homes or small premises, offering basic care and home visits. Evington, once a

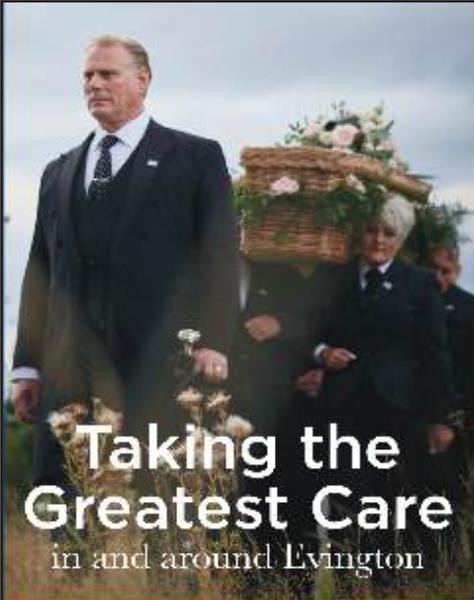
separate rural village outside Leicester, had resident doctors in the late 19th century. Local records include doctors living in the area, such as a young Australian doctor recorded at Evington House in the 1891 census.

Following the creation of the NHS in 1948, GP services became more formally organised while remaining locally rooted. In Evington, a surgery was established at 10 The Common, serving nearby residential areas including Netherhall and parts of east Leicester. For decades it operated as a branch surgery, providing GP consultations and nursing support, and became a valued local institution.

From the late 20th century onwards, primary care increasingly consolidated into larger practices with multiple sites. In Evington, 10 The Common became a branch of St Elizabeth's Medical Centre on Netherhall Road, a common model across the NHS. However, during the 2000s and 2010s many branch surgeries faced pressure due to policy preference for larger 'primary care hubs', building and accessibility standards, workforce shortages, and financial constraints.

The Evington branch closed in November 2024. Reasons cited included the landlord's decision to sell the property, the GP partnership applying for closure, and approval by the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Integrated Care Board. Residents protested, noting that many elderly patients relied on walkable access and that replacement services are around 2–3 miles away. Despite campaigns, petitions, and consultation responses opposing closure, Evington Village has now lost its local GP surgery.

John McFadyen – see full article at evingtonecho.uk



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Evington Youth Club The Common, Evington, LE5 6EA Tel: 0735 234 4183
<https://www.evingtonyouthclub.com>

Facilities for all, offering a safe and fun space for young people to meet and enjoy themselves. Offers football practice, basketball, chess club, pool and table tennis.

When not in use for youth activities, the club's premises are available for hire. All proceeds from venue hires go directly to supporting the club and its mission.

Don't get caught out: simple 'don'ts' to stop phone & online fraud

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COUNCILLORS' INFORMATION

The Evington Echo is circulated in Evington Ward, but also parts of Stoneygate Ward and North Evington Ward.

Here are details of how you can contact a councillor in your ward.

Evington:

Cllr. Deepak Bajaj 0797 609 6183
Cllr. Jenny Joannou - 0774 276 6461
Cllr. Zuffar Haq - 0774 276 6454

North Evington Ward:

Cllr. Dilip Joshi 0774 276 6456
Cllr. Ravi Mahesh 0774 276 6437
Cllr. Sanjay Modhwadia 0778 492 0818

Stoneygate Ward

Cllr. Raffiq Moosa Mohammed 0774 276 6430
Cllr. Yasmin Surti 0774 276 6430

Local councillors are elected officials who represent the interests of residents, making key decisions on local services like housing and transport, and a clean, pleasant, workable environment. They act as a bridge between the community and the council.



Cllr. Raffiq Mohammed Cllr. Yasmin Surti Cllr. Aasiya Bora



Cllr. Jenny Joannou Cllr. Zuffar Haq Cllr. Deepak Bajaj



Cllr. Ravi Mahesh Cllr. Dilip Joshi Cllr. Sanjay Modhwadia

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Easter Day 5th April 10.00am Holy Communion
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Email: chrisandpeterhardy@btinternet.com

115th Leicester Scout Group

We meet every week on Saturday mornings. We are based at Coleman Neighbourhood Centre LE5 4ES for Beavers 6-8, Cubs 8-10.5, Scouts 10.5 - 14, Explorers 14 - 18.

E-mail: 115thleicesterscouts@gmail.com

www.scouts.org.uk

Instagram: @115leicesterscouts

Woodcraft groups in Leicester cath.brownhome@ntlworld.com

Hamilton Air Cadets

Mon. & Thurs. 7.00pm - 9.30pm Tel: 2416559.

Neptune Swimming Club

Tel: 299 5575.

Please let us know if you have, or know of, a not-for-profit group for young people in the LE5 area not mentioned here.
Tel: 07910431044.

Evington House Yoga
£5.00 per session
at Mayflower Methodist Church,
Ethel Road, Leicester LE5 5PE

MONDAY - 6.00 - 7.00pm With Manjula (Ladies only)
WEDNESDAY - 6.00 - 7.00pm With Manjula (Ladies only)

Manjula on 07448 732696, email: manjula.odehra.yoga@gmail.com

BEAVERS

Using your imagination starts on a Wednesday night.

We're Scouts and everyone's welcome here. Every week, 18th Leicester (Evington) Scout Group is part of giving almost half a million young people the skills they need to thrive.

We have spaces for young people aged 6 - 8 years to join our Beaver Colony, running every Wednesday night during term time.

scouts.org.uk/join
#SkillsForLife

Scouts

Come and join the fun!
W: www.evingtonscouts.org.uk
T: 0116 2209017
Search Evington Scouts on Facebook

MEETINGS AT EVINGTON VILLAGE HALL LE5 6FA

Attitude 4 Dance

Dance classes for children aged 3 upwards and an adult, ladies only, tap class. All based at Evington Village Hall. For more information contact Nicola on nicfb123@hotmail.co.uk

Evington Garden Club

Meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at Evington Village Hall from 2.30pm. As usual, visitors are welcome

21st April - A Seasonal Talk by Mark Goddard
19th May - Plant Folklore - a talk by Stuart Phillips

Further information tel: Merrick on 2705950.

Silver Swans Ballet Classes

Sessions are held on Thursday morning from 9.15am through to 12.45pm. For more information about joining a class, please contact Vanessa 07765 407323. nelliebeeswans@gmail.com www.nelliebeeballet.co.uk

Fun , Fitness and Zumba Dance Exercises

Every Monday 6.30pm to 7.30pm. £3.00 a session.

A Friends of Evington supported event.Tel: 2204525/07910431044. A waiting list may apply. See more information on page 13.

Women's Institute

Humberstone Heights and Belgrave WI. Meetings are held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from 2.00pm to 4.00pm at Evington Village Hall. You are welcome to come along. For more information about joining contact Barbara on 077 138 04407.

Leicester Recorder Players

Meet at Evington Village Hall on Saturday afternoons 2.30pm - 5.00pm (Twice monthly). Please contact us for more details. Email leicester@srp.org.uk

Leicestershire Calligraphers

We welcome people of all levels. Sessions are on Saturday afternoons once a month (No meetings in July and August). www.leicestershirecalligraphers.org.uk Email: leicscalligraphers@hotmail.com

Evington Village Fete and Show 2026

Saturday 8th August 2026. A date for your diary.

Plant Sale

Monday 4th May 10.00am - 3.00pm. Refreshments and second hand book sale. Evington Village Hall. See advert on page 4.

UK Asian Film Festival

1st May - 10th May
'Stories that Bind Us'
Phoenix Cinema and Arts Centre LE1 1TG

Love Clean Streets

The easiest way to make a report is to use this app. It can be used anywhere in the UK. Report graffiti, flytipping, fly posting, pot holes, abandoned cars, dog mess and more. Website: <https://lovecleanstreets.com>

MEETINGS AT ST. DENYS PARISH CENTRE LE5 6FA

Monday Meet on the 1st and 3rd Mondays in the month 2.00pm to 4.00pm. Tea and chat.

Lily House Bereavement Support.

Tuesday evenings from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. For more information contact 2739714. Please leave your name and phone number and your call will be returned.

Gentle Exercise Group meet weekly on Thursdays from 10.30am to 11.30am. Tel: 07910431044.

EVINGTON LOCAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE GROUP

Venue: St. Denys Parish Centre

Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday in the month from 2.30pm to 4.00pm. £3.00 a session for visitors, includes coffee and tea. £20 a year for members.

Wednesday 8th April . Roman Towns of Leicestershire and Rutland. Peter Liddle (previously County Archaeologist).

ST DENYS CHURCH

Every Thursday at 10.00am. Holy Communion with Homily (Book of Common Prayer) or Morning Prayer followed by refreshments.

Sundays at 10.00am. Holy Communion with refreshments in the parish centre afterwards.

Our website is <https://stdenys.org.uk> On this website you can download weekly bulletins. Contact office@stdenys.org.uk Tel: 0780 3 82 8454.

EVINGTON LIBRARY

Weekly Sessions:

Wednesday mornings - warm welcome coffee morning drop ins. 10.00am - 12.00noon.

Tuesday mornings 1000am - 12noon. Toddler time.

Saturday mornings 11.00am - 12.30pm Puzzle Library Play for 8 years and under. Children can enjoy playing with a range of different puzzles.

One day event

28th May Themed craft session for children 5+. 1.00pm - 3.00pm No booking needed. Telephone 4540320.

Out and about - near and low cost

1. Shady Lane Arboretum and Evington Park - free and open. It's on your doorstep.
2. Leicester Cathedral (1.5 miles) Open daily for visitors LE1 5PZ
3. New Walk Museum (2.6 miles) 11.00am - 4.30pm daily LE1 7EA
4. Gorse Hill City Farm (2.7 miles) Open daily 10.00am - 4.30pm LE4 OFJ
5. Abbey Park (2.9 miles) Low cost day out. LE4 5AQ

MEETINGS AT EDEN CAFE LE5 6DN

EDEN'S KNIT AND NATTER GROUP

Tuesdays 12.00 noon at the Eden Café Bar, Main Street. Tel: Linda on 077 587 322.

EVINGTON FAMILY HISTORY GROUP

Meetings are at the Eden Café Bar, 11 Main Street, every Wednesday 10.00am to 12.00 noon. Tel: Barbara on 077 138 04407.

THE CEDARS LE5 6DN

RUMMIKUB CLUB

Monday morning 11.00am. Rummikub is a board game. £1.50 includes a tea or coffee and a biscuit.

EVINGTON SOCIAL CLUB

Every Wednesday from 11.00am to 1.00pm at The Cedars, Main Street, Evington. £1.50 with tea, coffee, biscuits provided. Tel: Renuka on 07514 202579.

EVINGTON SCRABBLE GROUP

Every Thursday from 11.00am to 1.00pm at The Cedars, Main Street, Evington. £1.50 with tea, coffee, biscuits provided. Tel: Lesly on 2419096.

GOODWOOD EVANGELICAL CHURCH GAMEL ROAD LE5 6TB

Messy Church - first Sunday of the month 4.00pm to 5.30pm. Craft, music, food and friendship within a Christian church.

The Ark for parents, carers and pre-schoolers Wednesdays 9.30am - 11.30am .

For all other meetings contact Stephen Taylor on 079 0294 6004.

www.goodwoodevangelicalchurch.org.uk

SCRAPTOFT PLAYERS

At The White House Thurnby. Amateur dramatics group looking for more adult members. Rehearsals Thursday evening and some Sunday afternoons. Not for profit and donating to charity. Contact Jude on 07946 414982.

Crown Hills Art Society

For details of their regular meetings, etc. www.crownhillsartsociety.co.uk crownhillsartsociety@gmail.com

BHANGRA CLASSES

Mondays: At Judgemeadow Community College for adults and children.

Saturdays: at Hamilton Community College for adults.Tel: Preet on 07525153284.

NORDIC WALKING

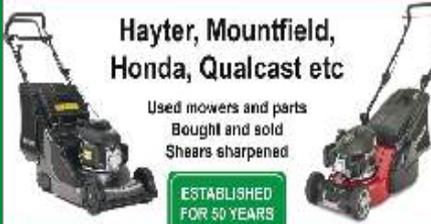
Walking using these long poles is a great way to improve your mental and physical wellbeing.

ministryofnordicwalks@gmail.com or phone Penny on 0750 2 57 6764.

EVINGTON HOUSE YOGA at Mayflower Methodist Church, Ethel Road, LE5 5ND

Mondays 6.00 - 7.00pm with Manjula (Ladies). Wednesday 6.00 - 7.00pm (Ladies). See advert on page 8. Tel: Manjula on 07448 732696.

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