Local and European elections

Make sure your voice is heard when the Local and European elections take place in Knowsley on Thursday 22 May.

This is your chance to vote for the people you want to represent you and your community.

Remember that you can only vote if you are on the electoral register.

If you have recently moved house, please don’t assume you are automatically registered at your new address, as this is not the case.

If you think you may not be registered to vote in Knowsley, you can request an application form by calling 0151 443 2222 or emailing elections@knowsley.gov.uk

The deadline for completed application forms is Tuesday 6 May.

If you wish to vote by post, please contact us on the helpline number or email us at the address above. The deadline for completed postal vote application forms is Wednesday 7 May.

The list of candidates nominated for each of the elections will be confirmed at the end of April and published on the council’s website at www.knowsley.gov.uk/your-council/voting-and-elections.aspx

www.knowsley.gov.uk
Budget update

The Government has recently announced further significant cuts in funding for local authorities. These cuts continue to be higher in the most deprived areas of the country, like Knowsley.

Knowsley has been hit the hardest of all metropolitan authorities in the UK, losing funding of £172 per household in 2014/15. The average cut across England is £62 per household.

The least deprived area of the country, Wokingham in Surrey - which has a similar size population to Knowsley – will actually get an increase of £5 per household.

The council is faced with managing household cuts of around £42m – 30% of our overall budget - over the next three years. This comes on top of the £56m saved in Knowsley since 2010.

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The council has done what it can to plan for these cuts. Last year, a wide range of savings were agreed to balance the budget up to 2015. In addition all services continue to be reviewed to see if there are more efficient ways to do business.

At the same time, the council is also trying to improve the longer-term sustainability of the borough by investing in initiatives to create new houses, businesses and jobs.

The council also understands that residents are experiencing financial pressures, so has again agreed to freeze Council Tax for 2014/15. This means you are still paying the same today as you did back in 2010.

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Given the scale of the Government’s funding cuts, while we will endeavour to protect key front-line services, there is no doubt that services and staff numbers will have to reduce in the coming years.

We will continue to identify and implement savings in a prioritised and planned manner with the needs of residents being the driving factor, but there are going to be some very difficult decisions ahead and no area can remain untouched.

Cllr Norman Keats, Knowsley Council’s Cabinet Member for Finance and IT, said,

"We will continue to lobby the Government to make future distribution of funding fairer and allocate the grant to where it is needed most.

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If you haven’t visited the council website in a while, it might just be worth taking a look.

The council’s website has been redesigned to make finding information and completing tasks much easier and faster.

The site is an easy way for you to connect with the council at a time and in a place that suits you! You don’t have to leave home, pick up the phone or take time out of your day to call into one of the One Stop Shops. You might be surprised by how easy it is to find information and complete simple tasks.

So what are you waiting for?

Log on and take a look!

You can do more when you are on the move
More and more people are accessing the site using their smartphones or tablets. So the new site has been specifically designed with that in mind, ensuring that all the content is easy to view even if you aren’t using a PC.

Finding what you want is easier than ever
The search facility just got smarter! So, you only need to type a few letters and it will guess what you are looking for and give you some options to choose from.

We know what information you want
We have analysed what people most commonly want to use the website for and prioritised links to that information on the homepage.

You can complete tasks online
The website is more than just a place to find information, you can also use it to do simple tasks. Why not go online to pay your council tax or set up a direct debit? Or you could view planning applications in your area, look at the events listing to see what’s coming up where you live or search the online library catalogue!

An anti-bullying campaign has been launched across all schools in Knowsley. It reminds young people that everyone has a right to be themselves, without risk of ridicule, criticism or abuse.

The campaign aims to raise awareness of the issue of bullying but with the reassuring message that Knowsley is a safe place - a ‘place to be yourself’.

Posters are on display around school buildings, postcards have been handed out to pupils and the message has also been promoted on social media.

Bullying can happen to anyone and can take many forms including verbal, physical and cyber-bullying. No matter what the circumstances, nobody has the right to hurt you or make you feel bad.

If you are being bullied, or you know someone who is, it’s important to remember that you are not alone and that help and support is available.

At school, young people are urged to speak to a member of staff in the first instance. Alternatively you can call the School Inclusion Team on 0151 443 5137 or report it to Bullybusters on 0800 169 6928.

This latest campaign is part of Knowsley’s Anti-Bullying Strategy, which sets out how the council, its partners and the community plan to work together to reduce instances of bullying.

To find out more, or for help and advice, visit www.bullybusters.org.uk

To visit the site log on to www.knowsley.gov.uk

Easter holiday library fun

There’s lots going on in the borough’s libraries over the Easter school holidays.

There will be Easter themed craft activities for the under 5s, while the stories of Roald Dahl will inspire activities for school children.

The children will be able to create hanging mobiles and canvas bags inspired by Matilda, the Witches or any of Dahl’s wonderful characters. All the author’s greatest books will also be available for the children to read and borrow.

Activities will be held in all the borough’s libraries so you can be sure there will be something going on near you. Please visit www.knowsley.gov.uk for full details or contact your local library.
Take control of your finances

Now is the ideal time to take control of your finances and give them a spring clean.

Whether you want to pay off your credit card bill, start saving for a big purchase or even to begin planning for Christmas - it’s never too early to start!

If you’re unsure about what the Government’s welfare reforms mean for you or want to check what benefits you are entitled to claim there are a number of free local services which can help you. Visit the ‘financial advice’ page of the council website for details.

If you are vulnerable, elderly or housebound, our benefits advisers can visit you at home to give you advice. Call 0151 443 4234.

Credit unions can also set up a savings account to help you put money aside for a big purchase or even to begin planning for Christmas - it’s never too early to start!

Local Heroes, Distant Voices brings together stories, experiences and artefacts from local soldiers, bringing to life the reality of war. The result is a fascinating and poignant exhibition, spread across four venues – Huyton Gallery and Knowsley Park Centre for Learning, Prescot (from now until 28 June) and then in Kirkby Gallery and Prescot Museum (from 11 August to 15 November).

Knowsley Council and British Cycling have teamed up once again to run Sky Ride Local, a programme offering fun and guided bike rides around the borough. With different levels, there are rides for all abilities.

The programme will commence in the summer and helps people of all ages and experience to enjoy the borough’s scenery on two wheels. Cycling has become increasingly popular and we have some fantastic cycle paths here in Knowsley.

Find out more at goskyride.com

Prescot’s rich heritage will be celebrated on Saturday 3 May as visitors to the town will be transported back to the 15th Century.

There will be traditional crafts such as basket making and wood turning, live Elizabethan music and craft stalls.

The event will take place from 10am to 4pm in and around Prescot Parish Church.

It will coincide with the monthly Producers’ Market that will take place in nearby Eccleston Street.

If you’d like to get involved in the Fayre or have a stall at the market please call 0151 443 5333.

Letter from Private Frank Warren of the 1st Battalion 2nd Loyal Lancashire Regiment, who lived at 4 East Street, Prescot, to his wife back home:

“I am still alive and lucky to be. On the 23rd of December I lay for ten hours in front of a German trench about fifty yards distant with dead and wounded round me, and saw Germans shoot my wounded comrades. I managed to hide myself under two dead soldiers, and stayed there from morning until dark. When I managed to escape and rejoin my regiment. I had a bullet put through my coat sleeve, without it hitting me, and also had my rifle broken by a shell, but, thank God, I am still alive. I thought of you and the children when I lay there expecting every minute to be my last, and I prayed very earnestly, I can tell you.”

The Victory Medal awarded to Private Joseph Bray from Prescot

The Memorial Scroll awarded to Private Joseph Bray of Cross Street, Prescot. He lied about his age to join up at 16. He was killed aged 20, whilst serving in Belgium.

This year’s Knowsley Flower Show will also commemorate the centenary of World War I when it returns to Court Hey Park, Huyton on Sunday 3 August.

Joining the festivities will be local soldiers in WWI uniforms and army activities for all the family including an assault course and tug of war.

To find out more information or book a place at the show ring 0151 443 5749 or visit www.knowsleyflowershow.com

These are just two of a number of events that will be held in Knowsley in 2014 to mark the centenary of the World War I. Further information throughout the year will be available on the council’s website.
Children across Knowsley should now have received a free ‘healthy teeth pack’ either through the post or via their health visitor. The pack - which includes a toothbrush, toothpaste and a handy guide to brushing teeth – is part of a drive to remind people of the importance of regular brushing and tooth care for youngsters.

Remember, dental treatment for children is free, so make sure you keep up-to-date with twice yearly dental check-ups and follow these simple tips for you and your children:

- Brush your teeth twice a day, at night and one other time, with a family fluoride toothpaste
- For children under the age of three - use a smear of toothpaste on the brush.
- For children over the age of three - use a pea-size blob of paste on the brush.
- Don’t rinse with water, just spit out the extra toothpaste
- Choose sugar-free snacks and drinks

And remember healthy teeth means happy kids!

For further information on Knowsley Dental Services, call the Patient Advice Liaison Services (PALS) on 03003 112233.

For further information on the free healthy teeth packs, call 0151 443 4994.

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Eyesore transformed and tenant saved from ‘bedroom tax’

For eight years, it was an empty, semi-derelict blight on the local community. Now, this house has become a beautiful home for a tenant who desperately wanted to downsize after being stung by the ‘bedroom tax’.

It’s all thanks to the council’s strategic housing team, who used legal powers to take control of the property and bring it back into use.

After the owner failed to make improvements, officers used an Empty Dwelling Management Order (EDMO) to secure the two bedroom house in Whiston.

They appointed contractors to carry out a wide range of improvements to the house before handing it over to Knowsley Housing Trust to manage.

The house has now been let out to tenant Elaine McNally, who has downsized from a four bedroom house and now lives in the property with her daughter.

Elaine said,

“In my old house I had the stress of thinking about where the money was going to come from to pay the bedroom tax for the rest of my life and it was too much. Coming into this house was great and I really feel like a big weight has been lifted off my shoulders since being here. There is a lovely feel to the house and I felt at home right away."

Knowsley Council’s Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills, Cllr Dave Lonergan, said,

“This is a great example of how our approach to dealing with empty properties in the borough resolves the issue to everyone’s benefit."

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The Wizard of Oz is coming to the stage at Knowsley Leisure & Culture Park in April - and we’re giving away a family ticket!

Follow the yellow brick road with Dorothy, her dog Toto, and the friends she meets along the way - the brainless Scarecrow, loveable Tin Man and cowardly Lion.

Tickets for the performances, on Saturday 26 April at 7pm and Sunday 27 April at 1pm and 5pm are £10 for adults, £8 for children and concessions. Book by calling 0151 443 3200.

To win tickets just tell us: What is the name of Dorothy’s dog?

Email your answer, with your name and daytime telephone number, to knowsleynews@knowsley.gov.uk, or write to Knowsley News, Knowsley Council, Huyton Municipal Buildings, Archway Road, Huyton, L36 9YU.

The closing date for entries is 18 April.
Cycling news from Knowsley Velodrome and BMX Park

Knowsley Velodrome and BMX Park is the place to be to catch all the latest cycling action and take part in a range of events!

From BMX and track sessions for complete beginners to more experienced riders, half term and summer coaching sessions, school competitions and rider development sessions, there is something for everyone.

Knowsley Velodrome and BMX Park will also be hosting its first national competition on Sunday 18 May.

Riders from across the country will be competing in the National Track Omnium. Six track races will take place on the velodrome track, including three time trials and three mass-start events.

To find out more or take part, visit www.activeknowsley.com or call the Get Active Team on 0151 443 2200.

Support the foodbank

The Knowsley Foodbank was established just over two years ago to help families and individuals in our area who are in food crisis and struggling to cope.

Last year alone, the Foodbank helped to feed more than 3,000 adults and nearly 2,500 children in Knowsley.

The Foodbank relies almost entirely on donations from you - the general public - and as demand continues to grow, the Foodbank needs your support more than ever.

Take a look at the Foodbank shopping list (opposite) and see the kind of things they need. You can then bring your food donations to the Foodbank during opening hours.

You could even start a collection at your work, school or church or maybe consider volunteering at the Knowsley Foodbank?

Visit www.knowsley.foodbank.org.uk or call 0151 546 0470 for more information.

Investment to support ‘green’ travel

The council has successfully bid for £160,000 to expand three projects that help residents access work opportunities and make the most of ‘green’ travel options - like cycling to work.

This latest investment will support:

The Young Person’s Transport Programme - a scheme that helps young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) to improve their access to work and training by helping them to purchase a bus pass, providing a bike loan or assisting them in developing a journey plan.

Cycling Projects - a local charity group that encourages more people to cycle by leading guided cycles rides.

Business Travel Advisors - who provide support for employers to develop green travel plans to reduce car trips and encourage the use of public transport or more active forms of travel.

The funding is part of the government’s Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

Cycling Projects - the Get Active Team will also be hosting its first national competition on Sunday 18 May.

This June and July, business leaders from all over the world will arrive in Merseyside for the inaugural International Festival for Business - with Knowsley putting itself in poll position to reap the benefits.

Billed as the UK’s most significant international trade and investment showcase for decades, the 50-day show will attract people from more than 100 countries.

Knowsley is already busy making sure it maximises the opportunities available, helping local business make the vital connections which could help them with new global business and help provide a huge boost to our local economy.

Meanwhile the Festival will also place an emphasis on the skills needed for future jobs, something Knowsley Council continues to lead on behalf of the Liverpool City Region.

On 17 and 18 June, Knowsley will host a Skills Show, with more than 6,000 young people from across the region expected to attend. The event will outline the different types of employment opportunities available to them, get them involved in practical exercises and get invaluable careers advice from key employers.

This two day event is supported by The Skills Show Experience, the European Social Fund and the National Careers Service.

And the fantastic achievements of some of the region’s top apprentices will be recognised during the Festival, at the Merseyside Apprenticeship Awards, which will be held in Knowsley on 20 June.

For further information about the International Festival for Business, visit www.ifb2014.com
The changing face of Knowsley Industrial and Business Park

Over the next three years, the council is investing more than £6 million in Knowsley Industrial and Business Park.

The comprehensive programme of investment includes more than 50 individual projects to improve infrastructure, appearance and general quality of the park.

Recently we have been working on some environmental improvements to enhance the general appearance of the park. This will continue in the next few months when we will also be investing in Aconfield Plantation on Spinney Road.

Work is also underway to improve the A580 East Lancs Road corridor including highway improvements, landscaping work and new park signage.

As well as physical improvements, we are working to encourage new development on site and support businesses.

We will also be working to create new market places, with the aim of attracting new businesses and stimulate economic growth.

One of the first steps has been to consult with existing businesses around the current name of the park and future branding.

Watch this space (and the council’s website) for further updates!

And the winners are...

Hundreds of business people from Knowsley and beyond attended the 2013 Knowsley Business & Regeneration Awards.

The awards celebrated the achievements of organisations of all sizes and in all sectors. They recognised the wealth of expertise, talent and passion that exist in Knowsley.

This year’s winners included:

- Wetherby Building Systems Ltd, who introduced energy saving measures in over 2,000 homes, saving Knowsley residents £750,000 per year
- Taylor Wimpey North West, for their Speakman Gardens development in Prescot
- The partners behind the Knowsley stage of the Tour of Britain who helped put Knowsley on the global map

We’re delighted to have been recognised for our work at Speakman Gardens. This scheme has helped buyers in the borough to get on the next rung of the housing ladder; it was even the first site in the country to complete the first Help to Buy purchase.

"We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses."

David Hnyda, Taylor Wimpey Sales Manager, said, "We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses.

Business of the Year (50+ employees) - Warmer Energy Services Limited

"We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses."

David Hnyda, Taylor Wimpey Sales Manager, said, "We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses.

Business of the Year (10-49 employees) - Stroud Engineering Supplies Ltd

"We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses."

David Hnyda, Taylor Wimpey Sales Manager, said, "We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses.

Regeneration Award - Wetherby Building Systems Ltd

"We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses."

David Hnyda, Taylor Wimpey Sales Manager, said, "We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses.

Corporate Social Responsibility Award - First Ark Group

"We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses."

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Outstanding Contribution for Business - Clarke Energy

"We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses."

David Hnyda, Taylor Wimpey Sales Manager, said, "We want to see more new developments on site and support businesses.

Outstanding Contribution for Economy - Tour of Britain partners - Sweetspot Group, Knowsley Hall Estate and Knowsley Cycling

The winners 2013

Business of the Year (1-9 employees) - LK Valves Ltd

Contractor of the Year - Structec (NW) Ltd

Employee of the Year - Lesley Davies, Chums Ltd

Innovation Award - Glen Dimplex Home Appliances Ltd

Visitor Attraction of the Year - Spaceworld

Housing Scheme of the Year - Taylor Wimpey North West

Green Award - Fieldway Group

Corporate Social Responsibility Award - First Ark Group

Regeneration Award - Wetherby Building Systems Ltd

Business of the Year (40-99 employees) - Stroud Engineering Supplies Ltd

Business of the Year (50+ employees) - Warmer Energy Services Limited

Outstanding Contribution for Business - Clarke Energy

Outstanding Contribution for Economy - Tour of Britain partners - Sweetspot Group, Knowsley Hall Estate and Knowsley Cycling

Regenerate Knowsley

Work to start on transforming former watch making factory

In May, work is due to start on the former watch making factory on Albany Road.

The £11.8m development, with funding from Knowsley Housing Trust, Knowsley Council and the Department of Health, will see the building transformed into 54 extra care apartments. There are also future plans for 62 new homes on site.

Extra care housing is designed to help people live independently, with varying levels of care and support available on site. Facilities include a restaurant, lounge and pamper rooms.

Prescot THI

Prescot’s £3.2m Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) project will see the repair and restoration of the town’s historic fabric. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has awarded £1.85m to the project, with additional funding provided by Knowsley Council, Knowsley Housing Trust and the Empty Homes Fund.

Work will be starting on site over the coming months on the repair and restoration of four properties on Eccleston Street, High Street, Atherton Street and Market Place.

In addition, 5-7 Eccleston Street has been added to the THI as a Priority Project. Subject to grant and planning approvals, this prominent historic building should be repaired, restored and back in full use before the end of the year.

In addition, a number of Heritage Apprenticeships will be created this year to support the project as well as giving young people a unique career opportunity.

As well as the recently completed improvements to Leyland Street, further enhancements are planned for Atherton Street next year.

For all the latest THI news, visit www.prescotthi.org.uk/blog

Prescot’s rich heritage will also be celebrated at the annual Elizabethan Fayre, which takes place in the town centre on Saturday 3 May - see page 6 for further details.
The fantastic new Kirkby Centre has opened its doors to customers.

The £5m project has seen the building on Norwich Way completely transformed and remodelled. It provides bigger and better modern facilities for a range of your key local services, which have been protected by the move.

You can visit the Kirkby Centre to use Kirkby One Stop Shop and visit the new, larger library, gallery and local history archive. It is also the base for Kirkby’s Knowsley Works team and the Adult Disability Day Service. You can also use a number of excellent community facilities, including a meeting room, Poco Coffee shop and Changing Places changing and toilet facilities.

When the overall regeneration programme has been completed, the Kirkby Centre will open out onto an attractive new civic square.

The superb new market will really enhance your shopping experience and has created better links to the town centre. As well as looking bright and modern, the new market provides shelter from the weather and has easier access to stalls. There are 130 stalls in the market, providing you with the wide range of goods you have come to expect from Kirkby Market. The level of interest from traders wanting a stall in the market has been remarkable, with the 130 stalls quickly allocated and many other traders on the waiting list. As well as the regular traders from the old market, there are also traders who have moved to the new market from the Inshops Centre in Kirkby. There is also a café and toilets on the site for shoppers. The new market will trade six days a week, Monday to Saturday.

The much-anticipated £2.5m Kirkby Market opens for business next month.

The development of 71 new houses on St Kevin’s Drive has been completed and residents are now moving into them in phases between now and the summer.

The Plus Dane Group and Cherryfield Co-Operative residents are relocating to St Kevin’s Drive from Cherryfield Drive.

Once all residents have left Cherryfield Drive, preparations will be made to demolish their old properties. This will clear the way for construction to begin on the new Tesco store and other retail units on Cherryfield Drive.

It is business-as-usual at the Inshops Centre in Kirkby, after Knowsley Council and Tesco secured a lifeline for traders.

After Inshops announced it was closing, the council reached an agreement to take a lease on the centre from landlord Tesco until early 2015. That means businesses can continue trading. The council is also working closely with the traders to help find long-term premises in the town centre.

Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Economy and Skills, Cllr Dave Lonergan, said,

“We are pleased to have been able to help and support traders in Kirkby. We are totally committed to Kirkby and want the whole town centre to prosper as regeneration continues.”

Tesco spokesperson Mark Thomas said,

“By stepping in at this critical point, we have helped to secure some crucial breathing space for traders and we are working closely with them to help their long term plans.”

It is a great pleasure to see the new Kirkby Market almost ready for business.

We will have an excellent facility from which to trade and I am confident all the businesses involved will take this opportunity to develop the market to its maximum potential and create a new and enjoyable shopping experience.

We have been well supported in the temporary market by our existing loyal customers and look forward to welcoming them to the new market, along with plenty of newcomers.
Thanks for recycling!

‘Carry on recycling, week in, week out’....that’s the message to households.

Knowsley residents have been doing a great job recycling household waste in their grey and blue bins.

Since the introduction of the new ‘Week in, Week out’ waste collection service last October, we’ve seen a 20% increase in recycling and a 12% reduction in mancoon bin rubbish.

But we still need to do more if we are to meet our target of recycling 36% of our waste – and reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill.

So make sure all of your plastic and glass bottles, tins, jars, paper and card go in your grey bin. Recycling is also a great way of reducing the amount of waste in your mancoon bin.

Bravery that inspires a whole community

Sean Dillon from Kirkby was just an average seven-year-old boy when he was diagnosed with Aplastic Anaemia – a life threatening form of bone marrow failure.

Thanks to the bravery of his five year old sister, Saoirse, who donated her bone marrow, Sean received the transplant he needed to save his life in October last year. He is now back at home recovering.

Sean and Saoirse’s bravery has not only inspired all those around them but also the wider community who came together to raise money to help other people just like Sean.

Sinead Connolly, Sean and Saoirse’s mum said,

"We have been overwhelmed by the support we have received since Sean’s diagnosis and the kindness and generosity of so many people, particularly here in Knowsley. There seems to be so much bad news in the world that I think it’s really important to celebrate the positive things that can sometimes come out of a bad situation. Thank you to everyone who has helped us!"

Percet Soccer and Leisure Centre is a big hit!

The fitness suite at Percet Soccer and Leisure Centre has really taken off with more than 400 registered members and 150 new members taking advantage of the early bird opening offers since it opened in October. With the latest cardiovascular equipment and internet enabled touch-screen consoles, you can stay connected while getting a great workout.

Group fitness classes are also available for those that enjoy the social side of exercise. Why not relax afterwards in the fully licensed cafe bar which also shows selected live football/sporting events and offers free Wi-Fi connection?

For more information, details of current offers or to join, please ask a member of staff, call 0151 443 2200 or visit www.activeknowsley.com

To register a team visit www.percetsoccercentre.co.uk or email barry.lloyd@knowsley.gov.uk for full details.
Domestic abuse – support is available

Did you know that one in four women and one in six men will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lifetime? And only four out of 10 incidents are actually reported.

Here in Knowsley, the Safer Knowsley Partnership is working to ensure that victims of domestic abuse have access to the help and support they need, at what is an extremely difficult time in their lives.

Domestic abuse can be more than physical violence and can take many forms including verbal, psychological, emotional, social, financial and sexual abuse.

The partnership’s latest campaign – ‘It’s about choices’ – has been launched to raise awareness of domestic abuse and encourage victims to get help.

The campaign is also aiming to connect with perpetrators and help them to change their behaviour. In Knowsley, both men and women can contact the InFact programme (Intervening in Partnership Abuse Change for Tomorrow) for help and advice on 0151 548 3333.

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing domestic abuse the message is simple – help and support is available.

Knowsley Domestic Violence Support Services (KDVSS) offers a range of services for both men and women including support groups and one-to-one support over the phone or in person.

Call KDVSS on 0151 548 3333 or visit www.kdvss.org.uk

Alternatively call the Knowsley Domestic Violence Helpline on 0800 953 4433.

Protecting children and young people

We have all seen the news reports highlighting tragic stories where children and young people across the country have not been properly protected from danger.

Although the circumstances around each case may be different, the need to protect our children and young people remains the same. In Knowsley, that responsibility is taken very seriously.

The Knowsley Safeguarding Children Board is a totally independent body responsible for ensuring individuals and organisations work effectively together to protect children and young people.

The board is made up of representatives from a number of organisations, including the council and the police, who link together to provide support and services for young people.

David Hume is the Chair of the Knowsley Safeguarding Children Board, he said,

“By working together and identifying opportunities to improve our care and support for children and young people, we have the chance to make a real impact on peoples’ lives. Children and young people are some of the most vulnerable members of our society and it is our duty to work together to ensure their safety and wellbeing.”

Just the job for local job hunters

The future is rosy for a group of new recruits to the council’s horticulture and environment apprenticeship scheme.

The council has recruited five local young people to the apprenticeships – including Nicola Meredith, the first girl to join the team. The new recruits will work with the street scene, parks and cemeteries services.

During the two-year scheme, the apprentices will be working across the borough gaining experience in a wide range of horticultural maintenance activities. They will also receive training and work towards an NVQ level 2 in horticulture, from Myerscough College.
Staying safe in your home

Do you worry about an older or vulnerable relative living on their own? Or, if you live on your own, would you like to know that help is only a phone call away? Knowsley Telecare can help.

Telecare is an alarm system which can let a family member or the emergency services know when there is something wrong. It can give you and your relatives peace of mind that you’re safe in your home.

The alarm unit is connected to your phone line and you can call for assistance by simply pressing a button. You can also activate the alarm with a pendant which you can wear at all times, even in the shower.

Other sensors can be linked to the alarm including falls detectors, smoke alarms and door exit sensors. For more information visit www.knowsley.gov.uk/telecare or call 0151 443 2600.

Knowing the signs can save your life

Over the last 40 years, cancer survival rates have doubled, thanks to improvements in the diagnosis and treatment of the disease.

The earlier cancer is diagnosed, the better the outlook. So knowing how to spot the signs can help save your life.

In the coming months, a series of roadshows will be taking place across the borough to tell people what to look out for and how to spot the early symptoms.

Matthew Ashton, Director of Public Health in Knowsley, said,

Many people don’t realise how much survival rates have increased and that it is possible to survive cancer. My message is simple – if you spot the signs, don’t be scared to go to your GP. Support is available at every step of the way.

Details of the roadshows can be found on the council’s website.
In focus

Have you considered adoption?

There are 623 children currently waiting to be adopted in the north west region. To help find homes for these children, Knowsley is one of 22 local councils working together to make the adoption process simpler and more straight forward.

Every child hoping to be adopted is unique and so we need adoptive parents with a range of life experiences and backgrounds. What all the children have in common is that they are in need of loving, caring families to provide them with a secure and happy future.

You can adopt if you’re single, a same sex couple, over 50 years old, work full time or even if you have a family or are hoping to start one. There really is no such thing as a ‘typical’ adopter.

Single children and siblings from a variety of backgrounds and ranging in age from very young to school age are all waiting to find their forever family.

Cllr Graham Wright, Knowsley Council’s Cabinet Member for Children and Family Services, said,

“We’ve joined together with councils across the region to help find loving families for the 623 children in the north west who are currently waiting to be adopted.

We want to get everyone thinking and talking about adoption in the hope that we will encourage more people to consider it and to get in touch to find out more.

Adoption is a life changing and rewarding experience for all those involved. We can help you find out more and understand what adoption would mean for your family. We are here to provide you with help and support every step of the way.

The message is clear; anyone can adopt. We need a diverse range of adopters as contrary to popular belief, adopters come from all walks of life and there is no upper age limit. If you can provide a stable, loving home - you could adopt.

You may have seen the TV and radio adverts encouraging more people to consider adoption. If you are interested but haven’t been in touch yet, then what are you waiting for?

Foster for Knowsley

17-year-old Tom* is home from another good day at college and can’t wait to tell his two brothers and sister all about it.

He’s doing well on his course and has big ambitions for his future - but it wasn’t always like that for Tom.

Four years ago he and his brothers and sisters, then aged 13, five and one, were split up after being taken into care.

But the separation was hard on the siblings – and Tom, the eldest, started running away and skipping school.

Luckily, that’s where Mary and Steve stepped in.

As experienced foster carers for Knowsley they offered a home to all four children. Today the children are happy, settled, and doing well in school and college.

Now Knowsley is on the lookout for more carers who can make a real difference to the lives of children and young people like Tom.

Anyone can be considered as a foster carer, regardless of age, sexuality, income, employment status, experience or marital status. You don’t even need to live in Knowsley to foster for the council.

Full training is provided and allowances are paid. There’s even the opportunity to take additional training and earn extra Skills Payments, similar to a wage – making fostering a rewarding and viable career option.

To find out more call 0151 443 3958, visit the council’s website and search ‘fostering’, or ‘like’ the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/FosterforKnowsley.

*names have been changed.
**New cricket pavilion**

Visitors to Court Hey Park will be bowled over by the arrival of a new cricket pavilion later this year.

The existing Whitefield Cricket Club pavilion will be demolished and replaced by a new building featuring a new community room, kitchen, and changing facilities. The £249,000 development is funded by grants from Veolia Environmental Trust and the council.

The seven-strong group climbed 1,085 metres to the summit of Mount Snowdon, raising more than £270 for Macmillan Cancer Support. The group hope to continue their mountain adventures in the future. To get involved contact Ian Whiteside on 0151 443 4466.

The Youthy every Tuesday between 5.30pm and 7.30pm. Contact Katy on 0151 296 4351 to book your place first.

**Bowring Park restoration project**

A project to restore Bowring Park in Huyton has received a major funding boost.

A successful bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund will bring £108,000 to help kick start the Bowring Park Restoration Project. The bid was spearheaded by Knowsley Council in partnership with The Friends of Bowring Park and site leaseholders Mack Trading Ltd.

The funding will pay for initial works including a conservation plan, landscape feasibility studies, business plan and an archaeological survey. The cash will also pay for a consultation programme, which will invite local people to get involved with the project and seek their views on planned works.

Work on a second funding bid is now underway and, if successful, will bring a further £2m for improvements to the park.

A celebration gala event at the park – marking the ‘Friends’ group’s 25th anniversary – on Saturday 29 June will be a great opportunity to hear more about the restoration project.

**Kirkby**

**Blues star comes to Kirkby**

Blues star Bryan Oviedo scored a hit with local young people at the official launch of Everton in the Community’s Kicks project in Kirkby.

The project – a partnership with the council, Your Housing Group, Liverpool Housing Trust and Merseyside Police – offers free football coaching in a bid to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

The Kicks launch builds on the success of the weekly coaching sessions running at community centres in Westvale, Towerhill, Southdene and Northwood.

As well as football coaching, the programme also offers youngsters vocational qualifications.

**Kirkby school hosts science careers day**

Students at Kirkby High School have been inspired by a nuclear physicist at a special event aimed at boosting career aspirations.

The school joined forces with Wigan based Hawkley Hall High School, to stage the science careers day which featured talks from a range of guest speakers, including Alan Brown, a nuclear physicist with the Science and Technology Facilities Council in Daresbury.

**Get active and have fun**

North Kirkby residents – both young and old – can get active, have fun and make new friends at a number of local clubs and groups.

Youngsters can enjoy activities, such as drama, dance and sports, at the Saturday Club at All Saints Catholic High School, between 10am and 2pm. For more information call Hugh Shacklock on 07775 221925.

For the over 55’s there’s the Happy Hours club at Towerhill Community Centre which meets every Tuesday between 10.30am and 12.30pm.

Activities on offer include knitting, gentle exercise, bowls, dancing and trips.

There’s also the Golden Years group which meets every Thursday between 11am and 1pm and runs a dance class on Fridays between 11.30am and 1.30pm at Northwood Community Centre. Contact the IKAN team on 07717 301444 or drop into Northwood Community Centre to get involved.

**Play area gets a revamp**

The newly revamped children’s play area at Memorial Park is proving a hit with local families. The park at Bewley Drive has been given a new lease of life with exciting new play equipment, including a trampoline and climbing frame, as well as natural play features. Two new football pitches have been created and the area has also been landscaped, with new trees and wildflowers.

Funding for the £72,000 project came from Knowsley Council and the Veolia Environmental Trust.

**Join in the fun!**

Young people with disabilities can get involved with two new community groups in Huyton.

Acting Up is a drama group for young people aged 12 to 25 which meets at The Youthy every Tuesday between 5.30pm and 7.30pm. Contact Katy on 0151 443 5749 or email: fsnteam@merseyfire.gov.uk for details.

If you’re feeling sporty, then local community group L14 runs free and fully inclusive sports activities at The Gate Community Centre on Princess Drive, every Friday between 5pm and 7pm. Call Merseyside’s Fire Support Network on 0151 296 4351 or email: fsnteam@merseyfire.gov.uk to book your place first.

**Mountain climb raises cash**

Young people from Swanside Youth Club and The Youthy in Huyton have successfully scaled the highest peak in England and Wales.

The group hope to continue their mountain adventures in the future. To get involved contact Ian Whiteside on 0151 443 4466.

The Youthy in Huyton have successfully scaled Mount Snowdon, raising more than £1,085 metres to the summit of Mount Snowdon, raising more than £270 for Macmillan Cancer Support.

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**Growing spirit**

Halewood Community Spirit is running an exciting programme of events this year – and they want you to get involved.

For the latest information about events and how you can join in visit www.halewoodspirit.com or find them on Facebook.

**Martial arts success**

Halewood Tae Kwon-Do Club scooped an impressive haul of medals at the British Championships in Cheltenham.

The team won seven gold, six silver and two bronze medals, with the club’s black belt girls leading the way. Lauren Butler, 11, became double British champion after kicking her way to victory in both point-stop and continuous sparring categories, with Faye Clifton, 11, clinching silver and bronze medals.

Younger team members also featured on the roll of honour. Five-year-old Jack Harrison – competing for the first time – won a silver medal in yellow and green belt point-stop sparring. He only lost out to team-mate Joe Southern, aged eight, whose victory won him the British title. Halewood Tae Kwon-Do classes are held four times a week at Halewood Academy. Further details can be found on the website: www.halewoodtaekwondo.com

**Purple angels**

Halewood’s Joan Best has joined a worldwide network of ambassadors – committed to raising awareness of dementia.

Joan, a founder member of the Memory Lane dementia support group, has become one of 50 ‘Purple Angels’ – a global network of people who encourage local groups, businesses and organisations to become more ‘dementia friendly’. Memory Lane is based at Kinloch Close and opens on Wednesdays between 10am and 2pm. There’s also a support group for all carers between 6pm to 8pm on Thursdays.

You can contact Joan on 07900 632 058, or visit Merseyside Dementia Action Alliance’s website or find them on Facebook.

**Racing success at Stadt Moers Park**

Stadt Moers Park is fast earning a reputation as a leading cross country venue in the north west.

In recent years Stadt Moers - the largest public green space in Knowsley - has attracted a number of top events in the regional cycling, orienteering and cross country calendar. Hundreds of top flight runners and cyclists regularly compete in front of thousands of spectators from across the north west.

A major improvement programme will further boost the appeal of the park to competitors and local residents alike. The £230,000 regeneration will include improvements to park entrances, new pathways and cycleways, signage and woodland management.

For more information about the latest events at Knowsley parks visit the council’s website: www.prescot-tc.gov.uk

**Debt and housing advice**

Prescot and Whiston Community Advice Centre has expanded its team to offer more support to residents facing debt and housing issues.

The team now includes a new Debt Intermediary and Housing Solicitor. Contact us

**Prescot Town Hall - just around the corner**

Work on the new Prescot Town Hall is well underway, with the building set to open its doors in May.

The former Fusilier public house is being transformed inside and out to become a base for the town council, as well as a modern community hub. The new building includes meetings and function rooms for hire, a secure car park and full disability access.

Look out in the next edition of Knowsley News for an update on the new centre. For more information visit: www.prescot-tc.gov.uk

**Winter clean up**

Cronton Pathways group staged its annual winter clear-up - with six local residents collecting more than 40 bags of rubbish from around the village.

Anyone wanting to follow their progress, view photos and other news can visit www.litteraction.org.uk – include WA8 5DL to locate Cronton Pathways Project.

Since signing up to the website the group has logged the collection of 865 bags of rubbish, most of which were removed by Knowsley Council’s Neighbourhood Team.

**Flamenco fever hits Halewood**

Students at Halewood Academy were a step ahead when it came to learning about traditional Spanish dance.

Working alongside local artist Claire Brumby, the pupils celebrated the work of the late Catalan flamenco pioneer, Carmen Amaya, by staging a ‘Celebration of Life’ at the school.

The event, which was the culmination of six art workshops, also featured a live Flamenco performance from dancer Allie Herrmann, who put the audience through their Flamenco paces.

**Contact us**

Prescot and Whiston Community Advice Centre has expanded its team to offer more support to residents facing debt and housing issues.

The team now includes a new Debt Intermediary and Housing Solicitor. Manager Chris Armitage said, “Opening on Saturday has helped us reduce the waiting time for our support to less than one week. We hope our new additional services will help people who are worried and struggling to cope to come and see us.”

For more details please ring 0151 443 4639.
Sunday 30 March
Bookings: 0151 443 2200
(2 adults & 2 children) £34
Tickets: Adults £10, Children £8, Family ticket
the superstars.
have your photo taken with
Don't forget your camera and
American Wrestling show is
variety of independent traders selling a range of
11am to 3pm
Saturday 5 April
Prescot Producers' Market
9am with registration and practice
www.britishcycling.com
or
the age of 6 years and over.
with riders competing from
12.00 noon to 5pm
Knowsley Velodrome & BMX Park
7.30pm
Knowsley Leisure &
Show
American Wrestling
Saturday 29 March
Contact: Prescot Museum 0151 443 5617
provided.
All materials are
Museum staff. All ages welcome - under 8's need
to be accompanied by an adult. All materials are
free event.
with riders competing from the first time all aspects of her sculptural works
This solo exhibition of Halima Cassell's work is
In Focus:
Ongoing until 19 April
A solo exhibition of work by
Halima Cassell exhibition
Kirby Library
9.15am to 5pm Monday to Friday &
1pm to 3pm &
Saturday 26 & Sunday 27 April
The Wizard of Oz
Knowsley Leisure & Culture Park
Saturday 7pm, Sunday 1pm & 5pm
Follow the yellow brick road to Knowsley Leisure & Culture Park for a magical show. It is packed full of great songs and brilliant dance routines which all the family will enjoy.
Adults £10, concessions £8
Bookings: 0151 443 2200
Saturday 26 June
Summer Fayre and
Afternoon Tea
Our Lady of Portico Church
1pm to 4pm
Free fun day for all of
the family, organised by
Willowbrook Hospice. Entertainment will be
available, including stalls selling tea and cakes, as well as
fun day favourites such as ‘hook a duck’.
Contact: events@willowbrookhosps.org.uk
Saturday 3 May
Elizabethan Fayre &
Prescot Producers’ Market
Prescot town centre
Fayre 10am to 4pm, Market 11am to 3pm
The town’s heritage will be celebrated as visitors are transported back in time to the 15th Century. It coincides with the popular producers market.
14 to 28 May
Love your Local Market
Kirby Market
9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday
Come along and support your local market.
With 130 stalls at the new Kirby Market, there’s something for everyone!
Sunday 1 June
Love your Local Market
Kirby Market
11am to 3pm
Come along and support your local market.
With 130 stalls at the new Kirby Market, there’s something for everyone!
Saturday 14 June
Bless ‘em All
Knowsley Leisure & Culture Park
4pm
Slaged as a tribute to the Armed Forces and
to mark the centenary of the First World War the band's new wartime show is packed with
Adults £12, concessions £10
Bookings: 0151 443 2200
Saturday 28 June
Local Heroes, Distant Voices
Huyton Gallery
9.15am to 5pm Monday and Friday, 9.15am to 7pm Tuesday to Thursday, 10am to 1pm Saturday
Free 15 week course consisting of email, word
processsing and internet. The three hour classes
are small and informal, the only requirement is
punctuality and a willingness to learn!
Forthcoming ranger events
For details of the regular events arranged by the Rangers visit www.knowsley.gov.uk
For a full list of upcoming events across knowesley, please visit the council’s website.
Foster for Knowsley

The most rewarding job you’ll ever do.

Call 0151 443 3958 or visit www.knowsley.gov.uk and search ‘fostering’
www.facebook.com/FosterforKnowsley