

Driving ban for ex-council chair

Former firefighter 'remorseful' after Pangbourne crash

A FORMER council chairman crashed his car while drink-driving, resulting in a pedestrian's injury.

Although an innocent homeowner was hurt, it was "a miracle" no one was killed, Reading Magistrates' Court was told.

In the dock on Thursday January 16, was Robert Holden.

The 61-year-old former firefighter, of Pangbourne Hill, Pangbourne, swerved across the carriageway, broke through a garden wall and smashed into a parked car which, in turn, ploughed into the homeowner, injuring his leg, the court was told.

Peter Ryman, prosecuting, said the incident happened around 8pm on Shooter's Hill, Pangbourne.

Holden, a father of two and

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former chairman of Pangbourne Parish Council, admitted driving a Vauxhall Zafira after drinking more than the legal limit on December 31 last year.

Tests showed 50mcg of alcohol per 100ml of breath in his system.

The legal limit is 35mcg.

Holden's defence counsel said his client had no prior convictions and had probably passed out due to low blood pressure, as had happened previously.

The court heard Holden, a firefighter for 15 years, was extremely remorseful and had decided not to drive until the medical issue was resolved, no matter the outcome of the

court hearing.

Several character references were passed to district judge Davinder Sandhu, who described the blackout incident as "worrying".

She told Holden: "It's never going to be clear whether the accident was down to drink or to the blackouts you have."

"However, when sentencing you I must take into account that an accident occurred – it's a miracle no one died, and that includes you."

Judge Sandhu nevertheless said she gave credit for Holden's decades of driving without offending.

She fined him £1,000.

In addition, Holden was ordered to pay £85 costs, plus a statutory victim services surcharge of £400.

Finally, he was banned from driving for 16 months.

New landlord wanted at pub

DO you have what it takes to take over the reins at your local?

The Catherine Wheel is looking for its next tenant after current landlord Warwick Heskins announced last summer he was leaving the Newbury town centre pub after 10 years behind the bar.

Stonegate Group, which owns The Catherine Wheel, is now advertising for potential publicans to apply and take over management of the Cheap Street drinking establishment.

A large sign attached to the pub reads "Take on your local", encouraging Newburians and Catherine Wheel customers to try their hand at management.

The advert on Stonegate's website forecasts the pub making £542,671 turnover annually, with the guide rent being set at £730 per week.

Stonegate describes the pub as: "Situated just off the Market Square in the centre of Newbury, this multi-award-winning pub is available for the first time in over 10 years."

"A popular establishment that is enjoyed by both the locals and visitors to Newbury."

"While mainly wet led, the pub also offers a great food offering."

"The pub is well-maintained and in good decorative order, having recently been refurbished externally."

"The centrally located bar is traditional in style and houses



The Catherine Wheel landlord Warwick Heskins

plenty of beer engines for cask ales.

"Loose seating fills the open plan layout and the space can accommodate live music events and bands."

"The introduction of the Pieminister concept has been successful for the pub and the new publican should look to continue this."

"The trade kitchen is small but adequate to support the current food offer."

When he announced he was leaving The Catherine Wheel last year, Mr Heskins said he would be departing in March.

At the time he stated: "I have decided (with a heavy heart) that it is time to move on and pass over The Catherine Wheel baton to someone else."

"The Catherine Wheel is a fantastic pub and believe me when I say I will miss it very much."



Trinity School marked its 25-year anniversary by commending its current students and celebrating the achievements of some of its alumni

Trinity celebrates 25 years of achievement

A NEWBURY secondary school marked its 25-year anniversary by commending its current students and celebrating the achievements of its alumni.

At its annual presentation evening on Friday, January 10, Trinity School hosted several special guests to mark the occasion.

Pupils received their GCSE and A-level exam certificates from Thatcham mayor Suzanne Adamantos who also gave out a vast array of subject and special awards.

In Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) Theo Pagliaroli won the award for outstanding student and Archie Dove the award for greatest progress.

Lily Clarke received the Snowdon performing arts award, Ruairi Hopkins-McQuillan the leadership award and Jade Anns the service to school award.

In sixth form, the two outgoing head students received recognition for their work – Will Hammond for outstanding student and Evie Billyeald for outstanding contribution to school life – with Ben Luckett accepting the Key Stage 5 leadership award.

To mark Trinity's 25 years as a school, more than 20 former students were invited to attend the evening.

The audience watched Trinity alumni in short videos remembering their time at the

school as well as explaining where they are now.

These included Melissa Canio (2002-2009), a children's author who works for Disney in the US, Pierce Jones (2011-2018), a press officer at 10 Downing Street and Yasmin Trigwell (2015-2020), a demi chef de partie at The Woodspen.

Headteacher Charlotte Wilson said: "This event is always a special occasion, celebrating the achievements of our students."

"However, tonight was extra special as we were celebrating all we have achieved over the last 25 years through our alumni who make us incredibly proud."

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