

THATCHAM NEWS

Labour unveils its candidates

THE candidates are beginning to emerge to replace Lee Dillon on West Berkshire Council and Thatcham Town Council.

Mr Dillon stood down as a councillor for Thatcham North East last week to focus on his role as Parliamentary MP for Newbury.

Labour looks to be first out of the traps, announcing a 20-year-old university student for the post.

Lee Allen has been an active member of the Labour Party for several years and is currently the communication and social media officer for Newbury Labour.

"I care deeply about the inequality facing many families and want to be a councillor to change that," he said.

Mr Allen says he is passionate about social justice and has been actively involved in various community initiatives that aim to support vulnerable groups.

Another spot up for grabs is on Thatcham Town Council.

Mike Brook, a retired librarian, local speaker and amateur dramatic writer, is up for it for Labour.

"I value the services that local councils offer," he said.

"The town council has an important part to play in planning. It is important that new housing is matched with new infrastructure."

Chairman of Newbury Labour Party Gary Puffett highlighted the significance of this by-election, saying: "A second Labour councillor on West Berkshire Council would mean we have representation in two key wards in both the east and west of the district which will help us to continue to directly serve our local communities as the party of government."

Clive Taylor (Lab, Tilehurst Birch Copse) became the only Labour candidate in the May 2024 local elections for West Berkshire.

Candidates had until yesterday to declare for the election on Thursday, April 24.

Paul's reward for 50 years of beekeeping

Cold Ash man is passionate about hobby – and he's not stopping yet!

A MAN has celebrated 50 years of devotion to bees and beekeeping.

Cold Ash resident Paul Jarvis said he has been stung more times than he can count, but has no plans to stop his passion soon.

And he just been presented a certificate from The British Beekeepers Association in recognition of his sweet success.

"It's a fascinating hobby. You get stung a bit, but you don't mind that," the 87-year-old told the *Newbury Weekly News*.

But his hobby has also managed to become a family effort.

His daughter Carole Jarvis said: "When he first starting keeping bees, he'd get stung and his face would swell up like a balloon."

"Now it doesn't faze him in the slightest."

"I remember him taking us in the back of his van with hives to move with bees flying everywhere and me being scared, but dad saying 'it's ok, they won't sting'."

"Let me tell you that they did. He found it hilarious."

"I also have very fond memories of him bottling the honey at the dining room table with me putting lids and labels on the jars."

He has also taken his granddaughters out beekeeping and his wife used to make hand cream, candles and furniture polish from the wax.

Mr Jarvis was mentored by Frank Matthews, from Compton.

He has since trained others in



Beekeeper Paul Jarvis with his certificate

the craft himself and continues to tend to bees around Cold Ash, Ashmore Green and Eling.

Recounting what he finds the most interesting part of beekeeping, he said: "You can sit and watch the bees working in front of the hives and bringing in all the different coloured pollens."

"That's something that's very fascinating."

"Anyone who wants to take it up, it'd be well worth their while."

Newbury District Beekeepers Association chairman Adrian Doyle commented on his achieve-

ment, saying: "Newbury Beekeepers have been established for over 70 years and for Paul to be part of us for such a long period is a wonderful example to all beekeepers."

"Paul's jovial nature and excellent beekeeping knowledge have often put a beekeeper's mind at rest in what can be a passion of many opinions."

"Paul's experience is of the highest order and has deservedly been awarded this honour, for which only a few are handed out every year."

Congratulations Paul.

Police appeal over indecent exposure

A MAN has allegedly exposed himself to a woman in Thatcham.

Police are appealing for witnesses following an alleged incident of indecent exposure reported on Sunday, March 15.

A woman was walking down an alleyway between Dunstan Road

and Harebell Drive, when she witnessed a man exposing himself.

The man stood still in the alleyway and did not move. He then ran off towards Dunstan Road once confronted.

He is described as being in his late 30s, approximately 5ft 9in tall and wearing a plain black jacket

with dark navy/black trousers.

Police report he was potentially eastern European.

Call 101, quoting incident reference 43250127654, if you have any information which might help.

Alternatively, provide any information anonymously through Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

THATCHAM

Keeping in touch

Have you got a story?
Contact our Thatcham reporter MIREK GOSNEY on (01635) 886637 or email: mirek.gosney@newburynews.co.uk
Twitter @mgosney_nwn



News updates from Thatcham are now available online throughout the week. Go to newburytoday.co.uk and select the district pages

newburytoday.co.uk



Music at Thatcham Festival

Applications open for town festival

THATCHAM Town Council is seeking applications for events to be included in its annual flagship festival.

The highly-anticipated Thatcham Festival is returning for its 25th year from Friday, October 10, until Sunday, October 19.

And the town council is keen to hear Thatcham-based individuals, community groups, charities and arts and leisure organisations with ideas for one-off or multiple events including live music performances, cultural exhibitions, or something unique.

Interested event organisers have until Friday, May 9, to submit their proposals through the town council's website or by contacting the festival team directly at events.manager@thatchamtowncouncil.gov.uk

The festival welcomed more than 4,000 visitors last October, featuring music stages, historical talks, photography exhibitions, street food and more.

Emily's short cut to helping charity

A 10-YEAR-old girl from Ashmore Green is cutting her hair to support the fight against cancer.

Emily Macnab will be donating 12 inches of her hair during the Easter holidays to the Little Princess Trust, a charity helping those up to age of 24 who have lost their hair due to cancer treatment or other conditions.

Her hair will help create a wig for a child undergoing cancer treatment.

Emily, who attends Thatcham Park Primary School, said while she loves her hair, she understands how difficult it must be for other children like her to lose theirs, so wants to make a difference with hers.

Speaking to the *Newbury Weekly News* about why she decided to support the charity, she said: "A while ago,



Emily Macnab will be having her long hair cut for charity

my nan had cancer, and her hair went.

"And to think that would happen to other people, I decided that maybe I could donate my hair to help people that are going through that."

Her friends don't believe she'll do it, but she said she is already booked in at a hairdresser in Newbury.

Her mother Shelly Macnab shared how she

reacted when Emily told her what she had planned.

"I was so proud of her," she said.

"I didn't think she would do it at all when we first talked about it and suggested it."

"I said to her, 'you don't have to make a decision, just have a think about it, see what you want to do'."

"And then she came back to me in the morning and was like, 'yes, I'm doing it'."

They have started a GoFundMe campaign – which has already raised almost £400.

But they still need more to hit their online target of £700 – what it costs to provide one child with a wig, including making, fitting and styling.

Visit www.gofundme.com/f/emilys-big-cut to support her fundraiser.

Forget-me-not fundraiser

THATCHAM Town Council is inviting the community to crochet forget-me-nots for Dementia Action Week.

Inspired by the Remembrance poppies that adorned Thatcham Broadway, the town council is now inviting people to produce Forget-me-nots – the official flower of Dementia Action Week – to raise awareness and support for those affected by dementia.

The handmade flowers will be displayed in The Broadway trees as part of the 'Paint the Town Blue' campaign led by Dementia Friendly West Berkshire from May 19 to 25.

The council will also be hosting a fundraising party on Friday, May 23, in its dementia-friendly The Jubilee Sensory Garden at its offices in Brownsfield Road.

A crochet pattern is available on the town council's website for those who need guidance.

Any blue or yellow yarn will suffice.



The Jubilee Sensory Garden in Brownsfield Road

Deliver completed flowers to the council's offices by Monday, May 12.