

**babygrow**  
**A P P E A L**  
 Building a Neonatal Unit for the future

**DONATIONS can also be made by texting 'BGM79' (Quoting any amount up to £10) to 70070**

## Pupils' alphabet challenge raises almost £1,000

PUPILS at Rivacre Valley Primary School have again raised hundreds of pounds for the Babygrow Appeal.

Having already raised £260 over Christmas, the children decided to run an 'Alphabet Hunt' and had to find an item beginning with every letter of the alphabet to complete the treasure hunt with a difference.

Thanks to sponsorship from relatives and neighbours, the pupils raised £995 which was handed to community and events fundraiser Kathy Kenney when she visited the school.

## Staff profile: John Gibbs – consultant paediatrician

**How long have you worked here?**

I QUALIFIED as a doctor 30 years ago and trained in London, Liverpool and Sheffield before taking up my consultant post in Chester 18 years ago.

**What do you enjoy most about your work?**

ALL of us paediatricians here in Chester are general paediatricians and so we are responsible for helping to care for sick and vulnerable newborn babies as well as older children and teenagers.

My particular interests within paediatrics are child development, disability and epilepsy. Assisting sick babies and children to recover from illnesses is a very gratifying aspect of my work.

Sometimes, babies or older children have to cope with long term illnesses or disabilities. It can be most rewarding to support babies, children and families to cope with long term disorders and to maximise their potential in life.

As well as meeting a wonderful range of babies, children and



**John Gibbs with Mike, Angela and baby Rosa Jacques.**

families, a particular pleasure of being a paediatrician is working in a team with dedicated nurses and therapists and being supported by clerks, administrators and a host of other committed professionals, all striving to improve the lives of our young patients.

**What will having a bigger neonatal unit mean to you?**

THE NHS is renowned for managing to provide a good level of care despite not always having the best of facilities and resources.

Our neonatal unit facilities were fine when initially designed around 40 years ago but now need a major upgrade.

Despite this, we are currently able to provide a high level of care due to a considerable team effort.

However, there is no doubt that a larger unit, designed to fully accommodate all the advances that have been made in neonatal care, will facilitate the delivery of the highest quality of care to sick and vulnerable babies.

A larger, improved neonatal unit will also provide a better working environment for staff.

Of even greater importance, a more spacious, modern unit will offer a better experience, and more amenities, for parents for whom having a sick baby on the neonatal unit can be an extremely stressful and exhausting time.

## Royal baby competition

THE big question on lots of people's lips at the moment is whether Kate Middleton is carrying a baby boy or girl.

The fundraising team at the Countess of Chester Hospital are asking people to guess whether Kate will have a boy or girl for £1 per guess with all money raised being donated to the Babygrow Appeal.

Lesley Woodhead, corporate and events fundraising manager, came up with the idea for the competition.

She said: "We are all very excited about the royal baby and this is a fun way for everyone to get involved and for us to raise money at the same time."

"We will be producing a special book to send to the royal couple to mark the occasion which will include the names of all those who have taken part in the competition, as well as photographs of the babies born on the same day here at the Countess of Chester Hospital and these families will also be given a copy of the book."

"I am delighted that we have some 'royal' supporters in that Majestic Publications have kindly agreed to sponsor the cost of producing the books and Majestic Wines have donated a champagne prize for the winner of the correct guess that is pulled from the hat."

Competition entries can be made at the fundraising office and the team will be collecting entries at the Grosvenor Shopping Centre on Friday, June 7 and Saturday, June 8

Companies whose staff want to enter can also call Lesley on 01244 364505 and she will visit the company to collect entries.

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## Jams and marmalade donations wanted

VISITORS will be able to support the Babygrow Appeal while exploring the beautiful gardens of Tirley Garth near Tarpoley on Sunday, June 9.

The fundraising team will be selling second hand books, DVDs and bric a brac and are also hoping to have another stall selling homemade jams, marmalades, chutneys and pickles.

Anyone who enjoys making these products and who wants to donate some to the appeal can drop them into the fundraising office by Thursday, June 6.

## Chester's biggest Zumbathon

TICKETS are still available for the Big Daily Deals Zumbathon at Cheshire County Sports Club in Upton between 1-4pm on Sunday, July 7.

Tickets cost £8 and include a three-hour session with fantastic instructors from Chester and the Wirral.

Participants can choose to raise sponsorship for the Babygrow Appeal and tickets can be bought from the fundraising office or on 01244 364341.

# Boys' birthday party raises £2,500

**TWIN boys who spent more than two months in the Countess of Chester Hospital have celebrated turning one.**

Jude and Preston Chard were born 29 weeks premature last May and were very poorly, spending 11 weeks on the neonatal unit.

But the fun-loving boys, who have an older brother Dylan, pulled through and were guests of honour at a special birthday garden party last weekend.

Mum Jodie and dad Ricky, who live in Blaenau, invited about 150 family and friends to join them for the day and to help raise money for the Babygrow Appeal.

The celebrations included an auction for prizes including a signed Chester FC shirt and beauty treatments, raffle and tombola while three brave men agreed to be waxed to raise hundreds of pounds for the appeal.

Guests were able to tuck into a barbecue and enjoy a disco and karaoke while there was a bouncy castle and party games for the children.

In total the garden party raised an impressive £2,555.50 for the Babygrow Appeal.

"The charity is very close to my heart as our twins Jude and Preston were born at 29 weeks in 2012," said Jodie.

"They were extremely poorly and spent 10 weeks in intensive care."

"During this time we experienced what can only be described as a massive rollercoaster of highs and lows, not knowing from one day to the next whether they would survive."

"People have no idea of how much it costs to run a specialised unit and we were conscious that having twins meant that it was double the cost."

"Having twins I was very lucky to have access to the only two high-



**Jude and Preston Chard opening presents on their first birthday.**

dependency beds available which meant not having to split the boys between hospitals.

"We will be forever in debt to the neonatal unit. If it was not for them our boys would not be here today, we owe them our lives."

## Traders demand payout over bus station work

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has been almost halved but we are expected to carry on paying full rents and rates.

"Lots of our customers rely on the buses and they have been getting transported nearer to Tesco and they aren't going to walk all the way from Gorse Stacks."

"The work has taken so long and the worry now is that some of those customers have been lost forever."

"We should have a rent-free period for half the length of the time that we have only had half

the buses. That seems logical to me but that's not how the council seems to work."

Contractors started work on the bus exchange on February 11 but the project fell behind schedule and then stopped altogether because half the shelters were not ready.

Those shelters did eventually arrive and CWaC announced the bus exchange would reopen on May 20 but that target was missed, as was another reopening date.

Cllr Samantha Dixon, who represents the city centre, has submitted a petition with almost

400 signatures to the council calling for a full inquiry into the refurbishment and compensation for traders.

Mr Sheldon, who runs a fruit and vegetable stall in the market, described the new shelters as "pathetic."

"These yellow things look like little smoking shelters," he said. "When it rains people have to stand outside getting wet because they are not big enough."

"After all the money the council has spent, it is ridiculous that the bus exchange looks worse than what we had before."

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