



New Winchester festival promises nothing of any interest at all

ANOTHER EXCITING addition has been made to Winchester's festival calendar with the announcement of the inaugural Non-Festival in 2018.

Organisers were keen to point out both the need and appetite for a Non-Festival which will be: "Two days jam-packed with absolutely f*** all", in the words of the festival promoter, Mr. Dunraven. He said: "For too long, Winchester has had to suffer with year-round festivals, so with that in mind we've managed to find two days in February where we want residents and visitors alike to shop and drink coffee without being subjected to gin, fashion shows, science talks, literary talks and Morris dancers."

He went on: "We're particularly delighted to launch this in 2018, a year in which we are fairly confident that Jane Austen did not die, which means that all can enjoy a Non-Festival free of bonnets, books, exhibitions and rabid JA fans."

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The Non-Festival promises that absolutely nothing will happen over the two days: no cycle rides, no exhibitions, no sword swallowers, no comedy, no ice rinks, and nothing of any interest or note at all.

We will offer nothing of any interest at all

Organisers promise it will be a welcome respite, bound to attract visitors from Hay-on-Wye, Glastonbury and Edinburgh keen to relish the atmosphere of a town where the streets are free of free samples of cheese, chilli and beer, and no one is forced to watch short films or wear a woolly hat.

In previous years there have been attempts to amalgamate festivals in an effort to reduce the number of them. A city council spokesperson said that, though the Wine and Speakers Festival was a promising and, indeed, logical pairing - rivalling a similar happy melding of Ginchester and the Winchester Poetry Festival- re-locating the Chamber Music Festival to Boomtown last year proved less successful with legal action on-going.



NEWS IN BRIEF

RETIRED HARESTOCK RESIDENT remembers why he went into living room

HAMPSHIRE CHRONICLE accused of journalism

CHARTERS Estate Agent awarded award for being awarded most awards

DELAYS anticipated on M3

REAL NEWS OR FAKE NEWS
CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE?

TO MARK the introduction of our new SMUG 'straight' content, we thought you might appreciate the opportunity to test your ability to tell the difference between real news and fake news.

Whenever a news story has the above 'Real News or Fake News' symbol, you might be surprised at how difficult it is to discern which is which. We are conducting a poll on Twitter to find out how discerning Wintonians are. So let us know your opinion by visiting our twitter account and searching for the relevant poll by scrolling down our twitter feed.

To help you, here's a reminder of what you probably already know.

Don't trust your brain.

Brains are lazy. Designed to make sense of the onslaught of sensory stimulation and information they get from the world, brains filter and organise. To avoid being overwhelmed they tend to focus on certain details, ignoring stuff that doesn't fit what you believe, while embracing stuff that reinforces what you think you already know, confirms your suspicions or appeals to your hopes.

Don't be swayed by your expectation of how 'serious' journalism should read.

Just because something is well written and uses an authoritative and erudite tone, doesn't make it Real News.



Have your say in our SMUG polls @SmugW

New study explains visitor decline at Winchester's High Street banks



IN LATE 2016, Winchester's banks commissioned the city's University to discover why customer visits remained at an all-time low.

"We thought it might relate to Internet banking," a research team spokesperson told SMUG. "It turns out, however, that nearly all bank customers avoid visiting branches because staff behaviour makes them uncomfortable."

"I first noticed the change in staff attitudes four years ago," recalled one report contributor. "I went to use a cashpoint inside HSBC. A bank employee opened the door for me, said a cheery *good morning* and asked if there was anything she could do to help me. It was creepy."

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The study discovered that many customers fondly recall the days before banks began their post-financial-crash charm offensive.

"Admittedly staff were rude back then, and totally uninterested in helping you," said another report contributor. "At least their selfishness and indifference was honest, though. It feels so surreal now they pretend to be nice."

Local loan sharks have capitalised on customers' desire for honesty by continuing to offer a candid, no frills service. "I always borrow from Knuckles McNab," admitted another report contributor. "It was scary when Knuckles beat me up for missing a payment, but at least I felt we had an honest rapport."

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"There were no devious psychological strategies to con me into believing he cared about me. He's clear, for example, that defaulters will end up floating face down in the Itchen."

The banks have reacted with disappointment.

"After the financial crash," explained an anonymous local bank manager, "we had a dreadful reputation due to our greed and cavalier disregard for customers' interests. There was no way we were going to change, so we had to trick the bastards into forgetting what the 2008 crisis had taught them about us. That's why we ordered staff to feign courtesy towards the mindless cash-cows and pretend we gave a damn. I don't know what went wrong," he sadly concluded, referring to the Winchester report. "Perhaps the public aren't as stupid as we'd thought."



SLOW BOAT TO WATERLOO

In a seismic move today, Slow Wet Trains have announced that half of Waterloo Station is to be closed. A slightly frazzled Monsieur F. Controllee, Chief of Waterloo Passengers and Trains (C.O.W.P.A.T.) said: "we are planning a, how you say, demi-station. There are too much platforms, no? Eeet is too confusing to count from un to vingt-deux? It is just too easy to commute. So we are making 'eeet more fun, by only having half of the platforms. People will like to squeeze into a smaller space – 'eeet is more intimate, no? 'ealthier? Easier to count?"

M. Controllee said that he and his team of young Train Wizards and Tutees (T.W.A.T.s) have been discussing how to get the same number of 'customers' into a smaller space. "We 'ave a great idea!" says Controllee. According to the chief: "Only people from Basingstoke can use the platforms, as anyone west of there – such as people from Winchester, Poole and Weymut – are too big to fit onto the slimmer platforms. They will 'ave to look for jobs locally – they travel too far to work in Londres anyway."

Phase Deux of the plan will involve various new inishitives: a new 'Gold Shower' ticket will allow 'customers' to sit on each other's laps to save space; new all-weather seats on the roofs of trains will be provided ("you will 'ave to mind the tete in tunnels!" says Controllee); and a new 'Silver Throne' ticket will allow one lucky 'customer' to occupy the toilet for the entire journey. This last inishitive is the first fruit of a new partnership between Slow Wet Trains and Deliverpoo, which will allow 'customers' to be transported to London on the back of a bicycle, should Waterloo be too crowded. Said M. Controllee: "We will be advertising it as our new 'Deliverpoo to Waterloo' service!". Other plans are said to include a 'Slow Wet Posh Wash' for First Class customers.

The unused half of Waterloo Station is to be redeveloped as a coffee shop.



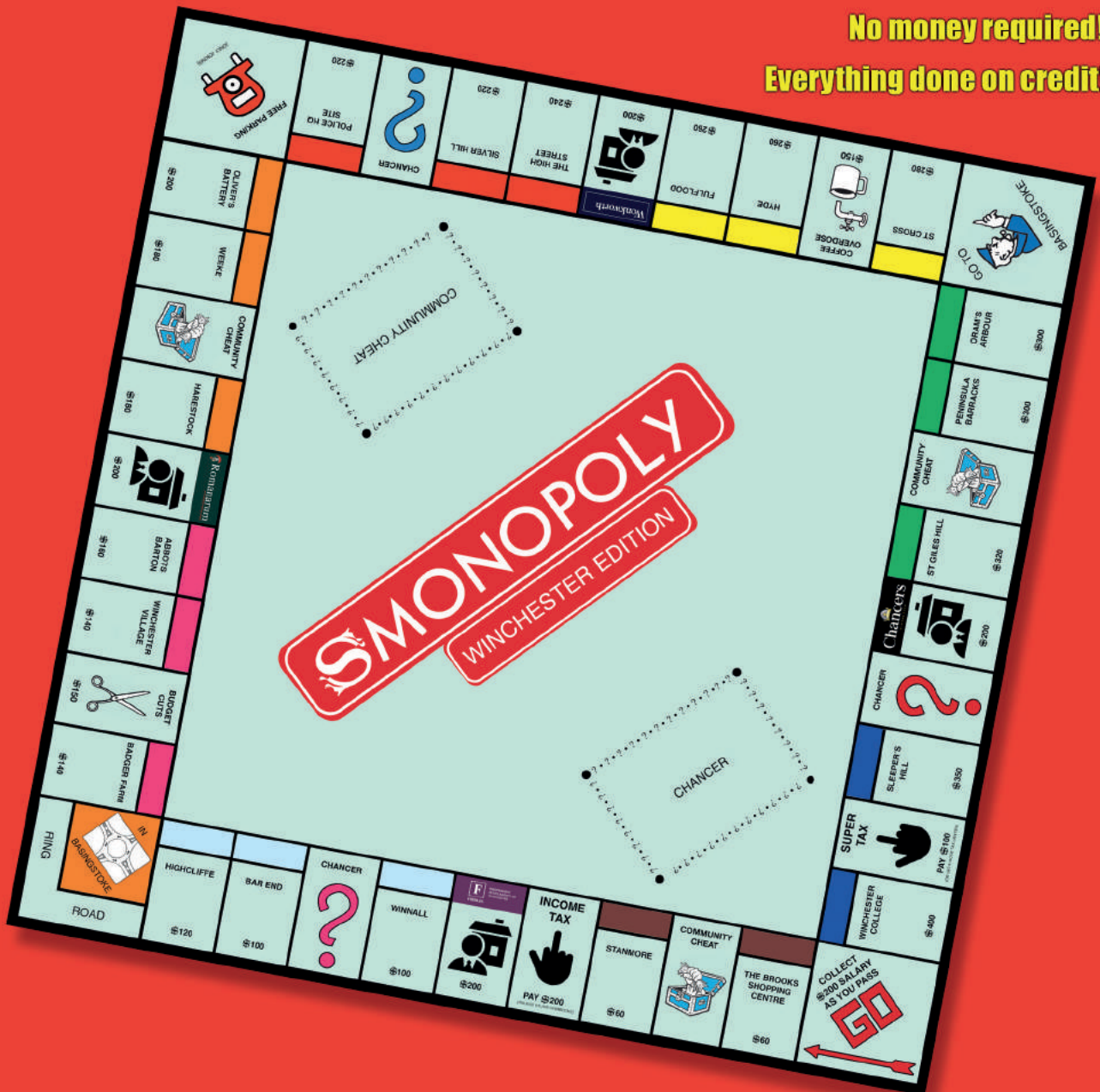
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