

Arson case is adjourned

A MAN charged with arson has had his case adjourned.

Christopher Line, 28, who has lived on traveller sites across south Essex, was charged with arson recklessly endangering life, after a fire at a house in Fallowfield Close, Norwich, on Wednesday, March 16.

Line, of Willow Park, Beck Row, Mildenhall, Suffolk, entered no plea at Norwich Crown Court yesterday. He will reappear at the court on May 23.

Man denies GBH charge

A MAN has denied attacking a man in Leigh.

Mark Barker, 42, of Leigh Hall Road, Leigh, pleaded not guilty at Basildon Crown Court to causing grievous bodily harm with intent on October 14.

A trial date has been set for July 4.

MANNERS Way, in Southend, will be closed from Cuckoo Corner to Hampton Gardens for resurfacing work this evening. Traffic will be diverted to Rochford Road.

■ Friends in need – brain tumour patients Alison Cook (right) and Grace Connell are campaigning to protect vital treatments

Picture: PAUL WATSON
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We want equality in brain tumour care

By STEPHEN HACKWELL
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TWO friends who are fighting brain tumours are urging the Government to end the "postcode lottery" for treatment.

Alison Cook and Grace Connell, who were both diagnosed in 2006, are backing a national campaign to introduce uniform care standards for cancer patients.

The friends believe the coalition's NHS shake-up will mean guidance published five years ago, designed to prevent different treatments being offered in different areas, may be overlooked or ignored.

Alison, 45, of Westview Drive, Rayleigh, said: "This guidance is very important, but hasn't been implemented yet.

"What we're worried about

Lives can be on the line and further delays to implementation would be unforgivable

Pals fear continued "postcode lottery" under NHS reforms

is, with the changes coming in, it won't be implemented at all.

"It's needed to give everyone equal access to treatment."

Grace, 28, who grew up in Rayleigh, but now lives in west London, added: "We are calling on MPs not to forget brain tumours and to ensure no one misses out on the best standards of care.

"It would be appalling if, just as the Government is about to solve this problem, the progress promised is lost.

"When it comes to brain tumours, lives can be on the line and further delays to implementation would be unforgivable."

At the moment, decisions about which treatments to provide for brain tumour patients are left to individual primary care trusts, such as NHS South East Essex.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence published guidance in 2006 which advocated introducing the same standards across the country.

However, the Government plans to scrap primary care trusts in 2013 and replace them with consortia of GPs, which will each be given multi-million pound budgets to spend on treatments at hospitals and private clinics.

If there are no uniform standards for cancer treatments, it could lead to patients at neighbouring doctors' surgeries being offered different care for the same condition.

That fear prompted Brain Tumour Research, Brain Tumour UK, the International Brain Tumour Alliance and Samantha Dickson Brain Tumour Trust to organise a demonstration outside Parliament last week.

Alison, who joined the protest, said: "We just want to raise awareness of what is going on. People need to know about it."

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Volunteer for park history project

AN arts group is looking for volunteers to help with a living history project this Easter in Basildon's Wat Tyler Country Park.

Rayleigh-based Arts Labyrinth, which was established

in 1977, will be recreating the life of 18th century weavers who lived in cottages that still stand in the park.

The Basildon project is expected to be the first of many which the group hopes

to stage this year. Organisers are hoping to attract people with an interest in any aspect of the project.

For further information, or to register your interest, e-mail allivhis@hotmail.co.uk

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