

# Wheathampstead Magazine



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March 2024



**Looking After Eyes**

**Gardening Tips for March**

**Restoration Finally Complete**

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# WELCOME

March is surely one of the best months of the year and, just as my old mum used to say, this month, everything always seems to be on the up! So, with that in mind, with plenty going on in the month, we went out in the area to try to discover what people think of March and its various scheduled happenings.

We also talked to a local volunteer from the Air Ambulance Service to hear about all the good work that they do and the many unsung heroes who give their time and support to this worthwhile charity.

The ribbon has been cut to open the new Squirrels Dray group for local youngsters and the Quiz of Quizzes is back again to challenge all you quiz enthusiasts out there. We've also heard from the Friends of St Helens Church that at last the restoration of the Garrard Memorial in St Helen's church has been completed and it really does look good.

March is a great time to be outside as the sun threatens more and more to shine and so we share some tops tips for what to do in your garden this month, courtesy of Carpenters Nursery and Farm Shop.

*Health Matters* considers eyesight issues and, as usual, there's plenty to do and see in and around our area in the *What's On* section.

Eve

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# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Useful Phone Numbers

**Doctors Surgery:** Marford Road  
01582 832258

**Dentist:** Marford Road 01582 833 408

**Gas Emergency:** 0800 111 999

**Electricity Emergency:** 0800 404 090

**Power Cuts:** 105

**Healthline:** 111

**Police non emergency:** 101

**Parish Council:** 01582 832541

**County Council:** 0300 123 4040

**Local Pharmacy:** 01582 832102

## Help Lines

**Mind:** 0845 766 0163

Advice for Mental Health Issues

**The Samaritans: Freephone 116123**

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**Alcoholics Anonymous:**

0845 769 7555

**Stroke helpline:** 0845 303 3100

Advice from the Stroke Association

**Age Concern:** 0800 00 99 66

**Frank:** 0800 77 66 00

Advice about drugs from professional advisers

**Beating Eating Disorders:**

0845 634 1414

**Cruse Day by Day:** 0844 477 9400

Help and support for people who are bereaved

**Macmillan CancerLine:**

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**Autism Helpline:** 0845 070 4004

## We've heard that

Local home cleaning experts, Molly Maid, are looking for staff. You can work family friendly hours – full time or part time and they have really excellent rates of pay too. You'll be working with a busy, exciting and established team based in Harpenden. For more information e-mail [st.albans@mollymaid.co.uk](mailto:st.albans@mollymaid.co.uk) or call 01582-966646

## Did you know that...

It was March 1969 when Concorde, the Anglo-French supersonic airline, roared into the skies on its maiden flight. The aircraft travelled at twice the speed of sound.



## Peace

March 1, 1961 - President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps, an organization sending young American volunteers to developing countries to assist with health care, education and other basic human needs.

## Thought for March

Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world.

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## What's On... regularly

### • Foodbank

Confidentiality is assured. Community Centre, Hillydyke Road 12.30 - 2.30 every Thursday. Tel: 01727 613019

### • Recreation for the Retired

The Chapel Halls Brewhouse Hill All welcome. Various activities available. 2pm-4pm most Fridays

### • Wheathampstead Dementia Wellbeing Group ('WDWG') Coffee Morning

The Mead Hall, every 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 10.30am - 12pm John Gladwin, Chairman, WDWG 01582 834223

### • W.A.S.P.S. After School Play-Scheme

Fantastic, affordable and experienced child-care before and after school each day, Beech Hyde Primary School, [www.wasps-asc.org](http://www.wasps-asc.org)

### • Quiz

The Swan Wheathampstead. Wed 6th and 20th March 7.30 For details:: 01582 833110

### • Herts Musical Memories

Singing for people with dementia & their carers/loved ones. Monday mornings 10.30am - 12.00 midday. Memorial Hall Call Wendy Hyams 07483 307545 or Kerry Brabant 020 8950 5757

### • Harpenden Farmers Market

70 + stalls running north bound along the Lower High Street from Sainsburys offering a huge selection of produce and gifts.. It's a great place to browse on the 4th Sunday of every month.

### • Community Library

Wheathampstead Community Library Monday - Thursday 2pm - 6pm and Saturday 9am-1pm. Knit Natter & Know Craft group every Wednesday 10am-Noon. Fire Station and Library Marford Road Wheathampstead.

### • Roast & Meat Raffle

Weekly Sundays at The Swan, Wheathampstead

### • Seniors' Bingo

Amwell Local Fundraisers (ALF) holds monthly seniors bingo evenings in the Mead Hall last Tuesday of the month. If you need a lift to get to bingo, just let ALF know (ring Colin on 07790 639735) They will arrange for you to be collected.

### • Harpenden Riding for Disabled (RDA)

Lessons to local people (over the age of 5) with physical disabilities or learning difficulties. Wednesdays 4.15-5.00 pm & 5.00 -5.45pm early Spring through Autumn. Sandridgebury equestrian centre, Sandridge. Contact [harpenderda@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:harpenderda@yahoo.co.uk) and via FB

Please contact event organisers for full details, ticket prices and availability.

## What's On This Month

### • Live Music 2nd March

Popular local band The Carnegies playing their brand of live music at the local pub The Swan in Wheathampstead Village, Saturday March 2nd ,9pm - till late

### • Russell Watson 2nd March

Come join Multi-Award-Winning tenor Russell Watson accompanied by world renowned Pianist/arranger /writer Mike Noran in the magnificent setting of St Albans Cathedral on Saturday 2 - Sunday 3rd March a magical evening which should not be missed. St Albans Cathedral Sumpter Yard for tickets <https://www.ticketweb.uk/>

### • Tony Stockwell - Psychic Medium 4th March

Demonstrates his belief that those who have passed can communicate with their loved ones with detailed messages frequently including names, dates and locations. 7.30pm Monday 4th March Campus West Welwyn AL8 6BX [www.campuswest.co.uk/](http://www.campuswest.co.uk/)

### • Swan Bingo 7th March

It's Eyes down once again for a great night of Bingo Fun at your favourite local pub in Wheathampstead Village 7.30 Thursday 7th March, The Swan Wheathampstead

### • Mothers Day 10th March

No need for cooking or washing up when you treat your Mum to a special time out with a Special Roast. Lunch at The Swan Sunday 10th March, for details contact The Swan Wheathampstead Tel: 01582 833110

### • Quiz of Quizzes 15th March

The quiz for enthusiasts, organised by Rotary in Harpenden at St George's School. Enter your team now. Email [QofQ@rih.org.uk](mailto:QofQ@rih.org.uk) for more information and entry form.Friday 15th March

### • Repair Fair 16th March

As usual, we will welcome any portable electrical and electronic items for the attention of our skilled amateur fixers. We will also be offering simple repairs and alterations to clothing and fabric items. 2pm - 5pm Saturday, 16th March, Chapel Halls Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, St Albans AL4, UK Event sponsored by Wheathampstead & District Preservation Society

### • Hatfield House West Garden - Open Garden 16th March

Enjoy the spring bulbs in the lime walk, sundial garden and view the famous Old Palace garden, childhood home of Queen Elizabeth I. The adjoining woodland garden is at its best in spring with masses of naturalised daffodils and bluebells. For NGS: 11 am - 4 pm Saturday 16th March Hatfield House AL9 5HX. Tickets tel: 01707 287010 Website: [findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/165/165](http://findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/165/165)

### • Arts & Crafts for Adults: Collage Workshop 22nd March

Experienced artist Sally Hunter to discover the magic of collage. Bring an image of your choice with you (print or on phone or tablet). All materials and refreshments provided.Booking essential. 10.15am - 12.15pm Friday 22nd March [www.ticketsource.co.uk/hertford-museum](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/hertford-museum) Hertford Museum 18 Bull Plain Hertford SG14 1DT tel: 01992582686

### • Wheathampstead u3a AGM 28th March

AGM and 'Meet the Groups' event from Wheathampstead U3A. Representatives from each group will be there to tell you all about what each group does. The AGM is an important part of the movement's yearly calendar - which helps shape the future. 2.30 Thursday 28th March at Marford Hall, Wheathampstead.

### • The Hertfordshire family Easter Festival 30th March

The whole event will be under marquees Your ticket is entry to this fun-filled festival on your preferred day and will include all attractions and entertainment at no extra cost! Small fees will apply for the fun fair rides only. Whole array of attractions for all ages from babies to teenagers.... and of course, not forgetting the adults! Herts Showground In St Albans Saturday 30th, Sunday 31st 12 - 6pm tickets <https://hertsshow.com/showground-events/>

To add your events please email: [eve@minimagazines.co.uk](mailto:eve@minimagazines.co.uk)

Please Note: Events, dates and times correct at time of going to press.



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# From Church to Chocolate and Daffodils to Tax Cuts...

Fresh from all the New Years and Valentine's excitement, along comes March – the month of Spring, blue skies and daffodils! No other flower heralds spring quite like the daffodil. The UK is the world's biggest grower of daffodils and they are woven into the stories of many National Trust places scattered throughout Hertfordshire and beyond too.

March marks the end of one of our least favourite things about the winter, and that's the cold and flu season and by March, thank goodness, the flu season is usually over. The days are getting longer too – the sun starts to rise earlier and set later, which definitely can promote a feel-good factor across the days.

All of our bat species, hedgehogs and the dormouse retreat to their cosy boltholes during winter, but March is the month that these animals start waking up after hibernation, so look out for them. Things really start growing in March too, not just daffodils! We've had snow drops, but all sorts of buds, bulbs and greenery begins to show

itself right across the month. That just means it's time to get out in the garden and do those jobs that you've probably been meaning to do, but decided to wait until weather warmed up. Well, now's your chance and, for inspiration, take a look at our gardening tips on page 17.

Easter is one of the principal holidays, or feasts, of Christianity and usually happens in March. It marks the Resurrection of Jesus three days after his death by crucifixion. For many Christian churches, Easter is the joyful end to the Lenten season of fasting and penitence.

Easter can be a time to attend church services, give thanks and review the easter story, although it has become a holiday involving easter egg hunting, the easter bunny and lots of chocolate. It can be a good reason for families and friends to get together to share a meal or have a celebration. Some people even buy two turkeys at Christmas and save one to cook and eat over the Easter holidays.

The Treasury has

*Continued on page 11*

## 'Tax - will Jeremy Hunt target stamp duty in his Budget?'



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confirmed that the pre-election Spring Budget will be held on Wednesday 6 March 2024. We already know that the National Living Wage will increase from £10.42 to £11.44 an hour from April 2024. Eligibility will also be extended by reducing the age threshold to 21-year-olds for the first time.

With a general election due this year, the government will be keen to avoid disappointing its voter base where possible - and the level of taxation in the UK is currently at a record high, so many of us have high hopes for tax cuts and/or threshold increases of some kind in this budget.

With inflation on a seemingly downward trend and hints of a possible Bank of England interest rate cut sometime this year, we can all hope that various economic factors may give the Chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, more room to manoeuvre on tax cuts. He may even decide to

go further and up-rate some tax thresholds to help low-income households. Could the flagging housing market and a sluggish electorate prompt the Chancellor to look at extending stamp duty. That could take the form of an extension to the thresholds at which stamp duty is paid, a reduction in the rate or even another temporary stamp duty holiday.

A slow property market tends to depress consumer confidence and the wider economy. It seems beyond dispute that large stamp duty bills are a disincentive towards downsizing for older homeowners. Among those who have

more space and rooms than they need, many are willing to move to a smaller property to free up some equity and add to their retirement savings. But as they calculate the many substantial costs of moving, including stamp duty on a purchase, they are deterred from acting. This in turn could contribute to the lack of family homes on the market, making it less possible and more expensive for younger buyers looking at in-demand areas to move into larger properties. It was a clear sunny day when we went out and about in and around our area to ask local people



what (if anything) is so good about March.

Mr and Mrs B said: "What's not to like? The days are getting longer, daffodils are coming out, and the weather has brightened up too. All we need now is some nice hefty tax cuts

from Jeremy and March will be great!" (They did laugh at the tax cut comments).



Mr P told us that he enjoyed Easter. He enjoyed all the services at St Helens, but particularly the Easter Services. But he was also happy to admit to a liking for large quantities of Chocolate – either in bars or

Easter eggs. He said: "I'm bored with the budget, I wish they'd just get on with it."

Miss C and Miss R said: "You can never have enough easter eggs. We like to plan easter egg hunts in the garden. Everyone gets involved, kids and the adults too. We all like chocolate - Easter is a family thing at our house, everyone comes for lunch, it's a bit like Christmas really."

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# Local Update

## A Lovely Afternoon

Whilst it's great and very rewarding to see spring bulbs and plants start to blossom in your own garden, for a lovely afternoon out, we found a couple of more formal gardens in and around our area that you can visit.

This March at Hatfield House West Garden, visitors can enjoy the spring bulbs in the lime walk, sundial garden and view the famous Old Palace garden, childhood home of Queen Elizabeth I. The adjoining woodland garden is at its best in spring with masses of naturalised daffodils and bluebells.

Walkern Hall in Stevenage, is essentially a winter woodland garden. This medieval hunting park is known more for its established trees, such as the tulip trees and a magnificent London plane tree which dominates the garden. Following on in



March and April is a stunning display of daffodils and other spring bulbs.

For specific dates and times, please see our *What's On* pages

## Are you an Enthusiast?

If you are a quiz enthusiast and fancy yourself as knowledgeable, the Quiz of Quizzes is probably for you. Rotary in Harpenden's will host their annual Quiz of Quizzes this month with the Rotary's own quiz master preparing the questions, which are general knowledge. Some rounds take the form of 'table rounds'. There are around 30 teams that take part, each with six players and running scores are projected on to a big screen for all to see. During the quiz 'waiters'

take competitors' orders and deliver the drinks to their tables.

The winning team holds the Quiz of Quizzes Cup for a year. Each team member also receives a bottle of wine, as do the runners-up and third-placed team members.

The Rotary staged the first Quiz of Quizzes in 1996 and many thousands of pounds have been raised for good causes since then. The profit from the bar and the proceeds from a raffle are donated to charity.

Enter your team now. Email [qoq@rih.org.uk](mailto:qoq@rih.org.uk) for more information.

## Garrard Memorial Restoration Now Complete

The seventeenth century Garrard Memorial in the north transept of St Helens Church is one of the most important Monuments of its type in Hertfordshire. The life size effigies of John Garrard and his wife, *Continued on page 14*



Elizabeth, lie on a tomb of marble and alabaster and below them are statues of their Fourteen children, those who died young are holding skulls. John, his father and his son, Samuel, were all Lord Mayors of London. Samuel held other honours including that of local magistrate and Master of the Grocers Company, one of the City Livery Companies which still exist to this day. The family were substantial landowners in and around Wheathampstead.

Recognising the need to repair and renovate the Memorial and restore it to its former glory, the Friends of St Helen's Church set about raising funds and applying for grants to raise



the necessary funds to restore this important monument.

Following a series of events in support of their fund-raising aims and after gaining the necessary permissions from the Diocesan Advisory Council, specialist conservators, Chroma Conservation were engaged to complete the works.

The Friends of St Helen's Church are both pleased and proud to say that the renovations and repairs of the Garrard Memorial are now complete. The 'friends' have watched with great pleasure as decades of dirt and damage have been

painstakingly treated by conservators working on the monument from many feet above ground down to the children sculpted at the base. A grant from The Leche Trust with donations from local organisations and individuals, together with events raising money from The Friends themselves, have all contributed to the necessary funds to commission the work. The gold paint now shines, the inscription can be read and some ugly cracks have been repaired.

Ruth Coles from the Friends of St Helen's Church said, "It is exciting that this fine memorial will be looking its best for visitors following the heritage trail but, perhaps, more importantly for Wheathampstead residents who live on land once owned by the Garrard family."

(Pictured page 13) Ruth Coles, Deborah Carthy, Marta Sledz and Ran-John Wilson

## Speaker in Poetic Form

Brenda Bigland has been appointed as the new speaker's secretary Wheathampstead U3A. Brenda told us (in poetic form) how her son, Chris, (pictured), Deputy Chief of Beds Fire and Rescue, started the year with a talk about the service...



Christopher Bigland, Deputy Chief of Beds Fire and Rescue

Held the audience spellbound as he outlined all the Service can do. The audience were delighted to hear from Chris as he spoke about various elements of his work from smoke alarms to line rescues, from fighting fires to flood relief.

The service also supports paramedics; the Fire Service has a wide brief. And important for Chris as Education Lead for the Nation

The development of a website improving safety through education. It links all the Emergency Services with the schools' curricular. Using appropriately focussed and targeted education vernacular.

So do click onto [www.staywise.co.uk](http://www.staywise.co.uk) - and take a look today

This is something everyone should promote; it's a message we can all convey!

Well said Brenda!

## Still Flooding

Amazingly, it seems quite normal to experience rain water flooding on local roads, as they are completely awash with water when driving locally. It's true that there has been lots of rain recently, but it's winter in the UK, so rain really shouldn't come as that much of a surprise, so there is no excuse to allow our roads to flood this way. Flooded roads, like Lamer Lane, cause motorists to drive through the middle of the standing water, making it dangerous for other traffic and cyclists. Dangerous, deep potholes, which are also quite

prolific in our local areas, fill with rainwater and so become obscured, representing yet more danger to road users. We can't help but wonder when the council will properly deal with the problem.



## New Local Squirrels Group

The 1st Wheathampstead Scout Group, our local group, has opened a new section called Squirrels, in order to offer the benefits of scouting to children from a younger age group. Open for boys and girls from the age of 4 to 6 years old, the Squirrels sessions run for 1 hour per week on a Tuesday from 4.45pm.

The new group was opened by Simon Johns, our District Councillor, who cut the ribbon and congratulated Wheathampstead Scout group for offering this wonderful start in life for youngsters in the parish. Steve Haynes, Chair Parish Councillor, and Parish Councillors Anne Howie, Linda Halford and Ann Chance-Read were also in attendance.

*Continued on page 16*



Various children and supporters from the group



Ann Chance-Read, Chair of 1st Wheathampstead Scout Group, welcomed everyone and introduced and thanked Jenny Hanks, Squirrel Leader, who was a driving force in getting the group off the ground

Ann said, "Jenny's enthusiasm and dedication has enabled us to give boys and girls, 4 to 6 year olds of Wheathampstead, an opportunity to join the Scouting movement and enjoy the outdoor life." Ann also thanked Karen Oxley, Group Scout Leader, Matt Bolton, Asst Group Scout Leader, and Catherine Fraser for their help and support. It seems that Squirrels can achieve anything they set their minds to – and have lots of fun along the way. The one-hour sessions will be a great opportunity for young people to take their first step into being part of Scouts. Sessions will be packed with outdoors activities, fun, games, badges, laughter, and so much more, to help the youngest members learn the skills they need for life.

10 children have joined so far and there are spaces for 20 children, going forward. So, if you would like a place for your child or to go on a waiting list, please email: [w11stweathampstead@outlook.com](mailto:w11stweathampstead@outlook.com)

## Mother's Day Tea

It's Mother's Day on Sunday 10th March, so treat your special mum to a splendid afternoon tea at Marley's café in the Village. Bookings are essential for finger sandwiches, handmade cakes, scones, and clotted cream as well as unlimited cups of tea. Delicious! (See page 2 for contacts)



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## Gardening tips for March

Whilst it's hard to tell at this point, history and the weather men tell us that the weather will definitely be warmer in March. So, as the weather warms up, dust off your gardening gloves and boots and get out into the garden to make a start on all those jobs that need your attention. We spoke to the experts at Carpenters Nursery & Farm Shop who shared their top tips for March.

**There are many things** to be getting on with in March and soil preparation is one of them. Hoeing or digging out weeds and lightly raking the soil to create a fine tilth will help to prepare the soil for seed planting.

**Hardy annuals and wildflowers** do not require a nutrient rich soil, so resist temptation to enrich the soil. Whether you are sowing in rows and drills or using a 'scatter' method, the seeds will need to be lightly covered and gently watered in. As the weather warms your newly planted area will start to develop into a floral explosion.

**It is also a great time** to get some hardy perennials planted out too. Buying younger plants in smaller pots is usually a lot cheaper too, allowing you to maximise your budget. Just remember the slugs will be looking to benefit from your purchases too, so make sure you have some slug protection lined up also! Now is also the perfect time to start sowing some veg seeds. Beans and peas can be planted into 9cm pots and should be ok outside unless it is unseasonably cold. Lettuce, tomato and pepper plants will benefit from a slightly warmer environment such as an interior windowsill, conservatory or best still, greenhouse.

**Summer flowering deciduous shrubs** will be looking forward to their annual prune towards the end of this month too. Pruning encourages lots of fresh new growth and helps to create a

bushier habit. This will reduce the chance of ending up with a leggy shrub that you can see right through! Weigela, Spiraea, Philadelphus, Buddleja and Lavatera are all good examples of this.

**It is also time to get cracking** with the lawn too. You may have seen signs of new growth by now and it would be a good idea to start your lawn care now. A light raking after winter will remove any thatch and residual leaves, allowing light to get to the young shoots. Lawn fertilisers should be applied between March and September and are available as slow release granular and liquid forms. You may feel an aerating is also necessary after a particularly wet winter.

**Let us not forget good housekeeping.** As we go to the shed to dig our tools out again, are they clean and sharp? It is also good to clean your



garden tools with warm soapy water and even in a mild Jeyes fluid solution to ensure they are sterile. Secateurs, loppers and shears should not only be clean but sharp too. This makes life a lot easier and reduces ergonomic stress on your body.

**Annual bird feeder** cleaning is due now too. As our feathered friends are now nest building, they need to ensure their food supplement (supplied by us) is healthy and clean. Again, warm soapy water is perfect for this. As we enter the spring, move away from peanuts as they can end up choking fledglings. Stick to suet, seed and mealworm based feeds, Once you see some blue skies, don't put it off any longer, it will be worth it in the long run.



# THE SWAN

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# Local Life-Saving Charity

Somewhere in the back of our minds, we probably all know, or at least hope, that there's an air ambulance service that scrambles a helicopter with medics to come to our aid should we have a medical emergency that needs that sort of service. We tend to take that kind of exceptional care and service completely for granted unless the unthinkable happens and we or someone we love needs it.

We are talking about Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT), the free life-saving service provided 24/7 by helicopters and rapid response vehicles (RRVs). Each critical care team consists of a pilot and co-pilot, a pre-hospital care doctor and a critical care paramedic who can be rushed to the scene with life-saving support equipment to deliver

advanced clinical care, usually only available in the hospital emergency department. Many patients have received blood transfusions from EHAAT's critical care teams and, with blood on board, helicopters and RRVs

carry packed red blood cells of blood group O Negative, meaning they can be used on any patient when needed.

But it's worth knowing that, unlike NHS emergency services, Essex & Herts Air Ambulance is a charity and must raise its own funding to cover the significant costs involved! Those costs are in excess of £750,000 every month to remain operational - to cover all charitable costs, which is around £9 million a year, and the cost per mission is in the region of £2,200.

There are many, many volunteers that work to support the charity and all play an important part and are obviously highly valued. We went to meet Wheathampstead resident and volunteer, Kate

Lloyd-Davies, to find out more.

Whilst personal experience for themselves or for a close friend or relative has encouraged many volunteers to offer their support, Kate became involved around twelve years ago after a chance conversation and meeting with a volunteer already supporting the charity.

Volunteers can be as involved as much or as little as they choose, as the role of a volunteer is very varied. Working in their charity shops, shaking buckets at supermarkets, and collecting tins are just a few of the jobs that need to be done, although there are also opportunities to work in the office, attend events and give talks to schools, clubs and groups about the service.

Kate said: "I have given many talks, including



here in Wheathampstead at the local U3A, and I've been involved in bucket collections and manning stands at fundraising events, as well as helping in the office and on reception and lots of other things. It's been so good to be involved

and it's given me the chance to meet so many interesting people too."

It seems that there are plenty of ways to raise vital funds and Essex & Herts Air Ambulance has all sorts of events, challenges, badges and quizzes for people to take part in.

Fundraising events include the Motorcycle Run, Treks, Strictly Air Ambulance and the Big Pub Quiz to name just a few.

The helicopters, the rapid response vehicles, the dedicated staff, the volunteers, the tours, the talks and all that they do means that there is really so much more to this amazing charity. To find out more about Essex & Herts Air Ambulance (EHAAT), to donate or become a volunteer, take a look at the excellent web site <https://ehaat.org/>

# Local Services

## Elbow Grease

If you are anything like me, cleaning the oven is well down on the list of enjoyable things to do. My oven gets a lot of use and so understandable gets dirty and greasy. I frequently look at it and tell myself that I really must get on and clean it, but honestly, it's always going to be tomorrow, or



maybe even next week but I just don't ever seem to get around to it. Of course, the trouble with that is that it gets harder to clean the longer you leave it. I have a double oven, so I'd have to take out the shelves in both ovens, then there are the sides and the doors, inside and out and... well, it's a lot of cleaning, so I'm delighted to show you

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just how marvelous my cooker looks now! It was marvellous to find a company to clean my oven for me, do a great job and at a reasonable price too! I contacted David Clarke, owner of Oventeam (pictured), and explained that my



oven needed a cleanup and warned him that it was rather dirty too. We arranged a date and time and when the day came, David sent a text to let me know he was on his way. David came prepared with sheets to cover the floor and work top as well as a toolbox with various cleaning utensils, degreasers, and cream cleaners, although no chemicals – everything he uses is completely Non-Caustic and Biodegradable. David is a friendly, smiley kind of man, obviously reliable and hardworking and I must say that I was frankly amazed at the results that David achieved from which was clearly sheer effort and elbow grease – my oven top and

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bottom just look like new! I don't think I could have every achieved those results, no matter how much time I spent on it, so whatever the secret, I'm thoroughly delighted.

David started out initially as a franchisee in the late 90's for an oven cleaning company but launched his own company, Oventeam, around 12 years ago. Based locally, David moved here from Amersham, Bucks over 3 years ago to spend time during lockdown with his fiancée and has never left the area, leaving his brother-in-law, Darren, to cover the Buckinghamshire side of the business while he concentrates on our local area. When chatting to David, I discovered that he only uses non caustic, biodegradable ecofriendly products to clean all sorts of Ovens, hobs, extractors, microwaves, BBQ's and Agas. He is flexible and, whilst he is normally booked up for a few days ahead, he will fit in SOS jobs if necessary.

David told us, "I love the independence of working for myself, meeting different people and I genuinely take pride in my work, so customer satisfaction is something that really pleases me!" So don't put it off any longer... give David a call.

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## Useful Contacts

### Emotional & practical support

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### Health advice and information

[www.nhs.uk/coroavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coroavirus)

### Local council services

[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus)

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### Domestic abuse

[www.hertssunflower.org](http://www.hertssunflower.org)

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### Financial Advice

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[www.nationaldebtline.org](http://www.nationaldebtline.org)

### Avoiding Scams

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### Volunteering

[www.volunteering.org.uk](http://www.volunteering.org.uk)

# Looking after Eyes

After passing the milestone age of 40, many people will notice that it's more difficult to focus on objects up close because of presbyopia - you find it hard to see things nearby, but you can see things far away clearly. This is long-sightedness caused by a perfectly normal loss of focusing ability due to hardening of the lens inside the eye.

For a time, you can compensate for this gradual decline in focusing ability by holding reading material farther away from your eyes. But eventually it's likely that you will benefit from reading glasses, progressive lenses or multifocal contact lenses and wearing glasses or contact lenses can usually correct your vision.



As you continue to age through your 50's and beyond, presbyopia becomes more advanced. You may notice the need for more frequent changes in eyeglass or contact lens prescriptions. You may also find that a single prescription is no longer the best solution for all your visual needs. As an example, you may need one pair of eyeglasses for normal tasks and another that emphasizes intermediate ranges for working more comfortably at the computer. So your optician may suggest bifocal or varifocal lenses, which should cover your needs with one set of glasses. Short-sightedness (myopia) is a very common eye condition, where you cannot see objects far away clearly. Short-sightedness usually starts in

children from age 6 to 13 and symptoms include difficulty reading words from a distance, having to sit close to the TV or computer, holding a mobile phone or tablet close to the face. Short-sightedness often runs in families, so you may have relatives who are also short-sighted. It can get worse until the eye has stopped growing, at around 20 years of age. It's usually corrected with glasses or contact lenses (for adults) which help your eyes focus correctly, so you can see distant objects more clearly.

It's important to have regular check-ups and have

your eyes tested every two years, even if you think your vision is fine.

An eye test can spot some eye conditions and other illnesses not related to sight. Regular check-ups are vital even if you have no symptoms. Wear sunglasses to

protect your eyes

when it is sunny or when you're in high glare areas such as near snow or water. Also, make sure your diet includes nutrients such as Omega 3 fatty acids, zinc and vitamins C and E. These may help to prevent or delay age-related vision problems. An optician will advise you about the best option for any eyesight issues

### Age related sight problems

Even though cataracts are considered an age-related eye disease, they are so common among seniors that they can also be classified as a normal aging change.

Glaucoma is a group of related eye disorders that cause damage to the optic nerve that carries



information from the eye to the brain.

In its early stages, glaucoma usually has no symptoms, which is what makes it so dangerous — by the time you notice problems with your sight, the disease has progressed to the point that irreversible vision loss has already occurred and additional loss may be difficult to stop.

In most cases, glaucoma is associated with higher-than-normal pressure inside the eye

— a condition called ocular hypertension. But it also can occur when intraocular pressure (IOP) is normal. If untreated or uncontrolled, glaucoma first causes peripheral vision loss and eventually can lead

to blindness.

And because most cases of glaucoma have few or no early symptoms, it's likely that many people with glaucoma don't know they have it.

Glaucoma is the second-leading cause of blindness and the second-leading cause of blindness worldwide (behind cataracts).

### Diagnosis, Screening and Tests

#### For Glaucoma

During routine eye exams, a tonometer is used to measure your intraocular pressure, or IOP. Your eye typically is numbed with eye drops, and a small probe gently rests against your eye's surface. Other tonometers send a puff of air onto your

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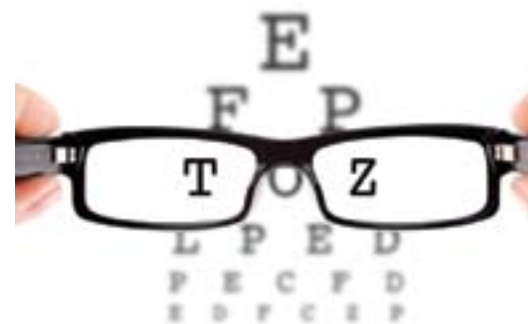


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## Health Matters



### Facts about sight

- Every 5 seconds someone in the world goes blind
- Every day 100 people in the UK start to lose their sight
- Almost 2 million people in the UK are living with significant sight loss. The number is predicted to rise to almost 4 million by 2050
- Around 360,000 people in the UK are registered blind or partially sighted
- An estimated 25,000 children in Britain are blind or partially sighted
- 86% of people in the UK value their sight above any other sense
- Sight loss can affect people of any age but the likelihood increases as you get older: One in five people over 70 are living with sight loss
- Black and Asian people are at greater risk of some of the leading causes of sight loss

eye's surface.

An abnormally high IOP reading indicates a problem with the amount of fluid (aqueous humor) in the eye. Either the eye is producing too much fluid, or it's not draining properly. Normally, IOP should be below 21 mmHg (millimetres of mercury) — a unit of measurement based on how much force is exerted within a certain defined area. Treatment can involve glaucoma surgery, lasers or medication, depending on the severity. Eye drops with medication aimed at lowering IOP usually are tried first to control glaucoma. Many opticians offer free eye tests and if you are over 60 years old, eye tests are free anyway.




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# Local Clubs and Groups



## Tennis

Wheathampstead Lawn Tennis Club with 3 all-weather floodlit courts, a short tennis court and a clubhouse located in the heart of Wheathampstead on Marford Playing Fields, just alongside Brocket View. Wednesdays at 6.30pm every week, or Sundays at 10am most weeks. Visit the website for further information [www.wltc.org.uk](http://www.wltc.org.uk)

## Thursday Club

As part of the Wheathampstead Community Group, the Thursday Club provides companionship and support for Wheathampstead residents who are aged over 60, unable to access other activities without support, or need day to day care either from a carer or family member. The club meets every Thursday in school term time from 10.00.a.m. – 2.00.p.m. Tea/coffee and biscuits are provided on arrival followed by lunch and entertainment. Transport can be arranged. To find out about potential membership, call Val Hughes on 01582 629682 or Peter Woods on 01582 621944.

## The Village Surgeries PPG.

The objective of the group is to contribute wherever possible to the health improvements in Wheathampstead and Harpenden. We are now arranging monthly medical talks on-line. There are also newsletters 4 times a year where members can gain information about local initiatives. We are always looking for new members and it is free to join and participate. To be included and receive the newsletter and get details of the talks please send a request to [chair@thevillagesurgeriesppg.co.uk](mailto:chair@thevillagesurgeriesppg.co.uk)

## Archery

Wheathampstead Archery club was founded in 1956, and has about 70 members. Always happy to welcome newcomers; beginners or experienced. Beginners will need to complete a beginner course run by our Archery GB qualified club coaches. There is a Junior Section for under-18s, but the minimum age is 10.  
<http://wheathampsteadarchery.org.uk/>

## Forging Friendship Club

Affiliated to the Men's Sheds Association, this new club has recently formed in Wheathampstead. Members meet socially and form friendships while facilitating creativity, passing on skills and learning from each other. Meet fortnightly on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 10am in the Forge building near the entrance to the Meads. To join or find out more email: [forgingfriendshipsclub@gmail.com](mailto:forgingfriendshipsclub@gmail.com)

## Wheathampstead Baby & Toddler Group

We are a relaxed and friendly group for 0-4 year-olds and their parents and carers, run by parent-volunteers. We provide toys, craft, music, snacks, hot drinks and the chance to get to know other local people. We meet every Friday during term time, 9:45-11:15am at The Memorial Hall on Marford Road.

Find us on Facebook or contact [wheathampsteadtoddlergroup@gmail.com](mailto:wheathampsteadtoddlergroup@gmail.com)

## Wheathampstead Community Group (WCG)

WCG seeks to support anyone in the Parish of Wheathampstead who is looking for assistance. If you or anyone that you know needs help, or you wish to volunteer for WCG, please call 07539 176481. If you need transport to hospital or the doctor, please call 07918 136870.  
[www.wheathampsteadwcg.org](http://www.wheathampsteadwcg.org)  
email: [Secretary@wheathampsteadwcg.org](mailto:Secretary@wheathampsteadwcg.org)

*Continued on page 28*

## Kimpton Bowls Club

Bowling for everyone- Come and try bowls. 'Beginners Welcome' Friendly members to help you play. Woods provided but flat shoes please. Come and have fun on Sunday 23rd April 2023 from 2pm. Kimpton Bowls Club, Recreation Ground, Kimpton.  
For further details contact John 07785960353

## Business Group

Wheathampstead Businesses (known as WEB) has a mission to Promote, Protect & Support local businesses and the local community. BILLY the Bee is our mascot promoting Buy It Locally. Twice monthly networking meetings provide an opportunity to collaborate, learn from each other and gain customers. For more details contact Ginny Cooper, Chairman:  
chair@wheathampsteadbusinesses.co.uk

## Cricket

Wheathampstead Cricket Club has five adult teams and an expanding colts section. Cricket is played on Nomansland Common on Saturday and Sunday throughout the season, with occasional mid-week



and evening fixtures. WCC really is a club on the up and we now have some of the best cricket facilities in the county. New players and spectators are always welcome. [www.wheathampsteadcc.hitscricket.com](http://www.wheathampsteadcc.hitscricket.com)

## Wheathampstead Dramatic Society

The Dramatic Society is always looking for new members who would like to join this friendly group. For information about our next planned production visit our website:  
[www.wheathampsteadramaticsociety.co.uk](http://www.wheathampsteadramaticsociety.co.uk)

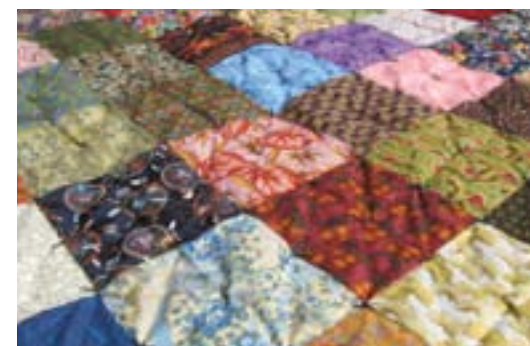
## Wheathampstead & District Preservation Society

The aims of the group are to protect what's best about the village, make the best use of its assets, object to inappropriate planning applications and take part in community initiatives. The more members we have, the louder is our voice. To join, please see our website:  
[www.wheathampsteadpreservation.org.uk](http://www.wheathampsteadpreservation.org.uk) or call 01582 833789.

## Mead Quilters

We are a long established, forward looking and friendly quilting and patchwork group who meet at the Mead Hall in East Lane, Wheathampstead, AL4 8BP.

We meet on the first Tuesday morning of each month 10.00-12.00noon, and the 3rd Tuesday evening 7.30-9.00pm. Visitors are welcome at both sessions. For further information see our website [www.meadquilters.org](http://www.meadquilters.org)



## Wheathampstead W.I.

Lively, interesting and varied meetings. Every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm at the Mead Hall in East Lane W/stead. Social events and outings throughout the year. See W.I Noticeboard in the High Street for more information or contact our Secretary Karen Benomran:  
[wheathampsteadwicommittee@outlook.com](mailto:wheathampsteadwicommittee@outlook.com)  
New members always welcome.

## Football

Wheathampstead Wanderers was formed in 1990 by a small group of families from the village to promote and support youth football for the benefit of children and young people in Wheathampstead and surrounding areas. An FA Charter Standard Club, granted in 2008, with around 300 boys and



girls playing football.

[www.wheathampsteadwanderersfc.co.uk](http://www.wheathampsteadwanderersfc.co.uk)

## ALF Over 60's Socials

ALF raises money at Amwell Day at the Elephant and Castle to fund social events for the over '60s. ALF Bingo is in the Mead Hall (last Tuesday of most months - transport available). Other highlights are the summer outing (for example cream tea at Flatford Mill in Constable Country) and the Christmas party (food, drink, a great entertainer and more). Details from Colin, Amwell Local Fundraisers charity, on 07790 639735.

## Wheathampstead Dementia Friendship and Support

Social group for those living with dementia and their carers. 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, 10.30 to noon at the Mead Hall, East Lane AL4 8BP. Call John Gladwin, 01582 834223.

## Brownies and Rainbows

1st Wheathampstead Brownies meets at St. Peter's in Gustard Wood on a Tuesday.  
3rd Wheathampstead brownies meet at the Scout Hut on a Thursday.

1st Wheathampstead Rainbows meets at the Scout Hut on a Monday. There are currently spaces available so, if you would like your daughter to join please visit: [go.girlguiding.org.uk](http://go.girlguiding.org.uk) to register your interest.

One of the leaders in the village will be in touch when a space becomes available. Registering your daughter earlier rather than later will mean she will be added to our waiting list and when a place becomes available at the right age, she will be offered a place.

*Continued on page 31*

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## Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

Squirrels, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are popular in Wheathampstead and meet regularly at the Scout Hut in Mead Lane, Wheathampstead as follows:

Squirrel Drey Tuesday 4:45 to 5:45  
 Beaver Colony Wednesday 5:15 to 6:15  
 Mead Cub Pack Tuesday 6:30 to 8:00  
 Delaport Cub Pack Wednesday 6:30 to 8:00  
 Lamer Scout Troop Friday 7:30 to 9:00  
 Explorer Scouts Tuesday 8:15 to 10:00  
 If your child would like a place, please contact: [w11stwheathampstead@outlook.com](mailto:w11stwheathampstead@outlook.com)

## Music and Singing

Introducing the Clover Singing Club, a new concept in ensemble singing for ladies, with emphasis on laughter and relaxation. Try us out - first session free. No need to read music. Sessions are term time on Mondays 1.15-3.15 p.m., Mead Hall, Wheathampstead.  
 Contact Charlotte 07791 741233.

## The Hardyng Choir

The Hardyng Choir is keen to help people experience the joy of choral singing, and welcomes new members, whatever their previous expertise, especially Altos, Tenors and Basses. We rehearse on a Monday evening 7:45pm and 9:45pm during school term time at the School Hall of St Helen's C of E Primary School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead.  
 Call Primrose Watts on 01582 460092  
[www.hardyngchoir.org](http://www.hardyngchoir.org)

## Wheathampstead U3A

Wheathampstead U3A is open to anyone who is retired or semi-retired. No qualifications are needed, and none are given. Make friends, learn new skills or refresh old ones through our wide range of interest groups. Enjoy first-rate speakers at monthly meetings in the Memorial Hall and participate in organised outings to places of interest. Find out more at:  
<https://u3asites.org.uk/wheathampstead/home>

## Wheathampstead History Society

The society meets at 7.15pm, the third Wednesday of each month, in the Mead Hall, East Lane.  
 It offers a programme of talks promoting local

history & heritage, undertakes research projects and encourages and supports members' research. For further information visit our website [www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk](http://www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk)

## Wheathampstead Warriors

Your local running club, all abilities welcome!  
 The best way to find out more about the Warriors is to come and join one of our club runs on a Tuesday or Thursday evening.  
 Currently all runs need to be booked in advance but please contact us on [wheatwarriorsmembership@gmail.com](mailto:wheatwarriorsmembership@gmail.com) and we'll be able to arrange for you to join us for a run.  
 More information can be found on our website - <https://wheathampsteadwarriors.co.uk/>

## Positive Movement

On-line classes twice per week (term time) via Zoom, Tuesdays at 2pm and Thursday at 10.30. Classes are for those with reduced mobility. Gentle, chair-based exercises to improve Posture, Balance, Strength and Stability. Call Lynn on 07866 168242 to arrange for a trial class.

## Horticultural Society

Meets: St. Helen's School, Wheathampstead AL4 8AN. 7.30pm, first Wednesday of the month.  
 A friendly village gardening club welcoming everyone of all ages and enthusiasm - even armchair gardeners! A wide range of speakers [some selling plants], socials, visits to interesting gardens, a Plant Sale on 3rd Sunday in May - all are on the agenda. Affiliated to the R.H.S. Occasional meeting on Zoom. For more information please email [whortsoc@gmail.com](mailto:whortsoc@gmail.com) or phone Jill on 01582 460394

## The Community Kitchen

Open to everyone of all ages - families, friends, couples, single people. The Community Kitchen comes together to prepare a three-course restaurant style meal with up to three choices from a freshly prepared menu. You can help to cook and/or mix and mingle with diners and volunteers. Working on an anonymous, pay what you can afford basis, the group meet on the last Tuesday of each month (unless specified), arrival from 5.30pm to eat at 6pm at The Chapel Halls, (behind the Chapel Gym), Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, AL1 4AG. Call or text Maria on 07727 207818 to book your place or with questions.



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