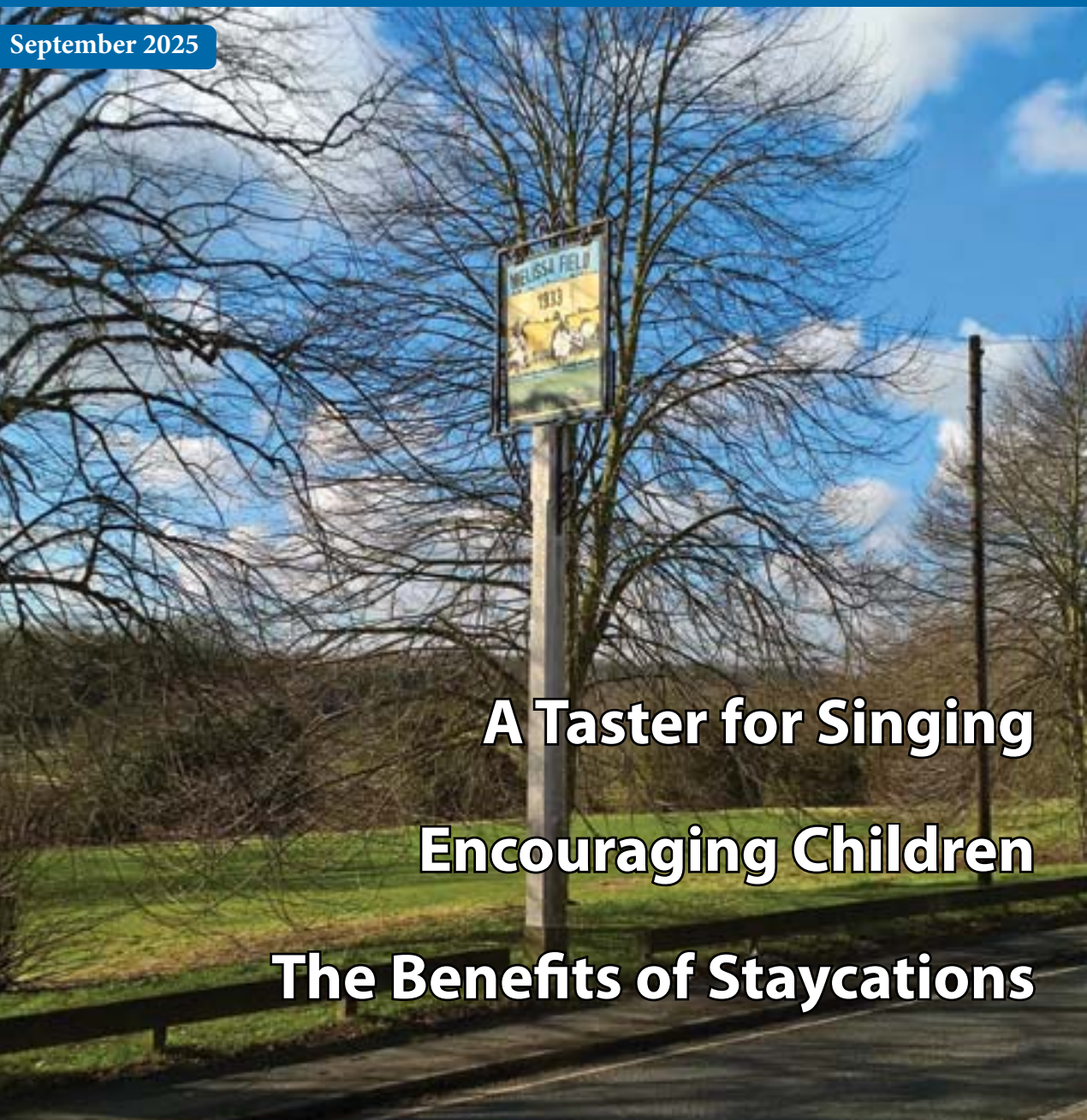


Wheathampstead Magazine



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September 2025



A Taster for Singing
Encouraging Children
The Benefits of Staycations

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WELCOME

Children go back to school and, if the rain stays away, rain stays away, skies are often blue and the roads seem less busy too, all of which makes September appear to be a great time to take a trip, especially, if like me, you love Great Britain. So, this time we look at the many benefits of holidaying in the UK and find out what local people think of staycations. September also seems like a great time for Garden Parties, and the lovely people at the Hospice of St Francis told us all about their popular annual event that helps raise funds for the marvellous services that they offer.

We heard from Katie Hillcoat from Jigsaw Arts who told us about the creativity and confidence building elements for children that comes with performing arts. If singing is your thing, we heard from Harpenden Choral Society who are planning a taster evening this month; and Wheathampstead Wine Club are all set to taste and try as their wine and social meetings re start after the summer break.

Health matters looks at the unpleasant condition of shingles and our *What's On* section highlights the many events and happenings in and around our area.

Eve

eve@minimagazines.co.uk

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Useful Phone Numbers

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Did you know?

It was September 1666 that The Great Fire of London began in a bakery in Pudding Lane near the Tower. The fire likely originated from an unattended oven, with a spark igniting nearby fuel and flour. Over the following three days more than 13,000 houses were destroyed, although only six lives were believed to be lost.



More fires

Recent heatwaves have been driving wildfires across southern Europe, with temperatures topping 40C (104F). Thousands have been forced to flee, and red heat alerts have been in effect across Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, and the Balkans.

We've heard...

That the Wheathampstead Wine Club is back after its summer break with new wines, and plenty of fun and social activities. They are also looking for new members. Check out our *Clubs and Groups* section page 31.

Thought for September

Trust yourself. Create the kind of self that you will be happy to live with all your life. Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into flames of achievement.

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What's On... regularly

- **Foodbank**
Confidentiality is assured. We now hold this at the Memorial Hall in Marford Road, still every Thursday but from 11:30am - 1:30pm. Tel: 01727 613019
- **Recreation for the Retired**
The Chapel Halls Brewhouse Hill All welcome. Various activities available. 2pm-4pm most Fridays
- **Bluebell Memory Cafe**
Activities for those people living with memory-related conditions and their supporters Meets at the Mead Hall every 1st and 3rd Wednesday (except August). All welcome. Enquiries to: Isobel Poole, 07949 630228.
- **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
- **Quiz**
The Swan Wheathampstead. Wed 3rd and 17th September
- **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
- **Silver Moon Café**
New Café, for Seniors, free hot/cold drinks, & cakes. Socialise, meet new people & make friends. Last Wednesday of each month (excl December) 11-12.30 pm, Mead Hall, East Lane,
- **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
- **Swan Bingo**
It's Eyes down once again for a great night of Bingo Fun at your favourite local pub in Wheathampstead Village 7.30 Thursday 4th September at The Swan Wheathampstead.
- **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 and via FB

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

What's On This Month

- **Open Gardens 7th September**
Contemporary space sympathetically redesigned in 2017 to keep many of the existing plants, trees and shrubs from a 1930s semi's garden. Modern take on the classic garden in two halves: ornamental and vegetable. All-year interest gabion borders packed with perennials and annuals, central bed featuring a pond and a mature Japanese maple. Sunday 7th September Open for NGS This garden also makes a donation to Alzheimer's Research UK. 102 Cambridge Road St Albans, AL1 5LG
- **Oakley's Crazy Bingo 6th September**
A laugh out loud night with musical bonkers bingo party madness. Win wild prizes and support 3-year-old Oakley's development while you're at it! Get ready for a night like no other, where the energy is high, the laughs are loud, and the prizes are so bad they're brilliant. This night of madness and mayhem is all in support of a very special little boy: Oakley - A brave 3-year-old who lives with a rare brain condition called Microlissencephaly. He's non-verbal, immobile and has significant visual and developmental challenges, but his spirit is mighty. Broadhall Suite, Stevenage Lamex Stadium, SG2 8RH, 7.30pm till late Saturday 6th September www.facebook.com/events/1667175430624928/ Book now www.tinyurl.com/oakleysbingo
- **Taster Evening 9th September**
Harpenden Choral Society is a thriving and friendly amateur choir keen to recruit new members. They are holding a Taster Evening on Tuesday 9th September. Admission is free and scores and refreshments will be provided. 7.45pm for 8.00pm, until 10.00pm United Reformed Church, Vaughan Road, Harpenden AL5 4ED Tuesday 9th September. For further information please contact Melanie, the Membership Secretary, who will be happy to answer any questions: membership@harpendenchoralsociety.org
- **Celebrating 90 years in song 13th September**
Welwyn Garden City Male Voice Choir are starting their 90th Anniversary Celebrations with a Gala Concert This will be a spectacular event, telling the story of the choir since its founding. There will be local dignitaries, speakers and special guests to celebrate this milestone in words and music. 7pm Saturday 13 September St. Mary's Church, Church Road, Welwyn, AL6 9LX for tickets www.wgcmalevoicechoir.org.uk/
- **Behind the Scenes at the Museum: 13th September**
Discover the story of Hertford Museum and its collections. This illustrated talk from the Curator will cover the 122 year history, exceptional collections and the diverse exhibitions, projects and programmes that are offered today. Limited places, booking essential! 2.30 pm Saturday 13th September Hertford Museum 18 Bull Plain Hertford Hertfordshire SG14 1DT for tickets www.ticketsource.co.uk/hertford-museum/t-vvxlmg www.hertfordmuseum.org Tel: 01992582686
- **Garden Party 14th September**
The Hospice of St Francis will hold its popular annual Garden Party in the stunning grounds of Ashridge House on Sunday 14th September, with this year's event offering a wide range of activities and attractions to keep the whole family entertained. Live music, circus skills, face painting and much more 12- 5 pm Ashridge House, Berkhamsted, HP4 1NS For details and tickets see the web site. www.stfrancis.org.uk/gardenparty
- **Open Gardens 17th September**
Daisy Roots nursery garden acts as trial ground and show case for perennials and ornamental grasses grown there. Over 250 varieties of snowdrop in February, deep borders packed with perennials and grasses later in the year. Small front garden with lots of foliage interest. 12 - 4pm Wednesday 17th September 8 Gosselin Road Bengoe, Hertford, , SG14 3LG Open for NGS.
- **Wheathampstead u3a 25th September**
Steve Dimmer will be the speaker at the September meeting. It's a return visit by Steve, but this time he will be talking about that most enduring and popular series of film comedies, the Carry-On films. He will take the audience through the rise of these films, looking at the lives of some of the main players and the legacy these comedies have left behind - all illustrated with clips from some of the most successful films. Memorial Hall at 2:00 for 2:30pm on Thursday 25th September.

To add your events please email: eve@minimagazines.co.uk

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

Local Update

Fantastic Garden Party

The Hospice of St Francis will hold its popular annual Garden Party in the stunning grounds of Ashridge House on Sunday 14th September, with this year's event offering a wide range of activities and attractions to keep the whole family entertained.

Party-goers can look forward to regular attractions like cream teas, live music, a dog show, Pimms tent and a wide range of speciality, locally produced food and drink. There will also be a Shop Local Village with a variety of artisan gifts to browse.

The family-friendly event draws crowds in the thousands who come to soak up the festival atmosphere and enjoy the opportunity to explore the extensive grounds of Ashridge House, which has played host for 21 years to what is now the best-attended event in the charity's fundraising calendar.

Nearly 5,000 people made the most of the warm

sunshine last year, raising over £43,000 for the Berkhamsted-based charity.

The Garden Party is a chance to show support for the Hospice and help to raise the over £6m needed every year to fund its free care and support for people facing life-limiting illnesses in West Herts and South Bucks.

Live music from Choir on the Green, The James Trio, and a ukelele band will entertain the crowds throughout the afternoon. Children can look forward to circus skills, face painting, and craft activities like sand art.

For tickets see the web site. www.stfrancis.org.uk/gardenparty

Stalls are still available to book and any local businesses interested in having a stall should email fundraising@stfrancis.org.uk

The Hospice of St Francis helps 2,000 people each year to live their precious lives well across West Hertfordshire and South Buckinghamshire. The Hospice's free care has many forms – care at home, in their outpatient health and wellbeing



Spring Centre or through specialised individual care in one of the Hospice's beds – and is defined by each person's need, needs that may change over time. Graded 'Outstanding' in its last CQC inspection, the charity cares for an individual or family for however long it's needed – days, weeks, months or even years. for details see page 7,

Patient Satisfaction Improves

According to the results of a national survey, patient satisfaction with GP practices, NHS dental and pharmacy services has improved across Hertfordshire.

The survey, which was sent out to just over 14,000 local patients earlier this year, revealed:

- 75% of patients expressed overall satisfaction with their GP practice, compared with 72% last year
- 91% of patients expressed overall satisfaction with local pharmacy services, compared with 89% last year
- 7% of patients expressed overall satisfaction with local NHS dental services, compared with 75% last year



Avni Shah, Director of Primary Care, NHS Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Board, (ICB) said: "This is great news and it's fantastic that all three services, GP, dental and pharmacy have achieved these results.

"This patient feedback shows that our local services remain resilient, and staff continue to work hard to do all they can for patients, despite the continuing pressure on NHS services. "We do know however that people's experiences differ across the patch which is why our focus continues to be on enhancing local services, working with and supporting individual services where needed, and implementing further change for the better."

Over the last year the ICB's primary care team has worked with local GP, dentist and pharmacy services to improve access to services and patient experience.

This includes investing in advanced telephone systems and expanding the use of online consultation tools to make it easier for patients



to contact their GP practice. The local NHS has also promoted the NHS app which has led to an over 50% increase in patients registering with the app an 40% increase in patients using it to order repeat prescriptions*. This year has also seen the expansion and development of the Pharmacy First scheme with pharmacies making it easier to get help for common conditions. There have been over 150,000 consultations in pharmacies that might previously have been delivered in general practice.

There have also been 120,000 new patients seen by an NHS dentist* and more appointments available including through the urgent dental care service.

Anvi continued: "Thank you to all of our patients who took the time to

Continued on page 11

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complete the survey. The recently released 10-year plan aims to improve GP access by making it easier for patients to contact practices and receive timely responses. It emphasises caring for more people in the community and using technology to improve access and patient experience for all. We are committed to continue to work with our local primary care providers to deliver further improvements for local patients."

Wine and Social

A glass of wine (or simila) is a great start to an evening of socialising. When September comes around, it means that Wheathampstead Wine Club is back in full swing after the summer and looking forward to welcoming members old and new.

As usual, the club offers a varied programme, mainly focusing on wine, but sometimes other 'tipples' are introduced, too. A Call My Bluff style game evening describing, sampling and identifying specific wines is popular, along with various other events that are often planned. So when it comes to socialising, Wheathampstead Wine Club is a great place to meet new friends, taste and try new things, all while you are mixing and socializing with other like-minded local people.

For more information see our Clubs and Groups section on page 31.

Could you be a Volunteer

Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care is urgently seeking new volunteers to support patients in their own homes.

Supporting Hands volunteers provide companionship and practical support in the



Looking to Volunteer?

community to patients who are living with a progressive life-limiting illness, and those around them.

No previous experience is required, but the role often appeals to people who have experience of working in health or social care.

Rennie Grove Peace Hospice Care is a charity that provides patient-centred palliative care and bereavement support for adults and children, and their loved ones, within *Continued on page 13*





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If you, or someone you know, could spare a few hours each week to support local people during a difficult time, get in touch today by visiting the web site <https://renniegrovepeace.org/>

Great Fun Singing

Harpenden Choral Society has an active and committed membership of about 75 singers. The choir is celebrating its 50th Anniversary this season and is marking the occasion with a concert of the choirs' favourite works in November. Plans also include the popular annual Christmas carol concert, a spring concert of Vivaldi's Gloria and Handel's Coronation Anthems and a summer concert of Puccini's Missa di Gloria and Rutter's Magnificat. All concerts this season will be held in Harpenden churches with professional soloists and musicians including the King's Sinfonietta.

Formed in 1975, Harpenden Choral Society has an established reputation for high quality performances to audiences in Harpenden and the local area, singing works from all periods. The choir would now like to recruit new members in all voice sections. Singers can be sure to find challenge and inspiration as well as having great fun singing with a friendly group of people. With that in mind, the choir is holding a Taster Evening on Tuesday 9th September Admission is free and scores and refreshments will be provided. See What's On page 7 for more details. Free singing lessons are offered to new joiners



under the age of 30. Reduced subscriptions are available to those under 30, full-time students and anyone in receipt of income-related benefits. A basic ability to read music is needed to follow the scores, but previous experience of choral singing is not necessary.

The society is fortunate to have John Andrews (pictured) as its Musical Director and Vivien Powles as its Rehearsal Accompanist. Full details of the forthcoming programme and more information can be found on the choir's website: www.harpendenchoralsociety.org



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Encouraging Children

When it comes to drama and performing arts in general, it seems likely that there are many benefits for children. Involvement in drama activities can help children to develop essential life skills that extend beyond the stage, enhancing their academic performance, social interactions, and their emotional well-being. Also, drama can encourage children to step outside their comfort zones and explore different characters and scenarios, sparking their imagination and creativity.

We spoke to Katie Hillcoat, who opened her own performing arts school in 2015 and launched in Harpenden in January this year, and she told us what it's all about.

Katie began as a Performing Arts teacher for Jigsaw Arts in 2012. By 2014 she became a school manager and then she opened her own Jigsaw Arts school in 2015. Starting with just 30 students, her classes grew so quickly that she opened another school in 2017, a third in 2019 and now has Harpenden too, with a total of 550 students across the schools.

Katie told us: "I moved to Harpenden when my eldest was 4 months old and knew instantly I wanted to bring Jigsaw into the local community as there is nothing quite like it! He is now 4 years

old and I have a 3-year-old and an 11-month-old. I decided to go for it in January and we opened in Harpenden with over 50 fantastic students aged 3-18 years."

Even though many people dream of becoming stars of stage and screen, there is clearly lots of work involved and we were keen to find out just how it all began for Katie and she explained: "I've been performing for as long as I can remember! I grew up in the Lake District and moved to Liverpool when I was 18 to train at Paul McCartney's Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts and The National Youth Theatre of Great Britain. I then moved to Germany after graduating, to tour in a musical and two plays. When I moved back to the UK I took part in various theatre projects and quickly fell in love with teaching the Performing Arts and how rewarding it was to see my students gain so much confidence! I knew this was the right path for me and have never looked back."

Performing Arts classes at Jigsaw are a mixture of singing, dance and drama. Every class is full of energy and imagination and can include all things musical theatre/Broadway, as well as the commercial elements of street dance, pop and acting for screen.

Continued on page 16



Each session is a chance for the children to grow in confidence, make friends, and explore their creative spark in a structured and supportive environment. Children are encouraged to explore their imaginations, build confidence, and grow. All staff team members are DBS checked and have attended the rigorous Jigsaw Arts teacher training. The team have all trained at London's top drama schools such as Laine Theatre Arts & Mountview in professional Musical Theatre. They have very successful careers within the Performing Arts industry which is very exciting for our students!

Sessions are on Sunday mornings at Katherine Warrington School. There are parent/child classes for tots up to aged 3 and there are 'drop off' classes which are a mixture of singing, dance and drama for 3-4's and 5-6's, which are 90 minutes of singing, dance and drama. 7-18's attend from 10am – 1pm and rotate between an hour of singing, dance and drama each week. Katie told us: "We work towards exciting end of term class shows and presentations so parents and family can come along to see what we have been working on in our singing, dance and



drama."

The great thing is that Jigsaw Arts offers a two-week trial initially, so you and your child can see if it works for you before you commit to a full term. Classes begin again with a new term starting on Sunday 21st September, so now is a good time to book a trial. See page 19 for contact details

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It's Really 'Great Britain'

It's true that it can be marvellous to travel abroad to experience different scenery and different cultures, but there is something very special about holidaying in the UK.

Holidays in the UK offer so many advantages including reduced travel time and costs, increased convenience, and opportunities to explore some great landscapes without the bother of international travel. From avoiding airport hassles to supporting local businesses, staycations can be both relaxing and enriching and good on your pocket and your stress levels. In the UK, we really are spoiled for choice when it comes to the great outdoors in this our own green and pleasant land. There are the rugged coastlines and sandy beaches of Devon

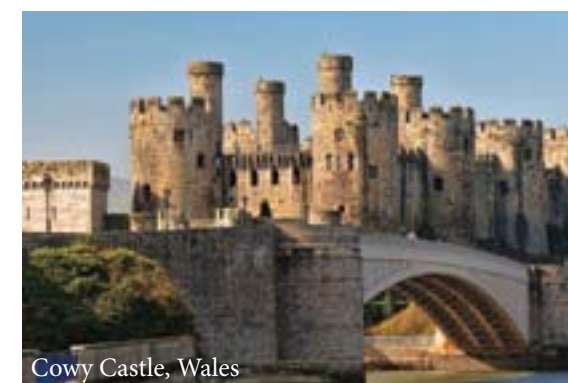
and Cornwall all the way through to the snow-capped mountains of Scotland, and any amount of different sets of scenery in between. Discover vibrant bustling city centres with diverse cultural experiences or relax in charming towns and

quaint villages with unique local charm. If you are into history, the UK has many historical buildings, Churches, Cathedrals and Abbeys, various grade 1 and grade 2 listed buildings, stately homes and castles to explore as well as museums and exhibitions aplenty and there's no need for extensive advance planning. If you love theatre, comedy or live music, then the UK has some of the best entertainment in the world. West end shows, Glastonbury

Continued on page 19



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music festival, the Edinburgh fringe and any number of concerts and shows at the palladium, the Albert Hall and many other music and performing arts venues as well as music halls and theatres up and down the country. England is a country with a rich culture, a proud history, and a diverse society. There is no doubt that the UK has changeable weather and one reason that many people give for travelling abroad is sunshine. But recently, UK summers have been notably hotter than some parts of the Mediterranean and indeed, as I write this, we are in the midst of a heatwave with temperatures expected to hit 32C. When it comes to food, the UK has an amazing melting pot of different cuisines from around the world to enjoy. The choices are so varied that it's certain that you could plan to eat freshly cooked meal from a different culture every night of the week if you wanted to. Vegetarian and vegan food is also widely available and there are plenty of excellent supermarkets and speciality stores that will cater for all your needs if you are self-catering. Another big plus is that if you like a full English breakfast, fish and chips or a Sunday roast - staying in the UK means that you won't need to miss out on those *Continued on page 21*

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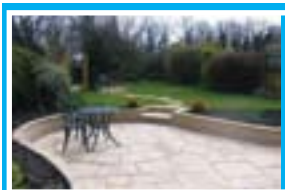
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Loch Ness

either.

It really depends on how you want to spend your holiday time, although the real benefits of a holiday in the UK is that there is so much to choose from and you can do just what is right for you, whether that's a city break with nearby entertainment or an escape to the country for relaxation. You can climb mountains, play a game of tennis or a round of golf, go surfing in the sea, or walking or cycling through the woods. With so many places to see and things to do it really is easy to see why it's called Great Britain.

As you can probably tell, I'm a great fan of holidaying in our beautiful country, in fact this year so far, I've been lucky enough to have a few short trips in the UK to Norfolk, Brighton and Bath although I must confess that have had a few days in Spain too.

We went out and about in our area to find out what local people think of Holidays in the UK.

Mrs C said: "You can't beat travelling in the UK, driving down to Devon is great. There is simply no hassle. Once you've decided where you are going and booked up, all you need to do is pack

up the car and your holiday starts. Marvellous, no stress, no airports, and if you start early enough no traffic either."

Mr and Mrs P told us: "We like the Scilly isles. We try to go most years. So relaxing, the weather is usually warm and everyone is friendly and it's just what holidays are all about."

Mr F said: "The truth is, we do like to go abroad and we go to France as often as we can, but having said that, we often go to Yorkshire to visit family and that really is splendid, such beautiful countryside. We stay in a local hotel and amble home when we are ready. There isn't any hassle involved so I suppose that's the best type of holiday."

Miss D said: "I remember great holidays with my mum and dad and brother when I was younger. We always got up really early and drove down to the coast to catch the ferry to Isle of Wight. We were out every day, usually spending hours in the sea and on the beach, picking up shells and building sandcastles and eating ice cream. They were really happy times."

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All About Shingles

Shingles can occur anywhere on your body and is a viral infection that causes a painful rash. It typically looks like a single stripe of blisters that wraps around the left side or the right side of your torso.

Shingles is caused by the varicella-zoster virus - the same virus that causes chickenpox. After you've had chickenpox, the virus stays in your body for the rest of your life. Years later, the virus may reactivate as shingles.

Shingles isn't life-threatening, but it can be very painful and unpleasant. Vaccines can help lower the risk of shingles. Early treatment may shorten a shingles infection and lessen the chance of complications. The most common complication is postherpetic neuralgia. This is a painful condition that causes shingles pain for a long time after your blisters have cleared.

Causes of shingles

You cannot get shingles from someone with shingles or chickenpox but you can get chickenpox from someone with shingles if you have not had chickenpox before. When people get chickenpox, the virus stays in the body. It can be reactivated later and cause shingles if someone's immune system is weakened. This can be because of stress, certain conditions, or treatments like chemotherapy.



Symptoms of shingles

Shingles symptoms usually affect only a small section on one side of your body and the first signs of shingles can be:

- Pain, burning or tingling
- Sensitivity to touch
- A red rash that begins a few days after the pain
- Fluid-filled blisters that break open and crust over
- Itching

Some people also experience:

- Fever
- Headache
- Sensitivity to light
- Fatigue

Pain is usually the first symptom of shingles. For some people, the pain can be intense. Depending on the location of the pain, it can sometimes be mistaken for problems with the heart, lungs or kidneys. Some people experience shingles pain without ever developing the rash.

The rash appears as blotches on your skin, on 1 side of your body only. A rash on both the left and right of your body is unlikely to be shingles. The blotches become itchy blisters that ooze fluid. A few days later, the blisters dry out and scab. Whilst the shingles rash often develops as a stripe of blisters that wraps around either the left or right side of the torso, sometimes the rash can



Health Matters

occur around one eye or on one side of the neck or face.

Treatment for shingles

Treatment for shingles depends on how severe your symptoms are and whether you're at risk of complications. If you have a mild rash you may not need any treatment.

You may be offered medicine (antiviral tablets) to help speed up your recovery from shingles if: you have a weakened immune system, your pain or your rash is moderate or severe, the rash is affecting other areas of your body apart from your chest, tummy and back.

You usually need to start taking the medicine within 3 days of your rash first appearing. Treatment for shingles can also include medicines to help relieve pain, such as painkillers, steroid tablets or medicines that help with nerve pain.

Looking after yourself

If you have shingles there are things you can do to help with the symptoms such as keeping the rash clean and dry to reduce the risk of infection, wearing loose-fitting clothing, using a cool compress (a bag of ice cubes or frozen vegetables wrapped in a towel, or a wet cloth) a few times a day and taking paracetamol to ease pain.

It can take up to 4 weeks for the shingles rash to heal. Your skin can be

Continued on page24



painful for weeks after the rash has gone, but it usually gets better over time.

Is it contagious?

As previously noted, you can't spread shingles to others but people could catch chickenpox from you if they have not had chickenpox before or have not had the chickenpox vaccine because shingles is caused by the chickenpox virus. So try to avoid any one that hasn't had chickenpox before as well as anyone that is pregnant or babies under 1 month old. You can only spread the infection to other people while the rash is weeping.

Complications of shingles

Most people recover from shingles without any problems. But it can sometimes cause complications, such as: post-herpetic neuralgia, where pain lasts for several months after the shingles rash has gone. The rash becomes infected, which may need to be treated with antibiotics. Scarring or changes in skin colour after the rash has healed, muscle weakness and eye problems may occur.

Another complication is Ramsay Hunt syndrome, which is a rare condition where shingles affects your facial nerve, causing weakness on one side of your face, and sometimes hearing problems. You can reduce the risk of complications by getting treatment as soon as possible after your symptoms start.



Shingles vaccine

A shingles vaccine is available on the NHS for:

- people who turned 65 on or after 1 September 2023
- people aged 70 to 79 who have not yet been vaccinated
- people aged 50 and over with a severely weakened immune system



The vaccine helps reduce your risk of getting shingles and even if you get shingles after being vaccinated, the symptoms can be much milder. You can get shingles more than once, so it's important to get vaccinated even if you've had shingles before.

Ask your GP surgery if you can get the vaccine on the NHS.

Information provided by NHS and Mayo clinic

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Protect Your Family Against Measles

As measles cases continue to rise across the country, parents, guardians and carers are being urged to make sure their children are up to date with their Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccinations. The MMR vaccine is the most effective way to protect children from becoming extremely unwell as a result of these highly contagious diseases. Two doses of the vaccine are needed to give a child lifetime protection.

Measles spreads easily among unvaccinated people, especially in nurseries and schools - so far in 2025 there have been more than 500 confirmed cases in England, with most of these being young children. You can catch it just by spending time in the same room as someone who has it, even if they don't know they are infected. Children who get measles are often really unwell, and it can lead to serious health conditions such as meningitis and hearing loss. In extreme cases, as we have recently seen elsewhere in the country, it can even be fatal.

How to get the MMR vaccine

- Ask at your GP practice, or
- Call the immunisations team to book an appointment near you: 0300 5555 055 option 7.

Residents' Feedback

Nearly 3,000 residents aged over 55 took part in an Age Friendly Hertfordshire survey to help improve services for older people in the county. Participants were asked for their views on eight areas of everyday life, such as health services, public transport, housing and volunteering opportunities, helping local authorities including Hertfordshire County Council to better understand what they do well to support people as they get older, and what they could do better. The areas identified by the residents who took part will now form the basis of a new vision and strategy for Age Friendly Hertfordshire which will be put together to help enact meaningful change in the areas where it is most needed. You can read the results of the survey and the full report <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>

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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 Bocket View. Wednesdays at 6.30pm every week, or Sundays at 10am most weeks. Visit the website for further information www.wlts.org.uk

Thursday Club

The Thursday Club is a friendly, volunteer-run companionship and support Club for Wheathampstead residents who are over 60 and unable to access other activities without support. The Club meets every Thursday from 10am-2pm. Tea/Coffee is provided upon arrival, followed by a home cooked meal and then we finish with some form of entertainment. Transport to and from the Mead Hall can be arranged. To find out more, or if you have any questions, call Val Hughes on 01582 629682 or Michael Corley on 01582 833018.

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

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 weekly on Wednesday at 10am to 12 pm in the Old Forge building near the entrance to the Meads.

To join or find out more email:
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

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.wheathampsteadwgc.org
 email: Secretary@wheathampsteadwgc.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

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



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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 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 10.00-12.00pm, and the 3rd Tuesday evening 7.30-9.00pm. Visitors are welcome at both sessions. For further information see our website 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 Gillian Keen: wheathampsteadwicommittee@outlook.com
New members always welcome.

Herts and Middx Badger Group

We look after badgers and their habitat across the two counties. We are involved in badger rescues, surveys, monitoring, education, advice, campaigning and upholding the law relating to badgers. Meet 1st Tuesday of the month from 8pm in the Mead Hall in Wheathampstead. Emergency line. 07860 210414
Enquiries. info@hmbadgergroup.org.uk or visit <https://hmbadgergroup.org.uk/>

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



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 e mail whortsoc@gmail.com or phone Jill on 01582 460394

Bluebell Memory Cafe

Friendship coffee activities and outings for those living with memory-related conditions and their supporters. 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, 10.30 to noon at the Mead Hall, East Lane AL4 8BP. Call Isobel Poole, 07949 630228 All Welcome

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 to register your interest.
One of the leaders in the village will be in touch when a space becomes

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All popular and meet regularly at the Scout Hut in Mead Lane, Wheathampstead as follows:

Squirrel Drey Tuesday 5:15 to 6:15
 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:
 wl1stweathampstead@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 Hardynges Choir

The Hardynges 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.hardyngeschoir.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

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 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.

Wheathampstead Wine Club

Friendly social group that meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 7:30 at the Mead Hall except for July, August and December. You don't need to know anything about wine. Members can learn about the wines that they are sampling and get wine shopping and price advice too from the various tastings and presentations that take place during meetings. If this sounds like your type of social evening, call Alan 07866 953971 or email wiggintonalan@gmail.com or just come along - you will be very welcome!

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