

Wheathampstead Magazine



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May 2025



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World War 2 Exhibition

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WELCOME

It's hard to believe that it was 80 years ago this month that the world saw an end to a war that had endured for five years. Whilst there will be national celebrations and commemorations, we heard from the Wheathampstead History Society who told us that they will mark the occasion with an exhibition entitled Wheathampstead During World War 2. We also had an update from our community library about all the things happening there as well as the new equipment that makes reading newspapers and magazines easy. The 10K and fun-run in aid of Beech Hyde School will see hundreds taking part in the annual event this month and St Helen's School is all set to show its stalls and inflatables, pig petting, wooden games and so much more in its ever popular Spring Fair. We take a look at outdoor living; barbeques, pergolas and garden rooms etc. in our special feature *Outdoor Living* and ask local people what outdoor living means to them. *Health Matters* looks at the age-old problem of backache and potential causes and treatments and there's plenty to do and see locally or within easy reach this month in our *What's On* section.

Eve

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Useful Phone Numbers

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Electricity Emergency: 0800 404 090

Power Cuts: 105

Healthline: 111

Police non emergency: 101

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Local Pharmacy: 01582 832102

Help Lines

Mind: 0845 766 0163

Advice for Mental Health Issues

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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:
0808 808 2020

Autism Helpline: 0845 070 4004

May 1

More than 300 years ago Great Britain was formed from a union between England and Scotland. The union included Wales which had already been part of England since the 1500's. The United Kingdom today consists of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Did You know?

That May Day is a European festival of ancient origins which marks the beginning of summer, and is usually celebrated on 1 May, around halfway between the Northern Hemisphere's Spring equinox and June solstice. Festivities may also be held the night before, known as May Eve. Sometimes people, usually children, dance around May poles to celebrate the arrival of summer.



What's New?

There seems to be so much going on in and around our area including a couple of new things worthy of a special mention. There's a new group in our Clubs and Groups section all about Badgers, page 29 and our local library has introduced a new way to use the internet and read papers and magazines using 'Hublets' on page 8.

Thought for May

May is a bridge between winter and summer, the month of expectation, the month of wishes, the month of hope. It's the month of sunshine, blooming flowers, and endless possibilities. That is one of the good things about this world – there are always going to be more Springs.

Contents

- 6** What's On
- 8** Our Marvellous Library
- 9** Spring Fair
- 9** Badgers
- 10** Your Rights
- 11** Fun Run
- 12** World War 2
- 15** Outdoor Living
- 19** Easy Wins
- 22** Health Matters
- 27** Clubs & Groups



9



12



8



9

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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 14th & 28th May
- **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
- **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 1st May 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 harpendenrda@yahoo.co.uk and via FB

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

What's On This Month

- **Live Band 3rd May**
Bought and Sold love to play live and enjoy performing a mix of rock and pop covers. Performing at The Swan on Saturday 3rd May 9pm, The Swan, Wheathampstead Village.
- **Living Crafts 8th May**
A huge range of high quality, handmade artisan art and craft showcasing everything crafty, from heritage skills to contemporary creativity. Experience excellence in British craft while enjoying a great day out for all the family. Meet the makers who just love sharing their stories and buy direct or commission a special piece. Workshops range from stone carving and silversmithing to clay sculpture and batik! Thursday 8 - Sunday 11th May. Hatfield Park Hatfield AL9 5AE for tickets www.livingcrafts.co.uk
- **Wheathampstead During World War 2 10th May**
A fascinating exhibition that will both commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of the war and look at the impact of the war both on the community and individuals. The exhibition will take place on Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th of May, at the Memorial Hall, Marford Road, Wheathampstead. Opening time will be 11am to 5pm and admission is free. <http://www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk/history-society.asp>
- **The Manor House, Ayot St Lawrence - 17th May**
A six-acre garden set in mature landscape around Elizabethan Manor House (not open). A one acre walled garden inc glasshouses, fruit and vegetables, double herbaceous borders, rose and herb beds. Herbaceous perennial island beds, topiary specimens. Parterre and temple pond garden surround the house. Home-made teas. Home-made cakes, scones, coffee and cold drinks available. Open Garden for NGS 11am - 5pm Saturday 17th & Sunday 18th May findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/22685/22685
- **Spring Fair 17th May**
St Helen's Church of England Primary School Spring Fair A great day out for the whole family at your local spring fair Live music from The Diamonds, BBQ, Bar, inflatables, pig petting, local fire engine, art and craft stalls, glitter tattoos, wooden games and much more. Everyone welcome so do come along and join the fun Saturday 17th May, 12-4pm. Brewhouse Hill Wheathampstead.
- **Live Music 17th April**
Live Music from terrific band Blues On Fire back by popular demand. An exciting 5-piece Blues Rock Band playing more blues with plenty of raunch and passion. Come on down and join the fun. 9pm Saturday 17th April, The Swan, Wheathampstead Village.
- **10k Race & Fun Run 18th May,**
Wheathampstead 10km race or 2km family fun run will be back again this starting and ending up on the Marford Playing Fields. This is an annual charity event, which raises money for Beech Hyde Primary School. The 2km is an off road, circular run that is ideal for families as it is suitable for both runners and walkers of ALL ages starts at 10.00am. The 10km is a challenging mat-to-mat timed off-road course, a popular run with all levels of runners starts at 11:00am. The morning rounds off with a BBQ, café and children's entertainment For details and to enter: www.wheathampstead10k.co.uk: Sunday 18th May.
- **Wheathampstead u3a meeting Thursday 22nd May**
Speaker Deborah Moggach will talk about "Growing Old Disgracefully - The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel". Deborah is a world-famous novelist, having written 22 novels and several films, including the BAFTA-nominated "Pride and Prejudice" starring Keira Knightley - and her novel "The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel" became a hit film. Memorial Hall at 2:00 for 2:30pm on Thursday 22nd May 2025.
- **Luton International Carnival 25th May**
Luton International Carnival will be parading through the streets of Luton once again. A perfect day out and jam-packed with family fun, from the colourful Parade to loads of music and lots of interactive, family-friendly activities. 12pm till 6pm. Sunday 25th May Luton Town Centre. For details www.carnivalarts.org.uk

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

Our Marvellous Library

After a very successful first few years as a community library and the move to the Fire Station nearer the centre of the village, our library can definitely be classed as an asset to the village.

Now, instead of hard copy daily newspapers and magazines to read in the library and borrow, the library has installed 'Hublets.' These are large ipads/tablets which provide easy access to a wide range of worldwide and UK newspapers, a vast number of magazines and a wide selection of



ebooks.

Library users can borrow the Hublets for use within the library and they are ready to browse the internet using the library's Wifi. All you need is your library card and PIN to release a Hublet for an hour's use, completely free. When you're done, return the device to the docking station and all your data will be wiped, ensuring that the Hublet is charged and ready for the next customer and your privacy is protected. The Hublet tablets and Hublet docking station screen



provide a safer user experience by using a self-disinfecting coating method.

Apart from using the Hublets, borrowing books and having reserved books delivered to the local library, the library also offers photocopying, laminating and printing from mobile phones, tablets and the library's own computers, two computers are available for customer use.

Story time for small children is on Wednesdays from 2.30pm and the person who runs it is happy to read to any children on a Wednesday afternoon if you are not able to be there at the story time slot.

Computer Friendly volunteers come to the library each alternate Tuesday afternoon to help with any queries, problems and learning how to operate your mobile devices.

It's worth noting too that the Summer Reading Challenge takes place during the school summer holidays. The challenge involves working to a theme (not yet set), reading six books, talking to a librarian, briefly, about the books read and following the theme with a chart, stickers and further possible fun via the internet.

Also Knit, Natter and Know continues to flourish on a Wednesday morning from 10-12 in the library where up to about 10 gather to craft and chat.

Our village library is a friendly and welcoming place to be and there seems to be plenty going on, so why not make a point of visiting and /or joining if you are yet ready to become a member. Open during the week, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons 2-6pm, and Saturday 9am-1pm. Books can be returned out of hours through the letter box.

It's easy to become a member or a volunteer – pop in to say hello and to have a browse.

To find out more visit www.wheathampsteadcommunitylibrary.org.uk



Spring Fair

Spring fairs are traditionally a lovely day out for the whole family and often feature artisan stalls, plant sales, live music, children's activities and much more.

Here in Wheathampstead, it's that time again when the Friends of St Helen's School get together to organise the very popular and long-standing St Helens Spring Fair. Lucinda, a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) member told us, "We

It seems that there will be lots going on, with a bouncy castle and plenty of games and activities, including a ballet display, fencing sessions and a pig petting zoo. St Helen's School Spring Fair is one of the largest fund-raising events that the school's PTA runs and this year, they are raising money to replace some playground equipment. The whole community is welcome, so why not go along and join the fun.

For more details see What's On page 7.



have live music from "The Diamonds", BBQ, Bar, inflatables, pig petting, local fire engine, art and craft stalls, glitter tattoos, wooden games and, of course, a raffle, so please do come down and support us."

About Badgers

We probably all know a little something about badgers but, according to the Woodland Trust, badgers have big families, big appetites and big personalities. It seems that badgers are a wood's ruling clan, often occupying the same sett for generations and laying a network of well-trodden paths through the undergrowth. They're playful, house proud and expert foragers. Badgers have rather short, wide bodies, with short legs for digging. They have elongated, weasel-like heads with small ears. We've just heard about a local group, the Herts and Middx Badger Group who look after badgers and their habitat across the two counties. A registered charity, the Herts and Middx Badger Group are involved in

Continued on page 10



Badger Group told us, “We are a voluntary organisation dedicated to all aspects of badgers in Hertfordshire and Middlesex and are affiliated to the Badger Trust. We need volunteers for all aspects of our work, but especially people with animal handling experience to help with rescues.’ See page 29 for more details.

badger rescues, surveys, monitoring, education, advice, campaigning and upholding the law relating to badgers. They have, they say, an amazing woodland hide where badgers can be watched, and they hold monthly meetings in Wheathampstead where everyone interested can get together.
Zoe Wilson from the Herts and Middx



Understanding Your Rights

The Patients Association has put together a factsheet and animated video to help patients better understand their rights when using health care services.

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The content covers potential issues that some patients may face such as unequal access to services and discrimination, and the financial and social support that may be available to them.

The resources were developed as part of the Patient Association's work project on how social and economic factors affect the health of people living with blood disorders and/or cancer, but the guidance is relevant for all patients. You can find the factsheet and animated video on the <https://www.patients-association.org.uk/>

Wheathampstead Run

It's that time of year when the weather warms up and the great outdoors beckons, which means that it's time to get involved in some local running.

Although we know that, for some people, the word fun and run simply don't belong together, there are still so many reasons to get involved. Running is, of course, a great way to exercise and with a local run, just add viewing the local countryside, having a good time with friends and family and raising money for charity.

One of the biggest reasons to enter a fun run is that it will give you that motivation to put your running shoes on. Joining others and having that end goal of running to achieve a personal best, or just to say you've done it or to help raise money for a good cause, must be one of the best ways to

keep the motivation levels high. So, whatever the distance and whatever motivates you this spring, keeping it local is always a good beginning.

With that in mind, many of you will want to join the ever-popular Wheathampstead 10km race or 2km family fun run which will be back again this year on Sunday 18th May, starting and ending up on the Marford Playing Fields.

This annual charity event, which raises money for Beech Hyde Primary School, has become a favourite for over 20 years amongst local runners and even sees competitors from much further afield coming to the village, encouraged by reports of a run with a local feel that takes in some beautiful countryside.

The 2km is an off road, circular run that is ideal for families as it is suitable for both runners and walkers of ALL ages. This event starts at 10.00am. The 10km is a challenging mat-to-mat timed off-road course, and with its outstanding scenery and friendly village setting, this is a popular run with all levels of runners. The event starts at 11:00am. They will again be hosting an inter-Primary School 2km challenge to encourage children to participate in a fun physical activity.

The whole morning rounds off with a BBQ, café and children's entertainment. It makes for a great morning out with the family. For more information and to enter, go to: www.wheathampstead10k.co.uk





Wheathampstead During World War 2

2025 marks 80 years since the end of the Second World War, with Victory in Europe (VE) Day on 8 May 1945 which marks the Allied victory in Europe. The news on that day resulted in millions celebrating the end of the war, with street parties, dancing and singing across the country. The war in the Far East did not end until 15 August 1945 with VJ Day (Victory Over Japan).

This is without any doubt a momentous anniversary and Wheathampstead History Society are staging an exhibition entitled 'Wheathampstead during the second world war' The exhibition will both commemorate the 80th anniversary of the end of the war and look at the impact of the war both on the community and individuals.

This promises to be an interesting and important exhibition which will include many fascinating stories such as:-

- Why air raid precautions were in place eighteen months before the start of the war
- How the village sheltered 500 evacuees at the beginning of the war

- Coping with rationing
- Stories of the men and women who served in the armed services
- Local men who became prisoners of war of the Japanese
- Bombing and bomb damage to Wheathampstead
- Dressing fashionably when clothing was rationed
- Why there were no children's parties on VE day in Wheathampstead

The exhibition will take place on Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th of May, at the Memorial Hall, Marford Road, Wheathampstead. Opening time will be 11am to 5pm and admission is free. The department for Culture and the ministry of Defence have announced that there will be Four days of celebrations in the capital to mark the 80th anniversary with the Cenotaph draped in Union Flags, a Westminster Abbey service, a concert and a Flypast among plans to mark VE Day 80. On Thursday 8th May, events will conclude with

a concert at the historic Horse Guards Parade in a celebratory tone, echoing how the nation reacted to the news 80 years before. With more than 10,000 members of the public in attendance, the concert will feature stars of stage and screen and military musicians and tell the story of



victory and the legacy of the Second World War in Europe.

All commemorations will act as a point of remembrance of the millions who lost their lives in the conflict as well as a celebration of peace. For more details about the exhibition staged by Wheathampstead History Society please see What's On page 7 or visit: <http://www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk/history-society.asp>

Photo one - Female Auxiliary Fire service volunteers who were not allowed to 'man' the fire engine but nevertheless beat the men in fire exercises.

Photo Two - George Swallow trying out his army uniform and respirator in his back garden shortly after he had joined up in 1939. Sadly, he was killed in Egypt in early 1942.

Photo Three - The Home Guard rapid reaction force - John Leiper's Singer sports car towing a Vickers machine gun.



Community Project

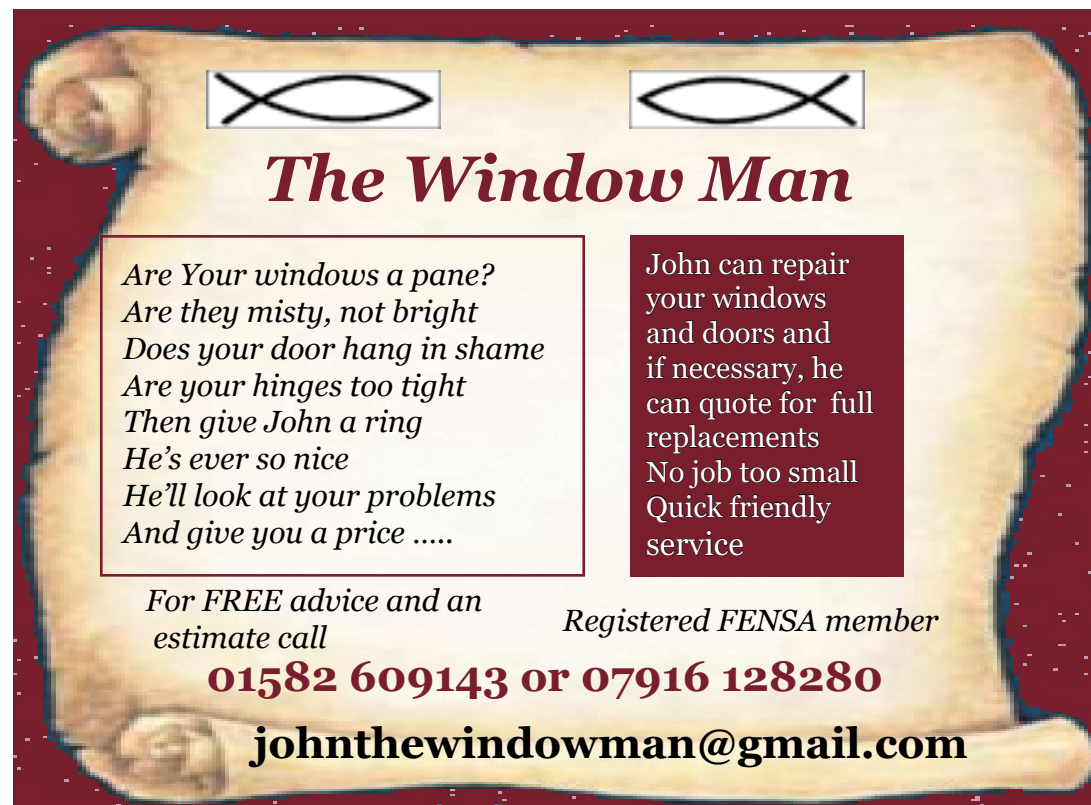
A community Project to hear the voice of young people is up for local government award.

The work of a community engagement programme which ensures young people with Special Educational Needs and disabilities have a voice has been shortlisted for an award.

Voices of Hertfordshire, which has been shortlisted in the Community Engagement category of the MJ (Municipal Journal) Awards 2025 was developed to capture the views of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and launched in June 2024.

It includes input from the SEND partnership, 40 partners across health, social care and education services in Hertfordshire to empower children and young people to use their lived experience to improve the services impacting their lives. The work has included the creation of a number of SEND Youth Councils in each district and borough; the development of internships for young people with SEND including roles at the county council and ICB; making sure the views of young people with health needs are represented at the youth council; and recruiting people aged 19 to 24 with lived experience to work with directors of SEND services to improve specialist provision, autism and ADHD pathways and mental health support.

The awards will take place on 20 June. For more information visit: <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/>



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Outdoor Living

It seems to have become more of a British thing to want to spend more time outside. Garden rooms, orangeries, pergolas, barbecues and fire pits appear to have become much more popular in recent times, not forgetting lap pools and hot tubs, which also seem to have developed a place on our outdoor wish list.

These days, outdoor living is more of a design concept where you can create an outdoor space that is meant for entertaining and spending considerable amounts of time. Essentially, you want your outdoor space to have the feel of a traditional living room with all its comfort - just outdoors.

In addition, the concept of connecting with nature, breathing fresh air and cooking outdoors conjures up a real feel-good factor which only the weather can negatively or positively impact. Infact, research has shown that spending time outdoors in nature can tone down negative emotions such as anger, stress, depression, anxiety, grief, and fear. It can also amplify more positive feelings and improve our mood. As we all know, England is often cold and there is no escaping that fact. So, instead of denying it, how can we embrace it - is it an attitude? Let's just wrap up well and sit by the fire, or perhaps its

let's get a pergola, outdoor cabin or glass garden room and spend time in that instead?

Whether your garden is very big or very small, cosy nooks and crannies or corners that are near to power are a great place to start. You can make a cosy area in the corner of your garden rather than littering it with garden junk.

Food is, of course, a very important part of our lives and, when it's warm enough to combine good food with eating outdoors, the experience can be marvellous. Somehow, eating outside, wherever you are, can just get you into that holiday mode and can help you feel more relaxed and de-stressed too.

So, in essence, outdoor living means it's just really about extending your living experience outdoors - take the inside out and to enjoy all it has to offer, but from a comfortable chair rather than just through the window. Once you start to see your outdoor space (no matter the size) as another space, you can realise the potential of increasing your living space in general.

It's fair to say that a neat and pretty garden will likely add to the experience of any outdoor living and so if you are into gardening yourself, you may know exactly what to do, but if not, find a good local garden centre *Continued 17page 17*

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and ask their advice about what to plant as well as when and where to plant (see our gardening tips on page 19) or, if your fingers never turned green, you could employ the services of a garden designer and see what they come up with. Whether the purpose of your outdoor area is to party, to relax, to entertain or to BBQ, just make the most of it and enjoy the blue skies when they do arrive.

We went out and about to ask local people what outdoor living means to them. Mr & Mrs N told us, "We are lucky because when we moved into our house all those years ago, the garden had already been beautifully kept, so it was relatively easy to maintain things. But we have subsequently added a garden room cum Orangery and, with two sets of doors, it really does bring the outside in. It's great to have a big patio too. Yes, we do spend a lot of time outside, doing all the things you mentioned; -barbeques, entertaining and relaxing."

Mrs A said: "I couldn't live

anywhere without access to some private outdoor space, even if it was a just a decent sized balcony. I do love my garden, it's a bit too big for us now, but it gets a lot of use. It's a great place to sit and soak up the sun and it is relaxing too. When we get good weather in this country, you just can't beat sitting in your own private garden watching nature."

Miss P and Mr D explained: "We currently live in a flat that doesn't have any outside space, apart from a communal garden, it's ok but it's just not private. We are just looking for a little house with a little garden. We love the idea of being able to

kick our shoes off and have a glass of wine after work on a sunny evening. So, we are working on getting to that."

Mrs H said: "I'm not much of a gardener but I'm very happy to sit about relaxing and watching the birds or nature in general in someone else's garden! But seriously, my own garden is small and a little bit bland, but I do still sit out there when the sun comes out."




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Mar / Apr 2025


Location	Course & Fees	Course Details	Class Dates
Clarence Park Cricket Club Pavilion	Family History £40	5 weeks – Wednesdays 14:00 – 16:00	5 th March – 2 nd April
Harpenden Indoor Bowling Club	Starting Off With Apple iPads & iPhones £20	4 Weeks – Wednesdays 11:00 – 12:30	12 th March – 2 nd April

Starting Off with Apple iPad / iPhone

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Local Services

Easy Wins in the Garden

Now that you are planning to spend more time living outdoors, making the garden look as good as possible seems like a reasonable plan.

If, like me, you want to make your garden look better without doing too much hard work, check out these easy tips that will quickly make things look better.

Plants

Removing lower branches from trees and shrubs can improve their shape, make them look 'cleaner' and also help air circulate around the plant as well as creating opportunities to plant underneath them. Target branches that are touching the ground or spoiling the shape of the plant and remove them *Continued on page 21*

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back to their source.

Pots

Scrape away the top 5cm of soil from the tops of pots of established plants. This will remove weeds, moss and dead leaves. Then replace with a layer of fresh compost or a decorative mulch and then water the plant, unless it is already saturated. Next give your pots a wash. Fill a bucket with warm water and a small amount of washing up liquid and using a scourer or a scrubbing brush clean the outside of your patio pots.

Patio

Tidy up the look of your patio and scrape away moss and weeds from the cracks in between your paving slabs. Once removed, fill in any gaps between the paving with a mix of three parts sharp sand to one part cement, and a little water



to moisten the mix. Push it down into the cracks, then smooth the surface with a trowel.

Lawns

Give your lawn a crisp edge and cut into the edges to make them an attractive shape and your flower beds and borders will instantly look better to. Just cut along the line with an edger or a spade will do the job. This makes

trimming the edges easier when cutting grass.

Instant colour

Freshly planted pots may have lots of bare compost while you wait for plants to grow. Don't leave the space empty, instead fill gaps with temporary colour by planting violas or primroses usually available in a variety of bright colours. You can fill any gaps in your flower beds with these easy colourful plants too.



Useful Contacts

Emotional & practical support

www.hertshelp.net

03001234044

Health advice and information

www.nhs.uk/coronaavirus

Local council services

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

Domestic abuse

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Volunteering

www.volunteering.org.uk

Back Aches and Pains

It's estimated that up to 8 in every 10 people in the UK are affected by back pain at some point in their lives.

Lower back pain is a common cause for visits to the doctor and according to Health Line, low back pain is the most common cause of job-related disability. Most low back pain it seems is the result of an injury, such as muscle sprains or strains due to sudden movements or poor body mechanics while lifting heavy objects. However, back pain is very common and usually improves within a few weeks or months. Pain in the lower back (lumbago) is particularly common, although it can be felt anywhere along the spine, from the neck down to the hips. In most cases the pain is not caused by anything serious and will usually get better over time.

Acute back pain can last anywhere from a few days to a few weeks, while chronic back pain is

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pain that lasts longer than three months.

Low back pain is more likely to occur in individuals between the ages of 30 and 50. This is partly due to the changes that occur in the body with aging. As you grow older, there's a reduction in the fluid content between the vertebrae in the spine.

This means discs in the spine experience irritation more easily. You also lose some muscle tone, which makes the back more prone to injury. This is why strengthening your back muscles can be helpful in preventing low back pain.

Causes of back pain

It's often not possible to identify the cause of back pain. Doctors call this non-specific back pain. Sometimes the pain may be from an injury such as a sprain or strain, but often it happens for no apparent reason. It's very rarely caused by anything

serious although occasionally back pain can be caused by a medical condition

Strains

The muscles and ligaments in the back can stretch or tear due to excess activity. Symptoms include pain and stiffness in the lower back, as well as muscle spasms. Rest and physical therapy

Health Matters

are remedies for these symptoms.

Disc injury

The discs in the back are prone to injury. This risk increases with age. The outside of the disc can tear or herniate.

A herniated disc, which is also known as a slipped or ruptured disc, occurs when the cartilage surrounding the disc pushes against the spinal cord or nerve roots. The cushion that sits between the spinal vertebrae extends outside its normal position. This can result in compression of the nerve root as it exits from the spinal cord and through the vertebral bones. Disc injury usually occurs suddenly after lifting something or twisting

the back. Unlike a back strain, pain from a disc injury usually lasts for more than 72 hours.

Sciatica

Sciatica can occur with a herniated disc if the disc presses on the sciatic nerve. The sciatic nerve connects the spine to the legs. As a result, sciatica can cause pain in the legs *Continued on page 24*



and feet. This pain usually feels like burning, or pins and needles.

Spinal stenosis

Spinal stenosis is when the spinal column narrows, putting pressure on the spinal cord and spinal nerves.

Spinal stenosis is most commonly due to degeneration of the discs between the vertebrae. The result is compression of the nerve roots or spinal cord by bony spurs or soft tissues, such as discs.

Pressure on the spinal nerves causes symptoms such as: numbness, cramping, weakness. You might feel these symptoms anywhere in the body. Many people with spinal stenosis notice their symptoms worsen when standing or walking.

Abnormal spine curvatures

Scoliosis, kyphosis, and lordosis are all conditions that cause abnormal curvatures in the spine.

These are congenital conditions that are usually first diagnosed during childhood or adolescence. The abnormal curvature causes pain and poor posture because it places pressure on:



- muscles
- tendons
- ligaments
- vertebrae

Other conditions

There are a number of other conditions that cause lower back pain. These conditions include: Arthritis is an inflammation of the joints. Fibromyalgia is long-term pain and tenderness in the joints, muscles, and tendons.

Spondylitis is inflammation of the joints between the spinal bones.

Spondylosis is a degenerative disorder that may cause loss of normal spinal structure and function. Although aging is the primary cause of the condition, the location and rate of degeneration is specific to the individual.

How to relieve back pain

The following tips may help reduce your back pain and speed up your recovery:

According to the NHS, staying as active as possible and trying to continue with your daily activities is one of the most important things you can do, as resting for long periods is likely to make the pain worse

You can also try exercises and stretches for back pain and other activities such as walking, swimming, yoga and pilates may also be helpful. Take anti-inflammatory painkillers, such as ibuprofen but do remember to check the medicine is safe for you to take and ask a pharmacist if you're not sure.

You can use hot or cold compression packs for short-term relief – you can buy these from a pharmacy, or a hot water bottle or a bag of frozen vegetables wrapped in a cloth or towel will work just as well.

Although it can be difficult, it helps if you stay optimistic and recognise that your pain should get better. People who manage to stay positive despite their pain tend to recover quicker.

Getting help and advice

Back pain usually gets better on its own within a few weeks or months and you may not need to see a doctor or other healthcare professional. But it's a good idea to get help if:

- the pain does not start to improve within a few weeks
- the pain stops you doing your day-to-day activities
- the pain is very severe or gets worse over time
- you're worried about the pain or struggling to cope

If you see a GP they will ask about your symptoms, examine your back and discuss possible treatments.

They may refer you to a specialist doctor or a physiotherapist for further help. Alternatively, you may want to consider



contacting a physiotherapist directly. Some NHS physiotherapists accept appointments without a doctor's referral, or you could choose to pay for private treatment.

Treatments for back pain from a specialist

A GP, specialist or physiotherapist may recommend extra treatments if they do not think your pain will improve with self-help measures alone.

These may include:

- group exercise classes where you're taught exercises to strengthen your muscles and improve your posture
- manual therapy treatments, such as manipulating the spine and massage, which are usually done by a physiotherapist, chiropractor or osteopath
- psychological support, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), which can be a useful part of treatment if you're struggling to cope with pain

Some people choose to see a therapist for manual therapy without seeing a GP first. If you want to do this, you'll usually need to pay for private treatment.

Surgery is generally only considered in the small number of cases where back pain is caused by a specific medical condition.

Information provided by various online health bodies plus Health Line.com and NHS.org

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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

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.wheathampsteadwcg.org
 email: 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

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.noon, 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

Continued on page 31



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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.

Squirrels Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

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: 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 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 wheatywarriorsmembership@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.

The Community Kitchen

Open to everyone of all ages. 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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