

FREE



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12/23

Issue 042
December 2023

Pages 35-52



Bournfree

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Shop in Meads
this Christmas See page 4

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Christmas is here...

WELL, here we are once again in December – the festive season and then looking ahead to 2024.

By **Peter Lindsey**

It's a key time for our businesses as they look to make the most of what has been a tough 12 months for many, with the cost of living crisis.

Lighting Fibre's Ice Rink at the *Enterprise Centre* will no doubt be a huge success, running from December 9th until the 31st.

And *Your Eastbourne Bid* is working hard with the Chamber to put on festive events and help make Christmas a busy one.

We should all remember that for many Christmas is not always the easiest time – and for a wide variety of reasons.

That's why each year the Rotary Clubs of Eastbourne come together

to put up the *Tree of Light* in the *Devonshire Quarter*.

That tree means an awful lot to many of us.

Eastbourne is well known far and wide for its high-quality panto Chris Jordan and the team put on every December/January.

Ever since Chris arrived in town many years ago, he insisted that simply paying top stars to appear in panto wasn't the answer.

He has proved that to be right with the numbers of people who come to the *Devonshire Park Theatre* each year for panto.

Here at *Bournefree*, we've had a great 12 months – and we want to

thank everyone who has helped us as we continue to grow.

Our print run increased to 15,000 for the past two months – and yes they went almost as quickly as the 10,000 in a normal month.

There is no doubt that the demand is there.

Digitally, we continue to attract numbers in their thousands to both our News website and also to our social media, primarily *Facebook* where we are still reaching around 250,000 people each month.

We have big plans for 2024 – and we want to take the community with us on our journey of reaching out to more people.

More of 2024 next month.

In the meantime, from the *Bournefree* team we wish everyone a happy and safe Christmas period.

Thank You



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Our next edition will be distributed from January 3rd. Make sure you are a part of it.

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ENTERPRISE

INDEPENDENT SHOPPING



It's beginning to feel a lot like Christmas at the Enterprise

EVEN last-minute shoppers will find everything they want when they visit the Enterprise Shopping Centre, situated next to Eastbourne's Railway Station.

By **Emily Sander**

With its eclectic mix of boutique style shops, you are sure to find something for everyone on your list!

Our independent shopping centre has everything from stylish beach inspired homeware to ladies & men's fashion, laptops & vintage style gifts & accessories, to craft beer & crystals.

If you are in need of some pampering, you find hair, nails & beauty treatments, tattoos and piercings all within our Centre.

We know Christmas shopping can be exhausting; however, the Enterprise offers plenty of eateries and coffee shops. With everything from a Full English Breakfast to Thai Noodles or Tapas, to delicious home baked cakes, fine wines, our newest Pasta & Pizzeria and artisan food from Sicily, you can take a well-earned break.

With plenty of on-site parking and the knowledge that you'll be supporting local businesses, you'll be sure to get exceptional service when you visit us too!

**Enterprise Shopping Centre
Station Parade
Eastbourne BN21 1BD**

www.enterprise-centre.org



Get some Meads Magic

THIS December pop down to Meads Street for your Christmas shopping.

By **Peter Lindsey**

It is full of excellent, top-quality shops and well worth a visit.

One new attraction is *Ren's Kitchen*, which has only just opened. It has a branch in Worthing and has now expanded into Eastbourne.

It is open seven days a week and you can be sure of a warm welcome as well as great food and excellent coffee.

Grand Flowers & Gifts always looks fabulous while *Longleaf* is a very special place to shop – its chutneys and jams are out of this world. Both are packed full of beautiful and unusual presents – Christmas shopping at its best.

Meads has regained its Post Office, which is important to residents, and that's open seven days a week with long hours.

There are two very popular beauty salons – *Bliss Spar & Beauty* and



JNC Aesthetics and Meads just has that true festive feel about it now the Christmas Lights are up.

Xing Fu Chinese restaurant is also very popular while *Ancient Grains* does some outstanding Sardinian sharing plates in the evening.

Let's not forget the two very busy pubs in Meads – *The Ship* and *The*



Pilot – and don't forget those other special shops and restaurants in Compton Street and Carlisle Road are also part of Meads.

Come to Meads for your Christmas shopping – and indeed all year long! You won't regret it!

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A great month for Lightning Fibre



LIGHTNING Fibre has won the ISPA Best Consumer ISP (fewer than 50 000 customers) Award 2023.

By **Peter Lindsey**

The team collected the award at the awards ceremony at Raffles London at The OWO on Thursday November 9th.

Sales and Marketing Director Rob Reaks said: "This is a fantastic achievement."

Hyper fast and reliable

Lightning Fibre is providing affordable Full Fibre to a new housing development.

'The Glenn' in Southfields Road is ready to welcome new tenants and includes 17 two-bedroom and two one-bedroom properties, with three fully accessible ground floor flats, each with their own garden.

The site is a former council car park that was once home to Eastbourne School for Girls, known in 1935 as The Glen.

The development by *Trinity Homes* includes affordable hyper fast and hyper reliable Full Fibre broadband using Eastbourne's new, local fibre optic infrastructure built by *Lightning Fibre*.

Lightning expansion

The company is expanding into Stone Cross. Here's what the local MP Huw Merriman had to say: "The Government committed at the last election to deliver nationwide gigabit-broadband. This private investment from a local East Sussex company helps us meet that commitment. I am very pleased that Stone Cross now has access to hyper fast full fibre broadband."

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Staff and Service users enjoying summer at Mill Road.

From Eastbourne Mencap to Inspire Sussex: Decades of dedication

CHANGE is in the crisp winter air, and it's sweeping through Eastbourne Mencap like a breath of fresh inspiration.

For years, we have been a steadfast charity supporting adults with learning disabilities in Eastbourne and the surrounding areas. Today, we're excited to unveil our exciting transformation.

A legacy of compassion and support

Eastbourne Mencap has a rich history of supporting those with learning disabilities, providing them with vital support and a sense of belonging.

Our ambition is to help change perceptions. We work in partnership with other healthcare professionals and break down perceived barriers to what people with learning disabilities can achieve.

We want to encourage understanding and compassion, making a positive difference to society. Our dedication

By **Alex Baiocchi**, Eastbourne & District Mencap

to enhancing the lives of our service users is a legacy we proudly carry forward, and our organisations success is driven by its people. We see beyond disability, know what can be achieved and go the extra mile to make it happen.

Inspire Sussex: A fresh beginning

While our roots in Eastbourne run deep, we believe it's time to spread our wings and embrace a more expansive vision. With *Inspire Sussex*, we're ushering in a fresh new era

of support, empowerment, and community engagement. Enabling people, enhancing lives. Every life is precious, and we celebrate that.

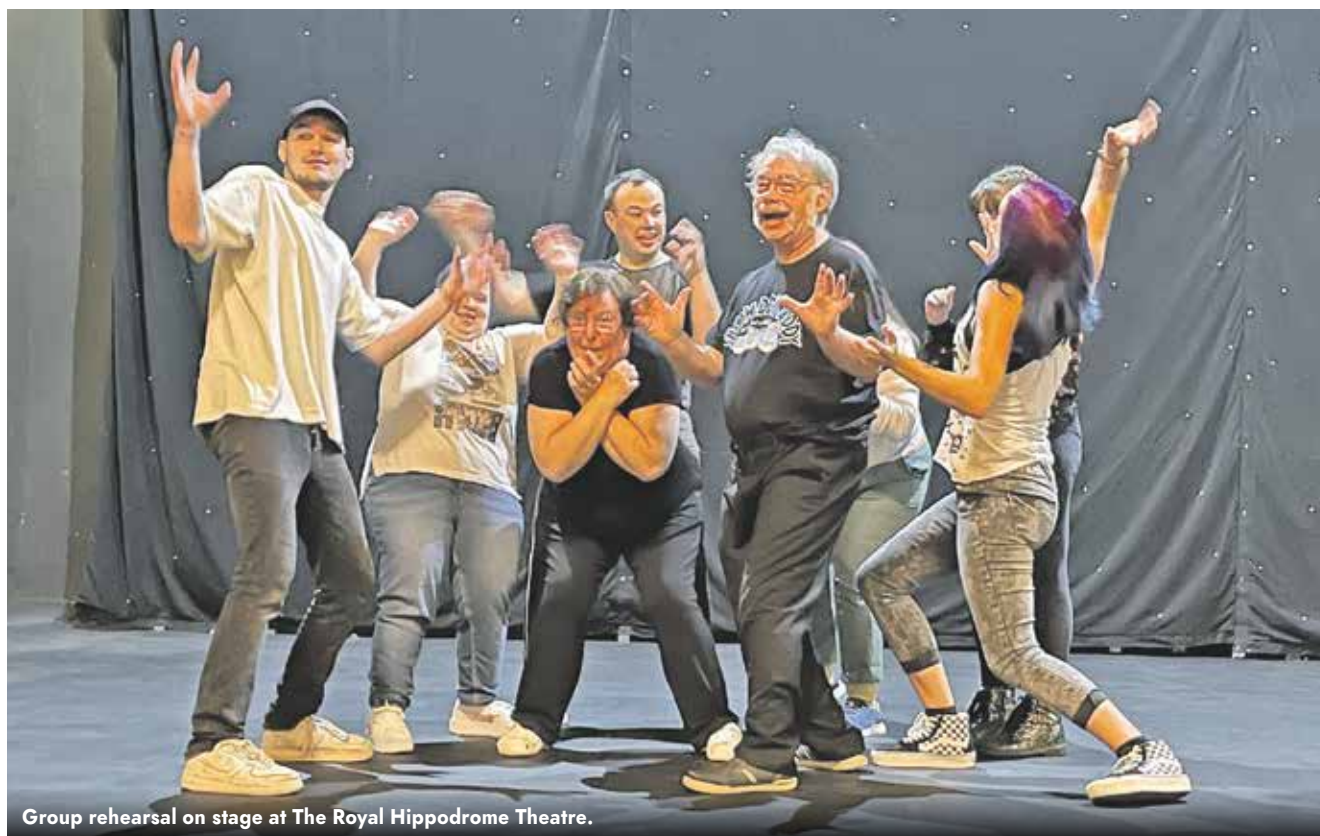
A new look to Inspire

Our rebranding isn't just about a name change—it's a holistic transformation that includes a vibrant new logo and brand identity. Our new company logo for 'Inspire' is a dynamic and versatile design that reflects our commitment to personalised care and individuality. The word 'Inspire' is adorned with unique graphics above each letter 'I,' allowing us to tailor our branding to suit each of our residential supported living homes and our day centre. For example, one of our residential homes use a puzzle piece graphic – to represent the complexities of the service. Our main company logo features a lightbulb – to represent innovation.





While our roots in Eastbourne run deep, we believe it's time to spread our wings and embrace a more expansive vision. With Inspire Sussex, we're ushering in a fresh new era of support, empowerment, and community engagement.



Group rehearsal on stage at The Royal Hippodrome Theatre.

A digital transformation

Over the past month, we've witnessed significant advancements in the construction of our website. This progress not only promises enhanced accessibility to our services for both our valued service users and the wider public but also expands our capacity to distribute vital information to our community and local businesses, giving them insight into our identity and mission. Furthermore, these digital developments will substantially boost our fundraising initiatives and social media presence, allowing us to directly promote our services and facilitate our recruitment efforts with greater effectiveness.

Expanding our horizons

Our day centre will continue to be a hub of creativity and support, while our three residential homes remain safe and nurturing homes for our residents. We have introduced a fresh and innovative branch of our organisation called 'Inspire Events,' a dynamic social events group tailored specifically for adults with learning disabilities throughout Sussex. This new initiative launched back in spring this year, and we are thrilled to report that it has already begun making a significant impact. By organising a series of successful events and outings, Inspire Events has demonstrated its ability to creating engaging and inclusive social experiences for our community members. Our vision is to break down social barriers and ensure that individuals with learning disabilities across Sussex can access our enriching

programs, forming new friendships and gaining a sense of belonging, empowerment, and happiness. Thriving within a society in which they have an equal sense of belonging.

A future filled with possibilities

As we embark on this exciting journey, we envision a Sussex where individuals with learning disabilities not only receive the support they need but also have the opportunity to flourish, grow, and inspire others in return. We'll continue to offer a wide range of programs, activities, and events that empower our service users to lead fulfilling lives. Whether it's our kayaking adventures, creative workshops, or community engagement initiatives, Inspire Sussex will be at the forefront of positive change.

Our fundraising event

We are thrilled to extend a heartfelt invitation to all of you for a truly remarkable event – 'The One Thousand Challenge'! Mark your calendars for December 1st, 2023, from 10am to 2pm, as we gather at the Eastbourne Sports Park, East Sussex College BN21 2UF.

Our goal is to collectively complete 1000 laps of the track in a mere four hours, and we can only achieve this incredible feat with your generous support.

The funds raised during this event will be dedicated to acquiring a new minibus for our learning disability support service. This new

addition will significantly enhance the opportunities available to the individuals attending our day centre, improving their quality of life through access to events and opportunities.

Here's how you can help:

- 1. Participate:** Join us on the track, pedal alongside us, and help us reach the 1000-lap target. It's not only a fantastic opportunity to challenge yourself but also a chance to contribute to a meaningful cause.
- 2. Donate:** Give us a call at **01323 722034** to sponsor us at just £1 per lap. If you're unable to attend the event but still wish to support our cause, simply scan the QR code or input the following address onto your web browser <https://gofund.me/b2ada831>
- 3. Spread the Word:** Share with your friends, family, and colleagues who might be interested in joining or contributing to the event.

Join us on this inspiring journey

We invite you to join us on this inspiring journey. Whether you've been a part of our Eastbourne Mencap family for years or are just discovering us now, we welcome you with open arms to be a part of Inspire Sussex.

Becoming a member is a straightforward and rewarding process. Get in touch on **01323 722034** or email admin@inspiresussex.org.uk As a member, you'll have the opportunity to attend our annual

general meetings, engage in various events, and activities that directly support adults with learning disabilities. Together, we can make a difference that truly matters, and we look forward to having you as part of our team.

Supporting our charity is just a click away! When you choose to **donate through our website**, you're not just making a financial contribution; you're helping to create a brighter future for those in need. Our online platform provides a secure, user-friendly way to make a meaningful impact. Simply visit our website, navigate to the donation page, and select the amount you wish to contribute.

Stay informed and connected by **visiting our website** regularly. We've designed our website to be your go-to source for all the latest updates, news, and information about our mission and initiatives. Here, you'll find inspiring success stories, upcoming events, and ways to get involved. Check in with us online at www.inspiresussex.org.uk



Please scan to sponsor us.



Image by Graham Huntley.

Bandstand to host Festive Concerts with free tickets

FESTIVE concerts will return to *Eastbourne Bandstand* this Christmas and New Year for the first time since 2019, with free tickets available to book.

By **Peter Lindsey**

The traditional music and dance concerts will take place at the seafront landmark on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day with *Eastbourne Silver Band* leading the festivities on 25th December.

In the Main Arena, due to capacity restrictions while the colonnades are closed, spaces will be limited and free standing tickets can be booked in advance. A printed ticket is required to gain entry.

Limited seating will be available on the Top Balcony and seats are provided on a first come, first served basis on each of the three days – no ticket required. The *Bandstand's* middle promenade will also be open for people taking a seafront stroll and bars will be open on both the lower and middle levels.

People will not be able to walk through the bandstand on the Lower Prom during the concerts as access will be ticket only.

This year, on Christmas Day – Monday 25th December – *Eastbourne Silver Band* will be providing the entertainment at the Bandstand with a concert from 10:30am–12:00pm. Doors will open at 10:00am.

Boxing Day – Tuesday 26th December – will see *The Ray Campbell Band* take to the stage from 11:00am–12:30pm. Doors open at 10:30am.

On New Year's Day – Monday 1st January – *The Ray Campbell Band* will be back at the *Bandstand* between 11:00am and 12:30pm and once again, doors will open at 10:30am.

Free tickets are available now to book and ticketholders also have the option of contributing a £5 donation to the *Bandstand* at the time of booking, to support the venue's running costs. For further information and to book free tickets online and/or make a donation

to the *Bandstand* please visit www.eastbournebandstand.co.uk/xmas

Tickets can also be booked by phone on **01323 410611** or **01323 415415**, in person at *Eastbourne Visitor Centre* (open daily), or at the *Seafront Office* from 1st – 22nd December (Monday to Friday only from 10:00am–4:00pm).



Image by Graham Huntley.

Christmas Specials



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Dancing in the dusk

ELLIS Skelton, 17, from Old Town was awarded two Highly Commended awards for his landscape photography at *The Young Landscape Photographer Of The Year* awards.

By **Peter Lindsey**

His images included a beautiful tranquil photograph of the murmurations over Eastbourne pier during blue hour called 'Dancing In The Dusk' – this was awarded in the coastal category.

His second image was called 'The Last Tree Standing', a striking photograph of a lone tree over the South Downs, early one snowy morning in December – this was awarded in the classic view category.



His awards were presented by professional landscape photographer and founder of *Landscape Photographer Of The Year*; Charlie Waite who praised Ellis for his knowledge on photography and his attitude to the local environment around Eastbourne.

Ellis is extremely proud of his achievements "This is my second year of entering, Last year I made it as far as

the shortlisting stage although this year in 2023 I made it as far as the finals! I was thrilled to hear that both of my images had been highly commended and I would like to thank the Eastbourne community for supporting me through my photography journey."

Ellis' work can be found on his website and he exhibits and sells his work around Eastbourne and the surrounding areas.

Teaching young readers mindfulness

ABBY McPhee, who is a Primary school teacher and community fundraiser, has published her first children's book.

By **Gail McKay**

'Eliza and the Fox' is a children's picture book written to encourage mindfulness, with some practical ideas incorporated into the story.

Magical fox

Eliza is a happy and adventurous girl, but sometimes she feels scared. It makes her feel like she's got butterflies fluttering around inside

her. It's not a very nice feeling, but we all feel it sometimes. One day she meets a magical fox who helps her when she's in need. Join Eliza and the fox on their journey, and see if you can find your inner bravery along the way!

This is a story of courage, love and friendship – full of ideas to help you become calm, curious and brave.

Young children are able to adopt practical ideas such as breathing steadily, slowing down, being aware of their surroundings and feelings, and living each moment as it arrives.

One step at a time

As Abby says: "Sometimes we will have big feelings, and when this happens we can focus on our breathing and take things one step at a time."

Abby is also a children's yoga teacher and uses simple techniques to help children become more mindful and to build their resilience.

Eliza and the Fox is suitable for 5–10 year olds and is available to order on *Amazon* (hardback or paperback) or to order into *Waterstones* stores.



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Eastbourne Business Awards celebrate Dedication, Diligence and Diversity

NEARLY 500 guests attended this year's *Eastbourne Business Awards* at the *Winter Garden* for a spectacular black-tie celebration.

The brightest and best of Eastbourne's business community attended for dinner, entertainment from *Sound of the Crowd* and the all-important awards ceremony, hosted by comedian *Jo Enright*.

By the end of the evening there were guests dancing on the stage and a conga line wove its way around the room.

By **Christina Ewbank**, Chief Executive, Eastbourne unLtd Chamber of Commerce

The night raised over £8,000 for our chosen charities; *You Raise Me Up* and *St Wilfrid's Hospice*.

A broad range of awards categories and shortlisted businesses played

testimony to the diverse nature of Eastbourne's economy.

The night was a fantastic celebration of Eastbourne as the best place in the UK to live, work and play.

Eastbourne unLtd Chamber of Commerce would like to congratulate the winners pictured here.

EASTBOURNE BUSINESS AWARDS 2023



Outstanding New Business / Start-up – Sponsored By Southern IT. **WINNER: Foundry Eastbourne.** **HIGHLY COMMENDED: Journeys Wine Bar and Restaurant.**



Micro Business of the Year (1 to 9 employees) – Sponsored by Brewers. **WINNER: Taboo.** **HIGHLY COMMENDED: Cadenza Tuition.**



Medium Business of the Year (10 to 49 Employees) – Sponsored by Advanta. **WINNER: Newman Business Solutions.**



Large Business of the Year (50+ Employees) – Sponsored by Gardners Books. **WINNER: The Grand Hotel.**



Digital Excellence Award – Sponsored by Switchplane. **WINNER: Zunoma.**



Community Business of the Year – Sponsored by Birchwood Group. **JOINT WINNERS: Chalk Eastbourne. Valerie Pope of M&S. The Chaseley Trust.**



Employer of the Year – LWC. **WINNER: LawlerDavis Independent Financial Planners.**



Outstanding Young Achiever (18 to 35) – Sponsored by East Sussex College. **WINNER:** Emily Lockyer of Pro Touch Beauty. **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Chloe Stamp of Pearce Marketing.



Outstanding Professional Service Award – Sponsored by H R Dept. **WINNER:** IDP Safety Services. **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Alex Funnell of Hart Reade LLP.



Creative Excellence Award – Sponsored by PRG Marketing Communications. **WINNER:** Towner Gallery. **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** Printers Playhouse.



Outstanding Family Business of the Year Award – Sponsored by Hallmark Care Homes. **WINNER:** Tectonic Digital Systems. **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** DB Domestic.



Customer Service Excellence Award – Sponsored by Handelsbanken. **WINNER:** Fountain Digital.



Outstanding Tourism / Accommodation – Sponsored by Pomodoro E Mozzarella. **WINNER:** The Lansdowne Hotel.



Outstanding Contribution to Business – Sponsored by The Beacon. **WINNER:** Phil Ouzman of Zunoma.



Overall Business of the Year 2023 – Sponsored by W. Bruford. **WINNER:** Towner Eastbourne.



Outstanding Food & Drink Hospitality Award – Sponsored by Your Eastbourne BID. **WINNER:** The Hart.



Apprentice of the Year – LECS (UK) Ltd. **JOINT WINNERS:** Ciaran Toms of Joe Lam; Abi Tappenden of Children's Respite Trust.



Health and Wellbeing Excellence – Sponsored by First Choice Dental Clinic. **WINNER:** The View Hotel. **HIGHLY COMMENDED:** RMJ Wellbeing.



Outstanding Sustainable / Environmental Business – Sponsored by Identity. **WINNER:** OHM Energy.

OHM Energy

HAILSHAM-BASED renewable energy firm, OHM Energy has been crowned Sustainable Business of the Year at the prestigious Eastbourne Business Awards.

By **Peter Lindsey**

Sponsored by Identity, the Sustainable Business of the Year award looked at how sustainability has been hard-wired into the business, measures taken to reduce the carbon footprint and team attitudes to becoming greener.

The Directors at *OHM Energy* have been in the renewable energy sector since 2000, and are nationally recognised as leading experts in the

industry. They have even been jokingly referred to as the “founding fathers” as they influence the company, the local community and policy by sitting on nationwide working groups and working with government.

Last year, in a joint venture with *East Sussex College*, *OHM Energy* launched the first green training hub in Sussex to help bridge the critical skills gap the sector faces. Only by upskilling and training on a mass basis will we be able to reach ambitious net-zero targets. Courses are available online or in person at the Hampden Park hub to anyone



working in the renewable energy sector or those wishing to enter the industry. *OHM Energy* supports local people and employees new to the renewable energy industry through apprenticeships, training courses, and manufacture installer courses to aid their development.

Jason Lindfield, MD of *OHM Energy* says “We feel privileged to receive the award and we see our role to encourage other local businesses to take similar measures to be more sustainable.”

“Most businesses can install solar panels (as we have in our office) or heat pumps to cut carbon emissions, encourage car sharing, drive electric vehicles or motorbikes or even install trackers in petrol company vehicles to encourage employees to drive with a greater ecological awareness. Our schemes have proved very successful in reducing fuel consumption, and produce less pollution for the environment.”

More information on solar panel and heat pump installation visit: www.ohmenergy.co.uk

Construction hero!

IF you are looking for a true expert in the construction industry, look no further than Eastbourne’s own Ian Pickard.

By **Peter Lindsey**

Ian has been in the business for over 40 years, and he knows everything there is to know about building, safety, and quality. He started as a bricklayer, but he didn’t stop there. He worked his way up through different roles, learning new skills and gaining valuable insights along the way.

He is now the founder and director of *IDP Safety Services*, a company

that provides top-notch training and consultancy services to the construction sector. Ian has worked with some of the biggest names in the UK house building industry, and he has seen how the industry has changed over the years. He knows that safety is not just a matter of compliance, but also a matter of reputation and trust. That’s why he is always updating his knowledge and qualifications, and that’s why he set up *IDP Safety Services* in 2002 with his wife Lisa.

Ian wanted to share his passion and expertise with other businesses, and



help them protect themselves, their staff, and their customers from the risks involved in construction work. *IDP Safety Services* is not just another safety company. It is a company that cares about quality and excellence. Ian believes that cutting corners is not an option, and that high standards are the key to success. He helps his clients achieve those standards by offering them the best training and consultancy services in the market. Whether it’s plant training, health & safety, or wellbeing, Ian can deliver it with professionalism and efficiency. Ian’s story is an inspiration to anyone who wants to pursue a career in construction. He shows that with hard work, dedication, and a love

for learning, you can achieve great things and make a positive difference in the industry. He also shows that safety and quality are not just buzzwords, but values that can shape the future of construction.

Ian is not only a professional champion, he is also a community champion. He has been involved in setting up two mental health support groups – *SWAG*, which aims to raise awareness of mental health issues in the construction industry, and *Mankind*, which offers support to men in and around Eastbourne. If you want to know more about Ian, his company, or his support groups, you can contact him on **07793 431665**.

Cadenza Tuition

OWNER Becca Phillips extends heartfelt gratitude for Cadenza Tuition's "Highly Commended" in the Micro Business of the Year category, celebrating its innovative use of technology.

By **Peter Lindsey**

Teaching up to 9 piano students individually across two classrooms, the studio not only meets the needs of each student but also serves just shy of 100 students in total.

Standout features include utilising weighted digital pianos and headphones, with iPad apps that provide backing tracks and instant feedback. This innovation allows students to benefit from individual one-to-one coaching with the teacher and crucial independent study time during lessons. This model departs significantly from the traditional



approach of shorter sessions, where the teacher closely monitors every moment, creating a pressured experience. In its place, a more relaxed and productive atmosphere is fostered for students to absorb and apply their musical skills, all while alleviating the pressure often associated with home practice.

recognition is truly appreciated. Becca Phillips remarks, "We want to give a big thank you to everyone for the ongoing support and contributions to this amazing journey."

For more information, visit www.cadenzatuition.co.uk



In this competitive category, featuring the highest number of finalists during the awards evening,

Outstanding LawlerDavis

LAWLERDAVIS has been named Employer of the Year – The Outstanding Place to Work.

By **Peter Lindsey**

The independent financial planners are situated at Upperton House, The Avenue, Eastbourne, and have gone from strength to strength since starting the business in 2011.

Sarah Lawler said: "We are thrilled to have won this award and been recognised in this way. Our staff are absolutely fantastic, and I pay tribute to each one of them."

LawlerDavis specialises in:

- **Investments**
- **Pensions, including pension sharing on divorce**

- **Inheritance tax planning**
- **Protection**
- **Trusts.**

Happy and comfortable

Sarah has taken sole ownership of LawlerDavis since the retirement of Colin Davis in November 2022.

Continued success of the company means there is now a team of six, both male and female, in a happy and comfortable working environment.

Staff members each gave independent testimonial as to why they thought LawlerDavis was such a



Sarah receiving her 'Employer of the Year – The Outstanding Place to Work' at the Eastbourne Business Awards.

great place to work, and it was these which helped the judges choose LawlerDavis as Employer of the Year.

Sarah said: "It's the team which make LawlerDavis such a great company, not just to work at but for the benefit of our clients who appreciate the family feel we have in a relaxed but professional environment. It really does help us stay true to our ethos of Personal, Professional Planning."

She added: "Come and see us. Have a cuppa and see if we can work together going forward."

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INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL PLANNERS LTD

**Upperton House
The Avenue, Eastbourne
East Sussex BN21 3YB**

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info@lawlerdavis.co.uk

LawlerDavis Independent Financial Planners Ltd is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. FCA registration number 615491.

A special gift at Christmas

Could you make a special gift to St Wilfrid's Hospice this December, and help us to be there for more people?

One of the hardest things for some patients is not being able to be at home with their loved ones over the festive season. The whole hospice team works to enable them to spend some time at home, even if only for a short visit. But if that isn't possible, we bring Christmas to them in the hospice.

At St Wilfrid's it is our mission to do all we can to help people live well at the end of their life, and that feels even more important at Christmas. But to do this we need your help.

We rely on our community for 70% of our funding and with rising costs it is a struggle for the hospice to ensure that we can provide patients with our expert care.

We know that times are hard for many, but if you are able to make a special gift for our patients this December it will ensure we can be there for more families like Nat's at Christmas.

Find out more and make a donation at www.stwhospice.org/christmasgift

“

'In the 17 years we had been together we had never been able to spend a Christmas day all together; many years had been spent at work, or on call. **But that Christmas day we had a big celebration at the hospice**, with all the family together. We opened presents, we laughed, told stories and toasted Natalie with champagne.

'We had a beautiful table, laid up for all of us with floral centre-pieces and champagne glasses brought in from someone's home, and volunteers helped serve our food. Precious memories were created that day.

'At about 4pm Nat said to me she needed to go back to bed. **She whispered to me that it had been the best Christmas ever.** She was exhausted but happy and mostly slept after that; she passed away on New Year's Eve.

'All the people who have previously donated to St Wilfrid's Hospice contributed to making Nat's last few weeks comfortable, and to giving her the best Christmas ever. I am indebted and eternally grateful for that.' ”

Niall Maloney, whose Wife Natalie died at St Wilfrid's Hospice, aged 52, in December 2019.



www.stwhospice.org/christmasgift

01323 434200

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St Wilfrid's Hospice

Hospice at the heart of the community

IT'S been a busy month for *St Wilfrid's Hospice*.

By **Peter Lindsey**

First, it has opened its 11th hospice shop, in the heart of the Polegate community.

The brand-new shop in Polegate High Street opened its doors to waiting crowds of eager customers.

Shop Manager Nathan Dubar was joined by Cllr Dan Dunbar, Mayor of Polegate, *St Wilfrid's* Trustee David Turner, and shop volunteers, to officially cut the ribbon and open the store.

Charity Champion Awards

Second, it has recognised local business supporters at a special *Charity Champion Awards* evening.



David Turner, Jan Whiting, Cllr Dan Dunbar, Nathan Dunbar and Melody Sieyes officially open the store.

The event, sponsored by *Birchwood Group*, saw key members of the local business community sharing their success. There were six categories, each with up to six nominees, and one triumphant winner.

A thank you

St Wilfrid's Community Fundraiser, Simon Cosham, said: "We are fortunate to have the support of many local businesses who help us continue offering care in the hospice

and out in the community. This special awards evening is a small way to say thank you to them and acknowledge the important role they play. They deserve this recognition and I'd like to congratulate all the nominees and winners."



St Wilfrid's Hospice



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Meet FOUNDRY Eastbourne member Alexandra Benedict, an award-winning writer



Alexandra (AK) Benedict is an award-winning writer of scripts, short stories and internationally bestselling novels.

After reading English at Cambridge, and then Creative Writing at Sussex, Alexandra became a rock singer, an actor, a clown, a composer for film and TV, and a university lecturer, before writing full time. Alexandra lives in Eastbourne with her husband, writer Guy Adams, their daughter, Verity, and dog, Dame Margaret Rutherford.

As A K Benedict, she writes critically acclaimed high concept thrillers, short stories and for BBC Sounds, Audible and *Doctor Who*. Along with being shortlisted for the BBC Audio Award for Best Audio Drama and the eDunnit Award, she won the Scribe Award for Audio Drama. As Alexandra Benedict, she writes internationally bestselling Golden Age-inspired mysteries with a darker, contemporary edge. *The Christmas Murder Game* (Bonnie

Zaffre, 2021) was an Amazon Fiction Bestseller, the Independent Booksellers' Book of the Month, and was long-listed for the Gold Dagger Award.

Her latest Christmas mystery, *The Christmas Jigsaw Murders*, has just been published. A week before Christmas, Edie O'Sullivan, grumpy loner and crossword setter, finds a mysterious present on her doorstep. The box contains six jigsaw pieces that show the outline of a dead body and a message from 'Rest In Pieces' challenging Edie to prevent a final murder on Christmas Eve.

The Christmas Jigsaw Murders is out in hardback now. Signed copies are available at Waterstones Eastbourne. A limited, sprayed edges special edition can be obtained from independent book shops.

Alexandra's second Christmas crime, the bestselling *Murder on the Christmas Express*, is available in paperback from Waterstones, independent bookshops, WH Smiths, WH Smiths Travel, Tesco, Asda, Sainsbury's, and Morrisons.

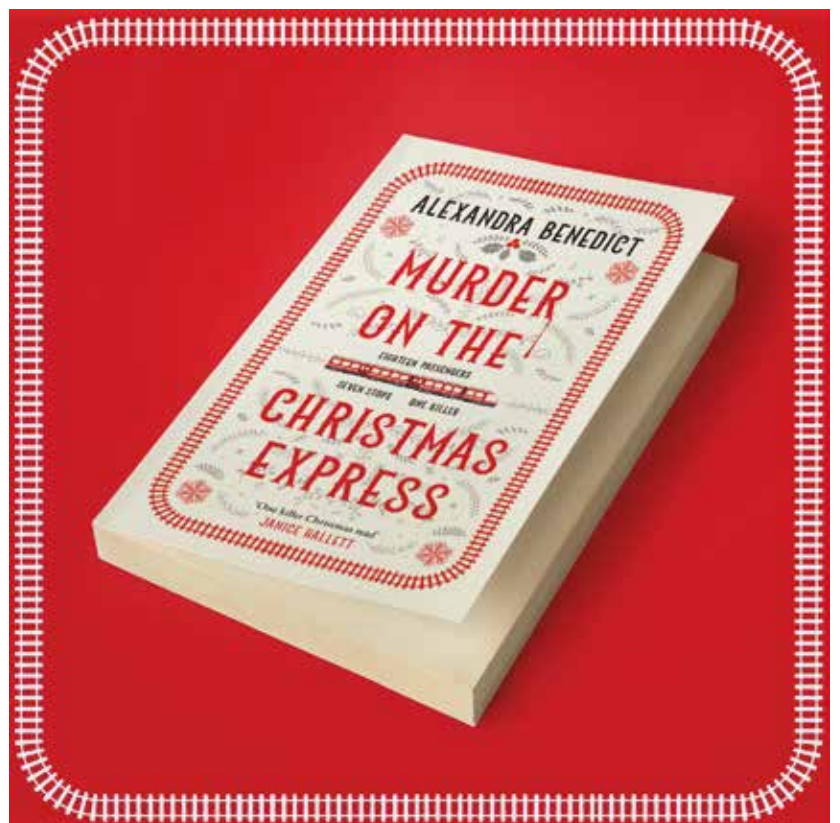
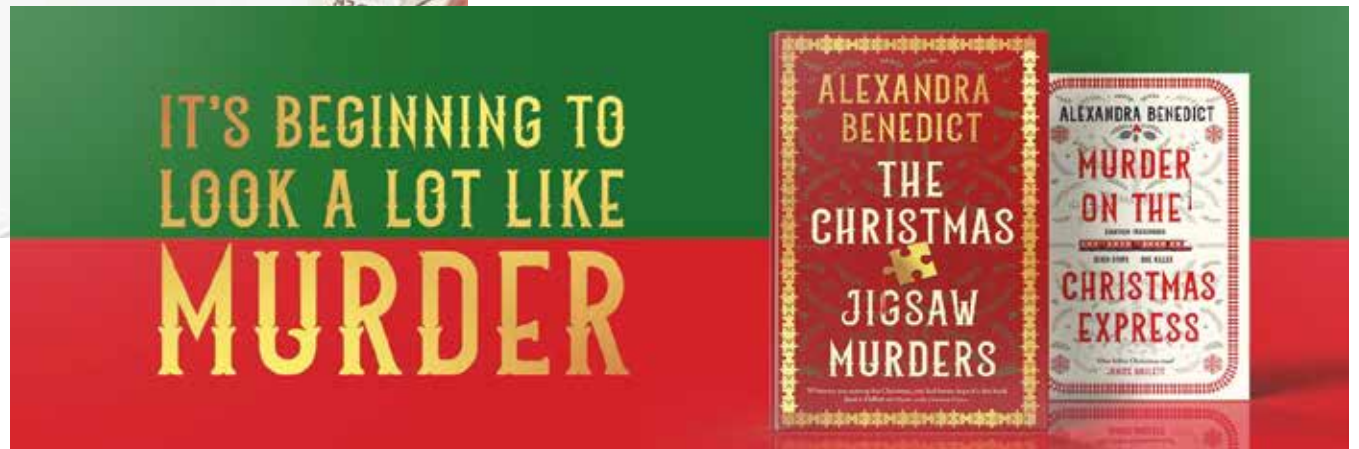
The box contains six jigsaw pieces that show the outline of a dead body and a message from 'Rest In Pieces'...



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FOUNDRY

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From left; Stuart Black (vice-president), Liam Brooks (media), Nick Underdown (vice-chairman), Chris Bennett (president), Danni Green (secretary), Alan Brooks (treasurer) and Sam Eaton (manager). Photo: Simon Roe Photography.

Polegate Town FC centenary award

POLEGATE Town FC has been awarded a centenary award by the *Sussex FA* at a recent awards night celebrating their long service since 1915.

By **Peter Lindsey**

The club was founded by players from the nearby Royal Naval Airship station and started playing at the *Polegate War Memorial Recreation Ground* in 1923 where they still play to this day.

President Chris Bennett said: "It was great to be awarded this as a club. More than 300 people were at the awards night, with about 20 awards presented to referees, managers and club around Sussex. It is a great privilege for us as a club to be recognised."

The 70s proved to be a successful decade for the club as they won one

league title and four cups in the *East Sussex League*.

The 1996/97 team won the *Eastbourne FA Challenge Cup* and improved the following season securing the *East Sussex League* and Cup double.

In recent years, the club repeated the 1997 success winning the *Eastbourne FA Challenge Cup* in 2018, beating *AFC Uckfield Town* in the final.

A *Mid Sussex Cup* double was won in 2019, with the 2nd team winning the *Eastbourne FA Vice Presidents Cup* in 2022 being their most recent success.



Polegate Town FC, 1915–1916.

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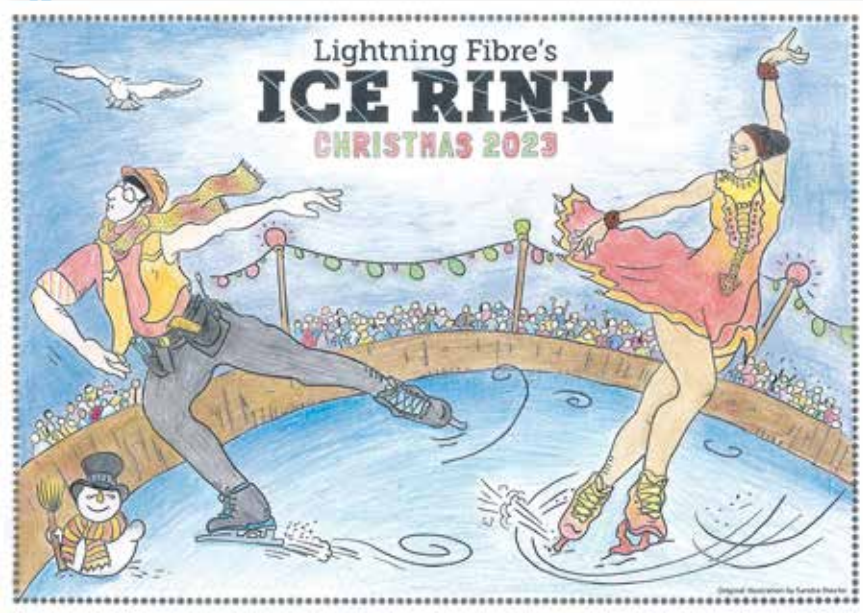


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Overall Winner, Olivia Odey-Knight.

Winners announced

LIGHTNING Fibre's Ice Rink Schools Colouring Competition – winners announced.

By **Harry Farmer**

The Festival team were thrilled to receive thousands of entries into this years colouring competition, sponsored by Lightning Fibre and Sigtek, the standard was incredibly high.

This years judge, Lara Groves had very tough decisions to make.

The Festival team are very happy to announce **Olivia Odey-Knight** from Tollgate School, Y5 as the overall competition winner.

Olivia's house will receive a years free *Lightning Fibre* Broadband, her artwork vinyl wrapped around a *Lightning Fibre* cabinet near to her school, Olivia has also been invited to cut the ribbon at the opening ceremony of *Lightning Fibre's Ice Rink* on Saturday 9th December.

The other four winners chosen are:
Matteo Gibbons, Bourne School – Y3
Melanie Przybylek, Ocklyne Junior School – Y6
Nathaniel Ndoci, Pashley Down Infant School – Y1
Emilia Stabler, Polegate School – Y6

These four winners have also won a years free supply of *Lightning Fibre* Broadband plus a free Ice Skating session for four people on Saturday 9th December too.

Plus each school whose students took part in the colouring competition will also have two winners in Key Stages who will win a free Ice Skating session for four people on Saturday 9th December.

Congratulations everyone! *The Festival* team, *Lightning Fibre* and *Sigtek* thank you all for taking part!

Lightning Fibre's Ice Rink is situated outside *The Enterprise Shopping Centre* and *Eastbourne Train Station* and will be running from Saturday 9th to Sunday 31st December (except Christmas Day).

You can buy tickets in advance at: www.visiteastbournetickets.co.uk



Judge Lara Groves.



Cuckmere buses

Want to drive a bus? Volunteer Drivers Required

We are a busy charity operating 16-seater mini-buses from our base at Berwick. We provide weekly timetabled public services in the Cuckmere Valley area, plus town services in Hailsham and Seaford. We also provide Private Hire.

Interested in becoming a volunteer driver?

Full training will be given, and you may drive as many or as few shifts as you wish in any month. You'll need a D1 classification on your licence.

To find out more about joining our team of drivers, call us on **07834 558376** or email volunteer@cuckmerebuses.org.uk

We look forward to welcoming you aboard and to join an organisation where everyone is a volunteer.

For timetables and other information about us, visit:
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Friday 22nd December: 9am – 5pm
Saturday 23rd December: 10am – 2pm
Sunday 24th December: Closed
Monday 25th December: Closed
Tuesday 26th December: Closed
Wednesday 27th December: 10am – 2pm

Thursday 28th December: 10am – 2pm
Friday 29th December: 10am – 2pm
Saturday 30th December: Closed
Sunday 31st December: Closed
Monday 1st January: Closed
Tuesday 2nd January: 9am – 5pm

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Rick's Xmas show for Ukraine

EASTBOURNE singer Rick Bonner is continuing his fundraising for Ukraine with a special Christmas concert.

By **Peter Lindsey**

It is taking place at *The Cavendish Hotel on Eastbourne Seafront on Friday December 15th from 6:30pm.*

Entrance is free and donations will be asked for on the night.

This is the latest of a series of fundraising concerts being staged and organised by Rick.

Earlier this year, he set up *Life Aid* with a target of £30,000 to help the people of Ukraine.

It's quite simple – entertainers give up their time FREE on a Thursday to perform a gig.



Rick has been appealing to DJs, bands, discos, singers, karaokes, musicians and comedians to contact him.

Either he will sort the venue or the entertainer may know somewhere.

Rick said: "I am very much looking forward to the Christmas show at *The Cavendish Hotel*.

"Please come along and play your part in supporting these people in Ukraine who very much need our help."

Also appearing will be International vocal celebrity Igor Grohotsky and Ukraine vocalist Lana Bright.

For more information call Rick on **07456 919742** or email **rickbonner@live.co.uk**

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The Chaseley Trust

Your specialist local charity enabling people with complex disabilities to live a full and active life



Located in South Cliff, Eastbourne, The Chaseley Trust is a 55 bed charity care home offering high-quality care, nursing and rehabilitation services for adults with complex neurological disabilities and conditions such as Acquired Brain Injury, Spinal Cord Injury, Stroke, Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neurone, Parkinson's Disease and Cerebral Palsy.

We offer residents:

- 24 hour residential care and nursing for long term and respite stays
- Specialist rehabilitation services – neuro physiotherapy & occupational therapy
- Fully wheelchair accessible gym facilities also open to the local community
- Dedicated and highly trained staff
- A varied range of stimulating activities
- Healthy and nutritious meals tailored to personal diets
- A home from home in a stunning seaside location
- Casbar, our bistro cafe open to family and guests to socialise during the day

We offer staff:

- Comprehensive in-house training
- Apprenticeships and the opportunity for additional qualifications
- Competitive rates of pay
- Rewarding work
- Career development
- Rolling Rota
- Benefits include free health scheme and life insurance cover

We offer the community:

- Volunteering opportunities
- Fundraising events and opportunities
- A very worthy local cause to support

For further information or to visit, please contact us on **01323 744200** or by email: reception@chaseleytrust.org www.chaseley.org.uk



Chaseley provide weekly activities for their residents

WITH thanks to our wonderful Wellbeing & Activities Team.

By **Nic Gray**

Not only do we put on fundraising activities here at Chaseley, but we also ensure that all our residents have fun, get involved and learn something new each week.

Our Wellbeing & Activities Team put on well thought out and inclusive activities for everyone to get involved in.

Over the past month or two we have had lots of activities and visits.

*Millie's Nightclub** attend *The Chaseley Trust* monthly, which invites a night of fun for adults with disabilities. A safe environment for all people with disabilities to experience a night club environment and have the freedom and choice to do as others do. October was Halloween themed, and everyone got involved in dressing up.

We also had our regular, popular visit from *Pet Pals Therapy* with Bex bringing along rabbits and chickens. Residents had the opportunity to have Pepsi and Bailey the chickens, and Dusty and Sinead the rabbits sitting on their laps.

The benefits of petting animals are numerous including:

- lowering blood pressure
- reducing anxiety

Everyone was relaxed and eager to hear the animal tales.

Violinist Miriam Eiselle, one of our regular visitors, came to play for the Residents last month too. The theme was famous film scores, ranging from Star Wars to Indiana Jones. The Residents absolutely loved her and clapped and cheered for more throughout the afternoon.



Another great event was our "Cockney Knees Up". We had some London sing-along in the morning and a Cockney London through history PowerPoint presentation. In the afternoon the residents enjoyed a themed lunch of pie and mash, followed by a viewing of "My Fair Lady".

Special thanks go to Teresa Boyle our Wellbeing and Activities Coordinator and the rest of the team here at Chaseley who make all of these things possible.

*If you would like to find out more about *Millie's Nightclub* you can head to their website: www.millies-nightclub.co.uk



The main source of Chaseley's funding comes from residents' fees, which cover the cost of their care package and contributes to the daily running costs of the home.

Various commissioning bodies fund the majority of resident care packages and they have just 5% surplus to fund all their additional costs, including the upkeep of their beautiful building, upgrading their equipment, and to provide the extra social and

recreational activities and services that enhance the comfort and well-being of their residents, which is why they rely on donations and fundraising.

Chaseley is an independent charity-owned care home located in a stunning location on Eastbourne's seafront. It is a 55-bed home that specialises in long-term nursing and respite care for people with complex disabilities, such as Acquired and Traumatic Brain Injury, stroke, spinal cord injury and

degenerative neurological conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neurone and Parkinson's disease.

Their multi-disciplinary approach to care and rehabilitation includes physiotherapy, occupational therapy and recreational activities, ensuring their person-centred approach is focused on individuals regaining as much independence as possible, so that their psychological well-being and emotional balance are maintained. In addition

to this their facilities included an on-site, fully accessible gym specifically designed for people who are disabled and living in the community.

If you feel like you could support *Chaseley* by making us your Charity of the Year or potentially host an event on our behalf, please contact us on **01323 744200** or fundraising@chaseleytrust.org

Local Environmentalist Leads The Way With Sustainable Giving



Ecohaven stocks a range of beautiful products that can help you bring about positive change this Christmas and beyond.

Karine Morrison discovered a love of sea swimming during the pandemic, and it was during one of her swims that she came across the extent of plastic that litters our beaches. When she returned home, her realisation made Karine determined to find alternatives to plastic in our homes, starting in the bathroom.

At home, it was difficult to find substitutes for plastic products, and even when she did find alternatives, Karine was dismayed to discover

that they were delivered in plastic packaging.

Through extensive research, Ecohaven was born and a mission was launched: to find eco-friendly bathroom products that replace plastic ones.

“80% of all marine debris is plastic” said Karine Morrison of Ecohaven.

Ecohaven supplies a wide range of eco-friendly personal care products for the home that have a positive impact on the planet.

All the products on the Ecohaven website have been carefully chosen for their natural ingredients, and are vegan, plastic-free, recyclable, and all UK brands. The majority of the brands are women-owned businesses.

One such brand is Truthpaste, which Karine explains is a very popular toothpaste in her shop, and is made in Brighton, from natural organic botanicals, and is plastic-free. Another example is Ku-tis - a natural deodorant made in Wales which is a fantastic swap to plastic as that works.

Karine’s enthusiasm for her business is evidenced in the products she sells, which all carry her environmental ethos. As Karine explains: *“Beam is another amazing brand created by Amy, a maker of exquisite soap bars that smell incredibly homely and fresh, look stunning, and are packed with natural ingredients”*.

“At Ecohaven we take our responsibility for the sustainable future seriously. We want to encourage our customers to make



eco-conscious choices whenever possible, and we’re here to help make that happen- what better place to start than with your Christmas gifts?”

You can find out more about ecohaven at ecohavenstore.com

Port Hotel’s first guest chef revealed with the launch of Sunday Roasts & Christmas Menu

Sussex-based Loic Williams will be serving mouth-watering Sunday Roasts and dishing up a delicious Christmas Menu.

The menu calls on the best of Sussex and local surrounds produce with Sussex wagyu rump of beef headlining the menu. Making a star appearance is the original The Hungry Monk banoffee pie, a recipe created by Loic Williams’ parents in the Seventies and now available for all to enjoy at Port.

As Loic Williams reflects: *“Growing up, I didn’t have the ‘ordinary childhood’ and teen years. My memories are adorned in*

working at my parents’ restaurant – The Hungry Monk. Throughout my journey there, Rosettes were awarded, and at one time, the restaurant was voted as one of the top 100 places to dine in the UK. I’ve worked at a lot of restaurants since, however, there has never been that magic anywhere else. Every day after school I wouldn’t go to my house, I would go to the restaurant – my second home, to make banoffee pies, sauces, and peel potatoes...this is where it all started for me and where I learnt my passion for food. And so, I’m excited to be bringing my memories of The Hungry Monk to Port

Hotel. I am looking forward to the collaboration, serving the best of what our local area has to offer.”

Peter Cadwallader, Co-Founder, Port Hotel commented *“We’re excited to launch our first guest chef residency on 5th November with a bang! Loic Williams encapsulates what we love to see in chefs – he’s passionate about local produce, has exemplary standards, and loves bringing people together over food. It’s in his blood. We can’t wait to see what he serves up at Port throughout our Winter season.”*

Sunday Roasts are available noon-5pm from 5th November,



throughout Winter and the Christmas Menu is served from November, Lunch and Dinner times to group bookings, for 10 or more people.

New members for November

Cory J Balance • Sussex Community Foundation • Chuck and Blade Burgers • Ann’s Flowers • Crafted Coffee • Corinne Guion • BodiBlossom • JoJo’s Tea Room • Wave Community Bank • Utility Warehouse

Eastbourne Therapist Says ‘You Can Make 2024 your best year yet!’

Hannah Gardner is an accredited Hypnotherapist, coach and counsellor who has been supporting Eastbourne residents for over 4 years. Based in Eastbourne, Hannah Louise Coaching helps people to achieve their goals and improve their relationships.

As one year draws to a close and another year begins, we caught up with Hannah, to find out how she helps her clients to set and keep their new year resolutions.

“December is a month which encourages us to think about what really matters”, said Hannah, “it is a time to reflect on the year we have had and to make plans for the future. Like me you might find yourself setting some goals for the new year; maybe you want to get more active, eat healthier, or stop



an unhelpful habit. Many of my clients are also thinking about what they do want next year to bring; for some it is increased confidence, a feeling of calm or improvements in their relationships.”

Amongst other techniques, Hannah uses hypnotherapy, which works by accessing your subconscious- the part of the mind where your habits and unhelpful beliefs live. By inducing a hypnotic state, trained therapists can turn off unhelpful thought patterns or turn on helpful ones.

As Hannah explained *“Identifying the changes you want to make can be the easy part- the difficult part is making the changes! That’s where hypnotherapy and coaching can really give you the boost you need. Many clients can be surprised to hear that even deeply rooted habits such as stopping smoking can often take just one session of hypnotherapy.”*

From her relaxing treatment room in Eastbourne Hannah can offer coaching and hypnotherapy

designed to help you achieve the changes you want to make. This year Hannah has successfully helped clients to;

- stop smoking
- stop nail biting
- lose weight
- improve communication in their marriage
- improve parenting skills
- give confident presentations

Gift Vouchers for all treatments are available to buy- so this year why not give the gift of powerful personal change through hypnotherapy!

Hannah offers a free no obligation consultation to anyone who would like to find out more.

For more information please visit www.hannahlouisecoaching.com

Local businesswoman is Finalist for Women’s Business Award

This December, businesswomen from across the globe are coming together for the annual Women’s Business Awards.

Shortlisted for the Overcomer Award is Local businesswoman, Nic Gray of Nic Gray PA in Hailsham.

The event features over 20 categories, including Businesswoman of the Year, Employer of the Year, and Diversity & Inclusion Award.

On reaching the finals, Nic says: *“A few years ago I would have laughed if you had told me I was going to own my own business and*

be a multi-award winner. A shy and anxious person by nature, I’ve pushed myself out of my comfort zone to get where I am today. The support of fellow business owners and entrepreneurs has been incredible, and I wish all the Finalists huge success”.

Angela De Souza, CEO and founder of Women’s Business Club, the event organiser, commented:

“There is nothing quite like celebrating the accomplishments of our businesswomen. Although only one woman can win in each category, we feel that every single woman who enters is a winner

- she is still standing, she is still determined to succeed and she still has hope for the future, a winning attitude indeed. I am so proud of all businessmen and women who are pushing through this year.”

The Women’s Business Awards take place globally online each December where women are celebrated and recognised for their outstanding contributions and achievements.

About the Finalist

Nic Gray is the owner and founder of Nic Gray PA, a Virtual Assistant company in Hailsham, supporting

business owners worldwide.

She supports businesses with their admin, bookkeeping and social media. Saving business owners the most precious thing of all... their time.

You can find out more at www.nicgraypa.com



Join today and reap the rewards!

Eastbourne unLtd Chamber of Commerce is the largest town based Chamber in the South East, so becoming a member will connect you to a large business network offering support, advice and opportunities for you and your business to grow.

Our members not only benefit from the varied events programme we offer but membership also enables them to submit an editorial for inclusion in this publication. This offer is free exclusively for our Members.

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Celebrating volunteers

IT'S a great Eastbourne charity – and now *Care for the Carers* has celebrated the wonderful contribution of its volunteers.

By **Peter Lindsey**

It staged its annual *Volunteer Celebration Event at the Lansdowne Hotel.*

The event celebrated and thanked volunteers in East Sussex who have undertaken roles with *Care for the Carers* over the last year, helping the

organisation to support over 10,000 carers each year.

Carers look after someone who couldn't manage without their help. It could be a friend, family member or neighbour who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem



or an addiction could not cope without their support.

Care for the Carers Chief Executive Jennifer Twist said: "It was an important celebration of the phenomenal impact that our dedicated team of volunteers helps us to achieve."

At the event, volunteers from various roles had the chance to meet,

discuss their work and plan for the future. This year they were joined by volunteer counsellors, *Carers' Wellbeing Group* hosts, *Carers in Touch* callers and volunteers helping at activities for young carers.

If you would like to join the team and take on a rewarding role, please contact *Care for the Carers* by calling **01323 738390** or visit the website **www.cftc.org.uk**

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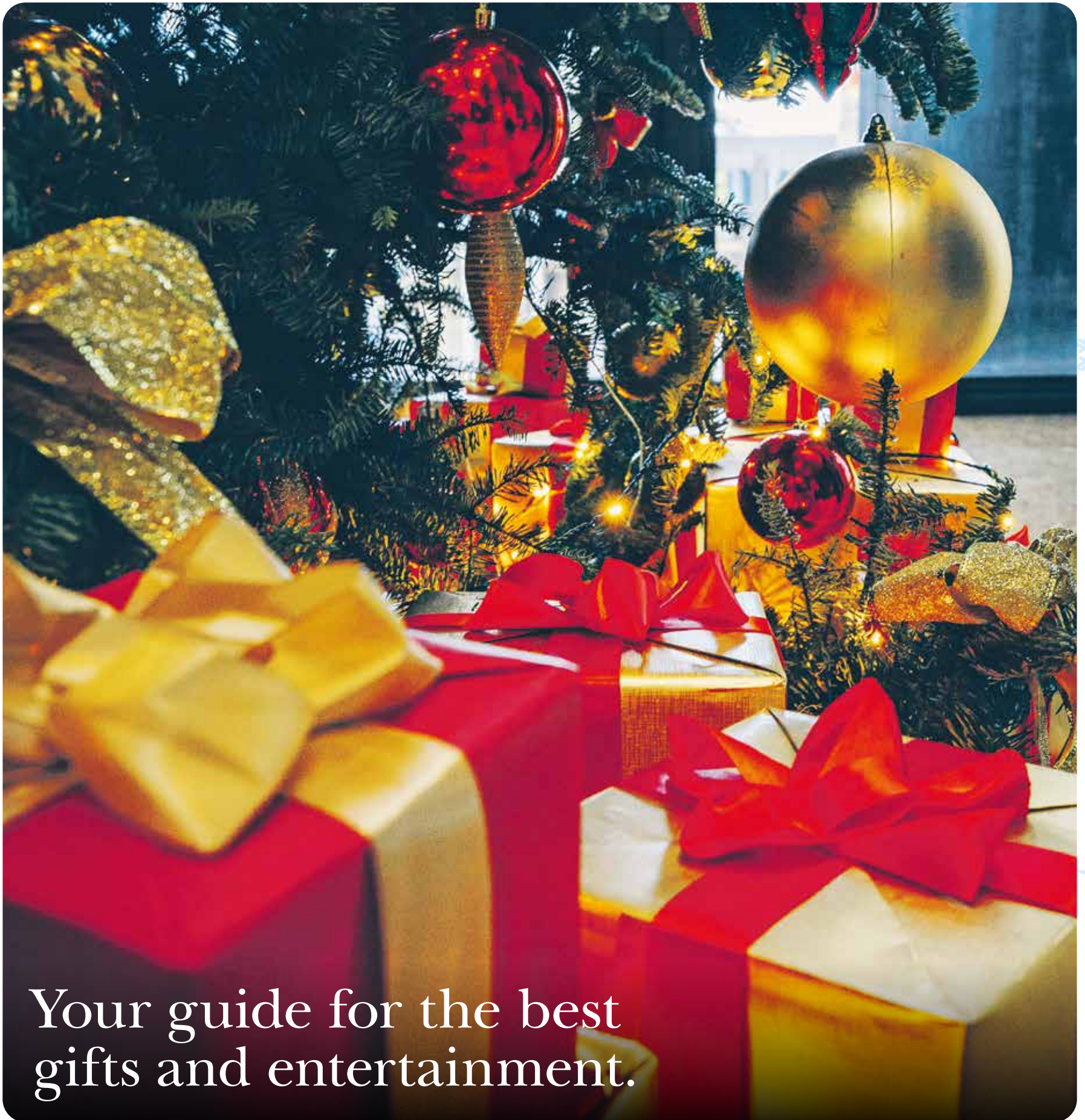


Taylor's Restaurant and Sports Bar is moving after Christmas. We are moving back to where it all began over 30 years ago for the Taylor family, in Bolton Road. Which was then called Shades Restaurant. Everything will be staying the same, just a change of location which we hope will secure the future of Taylor's for years to come. We would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support over the last four years of being in the Beacon Centre. We look forward to seeing you all at the newly renovated Taylor's in Bolton Road after Christmas.



Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year,
The Taylors

Bourne*festive*



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Christmas at Wards Clothing Company

WARDS Clothing Company is an independent family-owned clothing business for men and women, at 20 Cornfield Road, Eastbourne BN21 4QE. We specialise in Fairtrade and natural fibres, with respected brands.

By **Wards Clothing Company**

Visit our shop for all your holiday gift needs. Our shop is bursting with stylish and affordable fashion apparel, accessories and gifts.

In December, Wards is participating in Eastbourne's Angel Trail festival. Find the angel in our shop, then get your reward card stamped with a chance to win a hamper prize!

We wish all our customers a Happy and Healthy Christmas and 2024! Thank you for your support.



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CORNWALL

Weird Fish
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MEYER
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CLOTHING COMPANY

Wards Clothing Company Eastbourne Ltd
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Enjoy the open fire, relax in the lounge and rug up for some amazing walks in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Open daily

From 9am - 4:30pm serving wholesome breakfasts, specials menu, baked goods and delicious coffee. Gluten free, vegetarian and vegan options available.

Dog friendly too!

Christmas Lunches

Served daily in our formal dining room, from 1st December at 12pm. Select 2 courses for just £19.95 per person or elevate your experience with a delightful 3-course feast for £25.00

Book your table online

Christmas Market

9th-10th December, 2-4pm Experience the magic, and join us for a spectacular Christmas Market full of Artisan products, local produce and artists, drinks and Christmassy treats.

Ready to fill you with festive cheer!

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So whether you're planning to propose this Christmas, or searching for the perfect gift for someone special. there's never been a better time to visit us at Brufords.

Plus, with 0% finance options* and complementary gift wrapping available, you can make Christmas 2023 one to remember.

For more information, and to shop our Christmas Gift Guide. visit us in-store and online at **[brufords.com](https://www.brufords.com)**

*Subject to acceptance. Terms & conditions apply.



1



2



3



4



5



6

The 12 Gifts of Christmas



7



8



9



10



11



12

- 1) Fope Prima Bracelet in 18ct Rose Gold with Diamonds
- 2) Breitling Avenger Watch on Leather Strap
- 3) Brown & Newirth 'Peony' 1.80ct Lab Grown Diamond Ring
- 4) TAG Heuer Formula 1 Watch on Leather Strap
- 5) Wolf Cub Watch Winder in Bordeaux Leather
- 6) ChloBo Positive Vibes Silver Bracelet

- 7) BOSS Sage Ladies Watch on Bracelet
- 8) Montblanc Meisterstück Platinum Line Rollerball Pen
- 9) Garmin fenix 7S Watch on Rubber Strap
- 10) Gucci GG Running Earrings in 18ct Yellow Gold
- 11) Tissot PRX Automatic Chronograph Watch on Bracelet
- 12) Swarovski Sparkling Dance Necklace



Will Bruford the bear have a Christmas to remember?

Visit our social media channels to watch the story unfold...



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@brufordsjewellers

Father Christmas

PHONE IN 

Sunday 17th December 10am-2pm



Sponsored by



Once a year More Radio will be inviting a very special guest into the studios, Father Christmas!

We will be running a unique 4 hour show on Saturday 17th December 10am-2pm

If you would like the chance for your little one to talk to him, register at moreradio.online

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Metalsmith & more

A NEW Eastbourne based metalwork, jewellery and accessories business, *SORCA Studio*, has launched at the *The Labyrinth*, Mark Lane in Eastbourne town centre.

By **Gail McKay**

As a qualified silversmith, all products and services are made and carried out by jewellery designer Sophie Sorca.

Sophie specialises in contemporary handmade silver and gold jewellery as well as repairs and bespoke commissions.

SORCA Studio also focuses on restoring and up-cycling decorative items and accessories including sentimental, vintage and retro jewellery.

Originally from Eastbourne, Sophie has been working as a jeweller for ten years since graduating with a BA degree in Jewellery & Silversmithing at the *London School of Art, Architecture & Design* in 2013.



Sophie will be selling handmade *SORCA* jewellery at local artisan markets over the Christmas period including the *Sussex Christmas Craft Fair* on 2nd & 3rd December upstairs at the *Enterprise Shopping Centre*, Station Parade, Eastbourne.

If you have any enquiries you would like to discuss in person feel free to visit the studio at *The Labyrinth*:
SORCA Studio, 4 Mark Lane, Eastbourne BN21 4RJ

Regular opening hours: 10am–6pm on Tuesday, Thursday & Friday.

Xmas Open Studio: Thursday 7th December 1pm–9pm. Join for festive drinks and late night jewellery shopping!

Or by appointment: **07950 869846**
studio@sorca.co.uk

Instagram: **@sorcastudio** Facebook: **sorcastudio**
www.sorca.co.uk

Hydro Hotel Christmas Day give away

THE Hydro Hotel has been hosting guests for Christmas Day lunch since 1895 and for 2023 will continue this tradition and at the same time give something back to local people.

By **Stephen Callis**

We would like to host six individuals who would otherwise be on their own on Christmas Day. We will be providing a table for six guests and serving a four course festive lunch followed by coffee and truffles.

We would like your help to nominate a guest

Do you know of anyone that is going to be on their own on Christmas Day? Perhaps a friend, neighbour, colleague or extended family member. They would need to make their way to the hotel on Christmas Day but would be fully hosted by us as part of the wider Christmas Day lunch celebrations at the hotel.



To enter, please send the name of your nominated person and a brief passage on why they should be chosen. Email your nomination to:
jonathan.owen@hydrohotel.com

Six people will be selected and the nominating person for each one will be notified in the first instance.

December festivities at the Hydro Hotel

Throughout December we will be serving a festive lunch and dinner daily in the *Crystal Restaurant* plus festive afternoon tea in our lounges and *Conservatory Restaurant*.

Please see our website for further details of the festive season throughout December.

Hydro Hotel
EASTBOURNE

Mount Road, Eastbourne BN20 7HZ

www.hydrohotel.com
01323 720643
Facebook: **@HydroHotel**

FESTIVE DINING AT THE LANSDOWNE

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Seasons

Get a festive plan

It's time, to make that plan. It's probably going to involve your finest outfit in the company of the finest of friends and colleagues. Make The Lansdowne your destination of choice. Glorious window seats looking out to the Western Lawns, and fabulous dining at a similarly fabulous price in 1912 Seafood & Steak from the always good Seasons menu. Looks like you already have a plan.

1912 Seasons
£24.00

Two courses per person

Festive Afternoon Tea

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per person



Always festive



THE LANSDOWNE

King Edward's Parade, Eastbourne BN21 4EE www.lansdowne-hotel.co.uk 01323 725 174 [f](#) [@lansdownehotel](#)



December festivities at The Lansdowne

FESTIVITIES at *The Lansdowne* are well underway and we do invite you to experience this magical time of year with us, whether it be dropping in for a coffee, drink in the bar, meal in *1912* or afternoon tea in our lounges.

By **Stephen Callis**

We will continue to offer our 2 courses for just £24 during December, plus will be having some festive specials on the menu.

Festive Afternoon Tea

Relax in our lounges and treat yourself to some indulgence with our festive afternoon tea, inclusive of a selection of finger sandwiches, festive cakes and pastries, warm scones with jam and clotted cream, plus tea or coffee. £24.95 per person, £29.95 with a glass of Prosecco. Available from Friday 1st to Saturday 23rd December. Book via our website and the Dine section or call us on **01323 725174**.

Private Festive Lunches or Dinner

Enjoy a three course Christmas meal with coffee and mince pies with colleagues, friends or family in a private room. From £33 per person based on a minimum group of 10 guests. Available from Friday 1st December to Saturday 23rd December. Please call us on **01323 725174** to discuss availability and options.

Treat a friend or loved one to a Lansdowne gift voucher

Our gift vouchers are purchasable online and offer a selection of options, starting at only £10. Choose from a variety of

experience vouchers or a monetary voucher that can be used against everything at *The Lansdowne*.

Highlights include:

- Afternoon tea voucher with the choice of a sparkling option.
- Dining experiences in our restaurant *1912 Seafood & Steak*.
- Accommodation vouchers from a one night stay to our popular two night Signature Break.
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All vouchers are available for purchase online and can be sent electronically to the purchaser or recipient – and even set to arrive on Christmas Day.



4-13 Lansdowne Terrace
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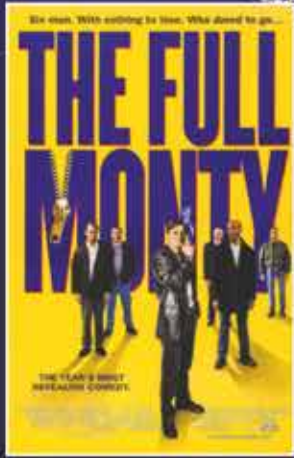
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What's on in December!

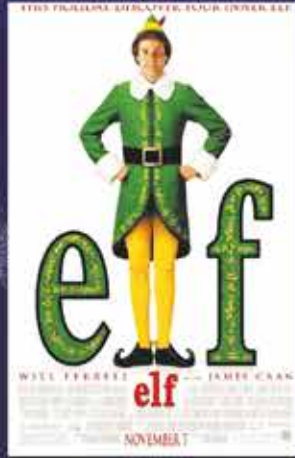
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THROUGHOUT HAILSHAM**



12A The Great Escaper



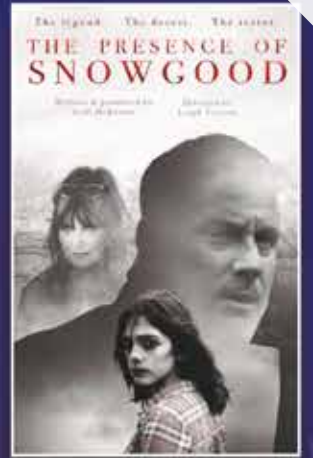
15 The Full Monty



PG Elf



15 Saltburn



12A The Presence of Snowgood



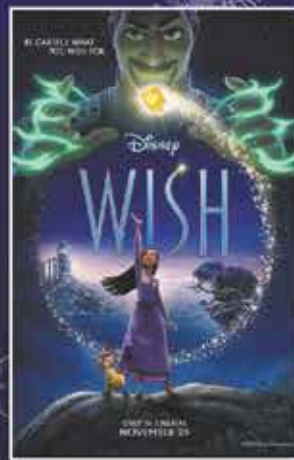
U Remains of the Day



PG It's A Wonderful Life



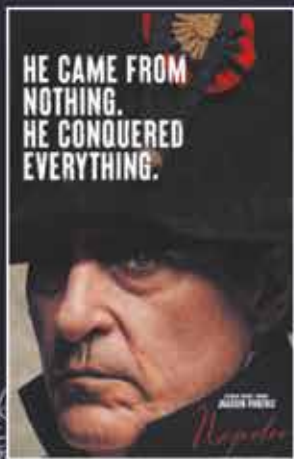
12A The Hunger Games:
The Ballad of
Songbirds And Snakes



PG Wish

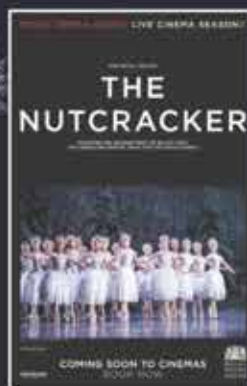


15 Love Actually



15 Napoleon

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Make Christmas shopping a treat!

DO you like silver jewellery? Handmade chocolate? Silk scarves? Original paintings and prints, hand turned wood, fused glass, unique ceramics? How about handmade candles, soaps, toiletries, and textiles?

By **Caroline Repchuk**, The Lighthouse Gallery

Wouldn't it be wonderful if there was somewhere in town to buy all of these things under one roof, and even better made by local artists and makers? Well, good news folks, there is!

If you have yet to discover *The Lighthouse Gallery* on Cornfield Terrace, you're in for a treat. Nestled in a beautiful period building, this is independent

shopping at its best. Come along and enjoy fabulous coffee, homemade soups, sandwiches and cakes and plenty of festive goodies while you browse all the unique and affordable gifts on offer.

Earn rewards
Every purchase earns a stamp on the *YourEastbourne Christmas Reward card* in support of independent shopping with fabulous



prizes to be won in the Christmas Draw. Even better, somewhere in Eastbourne an artist does a happy dance because you have added a little extra sparkle to their Christmas.

Take a trip to *The Lighthouse*, make shopping a treat!

The Lighthouse Gallery
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Open Tuesday – Saturday
10am to 4pm.
Late Night Shopping:
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Christmas Festive Lunches

Throughout December celebrate with friends, family, colleagues and clients. The Crystal Restaurant is available for lunch and dinner throughout the week and is the perfect location to enjoy our festive menu. Three course Christmas lunch with festive novelties - £29 per person.

Monday to Saturday 12.30pm – 2pm
1st December to 23rd December

Gift vouchers

Treat a friend or a loved one to a Hydro Hotel gift voucher. Choose from afternoon tea, dining, overnight stays or monetary vouchers.

Available for online purchase and delivery.

hydrohotel.com/gift-vouchers



Hydro Hotel Mount Road, Eastbourne,
East Sussex BN20 7HZ

01323 720643 hydrohotel.com



View our
Christmas
menu
online



Your Eastbourne BID Brings Christmas Cheer to the Town Centre

Eastbourne is ready for a cracker of a Christmas this year with plenty of festive cheer in the bustling town centre thanks to Your Eastbourne BID.

The Eastbourne BID group, which is a business-led, business-funded initiative to improve and enhance Eastbourne town centre, has lit up the town by reinstalling last year's festive lights.

The lights, which run throughout the whole BID area and were officially switched on for the Christmas season on November 25, are joined by a brand new display in Terminus Road from Bankers Corner to Blacks.

The BID has also commissioned Christmas trees for Little Chelsea, Victoria Place and the Beacon shopping centre, as well as bringing back the hugely popular interactive Christmas tree at Bankers Corner which was a hit with residents and visitors last year.

Today (December 1, from 3.30pm), a Festive Fun and Fireworks extravaganza will be held in Little Chelsea. The popular event is funded by the BID and organised by the independent traders in the area.

Thousands of residents and visitors pack the streets to enjoy traditional stalls, a Santa's grotto, children's rides and live music, as well as festive food and drinks being sold by traders.

The evening culminates with the Town Hall laser and music show at 6.45pm, followed by a spectacular firework display.

The Victorian Christmas Market will also be returning to the town centre from Thursday December 7–Sunday December 10 (10am–6pm).

Terminus Road's pedestrian precinct will be transformed into a wonderland of festive stalls, with unique gifts such as handcrafted ornaments and original stocking fillers, as well as tasty Christmas treats and live music.



On the last day of the market (December 10), Eastbourne will be attempting a celestial world record – the most people dressed as Christmas angels in one place.

The current Guinness World Record, which was set by the residents of Winnipeg in Canada in 2015, stands at 1,275.

Once the angels have mustered in the Beacon (2pm) – wearing white, wings and halos – and been counted, they will then parade through the shopping centre and out into Terminus Road before an announcement is made revealing whether the town has set a new festive record. Children will also be encouraged to spot angels in shop windows, while their parents pick up some Christmas presents at the market and Eastbourne's shops.



Eastbourne BID Chief Executive Stephen Holt said, "The countdown to Christmas has already started in Eastbourne – and there's plenty more to look forward to this December.

"With a world record attempt, angel parade, and a Christmas market there is festive fun for all the family to enjoy.

"We hope to see you there!"

Eastbourne also continues to celebrate the world-famous Turner Prize over the Christmas season, with installations throughout the town centre – including the bright pink Eve De Haan artwork outside Metrobank, and the Nathan Coley light installation on the front of the Central Library.

There's also Judith Alder's installation within the Beacon, whilst Jason Burges – just back from an exhibition in the Middle East – will shortly be opening a temporary unit in Victoria Place.



Any traders who are part of Your Eastbourne BID can share their views on its future priorities by visiting surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BIDPriorities



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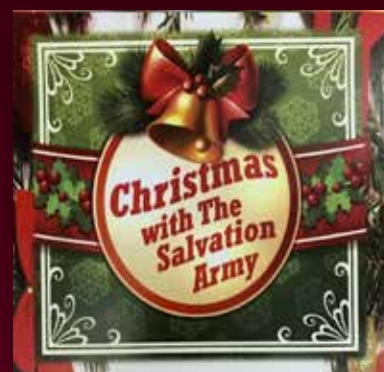
ROYAL HIPPODROME THEATRE



Screaming Blue Murder
Comedy Club
Friday 1 December



Country Superstars
Tennessee Country Christmas
Saturday 2 December



Christmas with
The Salvation Army
Sunday 3 December

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Age Concern celebrate

SEVENTY-FIVE years of improving later life for older people in Eastbourne.

By **Peter Lindsey**

That's the proud achievement of Age Concern Eastbourne, which held a day of celebration to mark the anniversary.

Its other key aim is to avoid people feeling isolated and lonely as they grow old, and to make them socially engaged.

That was certainly the case on Celebration day as around 200 people took part in various activities between 10am and 2pm.

This was followed by a gathering of volunteers and VIPs, including Mayor Candy Vaughan who cut a cake and Deputy Lieutenant of East Sussex Tim Cobb, who planted a memorial cherry tree outside the front of the centre in Junction Road.

Age Concern supports around 600 people and offers more than 40 activities, including belly dancing, art, cafe open to all, hairdressers and other clubs.

Manager John Trainor – who has been with the charity since 2013 – said: “Most of the people who come here are in their 70s but that really does not have to be the case.

“Some are in their 50s, and we offer a very warm and welcoming environment.”

Age Concern has 101 volunteers – incredibly it has lost 150 since Covid.

John said: “We do need volunteers, and this can be so rewarding. For some of those we lost, I think they literally got out of the habit, and of course for some there is still concern about Covid, and we have to respect that.”

Age Concern has four shops – in Grove Road, Green Street, Langney Shopping Centre and Hampden Park.

It also runs three Sheds – one for arts and crafts in Brassey Avenue, Hampden Park; one in Langney Priory on Etchingham Road; and one on Myrtle Road, Seaside.

John said: “The Sheds are so important to us and we have just secured five years more funding from the *National Lottery*.

“They are places for older people to go but, importantly, to go and actually do something. At Hampden Park’s Shed, it’s arts and crafts, which attracts more women than men.

“The one at Langney Priory is more about power drills and saws so that naturally attracts more men, as does the one at Myrtle Road, which focuses on making stuff with your hands.”

The charity also offers a Homecare service, helping people in their homes. There is a charge and any profit goes back into the charity.

John said: “It’s all about social engagement. We are very grateful to the late Patricia Venton, who funded the opening of the building back in 2000.

“We were honoured to welcome the Prince of Wales on the day perform the official opening.”

For more information please go to: www.ageconcerneastbourne.co.uk

AGE concern
Eastbourne



Tim's battle Overcoming MS



Sally Insley, Overcoming MS, Tim Cobb, Cobb PR, Tony Bloom, chairman of Brighton & Hove Albion, Linda Bloom, chair of Overcoming MS, Alexandra Holden, chief executive of Overcoming MS, Norman Cook (Fat Boy Slim), guest; Pauline Thompson, trustee of Overcoming MS.

TIM Cobb is well known in Eastbourne.

By **Peter Lindsey**

He runs a successful PR agency with wife Sue and is a former President of the Chamber of Commerce.

Life changed for Tim in 2012 when he nipped in for a sports physio appointment to sort out a sore back.

He was stunned when the healthcare advisor said he probably had multiple

sclerosis (MS). A quick online search filled in the blanks in his knowledge.

Fast forward to November 2023 and Tim was joined by more than 200 business leaders and die-hard football fans at an *Overcoming MS* charity lunch at The Amex.

That's the charity which Tim has been working with for many years.

Brighton & Hove Albion owner Tony Bloom talked about his hopes for this season, his love of horses and changes in the world of poker.

In the audience was Brighton's favourite DJ, Norman Cook (Fat Boy Slim), who supported an auction to raise money for the MS charity.

The lunch raised £25k for *Overcoming MS*. Tim shared his story with guests at the lunch.

Alexandra Holden, Chief Executive of *Overcoming MS*, said she was delighted with the generosity of the

Sussex community and with the raised profile that the lunch gave the charity.

"It was a great day and the team and I were delighted to be a part of it," Alexandra said. "*Overcoming MS* is here for everyone with MS who wants to live a full and healthy life, giving hope for a brighter future with this debilitating disease. *Overcoming MS* helps people understand the condition and helps them discover pathways to a brighter future for this debilitating disease."

<https://overcomingms.org/press-resources/real-life-stories/tim-cobb>

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[^]Care UK relative survey April 2023. Study operated by QRS Market Research, an independent survey agency.

The weird & the wonderful

DID you know that East Sussex has about 2000 miles of footpaths?

By **Gill Mattock**, Polegate Ramblers

This means that regular ramblers can still find themselves on an unknown stretch of path or bridleway, not always intentionally! And when we are out and about in the countryside we regularly experience unexpected sights or views that take our breath away.

Occasionally we come across random remains of structures half buried in fields or woods and wonder what they were and what their purpose was. An internet search occasionally reveals the answer but all too often we are left guessing although a succession of concrete blocks in fields near Robertsbridge turned out to be the remains of World War 2 defences.

Often our walks take us near or through the grounds of rather large country estates when we enjoy ourselves discussing who might own it, the style of architecture but especially the garden design. Some landowners senses of humour are often visible too with tree trunks that look like goblins and notices warning us of death or serious injury by tractor, geese, electric fences or children! Needless to say, none of us have yet succumbed to the aggressive tendencies of geese but we are exceedingly wary of other livestock and follow the Countryside Code in keeping our distance.

When receiving a walk recently I saw in the distance a white shape that looked distinctly like the silhouette of a hovercraft. I didn't really believe it, it couldn't possibly be, could it? But low and behold there it was – a hovercraft parked in a field near Chiddingly. Lots of

speculation ensued: how did it get there and why. When I returned a week or so later it had gone – another unsolved mystery.

But nothing can beat the ever changing views across our beautiful downs or tramping through a beech wood with the wind whispering in the leaves above your head or finding a peaceful hidden valley with birdsong all around you. It is these things that lift the souls of us ramblers.

Polegate Ramblers meet every Thursday for a choice of a 10-ish mile, 5-ish mile or 2-ish mile walk. Rambles are led by experienced members who plan walks in the local area. New walkers can come from any of the nearby towns or villages and are encouraged to join a walk or two before committing to membership. Email polegateramblers@gmail.com for details of forthcoming walks or look at the website and contact the leader direct.



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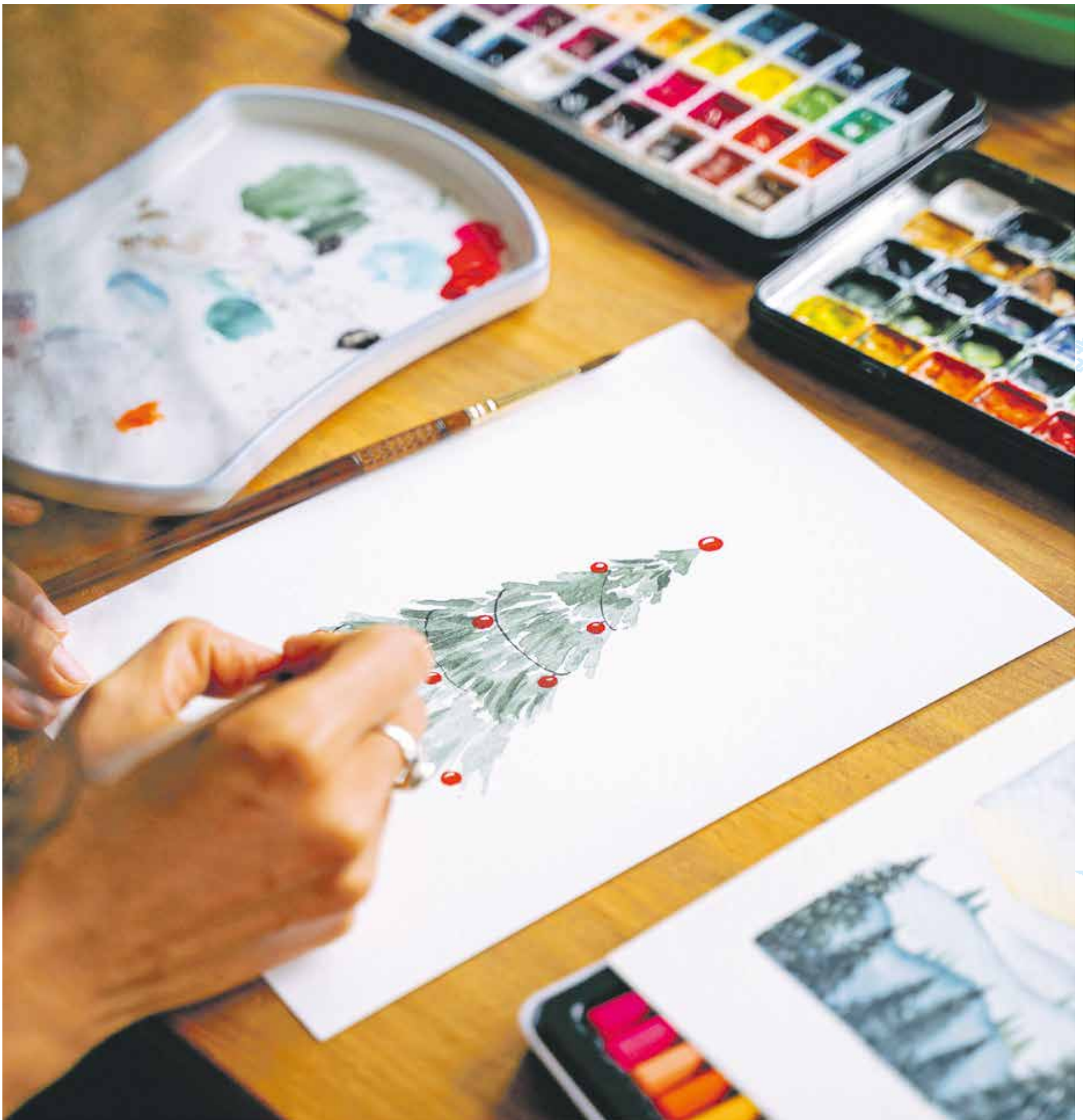
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Oily Gasbag Goes a Dancing

EASTBOURNE Author, Victor L Moore writes fantasy fiction for children and young adults.

By **Gail McKay**

The first book Victor wrote was several years ago titled, 'The Pentacle of Northumbria' and the second in the trilogy, 'Sisterhood of The Dead' will be out soon. They are aimed at an audience of 12 plus.

Oily Gasbag Goes a Dancing, the first in his series for younger children (7–10) is out now.

The story

Our so-called 'hero' Oily Gasbag is a large, clumsy, rather daft goblin with a firm belief that he is handsome and that all the young pretty faeries and elves are in awe of him.

Very few females like him, apart from one: a youngish witch who hails from Vienna whose name is Frieda Hasbug. Her sniffy older sister, Hattie has little time for Oily; she has little time for anyone. Nevertheless, she agrees to help her sister conjure up a dark magic potion that will turn Oily's dancing skills

from that of a deranged hippopotamus into a champion ballroom performer.

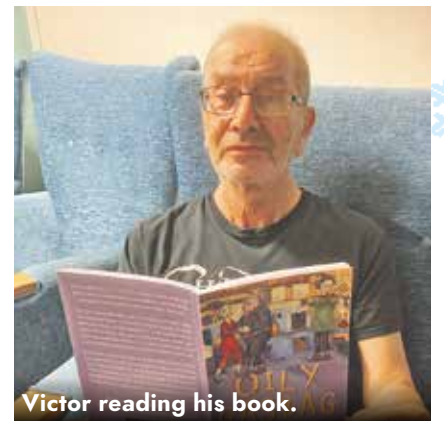
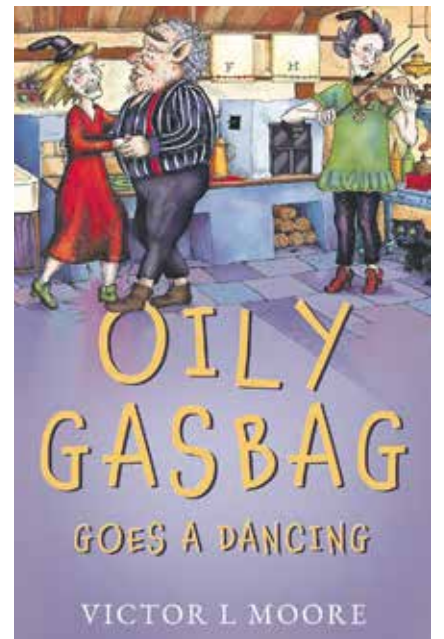
It all begins at the local fair in Smelly Welly, Nonsenseshire. He tries to dance with the beautiful elf, Su Fa Su Gut who pushes him away. When he is thrown out of the fair, he decides to learn to dance but unfortunately for him, the schools he tries do not want him! Luckily Frieda has a plan.

Will they prove everyone wrong and win? Or is Oily destined to have two left feet forever?

Victor will be having a book signing at *The Sicilia Chi Cafe, The Enterprise Shopping Centre, Station Parade BN21 1BD* on Sunday 10th December from 11am.

Published by *Troubador*, and is currently available, online, on *Amazon* and *Troubador* and locally at *Waterstones*. To order online visit:

www.troubador.co.uk/bookshop/young-children/oily-gasbag-goes-a-dancing



Victor reading his book.

Stunning Eastbourne

LOOK at these stunning pictures of Eastbourne and The South Downs which have been turned into a 2024 Calendar.

By **Peter Lindsey**

Toby Godfree is a young photographer from Sussex.

His work began in 2020 and since then his work has been sold across the world, shown on the BBC and been published in newspapers.

The cost is £9.99

Go to: tobyphotography.com/products/eastbourne-the-south-downs-2024-calendar



Volunteer and support the arts

AN INVITATION to join the *Friends of Devonshire Park Theatre*.

By **Gail McKay**

Eastbourne is very fortunate to have such diverse access to the Arts with the outstanding Towner Gallery and many wonderful theatres including the Devonshire Park Theatre.

Designed by Henry Curry it has a wonderful history going back to 1884. The interior was redesigned by the famous theatre designer –

Frank Matcham who also designed the Coliseum and the Palladium in London all with outstanding acoustics.

The Friends of the theatre are instrumental in providing support for the theatre in a number of ways.

They raise funds to improve the experience for the attending public and provide volunteers to assist on the doors at shows.

The Friends have recently updated the gents toilets in the foyer and the stalls and installed a new audio system costing over £13,000 for the hard of hearing and visually impaired. Future plans are to increase and update the ladies toilets in the stalls.



Reasons to join

Joining the *Friends of Devonshire Park Theatre* is only £14.50 for singles and £22.50 for couples and the benefits are many.

You will receive 25% discount on first night tickets of week long productions, meet the cast in the bar after first nights. These are good fun and the cast love meeting members.

There is the opportunity to volunteer for a variety of jobs.

The Friends hold Sunday afternoon teas with terrific speakers, a Christmas lunch, an annual dinner, Quiz nights, and Spring, Summer and Autumn Fairs.

You can also have plaques on seats for you or a friend at just £25 each.

There's a quarterly magazine to keep members up to date with all that is going on and news and photos of bar receptions and events.

All this and the chance to meet new friends and make sure that this lovely theatre remains the 'Jewel in the Crown' and continue bring Eastbourne the best of plays, musicals and individual evenings with great names such as Sir Winston Churchill and more recently, the late Barry Humphries, Harry Hill and Gyles Brandreth.

To join visit: www.fodpt.org.uk

THE MAKERS DIRECTORY

THE Makers Directory is the online directory of all the makers and artists that work in and around Eastbourne and Lewes.

By **Harry Farmer**

Use The Makers Directory to search for the perfect hand-made gift, find a craftsperson who will repair a much-loved item, or discover someone who is able to teach you a new skill at a workshop.

It's a brilliant way to discover, support and buy from your local makers!

You can keep up with their latest news by following them on *Instagram* [@themakersdirectory](https://www.instagram.com/themakersdirectory)

themakersdirectory.co.uk

FEATURED ARTIST Hannah Cope

My work is inspired by folklore, surrealism and 20th century children's book illustrations. In creating, I seek to make things that are functional, illustrative and playful. Function is important in my work as I like the idea of my pieces being in daily use.

For further inspiration I regularly scout boot fairs and charity shops to find old toys, handmade objects and figurines. My most treasured boot fair find is a small ceramic terracotta giraffe made by a child. Each squish of the clay is visible in its finished form. For me this is what I love most about ceramics and what I look for

when buying them – the mark of the individual in the finished piece.

In my creative practice I generally begin with a piece of clay without quite knowing what it will transform into. Like spotting forms in clouds, something usually emerges from the clay and grows into a more formed idea – often an animal or a creature.

Alongside making, I'm a technician at *Eastbourne Studio Pottery* and run children's workshops there – it's a great place to mix with and be inspired by fellow creatives. Having grown up in Sussex I feel a deep connection to the area inspired by its rich history of art and local traditions. *The Makers Directory* is a fantastic resource for creatives in the area and anyone looking to support local artisans. www.themakersdirectory.co.uk/directory/hannah-cope



hannahcopeart@gmail.com
www.hannahcope.co.uk
[@hannah.cope.art](https://www.instagram.com/hannah.cope.art)



Green and pleasant

THIS month brings with it the shortest day of the year and you will need to work hard to keep warm outside, maybe some digging or tree pruning. Keep an eye on your winter protection for equipment and plants. If you have a greenhouse, make sure the heater is working as it should. You may not have too many more jobs to do outside, if not you can spend some time with fireside garden planning. Keep an eye on the garden as cold, wet, windy winter weather can damage trees, shrubs and garden structures such as trellis. Seek to improve shelter, staking plants, mulching and wrapping pots to prevent damage.

By **Geoff Stonebanks**

Not got a Christmas tree yet? Prevent their premature needle drop by choosing a pine or fir tree instead of the traditional Norway spruce. They will hold their needles for longer which is always good news. Once in the house, avoid placing it near sources of heat such as a fire or radiator. A cut tree will last longer if stood in a bucket of water or a stand with a reservoir. You should saw off about 2-3 inches from the base of the trunk to allow the tree to drink freely. I've got a small real tree outdoors, as you can see in the header.

Winter sun

A plant that comes into its own at this time of year is the Mahonia 'Winter Sun'. It is so named for its beautiful yellow flower spikes that rise above the long arching stems with their glossy-green, holly-like leaves through the cold winter months, bringing a ray of sunshine into the winter garden. Not only are the flowers bright and sunny, they are highly fragrant and similar in scent to Lily-of-the-Valley. This mid-sized, hardy evergreen shrub will grow to 4m x 2.5m height and spread and will bring a shady

corner of the garden to life all year round. Mine is planted behind the railway sleepers and is now about 3 metres tall. Tall mahonias that become bare at the base are easily restored by cutting back the stems to about 15cm (6in) from the ground in late winter to early spring.

Whilst most mahonias have sharp spikes on the leaves, you can also buy Mahonia Soft Caress which is the first mahonia of its kind with spine-free leaves, which means it can be planted near to paths or doorways without the fear of being pricked as you might with traditional Mahonia varieties that have holly-like leaves. If you brush past these, there will be no worries about any scratches, opening up many new planting positions and ideas where you may not have considered Mahonia in the past. 'Soft Caress' is also compact and dwarf in nature.

Jobs at Driftwood

I doubt I'll be doing too much in the garden this month, the temperatures have really begun to drop and it's not much fun being out there when it's really cold. I have checked the many large containers of shrubs, that don't like the wind and the cold, under cover in an alley to the side of the house. I've got about several sheltered in there at the moment but they do need to be watered every so often, which has now been done. Regular visits up to the heated greenhouse are needed too, as the plants also need checking. I have one of those probes that you can pierce the soil with and it will tell you how damp it is, allowing you to tell whether it needs watering, it is a really useful

tool at this time of year! Maybe get friends or family to buy you one for Christmas! I regularly check my collection of tender plants too, removing the dead leaves removed and watering where necessary.

Make your own wreath

If you feel inspired, why not raid your garden for some greenery and colour to make your own festive wreath. Buy a moss ring in a local florist and give it a go. I've got both plentiful supplies of holly and ivy growing in the garden as you may have too. Keep some of the lower branches of your Christmas Tree to start the wreath off. You'll need some pieces of wire and if your holly has no berries you can cheat by buying some red berries on wire to add to the finished wreath. Start off by wiring each piece of greenery you plan to use, holly, ivy and tree branches. Next up work your way around the moss circle, carefully securing each piece with the wire to the moss circle by winding the wire around the frame, until it is covered with a mixture of the greenery. Finish off by adding a wire hook if you plan to hang on the door!

Read more of Geoff's garden at: www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk

Geoff is a multi-award-winning garden owner, garden writer & broadcaster. Driftwood has appeared on BBC2 Gardeners' World and was a finalist in Gardeners' World Magazine Best Small Space. See the amazing 5-star reviews on TripAdvisor. Read all about Geoff's work for the community, appointment as a Coronation Champion and trips to Buckingham Palace including 2 Royal Garden Parties, in 2018 and 2023. Read the many published features on the garden in national, local and worldwide media, including TV.

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