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02/25

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February 2025

Pages 25-32

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**Our next edition will be distributed from March 1st. Make sure you are a part of it.**

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# The town is full of such inspiring people

**IT'S been a great month out and about, talking to various people and reminding everyone what wonderful people there are in Eastbourne.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**First, in this edition you will see two features on Eastbourne residents who were honoured in the New Year's Honours List.**

That may sound a while ago now, but they are two amazing people.

First, Ralph Homer who has served *Eastbourne Samaritans* for 53 years. He received the Order of the British Empire (BEM) for his services to vulnerable people.

It was a real eye-opener to visit the Samaritans office at Bolton Road. The work the volunteers do there is lifesaving, they are remarkable people.

The second recipient of the BEM in Eastbourne was Kate Daly from Old Town, honoured for her service to the local community.

I had met Kate before but chatting to her at her home was so inspirational. Her work, first for Kingsmere and now Old Town, is again well worthy of the honour she has now received. It's great to see *Old Town Community Library* thriving again.

I popped out to the new *Knights Farm Shop* on Sayerland Lane in Polegate. It was a delight to meet Sue, Gary and the team who have just moved there.

They are offering local produce, butchers' shop and cafe – and so much more. More of them in next month's *Bournefree*.

Speaking with Eastbourne dad Chris Hoadley has been another highlight. Chris completed a 250k challenge for charity.

He ran 10km each day for 25 days, starting on December 1st and finishing on Christmas Day.

Father-of-two Chris, 36, is absolutely delighted to have raised more than £2,150 for *The Matthew 25 Mission*, situated at Seaside, which supports anyone in crisis.

He said: "I wanted to try and give something back to people in need."

What a positive message for us all.

*Bournefree* is proud to have chosen *You Raise Me Up* as its charity partner for 2025, and we will be looking to support the team during the year.

We continue to connect with the local community as much as we can. That includes attending networking events, featuring local people and groups, and working with businesspeople on the commercial front.

Each month, we produce a special feature section, and this month's is *Love Eastbourne*.

Indeed, we do.

Remember to keep in touch with us daily go to our website [www.bournefreelive.co.uk](http://www.bournefreelive.co.uk) and our social media continues to grow at a fast pace.

Happy February to you all!

## Bournefree

**Bournefree is becoming more and more popular each month, and we want to make it easier for you to promote your business or organisation.**

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Kate Daly at Old Town Community Library.

# Heroic Kate rewarded for community work

**KATE Daly has worked tirelessly over the years to make Eastbourne a better place – and now she’s been rewarded for her efforts.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**She was awarded the BEM in The New Year Honours List for 2025 for services to the community – so richly deserved.**

Kate’s work splits into two areas of town, first Kingsmere and then Old Town.

She recalls: “It was 2006 when I first became involved in community work on the Kingsmere estate. The area was going through a real rough time, and I decided the time had come to make a change.

“I was forced to give up work for family reasons so I decided then it was time to give something back, and that’s exactly what happened.

“A *Neighbourhood Partnership* was formed and we literally got everyone around the table who mattered, including the MP, police, youth services and other key people.

“Together we made a huge difference. We set up youth clubs for young people, computer lessons, a camera club, Saturday morning pictures and more. Soon those living on the estate started to take ownership of the hall,

the estate, what they were doing and what was going on.

“Everyone came to us if there were any problems but more importantly, we were able to provide facilities, annual events and improve the three greens.

“The year we moved to Old Town in 2013, crime in Kingsmere had dropped by 77 per cent and we had raised over £66,000.”

And then Old Town, and more specifically the *Old Town Community Library*, closed in 2002 by *East Sussex County Council* to save money, it was then taken over by a group called ‘*Friends of the Library*’.

The building is owned by *Eastbourne Borough Council*, although the

decision to close it was made by the *County Council*.

Old Town needed a library – the demand has always been there – and Kate, with husband Jerry, had already set up a Film Club locally.

Then, in 2016, they bumped into former MP Stephen Lloyd outside the library.

Kate said: “Stephen was trying to save it. The library had reopened with volunteers, but it was under threat of closure again. He saw us, said come in and have a look, and that was that.

“Jerry and I were on the *Old Town Area Panel*, and we persuaded the group to give £15,000 to the library. We closed it for a short period while we refurbished it, it was redesigned and

made into the award-winning, friendly and welcoming place it is today.

“I became Secretary, we assembled trustees and volunteers and soon we had a winning team running *Old Town Community Library*.

“We now have around 800 customers, 20 volunteers and it’s self-financing. It opens five days a week, Tuesday to Saturday, and it runs like clockwork, we are like one big family.

“The library relies on donations of books and people can also become a friend of the library, donating any amount they can afford either monthly, quarterly or annually. Without this support we would struggle to survive as we receive no funding from the *County Council*.

“*Eastbourne Council* does support us with a rent grant and we have also had grants from the council via Residents Voice for new laptops.

“We were one of the first independent libraries in the country and people would come to us asking if they could use our model in other areas where the libraries were at risk.

“We do have a great selection of books, dare I say sometimes better than the main libraries. Most are donated; some I buy on eBay when we raise money through world of books.”

Kate says “Of course a library is about so much more than just books, it is a place for the vulnerable, lonely, children, job seekers and more. Libraries are a haven in a world where community services are being ground to nothing. Libraries are vital, their worth cannot be measured by books alone.”

Kate is thrilled to have been recognised.

She said: “I have always helped people and supported the community. I help individuals but I love being involved in Old Town, and previously Kingsmere.

“I was so shocked in November when I received the letter to say I had been nominated for the BEM. It was, of course a real surprise, and I have received so many messages of congratulations, which is so very nice.”



Kate (right) on The One Show with Jenny 'The Vixen' Ryan from The Chase.

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📌 [OldtownlibraryEastbourne](https://www.facebook.com/OldtownlibraryEastbourne)**

# A new year, and a new major project!

*THE Friends of Eastbourne Hospital* is such a marvellous charity.

By **Peter Lindsey**

**For 2025, it is supporting the DGH with a £1 million donation towards the equipment required for the new Sussex Surgical Centre.**

That is the name of the new elective surgical facility, a modern, purpose-built day surgery unit which will include a pre-assessment area, four theatres, admission, recovery and discharge space as well as support facilities.

Work on the elective surgical hub is planned to be completed in the Spring.

With thanks to the generous legacies received, *The Friends* has entered the year with £750K already raised.

It is looking to raise the final £250K over the course of this fundraising year.

President Sandy Boyce-Sharpe said: "It remains to us and our fabulous

members and supporters to raise the final £250k. This is such an exciting project for the Friends.

"A brand new hospital build on the Eastbourne site is wonderful for the town and we hope that the community will support this fundraising.

### Huge contribution

"The Trust management are incredibly appreciative of the support of *Friends of Eastbourne Hospital*, and there will be a sign at the front entrance to acknowledge the *Friends* huge contribution."



### How to help

We can help by:

- Donating directly to the project online.
- Joining the Friends.
- Organising fundraising events through work, social groups, or school.
- Making the appeal our business's charity of the year.
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For more details, contact the *Friends* Office on **01323 749503** or email [esh-tr.friendsdgh@nhs.net](mailto:esh-tr.friendsdgh@nhs.net)

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# The BIG Futures Show 2025

**THE BIG Futures Show returns to Eastbourne Sports Park on Tuesday 29th April 2025 from 9:30am – 3:00pm.**

By **Tim Sorensen**

**The show, that first opened in 2016, is the largest employability, skills and job-seekers event in the area and is aimed at students (aged 14+) from across East Sussex as well as parents, carers and anyone looking for work or training.**

Organised by *Eastbourne Education Business Partnership* in association with *Eastbourne Borough Council*, the show helps to support local community and economic development agendas and brings a wide range of expert advice and guidance all under one roof.

80+ organisations will be providing interactive exhibits aimed at inspiring tomorrow's workforce. Employers



will be looking for new talent and explaining what qualifications they require and what training and apprenticeships they offer in the work place.

Colleges, Universities and training providers will be on hand to promote their offer and where it fits with employer's requirements and what they are seeking from students.

A dedicated job-seekers area with expert help from *Recruitment South East* will be available for those seeking a more immediate employment opportunity.

"BIG Futures offers an ideal opportunity for businesses to do their bit engaging and inspiring the next generation of young talent locally. It is something as business owners we should all take responsibility for, and it is great to exhibit and connect with other like-minded organisations which share our values in this regard", *Chalk Eastbourne*.

Exhibitor bookings are now open with further information, stand rates and on-line booking at:

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

[hello@bigfuturesshow.org.uk](mailto:hello@bigfuturesshow.org.uk)

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# Lightning Fibre has introduced new prices

**THE entry level package has been doubled to pitch the company head-to-head with its mainstream competitors Sky, TalkTalk and EE.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**This means that *Lightning Fibre* is 'twice as fast' as the competitors for the same monthly fee! <https://www.lightningfibre.co.uk/verify>**

Furthermore, a price match is in place for any valid full fibre broadband offer (new customers only).

The company has also decided against introducing annual, mid contract price rises, unlike the majority of its competitors who increase prices each April.



Rob Reaks, chief commercial officer at *Lightning Fibre*, said: "We do review things from time to time but it's clear that annual mid term price rises are very unpopular with consumers, and often cited as a reason why people switch from a mainstream ISP to us."

*Lightning Fibre* turned six in January, having launched in Eastbourne in 2018. The company marks the occasion each year with a donation to *St Wilfrid's Hospice* to 'pay for a day for nursing care' at the Eastbourne hospice.

*Lightning Fibre* continues to focus on outstanding customer service, answering calls seven days a week including bank and public holidays (except Christmas Day) from 8am-8pm.

A retail unit was opened in Eastbourne in 2024, and the company expanded to Brighton and Hove, and Worthing.

The firm won the prestigious ISPA Awards 'Best Consumer ISP' (with fewer than 100k customers) for a second consecutive year in November 2024.



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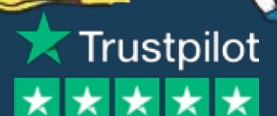
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\*The first 3 payments for all 2 year packages are priced at £20 per month. T&C's Apply.



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**[www.LightningFibre.co.uk](http://www.LightningFibre.co.uk)**



# Ralph's 53 years of listening to others

**RALPH Homer has been volunteering at *Eastbourne Samaritans* for a staggering 53 years.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**Now he has been awarded the BEM in *The New Year Honours List for 2025* for his devoted services to vulnerable people.**

Devoted is certainly the right word to describe Ralph, 90, having started in 1971 and remaining a Trustee until this day. He has recently had to give up answering phone calls due to his hearing.

## Showing love and care

He said: "Being a Samaritan is about listening, showing love and care and that you are genuinely interested in what they are saying."

"Empathy is very important, not talking about yourself. It's all about the caller and giving an appropriate response."

When Ralph started in 1971, it was all very different. *The Samaritans* locally had an Eastbourne number so you would be helping local people. Now calls come in from all over the country from a shared phone network.

*Eastbourne Samaritans* are at 13 Bolton Road in the Town Centre. It also has a very popular charity shop in Grove Road.

Ralph said: "I am very proud of all the work I have done and the recognition I have received, but I accept this on behalf of all my colleagues."

"We listen and we are a sounding board for those in need. We never tell anyone what to do. If you need help, I have always said to people that they should pick up the phone – no call is too trivial."

Ralph worked as teacher and was Principal Lecturer at the *University of Brighton*. He was Branch Director from 1976-79.

David Smith is currently the Director of *Eastbourne Samaritans*, which has around 90 active listening volunteers at present with ten more support volunteers.

## Becoming a Samaritan

He said: "Becoming a Samaritan can be an incredibly rewarding experience – you gain skills for life. The training takes around six months, which may sound like a long time, but we need people who want to be here and learn how to deal with various situations. We all find the volunteering experience very fulfilling. We have training sessions starting in March so please get touch if you want to find out more."

"I have been involved for six years – some people here have been volunteering for many years. We are part of a national network of 200 branches which means the service is open 24/7, 365 days a year."



Ralph at The Haven in Bolton Road.

"We welcome people here at 13 Bolton Road from 10:30am until 10:30pm to come and talk to us one to one. We sit and provide emotional support by listening. We are a unique service."

## Available for anyone

"We are in the centre answering calls for at least 18 hours each day, and we are available for anyone who is in trouble, they may be lonely and have nobody else to talk to. I like to think that we are a sounding board."

## Most wonderful example

"Ralph is of course the most wonderful example of being a Samaritan. Everyone here finds him an inspiration and holds him in the very highest regard."

So the last words to Ralph, who was also named a *Jubilee Champion* back in 2022 for his valued work.

"It's never over until it's over. We want to help people through difficult times and get them through what they may be going through and experiencing."

Come and find out more about the *Samaritans* and attend an information evening at **7PM**.

**13 Bolton Road BN21 3JT**

**Monday, 3rd March**

**Monday, 21st April**

**Monday, 7th July**

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# Chris completes 250k challenge for charity

**LAST February, father of two Chris Hoadley decided to become a self-employed Licensed Conveyancer and in doing so has received tremendous support from the community.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**He decided to end the year giving back some goodwill to support the most needed in Eastbourne at Christmas.**

He woke up one morning and said to his wife: "I want to do something this Christmas to help others."

And that's exactly what he did, running 10km each day for 25 days, starting on December 1 and finishing on Christmas Day.

Chris, 36 said "I wanted to try and give something back to people in need, I looked at a few organisations before deciding to support the local charity *The Matthew 25 Mission*, and I am very pleased that I did. The charity supports anyone in crisis

whatever their ethnic beliefs or background, from their Seaside residence, Brodie Hall.

"250km is a long way, and the thought of running for 25 days straight was a worry as to whether my body was able to cope. The first few days were tough but then it became normal.

"The mental side was a challenge too – I varied where I ran although a lot of times it was along Eastbourne Seafront. We went to *Butlin's* at Bognor Regis, so I ran a couple there in storm Darragh, and another in London where we had a works do for Christmas. I made sure that wherever I ran it would be outside in rain or shine as those that needed the help had no choice but to brave the elements.

"I reached 100km at the end of Day 10 which felt like a milestone but in reality, I wasn't even halfway, that was

when the continued support spurred me on to keep going.

"with a week to go I had an Achilles problem and caught the lurgy that seemed to be doing the rounds, by then it was the mind that took me to the finish."

His last run was on Christmas Day, before his children woke up with excitement.

He was absolutely delighted to have raised more than £2,250 at an expensive time of the year. "My initial target was £500 but after about a week I upped that figure, because of the fantastic support I have received from friends, family and work contacts. The running costs are £630 a day for the charity to provide the services that they do so unfortunately it will only last 4 days which just shows the continued need for public support.

Chris said: "People who have donated include some who have been supported by *The Matthew 25 Mission*. One person told me how he had been helped by staff there 15 years ago. Now he has a family and a good job.

"People supported by the charity are often hungry or simply have nowhere else to go. The charity does its very best to allow them to go on the straight and narrow and set them on a path to a brighter future. *Matthew25 Mission* along with other local charities play such a pivotal role within the community and must be protected in these times of greater need.

If you would like to support Chris' efforts and donate, please visit [www.matthew25mission.org](http://www.matthew25mission.org)

# James is working wonders at Morrisons

**MORRISONS Eastbourne is working with *Little Gate Farm*, a charity that provides work training for adults with learning disabilities/autism in Sussex.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**The partnership involves Supported Internships and Future-Ready College Programmes, and placements have begun this term in Hastings and Eastbourne Morrisons Stores.**

James is currently working in the Amazon department at *Morrisons*

*Eastbourne*. He began his first day with his mentors Jessica and Linda and by only his second day, was picking and bagging items independently.

The Intern's Job Coaches are delighted with the progression in such a very short time.

Rob Knight, Store Manager at *Morrisons Eastbourne*, said: "James has settled in really well as part of the team and is already showcasing great abilities and

teamwork. We look forward to seeing how he progresses within the business."

Kim Hatcher-Davies, Community Champion Eastbourne at *Morrisons Eastbourne*, said: "We are excited to collaborate with *Little Gate College* with the Supported Internship placement for James, supporting him to get work ready for his future career."

*Little Gate College* programme is based in Bexhill.



James with Kim Hatcher-Davies.

If you are a business who would like to consider partnering with *Little Gate* and one of their roots to employment programmes please contact them:

**01797 260580**  
**[info@littlegate.org.uk](mailto:info@littlegate.org.uk)**

In December, the charity staged an awareness day at *Gather* in *The Beacon*.



# Indigo Little Chelsea – New love yourself menu

**SUE, a passionate artistic entrepreneur in Grove Road, Little Chelsea, has always loved cooking.**

By **Gail McKay**

**Recently, she felt the urge to share her love of cooking, and pours all her creative energy into her inspirational cafe.**

Previously known as *DNB*, *Indigo Little Chelsea* is a warm, welcoming hub for those seeking physical and spiritual sustenance. “You must love your body and love yourself,” Sue emphasizes.

## New menu

February will bring a revamp to the food she has been serving where Brunch takes centre stage. “I’m calling it ‘*Tide and Thyme*.’” The new menu will feature fish and vegetarian dishes, some inspired by continental ingredients. Expect delights like Sussex Smokie Rarebit, Avocado on toast with assorted toppings



including smoked salmon, Vegan feta, as well as a unique Stroganoff Mushrooms on Toast.

Sue serves delicious doorstep toast from local bakers, with an excellent gluten-free option. In fact all the home made dishes are gluten free.

## Bloody Mary Mackerel

“My favourite chef is Keith Floyd,” Sue shares. “It’s his passion for cooking and great ingredients that I truly relate to.” This passion is evident in dishes like Bloody Mary Mackerel, Smoked Haddock Mornay, and Kedgeree. While not entirely meat-free, *Indigo* offers a hearty meat dish daily, such as cottage pie or sausage and mash.



“We buy all our sausages from amazing local butchers,” Sue explains, “so I’ll be featuring a ‘Sausage of the Day’. There’s a delicious spicy one which is my favourite with some ciabatta.”

## Unique gifts

Beyond delicious, joyful food, *Indigo* is an absolute treasure trove of art, prints, gifts, jewellery, cards, and homeware. Behind the window filled with sparkly glass gifts and art lies a unique place in Eastbourne that’s truly worth a visit.

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# Charity's drive for new minibus

**EACH week, between 50 and 60 people come to the *Inspire Sussex* charity now situated at Greenfield Road, Old Town.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**It used to be a church, and now equally important work goes on by the charity – created in 1949 as *Eastbourne and District Mencap*.**

It's now called *Inspire Sussex*, supporting individuals with learning disabilities and their families.

Key to that support is transport, and the charity is now raising money to buy a minibus, either brand new or, if too expensive, second hand.

Three fundraising events are so far planned, with more to come, including *Ride 2 Inspire* on Saturday April 5th. That's when Brian Lambert and Samantha Skinner will kick off an incredible mission.

They will be cycling from London to Eastbourne, that's 77 miles, in just 7.5 hours.

Domenico Della Valle, Fundraising and Social Media Liaison, is full of praise for the pair.

He said: "We provide a lifeline for many people who may have nowhere else to go if they were not coming to us.

"That's why a minibus would be such a boost for the charity. Some are on low incomes and it's a stretch for them to pay for taxis.

"Not everyone who comes lives in Eastbourne – some are Hailsham, Pevensey and further afield. We want to be able to pick them up and drop them off at the end of the day.

"We represent freedom for many of these people. The minibus would also mean that we could do outdoor activities, visiting art exhibitions and workshops, and so much more.



"But first we need to raise the money."

Brian Lambert is taking part in the cycle ride after he was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes two years ago. He took up cycling as motivation to boost his health.

He said: "It was suggested by my Diabetes Nurse that I really should take up some form of exercise to help my circulation.

"I have never really been into cycling, but it didn't take long to be hooked. I now cycle every day, and it is my main form of transport, cycling 12 miles every day, and when the weather is nice, I ride for longer."

Sam Skinner has been a Support Worker at *Inspire Sussex* for five years, and she is always eager to give up her spare time to fundraise for the charity.

Previously, she has taken part in cycling races and the *Kayaks Challenge*.

Dom said: "Sam is incredible and brings her boundless energy and dedication to every aspect of her work.

"I know that she will push herself to make a meaningful impact for the cause she deeply cares about.

"This really is the start of our fundraising journey, and I want to thank them both.

"At the end of January, we held a fundraising dinner at *Bombay Avenue* in Grove Road, and I want to thank Mozmil Hussain and his team for making this happen.

"Our other big event is a family fun day on August 2nd in partnership with *Eastbourne Wheels For All* – and more details will be released nearer the time."

To sponsor Brian and Sam, please visit <https://www.justgiving.com> and search for: **Domenico Della Valle**





## SUPPORTING our community with Flood Resilience this February.

By **Sarah O'Flaherty**

**This February, Blue Heart is offering a range of support to help businesses and community groups tackle the challenges of flooding and climate change.**

### Practical advice

Local businesses in Eastbourne and southern Wealden can benefit from free *Property Flood Resilience (PFR) Surveys*. These expert assessments provide practical advice and

solutions to reduce flood risk and protect your property from future water damage. Don't miss out—contact [contact@blueheart.org.uk](mailto:contact@blueheart.org.uk) to book your survey today.

### Community groups

For community groups and organisations, the *Blue Heart Community Fund* is now accepting applications. Grants of up to £5,000 are available for innovative projects

that address flooding, climate resilience, and environmental challenges. Whether it's creating nature-based solutions or running education initiatives, this is your chance to make a lasting impact.


Applications for the *Community Fund* close on 24th February, so act now! Learn more and apply at [www.blueheart.org.uk/community-fund-apply-now](http://www.blueheart.org.uk/community-fund-apply-now)

### Resources and expertise

*Blue Heart's* work is part of a wider effort to create resilient, thriving

communities that can withstand the challenges of climate change. By providing resources and expertise to both businesses and local groups, they are empowering residents to take action, protect what matters most, and build a better future. Whether you're a business owner, community leader, or local resident, there's never been a better time to get involved and make a difference.

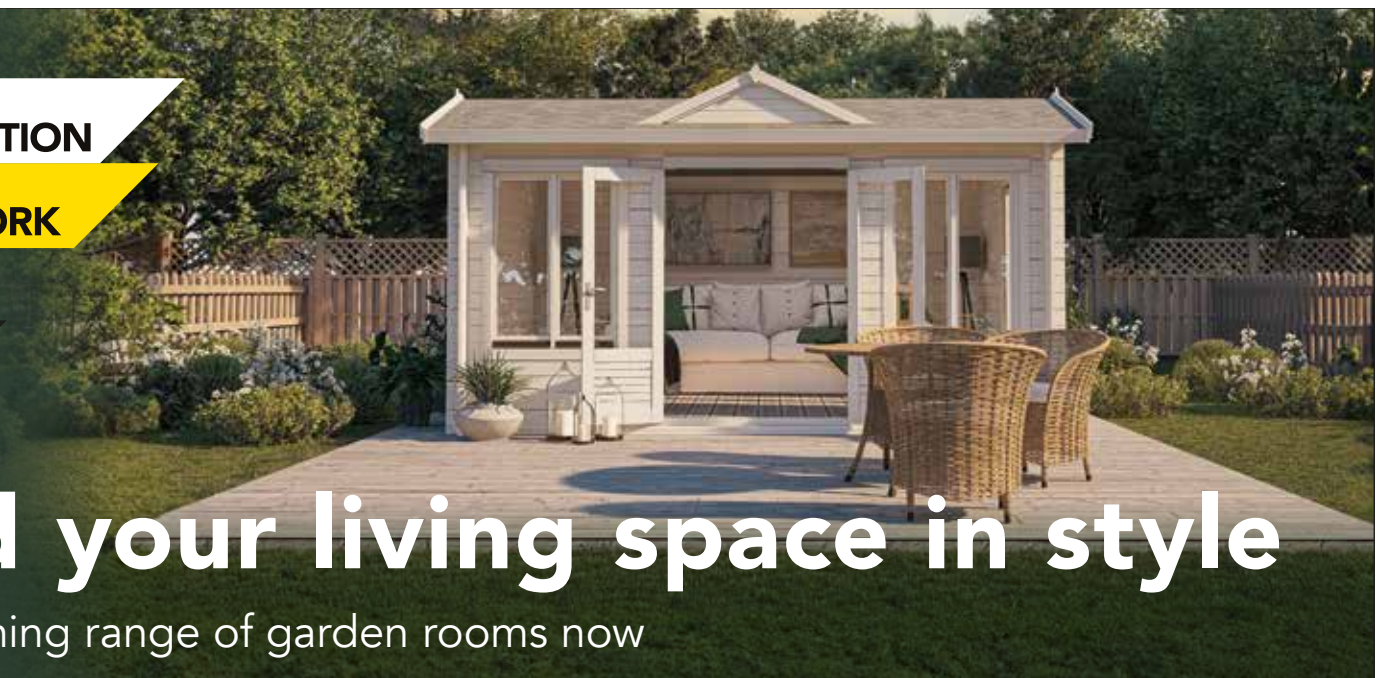
With support for businesses and communities alike, *Blue Heart* is helping to build a resilient future for our area. Don't wait—get involved today!"



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# Indoor Bowls 'has saved my life'

**KEITH Jenkinson, 76, from Hailsham was a workaholic and carried on working as a postman when he reached his retirement age.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**He eventually retired at 70 due to ill health – and it was six years ago that he tried *Eastbourne Borough Indoor Bowls Club* – situated at *Priory Lane*, the home of *Eastbourne Borough FC* – for the very first time.**

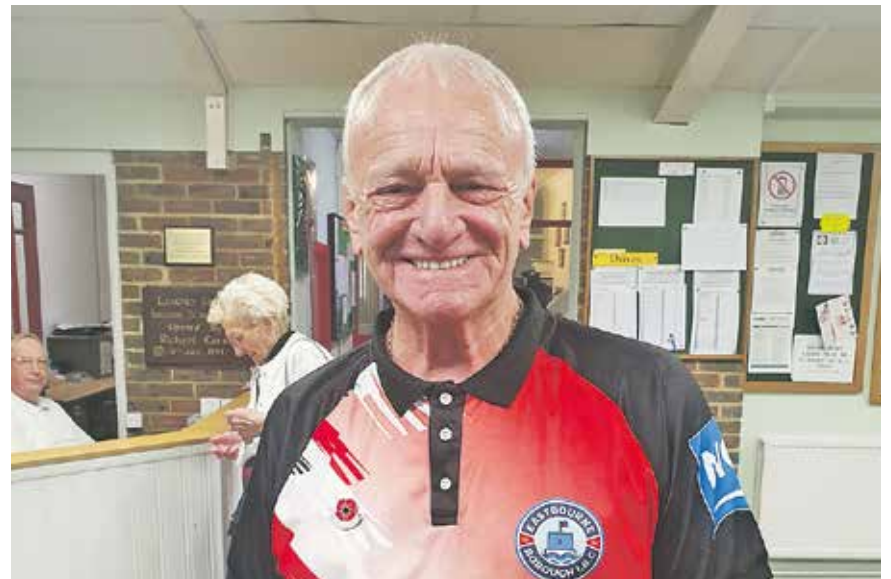
Now, he says the club, and its people, mean absolutely everything to him.

Why not give indoor bowls a try, says Keith.

He said: "This is absolutely my everything, I am passionate about it beyond belief. All I had ever known was work really."

The club has around 250 members, it's open seven days a week, and the attractions include:

A It's social and means interacting with like-minded people



B It's 'probably the cheapest in town'

C Social activities, including quizzes and activities at Christmas.

Back to Keith: "Back to Keith. Having worked non stop from over 50 years from the age of 15 to 70, I found myself at a complete loss as to what to do with my life.

"Giving it a lot of thought, I decided to try my hand at playing bowls. It was one of the best decisions I've made in my life.

"I quickly fell in love with the game, and it became my passion.

"In 2021 I was diagnosed with bladder cancer and my whole world fell apart. To say that I was distraught and devastated is an understatement.

"I became very depressed, and I found myself in a very dark place. The next few months I underwent three operations to have the tumours cut out of my bladder.

"My cancer was graded at very high risk and my consultant offered me two options – a radical cystectomy, which means taking the bladder out, or BCG, which is an immunotherapy drug, this is administered via a catheter directly into the bladder.

"I was given time to make my decision. I felt my life had collapsed and I just shut myself at home, not going outside the front door.

"I was desperately missing my friends and playing bowls. I decided to have the BCG treatment, and this started in May 2022. The treatment lasts for three years and it's very brutal and hard to tolerate.

"Apart from numerous trips to the hospital for appointments, my friends were urging me to face the outside world again and get back to playing bowls. Naturally, I knew that they were right so I made the effort and went back to playing the game that I love, and within a few weeks I found that this was helping me cope much better with my battle with cancer.

"I'm still having treatment and so my fight continues. My message is – If you have any health issues or difficulties in life, or even if you haven't, why not try your hand at bowls? You'll make many new friends and have fun and you never know you might fall in love with it just like I did.

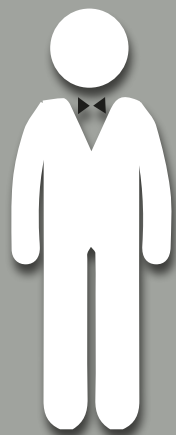
"The last words on the TV programme *Strictly Come Dancing* are "keep dancing!" ...my last words are "keep bowling."

If you want to try out bowling for free, come down to *Eastbourne Borough Indoor Bowls Club* on:

**Sunday 2nd February 2pm–4pm**  
**Saturday 8th February 2pm–4:30pm**  
**Friday 14th February 2pm–4pm.**

For more information go to:

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



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# Mark snaps up top post

A FORMER press photographer has been appointed joint CEO of *East Sussex Hearing*.

By **Peter Lindsey**

**Mark Dimmock and Glynwen Chetcuti are the charity's new Co-CEOs following the retirement of esteemed leader, David Rowan.**

Mark worked on the *Herald* for many years and is well known across the town.

Glynwen, Mark, and the team are passionate about supporting the

188,000 East Sussex residents with hearing loss.

Their focus will be driving the charity forward and tackling the isolation that so many in our community face due to hearing loss.

Mark, pictured, spoke at January's meeting of the *Eastbourne Sovereign Inner Wheel D12* at



the *Chalk Farm Hotel – Learning Disability Centre* in Willingdon.

June Christophi from *Inner Wheel* said: "Mark and his colleague Mary gave a very interesting and informative talk.

"One in three adults in the UK are affected by hearing loss – we were amazed at this as we all tend to think that we are the only ones suffering."

*East Sussex Hearing* is based at Chantry House, 22 Upperton Road.

Email [hello@eshrc.org](mailto:hello@eshrc.org) or call **01323 722505**.

For more information on *Inner Wheel* locally, email [jrachristophi@hotmail.com](mailto:jrachristophi@hotmail.com)

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# Spurs Legends are coming to The Oval



**SO much has gone on at *The Oval* – home of *Eastbourne United Football Club* – with massive investment.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**Now *Eastbourne United* is proud to host a charity football match against *Spurs Legends* on May 25th—a celebration of sport, community, and compassion.**

This event is about more than just football; it's about uniting our community for a meaningful cause, creating unforgettable memories, and raising vital funds for charity. It will be an incredible day for the young footballers, who will have the chance to showcase their talents in exhibition games and meet their heroes.

These games have a history of bringing people together, creating a sense of pride and unity in our town. None of this would be possible without the unwavering support of local businesses, the dedicated committee, and generous sponsors.

Richard Davies, Commercial Manager, said: "This event is a testament to the power of sport to unite people, inspire the next generation, and make a real difference in our community. We are grateful for the incredible support that makes it all possible."

"Let's come together to make this a fun-filled weekend that highlights the heart and spirit of Eastbourne while supporting those in need."

There has been a £1m investment at *The Oval Arena 3G Training Complex* – *Eastbourne*. That includes a complete new 3G artificial pitch but also a huge revamp of the facilities inside and out, including the changing rooms, car parks and bar / clubhouse areas.

There's also a new entrance area for spectators and a fully refurbished tea bar inside the ground.

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# 10 years of making a real difference

**THE Spirit of Football Disability Squad at Eastbourne Borough FC has celebrated its tenth birthday.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**Ten years ago, the club advertised the opportunity for children with mental or physical disabilities to enjoy a taster session of football training at Priory Lane.**

The idea was to offer fun and exciting football sessions for neurodiverse youngsters in our community who weren't engaged in any form of sport or activity – to remove the idea of disability and instead provide an opportunity for children to showcase their ABILITY.

The result has been amazing – and the team was soon established as the Eastbourne Borough 'Spirit of Football' Squad.

And to mark the ten years in January, Trident Fish Restaurant based in Old Town donated new tracksuit tops to see them through the winter. Another partner, Viasat, donated bobble hats.

Spirit players range from the age of six to 22 and have a wide range of

impairments such as Downs syndrome, cerebral palsy, autism, ADHD, hearing and multi sensory impairments and developmental delays.

No child is ever refused a place in the team, so the nine coaches have the extremely difficult task of learning and understanding each child's unique abilities.

Coach Tim Brown said: "We now have nearly 40 children who train with us each week and plans are already in place for us to accommodate even more players and coaches over the next few seasons, so the future looks extremely exciting.

"The camaraderie, teamwork, care, compassion and encouragement that our children show towards each other is truly unique and humbling to witness. This is their safe space where they feel welcomed and loved, and so they blossom into showcasing their abilities in a variety of ways."

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# Discover the underwater world in 2025

**IF you've been searching for an exciting way to embrace new experiences this year, why not explore the wonders of scuba diving with *Sovereign Divers*?**

By **Gail McKay**

**Based at the *Sovereign Harbour Yacht Club*, the club offers a welcoming environment for divers of all levels, from seasoned BSAC or PADI-certified enthusiasts to complete beginners eager to take the plunge.**

They meet every Tuesday evening at 8pm making it easy to drop by, enjoy a drink, and chat with others who share your passion for underwater exploration.

#### **40 dive sites**

As a member of *Sovereign Divers*, you'll gain access to over 40 stunning dive sites via their club boat, along with air and nitrox fills at cost, in-club training opportunities, and use of club equipment as you build your own collection. Beyond diving, the club offers a lively social calendar, including trips, holidays (both in the UK and abroad), and full access to the yacht club's bar and restaurant.

#### **Pool based trial**

Never tried scuba diving? No problem! The instructors offer pool-based try dives for beginners, giving you a safe and supportive way to experience the thrill of breathing underwater for the first time.

#### **Exploring**

*The Nautical Archaeology Society* are giving a free talk in March about underwater archaeology and getting involved with historic wrecks around society.

To learn more or get involved, join the *Facebook* group: **ESAC 0513 Sovereign Divers 2025**



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Funded by Eastbourne Borough Council, Edeal is working in association with Ditzzy Media to offer Eastbourne businesses the opportunity to receive a free two-hour social media consultation. The

two-hour session will cover any of the following:

- Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok
- Meta Business Suite and Ads
- Content strategy, creation and strategy
- Email marketing
- Canva training

What our previous clients have said:

*“Your consultant explained fully the settings of Facebook and LinkedIn assisting me with the setup of pages and Meta Business Suite.”*

*“The consultant asked intelligent questions as to pitch the training just right for my needs. Really listened to me, was very knowledgeable and informative and very approachable. A thoroughly enjoyable session.”*

If you would like to access this service, please email Edeal for a booking form: [info@edeal.org.uk](mailto:info@edeal.org.uk)

For more information on Edeal’s services please visit [www.edealgroup.org](http://www.edealgroup.org)



Ditzzy Media Team



## Str/eat Greek wins prestigious Good Food award

Eastbourne restaurant Str/eat Greek picked up a Blue Ribbon at the recent Good Food Awards.

The Good Food Awards celebrate culinary diversity throughout the United Kingdom. Established in 2002, The awards have earned a reputation as a respected authority in the food industry.

The Blue Ribbon for Delicious Dishes was awarded to Str/eat Greek for their food quality, service and value and was decided by judges and votes from the public.

The recognition is an important distinction for Str/eat Greek, whose authentic Greek food is well respected throughout Eastbourne. As Good Food explained *“At the heart of what we do is a commitment to honour local,*



*independent businesses that create delicious dishes.”*

You can find Str/eat Greek in Langney Shopping Centre, 64 Kingfisher Drive, BN23 7RT  
Visit: [www.streatgreek.co.uk](http://www.streatgreek.co.uk)

### New Members for February

Flow Fusion Studios • The Collaborative Canvas • The Dust Bunnies • Rhapsody Artist Development • Snuka Limited • Hawes Construction Group • The Goldsmiths Workshop • Fame Academy • The Turing School • Bramber Bakehouse • Infini East

## Coming up... Chamber Events

### Sunday 23rd February Dvořák’s New World Symphony

Hear Dvořák’s masterpiece performed by the London Philharmonic Orchestra, the orchestra that premiered the piece in Britain in 1894.

Congress Theatre, Eastbourne  
15:00 - 17:00

Visit [eastbournetheatres.co.uk](http://eastbournetheatres.co.uk)



### Wednesday 12th March European Movement Dinner & Speaker with Harry Brunjes

Two-course meal and a talk from a man who is Chairman of the English National Opera, surgeon, public speaker, talent agent, stand-up comedian... and more

Hydro Hotel 18:30 - 21:30

Visit [www.eastbourneunltd.co.uk/events](http://www.eastbourneunltd.co.uk/events)

### Friday 16th May Chamber Golf Day

Details are yet to be confirmed, but this is a jewel in the Chamber crown and one of our biggest fundraisers. 18 holes of golf and some serious prizes to be won.



### Tuesday 1st July Summer Big Breakfast at Bistrot Pierre

Celebrate summer with the Chamber’s Annual Summer breakfast get-together. The bravest amongst us go for a sea swim before hand!

Visit [www.eastbourneunltd.co.uk/events](http://www.eastbourneunltd.co.uk/events)

Bistrot Pierre 08:00 - 10:00

## Sussex Audiology Centre opens new clinic in Meads



The Sussex Audiology Team

**When asked recently, 94% of chamber members said that their hearing was impaired and affected their ability to work, so we are delighted to announce that the Sussex Audiology Centre has opened a new clinic in Meads Village, Eastbourne.**

Known for its comprehensive audiology services and patient-centred approach, the family run Sussex-based clinic will provide Eastbourne residents with greater access to high-quality hearing health care. The new location reflects the company's commitment to meeting the hearing healthcare needs of the Sussex region both in clinic and at home.

Chamber CEO Christina Ewbank said *"Having consulted the Sussex Audiology Centre about my hearing I was very impressed with their facilities and expertise. I was also impressed with their in-depth liaison with the NHS and my previous surgeons."*

The new clinic at 3b Meads Street offers their full range of

audiological services, including hearing assessments, earwax removal, and tinnitus management, in addition to offering the latest in hearing aid technology. Sussex Audiology Centre's team of qualified audiologists will ensure residents receive expert care tailored to their specific needs, from diagnostic testing to comprehensive aftercare plans in their two fully equipped clinic rooms.

*"We are thrilled to have opened a new clinic in the heart of Meads Village," said Bryce Murphy, Operations Director at Sussex Audiology Centre. "Our goal is to make hearing health accessible for everyone, and we look forward to becoming a valued member of the Eastbourne community."*

The clinic's opening comes at a time of increasing awareness about hearing health and the link with early cognitive decline. Sussex Audiology Centre's emphasis on early detection and preventive care will benefit those who join them in prioritising their hearing health as much as their vision and dental care.

The new clinic is open for business and Sussex Audiology Centre invites the Eastbourne community to discover the difference that local, personalised audiology care can make.

**Please contact:**  
**sussexaudiologycentre.co.uk**  
**or call 01323 387 098 for more information**

## Are you under 35 and thinking about networking to build business opportunities?

**'Future Leaders' helps you build confidence, connections and a great career!**

Future Leaders aim is simple. It gives young people in Eastbourne the opportunity to meet like-minded business people who live and work locally. We know that Eastbourne is a fantastic place to live, work and play. We also understand that building a career, meeting people, making connections and finding work opportunities isn't always easy.

The Future Leaders Network is an informal way to get out and meet young people who work in Eastbourne. Their regular events are affordable and fun and take place in the evening, away from the workplace. Activities have included virtual golf, beers and bikes at the Belgian Café, virtual reality gaming and escape room challenges.

There's food and drink and it's a great opportunity to meet people like you, who want to get ahead working in Eastbourne.

**To find out more, please email:**  
**marketing@eastbournechamber.co.uk**



## 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.

**Annual membership starts from as little as £70+vat per year – Join today, it's a complete no brainer!**

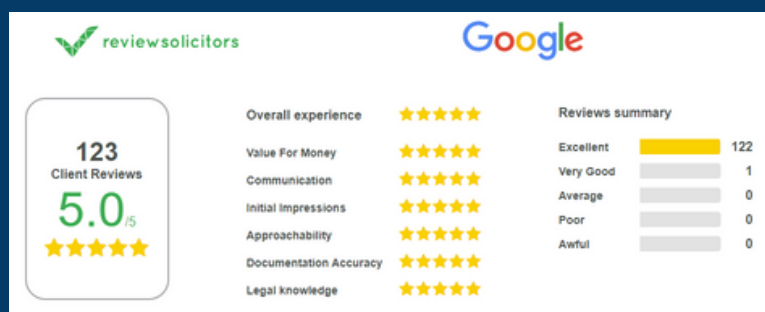
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# Lightning Fibre and Hailsham Active community collaboration



Myself with Rob Reaks from Lightning Fibre.

**ROB Reaks (*Lightning Fibre*) and myself have been working together for a number of years now helping various community projects.**

By **Steve Wennington**

## The concept is brilliantly simple.

Rob from *Lightning Fibre*, sponsors and works with us at *Hailsham Active*, assisting many of our projects (and this successful arrangement for community benefit has just been extended another 12 months).

We, mostly through our amazing grants specialist, Annette Buswell (*Stepupsports*), support this with a level of free consultancy.

We use this consultancy to see where we can help local sports clubs and indeed local town and parish councils

find opportunities for facilities, classes or equipment to improve opportunities for health and wellbeing.

The outcomes have been amazing.

Probably our most noticeable win, is the lighting installed around the perimeter of Western Road rec.

With help and approval from *Hailsham Town Council* (who are ultimately responsible for the rec and lights) we were able to oversee the project from design to installation, crucially identifying and successfully submitting the bid for £50,000 of

grant funding towards the £60,000 cost – *Hailsham Town council* approved the additional £10,000 from CIL funds.

At the other end of the scale, we have been able to help fund a few hundred pounds (80% of the cost) of portable football posts for junior football clubs.

If you have a community project involving sport/fitness and want to see if we can help, email me at: [steve@pro-eco.co.uk](mailto:steve@pro-eco.co.uk)

Lets continue the improvements for 2025/26 and beyond.



**Hailsham Active is Proudly Supported by**



**Lightning Fibre**



# Hailsham Parkinson's Singing Group

**RESEARCH suggests that group singing is beneficial for health and wellbeing.**

By **Gail McKay**

**Taking part in regular group singing can help mitigate the symptoms of Parkinson's and is a great way of boosting the mood and health of people living with the daily challenges of Parkinson's and other neurological conditions.**

## Caring through singing

The Hailsham group (*The Cuckoos Chorus*) is part of the *Sing to Beat Parkinson's* network of singing groups across the UK that operates under the umbrella of registered charity *Canterbury Cantata Trust* – whose mission statement is 'caring through singing'.

## Uplifting

Group singing sessions are fun, informal, social and uplifting those who attend come away feeling in better spirits. Singing can be a helpful therapeutic activity for people with Parkinson's, improving speech and vocal function, as well as general wellbeing.

## Free

People with Parkinson's and other related conditions, family and/or carers also welcome. It's free to all.

Fortnightly on Mondays from 11am-1pm

Email Debra Skeen:

[enquiries@debraskeen.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@debraskeen.co.uk)

**Diplocks Hall, The Diplocks, Hailsham, BN27 3JY**

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



# Simply the best!

**STEVENS and Carter** opened their Hailsham office back in 2004 and have been steadily growing ever since. They really took off after the pandemic, and by 2022, they had secured the top position locally, and have proudly maintained this status.

By **Gail McKay**

**The business now operates in partnership with Archer and Partners in Polegate. The team includes John Stevens as Managing Director, Sam Beale as Sales Director, Nick Russell and David Shelton as Sales Managers, Samuel Townsend as Senior Negotiator, Lucy Brown and Anita Baker as Negotiators, and Laura Stevens as Sales Assistant.**

*Stevens and Carter* are big deals in the UK real estate world. They've just been named one of the top estate agents in the country and are now featured in the *Best Estate Agent Guide 2025*, the most comprehensive review UK agencies.

*The Best Estate Agent Guide* was created to help sellers and landlords

find the top agents in their area. Each year, the Guide is compiled following a rigorous assessment which analyses more than 11,300 Agents. They look at how well the agents market properties, how good their customer service is, and how successful they are at selling homes. It's all about finding the agents who will get the best results for homeowners.

This year, *Stevens and Carter* was among the winners, taking home GOLD, rated within the TOP 5% of

both Sales and Lettings Agents in the country.

Sam Beale, Sales Director, shared his enthusiasm: "We are thrilled to have been featured in the prestigious *Best Estate Agent Guide 2025*. This recognition reflects our commitment to upholding the highest industry standards, and we are honoured to be acknowledged as one of the top-performing agents in the UK.

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



Sam Beale and Lucy Brown receiving awards from TV presenter Alex Jones.

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# Businesses invited to join youth service's sponsorship programme



**HAILSHAM Youth Service, is seeking corporate partners to join its new sponsorship programme to help support local youth services and build stronger links in the community.**

By **Gail McKay**

**The Friday Night Project, a non-profit initiative, has provided fun, safe and engaging activities for young people in the local area on Friday evenings since 2010.**

Such activities have included outdoor activities, dry-slope skiing, ski

lessons, pottery-glazing, inflatable assault courses, trampolining, ten-pin bowling, crafts and cooking and sporting activities.

### Impact on young lives

Working in partnership with organisations such as *Knockhatch* and *Freedom Leisure*, Hailsham Youth Service has shown the impact local businesses make a on the lives of young people by sponsoring *Friday Night Project* activities.

HYS has been managed and funded by the Town Council for many years and operates alongside as a Community Interest Company (CIC), which can accept private sector funding to support the ever-increasing programme of events and activities for young people.

### Reducing antisocial behaviour

"By sponsoring the *Friday Night Project*, businesses can help

reduce antisocial behaviour in our community and give local young people a positive space to grow and connect," said Youth Service Manager, Andy Joyes. "Corporate partners will also be able to demonstrate to the public their commitment to supporting the future of Hailsham and in return, will receive promotion by the Service to local audiences and readers through our various publicity channels."

### Contact

For further information regarding sponsorship, please contact Hailsham Youth Service by calling **01323 841702** or emailing **info@hailsham-tc.gov.uk**. Visit **www.hailshamyouthservice.org** for details of services and activities.

# Stand Proud

**WHEELS are in motion for the planning of the town's 'Stand Proud in Hailsham' event at the White Hart in Horsebridge this June.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**In support of Pride Month later this year, project organisers – including two town councillors and The White Hart – will once again be hosting a special event with festival vibes on Saturday 28th June from noon to midnight, featuring a variety of live entertainment including that from rhythm and blues guitarist/singer Moss, as well as headline drag act Fonda who will be part of the line-up and back due to popular demand.**

Other headline acts will be commissioned soon and the Town Council is again supporting the event by part-funding the project, as it did in 2024 for the inaugural *Stand Proud* in Hailsham.

The Town Council agreed to part-fund the costs associated with the event, which include entertainment acts and activities. Other sponsors in the town will be contributing towards the cost of the event, including *Stevens and Carter* and venue hosts *The White Hart*.



A watershed will be put in place for 7pm on the day and, due to the popularity of last year's event, members of the public will be encouraged to bring picnic chairs and blankets with them to prevent the venue from running out of seating. Pop-up food vendors will be on site.

More details about the event will be announced in the coming months as further plans are made and entertainers are booked.

"The sunshine brought out a constant flow of visitors, averaging around 300 people on site at any one time, at the *White Hart* in Horsebridge,"

said event co-organiser Mary Laxton, reflecting on the success of the inaugural *Stand Proud* in Hailsham event which took place last June.





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# Historical Hailsham – The Railway

**THE development of the railway in Hailsham followed an Act of Parliament in 1846 which permitted the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway to build a branch line from Polegate to Hailsham.**

By **Paul Endersby**, paul@paulendersby.co.uk

**The new line cost £30,000 and work went well bar one accident in August 1847 when a 15-year-old boy slipped on a rail while emptying one of the muck wagons and severely injured his arm, which had to be amputated at the scene by a local doctor.**

## Grand opening

The railway opened on 14th May 1849 which was proclaimed a holiday. There was much rejoicing and banners were hung in the streets and festivities held on the nearby Common. A dinner was provided for everyone with local traders supplying the food and barrels of ale. With so much ale about it was thought proper to separate the sexes, men and boys ate in a large tent on the Common and women and girls in the school room. The directors of the train company laid on a free ride to Eastbourne for children and those less well-off. At 4:30pm a public dinner was held in *The Crown Hotel* where Dr Cunningham GP, took the chair. However the festivities were marred by the death of John Hield who was killed while standing on the step of a railway carriage which necessitated in Dr Cunningham being called away. The festivities continued into the evening ending at 10:00pm!

The line was extended northwards to Eridge in 1880 at a cost of £155,000 and soon became known as the 'Cuckoo Line.' An additional platform was built with both platforms being connected by a subway and bridge

over the line was constructed. During the work many of the navvies lodged at the *Black Horse Beer House*. This property, now known as Bridge House, is located in London Road. In 1892 a stationmaster's house was completed at a cost of £275. This building also still exists today as a private house in Station Road. A signal box was erected beside the line opposite the *Common Pond*.

## Increased opportunities

The arrival of the railway opened up increased opportunities for both travel and trade. The Victorian writer, George Bradshaw includes Hailsham, albeit briefly, in his *Railway Guide and Handbook*. From 1886 mail was moved by train. Cattle were brought in for the weekly markets. Arthur Pettigrew in 'My memories of Hailsham,' writes, "the railway was a very busy place... as kids we helped to drive them (the cattle) to the market for half a penny." In 1890, two local businessmen established *White & Beeny*, Coal Merchants with their yard at the station. Their trucks and publicity proudly stated, "We supply by road or rail," adding, "special attention given to all orders large or small." From 1870 *Stricklands*,



Hailsham Station and approach road c1869.



Hailsham signal box c1902.

the corn merchants had their granary in the goods yard which was later incorporated into the egg packing station. Another writer recalls the arrival of the circus by train in the late 1950's when elephants and camels that were off loaded and then walked up the street! Also present within the station was the ubiquitous *W H Smith's*.

## Victoria to Hailsham

As travel developed use of the train between Hailsham and Eastbourne became more commonplace, and in April 1901 the Parish Council asked the railway company to provide a train leaving Eastbourne at about 10:00pm. This service commenced in July of the same year. Writing in the parish magazine, April 1902, the Vicar noted, "that it was now possible to travel from Victoria to Hailsham in just 2 hours." Like today the railways were keen to attract customers through the use of special deals. In December 1904 the company made available cheap return tickets to Eastbourne every Friday. This offer was time limited until the end of

April the following year. In 1960 an off peak day return to Eastbourne was 2/9 (13p) and to Victoria 17/9 (89p).

The town had a train named after it, one of a class of 50 locomotives nicknamed 'Terriers' because they were small in size and considered to be tenacious in character. The 'Hailsham' was scrapped in 1903 but several other 'Terriers's' can be seen on historic railways including the *Bluebell Railway* and the *Kent & East Sussex*.

## End of the line

The country's railways were nationalised in 1948 and in 1963 Dr Richard Beeching's controversial report recommended the closure of many lines and stations, including the *Cuckoo Line*. A 1965 survey revealed only 250 passengers a day were using the line, of which just 23 were season ticket holders. As a result the section north of Hailsham was closed to passenger traffic in 1965 and the last train left on 4th June of that year. However a weekly freight service continued until April 1968 when the bridge at Horsebridge was damaged by a road vehicle. With the whole line due for closure, the damaged bridge was never repaired. The last train left on 9th September 1968 to the sound of detonators on the line and the singing of Auld Lang Syne by a large crowd. After 119 years of railway operation into Hailsham, the line was gone.

# Hailsham's Community Organisations thanked by the Town Mayor

**HAILSHAM'S Mayor has revealed how his time in the post since May 2019 has confirmed his belief that the town has a "great community spirit."**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**Cllr Paul Holbrook referred to the various functions he has attended since being elected as Town Mayor and the opportunities to meet representatives from community groups and voluntary organisations in Hailsham.**

"The community and voluntary sector play a significant role within Hailsham, fulfilling a broad range of requirements for the local community," Cllr Holbrook said.

"The benefits that come from a having such a vibrant community

and voluntary sector creates a number of positives for the town by providing services to those in need, volunteering for those who need to develop their life skills, as well as providing the means for people to become involved in their community or simply leisure opportunities.

"Throughout my near near-six years as Town Mayor, it has been an honour and privilege to be guest of honour at several civic engagements so ably organised by local voluntary and community organisations. From these engagements, I have learned that Hailsham has a great community spirit.

"I am impressed by the work in the town by volunteers who help run these organisations and, having recognised and supported such organisations in the past wherever I can, I am certain that there are many unsung heroes upon who so much depends on the success of fundraising events and other vital work in the community.



"Hailsham Bonfire Society, Hailsham Choral Society, the Royal British Legion Hailsham branch, Hailsham Foodbank, Pass It On (In Your Community), Hailsham Active, and the Hailsham Festival Committee, to name just a few, work tirelessly to serve and promote our community and keep the profile of the town high, often without the recognition they deserve."



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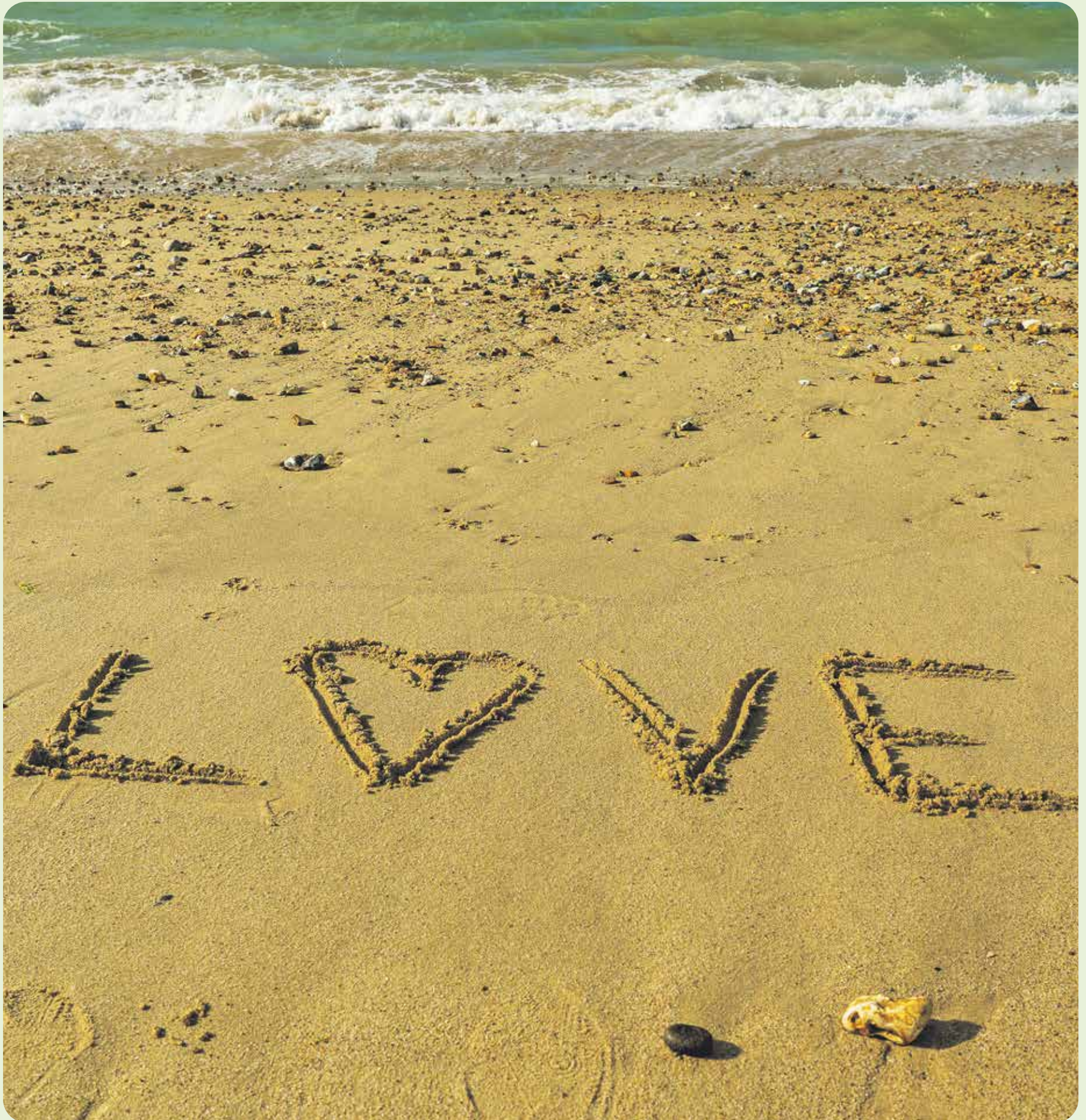


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# Eastbourne Carnival 2025 – Registration is now open!

**EASTBOURNE Carnival CIC are delighted to launch the registration for this year’s carnival event.**

By **Harry Farmer**

**The date for is Saturday May 24th and the theme is Celebrations of the World. We want to create a carnival full of global celebrations.**

Entrants are encouraged to get creative with their costumes and floats and celebrate some of the most spectacular, diverse events from across the world.

The new carnival website – created with love by *RJM Digital* – is now live, featuring artwork by *WriteHand Designs*.

**Creative Carnival Workshops**  
The 2025 'Lightning Fibre Creative Carnival Workshops' will cover costume making, sewing, prop making and dance and performance.

*Eastbourne Carnival CIC* has successfully obtained funding from *Chalk Cliff* and public funding from the *National Lottery* through *Arts Council England*.

**More spectacular**  
Mina O'Brien, Chair of *Eastbourne Carnival* said: "We are delighted to officially launch carnival registration and announce the fabulous news of getting support through *Arts Council England* and *Chalk Cliff* as well as the support from our sponsors. There is great excitement for this year, including from our friends in Dortmund, Germany, who will be coming over bringing a taste of their Karneval to Eastbourne. This year's event should be bigger and more spectacular than ever."

Rob Reaks, *Lightning Fibre's* chief commercial officer, added, "Supporting our local community is very important to us. This is our fourth consecutive year of Carnival sponsorship. This financial contribution to the 'Lightning Fibre' Creative Carnival Workshops is a great opportunity for us to add value this year, and its exciting that there are so many workshops planned."

**Fabulous support**

Mina thanked the carnival sponsors for their support: *Lightning Fibre*, *The Best of Eastbourne*, *RJM Digital*, *Media Attention*, *BourneFree* and *Custard Design & Print*, *Eastbourne & District Enterprise Agency*, *Elite Medical*, *Eastbourne UnLtd Chamber of Commerce* and *Sussex Audiology*.

A special thank you to the team at *Towner Art Gallery* for their support.

Get involved in this years' carnival – enter, volunteer or sponsor – please visit:  
[www.eastbournecarnival.com](http://www.eastbournecarnival.com)



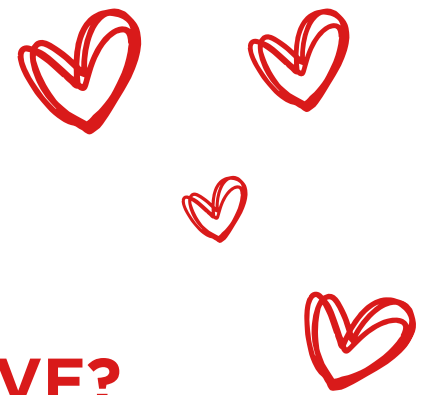
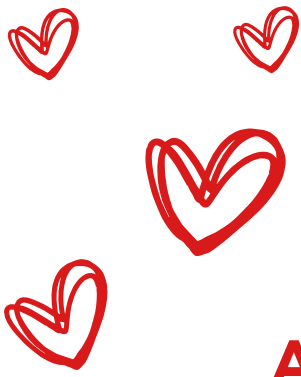
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# Your Eastbourne Business Improvement District: Giving You Reasons to Love Our Town Centre



Eastbourne is a unique and vibrant place, whether you're a resident, business owner, or visitor. A thriving, clean, and safe town centre is essential to its charm.

That's why Your Eastbourne Business Improvement District (BID) is here – to enhance the town centre, ensure it remains attractive and welcoming, and provide added security to support our local partners.

The BID is independently managed and funded by businesses in the town centre, covering areas such as Little Chelsea, Cornfields, the Devonshire Quarter, Victoria Place, Gildredge Road, Hyde Gardens, the Beacon, Enterprise Shopping Centre, Langney and Bolton Road and Commercial Road.

This year, Your Eastbourne BID will be launching a monthly newsletter. You'll get exclusive updates, discover hidden gems, and enjoy early access to special offers – everything you need to make the most of what our town has to offer.



To stay in the loop, simply scan the QR code to sign up.



Your Eastbourne BID funded the Little Chelsea Festive Fun and Fireworks Event in December

## Loving Local: Business Highlights Fall in Love With Foundry Coffee's Newest Spot on Grove Road!

Heads up, coffee lovers! Following the success of our flagship store at Eastbourne Train Station, we're excited to announce the opening of Foundry Coffee Grove Road, our brand-new sister location in the heart of Little Chelsea.

Set within a beautifully restored Victorian building, our new venue invites you to relax, connect & fall in love with the perfect cup of coffee. Surrounded by some of the best independent businesses in town, we're proud to join this vibrant, community-driven area where passion & creativity thrive.

At Grove Road, we offer the same warm & inviting experience that you've come to know & love from Foundry Coffee. Whether you're enjoying your favourite brew, sharing a delicious breakfast or lunch, or catching up with friends, we've designed a space for you to savour the moments that matter most.

Find us at 49 Grove Road & discover Eastbourne's unmissable new coffee destination!



## What is a Business Improvement District?

Your Eastbourne BID is independently run and funded by town centre businesses to support and promote our area. We've organised events like the Little Chelsea Christmas Fun and Fireworks, funded Christmas lights, and installed CCTV and planters. Decisions are made by a voluntary team of Directors who represent local businesses, dedicated to creating a thriving, vibrant town centre for everyone to enjoy.

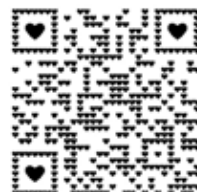
## Loving Local: Business Highlights Fall in Love With Chatfields' Engagement Rings

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# Love on the Waterfront

WE'RE feeling the love at *The Waterfront* and are excited to kick off February Half Term activities starting Saturday 15th February!

By **Taria Williams**

**From 11am to 4pm daily, bring your kids along for our beloved *Hunt Around the Harbour* activity, running until Sunday 23rd February. This event is perfect for children of all ages and offers a delightful way to explore the area while having fun.**

### Harbour Hunt

Follow the specially designed route map around the harbour to find a collection of adorable cupids. Each cupid has a letter attached that makes up a three-word secret passcode for you to solve! Once you've cracked the code, head over to *Dolci's* on the *Waterfront*



to share the passcode and claim some sweet treats as your reward. Maps will be provided, so you won't miss a single cupid.

### Relax

Make it a day to remember by enjoying a coffee at one of our welcoming cafes before starting your hunt. Afterward, reward yourself with a delicious lunch or simply relax at one of our many fantastic eateries at *The Waterfront*.

### Don't miss this Free event

This activity is a wonderful way to spend time with the whole family, including your furry friends, while soaking up some fresh air and enjoying the beautiful harbour scenery. Whether you're a local or visiting for the half term, we can't wait to welcome you to *The Waterfront* for this fun-filled adventure. Don't miss out on this free event—let's make some magical half-term memories together!



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## NEW: Polegate Ramblers Saturday Walks

### NOT free on Thursdays? We have the answer!

By **Gill Mattock**, Polegate Ramblers

**A number of people have contacted Polegate Ramblers telling us they would like to walk with us but aren't free on Thursdays, our normal walking day. We have responded!**

Starting in February we will be offering a monthly walk on a Saturday morning. The walks will be led by one of our experienced walk leaders and will be between 7 and 8 miles long starting at 9:30am. There will be the usual coffee break so please bring a drink and snack but we expect to finish in time for busy people to get home for a late lunch.

Our first walk will be on Saturday February 22nd and will start at *Folkington Church* at 9:30am (*What 3 Words*\*: **prove.famed.assets**). Parking is limited by the church so please try to car share if possible. This walk, led by experienced walk leader, Gill Mattock, will take you across our beautiful downland, along a hidden valley and through woodland along well established paths. It will be rough underfoot in places and there may even be a couple of hills so please wear appropriate footwear and bring poles if you use them.

Please text Gill, on **07963 930941** if you are interested in joining her or have any questions about the walk.

Alternatively email the secretary at [polegateramblers@gmail.com](mailto:polegateramblers@gmail.com)

We are happy for people to try out our group before committing to joining but our insurers do require people to join thereafter. Our annual subscription is a real bargain at £5 and ensures you are covered by our Public Liability Insurance as well as giving you a small discount in some outdoor clothing shops.

Details of our Saturday walk programme can be found on the *Polegate Ramblers* website: <http://polegateramblers.org.uk> – just click on the Walks Programme button, then Saturdays.

### what3words

\**What3Words* is a really simple way of pinpointing an exact location. The entire planet has been split up into 3m x 3m squares and each one of these has been allocated a unique 3 word address. This is more precise than a postcode or a grid reference (something many of us may have struggled with in geography lessons at school) and particularly useful to hikers who find themselves lost or injured in the middle of nowhere. The emergency services are happy to use it too. Just download the app onto your phone – it's free and available to everyone.



## True love... for you

**IT'S time to nurture the most important relationship in your life... the one with yourself.**

By **Gail McKay**

**Here are some tips to help you recalibrate and revive your ardour for the most important person in your life: you.**

### Practise self-compassion

Treat yourself with the same kindness you would show a close friend. When you make mistakes or feel inadequate, remind yourself that nobody is perfect and that setbacks are part of life. Self-compassion involves accepting yourself in moments of struggle and being gentle with yourself.

### Challenge negative self-talk

Instead of saying, "I can't do anything right," try, "I'm learning, and it's okay to make mistakes."

### Set healthy boundaries

Loving yourself means knowing what is and isn't good for you. Practise saying 'no' when you need to, and distance yourself from people who drain your energy or bring you down. Surround yourself with those who support and uplift you.

### Invest in self-care

Make time for activities that make you feel good, whether it's exercising, cooking, reading, meditating or taking a day to relax.

Self-care isn't selfish; it's a vital way of nourishing your mind, body and soul.

### Celebrate strengths, lose guilt

Reflect on your unique qualities, talents and accomplishments. List things you're proud of, no matter how small; at the same time letting go of guilt or shame about past mistakes.

### Set and pursue goals

Having goals – no matter how big or small – gives you a sense of purpose. Break them into small, achievable steps, and celebrate your progress along the way. This can help build self-trust, knowing you can work toward what matters to you.

### Develop an eternal locus of self control

Finally, a person with self-love often develops an internal locus of control – the belief that they are responsible for and in control of their life and choices.

This mindset promotes accountability and self-empowerment, helping people to make choices aligned with their values and goals.

Self-love encourages people to take control of their lives rather than feeling like victims of circumstance... try it.



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# Fur-ever friends

**FEBRUARY 20th is *Love Your Pets Day* – 24 hours dedicated to our cherished cats, dogs and everything else besides. With that in mind, why not look at fun, heartfelt ways to make it a day they'll never forget.**

By **Gail McKay**

**The best way to celebrate is with time spent together. Start with an extended walk to a new park or trail; many dog-friendly parks have areas for off-lead fun, giving them a chance to run free.**

Pack a few of their favourite treats, and when back home, consider a dog-friendly spa day. Whether it's a thorough brushing session or a trip to a local dog groomer, your pup will appreciate the special attention.

Finally, indulge them with a new toy or a puzzle feeder, and perhaps even pick up a pup-friendly cupcake!

For cats, pampering them on their special day is all about tapping into their love for curiosity and comfort. Set up a cosy space with their favourite blanket, toys and perhaps a sprinkle of catnip.

Interactive playtime is essential for keeping cats active and stimulated – add a new scratching post or climbing tree – and when it's time to wind down, a gentle brush (for those who enjoy it) or a lap to curl up on will go down a treat.

For other pets, even something as simple as cleaning out a fish tank, refreshing sawdust or interacting with them for longer, and with love, can bring out the very best not just in them, but you as well!



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## Stress test

**WE'VE all said 'I'm stressed!', but what does it really mean and how bad is it for your health?**

By **Gail McKay**

**It could be sparked by a big work project or the death of a loved one, it could simply be a bad day or a friend who is constantly 'stressing you out'. Stress, in other words, is a term we use for a myriad of things meaning several degrees of discomfort: from mild annoyance to debilitating anguish.**

However, if we look closer at what stress is, it can help us cope and manage far better.

### What is stress?

Stress is the body's natural response to challenges, threats, or demands. It's a psychological and physiological reaction that occurs when we perceive a situation as requiring more resources or effort than we feel capable of providing.

### Types of Stress

#### Acute stress

Short-term and immediate, often triggered by sudden challenges (e.g. a deadline or an argument). It can be positive (eustress) when it motivates action, or negative (distress) when overwhelming.

#### Chronic stress

Ongoing stress that persists over time due to prolonged issues like financial hardship, a toxic relationship, or a demanding job. It is more harmful than acute stress and often leads to serious health problems.

### How stress works

When faced with a stressor, the body activates the fight-or-flight response, a survival mechanism that prepares us to face or flee danger. This involves the release of stress hormones (adrenaline and cortisol), an increase in heart rate, blood pressure and breathing rate, plus and heightened alertness and a temporary suppression of non-essential functions like digestion and immune response.

Once the stressor is resolved, the body should return to a relaxed state. However, if stress persists, the body remains in a heightened state, leading to negative health effects.

### Long-term effects

Prolonged stress can be very bad for our health as constant release of adrenaline and cortisol take their toll on a system that simply isn't designed to withstand over an extended period.

Systems affected include the cardiovascular (risk of hypertension, heart disease, heart attacks), Endocrine (causing weight gain and risk of diabetes), and digestive (risk of IBS and stomach ulcers). In addition, there's an increased risk of mental health problems including brain fog, memory loss and depression.

### Stress help

Apart from avoiding excess stress, regular exercise, a healthy diet, meditation, good sleep habits, deep breathing, time with those you love, and being in nature, are all excellent ways to heal your exhausted nervous system and allow you to fight another day.

## Supporting those in need

**RESIDENTS at Mortain Place Care Home – on Pevensey Bay Road – have been supporting the less fortunate people in Eastbourne.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**They knitted blankets and collecting coats for Eastbourne Street Pastors.**

Comprising a team of more than 40 volunteers from 18 churches, they go out on the streets of Eastbourne on Friday and Saturday night from 10pm until 4am and make themselves available to those who need some help.

A spokesperson for *Mortain Place* said: "These blankets and coats will help keep our local less fortunate friends warm during these colder months."

"Residents take great pride in the blankets they make, and have also donated to other causes such as *Raystede Centre for Animal Welfare* and *Cats Protection*."

"Not only did the residents make blankets, staff members donated items such as coats, hats and gloves."



## Veterans help charities

**THE Eastbourne & District Veterans CIC has donated £100 worth of supplies to help The Salvation Army with the breakfasts it provides for people in need.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**The money was raised at the 2024 Armed Forces Day.**

The group wants to work more with *The Salvation Army* more in 2025 to help them with the veterans they come across.

It has also been supporting *The Chaseley Trust*.

### Armed Forces Day 2025

This year it is on Saturday 28th June at Five Acre Field, Lottbridge Drove from 10am–6pm.



# Seasonal offers now in store

**ACTIVE Days Mobility is now situated at 6 Winston Crescent, Seaside, where there is plenty of free parking.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**It sells all types of mobility living aids, including scooters, wheelchairs and walking sticks.**

Owner Mark Stewart is clear what the shop has to offer:

- A warm welcome and that personal touch.
- Value for money and competitive pricing.
- Time spent discussing exactly what the customer wants so it's the right product for each customer.
- And if the item is on show, you can buy it straight away, no need to order.

Mark – who also owns a similar business in Western Road, Bexhill, said: "My staff are fully qualified and fully trained.

"We are the main dealer for all the big manufacturers, and we sell a wide range of products.

"My priority is talking with people so they get what they want, and at the right price.

"We service and repair mobility aids and offer free collection and delivery. We sell insurance and can deal with any claims on your behalf.

"Come and pay us a visit."

**01323 301101**  
[www.activedaysmobility.co.uk](http://www.activedaysmobility.co.uk)



# Healthy hot drinks this winter

**COSYING up with a hot cuppa and a book is one of the pleasures to enjoy during the winter months.**

By **Jane Long**

**Sometimes it can be easy to go for a coffee or tea, but too much caffeine can dehydrate you or leave you feeling frazzled and disrupt your sleep.**

So I've compiled a list of healthy cosy alternative warm drinks.

## The herbal option

This is easy! Add any spice, herb or natural sweetener to your hot water to soothe and cleanse and hydrate you from the inside out.

- **Lemon, ginger and honey.**
- **Cloves, cinnamon, orange.**
- **Spiced pear tea bags.**

## Cacao

Cacao is a healthy, nutritious alternative for chocolate. It is full of minerals which include magnesium, copper, potassium, iron, zinc, and brain-boosting flavonoids.

You can make this inviting drink with dairy milk, or any milk alternative, such as oat or almond milk.

Add a couple of teaspoons of cacao powder to a pan. Add a few drops of boiled water from the kettle and stir together to make a paste. Then add the milk of your choice and heat up.

You may want to add some maple syrup, rock salt and some spices like cinnamon, nutmeg, cardamom, or even a pinch of cayenne pepper to jazz up your cacao treat.

## Golden milk

Also known as hot turmeric milk, Golden milk is known for its anti-inflammatory properties as well as supporting your digestion. The turmeric makes for a vibrant, golden, autumnal colour. Adding fats like ghee and spices like black pepper help for absorption of active ingredients in the turmeric. If you prefer to add a sweet touch, maple syrup or some natural honey are healthy options.

I'm a reflexologist and offer luxury holistic facials in my Old Town treatment room as well as Skin Nourishing Café workshops around Eastbourne.

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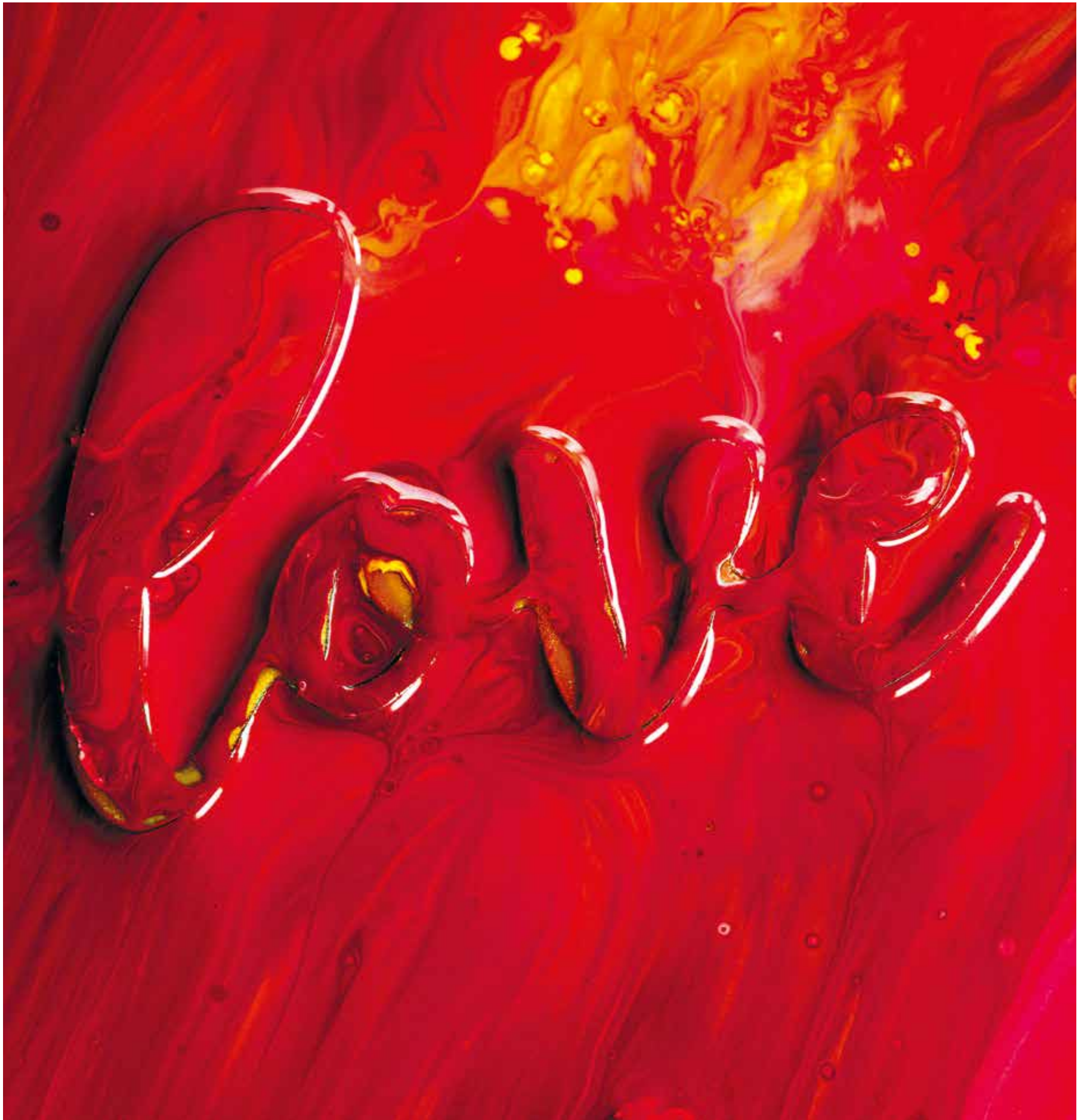
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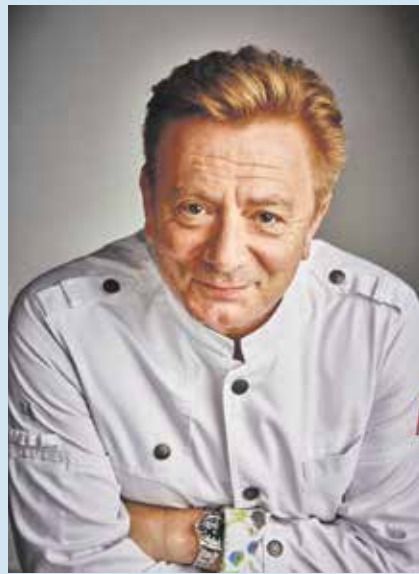
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# Posh Teas and Artisan Cheese

**CULINARY** champions Rosemary Shrager and Sean Wilson have joined forces for their first-ever live UK tour – and they are coming to Eastbourne.

By **Peter Lindsey**

**Prepare your taste buds for an unforgettable culinary experience as renowned chefs Rosemary Shrager and Sean Wilson take to the stage at the Royal Hippodrome Theatre on Thursday February 20th for their debut live show, *Posh Teas & Artisan Cheese*.**

## Food, fun, and flair

This unique, interactive event promises to be a feast for the senses, combining food, fun, and fabulous flair.

The evening will be split into two entertaining halves: the first features a lively Q&A session where the duo will answer audience questions, revealing the secrets behind their culinary successes.

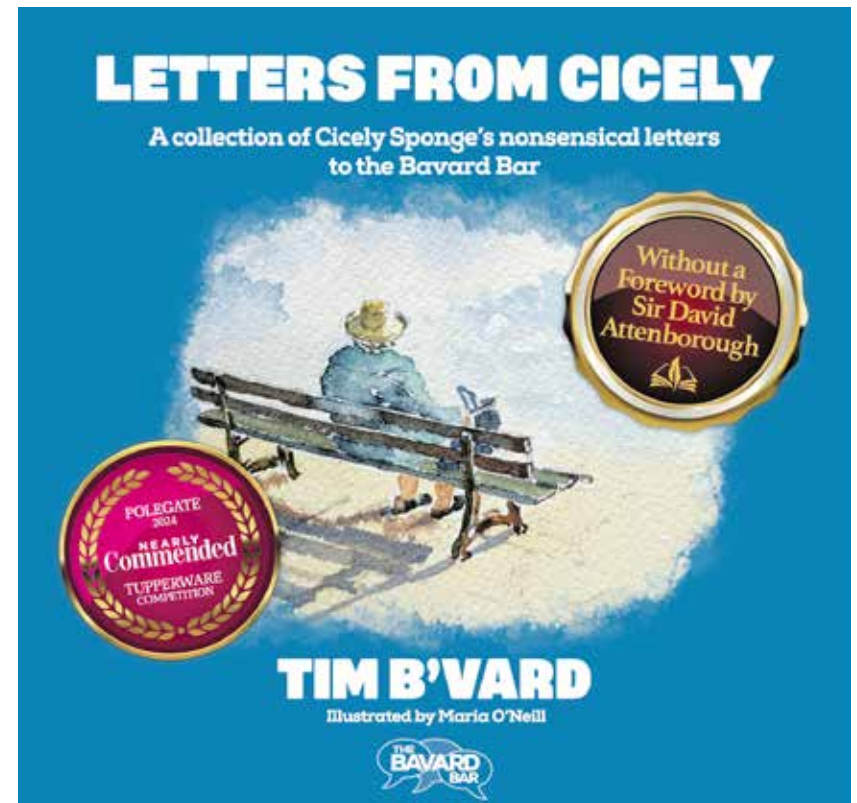
The second half will be a thrilling cook-off, with Rosemary and Sean showcasing their mouth-watering recipes and culinary skills in a head-to-head demonstration.

Expect hot tips, delicious recipes, and the kind of culinary magic that can only come from these two food experts.

Rosemary Shrager is a household name in the culinary world. Her impressive resume includes working with legendary chefs such as Pierre Koffman and Jean-Christophe Novelli, followed by a distinguished tenure as head chef at *Moyns Park*, the Mountbatten family's estate.

Sean Wilson first became a household name for his role as Martin Platt in *Coronation Street* from 1985 to 2004. After leaving the soap, he reinvented himself as a self-taught chef, honing his skills at the Michelin-starred *Northcote Manor* and later establishing his own award-winning *Artisan Farm Cheese Company*.

For ticket information and bookings, visit <https://royalhippodrome.com/event/rosemary-sean-posh-teas-artisan-cheese> or call the Box Office on **01323 802020**



# Letters from Cicely

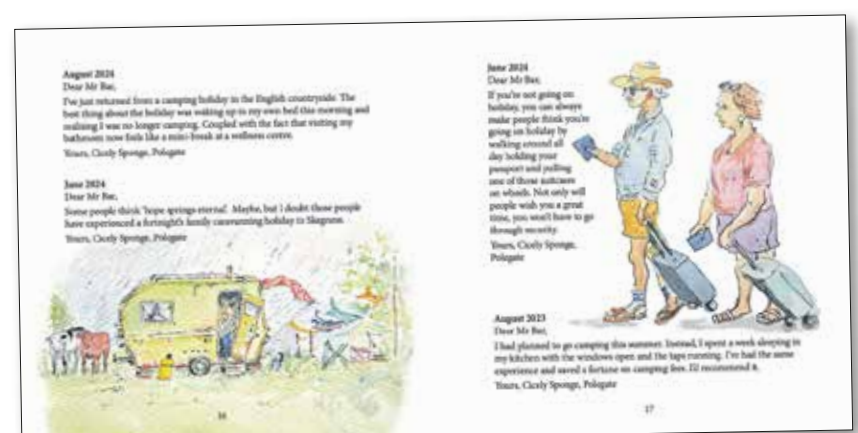
**BACK** in 1965, Jackie DeShannon released *'What the World Needs Now Is Love.'* Perhaps, as we enter 2025, what we also need is a heap of joyous nonsense.

By **Harry Farmer**

**Cicely Sponge from Polegate certainly thinks so. Since 2018, Cicely has been writing to *The Bavard Bar*, a talk and comedy show held at Towner on the second Wednesday of every month. Her letters are entirely nonsensical and have been compiled into a book, *'Letters from Cicely'*, that has been beautifully illustrated by local artist, Maria O'Neill.**

To celebrate the publication of *'Letters from Cicely'*, there is a book launch party at Towner on Friday, 7th February between 5–7:30pm. It's a 'Towner Late', so the galleries will be open as will the *Light Cafe*. And local band, *Simon&thePope*, will be delivering their unique mix of hypnotic funky grooves.

So as winter slips away, and we edge closer to warmer days and shorter nights, why not pop along to Towner on Friday, 7th February and add a bit of nonsense to your life. It's free to attend and everyone is welcome.



# Bumper year for Towner

**TOWNER Eastbourne added an additional visitor spend to the Eastbourne economy of £16 million during 2023–24.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**That figure has been released in the attraction's Annual Review for 2023-24 – and it's a massive amount which shows why Towner is so important not just to Eastbourne but the wider economy as well.**

Highlights include:

- More than 260,000 people visited Towner during that time
- There were 385 events, exhibitions, performances and workshops
- Over 20,000 hours of arts engagement opportunities were available for young people and the wider community
- And more than 2400 Year 9s pupils visited.



Towner also says press coverage generated more than 14 million views online. This was the period the Towner hosted the *Turner Prize*, which attracted worldwide coverage.

Times are challenging in 2025 with *Eastbourne Borough Council* reducing the amount it gives to Towner.

Meanwhile, Joe Hill, Director and CEO of Towner Eastbourne, has become chair of the *Culture East Sussex* board.

The cultural sector is important to the economy of East Sussex and Culture East Sussex brings together public bodies, cultural organisations and individuals to act as a collective voice for culture across East Sussex, develop the skills of people working in the sector and promote diversity.

You can read the Annual Review by visiting the Towner website at: <https://townereastbourne.org.uk> and searching 'Annual Review'.

# Eastbourne dazzled by 'Wicked' Christmas lights

**IF you ventured near Green Street in December, you couldn't have missed the Graves' spectacular Christmas light display.**

By **Gail McKay**

**Every year, Simon and Claire Graves theme their festive decorations around a popular theme at the time.**

## Neighbours

Christmas 2024 was inspired by the 'Wicked' musical, and the recent film. The outside of their house was

transformed into a magical spectacle, drawing positive comments from neighbours and visitors.

Recognizing the impact of their display, and the crowds that they draw, Simon decided to use it to raise funds for *The Children With Cancer Fund*.



"Everyone is so kind about our lights, so we thought a small donation from those who could would make it even more special," he explained.

## Amazing result

Chris Downton, one of the charity's founders, expressed his gratitude: "We have fantastic news! Simon and his 'Pink House Christmas Lights' have raised enough to treat the 13–18-year-olds to their Christmas meal in 2025. They've been amazing and they've raised almost £500!"

At this meal the young adults decide what events or activities they would like to do the following year.

Activities include such things as high wire climbing, rock climbing, banger racing and exciting things like this,

that they can't do if their younger siblings are in tow.

## Practical support

Chris is clear about the charity's purpose, "Our aim is to grant wishes to children up to the age of eighteen, and their families, who have, or have had, cancer and who primarily live in East Sussex, Brighton and Hove.

"Wishes can be practical, medical or fun and made to individual families as well as supporting a group together by giving them quality family time."

The link is still open for those wishing to add to the total.

Please visit [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com) and Search for *The Pink House Christmas Lights*.

# Eastbourne to host opera stars of tomorrow

**FOLLOWING** on from the huge success of the inaugural *Eastbourne International Singing Competition 2024*, which attracted applications from more than 100 young professional solo classical singers of 30 different nationalities, I am delighted to announce *The Eastbourne International Singing Competition 2025* which will take place from Thursday May 29th to Sunday June 1st at Eastbourne's *Birley Centre*.



By **Chris Dixon**, Founder and Director, EISC

**Tickets can now be purchased via our website ([www.ebisc.co.uk](http://www.ebisc.co.uk)) and cost from £20 (adults) and from £10 (U16's).**

60 of the world's top young solo classical singers will perform live in the *Birley Centre* in the hope of winning the coveted Eastbourne Trophy. Due to a large number of applicants, this year's competition will feature a First Round, a Semi-Final Round and a Final Round. Please do come to hear your favourite opera arias and classical songs. The competition is suitable for seasoned opera-goers as well as for audience members who may be witnessing live classical singing for the first time.

A pop-up café in the *Birley Centre* art-gallery will serve tea, coffee, and light refreshments throughout the competition. A string quartet from the *Royal College of Music* will play live in our café.

Situated in Eastbourne's *Devonshire Quarter*, this event offers a unique opportunity to experience classical music of the highest quality whilst enjoying a day or a weekend by the sea!

We have negotiated special rates with our hotel partners, allowing you to holiday on the Sunshine Coast for less!

*The Eastbourne International Singing Competition* is extremely grateful to both the *Richard Lewis/Jean Shanks Trust* and *Sussex Opera and Ballet Society* for their generous support.

*The Eastbourne International Singing Competition 2025* is a wonderful opportunity to see and hear the global opera stars of tomorrow, at a ticket-price far lower than you would expect. We are incredibly lucky to have this new, world-class musical event here in Eastbourne. Please do come and experience it for yourself. Will you agree with the Adjudicators' decisions?!

Thank you and I look forward to welcoming you to:

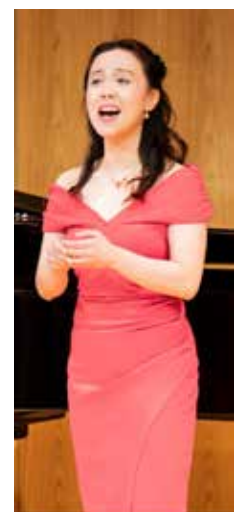
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**Thursday May 29th – Sunday June 1st, 2025**

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 COMPETITION  
 MAY 29 - JUNE 1, 2025





Tomas Siroky.

# IT'S a musical first – and it's happening here in Eastbourne

**THE Bohemian Symphony Orchestra Prague from the Czech Republic has performed all over the world but never in England – until now.**

By **Peter Lindsey**

**The 20-strong group is coming to the UK for the first time ever on April 13th for a special performance in Eastbourne.**

Tomas Siroky – a piano tuner and technician who lives in Eastbourne and works at *Bonnors Piano Centre* – is now the UK director for the Orchestra. He's very excited about the *Hollywood in Eastbourne* concert at *St Saviour's Church* in Eastbourne Town Centre.

Tomas plays double bass. He moved to England in 2013, well Hastings at first, and he couldn't speak any of the language at the time.

He said: "It was just a feeling to come and live here and Hastings had and still has a very good reputation for its local music scene.

"Before then, when I was younger, I had no real ambition, I just wanted to play music. Practice, practice and practice is the key – sometimes for six to eight hours a day – it was like a real job on its own.

"The Orchestra performs in countries including China, Japan, Germany, Switzerland and Austria and has around 70 members in total. Around 20 will be coming to Eastbourne."

The evening is described as 'a spectacular journey through the greatest film scores of Hollywood.' It promises to be an unforgettable evening of film music.

The Orchestra will perform stunning scores from legendary films like *Harry Potter*, *Mission Impossible*, *Pearl Harbor*, and *Top Gun: Maverick*.

The concert will be dominated by the melodies of the biggest Hollywood blockbusters, including beloved classics like *Once Upon a Time in the West*, *Forrest Gump*, *Twilight Saga*, *Armageddon*, *Love Actually*, and *Frozen*.

You'll also hear timeless music from the romantic comedy *Bridget Jones's Diary*, as well as unforgettable tunes from recent hits such as *Deadpool* starring Ryan Reynolds and the poignant song *Speechless* from *Disney's Aladdin*.

This 90-minute concert will take you on a musical journey through cinema's greatest hits, from timeless classics to modern blockbusters.

Tomas said: "The Orchestra was founded by Martin Sanda, and he's still the conductor now after 20 years. He is a great inspiration to us all.

"Please come and support us, we cannot wait to perform in front of hopefully a packed house at the wonderful church."

The *Bohemian Symphony Orchestra Prague* is recognized for its exceptional artistry and dedication to musical excellence. Its performances showcase outstanding sound quality and stylistic precision, allowing it to excel in a diverse symphonic repertoire.

The Orchestra has achieved notable success through collaborations and tours with legendary artists and bands, including Deep Purple, Nazareth, Europe, Alice Cooper, Toto, Survivor, Foreigner, Journey, Bonnie Tyler, Uriah Heep, Sabaton, José Carreras, Sarah Brightman, Vanessa Mae, Michael Bublé, 2Cellos, and The Tenors.

To book your tickets to this fantastic event, please visit:

[www.bsop.eu/eventbrite](http://www.bsop.eu/eventbrite)

**Sunday 13th April 2025 at 19:30**  
**St Saviour's Church**  
**South Street, Eastbourne**  
**BN21 4UT**  
[www.bsop.eu](http://www.bsop.eu)





# Green and pleasant

**I'M sure readers will be well aware that the 2025 open garden season gets off to a wonderful bejewelled start from late January onwards, with the *National Garden Scheme's Snowdrop and Spring Flower* gardens. From swathes of snowy white blooms to colourful mixtures of aconites, hellebores, iris and crocus under early blossom there is a garden visit to lift your spirits as the year begins. Check out the two in East Sussex below, with 5 Whitemans Close pictured in header.**

By **Geoff Stonebanks**

**This month we will start to see the with bulbs appearing and wildlife waking up as day length and temperatures increase. There're will be plenty to do indoors this month too, making preparations for the season ahead. Outdoors, as the garden comes to life again, it will be time to prune some shrubs and climbers.**

## National Garden Scheme

As I mentioned above, there are two lovely gardens to visit this month in East Sussex as part of the scheme's early openers. First up is 5 Whitemans Close in Cuckfield which will be open for pre booked visitors only on Saturday 1st, Monday 3rd, Tuesday 4th, Wednesday

5th, Tuesday 11th, Wednesday 12th, Friday 14th and Saturday 15th February from 11:00am to 3:30pm with entry £8.50, inclusive of teas. Please phone **01444 473520** or email **shirley.carmanmartin@ngs.org.uk** for information & booking.

This garden shows that winter need not be dull, as there is much to see and enjoy in the depths of winter. See a collection of many single and double snowdrops, hellebores, bulbs and other winter treasures, some not widely known. It is a sheltered garden and there will be flowers to enjoy. Check out the enormous *Daphne bholua* that scents the garden for weeks on end in February.

Next up is the ever-popular *Pembury House* in Ditchling Road, Clayton which will open every Thursday and

Friday from 13th February to 7th March from 10:30am to 3:30pm with entry £12 and home-made teas included. Pre-booking is essential again, so please visit **www.ngs.org.uk** for all the details. There will be timed slots at 10:30am & 2:00pm available.

Depending on the vagaries of the season, hellebores and snowdrops are at their best in February and March. This is a country garden, tidy but not manicured. A number of winding paths give a choice of walks through three acres of garden, which is in and enjoys views of the *South Downs National Park*. Please wear suitable footwear and bring along macs and winter woollies. Plants for sale and ideally, cash preferred.

## Camelias

February is the month the patio at the back of my house comes alive with beautiful camelias. Though roses top the charts for romance, these are equally dreamy flowers that bloom now! The ruffled flowers could easily be mistaken for a rose, if it weren't for the glossy, deep bottle-green foliage that makes it worth growing as a stand-alone evergreen shrub all year round. The blooms are particularly appealing and generally last through to March. I've got six shrubs in both pink and white that really liven up the outlook at this time of the year. They thrive in acidic soil, so benefit from being in a container or raised bed with other acid loving plants and shrubs. They can survive in neutral soil if needed too. Raised beds, made from old railway sleepers, work really well. Make sure you fill the beds with good ericaceous potting compost and if you plan to top off, use bark chippings. Other plants that work well with them are native primroses and pulmonarias

which finish off the woodland look.

## Trimming shrubs and hedges

As the garden comes to life again, it's time to consider pruning shrubs and climbers as well as evergreen hedges. I've got many low trimmed hedges and divisions between my various garden rooms, so have to trim fairly regularly to keep them as I want them. They were extensively trimmed back last month but in the coming weeks, as it warms up and spring appears they will start to show signs that they need to be trimmed back again. Remember that if you usually have birds nesting in your hedges, it is vital to do what you have to do now, before they start making their nests this year, meaning you will cause much disturbance to them. Also, keep leaving food out for them, to help them through the cold spells.

## Border checks

While the borders are still a bit sparse, it is a good time to see what needs to be done, either removing a plant or two, completely or transplanting it to another area of the garden. It is always useful to perhaps make notes, through the Summer, when the garden is looking its best, to remind you what plants are not performing as well as you would like, and then take action to deal with it now.

Read more of Geoff's garden at: **[www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk](http://www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk)**

Geoff is a multi-award-winning garden owner, garden writer & broadcaster. Driftwood has appeared twice 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 two Royal Garden Parties, in 2018 and 2023. Read the many published features on the garden in national, local and worldwide media, including TV.

# PROTECTING YOUR FAMILY'S INHERITANCE

Most people hope that their estate will pass on to their loved ones eventually. But this will not happen for many unless careful arrangements have been made to protect their assets from being taken towards the end of their life to pay for care home fees.

The solution to help protect your estate is a Will incorporating a Property Protection Trust (PPT). A testamentary PPT can only be executed whilst both partners remain alive. Upon death of the first partner, their Will specifies that their share of the property is placed into trust and names the ultimate beneficiary of this share, normally the children of the deceased.

The surviving partner, under the terms of the Trust, has the unequivocal right to remain living in the property for the rest of their life.

On the death of the second partner the Trust comes to an end and the property passes to the beneficiaries. As the surviving partner does not own the deceased's share of the property it is fully protected for the beneficiaries, so if the

surviving partner requires care, or even remarries, this share of the children's inheritance is protected.

This last point can be of particular interest to couples who have come together but have children from different partners. A PPT can help each person in a relationship ensure that their children inherit their share of the property, while giving their surviving partner the ability to live in the property for the rest of their life.

If the surviving partner wants to move to another property they can still sell the property and the proceeds be used to purchase a new property; the terms of the trust remain over the new property.



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