

12/25

**Issue 066**December 2025

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A Pantomime to Keep you **Hooked this Christmas!** See page 38

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





# The end of a successful year at Bournefree

IT doesn't seem possible but here we are in December and Christmas just around the corner.

By Peter Lindsey

It's a wonderful time for many, full of joy and happiness, but it can also be a challenging few weeks for others.

Here at *Bournefree* we are celebrating a bumper December issue, while also busy completing January's issue before the festive break.

And what a year it has been for us. At the start of 2025, we were looking forward to a year of solid progress and development.

What we have achieved is so much more. Our prime aim has been to increase our level of community engagement.

We do this in two ways — first, by being out and about in the community meeting different groups and being involved in success stories such as Eastbourne Youth Radio.

Second, by our level of engagement with local people, and our social media plays a huge role in that. Some of our *Facebook* posts are viewed by more than 250,000 people — admittedly not all local but the engagement is very high.

And that's why in the New Year we will be launching a new weekly Newsletter on *Substack*, an exciting new development for *Bournefree*. See page 8 for more details.

Eastbourne is lucky to have two pantos each Christmas — *Peter Pan* is at the *Devonshire Park* until January 11th. Chris Jordan and his team always deliver a fun, engaging panto.

The Hippodrome, meanwhile, is staging Sleeping Beauty, running until January 4th.

It's a key time for our local traders as well — many have been affected by the works in *Victoria Place*, and more recent in Terminus Road. Both are examples of real investment in our town but the short term effects have been detrimental for many of the businesses.

Shop local if you can — that must always be the key message.

And we do have more and better shops — *The Beacon* has celebrated a number of openings recently, and let's hope that trend continues.

Langney Shopping Centre is always popular with many of us, if only for the free parking, but there's so much to enjoy there as well.

From the *Bournefree* team, we want to wish everyone a safe and happy festive period.

Happy Christmas!

#### 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.

Gail and Harry are here to help you with your marketing and to raise awareness of what you do.



gail@bournefreemag.co.uk 01323 430303



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## Eastbourne Coaches now Touring the UK

EASTBOURNE Coaches was launched in May 2023 by a local family man Julian Ledger, who has many years of experience within the transport sector.

By Gail McKay

Antony Burkhill their Transport Manager joined the team at this time, he has many years of Coach Operating experience. Eastbourne Coaches launched with 2 drivers and have since grown to 7 drivers, all of which hold enhanced DBS certificates.

Since 2023 Eastbourne Coaches have been working with schools, colleges, language schools, private companies / businesses, sports clubs, charities for all their Private Hire requirements and they have also supported other coach operators.

#### Luxury

The fleet ranges from 16-61 seat coaches, the larger luxury coaches all have toilets, air conditioning and light refreshments. They took delivery in May 2025 of a brand new Yutong coach which is *PSVAR* (wheelchair accessible).

#### New office

Moving into 2026 Eastbourne
Coaches are launching their new UK
Tour Holiday Programme, offering
their customers a pickup from their
front door at home, online bookings
and card transactions. They will
be opening the front door of their
new office at 3 Courtlands Road,
Eastbourne from January so their
customers can drop in to chat through
their coach holiday requirements.

Joining the team full time from January is Julian's wife Tracey who has previously had a background in travel, she will be looking forward to meeting new customers and helping them with their 2026 or 2027 holiday.

#### Cream tea and prize draw

Come along and join them for a cream tea and the chance of winning a £200 holiday discount voucher in a prize draw. Seats will be limited so please email Tracey your name, address and contact number in order to confirm your attendance and to be entered into the prize draw on sales@eastbournecoaches.co.uk or by calling 01323 808080.

Eastbourne Coaches are members of the Road Haulage Association, Confederation of Passenger Transport and are bonded by British Coach Holidays & ABTOT (The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited) offering financial protection for their customers. We are also members of the Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce.

#### What their customers say:

"When it comes to creating memorable experiences for our international students, *Eastbourne Coaches* has been an exceptional partner for *East Sussex College*.

"Their reliability is outstanding — coaches arrive on time, every time, which makes planning stress-free for our team and students.

"On top of that, they offer excellent value for money without compromising on comfort or quality.





Their modern, well-maintained coaches give our students a positive first impression of the UK and make every trip a pleasure.

"Thank you, Eastbourne Coaches, for helping us deliver unforgettable experiences for our students!"

#### **Brochure launch**

On Wednesday January 21st, Eastbourne Coaches will be holding a new brochure launch at The Hotel Cumberland on Grand Parade. The afternoon starts at 3pm and is giving the opportunity of coming along to meet the team and to get more of an insight into what their programme offering will be.







# Eastbourne Youth Radio celebrates 25 years on-air

YOUNG people from local schools and colleges, together with more than 40 supporting organisations, took to the airwaves last week on *Eastbourne Youth Radio (EYR)* for the 25th annual broadcast.

By Peter Lindsey

This 77-hour extravaganza, broadcast on 87.7fm, was organised by the Eastbourne Education Business Partnership in association with East Sussex College.

Particular thanks to lead sponsor VACGEN and also to Eastbourne and Lewes Community Safety Partnership for their additional funding.

#### **EYR** alumni

To mark 25 years of broadcasting — this year saw a number of past EYR alumni back in the studios recounting their career journeys and achievements in the fields of radio broadcasting, TV, journalism and film — including one BAFTA!

Students aged 5-19 from local schools and colleges planned, created and presented an exciting mix of music, live performances, interviews, competitions and features.

The programmes were broadcast from the college studios in Eastbourne supported by their creative media students who also delivered their own programmes. You can still 'Listen Back' via **www.eyr.org.uk** and see images from the broadcast.

As well as the individual student shows, EYR broadcast the 'Answer Back' panel show kindly hosted by The Cavendish School and sponsored by Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce & EDEAL. A guest panel of politicians and prominent community figures debated topical issues of the day.

A second panel show, 'Meet the Media', hosted and sponsored by East Sussex College, brought together former EYR alumni, now working in TV, journalism, radio and film, who shared their career experiences with the student audience.

#### **Fantastic support**

A special hospitality tea, supported by *Children With Cancer Fund*, at the college was attended by The Worshipful the Mayor of Eastbourne, Cllr Margaret Bannister, and the Deputy Lord-Lieutenant Tim Cobb to recognise the support that local

businesses, organisations and dignitaries had given to the project this year.

#### Handing over the reins

The event was also an opportunity to mark the retirement of Tim Sorensen, Programme Manager, who has been at the forefront of all the amazing projects undertaken by the Eastbourne EBP for 30 years, and also of Trustee Mel Hobbs, who is also stepping down at the end of this year, and who has too made a significant contribution over 20 years of being on the Board.

Tim Sorensen, Eastbourne EBP Programme Manager, said: "EYR would not be possible without the generous support and involvement of our schools, colleges, community organisations and businesses. A massive thank you to them for helping to make EYR such a continuing success. Once again, we were treated to a fantastic schedule of programme features and live performances. It was great to see everyone coming away very proud and excited after taking part."

#### Next year and beyond

Tim adds: "Discussions are already underway for the next annual broadcast from 18th-20th November 2026. In the meantime, *Eastbourne EBP* is counting down to the next employability and skills event, *The BIG Futures Show*, organised in association with *Eastbourne Borough Council* on 28th April next year".





To find out more about Eastbourne Education Business Partnership and how you can get involved, please email Mina O'Brien, new EBP Programme Manager at mina.obrien@eastbourneebp.org.uk





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## Local voices: community ideas drive next steps

NEIGHBOURHOOD and Youth Board workshops inspire £10,000-per-ward investment in community-led projects.

By Joanne Rogers

Residents and young people across Eastbourne have come together through a series of Neighbourhood and youth workshops hosted by the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board (ENB) and local councillors. The ideas shared are now shaping the town's next wave of local investment, with £10,000 allocated to every ward to kick-start the projects that matter most to local people.

Residents and young people took part in the recent sessions, offering practical ideas to improve their streets, parks, and local facilities. Each event was rooted in *ENB's* guiding principle: listen first, act locally. The workshops built on Eastbourne's strong volunteer spirit, giving people of all ages the chance to co-design visible improvements for their neighbourhoods, and bring communities together to share bigger ideas.

#### Community ideas taking root

From wildflower verges and safer road crossings to youth clubs, repair cafés, and community events, residents' suggestions reflect Eastbourne's creativity and concern for the environment. Among the most popular priorities were:

- Public realm greening and planting, including community gardens and pollinator-friendly spaces.
- Active travel and accessibility upgrades such as safer crossings and improved walking and cycling routes.
- Youth and family projects, creating inter-generational activities, outdoor learning spaces, and youth pop-ups.
- Community hubs and wellbeing spaces, offering shared facilities, repair cafés, and food-sharing initiatives.
- Safety and pride-in-place efforts, including improved and local cleanup campaigns, bins and lighting.

Each of these themes connects to the *ENB's* long-term mission of helping Eastbourne to thrive by building stronger communities and empowering local people.

#### Young voices leading the way

The first ENB Youth Board, made up of young people from local schools met alongside the ward workshops to share their own ideas for Eastbourne's future. Many of their priorities echoed adult residents' concerns — cleaner, greener spaces, better lighting, and safer routes - but the young people also introduced fresh thinking around creativity, inclusion, and climate action.

Youth Board members called for informal hang-out spaces and caféstyle hubs, more accessible sports and recreation areas, and new opportunities to learn outdoors. They also placed strong emphasis on mental health and inclusion, suggesting safe



## We are **Eastbourne**

Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board

places spaces for girls, mindfulness and anti-racism campaigns, and encouraged greater youth involvement in local decision-making.

One standout idea was a 'Beach School' programme, combining opportunities to learn how to swim safely in the sea with coastal and environmental education, and local career pathways in tourism and sustainability.

#### A community-led approach

Richard Garland, Chair of the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board, said: "We're proud to be an independent, volunteer-led board - rooted in our community. The £10,000-per-ward investment is just the start of putting local ideas into action and this is what local decision-making should look like: transparent, fair, and built on real conversations. I am especially delighted that Eastbourne's young people have shown they're part of the solution. Their ideas about the environment, wellbeing, and community spaces have strengthened our town-wide plan."

#### **Next steps**

The *ENB* will now work with residents, young people, and community partners to prioritise and deliver the first round of local investments in early 2026. It will publish updates on how its £10,000 allocation in each ward will be spent.

Residents and young people are encouraged to continue to share their ideas and stay involved via the ENB website at:

https://weareeastbourne.org.uk











## \*\*Christmas is Coming to Eastbourne! 🔆

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas in Eastbourne — and the team at Your Eastbourne BID are working hard to make this festive season one to remember.

From twinkling lights and community carols to festive markets and family fun, there's something for everyone to enjoy across the town centre this Christmas.

•••••

Here's what's coming up:

#### Saturday 29th November -**Christmas Lights Switch-On** Bankers Corner, from 12noon

Join us at Bankers Corner for an afternoon packed with live music, street entertainment, and festive stalls — all leading up to the spectacular Christmas Lights Switch-On Parade at 6pm.

The parade will leave the Enterprise Centre at 6pm and make its way to Bankers Corner, where Santa, the Christmas Light Competition winner, the BID team, and Lightning Fibre will help light up Eastbourne at 6.30pm.

#### Friday 5th December -Little Chelsea Fun & Festive Fireworks 3.30pm - 8.30pm

.....

Little Chelsea comes alive for one of Eastbourne's most loved Christmas traditions! Enjoy late-night shopping, street performers, music, and festive cheer — all culminating in a spectacular fireworks display at 8pm.

There'll be plenty of opportunities to get involved, with competitions, family activities, and the perfect chance to discover the charm of Eastbourne's

#### Saturday 13th December -**Eastbourne's First Christmas Farmers Market**

Towner Gallery, 9.30am - 1pm

Celebrate local this season at Eastbourne's first-ever Christmas Farmers Market! Following the success of our regular markets — now the largest in East Sussex - we're going festive with a special edition filled with local produce, artisan gifts, and Christmas treats, and with the Towner Gallery showing a festive family favourite film at the cinema!

••••••

(If the weather turns windy, don't worry we'll move indoors so the fun can continue!)

#### Saturday 20th December -**Community Christmas Carols** Bankers Corner, 12pm - 6pm

Join us for a heartwarming afternoon of festive music and community spirit at Bankers Corner.

From 12pm to 3pm, enjoy performances from the Salvation Army, local singers, and musicians - before Printers Playhouse takes over with a community choir for a big festive singalong from 3pm onwards.

.....

#### **Plus! The Peter Pan Festive Trail**

This year, young adventurers (and the young at heart!) can join Peter Pan, Tinkerbell, and Wendy on a magical quest around town to help find the ten missing pages of Peter's book. Pick up a trail map and follow the clues for a sprinkle of festive fun and maybe even a prize at the end!

So wrap up warm, bring the family, and make your Christmas in Eastbourne truly unforgettable.

#### Follow Your Eastbourne BID on social media for all the latest festive updates

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#### Cali Fusion

Welcome to Cali Fusion, where flavours from California, Mexico, and Asia come together in one unforgettable menu. From handcrafted Californian pizzas topped with fresh ingredients to zesty Mexican classics and bold Asian-inspired dishes, every bite is designed to excite your taste buds.

Whether you're craving a slice, a taco, or noodles with a twist, Cali Fusion brings global

flavours straight to vour table - fresh. vibrant, and full of Cali vibes

"Our mission is to bring Californian style to our little seafront town.

Check them out at 53 South Street.



#### Driven by business, funded by business

Your Eastbourne BID is independently funded by town centre businesses to support and promote our area. We've organised events like the Little Chelsea Festive 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.

Don't forget, the BID has launched a monthly newsletter that promises exclusive updates, hidden gems and early access to special offers. It's an exciting way for residents and visitors alike to stay connected to everything happening in town, so please do sign up by scanning the QR code.







THE New Year will see the exciting expansion of what the *Bournefree* team offer with a new weekly 'Bournefree Newsletter'.

By Peter Lindsey

New in-depth stories
It will be full of different and
exciting stories, interviews, indepth features, current events
and much, much more.

You will be able to find it on the Bournefree Newsletter Substack page.

To register for free visit: https://substack.com/@bournefreemag?

Once you are registered, the Newsletter will pop into your inbox every Friday morning at 8am bringing you local news directly to you. **Expanding our service** 

Andy Thomas, *Bournefree's* owner, said: "We are always looking at new and exciting ways to expand what we offer at our publishing centre and launching a community network service via Substack, we feel, is the way to go.

"Substack is a fantastic publishing app which is now the choice of writers, publishers and creators who want to build and inform their audiences.

#### Unique editorial voice

"With the printing of 12,000 copies every month, an amazingly popular website, 'Bournefree Live', huge social media presence, including Facebook and LinkedIn, 'The 'Bournefree Newsletter' will serve as a unique editorial voice, adding new depth to the Bournefree brand.

If you would like to receive the 'Bournefree Newsletter' every week, then please register now and the Newsletter will pop into your inbox every Friday morning at 8am bringing local news directly to you.







## You Raise Me Up continues to support families

Offering emotional & mental health support to families that have lost a young adult between the ages of 16 & 25.

By Simon Cosham

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you to everyone for their support in 2025 and we will announce our event plans early next year.

We are delighted to confirm our annual Golf Day for next year. Friday 18th September 2026 with more details to follow.

It was a huge success last year, we raised £9,000, and we're looking forward to another great day of golf with our terrific supporters.

December gathering Friday 5th December 2025 from 7 to 9pm at Eastbourne Rugby Club.

We know how tough Christmas can be, whether it's your first without them or one of many.

It's a gentle space to pause, remember and celebrate those we love and lost. Families and friends old and new are welcome. There will be tea, coffee, light nibbles and mince pies. Charity Founder Fraser Brooks will be joining us on the night to give a warm welcome.

 ${\sf RSVP:} \ \textbf{lucie@youraisemeup.co.uk}$ 

#### 12 Days of Christmas auction

Also on the 1st December our online Auction, the 12 Days Of Christmas, goes live at 6am until 11:59pm on the 12th December.

### www.jumblebee.co.uk/ youraisemeup 12daysofchristmasonlineauction2

to see if there is anything you would like to bid on once it opens — please be aware that some items may change or no longer be available once it goes live.



#### **Christmas Jumper Day**

Finally we are encouraging anyone that would like to take part in our *Christmas Jumper Day* on Friday 13th December. **info@yourasiemeup.co.uk** 





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# The joys of the game

THE real joy of running *Students of the Game* is making someone's day.

By Joe Walton

For much of the year that joy comes from seeing a customer's face light up when they discover a football shirt they wore as a child, or a programme that brings back memories of precious afternoons spent with friends and family at the football.

There's nothing quite like helping people reconnect with moments that mean so much to them.

As Christmas approaches, that joy shifts a little. Now, it's all about helping customers find that perfect gift for the sports fan in their life.

Our job is to make the gift-buying process as easy and enjoyable as possible. Whether you're searching for a one-of-a-kind present or a Secret Santa gift, our shelves and rails are packed with options for every budget.

One of our favourite additions this year is our collaboration with *Pitch to Pouch*. These stunning crossbody bags and coin purses—made from



football kits that were otherwise destined for landfill—will take a proud place around Christmas trees in Eastbourne and beyond.

Christmas is also when our exclusive, handmade pieces of *Framed Subbuteo* really come into their own. The combination of nostalgia and design really hits the sweet spot for football gifts.

Alongside these, you'll find our everevolving range of vintage football shirts, jumpers and jackets; eyecatching coasters and beer mat sets available at a great price; and one-off pieces of memorabilia.

So whether you're wandering through Little Chelsea or heading straight to our door, let's make this Christmas about thoughtful gifts, sporting style, and supporting local business.

Pop in and see us at the top of South Street. We're always happy to help you find something special.

Students of the Game 3 South Street BN21 4UJ studentsofthegame.co.uk



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## Alice Court topping out

EASTBOURNE'S newest care home, *Alice Court*, has marked a major milestone with a celebratory topping out ceremony, signalling the completion of construction for the state-of-the-art residential, dementia and respite care home.

By Lucy Hennessy

The Mayor of Eastbourne joined the team to commemorate the occasion, helping to plant a locally sourced crab apple tree in the home's landscaped gardens. The symbolic gesture reflects the growth and future of Alice Court as a vibrant part of the local community.

Set to welcome residents from Monday, 3rd November, *Alice Court* offers 70 en-suite bedrooms, creating a welcoming environment where people feel truly at home. A cinema room, salon, and library make up the home, along with a Well-being Programme and diverse activities calendar. A dedicated minibus will

also take residents on regular outings to explore Eastbourne and beyond.

Michelle Love-Patel, General Manager at Alice Court, shared her pride in the day's celebrations, "Today marks a huge milestone for Alice Court. We are planting a tree to symbolise the completion of our building and to recognise the dedication of everyone involved."

The Mayor of Eastbourne added,
"The home has wonderful views
across Eastbourne and is well thought
out, with beautifully designed rooms.
I look forward to being invited again
to future events."

Open weekend is on Saturday 22nd and Sunday 23rd November, 10am



Michelle Love-Patel, Home Manager at Alice Court, planting a crab apple tree at the topping out ceremony with the Mayor of Eastbourne.

to 3pm. Visitors can enjoy live entertainment, guided tours and a glass of bubbly.

For more information or to book a tour, please visit **www.averyhealthcare.co.uk** 

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## Lightning Fibre make it three

FULL Fibre Broadband network operator and ISP Lightning Fibre achieves prestigious industry award hat-trick.

By Peter Lindsey

Lightning Fibre, the full fibre broadband network operator and Internet Service Provider (ISP), has secured a remarkable industry award hat-trick at the annual Internet Service Providers' Association (ISPA) Awards.

The ISPA Awards shine a spotlight on the organisations and individuals driving the UK's digital future, recognising providers for their passion, innovation, and commitment. *Lightning Fibre* was among the night's big winners, taking home multiple accolades.

### **Double win at the ISPA Awards** *Lightning Fibre* scooped two coveted awards at the ceremony:

- Best Consumer ISP Award (fewer than 100,000 customers).
- Best Customer Experience Award.



The Best Consumer ISP Award is aimed at challenger brands offering gigabit-capable fibre services. The judging process considers overall service levels, packages, performance, customer satisfaction, value, fair pricing, and support for vulnerable customers, as well as publicly available data from sources like Ofcom and Trustpilot.

Lightning Fibre's win demonstrates significant improvement in customer experience and strong customer base growth over the past 12 months.

#### Three years of consecutive excellence

The 2025 win marks the third consecutive year *Lightning Fibre* has secured the top prize in this category, solidifying its commitment to service excellence:

- **Best Consumer ISP** (under 100,000 customers) 2025 Winner.
- Best Consumer ISP (under 100.000 customers) 2024 Winner.
- Best Consumer ISP (under 50,000 customers) 2023 Winner.

Visit: www.LightningFibre.co.uk



# The very best food...and all homemade

AEGEA Restaurant has opened in Sovereign Harbour – offering the very best homemade Turkish food.

By Peter Lindsey

It is a top quality Turkish restaurant, also offering FREE delivery across Eastbourne.

Serhat, Yasin and Sertac have come together to serve the very best –

the chef has 20 years experience working in a top Mayfair restaurant.

This is why you must try Aegea Restaurant:

- The team has many years of experience of running the very best restaurants.
- It's the very best authentic
   Turkish food



- Yes, everything is homemade.
- And free delivery with their own driver.

The kebabs are the best, and all fish is sourced from local suppliers.

Come and try *Aegea Restaurant* – you won't regret it. It has beautiful interiors too.



Open noon until 9pm Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday. Noon until 11pm Friday and Saturday.

Caters for parties plus a super festive menu for December.

01323 810005 info@aegearestaurant.co.uk www.aegearestaurant.co.uk





# A Fresh Taste of Culinary Excellence!

Indulge in a first-class dining experience at Kings Restaurant. The student-run restaurant, located in the Kings Building of East Sussex College in Eastbourne, is where budding culinary and hospitality professionals serve up quality, creativity and value.

Open to the public on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays during term time, the restaurant offers a unique experience each day. Wednesdays feature casual dining by first-year students, Thursdays offer a Table d'hôte menu from Level 2 students, and Fridays showcase refined dining by Level 3 students. The Kings Coffee Shop, open Wednesday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM, serves barista-style drinks made with locally roasted Tigermoth beans.

Kings Restaurant, Kings Building, East Sussex College Cross Levels Way, Eastbourne, BN21 2UF

#### Why dine at Kings Restaurant?



Kings offers a unique combination of student learning and a professional restaurant setting.

Our restaurant managers, Oliver Zecchin and Kate Harris, oversee the food and beverage provision and front-of-house service, ensuring every guest enjoys a warm, professional welcome. In the kitchen, students are guided by our highly skilled chefs – Andy Barker and Patrick Nzeli – who share their expertise and passion to develop the next generation of culinary talent.

The result is a restaurant that delivers seasonal, locally sourced, beautifully prepared food with service that reflects the very best in hospitality. Whether you're joining us for lunch or a special event, you'll find an experience that's hard to match for both quality and value.

#### **Special Events**

Kings Restaurant also hosts a range of seasonal and themed events, including our ever-popular Christmas celebrations.

We're proud to collaborate with leading industry professionals, such as Hrvoje Loncarvic (Executive Head Chef, The Grand Hotel Eastbourne), Charlie Simmons (Senior Sous Chef, Wiston Wine Estate), and Jake Cranch (Restaurant Manager, Rathfinny Wine Estate), who bring their expertise and inspiration to our students and events.

#### Attention to detail

A focus on quality and fine attention to detail in the preparation and presentation of fine dishes makes Kings stand out from the crowd. As a training restaurant, diners also benefit from wallet-friendly prices. You will find it hard to find equal value and quality elsewhere.





#### **BOOK YOUR TABLE**

Reservations: kings@escg.ac.uk
Voicemail: 030 300 38315
Bookings and event details:
www.escg.ac.uk/shops-services/kings-restaurant

#### **FOLLOW US**

Keep up to date with the latest news and follow us on social media! @ESCGKingsRestaurant @WeAreESCG



## Food fit for a King at East Sussex College

TWO of the Bournefree team had a stunning lunch at Kings Restaurant at East Sussex College, on Kings Drive.

By Peter Lindsey

See the opposite page for their advert.

Ashley Chapman, the marketing manager, explained to Gail and Peter how the students learn to cook and serve in a completely professional environment.

The standard of food was incredible. And they serve wine.

It's open for lunch Wednesday – Friday. 11:45am, last orders 12:45pm.

To book, go to www.escg.ac.uk/ shops-services/kings-restaurant







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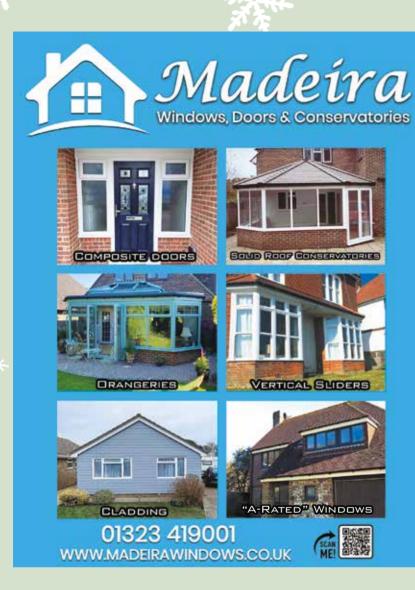






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To find out more about us, visit our website: www.cuckmerebuses.org.uk If you're ready to join our team of volunteers, we would love to hear from you!

Give us a call on **01323 870920** or email us at volunteer@cuckmerebuses.org.uk



## Sponsor a light for a loved one at Christmas

THE annual *Tree of Light* service is taking place outside the *Towner* on Sunday December 14th at 4pm.

By Peter Lindsey

It's a very special event for many - it's a time to come together and remember loved ones at what can be a challenging time for many at Christmas. Everyone is welcome.

The *Tree of Light* is organised by Eastbourne AM Rotary Club and The Rotary Club of Eastbourne, with the support of Hailsham Rotary Club.

Last year, donations received from the public sponsoring a light for a loved one, as well as valuable sponsorship from local businesses, helped raise £6,400.

Rotarian Melanie Adams said: "It's a very special Tree for Eastbourne, and this is the 27th year we have done this.

"Christmas can be a tough time for many and this is a way of remembering people close to us who may have passed away.

"We have an upbeat service inside the Congress Theatre with live

music and readings. It's always well supported, and we thank the public for coming along in such large numbers each year."

Dedications are put into a book situated at the Eastbourne Library as well as being visible on the website.

www.eastbournetreeoflight.co.uk



## Alex fundraises for the DGH

TV star Alex Polizzi has been supporting *The Friends of Eastbourne Hospital* – much to the delight of its President Sandy Boyce-Sharpe.

By Peter Lindsey

They are both pictured at *The Hydro Hotel* at a fundraising lunch when Alex — famous for *The Hotel Inspector* series — was guest speaker.

The Friends — such an important charity — has teamed up with The Hydro Hotel for a series of lunches, where they will receive a donation from every ticket sold.



Here are some upcoming dates: **Tuesday December 16th** — **Speakers Luncheon** with guest speaker Ian Haggie Exploring Wines of South Africa.

**Tuesday February 5th — Speakers Luncheon** with the one and only Lady Crabtree.

Tickets are £40 - a donation of each ticket goes to *The Friends*.

Sandy said: "Alex was a pure delight, it was a total sell-out, and I want to thank everyone who supported the event.

"Not to disappoint those unable to get tickets, Alex will lunch again with us on 15th January. We look forward to welcoming old and new friends to our monthly lunches."

Bookings: events@hydrohotel.com



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## Kate and Jerry's fond farewell to Old Town library

"WE have done everything we possibly could - now we are passing it onto others, and it's in good hands."

By Peter Lindsey

That's Kate and Jerry Daly, who have been at the helm of Old Town Community Library for the past ten years. They've made the volunteer-run library into a huge success.

#### Services to the community

The peak of their success was Kate deservedly receiving her BEM in The New Year Honours List for 2025 for services to the community - so richly deserved.



Kate said: "We have retired partly due to health issues but also because we feel that it's the right time to do so.

"The library is now the best that it has ever been, it is very secure now, and we have done everything we possibly could."

Jerry added: "We have seen the library win awards, it's had television exposure, and the number of users has grown. There's now about 130 customers each week, which is great."

The Old Town Community Library, closed in 2002 by East Sussex

County Council to save money, 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.

#### In demand

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

The rest is history...

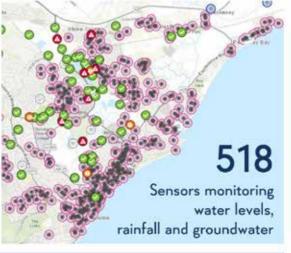












The story so far ..... find out more at blueheart.org.uk

## 2,000th donation to families in need

BABY Bank & Beyond CIC has marked an incredible milestone – the delivery of its 2,000th bundle of essential baby and children's items to local families since it first began supporting the community in 2023.

By Peter Lindsey

Run entirely by volunteers, the not-for-profit community interest company collects, quality-checks and redistributes pre-loved and new items such as clothing, prams, cots, bedding, toys and toiletries to families across South Wealden, Eastbourne, Lewes and The Hayens.

Each carefully packed bundle is tailored to the child's age and needs, helping local parents and carers who are struggling to provide the basics — from newborn starter packs to schoolage clothing bundles.

"When we first started, we never imagined the demand would grow so

quickly," said Nicky Walker, Director of Baby Bank & Beyond CIC.

"Reaching our 2,000th bundle shows both the incredible generosity of our community and sadly, the ongoing need for practical support. Behind every number is a child who now has warm clothes to wear or a safe cot to sleep in — that's what keeps us doing what we do."

Donations come from local families and are distributed through referrals from professionals such as health visitors, social workers and midwives — and also — unlike many other baby banks — directly from families themselves.



"We're proud to serve our local area and I'm deeply grateful to our hard working volunteers and everyone who's donated to us" added Nicky. "Every coat, every pram, every bundle makes a difference."

For more information or to offer support, please email

Nicky@babybankbeyond.org







## Wheely Big Vehicle Rally

TAKING place on 7th December, *Eastbourne Morrisons* is delighted to announce the return of their annual *Wheely Big Vehicle Rally*, now in its fourth year.

By Kim Hatcher-Davies

All proceeds from this festive community event will go to St Wilfrid's Hospice and Marie Curie.

The rally will run from 5:30pm to 8:00pm, starting in the *Eastbourne Morrisons* car park. From there, the route will travel through Hampden Park and the Langney area, continue along the seafront to the *Memorial Roundabout*, and loop back through key Eastbourne locations.

A free Santa's Grotto will be open from 5:30pm, where visitors can make voluntary donations. All participating vehicles will be decorated in festive style, adding to the Christmas atmosphere.

#### **Full route:**

Morrisons → The Drove →
Sovereign Centre roundabout
→ past The Cavendish Hotel
→ along the seafront past the
War Memorial → back down the
seafront → St Anthony's Avenue
→ past Langney Shopping
Centre → back past Morrisons →
Broadwater Road (Sainsbury's)

→ past the DGH Hospital → Kings Drive → Decoy Drive → over the railway line → returning to Morrisons car park.

Prizes will be awarded for the bestdressed vehicle and best-dressed driver.

As Morrisons Community Champion, I would like to thank Platinum sponsors *Balfour Beatty* and Gold sponsors *Coda Pharmacy*.





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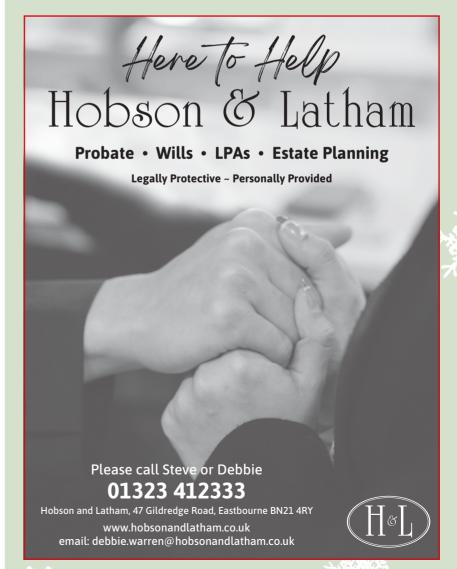
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#### Why join your Chamber of Commerce?

The Eastbourne unLtd Chamber of Commerce supports local businesses by providing advice, networking, promotion, and advocacy to manage rising costs and improve the business environment.

Overhead management support: The Chamber offers independent advice to help businesses manage increasing wage bills, National Insurance, interest rates, and material costs.

Significant local investment: Over £120 million has been secured for Eastbourne, including £19.8 million for levelling up and town improvements, £20 million for neighbourhood enhancements, £70 million for A27 road upgrades, and other funding for local initiatives like the rough sleeper outreach and Victoria Place improvements.

Government and policy influence: The Chamber lobbies on issues affecting local businesses, maintains access to government bodies, and engages with the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee to discuss economic conditions and interest rates

Networking and events: Regular networking events are hosted at various times to accommodate members, including breakfasts, dinners with notable speakers, member introductions, and large social events like the Christmas Lunch and Business Awards.

Membership: Members report gaining valuable business contacts, clients, friendships, and support for charitable activities and work experience opportunities through the Chamber.

Promotion and communication: The Chamber promotes members via free advertising in business press, newsletters, directories, website event pages, and offers opportunities for event sponsorship and discounted town centre promotions.

Business support services: Members receive advice on finance, social media, HR, mentoring, marketing, and access to start-up workshops and referrals - much of it free of charge.

Your own town centre meeting room: free of charge for 2 hours with 1000mbps broadband, tea and coffee facilities, touchscreen TV and Logitech hybrid meeting camera and mic.

Premier Membership benefits: Premier members enjoy enhanced visibility with logo placement on the website, Bank of England economic reviews, business consultations, priority advertising opportunities, event sponsorship, and invitations to exclusive events.

For more info please contact 01323 641144 or email info@eastbournechamber.



"I have been an Eastbourne Chamber member for 17 years now. In that time I have made many business contacts, found new clients and also made new friends. It's been a pleasure to chair the regular Chamber's breakfast networking meetings and see the group grow and thrive.

Steve Christmas, Life Planning Solutions

"Fountain Digital are proud to be members of Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is a valuable partner for our business, connecting us with clients and local suppliers, and they are always finding ways to help promote our business.

"In October we were honoured to receive the Chamber's Eastbourne Business Award for Digital Excellence for the second year running. This recognition is so important to our team."

Danny Hazelgrove, Fountain Digital Award Winning Digital Marketing Agency

#### 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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#### Deliciously Sweet Turns a Local Opportunity into a Chocolate Success Story

From a happy twist of fate to a thriving business success story, **Chamber member Deliciously Sweet Chocolate Company has become** a celebrated name in handcrafted Belgian truffles and creative gifting.

Owner David Smith first discovered his passion for chocolate when he took over a small coffee shop that happened to produce its own chocolates. What began as a chance encounter soon became a calling, and six years later, Deliciously Sweet was born. Today, the company is recognised across the region for its innovative flavours, handcrafted quality, and strong community spirit.

Deliciously Sweet sells directly to the public through its online store, offering an inviting range of personalised gifts perfect for Christmas, birthdays, anniversaries, and every special occasion. From luxurious Belgian truffles and Afternoon Tea hampers to bespoke corporate selections, there's something for every chocolate lover.

The company also partners with businesses to design corporate-branded gifts and event collaborations, ensuring memorable experiences that reflect each brand's unique identity.

Community involvement is central to Deliciously Sweet's values. The business actively supports local charities including St Wilfrid's Hospice, The Chaseley Trust, and the Children's Respite Trust, alongside sponsorship of the Eastbourne Operatic and Dramatic Society. Most recently, David Smith announced their new sponsorship of





the South Coast Ballet, continuing the company's commitment to the arts heading into 2026.

Innovation is at the heart of Deliciously Sweet's success. The company proudly offers vegan and dairy-free options, catering to evolving tastes and dietary needs while maintaining the same exceptional flavour and craftsmanship their customers love.

This Christmas David and the Deliciously Sweet team invite everyone to share the joy — one handcrafted truffle at a time.

For more information or to find the perfect gift, visit www.deliciouslysweet.co.uk or email hello@deliciouslysweet.co.uk

#### New Members for October

DeesGlobalGetaways • Eastbourne United Association FC • Signet Hotels (Alfriston) The Alfriston • TGHG Limited t/a McDonalds • Citrus Hotel Eastbourne • PMA Scaffolding • K L Consultancy & Coaching • The Eastbourne International Singing Competition

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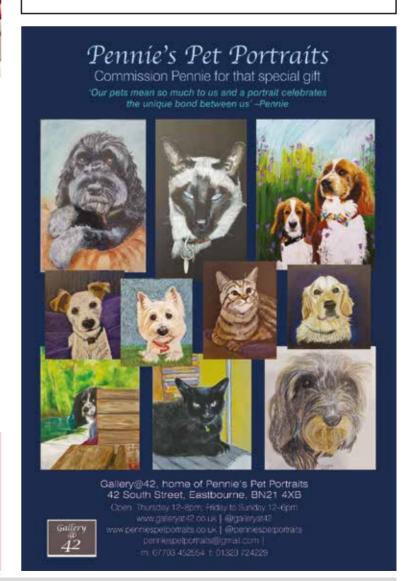
- Strong communication/interpersonal skills.
- Experience in marketing/fundraising in the charity sector.

  Understanding of service processes, IT, data protection & related systems.
- Strategical thinking.
  Integrity, good judgement & collaborative approach.
- Commitment to the mission/vision/values of The Old Bank Wellbeing Trust.

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For more information:

office@theoldbankwellbeing.org.uk



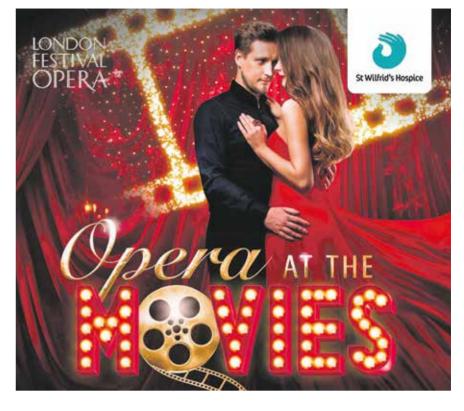
## Support St Wilfrid's at the opera...

OPERA at the Movies will take place on Saturday March 7th 2026 at *The Grand Hotel*, 7pm to 11pm. Tickets £80 per person / Tables of 10 £800.

By Peter Lindsey

Many celebrated filmmakers feature opera in their movies knowing that this will add an extra dramatic and emotional dimension to key scenes. Opera brings a depth and richness to the cinematic experience.

Opera at the Movies is a programme of passion, drama and humour with arias and ensembles from the great works of Handel, Mozart, Rossini, Verdi, Bizet, Puccini, Offenbach, Gilbert & Sullivan and more.



Sit back and listen to a programme of superb opera as seen at the movies including Pretty Woman, A Room with a View, Shawshank Redemption, Mission Impossible, Gallipoli, The Father, Sunday Bloody Sunday, Quartet, Atonement, The Godfather, Amadeus, Mrs Doubtfire, Mr Bean's Holiday and more...

This joyous evening of song will begin with a welcome drink reception, followed by a two course meal, served whilst you enjoy this immersive performance.

To book please visit: www.stwhospice.org/opera

## Recycle your Christmas tree for charity

If you live in BN8, BN20, BN21, BN22, BN23, BN24, BN25, BN26, BN27, TN21, TN22
St Wilfrid's Hospice can collect your real Christmas tree in return for a donation.

- stwhospice.org/recycle
- 01323 434221

With thanks to our kind sponsors







As easy as 1, 2, tree...

- 1. Visit **stwhospice.org/ recycle** before 10pm on Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> January.
- 2. Tell us your address and make a donation.
- 3. Leave your tree on the boundary of your property by 8am on 8<sup>th</sup> January. We will collect it by midnight on 11<sup>th</sup> January.

## PRG and Long Man Brewery raise a can to 45 years of local creativity

EASTBOURNE marketing agency, *PRG*, has designed a limited edition Pale Ale label to mark a milestone anniversary.

By Kathryn Ranger

PRG Marketing Communications has joined forces with local favourite Long Man Brewery to create a special edition can design for the award-winning Long Man Pale Ale — celebrating PRG's 45th year in business.

The one-off label, designed inhouse by *PRG*'s creative team and appropriately named 'THE BIG FOUR FIVE', reimagines the brewery's popular 4.2% ABV Pale Ale in the agency's signature red and white colours. The limited-edition cans feature a bold repeating pattern that sits at a 45° angle — a subtle nod to *PRG*'s milestone anniversary.

#### **Awards**

The Pale Ale itself has had an exceptional couple of years, winning Silver at this year's World Beer Awards following its victory last year at the 2024 International Brewing Awards.

To see the collaboration come to life, some of the *PRG* team visited *Long Man Brewery* to watch the first run of cans roll off the production line.

Simon Groves, Managing Director at *PRG*, said: "Long Man Brewery

is one of Sussex's finest and we couldn't think of a better partner to help us raise a toast to 45 years of creativity. The Pale Ale is a personal favourite for many of the team — and having the opportunity to design something unique for it felt like the perfect way to mark this milestone. It's been a real celebration of local craft, both in beer and in branding."

#### Great design

Tom O'Neill, Director at Long Man Brewery added: "It's been a real pleasure working with PRG on this special project. Their passion for great design mirrors our passion for great beer — and we're thrilled to see our award-winning Pale Ale dressed in a bold new look to celebrate their 45th anniversary. We hope everyone enjoys the story behind the can as much as the beer inside it!"

Founded in 1980, *PRG* has grown from a family-run PR consultancy into one of East Sussex's most established full-service marketing agencies, with a strong track record of supporting regional businesses through creative campaigns, branding and digital strategy.



FIVE' Pale Ale cans will be gifted by PRG to clients, family and friends as a celebration of its milestone anniversary.

Watch the video of *PRG's* collaboration with *Long Man Brewery* here: https://www.youtube.com/shorts/0H2hfA1p5uk

Or to find out more about *PRG's* 45-year legacy visit: **www.prgltd.co.uk** 



It's been a real celebration of local craft, both in beer and in branding.









# Every great adventure begins with a single,

## bold step

EAST Sussex College Higher Education (HE) students proudly celebrated their graduation at The Grand Hotel.

By Matthew Watkinson

Graduates received awards across a wide range of subjects from Business Management and Counselling to Early Years and Designer Maker.

The event was a joyful and memorable occasion, bringing together family members, friends, and staff to honour the accomplishments of this year's graduates.

Meg Sullivan, Director of HE at East Sussex College, said: "It was an honour and a privilege to celebrate our Higher Education students and their remarkable achievements.

"Their success is the result of true collaboration — from the dedication of our staff and the support of university partners and employers, to the families and friends who've

encouraged them every step of the way. We wish them all the best in their future adventures."

Many of the degree courses at *East Sussex College* are validated by University of East Anglia, and Pro Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation at the University, Julian Blow, closed the ceremony with a message of congratulations.

He said: "Congratulations to you, our graduates, on your outstanding achievements. You've shown incredible energy, passion, resilience and commitment to get here and your successes are heartily deserved. I'd also like to thank all the staff at East Sussex College whose tireless dedication to students has played such a big role in your achievements. We are very proud to be the validating partner of East Sussex College, a partnership that is very much thriving and growing. You should be very proud of the awards you've achieved today."

For many, it was both a moment of reflection and a launchpad into exciting new chapters — whether that means advancing in their careers, pursuing further study, or gearing up for new creative and professional ventures.

Lou Miller, Person Centred Counselling BSC (Hons) graduate, said: "The venue, atmosphere and how welcoming everyone was made it feel really special. The awards were fantastic. It was great to see everyone's achievements recognised so thoughtfully."

Design graduate, Zoe Horrod, said: "I miss uni so much! It was one of the best challenges I have ever undertaken. I've had 30 years of really interesting work experience, so coming back to school gave me a renewed appreciation for learning. It was the hardest work I've ever had to do."

As a staff member who chose *East Sussex College* for her daughter's higher education, Martine Brewer said the evening perfectly reflected the care and quality that make *ESC* 'good enough for our families'. She said: "We had an amazing evening, well done to all involved in making the Class of 25 a memorable one for all the graduates. Thank you from one very proud mother."

Every great adventure begins with a single bold step, as award-winning British explorer, author, and guest speaker Charlie Walker, reminded graduates at the ceremony. After completing his degree at Newcastle University, Charlie has journeyed more than 60,000 miles by foot, horse, bicycle, ski, kayak, and dugout canoe — traversing the Tibetan plateau, Mongolian steppe, Congolese jungle, Arctic tundra, New Guinean highlands, and the vast Sahara Desert.

East Sussex College has been offering Higher Education courses for over 25 years, giving local people and families flexible study options that fit around life commitments. Courses are validated by University of East Anglia, University of Brighton and Pearson, and offer hands-on, career-focused learning in a supportive environment.

Start your higher education journey today. https://adult.escg.ac.uk/degree-level/degree-level





## "I'm doing it for a cause that means a lot to me"

**EASTBOURNE** resident Cally Thomas is fundraising for The Mental House Foundation by taking part in a skydive.

By Peter Lindsey

The challenge is a dramatic 12,000ft skydive in Headcorn, Kent, next May as part of Mental Health Awareness Week.

Cally said: "I will be doing something I never thought I'd do... jumping out of a perfectly good plane. I don't even like flying — so throwing myself out of one is definitely not on my usual to do list.

"But I'm doing it for a cause that means a lot to me. I've had my own ups and downs with mental health, and I know how important the right support can be.

"That's why I've chosen to raise money for the Mental Health Foundation, who work tirelessly to help people look after their mental wellbeing and to make mental health support accessible to everyone.

"Mental health affects all of us friends, family, colleagues, and often people who look absolutely fine on the outside. If jumping out of a plane helps spark conversations and raise funds that can genuinely change lives, then it's a fear I'm willing to face (even if it's with my eyes shut the whole way down!)."

Please visit: www.justgiving.com and search for 'Cally's fundraiser for Mental Health Foundation'







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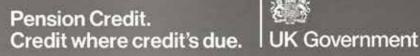


## Could you or someone you know be missing out on Pension Credit?

It's worth, on average, over £4,200 a year.

Eligibility criteria apply







## Walking and talking

AFTER too many weeks of not being able to walk with the group due to a health issue, I know the impact of not being able to walk with other ramblers on a weekly basis.

By Judy Kemp

It is not easy when you cannot join in knowing all of your friends are enjoying their walks and you know what you are missing.

So what do I miss?

I miss the company, exercise, laughter, discussions, puffing up hills

together, believe it or not the mud and oh those stiles!!!

We spend many hours out in the countryside with the amazing wildlife and looking at the views - it's so enlightening. You can maybe now start to understand why during



these weeks I miss so very much being out walking with my Polegate Ramblers family.

#### All walks of life

This family consist of couples, singles, those who have lost a partner and they are from all walks of life and therefore have so many tales to share. New friendships are created and there is always someone who is willing to listen. We are there for each other.

So if you would like join us for really enjoyable, social exercise and be part of a friendly group of ramblers please have a look at our website www.polegateramblers.org.uk, check out the walks programme and try us out a couple of times or email polegateramblers@gmail.com, for more details, you never know you could be joining us very soon.

I certainly cannot wait to be back amongst the group and walking again.

#### hristmas Recycling and Rubbish Collection Dates

**27** Dec

29 Dec

30 Dec

31 Dec

2 Jan

3 Jan

5 Jan

6 Jan

7 Jan

8 Jan

9 Jan

10 Jan



Collections resume on your usual collection day, from Monday 12 January 2026

Wealden Weekly Sign up to Wealden Weekly and receive weekly emails about your collections. Visit: www.wealden.gov.uk/wealden-weekly or scan the QR code to easily subscribe.



Garden Waste collections are suspended from Thursday 25 December 2025 and resume on your usual collection day, from Thursday 8 January 2026.

- Please ensure that the bins are put out at the edge of your property by 7am on the day of collection. Please take them in as soon as possible after collection.
- ► Extra recycling can be placed out in non-black plastic bags next to the recycling bin for collection (except for glass which should only be placed into the recycling bin).
- ► All your **festive wrapping paper and cards** (except foil/glitter) can be placed in the recycling bin.
- Recycle your real tree by cutting it up and placing in your Garden Waste Bin or take it to your local Household Waste Recycling Site.

**Check your collection days online:** www.wealden.gov.uk







## Wishing our customers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



Upper Kings Drive Guide Price £650,000

Spacious 3 Bed **Detached House** Sought After Willingdon Village **Two Reception Rooms** Feature Balcony Garage Off Road Parking



**Cuckmere Drive** Guide Price £450.000

Reimagined 3 Bedroom **Detached House** Popular Shelly Design No onward Chain Versatile Converted Garage **Popular Stone Cross Location** 



Staveley Road Guide Price £450,000

**Luxurious Ground Floor** Apartment Sought After Meads Location Close To Seafront Two Double Bedrooms Off Road Parking No Onward Chain



Vine Square Guide Price £430,000

Five Bedroom Semi Detached House **Includes Independent Annexe** No onward chain Southwest Facing Garden **Near School and Amenities** 



**Cuckmere Drive** Guide Price £400,000

**Charming 3 Bedroom Detached House Cul-de-sac Position** Garage and off-road parking **Vendor Suited** Very Well Presented



#### **Collington Close** Guide Price £385,000

3 Bedroom Apartment **Lower Meads Location** Open Plan lounge / **Dining Room** Well-maintained **Communal Gardens** Garage and off-road parking



**Royal Parade** Guide Price £325,000

Rare Top Floor 2-Bedroom Apartment Communal Lift Share of Freehold Private Balcony Panoramic Sea View A Costal Gem



#### Fairfield Road

Offers in Excess of £100,000

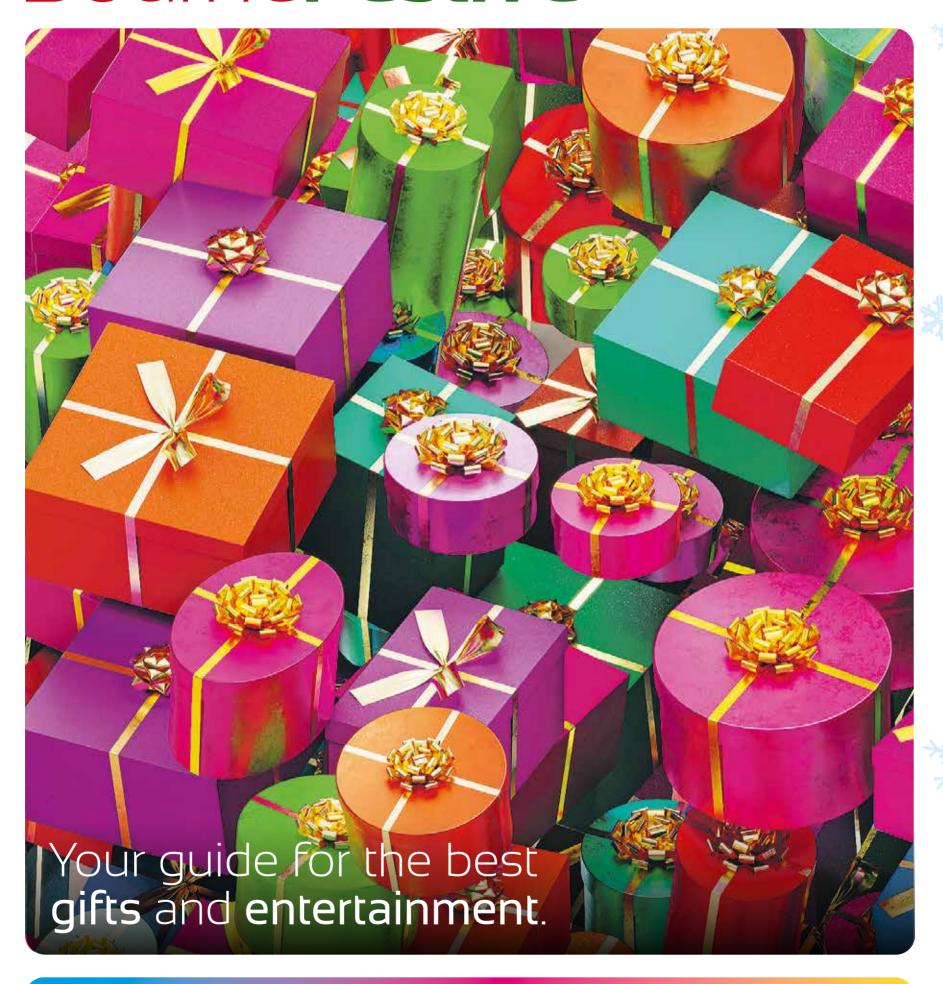
**Ground Floor** One Bedroom Retirement Flat in Meads Close to Amenities and Seafront Well-Maintained **Communal Grounds** Requires Refurbishment

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### TICK TOCKI

TIME'S ticking for the opening night of the pantomime extravaganza, The Adventures of Peter Pan at the Devonshire Park Theatre, from Friday 5th December 2025 - Sunday 11th January 2026.

By Aimee Pugh

The award-winning Devonshire Park team return with The **Adventures of Peter Pan! This** year's show is a swashbuckling adventure, which all ages will love, but be quick if you've not got your tickets yet as it opens on 5th December.

The Adventures of Peter Pan is a brand-new high-flying pantomime escapade for Eastbourne,

audiences will be whisked off on a new journey to far-away-lands where magic and excitement combine to create marvellous memories to treasure this festive period.

Leading the cast is **Angus Benstead** as the boy who never wants to grow up, Lewes Roberts (Robin Hood and Beauty and the Beast) returns to the Devonshire Park Theatre stage as the loathsome Captain Hook.



Eastbourne favourites Martyn **Knight** and comic **Tucker** are back and ready to join Hook's motley crew as Mrs Smee and her son, Smee.

Plus Ella Bracci (Cinderella, Kings Lynn) as Wendy, Gabriella Gilliat (A Midsummer Night's Dream, Bridge Theatre) as Tink and **Jessica Aubrey** (Rose in *Titanique*, Paris Lido) as Mermaid, and incredibly talented young company of

local dancers and a professional ensemble team.

This enchanting production will be packed with live music, vibrant sets, colourful costumes, spectacular special effects, and plenty of laughs. The Adventures of Peter Pan at the Devonshire Park Theatre, 5th December 2025 - 11th January 2026, eastbournetheatres.co.uk Box Office 01323 412000.









# Support Independents this Christmas

EVEN last-minute shoppers will feel right at home at the *Enterprise* Shopping Centre. Conveniently located next to Eastbourne's railway station, this vibrant destination boasts an eclectic mix of boutique-style shops – making it easy to find thoughtful gifts for everyone on your list.

By Emily Sander

And when the Christmas bustle calls for a pause, the Enterprise offers plenty of tempting options to refuel. Whether you're craving a Full English breakfast, zingy Thai noodles, fresh seafood, wholesome vegan dishes, cheese & charcuterie boards or indulgent home-baked cakes, there's something delicious to suit every taste and mood.

#### Late Night Shopping

Join The Enterprise Shopping Centre family for a magical evening full of festive fun on Thursday 11th December from 5-8pm.

We're bringing Late Night Shopping with a twist to the Eastbourne Community! All of your favourite indie businesses will be open until 8pm with drop-in workshops, special offers & events going on as well as their usual array of beautiful products.

The talented young people in our community will be performing live music – both your Christmas classics and their own original music. Plus a few of Eastbourne's snazziest cars will be outside the Centre taking part in a best-dressed vehicle competition!

There will, of course, be plenty of mulled wine and hot chocolates for you to enjoy as well as cakes, bakes, savouries & even The Good Grub food truck outside serving up delicious crumbles with custard!

Pop along for a fun, family night out this December, and support Eastbourne's small businesses at the same time by grabbing some fabulous gifts & stocking fillers.

Late Night Shopping is in aid of The Retreat Animal Sanctuary and Warming up the Homeless - let's keep our friends and furry friends cosy this Christmas.

#### Santa's Magical Elevator: A Journey to the North Pole

This year, the Feastival Events team brings a truly enchanting experience to the Enterprise Centre. Step inside Santa's Magical Elevator and soar through the roof, above the clouds, and all the way to the North Pole – where Santa awaits to greet you personally.

Your journey begins at Santa's Post Office, where 'lingles' the Elf will welcome you and guide you through this immersive adventure. Feel the thrill of flying alongside Santa's reindeer as you take in the sights of Eastbourne, outer space, and snowy northern landscapes.



Running daily from Saturday 29th November to Tuesday 24th December 2025

Book your tickets now: santasmagicalelevator. onlineticketseller.com

www.enterprise-centre.org





### Christmas gift ideas



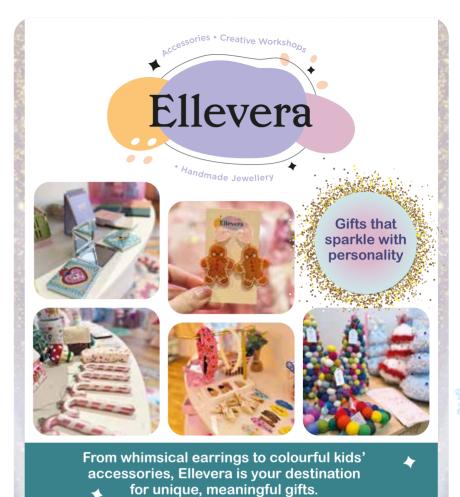








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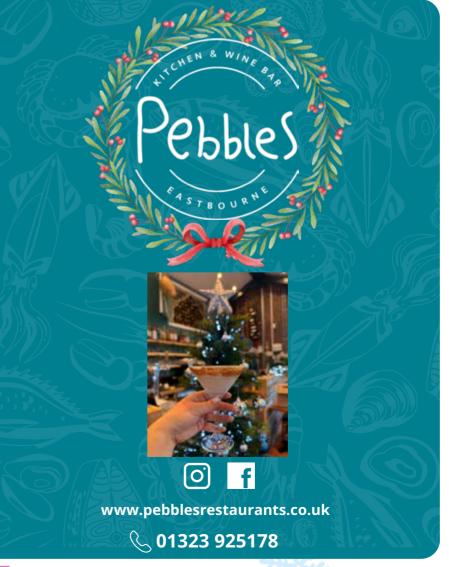


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# Christmas at Sharnfold Farm

CELEBRATE the magic of Christmas at Sharnfold Farm with our enchanting Pick Your Own Christmas Tree Experience and Festive Farm Trail – the perfect way to start your family celebrations this winter.

By Louise Page

Join us on Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th November 2025 for a truly traditional day out.

Wander through our beautiful Christmas tree field, take your time choosing your perfect tree, and watch as Farmer James carefully cuts it down for you to take home. Each tree is full of rustic charm -

no two are the same - giving your home a one-of-a-kind centrepiece for the festive season.

Your visit also includes entry to our Christmas-themed trail, where the woodland has been transformed into a winter wonderland. Follow twinkling paths, discover the magical village of Timber Town,

post your letter to Santa, and enjoy plenty of festive surprises along the way. There's so much to see, do, and capture with the family.

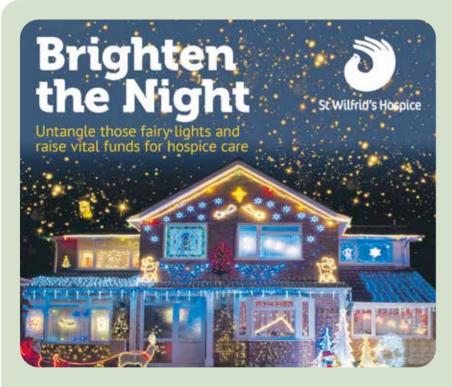
#### Tickets:

- PYO Christmas Tree Experience (up to 4 people): £44.95.
- Additional guests: £6.45 per person.
- General Festive Trail Admission: £6.45 online / £7.45 on the gate (under 2s free).



With delicious seasonal treats available in the café and the shop stocked full of gifts, cards, and decorations, Christmas at Sharnfold Farm promises festive fun, family memories, and plenty of sparkle.

www.thefamilyparksgroup.co.uk/ days-out/sharnfold-farm



By Peter Lindsey

The money you raise will help the hospice to continue caring for local people who need its services through the hospice building or out in the community. It will help to continue providing care and support to those facing a life-limiting diagnosis, and the hospice can continue to support their wider family through its bereavement services.

This project runs from December 1st until 31st.

# Raise vital funds with your festive display

IF you're putting on a fabulous display outside your house this Christmas, your lights can help raise funds for St Wilfrid's Hospice.

Whether you're putting up 3D Santas, sparkling reindeer, dancing snowmen or colourful Christmas lights, the hospice wants to know about it!

Sign up today. www.stwhospice.org/event/ brighten-the-night

They'll send you all the fundraising tools you need.

In December, St Wilfrid's will feature a list of Christmas light displays for everyone to visit!

Keep your eyes peeled.



#### FESTIVE CALENDAR

Step into the warmth of Christmas at The View Hotel, where we pride ourselves on being your Christmas experts!

From festive afternoon teas to cosy family carveries, we've got every occasion covered

#### FESTIVE BOTTOMLESS BRUNCH

6<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, FROM 12PM £43 per adult

#### FESTIVE TWO COURSE CARVERY LUNCE

SUNDAY 30TH NOVEMBER, 7TH, 14TH & 21ST DECEMBER Adults £26 | Children (aged 12 and under\*) £13

#### CHRISTMAS DAY LUNCH

Adults £90 | Children (aged 12 and u SOLD OUT

#### **BOXING DAY LUNCH**

Adults £60 | Children (aged 12 and under\*) £30

#### **FESTIVE AFTERNOON TEA**

AVAILABLE 1ST - 23RD DECEMBER, 2PM TO 5PM IN THE VISTA BAR £25 per adult, or £31 per adult to upgrade to include a Christmas cocktail

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# Wonderland at Drusillas

FROM now until Tuesday 23rd December, *Drusillas Park* will transform into a winter wonderland, ready to welcome the big man himself – Santa Claus – to his cosy cottage grotto.

By Peter Lindsey

Drusillas' Santa experience is one of the most sought-after in the South, offering little ones a one-to-one meet-and-greet with Santa, a magical photo moment, and a special festive gift to take home. Tickets are now available via the Drusillas website, but don't delay – some dates are already sold out!

Outside the grotto, the festive magic continues throughout the beautifully decorated Park. Visitors can wander through twinkling lights, snow-capped scenes, lifesized snowmen and nutcrackers, and a forest of real Christmas trees



all centred around a spectacular
24ft tree of lights.

Back by popular demand, the singing reindeer trio will be jingling all the way with their much-loved Christmas classics, bringing musical cheer from their stable in the Events Arena

There's no shortage of festive photo opps either: hop inside a giant present, climb aboard Santa's sleigh,

or snap a selfie in the magical Christmas tree forest. And of course, no visit would be complete without a glowing pic beside the Park's glittering centrepiece tree.

Warm up along the way with festive treats like iced Christmas biscuits and cake, and steaming festive hot chocolate, loaded with cream and marshmallows, available throughout the Park's eateries — perfect fuel for a day of festive fun.

# The Christmas Charity Run at Rathfinny

PLACES for the *Christmas Charity Run* at the *Rathfinny Estate* in Alfriston are now open.

By Peter Lindsey

You can join a festive 10km run through the vines on the morning of Sunday 28th December in support of *The Wolo Foundation*.

Wolo Foundation offers practical help and support to families affected by cancer living in Sussex.

It is a perfect opportunity to run 2 x 5km loops around the vineyards.

The event is open to local runners only to reduce car travel and the ecological impact on the vineyard.

£8 of your registration fee will go directly to *WOLO*.

**Start time: 10:15am**. You will given a bib before the start. Times will be recorded via *Webscorer* (similar to *East Sussex XC*) so

please ensure you show your bib number as you go through the finish funnel on both loops.

**Prize:** A bottle of Rathfinny Sparkling Wine for the first male and first female.

What better way to enjoy fresh air and a run after the Christmas Day dinner!

You can sign up here: https://3wordruns.eventrac.co.uk









# Join the crew for Carols

EASTBOURNE Lifeboats will be hosting a festive carol-singing event at *The Waterfront, Sovereign* Harbour, by the North Bridge.

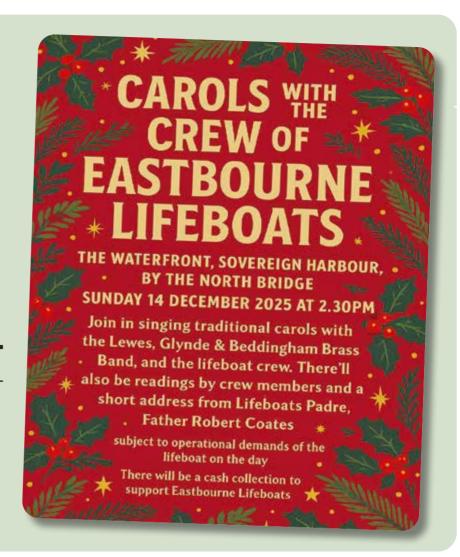
By Peter Lindsey

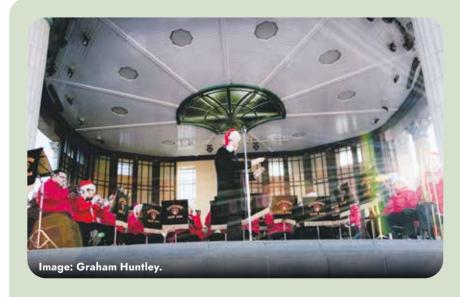
Guests are invited to join the Lewes, Glynde & Beddingham Brass Band and the Lifeboat **Crew for traditional Christmas** carols, along with readings from crew members and a short address by Lifeboats Padre, Father Robert Coates.

Please note that the event is subject to change depending on lifeboat operational requirements.

A cash collection will be held in support of Eastbourne Lifeboats.

14th December at 2:30pm





#### By Peter Lindsey

The long-standing tradition, dating back to 1935, will take place at the Wish Tower Slopes, due to essential winter maintenance works at the usual Bandstand venue.

Performed by Eastbourne Silver Band from 10:30am to 12 noon, the concert is an annual highlight in the festive calendar for both

Eastbourne residents and the many hotel guests celebrating Christmas in the town.

In what has become a staple pre-Christmas dinner treat for many, revellers can look forward to the usual mix of traditional carols, festive classics and family favourites, all in a stunning seafront setting.

### Celebrate Christmas Day with free concert

EASTBOURNE'S annual Christmas Day Concert will return this year, bringing free festive cheer to residents and visitors alike.

The festive fun will continue into Boxing Day with Long Man Morris dancers performing on the Wish Tower Slopes from 10:30 - 11:30am, bringing musical merriment to many.

The Christmas Day Concert starts at 10:30am on the Wish Tower Slopes and is free to attend with standing room only and no ticket required.

For warming refreshments, West Rocks Beach Club will be open both days on Lower Parade.

As an extra Christmas treat, on-street parking charges do not apply on 25th and 26th December.

For more information on festive events in Eastbourne visit: VisitEastbourne.com/Christmas





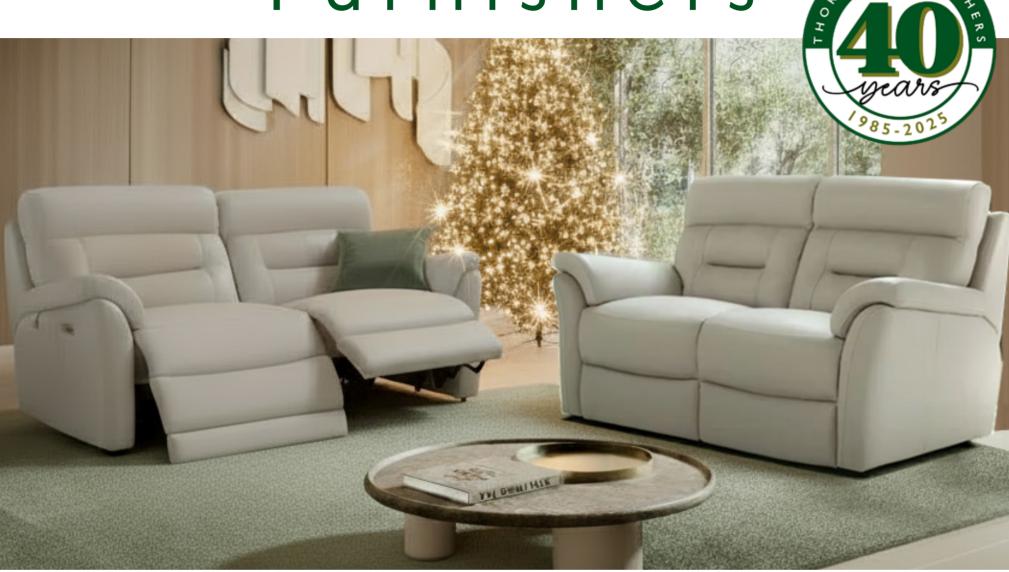
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# HailshamEye



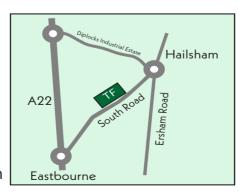
# Thorndale Furnishers



Thorndale Furnishers: Established in 1985 by Malcolm and Jennifer Baker Comprehensive home furnishing solutions in Hailsham Extensive showroom offering diverse furniture collections Expert advice from experienced staff for personalized guidance Commitment to quality, transparency, and customer satisfaction.

Thorndale Furnishers Ltd Burfield Park, South Road Hailsham, East Sussex BN27 3JL

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#### Opening Hours

Mon – Fri 9am to 4pm
Saturday 10am to 4pm
Sunday 10am to 2pm
Bank Holidays 10am to 4pm

Merry Christmas
and
Happy New
to all our customers
past and present

# Be sure to shop in Hailsham during the run up to Christmas

A MESSAGE from Hailsham Town Councillor **Anne Marie Ricketts:** 

By Peter Lindsey

"With the Christmas season just weeks away, the countdown to the festive celebrations is officially underway.

The Town Council would like to take this opportunity to remind residents and visitors alike that Hailsham is the perfect place to shop, socialise and enjoy everything the season has to offer.

Our town offers a fantastic range of shops, independent retailers and High Street favourites, all ready to help make Christmas 2025 truly special. We encourage everyone to shop locally and support our traders, as the strength of Hailsham's businesses is at the heart of our community. Visitors from outside the town are also warmly welcomed to explore what Hailsham has to offer.

From unique, bespoke gifts to festive decorations, our independent shops have something for everyone. Local florists are offering Christmas wreaths and arrangements to brighten your home, while many hair and beauty salons have special seasonal packages - the perfect gift for someone who deserves a little pampering. There's also a wide range of Christmas cards and festive essentials, and plenty of free parking is available in and around the town centre, making it easy and convenient to shop locally.

Beyond shopping, Hailsham is a fantastic place to eat, drink and relax. Our town boasts a variety of quality restaurants, cafes, bars and pubs,



providing the perfect setting for festive meals, catch-ups with friends, or simply enjoying a seasonal drink.

Experience the magic of Christmas in Hailsham – there's something for everyone to enjoy!"

### Christmas Window Display competition supporting Hailsham's businesses

LOCAL businesses are being encouraged to take part in this year's Best Shop Window Christmas Display Competition.

By Peter Lindsey

The Council will judge displays on a variety of festive criteria, including overall impression and visual impact, creativity and originality and innovative use of a Christmas theme.

All traders across Hailsham - not just those in the town centre — are invited to take part by creating bright, decorative and eye-catching window displays.

No formal entry is required, as all businesses with festive displays will

automatically be included in the judging process, which will take place incognito in mid-December.

Last year's winner, Millie's Boutique, located in Hailsham High Street, impressed judges with an elegant Christmas party-themed display that delighted passers-by and earned them the coveted Best Shop Window Christmas Display Award.

The announcement of this year's competition comes ahead of a wider campaign by the Town Council to promote the town centre and encourage residents to carry out their Christmas shopping locally -

and boosting the local economy.

Cllr Ricketts added: "With the Christmas season just weeks away, the countdown to the festive celebrations is officially underway. The Town Council would like to take this opportunity to remind residents and visitors alike that Hailsham is the perfect place to shop, socialise and enjoy everything the season has to offer."

"Our town offers a fantastic range of shops, independent retailers and High Street favourites, all ready to help make Christmas 2025 truly special. We encourage everyone to shop locally and support our traders, as the strength of Hailsham's businesses is at the heart of our community.

Visitors from outside the town are also warmly welcomed to explore what Hailsham has to offer."





# Kerry's wonderful mural

HAILSHAM artist Kerry Caffyn spent 130 hours creating this beautiful new mural.

By Peter Lindsey

The official launch took place on Friday November 14th at *The* JPK/SASBAH Hub in Church Street, Old Town, Eastbourne.

Kerry was commissioned by *Brewers* to produce the stunning mural after *SASBAH* moved into the premises.

SASBAH and Brewers have worked together for more than 20 years.

#### **Absolutely stunning**

Melanie Adams from *Brewers* said: "It looks absolutely stunning, and I want to publicly thank Kerry for her hard work



"It's such a creative piece of art which will be admired by so many driving past the building each day."

#### It means so much

Rom Sanglaji, CEO of SASBAH, said at the celebration party: "Thanks to Kerry for working so hard. I have watched this develop from start to finish, and it is just beautiful. It means so much to our members who come here."





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### Hailsham Chiropractic Clinic



Hailsham Chiropractic Clinic would like to wish all the residents of Hailsham a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Hailsham Chiropractic is a family run business that has been trading in Hailsham for over 20 years.

#### **Meet the Team**









From left to right
Becky Andrew, Gary Miles, Louise Lamberti, Tom Fletcher and Chloe Spicer

Our Chiropractors treat all ages from babies to adults in their 90's.

Common conditions treated include, back pain, neck pain, joint pain, headaches we also address issues such as sciatica and carpal tunnel syndrome.

The Chiropractors use different techniques, such as spinal manipulation, soft tissue therapy, stretching, exercise's and Lightforce Therapy Laser.



## Please give us a call on 01323 441857

and quote Bournefree to claim £15 off your initial treatment during January. Limited availability

1 North Street, Hailsham, BN27 1DQ



# Big Business in Hailsham

Hailsham Chamber is a fantastic place to meet and connect with other businesses in your area.

By Ryley Warwick

#### **Big Business Breakfast**

Thursday 8th January, 7:30am Wellshurst Golf & Country Club

Join us for our first Hailsham Chamber Big Business Breakfast of the year! This month we won't have any speakers — instead, we'll be celebrating our amazing charity members as we present the funds raised throughout last year by our Chamber community.

It's the perfect opportunity to network, learn, and grow while supporting the fantastic causes that make our town stronger.

We look forward to seeing you there!"

### Merry Christmas from the Hailsham Chamber of Commerce!

As we wrap up another busy and inspiring year, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all our members, partners, and the wider Hailsham business community. Your support, collaboration, and commitment to helping our town thrive mean so much.

We wish you a joyful Christmas filled with rest, celebration, and time with the people who matter most.

Here's to a successful, connected, and opportunity-filled 2025 — we can't wait to continue growing with you.

Merry Christmas!

#### Join us and Succeed!

Looking to grow your business and connect with like-minded professionals? Join *Hailsham Chamber of Commerce* and become part of a vibrant, local business community. Let's succeed together!



Did you know that being a member of *Hailsham Chamber of Commerce* gives you access to exclusive events, business support & local promotion? Get in touch today to find out more.

Becoming a member of the Hailsham Chamber of Commerce offers a range of benefits for local businesses and professionals. Members have the opportunity to network with fellow chamber members, grow their contacts, and develop mutually rewarding friendships. The Chamber provides a platform for businesses to connect, collaborate, and support each other within the local community. By joining, members can enhance their visibility, stay informed about local business initiatives, and contribute to the economic development of Hailsham.

For more information on membership and to see a list of current members, visit the *Hailsham Chamber of Commerce* website.

https://hailshamchamber.co.uk



#### Let's Talk Business

The Hailsham Chamber of Commerce is excited to highlight its official podcast "let's talk business" – a dynamic, informative series designed to champion local businesses and celebrate the people who keep our town thriving. Each episode features insightful conversations with business owners. community leaders, and industry experts, offering valuable guidance, inspiring stories, and a closer look at the



initiatives shaping Hailsham's future. Tune in to stay connected, stay informed, and support the heartbeat of our local economy.

https://www.youtube.com/@HailshamChamberofCommerce





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# Sussex Footcare will see you through the Winter!

HOW to keep your feet healthy in the cold months.

By Andrew Albon

As temperatures drop and the festive season begins, many people focus on keeping warm – but few give their feet the same attention. Winter can be particularly harsh on foot health, leading to cracked heels, chilblains, and worsening circulation issues. At Sussex Footcare we see a rise in patients with seasonal foot problems which are preventable.

#### Dry skin and cracked heels

The cold air outside and central heating indoors can damage the skin and prevent moisture, leaving heels dry, rough, and prone to splitting.

Tip: Moisturise feet daily with a 10% urea-based cream and avoid walking barefoot on hard floors. If the heels are extremely bad, then a 25% urea-based cream would be more suitable. At Sussex Footcare during our appointments, we will put together a treatment plan for each individual patient.

#### Chilblains: A common winter complaint

Chilblains were thought to be a thing of the past however last year during the cold snap in January we saw a huge increase in patients presenting with chilblains. Chilblains are painful, itchy red or purple patches caused by the skin's reaction to sudden temperature changes. They often affect the toes and can make walking uncomfortable. The vasodilation and vasoconstriction of blood vessels is what harms them and causes chilblains.

Tip: Keep feet warm with thick socks, avoid placing cold feet directly next to heaters or open fires — gradual warming is key.

#### Footwear mistakes

Whilst slippers may be cosy if you heat the feet too much this can lead to fungal issues. Also change your slippers yearly to prevent dermatophyte build up. Winter boots that may look sturdy, but aesthetics often win over practicality.

#### When to seek professional help

If you experience persistent foot pain, cracked heels, colour changes in the toes, or ongoing numbness, it's important to get professional help with a podiatrist. Here at *Sussex Footcare*, we have a team of podiatrists that have trained at university level to help with your problems.

At Sussex Footcare, we see dry cracked heels daily. My winter advice





is simple: Wear warm but breathable socks, moisturise your feet daily, and avoid extreme cold to hot change in temperatures. If all else fails come to *Sussex Footcare* and we can get you back on your feet in no time.

#### **Treatments on offer include:**

- Routine nail care.
- Nail surgery (Ingrown nails).
- Verruca's.
- 3D scanning Orthotics.
- Fungal nails.
- Musculoskeletal assessments.
- Biomechanics.
- Sports injuries.



07830 417007
andrewalbon@yahoo.co.uk
www.sussexfootcare.co.uk
Sussex Footcare



# Keep warm and stay well

RESIDENTS across East Sussex are being urged to keep warm and well this winter, with support and advice available through the council's *Warm Home Check* service.

By Peter Lindsey

Public Health bosses are reminding people who struggle to keep their homes warm that the free service offers telephone advice as well as money-saving information and tips on how to stay warm for less.

Eligible households can also receive a Warm Home Check visit. This involves a home energy efficiency assessment and can offer small improvement measures such as radiator reflector panels, draughtproofing, LED bulbs, and boiler servicing.

Mr Fullerton from Eastbourne was helped by the Warm Home Check service recently after contacting the team for advice.

During a home visit, it was found that the living room would heat up quickly and become very hot when the heating was on. A thermostatic radiator valve was installed so that Mr Fullerton could manage the distribution of heat throughout the property better.

A broken door pane, through which a lot of heat was being lost, was also fixed and reflective radiator panels, LED light bulbs, and an immersion heater insulation jacket have been installed.

In addition, an assessment was arranged for Mr Fullerton's property to check his eligibility for support under other government grant schemes.

Following this, Mr Fullerton has been referred to the Warm Homes Local Grant fund for assessment for further energy improvements.

Mr Fullerton said: "The help I have received from Warm Home Check service has been exemplary.

- "I never knew that these services were available to me and things I've learned from being involved with service have been amazing.
- "Everything that has been done for me is incredible and I hope other people can benefit from the service.
- "The help I have received has changed my life."

To apply for a warm home check visit www.eastsussex.gov.uk/keepwarm, text WARMHOME to 88440 or call 0800 464 7307.



# Once a head honcho, always a head honcho.

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# Breaking the silence

#### EASTBOURNE women launch first free menopause support meet-up.

By Gail McKay

Two local women are helping Eastbourne talk openly about menopause — and transforming how the community supports women's health.

Eastbourne residents Anna and Amy have joined forces to launch the town's first free monthly meet-up dedicated to perimenopause and menopause. Held at the newly opened *Alice Court Care Home*, the sessions offer a safe, confidential, and welcoming space for women to

share experiences, learn from experts, and find community.

#### Major gap in support

The idea emerged after the pair recognised a major gap in local support.

"We kept hearing the same story — women feeling confused, unheard, or brushed aside when talking about menopause," said Anna who is a Lead Mental Health Pharmacist currently training as an independent prescriber specialising in Bipolar Disorder and ADHD She combines her clinical expertise with her background as a qualified complementary therapist.



Co-founder Amy brings a wealth of experience as a 300-hour yoga teacher specialising in pregnancy, postnatal, menstrual health, and menopause yoga. A former primary teacher of 18 years, she also runs *Cub and Tribe*, a local wellbeing centre supporting women at every stage of life.

#### Strength and wisdom

"Menopause doesn't just affect one person — it affects relationships, families, and communities," they explained. "That's why we're inviting partners and relatives to some sessions. Understanding and empathy make a huge difference." "No woman should feel she's going through this alone," Anna added. "When we come together, we realise how much strength and wisdom we

The free menopause meet-ups are held monthly at *Alice Court Care Home*, Eastbourne.

already have."

For more information contact
eastbournemenopause@outlook.com
or Facebook 'Eastbourne
Menopause Support Group'

### Reset Your Body's Natural Rhythm with Reflexology and Vitamin D

AS the days grow shorter and the light fades earlier, it's not uncommon to feel your energy dip or your sleep pattern shift.

By Jane Long

The transition into winter naturally affects our body's circadian rhythm.

With small daily adjustments and the restorative power of reflexology, you can help your body stay balanced through the darker months.

#### 1. Understand what's happening to your body

When daylight hours decrease, your brain produces more melatonin, the

hormone that makes you feel sleepy, and less serotonin, the mood-lifting hormone. This can lead to fatigue, sluggishness, and even a touch of the "winter blues."

#### 2. Start the day with natural light

One of the most effective ways to reset your circadian rhythm is to expose your eyes and body to natural light soon after waking, even if it's cloudy.

#### 3. Hydrate and nourish

Hydration is essential for every cell in your body to function well —

especially your nervous system.
A protein-rich breakfast helps stabilise blood sugar and balances energy.

#### 4. Move to awaken your body

A few gentle stretches, yoga poses, or a brisk walk outdoors can activate circulation, release tension, and support lymphatic flow.

#### 5. Support your vitamin D levels

Take a daily Vitamin D supplement, eating foods rich in Vitamin D and getting outside for short daylight breaks when possible will boost your levels.



#### **6. Reflexology: Rebalance from** the inside out

Reflexology is a powerful way to help the body regulate itself, particularly when external factors like light, temperature, and routine are changing.

Book your monthly reflexology session this October and give your body the reset it deserves.

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### Gavel, Camera, Pen – The world according to James Braxton

MONDAY was a cold, rainy night in Eastbourne, yet a packed *Congress Theatre* surprised TV's James Braxton. He hadn't expected so many to brave the elements, but the *Ashridge Circle* members are made of sterner stuff, and they know they are always guaranteed a good speaker.

By Gail McKay

Gavel, Camera, Pen, a literal description of James's career so far, was a colourful jaunt through his action packed 59 years.

He delighted the crowd with crazy stories and lively characters along the way—not least his own rather quirky family.

James was a bit at sea at school, confused as to its purpose, though he loved English Literature and Carpentry. Diagnosed much later with dyslexia, everything began to make sense.



#### **Turning point**

The most significant turning point in his young life came when he took a summer job at *Gorringes*, the auction house in Lewes. It ignited a passion for an industry where art, culture, and furniture collide. He stayed for five years while qualifying in the profession.

He loved the items, the people, playing cricket in the salesroom, and rolling each other up in huge Turkish rugs. Eventually, he had his own auction house, *Edgar Horns* in Eastbourne.





James's flair for combining humour with expert knowledge of antiques was soon spotted, and he was drafted onto *Bargain Hunt*. He has been a regular on our screens ever since.

#### Famous guests

He spoke fondly of the many people he has worked with on these shows: the poet John Cooper Clarke ("Antiques won't make you gay, but they will make you buy curios"), Grace Dent (who "can write 800 words on anything by 12:30"), Bobby Davro (enjoying a temporary driving ban so they couldn't film him on public roads), and how he had no idea who Tim Vine was.

James's extraordinary life and personality have led to his latest venture: cosy crime. He now has two books to his name and is in the middle of his third.

The first, Barty: The Tale of a Stolen Bronze, is a romp based on two characters in Hasting, a restaurateur and an antiques dealer. They become temporarily embarrassed when a bronze is stolen from their client and must track it down. Think Jeeves and Wooster meets Lovejoy.

The second book, *The Crocodile Stone*, picks up at the end of the last story, when Lionel, the antiques dealer, travels to Sri Lanka. He is immediately caught up in helping a hapless young man sell a sapphire

the size of a hen's egg. It's a beautiful tale that's good for the soul.

So that's the Gavel, the Camera, and the Pen. I'm looking forward to the next book—and whatever profession James decides to have a go at next!

His books are available at **jamesbraxton.com** and **Amazon**.





### Farmers Market Christmas special

THE popular *Eastbourne Farmers Market* returns this December for a Christmas special to celebrate the festive season.

By Cameron Brown

Held on the square outside of Towner's award-winning building, the Christmas Farmers Market features over 20 independent stallholders, both local and from further afield.

Visitors can browse a wide selection of homegrown goods, making it an ideal time to find distinctive gifts

while supporting small businesses. In addition to our usual wonderful lineup of stallholders, we will have live music, hot food and mulled wine.

#### More to enjoy

Alongside the stalls, guests can enjoy *Towner's Cinema* and the current exhibitions, including *Impressions in Watercolour: J.M.W. Turner and his Contemporaries*, and *The Ravilious Collection*. Whether you're shopping for gifts, cards and decorations or a festive treat for

Images: Cameron Brown.

yourself, a stop at the gallery's shop is a must, offering a range of books, design items, and artist editions.

Entry to the Farmers Market is free.

Visit Towner's website
towner.gallery/farmers.market
to see the full line-up of makers
involved in this fantastic event.

Market opening times: 9:30am to 1:00pm Saturday 13th December





# Calming Sussex inspired digital art

FOR as long as she can remember, Rosalind Wilkins has felt at home by the sea.

By Gail McKay

Growing up in Hastings, then living in Bognor Regis and now Eastbourne, the Sussex coast has always been her source of calm and inspiration.

"There's something about the sea that clears the mind," she says.
"Eastbourne has such a lovely mix of gentle coastline and the magnificent South Downs — it's the perfect balance."

#### A little bit nostalgic

Rosalind's love of art and the outdoors led her to create Salt'n'Pixel, a collection of calming digital artworks inspired by life beside the waves. Drawing on her own photographs and those taken by friends, she transforms them using a blend of digital tools, crafting pieces that mimic watercolour, oil or pastel textures. "I usually know the feeling I want to capture before I start," she



explains. "Then I experiment until it feels right — soft, peaceful and a little bit nostalgic."

#### Inspiration

Rosalind is inspired by many artists, Salvador Dali let his creativity lead without censoring himself. Degas and Renoir for their soft pallettes, and Rousseau for his imagination.

Her latest limited edition lifeboat prints, now on display at *The Langham Hotel* in Eastbourne, are a heartfelt tribute to the *RNLI*. Each print is priced at £27.50, with part

of every sale donated to support the charity's lifesaving work.

For commissions contact Rosalind on **07838 219747** or email **Wilkinsos@outlook.com** 

# Choirs Captivate Eastbourne

LOCAL choirs' powerful performance raises £1,800 for charity.

By Gail McKay

"Voices in Harmony," the first joint-collaboration concert between Hailsham Voices and Eastbourne Voices Pop Choirs, proved to be an exceptional showcase of community talent.

With 150 singers on stage, the soldout event at *The Welcome Building*, Eastbourne offered an uplifting and profoundly moving evening of music. The choirs filled the venue with rich, spine-tingling harmonies and a warm, infectious energy that resonated throughout the audience. Local dignitaries were among the 400 attendees who rose to their feet in a well-earned standing ovation, celebrating a night that also raised an impressive £1,800 for *The Beachy Head Chaplaincy Team*.

#### All abilities welcome

Eastbourne Voices is a fun, friendly and uplifting community pop choir open to people of all abilities, you are welcome to come along for a free trial session. Contact details are on the website.





There are two choirs, Hailsham Voices and Eastbourne Voices.
Abbie is planning to expand within Sussex. If you would like to see a new community pop choir in your area then please contact Abbie.

#### **Founder**

Abbie Marsden trained as a singer at *The Royal Academy of Music*. She has enjoyed a busy career in London & East Sussex teaching both singing and piano, as well as continuing to work as

a professional singer. Abbie has sung with famous artists such as Michael Ball & Alfie Boe, Ellie Goulding and Andrea Bocelli and worked on TV shows such as *Strictly Come Dancing* and *The Voice*.

#### **Events**

Sunday 14th December, 2:30pm – RNLI's Carols With The Crew, Sovereign Harbour.

eastbournevoices@hotmail.com www.eastbournevoices.co.uk

# Richard returns for 20th anniversary

WILMINGTON is where Richard Durrant first performed his Christmas concerts back in 2005 – and he's coming back in December for the 20th anniversary.

By Laura Raymond

The date is Saturday 20th December at St Mary's & St Peter's Church, in the village.

The performance will include traditional and classical carols, their own take on *Frankie Goes to* 

Hollywood's The Power of Love and Richard's latest single, Ice Garden.

#### **Guitar virtuosos**

Composer & concert artist Richard Durrant is one of the leading guitar virtuosos of his generation, and his annual Christmas tour is his heartfelt expression of a British Isles Midwinter much loved by audiences throughout the UK.



For this year's Songs of the Solstice tour, Richard is once again joined on stage by singer Amy Kakoura, harpsichordist Howard Beach and two of Richard's musical children Daisy Durrant & Django Durrant.

He said: "The past 20 winters have been the most magical part of my life spent playing music and watching my four wonderful children grow up.

"As toddlers they would join me on stage and sing along. Now, variously,

they come with me on the tour and contribute new songs and ideas.

"We all share a respect for both the Pagan and Christian aspects of midwinter and love spending these mystical weeks with Amy and our extended musical family."

Go to www.richarddurrant.com

You can buy tickets here richarddurrant.com/events

# Dancing With The Moon

EASTBOURNE author Gabrielle (Gabi) Yetter has released her new poetry collection, Dancing With The Moon.

By **Peter Lindsey** 

This is Gabi's second poetry book, following *And The Clouds Parted* (2022), which was written during the Covid lockdown.

All profits from the new collection will be donated to *Eastbourne Foodbank* for the next 60 days, where Yetter has volunteered since 2022. The book is available on *Amazon* in paperback, e-book and audiobook.

Dancing With The Moon features poems rooted in personal experiences, quiet observations, and real-life encounters. They explore hope, positivity, and the beauty found in everyday experiences.

Every poem in the collection grew from an emotion, encounter, or real-life moment. Gabi's work at the Eastbourne Foodbank also fuelled her desire to give something back to the community.

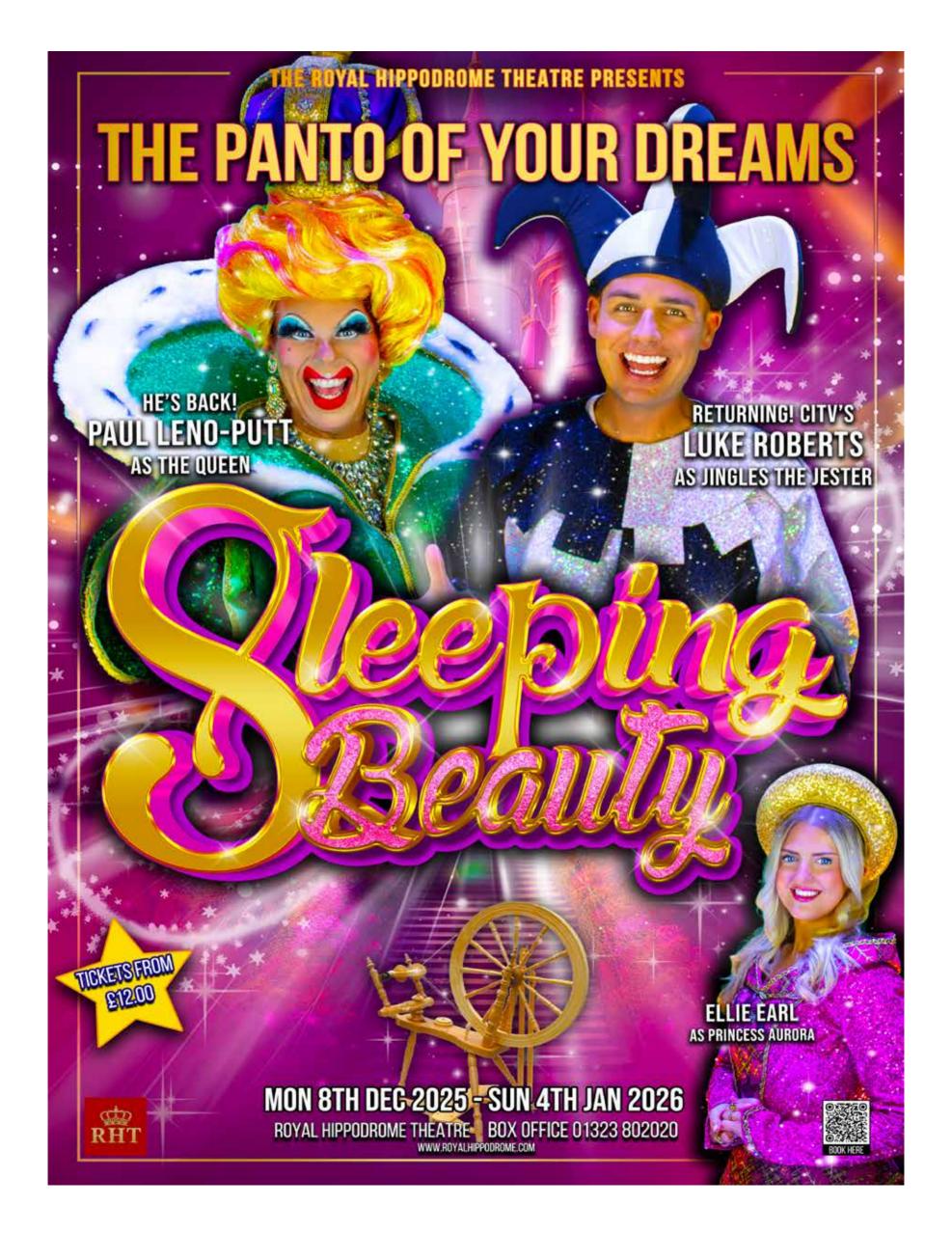
"My poems are designed to feed the soul," said Gabi. "So it felt right to help feed disadvantaged people in our town. Giving the proceeds to Eastbourne Foodbank felt like the most natural

extension of what this book is about: kindness and community."

Jess Holliday, CEO of *Eastbourne Foodbank*, said, "We are deeply



grateful for Gabi's generous gift of this book of poems, which will change people's lives in Eastbourne. Food for the soul and food for the body."





# Green and pleasant

AS we approach Christmas at a rate of knots, we also reach the shortest day of the year on the 21st. I must confess to not enjoying working outside in the cold and wet. It really is a case of wrapping up well and keeping warm outside. Remember to check your plants winter protection and if you have a greenhouse make sure the heater is working, both really important jobs at this time of the year. Hopefully, there are not too many tasks left to do outside, so you will have time for some fireside garden planning or simply viewing the garden from the house.

#### By Geoff Stonebanks

This is the month when cold, wet, windy winter weather can damage trees, shrubs and garden structures such as trellis. Be warned and take time to check things out, aiming to improve shelter for important plants, staking those that will benefit, mulch where needed and wrap pots where necessary!

#### Bringing the outside inside

If you have holly growing in the garden, as I do, why not harvest branches with berries for making Christmas garlands and wreaths or just fill vases for a festive touch indoors. It helps to stand the berry covered twigs in a bucket of

water until you're ready to use them. The perfect combination is the use of both holly and ivy over the Christmas period and I'm lucky to have a supply of both. You can always use spray cans of silver and gold paint to liven up the natural look too. Why not position along mantelpieces or create a centre piece for the dining table. Add a few baubles and maybe some ribbon and you'll be amazed what a difference it can make and at a fraction of the cost of shop bought decorations.

#### **Outdoor Christmas Tree**

If you have some time on your hands, why not have a go at making your own special Christmas tree for any

feathered friends around your plot? I have many birds visiting the garden at *Driftwood*, notably robins. Some years I place a small tree, where it can easily be seen from the house and then dress it with home-made edible decorations. Get yourself a large needle and thread with some garden twine or string. Purchase some nuts, I find the best to use are peanuts in shells as you can pass the needle through the shell with some ease, keep going until you have an edible garland for the birds and hang on the tree.

You can also use oranges and lemons by creating small hanging baskets in which to place bird food. Cut fruit in half, remove flesh, leaving the peel. String the halves up with twine or wire, fill with bird food and hang on the tree. This year, I've got a pretty Nordman Fir tree sitting on the back patio, dressed with a few outdoor baubles and some fairy lights. It is a lovely festive sight viewed from the house, you can see it in the header.

#### Providing interest in the Winter garden

One of the great joys I have each winter is appreciating how useful the rusted metal features I have amassed over the years have become. For me, they truly enhance the space, not only do they provide real drama when there are fewer flowering plants around to please the eye, they really come into their own on a cold winter morning when the frost clings to the edges and defines the piece. On the relatively rare occasions it happens, they look even more dramatic after a fall of snow. Maybe invest in some pieces for your plot, perhaps even ask for one as a Christmas gift!

#### Jobs to do in the garden

If you have any empty borders, they can be dug over ready for next year's planting. It is always a good idea to group potted plants together, in a sheltered spot in the garden, to protect them from the harshest winter weather that is likely to come. I always find there is a debate over whether to leave the faded flower heads on your hydrangeas or not. I do reckon that left until spring they will help to provide frost protection to the swelling buds further down the stems. I've got about ten different hydrangeas around the garden at Driftwood and tend to leave the old head on until spring.

#### **Christmas gifts**

Friends always ask what they can buy me for Christmas. In my view, it's an easy choice if you are a gardener! You can never have enough secateurs or proper, practical gloves. So, if you have a family member who loves gardening, I'm sure they would appreciate either. There are also many innovative ideas for gardeners promoted online and through social media to choose from as well. Wishing all my readers a very Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Read more of Geoff's garden at **www.driftwoodbysea.co.uk of** follow both him and the garden on social media.

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.





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