

Wheathampstead Magazine

by
MiniMagazines
& Brochures

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May 2021



Street Light Switch Off
Community Library Reopens
Local Resilience Winning the Fight?

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WELCOME

I hope that, by now, you will have all been enjoying a little more freedom as the Government's 'road map' continues to deliver on its promise to lift various restrictions - we also have May 17th to look forward to when, hopefully, even more elements of our old lives come back on stream.

Readers may recall from last month's issue, that local school Beech Hyde is 50 years old this year and now we've heard from Assistant Head Julie Field about the planting of 50 trees as part of the celebrations, and *MiniMagazines* shares a few letters from our post bag about recent articles.

With a few changes, the Wheathampstead Community Library opens its doors once again and roving editorial contributor Jordine investigates the early switch off of street lights and how it affects local people.

Also, we hear from Wheathampstead residents, Paul & Becky Davis, about the new state of the art combat sports centre which has just opened locally for the community to enjoy. The *What's On* section has more to offer for the first time in a while and *Health Matters* highlights the risks and symptoms of Liver disease.

Eve Atkins

eve@minimagazines.co.uk

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Useful Phone Numbers

Doctors Surgery: Marford Road

01582 832258

Dentist: Marford Road 01582 833 408

Gas Emergency: 0800 111 999

Electricity Emergency: 0800 404 090

Power Cuts: 105

Healthline: 111

Police non emergency: 101

Parish Council: 01582 832541

County Council: 0300 123 4040

Local Pharmacy: 01582 832102

Help Lines

Mind: 0845 766 0163

Advice for Mental Health Issues

The Samaritans: Freephone 116123

Confidential non-judgemental emotional support

Alcoholics Anonymous:

0845 769 7555

Stroke helpline: 0845 303 3100

Advice from the Stroke Association

Age Concern: 0800 00 99 66

Frank: 0800 77 66 00

Advice about drugs from professional advisers

Beating Eating Disorders:

0845 634 1414

Cruse Day by Day: 0844 477 9400

Help and support for people who are bereaved

Macmillan CancerLine:

0808 808 2020

Autism Helpline: 0845 070 4004

Did you know?

The British drink more than 60 billion cups of tea a year- that's around 100 million each day. While tea has been around for a long time, it became very popular in British culture in the 1700s, and by the middle of the 18th century, tea had replaced gin as the most popular drink in Britain.

Make the Most of May

Quite a lot of those pesky restrictions are set to be lifted on the 17th AND there are two bank holidays; one at the beginning (3rd) and one at the end (31st). There's sure to be something to do locally, even if its enjoying your favourite food and drink at one of our splendid local hospitality establishments.

May, 1937

The German airship Hindenburg burst into flames at 7:20 p.m. as it neared the mooring mast at Lakehurst, New Jersey, probably after a spark ignited its hydrogen core. Rapidly falling 200 feet to the ground, the hull of the airship incinerated within seconds. Thirty six of the 97 passengers and crew were killed.



Thought for the Month

We tend to forget that happiness doesn't come as a result of getting something we don't have, but rather of recognizing and appreciating what we do have.

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WHAT'S ON...

regularly (in normal times)

• Foodbank

Confidentiality is assured. Community Centre, Hillydyke Road 12.30 - 2.30 every Thursday. Tel: 01727 613019

• Recreation for the Retired

Memorial Hall, All welcome. Table tennis, darts, crib, scrabble. 2pm-4pm most Fridays.

• Wheathampstead Dementia Wellbeing Group ('WDWG') Coffee Morning

The Mead Hall, every 1st and 3rd Wednesday, 10.30am - 12pm Margaret 01582 832368 Isobel 01582 832439

• W.A.S.P.S. After School Play-Scheme

Fantastic, affordable and experienced child-care before and after school each day, Beech Hyde Primary School, www.wasps-asc.org

• Quiz

Have a great evening at the weekly quiz every Wednesday 8 p.m. The Swan Wheathampstead

• Harpenden Riding for Disabled(RDA) Group

Subsidised lessons to local people (over the age of 5) with physical disabilities or learning difficulties. Thursday 5.15-6.10pm & 6.10-7pm term time. Greenacres, Batford. Tim 07778 519569 tim@stagenhoe.co.uk.

• ALF Bingo for over '60s

Mead Hall, 6.30 for 7pm, last Tuesday of the month. Good company, cash prizes, raffle Lifts available Phone Colin on 07790 639735.

• Herts Musical Memories

Singing for people with dementia & their carers/loved ones. Monday mornings 10.30am - 12.00 midday. Memorial Hall Call Wendy Hyams 07984 588532 or Kerry Brabant 0208 9505757

• Harpenden Farmers Market

The market has moved to the Common opposite the Public Halls in Harpenden in order for social distancing measures to be easily observed and once inside the market, there will be a one-way route that attendees must follow. There's approximately 70 stalls offering a huge selection of produce from Fish to meat pies and meat through to Preserves - pickles, jams and honey and all sort in between. Harpenden Farmers' Market takes place on the 4th Sunday of the month from 10.00am to 2.00pm

Please contact event organisers for full details, ticket prices and availability. To add your events please email: info@minimagazines.co.uk

WHAT'S ON Coronavirus: Dates and times may have changed, events may be cancelled or postponed so please do check with venue before you set out.

• Lemsford Fete 2021 3rd May

First held in 1959, this splendid event provides a true English country fete experience which includes maypole dancing, coconut shy, live music, Pimms, local ale tent and teddy bear zip wire. A mixture of stalls, old fashioned games, mouth-watering food and drink, and entertainment to enjoy. Monday 3rd May 2021 - Noon to 4pm St John's C of E School Lemsford www.lemsfordfete.co.uk/whats-on/ tickets

• Arts Trail now until 8th May

Last year, 44 talented artists showcased their work during the Hertford Art Trail. Each artist was allocated a prime town centre location to exhibit and sell artwork for a month-long period. The pop-up art exhibition venues will be located around the town centre, where venues consist of a multitude of retailers including bars and cafes, beauty salons, clothes retailers & gift shops. visit Hertford Town and Tourist Information Centre, to pick up a trail map or download one from GoHertford/events. Now - Saturday 8 May www.hertford.gov.uk/events.Hertford Town Centre

• Bluebell Walks and Self-Serve Teas 2nd & 9th May

Take a walk through the cowslip meadows to the bluebell woods - then return to the outdoor cafe area for self serve teas and organic, home-made refreshments. MUST BOOK, via bookings page of our website. Groups of 6 or 2 families ONLY. 1.30 - 3.30 pm. or 4 - 6pm. Spring Meadow Farm, Whelpley Hill, Berkhamsted, Sunday 2nd May, Sunday 9th May https://faithworkstrust.org.uk/

• Bowling for Everyone 9th May

Come and try bowls. "Beginners Welcome" Friendly members to help you play. Woods provided but flat shoes please. Come and have fun on Sunday 9th May from 2pm. Kimpton Bowls Club, Recreation Ground, Kimpton.

• King Lear 12th - 15th May Virtual Event

A live - streamed online ticketed only performance of a modern abridged adaptation of the Shakespeare classic play King Lear via YouTube Channel, streamed from the Pump House Theatre Tickets www.ticketsource.co.uk/jo-emery-productions Wednesday 12th -Saturday 15th May tel: 0333 666 3366

• The Manor House, Ayot St Lawrence - Open Garden for NGS 16th May

A 6-acre garden set in mature landscape around Elizabethan Manor House (not open). 1-acre walled garden incl glasshouses, fruit and vegetables, double herbaceous borders, rose and herb beds. Herbaceous perennial island beds, topiary specimens. Parterre and temple pond garden surround the house. 11am - 5pm Sunday 16th May The Manor House, Ayot St Lawrence, Welwyn

• Grease the Musical Audition 22nd, 23rd May

Are you aged 9-21 years? Do you love to Sing, Dance and Act? Do you want to work with theatre professionals to put on a full-scale musical in just two weeks? The aim of The West End Summer Experience is to provide up to 100 youngsters aged 9 - 21 with the opportunity to work together in a professional theatre with like-minded individuals. To Apply for a FREE audition slot please contact us and apply www.smashartstheatrecompany.co.uk RSSKL Theatre, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Saturday 22nd & Sunday 23rd May tel: 07825395613

• Mackerye End House - Open Garden for NGS 28th May

15 acres of formal gardens, parkland and woodland, front garden set in framework of formal yew hedges. Victorian walled garden with extensive box hedging and box maze, cutting garden, kitchen garden and lily pond. Evening opening 6-9pm Friday 28th May. Open for charity. Mackerye End House, Harpenden, AL5 5DR

• Hertford Castle Enchanted Fairy Trail 29th May

Resurfacing for just one week, Hertford Castle fairies and pixies have conjured up some new mystical displays for all visitors to enjoy You are invited to follow the enchanted fairy trail through the picturesque castle grounds, uncovering the treasures of the fairy and pixie community hidden around the ancient trees, flower gardens, and castle walls. 6.30am to 9pm. This is a free self-guided trail event. www.hertford.gov.uk/events From Saturday 29th May - 6 June The Castle Hertford tel: 01992 552 885

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www.hertshelp.net

03001234044

Health advice and information

www.nhs.uk/coravirus

Local council services

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

Domestic abuse

www.hertssunflower.org

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse helpline

08 088 088 088

Financial Advice

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/benefits

Citizens Advice

03444111 444

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Avoiding Scams

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Volunteering

www.volunteering.org.uk

Coronavirus:

MiniMagazines has received the following Local Resilience Forum update, via Healthwatch Hertfordshire, the consumer champion for health and social care.

NB: information correct at times of going to press

Whilst we now have some freedoms to meet outside and to enjoy taking part in organised outdoor sport, it's still important that Hertfordshire residents continue acting sensibly to ensure we keep transmission rates of COVID suppressed as much as we can. By continuing to play our part and remembering to keep doing the basics – Hands, Face, Space – we can help make sure we reach the next stage on the roadmap out of COVID.

COVID-19 vaccination programme

Vaccination figures have reached more than 750,000 for Hertfordshire, as the focus continues on vaccinating people in cohorts 1-9, including the increasing number of people who are due their second doses. Around 4,500 second doses have been carried out in care homes (as at 1st April) which is around 40% of the total. Work will continue to deliver second doses to remaining residents at their 12-week mark. Hertfordshire GP practices are working hard to encourage those last few eligible patients in priority groups to take up the offer of vaccination.

More people added to priority list

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) advised that people over 16 years of age who live with severely immunosuppressed adults – including people with HIV, or cancer, should also now be offered the COVID-19 vaccination. This is in response to evidence which has recently emerged which suggests that COVID-19 vaccinations may not be as effective in those adults who are immunosuppressed as it is in others. By vaccinating their adult household contacts, the aim is to reduce the risk of infection for immunosuppressed people. GP practices have started the process of contacting patients who are immunosuppressed, to identify people in their

Local Resilience Forum

household who are now eligible to receive the jab.

Other NHS updates

Both East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust and West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust are seeing high numbers of patients with non-COVID symptoms. As a reminder, if you need health help please use NHS 111 online in the first instance (www.111.nhs.uk) or call 111 for free at any time. If you are assessed as needing an appointment with a doctor or other health professional, this can be made for you. West Herts Hospitals NHS Trust hosted a visit from Care Minister Helen Whately recently who met with frontline staff to hear about their experiences of the pandemic. The minister also learned about the trust's ambitions for its hospital redevelopment programme.

COVID

testing

COVID testing continues to be available to anyone who has symptoms. These tests can be booked online at: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test> or by calling 119. Rapid tests (Lateral Flow Tests) are also available for particular groups of people who don't have symptoms: parents of school-aged children and those in school bubbles and any key and essential workers who can't work from home. Community pharmacies are now being encouraged to sign up to a national 'community collect' scheme, enabling them to distribute home test kits free to anyone who is asymptomatic. 500 organisations in Hertfordshire have also signed up to enable rapid testing in their workplace. There has been a change in policy so that anyone who has a positive rapid test result in an assisted site, such as the community testing sites, must also now

book a PCR test. This is to confirm the rapid test result and will also help with finding variants. It's very reassuring to see that the vast majority of people are self-isolating as they need to, either because they have tested positive for COVID-19 themselves, or have been told they must do so by NHS Test and Trace. In mid-March, on a special 'self-isolation support day' around 750 visits were made to Hertfordshire residents. On the day, 89% of those visited were found to be self-isolating in line with requirements. Timed to coincide with



the government's roadmap towards easing and exiting lockdown, the visits helped to check on people's health and wellbeing - and were a good way of raising awareness of the help available if they needed it, while they were not able to leave the house.

Supporting our communities

People who are clinically extremely vulnerable to COVID are now no longer being advised to shield. The Volunteer and People Assistance Cell (VPAC) will continue to provide support to both clinically extremely vulnerable residents in need and residents who

Continued on page 11

The Story Frog Classes at Mead Hall!

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Continued from page 9

have been identified as having to self isolate, in partnership with HertsHelp and other voluntary sector and statutory partners. The principle contact point for support and signposting is HertsHelp, on 0300 123 4044 or by email at info@hertshelp.net. Herts Help can make referrals to the Hospital and Community Navigation Service, volunteer support through Community Help Hertfordshire, Hertswise dementia support, Advocacy services and other appropriate voluntary and community services. The COVID Information Champion Project, led by Communities Help Hertfordshire (CHH) has now recruited more than 250 champions across Hertfordshire. Films in eight different languages to encourage vaccine take up have been completed and have been made widely available on YouTube <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgtazLRY5Zd-yrK9YZzsEukHC4SmQ4mO0> Communities 1st and partners have continued to recruit volunteers to provide crucial support with both the vaccination centres and Lateral Flow Testing in schools. More than 4,300 volunteers have now signed up, committing to provide almost 60,000 hours of support for vaccination sites in a variety of roles, from stewarding to administration. Thank you to those volunteers for giving up their time.

Policing update

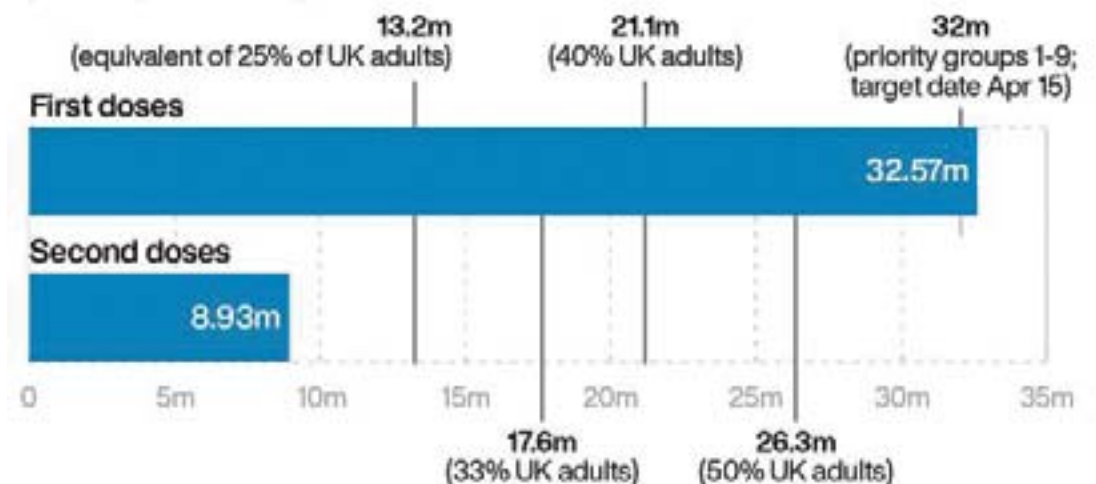
With the return of the 'Rule of six', police are keen that people remain responsible and follow the roadmap out of lockdown. Up to six people or two households can meet outside. Officers are still out on patrol policing coronavirus regulations using the well-established four Es approach of engaging, explaining and encouraging people to comply with the rules and using the final E of enforcement as a last resort. Additional 'hot spot' patrols will continue with officers investigating and responding to reported breaches as necessary, liaising with council COVID marshals, environmental health and trading standards officers. If you believe someone may be breaching the COVID-19 regulations, you can report information online, speak to an operator in the Force Communications Room via our online web chat or call the non-emergency number 101.

Economic Recovery

The Volunteer Business Support Scheme has been extended to support even more businesses to bounce back from COVID-19 and EU Transition. The scheme is delivered by Hertfordshire Growth Hub in partnership with the University of Hertfordshire and will now continue until November 2021. It is part of Hertfordshire LEP's £3.28m Business Support Package.

Covid-19 vaccine doses in the UK

(as of April 15 2021)



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Mail Box Share

MiniMagazines often gets feedback from readers in one way or another, usually in a positive way I'm pleased to say. This month, we've picked a few interesting examples from our mail box to share.

Diet and Light

Thank you for the magazine and the interesting articles. I read, with interest, the article on Macular Degeneration and wish to add some pertinent comments.

You omitted the two most important preventative measures that can, and of course, should be taken by everyone, especially those patients "at risk". Firstly: Diet. Diet should be rich in antioxidants and luteins. Each week there should be two portions of kale/spinach and blueberries/cranberries, as well as taking a daily antioxidant supplement.

Secondly: Blue Light. This is sunlight and reflected light from water and snow. Sunglasses should always be worn in these conditions, especially children. 50% of damage from the sun occurs in the first 15 years of life!

Thank you again for the magazine, and I trust that you do not mind me pointing out the omissions from a very interesting and informative article. *Mr. P.L.*



Green Waste

Re the green waste charge. But of course Liberal Democrat councillor Rowlands doesn't live in an area where he has to worry about the already enormous amount fly-tipping, it won't happen on his door step, or at the end of his street, but without any doubt, it will occur more frequently around the rural spots. Thus increasing the expenditure of the council as they have to clear

it up. And like others involved in the 'political sphere' some might even be able claim the charge back on expenses... And Covid related ??? But as most people might already be aware of, the green waste is processed and made into organic compost and people who are fond of gardening buy it back, so where is the loss? *Mr P.E.*



Positive Stories

I always read and enjoy the magazine and was particularly pleased to read the article about Chips Away and their positive attitude toward employing a profoundly deaf mobile technician. I do know personally how restrictive significant hearing loss can be. In all the doom and gloom that seems to be around us these days, it was refreshing to read this company's view that hearing loss and deafness doesn't necessarily hamper a person's ability to do a job – and the profoundly deaf man that they have employed has clearly proved that. Let's have more positive stories please. *Mrs J.L.*



Looking For Fun or a Challenge or Both?

If you've ever thought that fencing was an elite sport or that you have to be young, fit and able bodied to get involved with any kind of combat sport, think again!

It's actually been possible for a number of years for anyone to take part, from the very mobile to the disabled and from the young to the old – the UK has both standard and wheelchair fencing champions. So, if you have an interest along with a willingness to try it, you may just find that you love it.

MiniMagazines met up with Paul and Becky Davis to hear more about the new Hertfordshire Combat Centre which has just opened for local people to enjoy.

For Paul Davis, his love for fencing and combat sports probably began when he won a fencing scholarship to Newcastle University more than

10 years ago. Paul went on to start the Paul Davis Fencing Academy, which now has more than 950 members and has developed training schemes and sessions for 38 local schools and it's growing all the time.

More recently, with a passion for ensuring equal opportunity for everyone in combat sport, Paul has joined fellow Directors Maria Jose Faustino, Becky Davis and Andy Docherty to launch the Hertfordshire Combat Centre. Supported by Sport England, Veolia Environmental Trust and Paul Davis Fencing Academy Ltd, their goals are to encourage and develop community interest and involvement particularly amongst the young and all under- represented groups.

Paul, Becky and the team have connected with other like minded combat sports clubs and professionals who share a similar vision, and



HERTFORDSHIRE COMBAT CENTRE

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already, centre visitors can get involved in various mixed activities.

A key aim of this state of the art combat centre is to provide the resources to run professional and successful sessions suitable for all ages and abilities across various combat sports from fencing to karate, Jiu-Jitsu, to fitness classes and many elements in between.

But Hertfordshire Combat Centre is not just for sport, it's for personal development too. The centre is also working to create a first class learning environment that works as a partnership for individuals, Hertfordshire schools as well as community networks.

The group plan to provide a bespoke Leadership and Coach Education Scheme supporting young adults in developing key business skills and gaining coaching qualifications. Educational support through Youth Connection channels will also take place through Work Experience and Apprenticeships.

It's a brand new and rather impressive space.



Operated remotely, the main floor of the new Combat Centre is fully equipped to offer LED floor screens for the various sports and changes both colour and area at the touch of a digital pad.

It's possible to book a series of lessons at various levels and, whilst equipment is generally provided, as you progress there will be opportunity and help to buy your own if you prefer.

The centre has all appropriate facilities including showers and

kit storage and there's also a cafe where you can sit and watch the sports taking place below or take some time to just enjoy a cuppa and a snack. Quite close to St Albans Town, the centre is easy to find and there's plenty of parking too.

Whether you are looking for a new fun hobby, or you want to find something challenging and stimulating to get involved with, a visit to the centre for you, your son or daughter, your school or club is sure to offer a benefit as there are memberships and sessions to meet most needs.


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Street Light Switch Off

Is the early switch-off of street lights negatively impacting the mental health and personal safety of residents?

This year marks a decade since Hertfordshire County Council introduced the early switch-off of street-lights – a cost-cutting measure intended to save the taxpayer £1million a year and lower the district's carbon footprint. But although residents have grown accustomed to part-night lighting, the recent killing of Sarah Everard, (a 33-year-old marketing executive from London killed whilst walking home), has prompted locals to once again argue the Council's controversial decision to reduce street-lighting.

Under the existing policy, 60 per cent of West Hertfordshire is plunged into full darkness after 1am – with the remaining 40 per cent of full lighting reserved for A roads, areas with comparatively

high crime rates and neighbourhoods with traffic calming measures - and operational between dusk and 6am.

The Council plans to convert all conventional orange lighting to LED white lights by the summer and according to a spokesperson for Herts County Council, the updated lighting will “provide greater colour recognition, improving visibility for highway users on roads and pavements.” Over the last 10-years, 113,000 lights have been switched over – reducing the demand for energy by 50 per cent and lowering carbon emissions by 60 per cent.

But despite eco-efforts, local groups are using online forums to voice their concerns over public safety in the area- with some calling the scheme an “unintentional curfew” and LED's a “threat to

public health and wellbeing.”

A recent community poll revealed that out of 100 Wheathampstead residents, 30 per cent agreed with the enforced policy whilst 80 per cent said the absence of light caused them to feel more vulnerable. Some who completed the survey said they have consciously planned social outings around the hours of darkness or had purposely purchased personal safety equipment (such as torches, alarms, and reflective clothing) as a crime prevention measure.

In 2018, research by Public Health England revealed high levels of blue light found in LED's

caused long term eye damage, interference with sleep quality and affected daytime alertness – concluding that the UK's new street-lighting schemes had the potential to cause long-term health

problems.

Minimagazines reporter, Jordine Bartlett met with locals to hear their views on the part-night lighting scheme.

Mrs Davis, the owner of a sports startup said: “I am aware of how dark it is when I return home late – particularly in the alley which connects The Hill and Wick Avenue. “I walk the long way around if I have to and consciously plan my route home, which makes for a stressful way to end an evening.”

Young people were also keen to express their views. Amy, a recent law graduate explained her worries. “I want to enjoy time out with friends, without fearing the worst – but walking around in pitch black makes me an easy target. We asked whether she had made any adjustments. “I avoid

by Jordine Bartlett

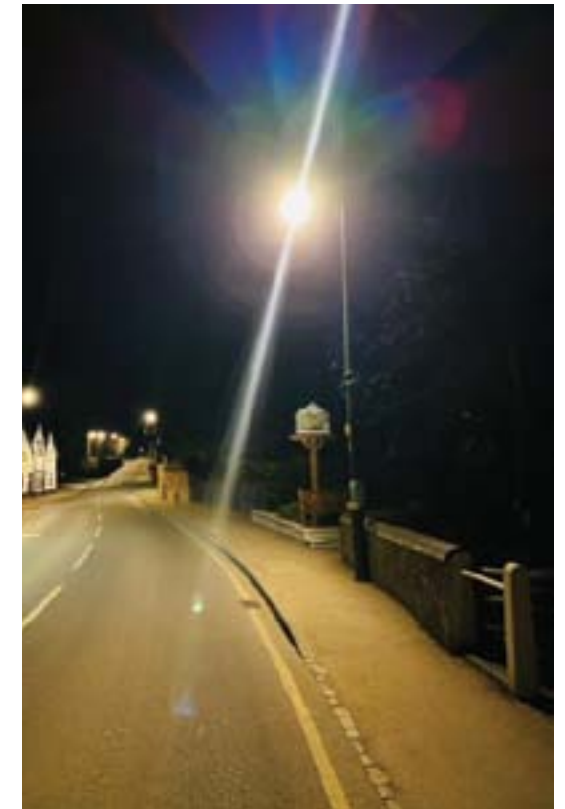



local areas where there's no lighting or run to my front door when exiting a taxi with my keys at the ready. “My anxiety has increased over the years and I sometimes avoid going out altogether.”




Other residents were, however, in favour of the switch-off. Mr Davies recently moved to the area and found the dimming of lights to be “nice” and said: “Neither I nor my wife feels uncomfortable. “It's a safe village and I don't see the problem.”

Mrs Patel, a mother of one, who also recently moved to the village, had a different view. “It's a silly idea and counteracts the green initiative, as I am now more inclined to take a taxi.” She went on to say: “My daughter is only three, but I know I will become more conscious of the impact it may have on her as she gets older.”

Child safety ranked highly among those we spoke to. Mr Whiting told us: “Although the scheme hasn't personally affected me, I am mindful of it when my children go out.” We asked whether he had taken any measures to increase their safety. “Yes, I always tell them to call when they're leaving their location and I will meet them at the other end or else pick them up. As a parent, it can become worrying, especially in light of recent news.”






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Local Library to Reopen

Traditionally, local Libraries provide people with all sorts of opportunities, not least a sense of place for people to gather and interact. At the library it's possible to find jobs, explore medical research, experience new ideas and, of course, to get lost in wonderful stories from the many books on offer. There are also various examples of music, films and databases available to meet the wide-ranging interests of local people.

So, of course, the services of our local community library have been sorely missed over recent months and it's great news to hear that their doors will be open again soon, albeit still in a limited way.

The Wheathampstead Community Library volunteers are now all busily doing their on-line re-training for the re-opening of the Library, which is likely to be May, unless there are changes required by the Government. The Library has to pass a 'Covid Secure' certification, which is happening imminently. Just like other public services, when the library does re open there will be certain changes. These will include a fifteen minute browse time for customers, the use of only one computer, which must be pre-booked in one hour slots; a limit of only 8 people, including



staff in the Library at any time and a new 'Meet and Greet' system at the front door.

As with all buildings there will be social distancing, mask wearing and hand sanitising. Unfortunately, groups will not restart and people will not be able sit and read newspapers or books. The opening hours will be slightly shorter, 2pm to 5pm on Monday through to Thursday and 10am to 1pm on Saturday.

Spokesperson Chrissie Chadney said: "Volunteers will be providing all the services that they can offer and you will be very welcome back at your Library. Once Government restrictions are lifted further, we hope to extend the services we can offer."





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southherts@visiting-angels.co.uk



50 Trees for 50 Years

This year Beech Hyde School and Nursery celebrates its 50th Birthday. In early March the children and staff of Beech Hyde Primary School planted a tree nursery of 50 saplings: This first of many celebrations was to create the tree nursery of 50 native saplings to provide a fun and inspiring outside learning space for the children where they will learn about science, ecology, the environment, climate change and the importance of the natural world.

Julie Field, Assistant Head told *MiniMagazines*: "2021 is a great year of celebration for our school as it is our 50th birthday! We want our pupils to be avid protectors of the native trees in our community and enjoy the new nursery, and we look forward to sharing our sapling growth story."

The new saplings planted are English Oak, Hawthorn, Hazel and Crab Apple and have been kindly donated by Earth Restoration, a charity that supports the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

The Earth Restoration Service (ERS) was established in 2001, by Peter Phelps, following his attendance of the Earth Restoration Conference. Peter saw an opportunity to encourage positive ecological action at a local level whilst inspiring the world's citizens to play their part in rehabilitating the natural health of their environments. The Earth Restoration Service has, since the beginning, been engaged with three main areas to restore the environment; tree planting, river restoration and the rehabilitation of wildflower meadows. Their approach is one of proactive collaboration with schools, community groups, other charities, businesses, landowners and government agencies to create an alliance addressing the challenges of regenerating the Earth.

Since the beginning, the ERS has served over 750 schools across the UK and some further afield, planting over 60,000 new trees, and engaging 50,000 children and their local communities.



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Health Matters

Your Liver

The liver is just as vital an organ as the heart, but people often fail to appreciate the importance of keeping it healthy. It's larger than most people realise – it's the largest solid organ in the body, weighing around 1.8 kg in men and 1.3 kg in women.

The liver is about the size of a rugby ball and is located in the upper right of your abdomen, under the diaphragm and sits above the stomach. Liver disease and liver cancer together caused 2.5% of deaths in England in recent years. Over half of these deaths occur in those of working age.

The Office for National Statistics reports that in 2018 in England, cirrhosis and other diseases of liver were among the top 5 leading causes of death for persons aged 20 to 34 years, and the leading cause of death for those aged 35 to 49 years, accounting for more than 10% of deaths in that age group. Deaths from cirrhosis and other diseases of liver remained in the top 5 leading causes for people ages between 50 and 64 years. Since 2001, the rate of liver disease deaths has been increasing and in 2015 to 2017 it reached its highest at 18.5 per 100,000 population, which is the same as the 2016 to 2018 rate. In 2001 to 2003, the rate was 15.8 per 100,00 population, in 2016 to 2018 the death rate was 18.5

Your liver performs hundreds of jobs

One of the liver's most important functions is to break down food and convert it into energy. Carbohydrates, such as bread and potatoes, are broken down to glucose and stored mainly in the liver and muscles as glycogen. When energy is required in an emergency the liver rapidly

converts its store of glycogen back into glucose ready for use.

It also plays a vital role in fighting infections, particularly infections arising in the bowel. It does this by mobilising part of your body's defence mechanism called the macrophage system. The liver contains over half of the body's supply of macrophages, known as Kupffer cells, which literally destroy any bacteria that they come into contact with.

It works hard and can take a lot of abuse, but it

is like an elastic band – it can only stretch so far before it breaks.

When other organs in the body are damaged, a scar forms, like on the skin. However, if given the chance, the liver has an incredible ability to replace damaged tissue with new cells. It's the only organ in the body with the ability to regenerate.

Risks

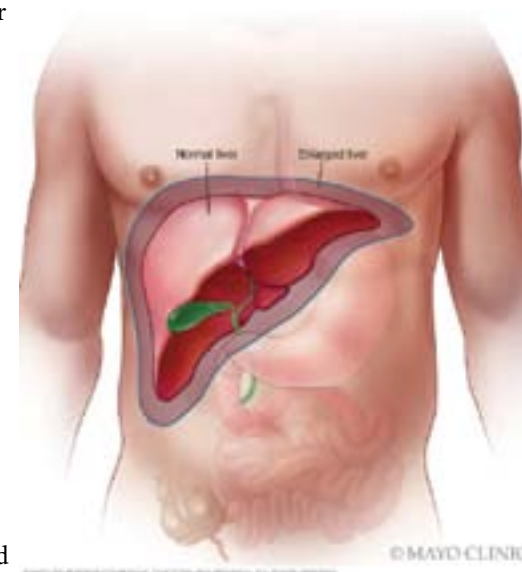
Around 90% of liver deaths are related to lifestyle and unhealthy

environments, with the vast majority of these being alcohol-related, and it is these diseases that are responsible for a 4 times increase in liver mortality over the last few decades.

Drinking alcohol can increase your risk of developing liver disease and cause irreparable damage to this very important part of your body. In fact, alcohol is a major cause of the 25% increase in deaths from liver disease in England over the last decade (from 9,231 in 2001 to 11,575 in 2009).

Overall, alcohol-related liver disease accounts for well over a third (37%) of liver disease deaths. Figures show victims of liver disease are getting younger – more than one in 10 of deaths of people in their 40s are from liver disease, most of

Continued on page 27





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Health Matters

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them from alcohol-related liver disease.

The leading causes of mortality from liver disease and liver cancer are:

- alcohol misuse
- non-alcoholic fatty liver disease related to obesity and metabolic syndrome (NAFLD)
- viral hepatitis
- autoimmune Liver Disease
- metabolic Liver disease and a variety of rarer miscellaneous causes

In addition, around half of patients with cirrhosis develop portal hypertension (increased pressure in the abdominal veins) – varicose veins in the gullet can bleed severely and are a common cause of death.

All liver diseases have a common pathway of liver damage resulted from the accumulation of scar tissue (fibrosis), and when the liver is very scarred this is termed cirrhosis. There is a misconception that cirrhosis

is end-stage and irreversible, but the liver has remarkable powers of regeneration. The scar tissue may not disappear, but if the underlying cause is removed liver function will often improve dramatically. The scar tissue becomes less important, just as the scar of an operation becomes less visible with time.

Symptoms

- Skin and eyes that appear yellowish (jaundice)
- Abdominal pain and swelling.
- Swelling in the legs and ankles.
- Itchy skin.
- Dark urine color.
- Pale stool color.
- Chronic fatigue.
- Nausea or vomiting.

Liver blood tests are designed to show evidence that abnormalities have occurred or are

occurring within the liver. Should you have any concerns, speak to your GP.

Liver disease develops silently

Liver disease develops silently with no signs or symptoms, and the tests currently done in general practice do not detect underlying liver scarring or cirrhosis. The majority of patients with cirrhosis are unaware they have liver disease until they present with often fatal complications. Public attention surrounding liver disease is not always positive due to its links to health inequalities and the stigmatisation of this disease of being 'self-inflicted'. The truth is that alcohol and obesity-related liver disease is a



combination of an underlying genetic susceptibility and environmental factors, just like diabetes or heart disease. Liver health has been suggested as a barometer for the wider health environment and that lifestyle-induced disease is the major


challenge for global health in the 21st century.

Information supplied by The British Liver Trust, Public Health Matters & www.drinkaware.co.uk/

How to Fight Liver Disease

The best way to fight liver disease is to avoid it, if at all possible

- Maintain a healthy weight
- Eat a balanced diet
- Exercise regularly
- Avoid toxins
- Use alcohol responsibly
- Avoid the use of illicit drugs
- Don't share personal hygiene items
- Wash your hands regularly
- Practice safe sex



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Local Clubs and Groups

Coronavirus:

Dates and times may have changed, events may be cancelled or postponed so please do check before you set out.

Tennis

Wheathampstead Lawn Tennis Club with 3 all-weather floodlit courts, a short tennis court and a clubhouse located in the heart of Wheathampstead on Marford Playing Fields, just alongside Bocket View. Wednesdays at 6.30pm every week, or Sundays at 10am most weeks. Visit the website for further information www.wlts.org.uk

Thursday Club for the Disabled

The Club has very clear objectives to welcome and support disabled individuals, for whatever reason, within the Parish of Wheathampstead. The Club has flourished for over 45 years and is a well-respected part of our community. We meet every Thursday in school term time, when lunch and entertainment are provided, together with valued social companionship. To find out about potential membership, call Maggie Fleetwood on 01438 832523 or David Law on 01582 833628

Wheathampstead Patient Participation Group

The objective of the group is to contribute wherever possible to health improvement in Wheathampstead. Our initiatives include highly successful weekly Pilates classes and we arrange at least three medical talks a year in the Memorial Hall. WPPG members receive a quarterly Newsletter with useful medical updates and specific details about forthcoming talks. To find out more, please visit www.wheathampsteadppg.org.uk or tel: Iain Begg on 07799 410670 or email: iain2.begg@virgin.net

Archery

Wheathampstead Archery club was founded in 1956, and has about 70 members. Always happy to welcome newcomers; beginners or experienced. Beginners will need to complete a beginner course run by our Archery GB qualified club coaches. There is a Junior Section for under-18s, but the minimum age is 10.
<http://wheathampsteadarchery.org.uk/>

Horticultural Society

'Our village 'Garden Club' meets on the first Wednesday of the month (except August and January) at 8.00pm in the Memorial Hall. We are affiliated to The Royal Horticultural, The Dahlia and The Fuchsia Societies. Each month we have interesting talks including garden travels, local gardens, good plants for our gardens and from specialist nurseries who often bring plants for sale. Coach trips and visits are held during the year and our Annual show is held in September. Visitors are very welcome.'

Continued on page 31

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Wheathampstead Community Group (WCG)

WCG seeks to support anyone in the Parish of Wheathampstead who is looking for assistance. If you or anyone that you know needs help, or you wish to volunteer for WCG, please call 07539 176481. If you need transport to hospital or the doctor, please call 07918 136870.
www.wheathampsteadwcg.org
email: Secretary@wheathampsteadwcg.org

Kimpton Bowls Club

A small, friendly outdoor bowls club located to the rear of the Recreation Ground in Kimpton. Informal bowling nights on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 6.00pm. We welcome new members of any age, to start with you only need flat soled shoes, bowls and tuition can be provided. For further details contact Brenda on 01582 623106

Cricket

Wheathampstead Cricket Club has five adult teams and an expanding colts section. Cricket is played



on Nomansland Common on Saturday and Sunday throughout the season, with occasional mid-week and evening fixtures. WCC really is a club on the up and we now have some of the best cricket facilities in the county. New players and spectators are always welcome. www.wheathampsteadcc.hitscricket.com

Wheathampstead Dramatic Society

The Dramatic Society is always looking for new members who would like to join this friendly group. For information about our next planned production visit our website: www.wheathampsteaddramaticsociety.co.uk

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Continued from page 31

Business Group

The Wheathampstead Business Group (aka "WEB") aims to proactively enhance and secure the long-term future of Wheathampstead as a dynamic trading area for the benefit of the whole community. Local businesses and residents are encouraged to get involved, support businesses locally and help make Wheathampstead a better place to live. The group meet regularly. Contact Jo 'Smiley' Hailey chair@wheathampstead.org.uk

Wheathampstead & District Preservation Society

The aims of the group are to protect what's best about the village, make the best use of its assets, object to inappropriate planning applications and take part in community initiatives. The more members we have, the louder is our voice. To join, please see our website – wheathampsteadpreservationsociety.org.uk or call 01582 833789.

Mead Quilters

The group was formed just over 26 years ago and meet on the first Tuesday morning of each month from 9.45-12 noon, visitors are welcome (fees apply) also on the third Tuesday evening of the month from 7.30pm for a guest speaker. Visitors are welcome (fees apply). For further information visit the group's website www.meadquilters.org

Wheathampstead W.I.

Lively, interesting and varied meetings. Every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm at the Mead Hall in East Lane W/stead. Social events and outings throughout the year. See W.I Noticeboard in High Street for more information or join us at our Friday Coffee Mornings 10.30-11.45am in the Mead Hall or Contact our Secretary Karen Benomran Wheathampsteadwi@outlook.com New members always welcome.

Football

Wheathampstead Wanderers was formed in 1990 by a small group of families from the village to promote and support youth football for the benefit of children and young people in Wheathampstead and surrounding areas. An FA Charter Standard

Club, granted in 2008, with around 300 boys and girls playing football.

www.wheathampsteadwanderersfc.co.uk



ALF Over 60's Socials

ALF raises money at Amwell Day at the Elephant and Castle to fund social events for the over '60s. ALF Bingo is in the Mead Hall (last Tuesday of most months - transport available). Other highlights are the summer outing (for example cream tea at Flatford Mill in Constable Country) and the Christmas party (food, drink, a great entertainer and more). Details from Colin, Amwell Local Fundraisers charity, on 07790 639735.

Dementia Wellbeing Group

Social group for those living with dementia and their carers. 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month, 10.30 to noon at the Mead Hall, East Lane AL4 8BP. Call Margaret 01582 832368 or Isobel 01582 832439

Brownies, Guides and Rainbows

1st Wheathampstead Brownies meets at St. Peter's in Gustard Wood on a Tuesday.

3rd Wheathampstead brownies meet at the Scout Hut on a Thursday.

1st Wheathampstead guides meets at Mead Hall on a Friday.

1st Wheathampstead Rainbows meet at the Scout Hut on Monday evening.

2nd Wheathampstead Rainbows meet on a Tuesday at Mead Hall

All units are currently full so anybody wishing to put their daughter on the waiting list should register at www.girlguiding.org.uk

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Continued from page 33

Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

- Beavers Cubs and Scouts are popular in Wheathampstead and meet regularly at Mead Lane in Wheathampstead as follows:
 - Beaver Colony Wednesday 5.15-6.15
 - Mead Cub Scout Pack Tuesday 6:30 - 8:00
 - Delaport Cub Scout Pack Wednesday 6:30-8:00
 - Amwell Scout Troop Monday 7:30 - 9:00
 - Lamer Scout Troop Friday 7:30 - 9:00
 - Explorer Scouts Thursday 7.30 - 9.15
- Contact Karen Oxley:-
gsl1stwheathampstead@outlook.com



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Introducing the Clover Singing Club, a new concept in ensemble singing for ladies, with emphasis on laughter and relaxation. Try us out - first session free. No need to read music. Sessions are term time on Mondays 1.15-3.15 p.m., Mead Hall, Wheathampstead. Contact Charlotte 07791 741233.

Wheathampstead History Society

The society meets at 7.15pm, the third Wednesday of each month, in the Mead Hall, East Lane.
It offers a programme of talks promoting local history & heritage, undertakes research projects and encourages and supports members' research. For further information visit our website www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk

Wheathampstead Warriors

A local running club, all abilities welcome! Come and run with us on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8pm at the Memorial Hall, Marford Road. Just turn up on any week to try us out for free.
<https://wheathampsteadwarriors.wordpress.com/>

Wheathampstead U3A

Wheathampstead U3A is open to anyone who is retired or semi-retired. No qualifications are needed, and none are given. Make friends, learn new skills or refresh old ones through our wide range of interest groups. Enjoy first-rate speakers at monthly meetings in the Memorial Hall and participate in organised outings to places of interest. Find out more at www.wheathampsteadu3a.co.uk

Art Group

Cancelled until notified
The art group get together to paint on Wednesday afternoons, 2 - 4 pm, in the Green Room, Memorial Hall, Marford Road, Wheathampstead. Beginners are welcome. Periodically we invite artists along to do demonstrations or workshops. Contact Jean Gatehouse 01582 832952 or Maureen McCaffrey 01582 833719



The Hardyng Choir

The Hardyng Choir is keen to help people experience the joy of choral singing, and welcomes new members, whatever their previous expertise, especially Altos, Tenors and Basses. We rehearse on a Monday evening 7:45pm and 9:45pm during school term time at the School Hall of St Helen's C of E Primary School, Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead.
Call Primrose Watts on 01582 460092
www.hardyngechoir.org



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