

Wheathampstead Magazine



incl. Gustard Wood & Blackmore End
wheathampsteadmagazine.co.uk

January 2025

A photograph of a paved path leading through a park-like setting. The path is made of reddish-brown paving stones and leads from the foreground towards the background. On the left side of the path, there is a green lawn with a red car parked in the distance. On the right side, there is a tall brick wall. The background is filled with various trees, some with yellow autumn leaves. The sky is blue with some light clouds.

New Year New You
Carnegies 10 years In Music
Equity Release More Popular

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WELCOME

The first thing to say, of course, is Happy New Year to everyone! That's it now for another year, Christmas is gone and 2025 has arrived, so here's to a healthy and peaceful year for us all.

To start the year off properly, we went out and about in the area to talk to local people about that old chestnut 'New Year New You' and to find out if that might now include some plans for 'Me' time.

We had some fun chatting with members of local band, *Carnegies*, who are celebrating playing together for a mammoth 10 years and celebrating in style with a party gig at the Swan pub in Wheathampstead on Saturday February 1st. We heard a little about fund raising at local school, Beech Hyde – their Fireworks display and the BHA, Beech Hyde Association, the dedicated group of parents who fundraise for the school.

With equity release becoming more popular, we spoke to local firm Equity Release Mortgage Advice Ltd to find out more about it and we heard about a study by Healthwatch Hertfordshire to look at health support for the armed forces. There is also news about free family lifestyle courses and Love it or Hate it checks out the health benefits of walking and finds some free organised walks to join.

So happy January!

Eve

eve@minimagazines.co.uk

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Friday 17th January

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Useful Phone Numbers

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Electricity Emergency: 0800 404 090

Power Cuts: 105

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Local Pharmacy: 01582 832102

Help Lines

Mind: 0845 766 0163

Advice for Mental Health Issues

The Samaritans: Freephone 116123

Confidential non-judgemental emotional support

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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

In the Desert

January 3, 1924 - British Egyptologist, Howard Carter, found the sarcophagus of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings near Luxor after several years of searching.



January 6, 2021

In Washington DC thousands attended a "Save America Rally" near the White House at the Ellipse, a park located south of the White House grounds. There, President Donald Trump and others addressed the crowd to express opposition to the certification of the Electoral College results of the 2020 presidential election which would finalise Joe Biden as the victor. Events escalated and hundreds advanced toward the United States Capitol building. They breached security perimeters and entered the Capitol building, The ensuing chaos included vandalism and violent confrontations with law enforcement and civilians, overall including five fatalities.

Did you know...

On Sunday 28th January 2024, a weather station in a Scottish village, Kinlochewe, in the north-west Highlands of Scotland hit 19.6°C. This breaks the highest temperature ever recorded in the month of January in the UK. It was also a new winter temperature record for Scotland.

Thought for January

Don't let yourself be controlled by three things:- People, Money or Past Experiences.

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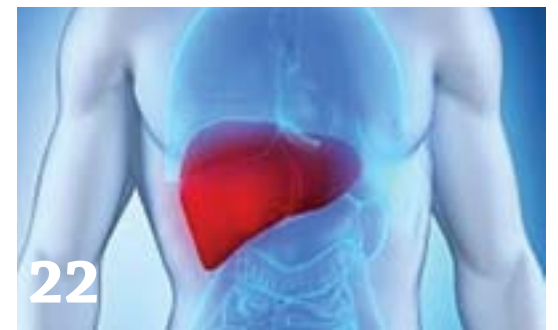
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What's On... regularly

- **Foodbank**
Confidentiality is assured. We now hold this at the Memorial Hall in Marford Road, still every Thursday but from 11:30am - 1:30pm. Tel: 01727 613019
- **Recreation for the Retired**
The Chapel Halls Brewhouse Hill All welcome. Various activities available. 2pm-4pm most Fridays
- **Wheathampstead Dementia Friendship and Support Group (WDFS) - Bluebell Club**
Meets at the Mead Hall every 1st and 3rd Wednesday (except August). All welcome. Enquiries to: Isobel Poole, 07949 630228.
- **W.A.S.P.S. After School Play-Scheme**
Fantastic, affordable and experienced child-care before and after school each day, Beech Hyde Primary School, www.wasps-asc.org
- **Quiz**
The Swan Wheathampstead. Wed 8th & 22nd January
- **Herts Musical Memories**
Singing for people with dementia & their carers/loved ones. Monday mornings 10.30am - 12.00 midday. Memorial Hall Call Wendy Hyams 07483 307545 or Kerry Brabant 020 8950 5757
- **Harpden Farmers Market**
70 + stalls running north bound along the Lower High Street from Sainsburys offering a huge selection of produce and gifts.. It's a great place to browse on the 4th Sunday of every month.
- **Community Library**
Wheathampstead Community Library Monday - Thursday 2pm - 6pm and Saturday 9am-1pm. Knit Natter & Know Craft group every Wednesday 10am-Noon. Fire Station and Library Marford Road Wheathampstead.
- **Roast & Meat Raffle**
Weekly Sundays at The Swan, Wheathampstead
- **Seniors' Bingo**
Amwell Local Fundraisers (ALF) holds monthly seniors bingo evenings in the Mead Hall last Tuesday of the month. If you need a lift to get to bingo, just let ALF know (ring Colin on 07790 639735) They will arrange for you to be collected.
- **Harpden Riding for Disabled (RDA)**
Lessons to local people (over the age of 5) with physical disabilities or learning difficulties. Wednesdays 4.15-5.00 pm & 5.00 -5.45pm early Spring through Autumn. Sandridgebury equestrian centre, Sandridge. Contact harpendenrda@yahoo.co.uk and via FB

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

What's On This Month

- **New Year Bingo 2nd January**
It's Eyes down once again for a great night of Bingo Fun at your favourite local pub in Wheathampstead Village 7.30 Thursday 2nd January at The Swan Wheathampstead.
- **Amahl and the Night Visitors 3rd January**
A delightful, hour-long opera telling the story of a poor shepherd boy and the visit of the Three Kings. From St Albans Chamber Opera soloists, chorus and orchestra, conducted by David Ireson, directed by Tim Armstrong-Taylor. The perfect event for all the family in the newly restored St Peter's Church, St Albans on Friday 3 January, 6 pm and 8 pm. Saturday 4 January at 4 pm and 6 pm. Tickets: www.ticketsource.co.uk/saco.
- **Shefford Community Market 11th January**
Up to 21 stalls running between Morrisons and the High Street, offering a diverse mix of products including consumables, crafts and local community fundraisers/awareness stalls. Each month 2 spaces to gift to a local community group/charity to use for fundraising or to raise awareness. To apply for a stall, please go to www.riverdreamevents.co.uk/stallholder-enquiries/ 9am-1pm. High Street, Shefford, SG17 5DD.
- **St Albans South Signal Box Open Afternoon 12th January**
The building has been structurally restored, painted and rewired and is now a valued community resource and heritage attraction. It has been recognised with awards from several bodies. Artwork from a short photography course, sponsored by GTR and organised by St Albans Arts Team, has been on display at the signal box. 2pm to 5pm entry is free but donations are gratefully received Sunday 12th January Ridgmont Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 3AJ sigbox.co.uk
- **75th Harpenden & Wheathampstead Gang Show 14th January**
75th Gang Show is coming! The Gang is being selected and rehearsals are underway. Singing, dancing and comedy will be returning for another year. Join the 150 Cubs, Scouts and Explorers who make up the Gang Show Cast as they provide an evening of song, dance and comedy for your enjoyment. Tuesday 14th - Saturday 18th January Tickets on sale now! Visit <https://harpندنen.gs/>
- **Pink Floyd by Candlelight at St Albans Cathedral 17th January**
Join us on the Dark Side of the Moon, for the ultimate tribute to Pink Floyd, performed by candlelight at the beautiful St Albans Cathedral. This show will be made even more special by Luke Jerram's Museum Of The Moon. The spectacular moon installation will be displayed in the room during the show. Get ready to experience some of the most iconic music of all time, like never before, as the 'Dark Side Of The Moon' album is performed in FULL! No 'Time' to waste! Book your tickets now and join us for 'The Great Gig in the Sky!' Thursday 16th, Friday 17th & Saturday 18th January at 7:30pm St Albans Cathedral, AL1 1BY <https://boxoffice.concertsbycandlelight.com/>
- **Live Music 23rd January**
If you love Folk music, Come along for Pizza and a great evening of music. Starts at 8 pm everyone welcome Thursday 23rd The Swan Wheathampstead Village.
- **Wheathampstead u3a 23rd January**
Tony Tutton is the speaker this time. Tony will take the audience on a trip through his life and love of music including his stage performances from 1953 to the present day. His talk covers his early musical influences (Skiffle, Rock & Roll etc.) his various bands, and celebrities he has met and worked with along the way. The presentation features images & great songs from 50s, 60s & 70s, together with audio and video clips that you can sing along to (and will surely bring back some nice memories). Memorial Hall at 2:00 for 2:30pm on Thursday 23rd January.
- **Live Music 1st February**
Live music from popular local band, Carnegies, Celebrating 10 years together at ths party gig playing great covers from across the music spectrum Come on down and join in the fun. 9pm Saturday 1st Februry at The Swan ,Wheathampstead Village.

To add your events please email: eve@minimagazines.co.uk
Please Note: Events, dates and times correct at time of going to press.



New Year New You

Many of us have been around for at least a few decades, so I'm not really sure that I can find yet another new me for this New Year. Actually, I don't mind the old me, the current me, but having said that, I'm all for being better, just so long as it doesn't take too much effort!

I like the idea of doing more, if I can fit more in, that is. I also like the idea of having more 'Me' time;- that's getting out and about more, going out for more walks, visiting the hairdressers and beauty salon more frequently, letting someone else cook as well as sitting around

and just reading a book.

But then, it's also got to be worth spending time appreciating all that I have got, and that includes making it to another January relatively unscathed!

I have already done some things toward that 'Me' time. There have been a

few dry and bright days recently that were good enough for walking around our lovely area. My local walk took me to the Meads, Nomansland and then I wandered around the grounds of our local church and finished up for a spot of coffee and a slice of their delicious home-made cake at Marley's Café in the village.

When it comes to walking, there are some great organised walks in and around our area that are definitely worth thinking about too, Check out page 19 for more details on local walks.

I also had a pamper session at Heaven's Above

beauty salon, the sister company to Coppertop hairdresser in Wheathampstead. The moment that I arrived for my appointment, I felt some stress just floating away, it just seemed like a very peaceful and calming place to be. The beautician, Bianca, was



just the right mix of friendly and professional and she talked to me about skin products and beauty routines too and easily answered all my question about the many treatments that are available.

I had booked for a manicure and an eyebrow shape and for the manicure, Bianca suggested a Bio Sculpture which was fantastic. There's a nail treatment to start with and then you can choose from lots of different colours and shades. The real beauty of this is that the varnish doesn't chip and your nails just grow on underneath which means that your nails always look great. My time at Heaven's Above was almost the epitome of 'Me' time. I just sat back and enjoyed everything - first the manicure and then the eyebrow shape, I loved it and will definitely be going back.

Of course, wandering around the shops can be very good for more of the 'Me' time, provided, of course, that you are on your own and you can spend as much or as little time browsing for things that you like rather than trying to please everyone else. Our local garden centre, Carpenter's, is great for that because they have lots of different departments selling lots of different things from plants and trees, to pots and bushes as well as gifts and a farm shop too. We went out and around the area to talk to local people about the premise of New Year New You and to ask if anyone had decided to make changes for the new year or have any 'Me' time planned in 2025.

Miss R. told us: "I do enjoy Christmas, but I've never been one for new years resolutions, I mean, what's the point, nobody keeps to them,

do they? And 'Me' time, Yes, I'm all for that. I've got a couple of vouchers as presents, so I'll be out indulging in some retail therapy. That's my kind of 'Me' time."

Mr and Mrs N, said "Yes, we've decided to try to go on more holidays, probably short holidays and probably in the UK, there are some smashing places to see. The great thing about holidays is that it's a new experience and there is plenty of 'Me' time to enjoy too, especially if you book lots of little trips."

Mrs B. said: "Honestly, I don't get much in the way of 'Me' time and I know that I should do more/ Life is just too short not to be a bit self indulgent sometimes. What would I do? Erm, I think that I would try to relax more, go to the hairdresser or have a manicure, that type of thing. Well, you've made me think, so I will



definitely try to have more time for myself!"

Mr D. told us: "My 'Me' time is playing golf.

I'm retired, so I can play when ever I like and honestly, I do play a couple of times a week, It keeps me at least on the verge of fit, it's good fun and great for socialising too. Perhaps I could say I want to play golf more often!, I'm not sure I'll get away with that though!"

So, if you are feeling even remotely stressed, whatever it means for you, make a plan to have some more 'Me' time - go on, you deserve it!



Building a greener Herts



Nearly a century has passed since the first Green Belt was proposed, and today their purpose, and importance, has expanded. We know green and blue spaces can help tackle issues such as air pollution, climate change, provide corridors for wildlife and improve our wellbeing. However just as their importance has increased, so have the threats they face.

New development has quadrupled

Recent CPRE research has shown that new development has more than quadrupled in recent years. There are significant challenges across the Chilterns, particularly North Herts, with the expansion of Luton Airport, proposed large housing developments to the east of Luton, and with a new Local Plan for North Herts, it is an ideal time for charities and pressure groups to place further scrutiny on planning matters in the area.

The Chiltern Society is a charity made up of volunteers who are active across the region. This army of local people champion sustainable growth, Biodiversity Net Gain and work to prevent inappropriate housing and other developments that may impact on nature.

In April 2022, the Society submitted objections to the proposed expansion of Luton Airport to allow an increase from 19 million to 32 million passengers per year. In view of the climate crisis, the environmental charity questioned whether this increase can be justified, particularly as passengers' travel habits have changed since Covid-19. The charity pointed out that if we are all to tackle climate change then there are some hard decisions to be made in relation to our individual carbon footprints, while increasing the number of flights significantly ahead of the development of more efficient and sustainable fuels does not make sense. The charity continues to monitor the development of the detailed proposals.

Planning Group looking for more help

The passionate people of the Chilterns are at the heart of the charity's work. At such a critical juncture it is on the lookout for anyone wishing to help its Planning Group to monitor planning applications in their local area and submit comments to try to influence local decision-making.

As development spirals, nature disappears and the impacts of climate change affect us all, the Chiltern Society relies on its members and volunteers to ensure it can tackle these challenges to build a green future. Look at the society's website if you would like to learn more.



Find out more

Scan the code to visit the website

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01494 771250 • office@chilternsociety.org.uk • www.chilternsociety.org.uk



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Local Update



A Sparkling Success for Education

The grounds of Beech Hyde School lit up with dazzling fireworks in a community celebration to raise funds for local schoolchildren. More than 800 local residents attended the event, which was organized and hosted by the dedicated parents of Beech Hyde children in support of the school's fundraising efforts. The evening was filled with excitement, entertainment and plenty of family fun, marking a memorable night for all. The funds raised will go directly toward enriching the educational experiences of the children, including new IT equipment and exciting school trips, as pictured above. The BHA, Beech Hyde Association is the group of parents who fund raise for the school.

and working in Hertfordshire and are a veteran, non-mobilised reservist, are currently serving or are a family of someone in this position, Healthwatch wants to hear from you.

Its study will provide a valuable opportunity to shape how care can be improved for the Armed Forces Community - and as a thank you for your time you will be given a £10 voucher for taking part.

Sign up to take part in the study and share your story.

<https://www.healthwatchhertfordshire.co.uk/stories-frontline-healthcare-and-armed-forces-community>

Continued on page 12

Help Improve Healthcare Services

Healthwatch Hertfordshire wants to hear from the Armed Forces community about their experiences of healthcare. If you are living





which includes:
 Pension credit entitlement and how to apply
 Other entitlements which may impact your pension credit
 Food and energy help
 Carer support
 Draught insulation and radiator reflectors
 Free full winter welfare check
 The charity is running the drop-in sessions in partnership with Hospital Community Navigation Service and Hertfordshire County Council.
 Memorial Hall, Marford Road, Wheathampstead
 16th January 2025 <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/hertfordshire/activities-and-events> for details

Age UK Values are:

- Care** – acting sensitively, with understanding and respect for all, especially older people
- Be effective** – achieving the best outcomes for older people for the optimum use of resources to maximise our impact
- Innovate** – seeking more effective ways to support older people, particularly using technology to improve digital inclusion
- Improve** – listening and learning from feedback

Drop In Event

Age UK Hertfordshire is running more than 100 drop-in events across the county over the winter months to raise awareness among older communities of the support available to those hit hardest by the Winter Fuel Payment changes. It seems that there is lots of support out there



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and converting that learning into better services for older people



New Scheme to Support Local Families

Beezee Families is a free, award-winning healthy lifestyle programme for the whole family. A free healthy lifestyle programmes is being offered by Beezee across Hertfordshire with the next courses to start in early 2025. Funded by Hertfordshire County Council, the scheme has a number of different sessions aimed at different ages and groups of people including families, toddlers and young children. The aim is help provide the confidence and skills needed to adopt a healthier lifestyle long term



and there is even a free creche on the Beezee Families eight-week course. Sign up for the New Year 2025 programme. Starting in January, the programme is now open and support is available both in person and online. Professionals can refer families and young people to these programmes, or you can sign up directly. To find out more visit: <https://hrt.maximusuk.co.uk/>

Community Friendly
 Many local residents will know that, whilst Wheathampstead Magazine is a free

magazine that is hand delivered to letterboxes all around our area, for many years there has been a dispenser for the magazine in Tesco in the village branch, where free copies of the magazine could also be picked up every month.

So it was with great disappointment that we learned that our magazine's dispenser had 'simply disappeared' during the recent store closure and that members of staff had 'no idea' what had happened to it and that, 'no', they would not fund a replacement. I was also informed that a similar, easy to find position near to the tills could not be found for the magazines to make copies available for our readers to pick up!

I am, however, delighted to tell you that other more community friendly local businesses are happy to make copies of the magazine available for you to pick up and they are as follows:-

- Titmuss Lamer Lane. Gustard Wood Carpenters Nursery & Farm Shop**
 St Albans Road, Sandridge
 The Swan High Street, Wheathampstead

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PLEASE TAKE A COPY

Wheathampstead Magazine
 incl. Gustard Wood & Blackmore End
wheathampsteadmagazine.co.uk

November 2024

The Gunpower Plot, Fireworks & Bonfires
Time to Get Pampered
How Does your Garden Grow?

FREE COPY

10 Years and Loving It!

It's been said that coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success. When it comes to live music, whilst the local scene is thriving, many bands still come and go, often unable to maintain

the right feel, the right excitement or the right levels of commitment to actually stay together. Working as a musician in a band covering popular songs in the local pub on a Friday or Saturday night or performing at festivals is what many local bands aim for and there are

a number of local venues that support live music. For the musicians, there's always lots of gear to be had around:- guitars, drums amplifiers, speakers, stands, microphones and miles of cables. There



are always new songs to learn and rehearsals to attend and the truth is, it's not a particularly well-paid job. So just what is the motivation for local band musicians?

Popular local band Carnegies, have been performing live together on the local circuit for an amazing 10 years. We went along to meet

them to find out how and why their band all works so well and how they plan to celebrate this terrific milestone.

They started by chance really. Rob (lead Guitar) and Andy (Keys) were invited to play for Andy's nephew's birthday party - if they could get a

band together. They quickly found Andre, (lead vocals) along with a temporary bass player and a drummer and performed at that first gig. The reception they received gave them the confidence to keep going and they approached

Glenn and Sally, Landlord and Landlady at Rob's local, The Swan Pub in Wheathampstead to ask if they could play there and Glenn immediately agreed. In those early days, the founder members wanted to achieve a better, tighter sound from the back line and so made a few changes and recruited Jules (Bass) and Matt (Drums) and they set to work on developing the sound that they wanted to achieve for a distinctive, versatile, high energy band.

Rob explained: "Whilst we are all individuals, we each have similar tastes and goals as well as the musical skills that can mesh and blend together to form the band and get the sound that we want."

They figured out the type of music they wanted to play, which is essentially high energy pop music which, for them, covers a wide spectrum of styles and dates from Elvis Presley, James Brown, Duran Duran and Blondie through to Adele and the Killers and loads of stuff in between. After all these years together, they are still loving it. They are great friends, they play regularly, they love the music they play, they love to gig and the overriding thing is that they enjoy what they do and have a lot of fun doing it and that, it seems, is the secret of their longevity.

Carnegies are entertainers. Whilst everything they do is recognisable, vocalist Andre said: "We always follow the song structure but we do like to make each song our own and mix it up when we can, which helps to bring the fun out of our performance, sometimes inviting the audience to get involved too."

The fact is, it's a 10-year anniversary and you simply don't get this far without real connection, focus, professionalism and friendship and it's obvious that the members of Carnegies have all that and more.

Carnegies have more than 100 songs to call on



Andy P - Keys, Jules - Bass, Rob - Guitar, Matt - Drums, Andre - Vocals

and each set is planned and prepared by Jules to suit each venue. Based on the reviews that I have seen, this band are a large part of what makes any event, or a night out at the local a really great success.

Carnegies are playing their 10-year anniversary gig at The Swan in Wheathampstead village on Saturday 1st February - it's going to be a popular event, so come on down, I'm sure I'll see you there.





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Equity Release Becoming More Popular



that you might have and have a lump sum to draw on when you need it. Equity release is generally available to homeowners over the age of 55. You don't have to make any payments and the loan does not have to be paid back immediately, interest builds up over time and the loan is repaid only when the last-named borrower in the house passes away or moves into long-term care, although, you can choose to make repayments as you go along if you wish.

According to a recent study by LV Insurance, of those people with a mortgage, 3 in 10 don't think they will have paid it off by retirement age, and for those who retired with a mortgage, equity release has become a more popular way to pay off their home - up to 1 in 14 from 1 in 25 a year ago.

Equity release is a way to turn some of your home's value into cash. Releasing equity effectively swaps a percentage of your property value for a lump-sum or in smaller amounts over a period of time.

You can use the money for whatever you like: some people use equity release to raise funds for one-off events, like preparing for retirement, putting a deposit on another property or financing an expensive family event, like a holiday or a wedding. You can also pay off a mortgage if you still have one or clear any debts

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Equity release reduces your estate's value and may affect any means-tested benefits you're eligible for. A lifetime mortgage is a loan secured against your home. Check that this mortgage will meet your needs if you want to move or sell your home, or you want your family to inherit it. If you are in any doubt, seek independent advice.

What they say...

"We were rather sceptical about 'equity release' having heard tales of extortionate payback rates etc. Once ERMA were involved, information became much clearer. They explained the different types of 'equity release' and gave us concise and understandable information so that we could form our own decision on what was right for our own individual circumstance."

"The process was smooth and seamless, we were consulted and advised by Mr Joseph at every step of the process. He remained in easy contact and was able to either answer our questions immediately or very soon after return with an appropriate answer."



and can look at advantages and disadvantages, so our clients can make a fully informed decision."

*Equity Release Mortgage Advice Ltd is an appointed representative of JLM Mortgage Network Ltd which is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority Registration 725996 and 300629.

Equity release reduces your estate's value and may affect any means-tested benefits you're eligible for. A lifetime mortgage is a loan secured against your home. Check that this mortgage will meet your needs if you want to move or sell your home, or you want your family to inherit it. If you are in any doubt, seek independent advice

There are several choices available when it comes to deciding how to release equity as well as, of course, the pros and cons for you. Equity release is not right for everyone, so it's important to make sure that you speak to an accredited advisor, and a company that is a member of the Equity Release Council. Decide, if you can, what you want from an equity release arrangement. Make notes and at least consider if it's a lump sum or a drawdown facility that you want, think about if you might want to move again or pay the loan off early and if you want to leave family members an inheritance. Ask your advisor about what's best for you and your circumstance. We spoke to the people at the Hertfordshire company, *Equity Release Mortgage Advice to find out more.

Based in Hitchin, this independent mortgage advice business was established in 2002 - but became an equity release specialist in 2015. As an independent Broker, they have facilities and arrangements with the majority of providers and crucially, are not tied to any one provider. With more than 30 years' experience in the mortgage market, founding director, Rory Joseph, along with 14 other advisors around the UK, offer face to face visits with clients. They are also ably supported by a team of support staff and, if required, tax specialists too. All advisors have received training and carry out further ongoing training annually. Only advisers with a good knowledge of later-life lending and a great track record in this area offer advice to clients. All Advisors are fully qualified and authorised by the FCA to give the advice and the firm is a Member of Equity Release Council.

When it comes to property valuations, how much you can borrow and what interest rates you might pay, it seems that every proposal is different. Many lenders will offer differing propositions depending on circumstances, so this is a probably a very good reason to talk to an independent advisor.

Rory Joseph explained: "We look at every case individually and, if possible, holistically, marrying any inheritance or legacy needs alongside the other requirements. This allows us to create tailored solutions that meet your financial needs, while considering long-term goals. Unlike most equity release advisers, we are also available to look at mainstream mortgages

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Local Services

Walking – Love It or Hate It

There are some people that just love to walk, they walk as often as possible and even go on walking holidays, walking up and around far-flung hills and mountains as they enjoy it all so much. But the truth is, you don't have to go that far to discover the many benefits of walking- just 10 – 20 minutes walk every day can really help to boost some feel-good factors.

Walking increases your blood flow and helps oxygen and nutrients move around your body, it makes you feel more alert and refreshed. It can also release natural chemicals that make you feel happy and positive, like serotonin, dopamine and endorphins. Moving regularly benefits your whole body. Amazingly, walking can help to ease muscle pain and stiffness, particularly in your lower back, hips and legs. It can also help your balance, which can prevent you from falling and injuring yourself.

Unlike cycling or swimming, walking is a weight-bearing exercise, which means your legs support your weight. This type of exercise is important for slowing bone loss as you age, which can reduce your risk of osteoporosis.

Walking is simple, free and one of the easiest ways to get more active, lose weight and become healthier. It's underrated *Continued on page 20*

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as a form of exercise, but walking is ideal for people of all ages and fitness levels who want to be more active.

So really, what's not to love about walking?

When it comes to walking in Wheathampstead, whether you're walking to improve your health or simply for the pleasure of exploring on foot, local walks make enjoying the great outdoors easy. Hertfordshire Health Walks are free, friendly, social, guided walks led by an excellent team of volunteers, one at the front and one at the back – will ensure a suitable pace for the group. Everyone is welcome, though the 'First Steps' walk is especially suited for people who have

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mobility issues or are just new to walking. There are 70 group walking opportunities across the county, including 2 regular walks in Wheathampstead. Walks are 'graded' so there is a walking opportunity for everyone, whatever their level of fitness! There are weekend walking opportunities too. Find a walk to suit you by visiting www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/healthwalks Simply turn up on the day and, if it's your first walk, please arrive 10 minutes before the start to complete a New Walker Form. If you prefer, you can register online.



There are various Wheathampstead Heritage Trails to discover and all aim to highlight our local history and encourage people to get their walking shoes on and enjoy it. There are seven walks in total and all start at the free car park in the centre of Wheathampstead and pass several places where food and drinks can be found.

Covering around 1 mile, the Village Centre trail uses footpaths within the village to reach more

than 20 historical properties which are all within easy reach of each other.

Each place has an interesting tale to tell, from the River Lea which flows on to the Thames to

the old corn mill mentioned in the Domesday Book across to the Swan Inn, the local pub built around 1500 and the 17th century former pub the Two Brewers and the many spots in between. You can find a brief history of each place and a guide and map online

at Wheathampstead heritage.org.uk or at the Parish Office, the village library or various local shops and stores.

There are six other walks around

The Lea Valley Circle Walk over the River Lea and gaze across its valley. One of the main rivers in Hertfordshire, it is a chalk stream – one of only 200 or so in the world. 4.3 miles (7km)

Devil's Dyke & Nomansland Walk through the impressive Devil's Dyke, an ancient defensive earthwork from Celtic times.. 4.6 miles (8km)

Above the Lea Valley From quiet woods to expansive views over the Lea valley, this walk includes Gustard Wood at the northern tip of Wheathampstead 6.5 miles (10km)

The Romans & Nomansland Walk along ancient thoroughfares created by Romans and Saxons. 7.8 miles (13km)

Lamer & Ayot St Lawrence Walk through the Lamer Estate to the historic village of Ayot St Lawrence. 7.6 miles (13km)

Old Railway & River Lea After a brief visit to the remains of Wheathampstead railway station, the walk follows the Ayot Greenway 7.9 miles (13km)

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Wheathampstead to enjoy (see below) which between them take in nature reserves, ancient thoroughfares and expansive views.

So, even if you don't 'Love It', surely everyone 'Likes' walking so, when the weather is kind, get all the health benefits as well as the bonus of exploring our own lovely area, as it really does have a lot to offer.

Useful Contacts

Emotional & practical support

www.hertshelp.net

03001234044

Health advice and information

www.nhs.uk/coroavirus

Local council services

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/coronavirus

Domestic abuse

www.hertssunflower.org

Hertfordshire Domestic Abuse helpline

08 088 088 088

Financial Advice

www.hertforshire.gov.uk/benefits

Citizens Advice

03444111 444

www.hcas.org.uk

National Debtline

0808 808 4000

www.nationaldebtline.org

Avoiding Scams

Sign up for scam alerts

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/updateme

Volunteering

www.volunteering.org.uk

A Hundred Jobs

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 England, cirrhosis and other diseases of liver are among the top 5 leading causes of death for persons aged 20 to 34 years, and are 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 *Continued on page 24*)



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. And 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 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.



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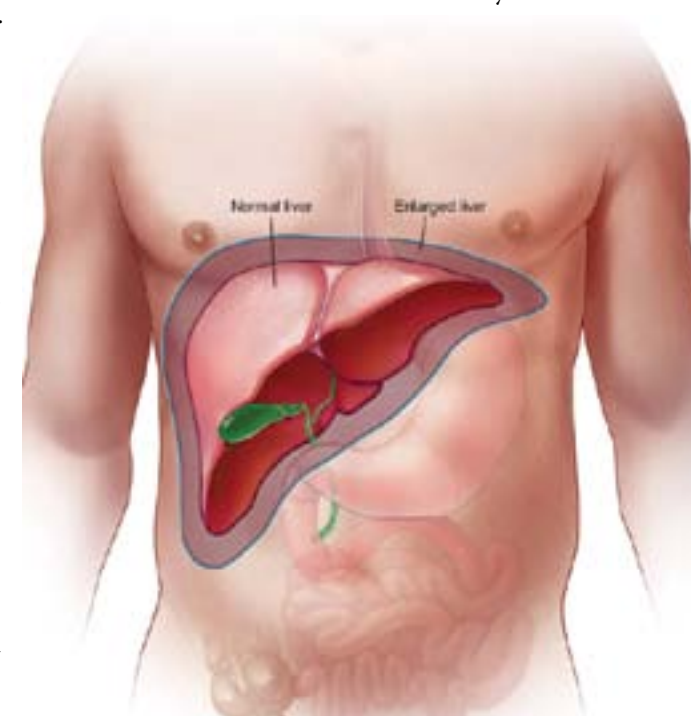
www.cfsta.org

- Pale stool color.
- Chronic fatigue.
- Nausea or vomiting.

If you drink alcohol in a harmful way, defined as more than 50 units of alcohol per week for men (around 15 pints of beer) and 35 units for women (about 3.5 bottles of wine), and have done so for several months, you should have a non-invasive test for cirrhosis. 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



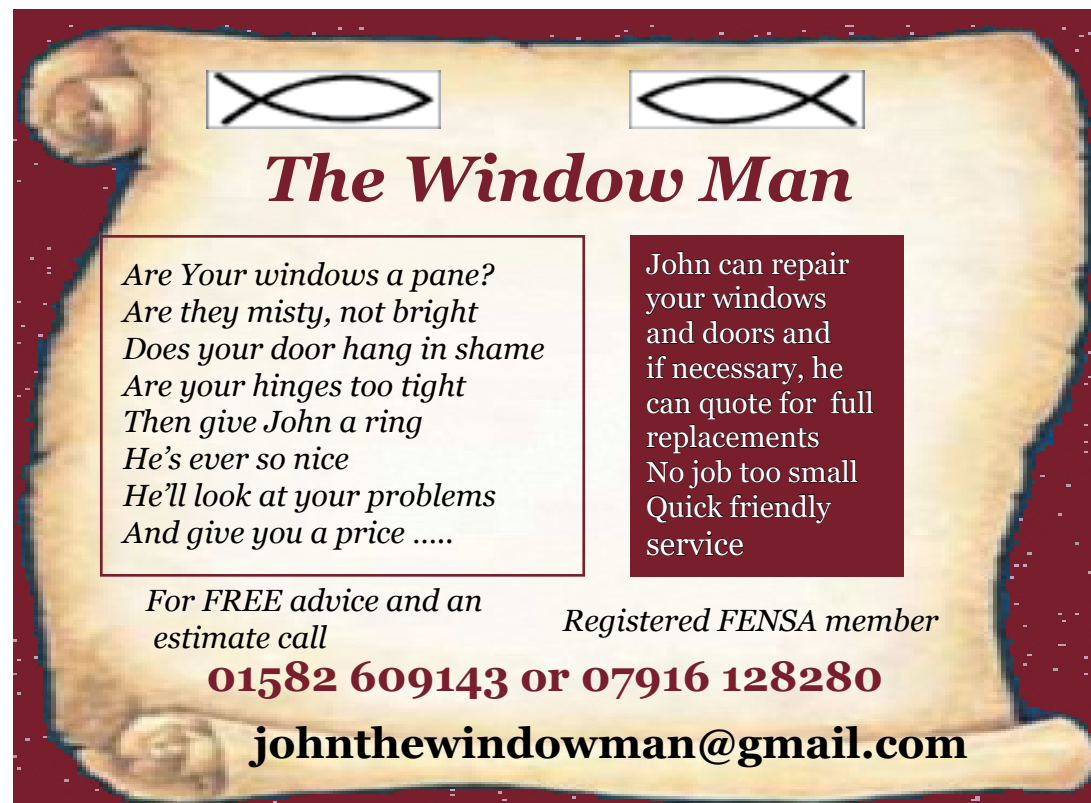
often fatal complications. Public attention surrounding liver disease is not always positive due to its links to health inequalities and the stigmatisation of this disease of being 'self-inflicted'. The truth is that alcohol and obesity-related liver disease is a combination of an underlying genetic 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/ <https://britishlivertrust.org.uk/>

How to Fight Liver Decease

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



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Local Clubs and Groups



Tennis

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

Thursday Club

The Thursday Club is a friendly, volunteer-run companionship and support Club for Wheathampstead residents who are over 60 and unable to access other activities without support. The Club meets every Thursday from 10am-2pm. Tea/Coffee is provided upon arrival, followed by a home cooked meal and then we finish with some form of entertainment. Transport to and from the Mead Hall can be arranged. To find out more, or if you have any questions, call Val Hughes on 01582 629682 or Michael Corley on 01582 833018.

The Village Surgeries PPG.

The objective of the group is to contribute wherever possible to the health improvements in Wheathampstead and Harpenden. We are now arranging monthly medical talks on-line. There are also newsletters 4 times a year where members can gain information about local initiatives. We are always looking for new members and it is free to join and participate. To be included and receive the newsletter and get details of the talks please send a request to chair@thevillagesurgeriesppg.co.uk

Archery

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

Forging Friendship Club

Affiliated to the Men's Sheds Association, this new club has recently formed in Wheathampstead. Members meet socially and form friendships while facilitating creativity, passing on skills and learning from each other. Meet weekly on Wednesday at 10am to 12 pm in the Old Forge building near the entrance to the Meads.

To join or find out more email:
forgingfriendshipsclub@gmail.com

Wheathampstead Baby & Toddler Group

We are a relaxed and friendly group for 0-4 year-olds and their parents and carers, run by parent-volunteers. We provide toys, craft, music, snacks, hot drinks and the chance to get to know other local people. We meet every Friday during term time, 9:45-11:15am at The Memorial Hall on Marford Road.

Find us on Facebook or contact
wheathampsteadtoddlergroup@gmail.com

Wheathampstead Community Group (WCG)

WCG seeks to support anyone in the Parish of Wheathampstead who is looking for assistance. If you or anyone that you know needs help, or you wish to volunteer for WCG, please call 07539 176481.

If you need transport to hospital or the doctor, please call 07918 136870.

www.wheathampsteadwcg.org
email: Secretary@wheathampsteadwcg.org

Continued on page 28

Kimpton Bowls Club

Bowling for everyone- Come and try bowls. 'Beginners Welcome' Friendly members to help you play. Woods provided but flat shoes please. Come and have fun on Sunday 23rd April 2023 from 2pm. Kimpton Bowls Club, Recreation Ground, Kimpton.
For further details contact John 07785960353

Business Group

Wheathampstead Businesses (known as WEB) has a mission to Promote, Protect & Support local businesses and the local community. BILLY the Bee is our mascot promoting Buy It Locally. Twice monthly networking meetings provide an opportunity to collaborate, learn from each other and gain customers. For more details contact Ginny Cooper, Chairman: chair@wheathampsteadbusinesses.co.uk

Cricket

Wheathampstead Cricket Club has five adult teams and an expanding colts section. Cricket is played on Nomansland Common on Saturday and Sunday throughout the season, with occasional mid-week



and evening fixtures. WCC really is a club on the up and we now have some of the best cricket facilities in the county. New players and spectators are always welcome. www.wheathampsteadcc.hitscricket.com

Wheathampstead Dramatic Society

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

Wheathampstead & District Preservation Society

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

Mead Quilters

We are a long established, forward looking and friendly quilting and patchwork group who meet at the Mead Hall in East Lane, Wheathampstead, AL4 8BP.

We meet on the first Tuesday morning of each month 10.00-12.00noon, and the 3rd Tuesday evening 7.30-9.00pm. Visitors are welcome at both sessions. For further information see our website www.meadquilters.org



Wheathampstead W.I.

Lively, interesting and varied meetings. Every 2nd Wednesday 7.30pm at the Mead Hall in East Lane W/stead. Social events and outings throughout the year. See W.I Noticeboard in the High Street for more information or contact our Secretary Gillian Keen: wheathampsteadwicommittee@outlook.com
New members always welcome.

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.

Wheathampstead Dementia Friendship and Support (WDFS) - Bluebell Club

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 Isobel Poole, 07949 630228 All Welcome

Brownies and Rainbows

1st Wheathampstead Brownies meets at St. Peter's in Gustard Wood on a Tuesday.
3rd Wheathampstead brownies meet at the Scout Hut on a Thursday.
1st Wheathampstead Rainbows meets at the Scout Hut on a Monday. There are currently spaces available so, if you would like your daughter to join please visit: go.girlguiding.org.uk to register your interest.

One of the leaders in the village will be in touch when a space becomes available. Registering your daughter earlier rather

Continued on page 31

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than later will mean she will be added to our waiting list and when a place becomes available at the right age, she will be offered a place.

Squirrels Beavers, Cubs & Scouts

All popular and meet regularly at the Scout Hut in Mead Lane, Wheathampstead as follows:
Squirrel Drey Tuesday 5:15 to 6:15
Beaver Colony Wednesday 5:15 to 6:15
Mead Cub Pack Tuesday 6:30 to 8:00
Delaport Cub Pack Wednesday 6:30 to 8:00
Lamer Scout Troop Friday 7:30 to 9:00
Explorer Scouts Tuesday 8:15 to 10:00
If your child would like a place, please contact: w11stwheathampstead@outlook.com

Music and Singing

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

The 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.hardyngchoir.org

Wheathampstead U3A

Wheathampstead U3A is open to anyone who is retired or semi-retired. No qualifications are needed, and none are given. Make friends, learn new skills or refresh old ones through our wide range of interest groups. Enjoy first-rate speakers at monthly meetings in the Memorial Hall and participate in organised outings to places of interest. Find out more at:
<https://u3asites.org.uk/wheathampstead/home>

Wheathampstead History Society

The society meets at 7.15pm, the third Wednesday of each month, in the Mead Hall,

East Lane.

It offers a programme of talks promoting local history & heritage, undertakes research projects and encourages and supports members' research. For further information visit our website www.wheathampsteadheritage.org.uk

Wheathampstead Warriors

Your local running club, all abilities welcome!
The best way to find out more about the Warriors is to come and join one of our club runs on a Tuesday or Thursday evening.
Currently all runs need to be booked in advance but please contact us on wheatwarriorsmembership@gmail.com and we'll be able to arrange for you to join us for a run.

More information can be found on our website - <https://wheathampsteadwarriors.co.uk/>

Positive Movement

On-line classes twice per week (term time) via Zoom, Tuesdays at 2pm and Thursday at 10.30. Classes are for those with reduced mobility. Gentle, chair-based exercises to improve Posture, Balance, Strength and Stability. Call Lynn on 07866 168242 to arrange for a trial class.

Horticultural Society

Meets: St. Helen's School, Wheathampstead AL4 8AN. 7.30pm, first Wednesday of the month.
A friendly village gardening club welcoming everyone of all ages and enthusiasm - even armchair gardeners! A wide range of speakers [some selling plants], socials, visits to interesting gardens, a Plant Sale on 3rd Sunday in May - all are on the agenda. Affiliated to the R.H.S. Occasional meeting on Zoom. For more information please email whortsoc@gmail.com or phone Jill on 01582 460394

The Community Kitchen

Open to everyone of all ages. The Community Kitchen comes together to prepare a three-course restaurant style meal with up to three choices from a freshly prepared menu. You can help to cook and/or mix and mingle with diners and volunteers.
Working on an anonymous, pay what you can afford basis, the group meet on the last Tuesday of each month (unless specified), arrival from 5.30pm to eat at 6pm at The Chapel Halls, (behind the Chapel Gym), Brewhouse Hill, Wheathampstead, AL1 4AG. Call or text Maria on 07727 207818 to book your place or with questions.

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