



WHAT'S UP AT OWENS?

Mixed messages to staff and public after sudden closure

Dave Young

HUGH SULLIVAN

In the week beginning 4 September Owens, the entertainment centre operating in the former Debenhams store in Robertson Street, failed to open. A sign on the window read: "Due to health and safety, we will be closing today with immediate effect. We apologise for any inconvenience caused, and any bookings can be refunded or moved to a new date."

On Friday 8 September a message was posted on the centre's Facebook page: "Due to unforeseen [sic] circumstances OWENS will be closed until further notice. We apologise for any inconvenience. Please keep an eye on social media for further updates".

However, the inconvenience was clearly not just to prospective customers, whether they had booked in advance or not. The model of the Owens business, run

by the lease-holding company C&O, has been to sublet parts of the building as 'concessions' to individuals or small enterprises offering separate attractions to customers. These range from immersive 'adventure' experiences to more standard games such as crazy golf or bowling, and include a bar and restaurant, soft play areas etc, with overall provision controlled through a centralised booking system.

Concession holders were paying C&O a flat fee plus a percentage of their take. The sudden closure of the building has meant the immediate freeze of each of these businesses – a complete cessation of their earnings.

The C&O management has offered no public explanation of what health or safety issues may have arisen, and a spokesperson

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NEWS

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Long-standing HIP readers will recall when the mixed fortunes of the pier were seldom off our front page.

Although that saga looks set to continue for as long as a TV soap opera, it has currently been usurped by the uncertain future of Owens “closed for refurbishment” entertainment centre. The big question is, should it fail, what happens to the large, centrally located former Debenhams building, and what effect might that have on the town? You could also say the same about the pier - let’s hope neither suffers the fiery fate of the Old Town amusement arcade...

Elsewhere in this issue, we’ve a whole page of readers’ letters on a range of diverse subjects, just the sort of interactivity one expects from a truly local newspaper. Continuing that theme in the Community section, HIP reports on the success of its recent drop-in gathering, where editors and contributors met the local community, and vice versa. Another such meeting is being held soon; come along, say hello, and perhaps join our volunteer team.

On other pages, HIP features its customarily eclectic mix of topics: a micro-brewery, robotic pets, saxophonists and drummers, tennis, and plum crumble bars - all happening in Hastings, St Leonards and Ore.

Happy Reading

School and Council Workers in Strike Ballots

The GMB trade union warned last week that it is balloting school and council workers across South East England for potential strike action from November onwards.

School workers such as teaching assistants, lunchtime supervisors, caretakers and administrative staff, and council workers including social workers, refuse

collectors, grounds staff and care workers, will take part in the ballot, which opened on 12 September and will close on 24 October.

Staff of more than 600 schools and local authorities are said to be involved. They include staff of East Sussex County Council and of the University of Brighton Academies Trust, which includes Hastings Academy, St Leonards Academy and the primary/infant schools of Baird, Churchwood, Dudley and Silverdale. St Richards School in Bexhill, Saxon Mount and Torfield, and the primary schools of Guestling Bradshaw, St Mary’s Star of the Sea and Sacred Heart are among others involved.

The issue is rates of pay – whether to accept or reject the government pay offer for the current year 2023/24 made through the NJC (National Joint Council).

GMB National Officer Sharon Wilde said:

“School staff, refuse collectors and council and town hall workers are the hidden glue that keeps our society together. They help our children learn, they look after our most vulnerable residents, they clean our streets and they keep us all safe. They deserve proper value for the work they do.

“After more than a decade of Conservative cuts and a crushing cost of living crisis, it’s time they were given the proper pay rise they need.”

The Unison union, which represents a larger proportion of local authority workers, indicated last month that it would not be calling upon its members to strike as such action would be “ineffective”. However, members of Unite, a third union within the sector, have already voted to strike.

Six Heroin Takers Treated in Conquest Hospital

Sussex Police issued a warning earlier this month that a number of people have had to seek medical treatment in East Sussex – six of them at the Conquest Hospital – linked with a particular batch of

heroin circulating locally.

Chief Inspector Simon Yates said: “We are aware of a potentially dangerous batch of heroin in East Sussex, mainly in the Hastings area, and we have reason to believe this may be linked to a number of patients being admitted to hospital.

“We understand the batch of heroin is lighter in colour than usual and we would like to remind people of the dangers of taking unknown substances.

“People who use drugs, in particular heroin, should be extra cautious about what they are using and how much they take.

“If someone shows any signs of an opioid overdose, such as shallow breathing, loss of consciousness



and blue lips or fingertips, call for an ambulance immediately and, if possible, use the opioid antidote, naloxone, which can save lives.”

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HASTINGS TIDES

DATE	HIGH AND LOW TIDES				SUNRISE	SUNSET	MOON
FRI 22 SEPT	H3:29am	L10:27am	H3:21pm	L10:58	6:43	6:56	FIRST
SAT 23 SEPT	H4:28am	L11:24am	H5:05pm		6:44	6:54	
SUN 24 SEPT	L0:07am	H5:56am	L12:46pm	H6:54pm	6:46	6:52	
MON 25 SEPT	L1:42am	H7:52am	L2:35pm	H8:38pm	6:48	6:49	
TUES 26 SEPT	L3:22am	H9:15am	L4:01pm	H9:48pm	6:49	6:47	
WED 27 SEPT	L4:33am	H10:13am	L5:02pm	H10:40pm	6:51	6:45	
THURS 28 SEPT	L5:31am	H11:00am	L5:57pm	H11:24pm	6:52	6:43	
FRI 29 SEPT	L6:22am	H11:42am	L6:47pm		6:54	6:40	FULL
SAT 30 SEPT	H0:06am	L7:09am	H12:21pm	L7:33pm	6:55	6:38	
SUN 1 OCT	H0:45am	L7:49am	H1:00pm	L8:13pm	6:57	6:36	
MON 2 OCT	H1:24am	L8:25am	H1:38pm	L8:50pm	6:59	6:34	
TUES 3 OCT	H2:01am	L8:59am	H2:15pm	L9:25pm	7:00	6:31	
WED 4 OCT	H2:38am	L9:32am	H2:52pm	L9:58pm	7:02	6:29	
THURS 5 OCT	3:18am	L10:05am	H3:54pm	L10:31pm	7:03	6:27	

* L = LOW TIDE H = HIGHTIDE For beach safety advice visit: mli.org/safety/beach-safety

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for Hastings Borough Council denied last week that any of its officers had any knowledge of such concerns.

One of the concession owners says he was told by a representative of C&O that there were potential RAAC (Reinforced Autoclaved Reinforced Concrete) problems – the widespread structural use of defective concrete that has been highlighted nationally in recent weeks as affecting public sector buildings like hospitals and schools. However, Chris Dodwell, managing director of Hastings Building Services Limited, which carried out the bulk of the refurbishment work at the Robertson Street building for both C&O and its landlord Moxie Management in 2021/22, says he saw no evidence of previous use of RAAC. He thinks it's very unlikely to be present in any parts of the building – and certainly not in the main structure, which long predates any application of this material. If there were any evidence, the Council's building control department should have been informed, as well as the upper floor leaseholders Freedom Works and the residents of adjoining Albany Court.

STAFF DISMISSALS

Be that as it may, on 14 September most if not all staff received messages from C&O that their employment was terminated. Some were told it would be for three months, others for six, but in any event all

were informed that they would have to reapply for their jobs if or when the business reopened.

On the same or the next day a revised notice was posted at the locked entrance – “We are currently closed for refurbishment to bring more new and exciting offerings to the Hastings community and its visitors!”

That's a fresh angle that seems hardly consistent with the previous messaging. And even if it's true, why are C&O undertaking a wholesale refurbishment less than 12 months after opening?

Founder director Graham Owen, who was dismissed from the company's board at the beginning of March (though his wife Debbie remains owner of one of the concessions), says that he thought back in November that they were opening too soon. “There should have been several months of marketing,” he says. “But as soon as the building was physically ready, I was told we had to open”.

Owen claims, nevertheless, that for the first four months the concessions were all in profit and paying their way. Footfall, mainly of locals, was in line with expectations. The business as a whole was not yet in profit but growing quickly. After March, when he was replaced and no longer had any involvement in the overall management, numbers collapsed. He joined forces with another concession holder Luke Tyler to develop a fresh immersive attraction, the Jurassic Experience, which he



describes as “a 45-minute family experience involving a series of escapes from dinosaurs”. It never opened, he says, because of what he saw as a management “vendetta” against him.

PERSONAL LOSSES

Owen says that he personally invested over £200,000 in building the crazy golf course and sets for immersive experiences which are now effectively mothballed. Tyler

claims that he put over £50,000 of his own money into the Jurassic enterprise, plus nine months of dedicated work, with nothing to show for it. Both are bitter at the way they have been treated. Other concession holders have also spoken of their frustration at the way the business has been conducted in recent months.

Chris Dodwell confirms that, from what he has seen of Owens, it has operated over recent months far below the capacity which would be needed to make it profitable, failing to attract tourists in worthwhile numbers. “The building often seemed to be populated by more staff than visitors even at peak times”, he says.

He too has suffered direct losses: he claims that his company is still owed £157,000 by C&O in unpaid invoices for its building work during 2022.

Readers will recall that a grant of £400,00, split between C&O and Moxie Management, was paid out of Town Deal funds last year to develop the business which has now closed. It is not known whether any conditions were attached to this grant that might be triggered by closure. The label of ‘commercial sensitivity’ seems to preclude any such disclosure by the Town Deal Board.

In the meantime, C&O have been asked to explain what ‘health and safety’ concerns have prompted their action. At the time of this newspaper going to press, no-one has responded.

Queensway Gateway: Is Council Awaiting LEP Abolition?

HUGH SULLIVAN

The Accountability Board of SELEP (South East Local Enterprise Partnership), which channels government funds into local infrastructure projects, is due to meet again today (Friday) for its quarterly review. Completion of the Queensway Gateway road, intended to connect the Bexhill link road to the A21, is once again on its agenda. But there's little indication from the documents prepared in advance of the meeting that the stand-off between East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and its project partner Sea Change Sussex over funds required to complete works to the outstand-

ing road junction is any nearer being resolved.

At each Board meeting since July of last year, a representative of ESCC has been called upon to report on progress, or lack of it, accompanied by reminders that the money already spent on the project (upwards of £10m) might be recouped from the Council if they could not achieve completion of the project within a reasonable time. On each occasion Richard Dawson, Head of Service Economic Development, Skills and Infrastructure at the Council, has produced a written resume in advance, explaining technical difficulties but avoiding any clear

explication of the funding issue.

In June this year he confirmed that ESCC remained “in disagreement” with Sea Change Sussex regarding funding, but told the SELEP Board that the Council was “fully committed to resolving any contentions with Sea Change” and that there was “ongoing dialogue seeking to find a resolution”. The minutes of the subsequent meeting record SELEP's Capital Programme Officer, Helen Dyer, as demanding that “a more comprehensive update on project delivery is provided at future Board meetings which clarifies the funding package and delivery programme”.

Mr Dawson has now had another go, filing his latest report in advance of today's meeting. Since June, he writes, ESCC and Sea Change “have met and held constructive dialogue to progress the project. Both parties are working together to bring the project to a close through the construction of this final connection to the A21. Further work will take place over the com-

ing weeks to ascertain the extent of the additional funding package, delivery programme, and the legal agreements that will be required to support project delivery. Whilst additional funding will be required, it is anticipated that the Project will be delivered within the amount estimated in the original 2015 Business Case of £15m”.

But this, he must be well aware, doesn't address the fundamental issue. Although it's true that £15m was offered at an early stage, that budget was long since reduced in order to justify the diversion of funds to projects in Bexhill at the other end of the link road, to which the Council wanted to give higher priority. The SELEP Board has previously made it clear that no further funding will be offered from its resources to complete the Gateway junction.

On the other hand, both Mr Dawson and members of the Board are likely to remind themselves at today's meeting that SELEP itself will be abolished within the next

seven months or at least stripped of any further funding from central government. Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt announced in his March budget that the government was “minded” to withdraw its support from all LEPs and transfer their responsibilities to local authorities from April 2024, in line with a policy of “empowering democratically elected local leaders at every opportunity”. This was confirmed by a further government announcement last month.

So where could the “additional funding” referred to by Mr Dawson come from? ESCC's future options seem to be either a ‘cap in hand’ request for direct government funding, sidestepping past controversies by presenting its case as an unfortunate casualty of the abolition of SELEP – or else swallowing the loss at the expense of its own council tax and rates payers. In the meantime, don't expect relief in the pile-up of traffic in and around The Ridge any time soon.



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John Feltwell

Sheep on the Normanhurst estate

Normanhurst Plans for Holiday Lodges Dismissed

At a meeting on 7 September, the Planning Committee of Rother District Council refused outline permission for the development of a major holiday complex on the Normanhurst estate, north of Catsfield.

Applicants Greystoke Land Limited were putting forward proposals to build up to 211 holiday lodges and 350 car parking spaces on this site. Their barrister, Anthony Crean KC, acknowledged unashamedly at the hearing that they had chosen it because of the beauty of the local landscape, which is encompassed within the Weald AONB [Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty], arguing that their designs would moderate any potential harm to it from the prospective development.

But while the Committee accepted that the proposals represented investment in the local economy and tourism sector, "which has policy support", it concluded unanimously that their scale – akin to building a new village the size of Catsfield itself, which has an existing population of around 800 residents – "would create a prominent and incongruous intrusion into the rural setting, appearing as an intensive overdevelopment of the site and out of keeping with the surroundings".

The Committee also expressed concern at the prospective intensification of traffic seeking access

from the existing village.

The result is vindication of the efforts of a team of local residents who have campaigned against the proposals, led by naturalist and local tree warden Dr John Feltwell. But it is plain that they had the vast majority of locals on their side as well as a plethora of statutory bodies. Over 1,000 on-line comments were lodged on Rother's planning website, almost all opposing the development – the largest application response which Rother has ever received.

"The environmental impact would have been substantial," says Dr Feltwell, "especially the eight-metre high lodges on stilts, out of character in the AONB. Dark Skies policy would have been compromised."

"As tree warden, I emphasised the impact on the protected woodlands on site, the loss of bluebell woods, greenfield loss with the widening of the woodland tracks to 3.7m. I also emphasised to Rother that UK law is all about 'conserve and enhance', not 'destroy, then enhance'."

During the hearing, the Committee were told by Mr Crean that his clients would not appeal if the application was rejected. Campaigners are hoping that the result means that the company will have given up their development plans altogether – but they remain alert to what may happen next.

SITE NOTICE FOR APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE

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Late Night Refreshment (on and off the premises): 23:00 to 00:00 Monday to Saturday, Until 00:00 on Sundays
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Sale of Alcohol by retail (on and off the premises): 11:00 to 23:30 Monday to Saturday, Until 23:30 on Sundays
preceding a Bank Holiday, Until 01:00 New Years Eve

Any person wishing to make representations about this application should write to Hastings Borough Council, Head of Environment & Place, Muriel Matters House, Breeds Place, Hastings, TN34 3UY,

or email Licensing@hastings.gov.uk within twenty eight consecutive days from the date of the application shown above.

The application can be viewed by pre-arranged appointment at our offices, during office hours. It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application & a person is liable to a fine of up to a maximum of £5,000 on summary conviction for the offence.

Dated this 16th day of September 2023



WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?



PUBLIC AND PRIVATE HEALTHCARE

Dear HIP

I have worked as a doctor for 35 years and have done additional private medical work for the past 25 years. For the past 21 years I have been Consultant Dermatologist at the Conquest Hospital. Here is my contribution to your current NHS debate (*Free at the Point of Delivery* in HIP 234).

Healthcare is a uniquely human arrangement that reflects our ability to communicate and cooperate to the benefit of our group and is therefore at the heart of a civilised society. I am not aware of an equivalent in the animal kingdom. Healthcare is built on altruism and the instinctive urge to help the suffering. It thus balances our selfish instinct, and seems to make us stronger as a community. Only if it does work to the benefit of the overall whole of society does it actually make sense. Therefore it's a 'group thing'. And that is how the NHS was created, in an attempt to make us all healthier and eliminate disease.

Has its goal been achieved? I think it is obvious that it has not. Will privatisation be able to fix this? Certainly not, in my view.

Firstly, there is the well-established correlation between health and wealth. The poorest are the sickest. Good luck with trying to build a business model around

caring for the poorest of the country in order to make a profit.

Secondly, practising good medicine requires a lot of empathy and compassion, something that is difficult to quantify and charge for. In fact, the most compassionate healthcare staff would probably be willing to work for next to nothing.

Thirdly, we see in countries where private medicine flourishes or where medical work is paid per service that this leads to harmful overtreatment and inflated costs.

Does private medicine have a role? Yes, it can pick up work that goes over and above what a public healthcare service should deliver. So, what should the public service deliver?

The most important answer to this £200 billion (the annual UK healthcare budget) question is in my view: not everything! We have to accept limits and acknowledge that the original concept of the NHS has failed. We are not healthier than we were 75 years ago. In fact we are much unhealthier. Possibly, in part, because we have become complacent and relied on the expectation that the NHS can sort all our problems out. This is a form of entitlement which corrodes the very basis of a public healthcare system.

Healthcare, and the debate around it, is now dragging the group (our country) down. It no longer seems to make us strong-

er. Unfortunately this means we need to ask for an increased personal (not financial) contribution from 'the ill', essentially becoming less helpful for a while and saying "no" more often. It strikes me as strange that, in an age of individuality, we assume that health is a system issue, free from individual responsibility.

If it can be demonstrated that individual responsibility is improving, then healthcare workers will be the first to jump in to assist further and help to the very best of our abilities – and without trying to become wealthy in the process.

Dr Jan von der Werth

NORTHEYE: THE LIB DEM VIEW

Dear HIP

We refer to your report in HIP 234.

The Home Office now presides over an asylum application backlog of some 175,000 cases and counting – that's four times the population of Bexhill. This astonishing number underlines both the scale of the issue and the magnitude of the Government's failure – a failure which looks set to deprive the people of Bexhill of an allocated brown field development site for 140 much-needed houses and sports facilities.

The current Government has granted itself powers against which there is little or no recourse: It can override local planning powers and controls, as it is doing with respect to Northeys; it can award building contracts to whomsoever it desires, and it has even curtailed our rights to protest. Despite the sop to local business offered by Huw Merriman MP, how many local companies will realistically navigate the Home Office procurement process and profit from the rebuild?

But there are wider issues too. The Government's recently passed Illegal Migration Act determines that any man, woman or child arriving on our shores by irregular means is automatically

deemed 'illegal'. This is despite the fact that 70% of claims to the year to June 2023 resulted in a grant of protection by the UK. In other words, the vast majority of the people running from countries like Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan or Syria are deemed by the Home Office itself to be entirely legitimate claimants – i.e. 'legal', not 'illegal'. Under the Government's cynical Illegal Migration Act, however, their rights shall be summarily denied contrary to international law and contrary to our legal obligations under the UN Refugee Convention. So, who's really acting 'illegally'?

But lofty talk of human rights often feels remote from immediate local concerns. Anxieties, expressed in good faith, about the pace, scale and impact of migration should not be a cause of shame, but it's worth recalling that desperate people have not caused the Home Office backlog, nor the consequent need for costly hotels, barges and detention camps like Northeys. The present situation is entirely the result of the Home Office failure to process applications. Indeed, the effect of the Illegal Migration Act will inevitably be to create more 'illegals', the majority of whom cannot be returned as the Government has barely any agreements in place and cannot, since Brexit, rely on the Dublin Agreement. So, how many more Northeys will we have to build if the Government's 'not for turning'?

Liberal Democrats don't underestimate the challenges, but we do propose pragmatic solutions. We have called for the repeal of the Illegal Migration legislation, the establishment of legal routes to deter small boat crossings, and an extension of the Ukrainian resettlement scheme to include people from other nations. We also advocate permitting asylum seekers to work, thereby removing the cost of their housing from the Exchequer. We also urge faster processing of asylum claims, and the abandonment of the costly and failed Rwanda scheme.

The combination of these commonsense measures would do

more to save taxpayers' money, remove the need for Northeys, and undermine the people smugglers' economic model, than would the Government's continued policy of inhumane detention, legally dubious legislation and morally questionable rhetoric.

Martin Griffiths,
Chair, Hastings & Rye Liberal Democrats

LEAVE IT TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Dear HIP,

I was shocked to read your report *Hotel Costs Soar But Council Committed* in HIP 234. Why do the Council think they can successfully develop a hotel? Where is their expertise in such schemes? Judging by the brief details available they clearly have not got a clue. Yes, things change, and especially costs, but they have not doubled. The decision was only taken in 2019 and some of the increases were fully predictable. The initial cost estimate must have been wrong.

The Council's total incompetence at property development was displayed only a few weeks ago when they announced the sale of 12/13 York Buildings. After spending over £1m converting the upper parts for social housing they decide the building was not suitable for such a use. Why did they come to that conclusion only after they had spent our money?

While the Council play at being property developer, where is our Local Plan? With the various flows of investment into our town, where is the much-needed co-ordinating Plan? The Council should not gamble our money on speculative schemes. Let the private sector take those risks. They have the knowledge and experience for such projects, and if they get it wrong then they take the consequences. Please, Council, get on with the jobs you should be doing, such as publishing the Local Plan.

Graham Seaton

We would love to hear from you.

Please be aware we may need to edit letters for reasons of space and we will only withhold names if this is necessary for the protection of the writer.

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COMMUNITY

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Robopets



RoboPets Help People with Dementia

SALLY BURR
AND SAFFRON PHILLIPS

A mechanical pet project to help people with early-stage dementia has been launched in East Sussex. The County Council (ESCC) RoboPets scheme aims to support clients suffering with the early stages of the condition by giving them a robotic cat or dog which acts as a positive distraction and is designed to relieve anxiety.

Both types respond to touch in similar ways when placed on a lap: the robot cat will promptly meow, purr, stretch and change position in response to being stroked. Patients can feel the purr vibration on their legs and the cat is even programmed to initially ignore people in the same way as a real cat.

The first batch of RoboPets was delivered to 50 people with dementia living independently at home. The second round of 50 is open to any client with care needs who may benefit from the anxiety-relieving effect of the RoboPet; The ESCC Occupational Therapy team is delivering them to residential units and they also plan to identify and include other

clients with learning disabilities.

As well as helping when a client becomes anxious, the automated pets provide companionship, which can ease the pressure felt by carers. They provide a talking point between clients and carers, encouraging a connection and aiding conversation.

Claire, a social prescriber who recently delivered a pet to a client, described the moment as "...very humbling and amazing to see the interaction with the pet. The client took it straight away, gave it a name, talked to the pet and stroked and brushed it. They were very happy interacting with the pet and thanked us for thinking of them."

Maxine Rose, a Community Support Worker, said: "I delivered a dog today. The lady who received it was delighted and named her new pet and sat quietly stroking and talking to it." In another example a digital trainer, Lex, reported good feedback from the launch in 2022 when a client scheduled for an operation initially refused it due to high anxiety. However, once introduced to a robocat, it gave such relief to their anxiety that they took 'their cat' to the

hospital appointment and agreed to the operation.

Because RoboPets are designed with a sleep mode they can last up to a year before their AA batteries require replacement.

This one-year Being Digital pilot project was commissioned by the county council's Adult Social Care team and is one of only three operating nationwide. In 2019, nearly 9,500 people in East Sussex were living with dementia and this is expected to rise to over 12,000 by 2025.

The project will be assessed in early in 2024 and ESCC will decide on the cost effectiveness of the scheme and the benefits of making RoboPets available throughout the county. This process is being informed by academic research, particularly from the USA where the 'pets' are more widely used.

The SpringerLink site reports that New York was the first state in the US to introduce RoboPets to isolated elderly clients: "The results showed that using pets to lower social isolation is highly successful for about 70% of pilot participants reporting a decrease in isolation after one year."

■ For more information about dementia support in East Sussex: eastsussex.gov.uk/social-care/health-advice/mental-health/dementia-support-in-east-sussex Also: cryptopolitan.com/robotic



How To Make a Difference in Your Workplace

ROBERT RALPH

Ever wondered if anyone at work gives a hoot about the impact of the workplace on climate and environment? They probably do, but hey, we're all beaver away making a living. It's hard enough to get the job done without trying to save the planet right? Well it turns out we should think again: there are some 'easy wins' to get the ball rolling, get everyone in the workplace thinking about this stuff and start to move in a better direction.

The local Extinction Rebellion team are at it again – this time in partnership with the Trades Council. They've gathered four widely different speakers together who can tell us how to make that difference: topics will vary from those easy wins that can be implemented quickly through to changing workplace culture, fossil fuel divestment of pension funds and information around the law.

Simon Hester from Hastings Trades Council explains: "It's vital that workers take the lead in combating climate change because the corporations and employers are focussed on profit-making, the underlying cause of the climate catastrophe. We want a society where the needs of people and planet come before the profits of big business. Workers have the collective power to influence our own workplaces and to change society. That's why Hastings & District Trades Union Council supports this event on 30 September. See you there."

SPEAKING AT THE EVENT ARE:

- **Melanie Strickland** from Lawyers are Responsible, which is organising across the legal profession against its role in criminalising climate protestors and enabling polluting industries.
- **Paul O'Brien** is an RMT rep on the London Underground who sits on the Transport for London pension committee, where they have been winning support for divestment from fossil fuels.
- **Neil Clark** is a digital strategy advisor to companies and charities and is a campaigner for emission reductions across the digital sector.
- **Jane Ripley**, Science Lecturer at East Sussex College, Hastings, is working to embed climate literacy across courses.

It promises to be a fascinating and inspirational event with organisers inviting you to join them for "a day of inspiration, ideas and practical advice about how to get organised and win climate demands at work".

■ The event is Saturday 30 September 10.30am-2.30pm, All Saints Hall, 142 All Saints' St, Hastings TN34 3BG. Entry is free and you can just turn up, but it would help organisers if you booked via Eventbrite bit.ly/climate-at-work.

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE...  HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

COMMUNITY



A regular column to update readers on the damaging effects of our current management of water in Hastings, surrounding area (and nationally) and what people are doing about it. If you have any information, please contact community@hastingsindependentpress.co.uk marked Clean Water Watch.

SAVE OLD ROAR GILL (SORG)

After SORG contacted Hastings Borough Council (HBC) about a polluted stream near the bottom of Mulberry Walk, the council followed up with Southern Water (SW), who replied: "We have investigated this and have found multiple misconnections in homes in Folkington Gardens and Lullington Gardens." This is written confirmation of SORG's contention that the Gill is being polluted by sewage and is "a step closer to finding out exactly what is going on". Hopefully action will follow.

CLEAN WATER ACTION GROUP (CWAG)

CWAG volunteers are gearing up for a new period of testing to monitor water quality. Test results earlier this year (Feb-May) and a recent one-off revealed extremely high E-Coli results at Combe Haven outflow on Bulverhythe beach (4400cfu/100ml: good bathing water quality <500cfu/100ml). This is a real health concern with so many families swimming in the water through the heatwave, and results have been reported to SW and the Environment Agency (EA). A full report on their activities in the past year will be published shortly. Follow @cleanwateractgp for updates.

With SW now conducting year-round testing in Brighton, CWAG are writing to request the same in the Hastings area and will also be launching a crowdfunder to cover the expense of their independent year-round testing as 'citizen scientists' (around £80 per test inc p&p).

An article in the Sunday Observer on 12 August about pollution in the river Wye underlines the "vital difference" made by citizen scientists. Talking about the accumulation of evidence, one local campaigner says: "We want it to reach a tipping point so it just

can't be ignored." An article in The Guardian, 13 September, confirms this importance by reporting the failure of the EA to "regularly audit water companies to check they are telling the truth about pollution and illegal sewage dumping in England".

Stop press! Local businesses becoming involved. Among these @haul_out, a benefit gig with DJs and SHE Choir on Saturday 23 September at Oscar's on the Square, 8.00pm-2.00am – proceeds going towards the testing programme.

LOCAL CAMPAIGNS

We previously mentioned the 7 September meeting at Eastbourne Town Hall to discuss strategies in public protesting and local government involvement to curb SW's policy of sewage dumping. One speaker, Julie Bygraves, talked about the Regulated Asset Base (RAB) model used by water authorities and how it encourages them to acquire a 'steaming pile of debt' using the public asset as collateral. Read Julie's article at sussexbylines.co.uk/news/environment/money=down-the-drain.

Apparently, it was also a great opportunity for networking, particularly highlighting the role played by CWAG locally: an opportunity to share information and create strength in numbers.

HASTING BOROUGH COUNCIL

We have been unable to obtain any updates in time for this edition. In the meantime, to report problems with SW you can use this link: tinyurl.com/myfu7bb3

NEWS FROM THE MEDIA

The BBC has published a very informative article on illegal sewage dumping in dry weather with clear explanations, diagrams, maps and further links. Much of the data relates to SW.

bbc.com/news/science-environment-66670132

West England Bylines is compiling a useful catalogue of information related to pollution of our rivers and beaches by water companies in England and Wales. englandbylines.co.uk/features/sewage-watch-focus.

A recent article quoted from the Times indicates that people power is growing: "Polling of 6,000 adults by Survation... found that discharges into rivers and seas will affect how more than 56 % of people vote."

Another, via a tweet from Fergal Sharkey, highlights a recent speech in parliament in which Conservative MP, Ian Liddell-Grainger, addressed Penny Mordaunt, as Leader of the House, saying: "She will be shocked to learn that Britain's worst water company has now resorted to thuggery and strong-arm tactics to silence parliamentarians and the press."

Another indication that people power is beginning to bite.

A significant win: The BBC reports that: "The House of Lords has blocked the UK government's plan to relax restrictions on water pollution to encourage house-building in England."

CORRECTION

In the last Clean Water Watch we wrote that the Consumer Council for Water (CCW) had confirmed in writing to the Boycott Water Bills website that action to boycott payment of sewage bills was 'appropriate'. What in fact the letter confirmed was, according to the Water Services Regulation Authority (OFWAT), water companies cannot chase for money while a customer is in dispute with them. For the full contents of the letter go to www.boycottwaterbills.com/faqs (Q5).

Drop-In and Meet the Team

On the last Thursday of August, HIP held the first of its interactive monthly drop-in gatherings. A chance for us to meet readers and for them to put names to faces and talk with HIP contributors and members of the editorial team.

Written by the community for the community - no one apart from the designer is paid - HIP wants to hear your feedback on stories we've featured and suggestions for future topics.

For eight years HIP has appeared, free of charge, every sec-

ond week, produced by volunteers on a shoestring budget gleaned from local advertising and the occasional fundraising event.

If you've ever fancied writing for a local newspaper, come and chat about how you might contribute, we're happy to help novices get started.

The paper is also on the lookout for people with editing skills and in the many supporting roles, advertising, marketing, social media, listings compilation, sub-editing, distribution and finance which ensure it continues to thrive. Previous experience is welcome but not always essential.

■ Our next drop-in session will be at the same venue as the first, *Bullet Coffee House, 38 Roberson Street, TN34 1HT* between 5.30-7.00pm on Thursday, 28 September. See you there.





COMMUNITY

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS



Contrasting Lifestyles

SIMON ANTHONY HOBSON, Chair of Surviving Christmas, writes about how it has been fighting loneliness, homelessness, and social deprivation at Christmas for the last 40 years.

In Country Life magazine, in April 2021, Hastings was number 13 on a list of best coastal towns to move to in the UK. This rating was based on a variety of factors, including

house prices, cleanliness of beaches, average temperature, quality of sea water and local salaries. Parts of Hastings have changed radically and there has been an influx of wealth, especially during the pandemic.

At the same time, Hastings is the most deprived lower tier local authority in Sussex and one of the most deprived in the country. The experiences of deprivation con-

tribute to higher rates of long-term illness, disabilities, cancer, lung disease and heart problems compared with the rest of England.

Department for Work and Pensions figures show 4,036 children in Hastings were living in relative poverty in the year ending April 2022. Meaning 24.8% of children in the area were in a family whose income was below 60% of average household income and claimed child benefit and at least one other household benefit. Loneliness has no social class.

This dichotomy of very contrasting lifestyles in such a small town has echoes of how Surviving Christmas came about in 1984. It was the initiative of some community-minded people who were enjoying a wonderful Christmas lunch at the White Rock Hotel on Christmas Day 1984. From the seafront restaurant they noticed several people walking past in the atrocious weather conditions with obviously nowhere to go or anything to do. The 'Care in the Community' legislation had resulted in many people having to rely on bed and breakfast accommodation for their existence, rather than previously in a form of sheltered accommodation.

The festive lunch goes agreed action needed to be taken and, working with Christ Church St Leonards, they opened the Church Hall on Christmas Day and Boxing Day in 1985. On Christmas Eve, there was concern whether many would turn up, and it was decided that if 12 did so, the effort would

have been worth it. In the event, there were 120 guests on Christmas Day and some 100 on Boxing Day.

The only rule for those attending was that there could be no alcohol on the premises. Right from the beginning, the volunteers came up hard against social deprivation: problem drinkers – who apparently were quite well behaved – elderly men with only jacket and trousers, no shirt, underwear or outdoor clothing, and a family of two young children with a half-naked father and a mother spaced out on heroin. Surviving Christmas was born.

WHY DOES DEPRIVATION CONTINUE?

According to multiple indices of deprivation, as recently as October 2022, a key cause behind Hastings' and Rye's poverty levels is the rapid rise in housing costs and the lack of accommodation that can be designated as 'affordable'. This problem has always existed in poor constituencies like Hastings and Rye but has intensified in recent years.

The latest figures obtained by Shelter showed that 371 people out of a population of 92,855 were homeless – either in temporary accommodation or sleeping rough. Of those, 48 people were sleeping rough on any given night in 2019.

A lot of insight can be had by reading the Hastings and St Leonards Anti-Poverty Strategy Refresh 2016-2020 and the Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

Strategy 2019-2023. Add to that, the present cost of living crisis and the latest figures released by the council reveal that the number of homeless people has gone from 170 two years ago to more than 1,000. Surviving Christmas is bracing itself.

Fortunately, the project has gone from strength to strength over the intervening years, extending the Christmas service to hampers for families nominated by local social service agencies and registering as a charity with the Charity Commission. All this against a backdrop where street drinking was becoming a real problem, and Hastings had blossomed into a major drug smuggling town – not unlike the gin, brandy and tobacco smuggling of 200 years ago!

It had been agreed from the start that any sense of 'us and them' should be avoided at all costs: the committee, volunteers and guest were to be on an equal footing. This has been maintained and any attempts to have identification tags discouraged. There can sometimes be problems telling volunteers and guests apart, but, if anything, that adds to the fun!

It is our fortieth anniversary in 2024 and we invite you to keep an eye on our website survivingchristmas.co.uk for up-coming events and how to participate, donate or if you want to volunteer or entertain musically, feel free to get in touch via survivingchristmas.co.uk!

Happy and We Know It

A gran spends Tuesday mornings at a playgroup in St Leonards

CATHERINE VALE

It's 10.50am on a Tuesday morning and I'm in a gang in a church hall doing the Hokey Cokey. "Knees bend, arms bend, ra ra ra". I miss out the knee bend, hoping my two under-five-year-old companions won't notice.

If you're looking for an affordable play experience, look no further. For a donation if you have it – free if you don't – you get resuscitative drinks for the mum/dad/gran/carers, 'snacks' for the children, and the run of a hall for nearly two hours.

There is SPACE, great if you live in a tiny flat with no garden. Children roar about on plastic motor-

bikes, leg-testing pedal trikes and police cars. Dollies race past in pushchairs. Watch out – no high-way code exists.

PLAY TOGETHER

Mums are propped on adult chairs round the edge, texting, drinking coffee, talking to a friend. Babies sleep in lie-back pushchairs while older siblings fly down the slide. Is it all unstructured mayhem? No, helpers have laid out the playdough table and the sticking table.

Playdough is a therapeutic material. Some helpers and carers gather there creating stress-reducing shapes, plunging cutters into pink goo, crushing stars, creating

bunnies and lions. It is second only to popping plastic bubble wrap – far more effective than Sertraline and no withdrawal syndrome.

On the sticking table sits a dad making a seagull out of a plastic teaspoon, goggle eyes and card wings. Not so many men here, perhaps daunted by the throng of staggering toddlers and creative bikes. This dad has got used to it and is the life and soul. But new dads don't talk to anyone, they mind their child carefully and leave before the singing. They need to find out about *Wind the Bobbin up* and *Sleeping Bunnies* before they stay.

EAT TOGETHER

After an hour or so, a snack is laid out on tiny tables. Groups of eight children sit round on tiny chairs as at a gala dinner, waited on by helpers and parents. Do you want pink juice or orange juice? On the plates are strawberries, grapes, cucumber, banana, carrot sticks, apple, with bread sticks or some

polystyrene look-alike rice cake.

Then the toys start vanishing into a distant room beyond the stage, where foodbank tins are available if you need them. Giveaways of toys and clothes are occasionally on the stage too.

A circle of chairs, big and small, is created around a corner of carpet, and the box of instruments comes out. There may be an unseemly struggle amongst the older children for the flashing guitar. Babies and toddlers get variations on rattles. The din is appalling. The leader is signing as well as singing. We conclude that it's *Five Little Ducks Went Swimming one Day*. The song slowly transcends the percussion as mums and grans join in.

SING TOGETHER

All the songs are horror stories – the little ducks get abducted, the sheep are lost, the monkeys fall off the bed. On the other hand, it seems to be a time when doctors answered their phones and of-

fered preventative medicine. "Mummy called the doctor and the doctor said: NO MORE MONKEYS JUMPING on the bed!" Miss Polly's dolly got a home visit (fat chance now). Spiders climb up spouts, buses have conductors who say "tickets, please".

Finally, it's *Ring a Ring o' Roses*, and *the Hokey Cokey* if we feel up to it. Some attendees are already asleep in their pushchairs, others leave clutching their artwork, goggle eyes falling off on the way home. The volunteers clear up, tables that need an engineering degree to dismantle are stacked, carpets rolled up, chairs piled, floor swept.

About 20 children, 20 adults and the vicar have all had as much fun as it's possible to have in town by 11am on a Tuesday. We go away tired and buzzing – happy, in fact, and we know it. CLAP your hands!

■ To find a group near you, just check the internet. There are many in Hastings & St Leonards.



Crystal Healing

ROMA CLARK

For as long as I can remember, I have been fascinated by crystals, rocks and stones, picking them up from the pavement or the beach and digging them up from the garden even! Every once in a while, a little coloured stone would appear that made my collection even more precious. Looking back, some of the coloured stones were probably crystals washed up from who knows where, which added to my excitement on finding one. I grew up, still fascinated by these 'rocks' and started collecting crystals. At the time, I didn't know how to choose, cleanse or programme them, although I do think crystals choose us. It seemed natural that I would have some sort of calling that involved crystals, and this has led me to become a crystal healer.

Healing with crystals goes back centuries to the ancient Egyptians, who had an advanced system of healing using gemstones and colour. Ayurvedic medicine, which originated in India, has and still uses gemstones: this entails grinding gemstones into a fine powder and combining them with liquid, which is then taken by the patient in a prescribed dose. If I make a gem essence I never grind crystals up, I work with the whole crystal.



(Please don't try making gem essences at home without the guidance of a qualified crystal healer as some stones are potentially dangerous and can be toxic when taken in this way).

WHAT IS CRYSTAL HEALING?

In a nutshell, crystal healing treatments realign the body's energy field, working with the chakras to promote an overall feeling of well-being. The crystals are placed around the body and set up specific and complex electro-magnetic force fields. This energy acts to re-polarise any fields that are out of sync., redistributing the correct energies to restore harmony and balance to both the physical and

subtle bodies. The therapist's hands are never laid on the body as the therapist works through the crystals. A treatment will do one or more of the following: clear negative and blocked energies, replace negative energy with positive vibrations or strengthen and build chakra energy.

The mineral kingdom receives its life-force energy from the sun and from other planetary sources. Crystals and stones emit powerful vibrations and frequencies which affect our whole being. They can expand spiritual development and awareness as well as balancing and attuning mind, body and spirit. We are now just beginning to realise the potential of crystals and stones as interest grows in

alternative forms of healing. We are learning that precious or semi-precious stones generate healing vibrations acting on the body's energy field, that go through the healer to the client or can be placed on specific parts of the body that need treatment.

CRYSTALS AND COLOUR THERAPY

Crystal healing combines well with some other therapies - including colour therapy. I use some aspects of colour therapy during my crystal healing treatments and vice versa as crystals and colour work very well together. In fact, during healing sessions I work a lot with the chakras which all have their own colour frequency and that attracts the strength of the colour vibration; in itself this is a very powerful healing quality. The crystals we choose to balance and realign these chakras relate to a specific chakra: for example, the crown chakra, colour violet: I would use amethyst or clear crystal quartz, but you can also use diamond or alexandrite. And so each chakra has its own colour and its own set of stones that

can be used.

There are also many stones used for conditions that are physical, emotional, mental and spiritual, whether it be for calming, revitalising or to inspire. Each symptom has its own colour and crystal to help the healing process, and each gemstone has its own colour energy and different healing qualities.

Each of my treatments begins with measuring and cleansing the aura and then a chakra balancing and realigning session before moving on, if necessary to a healing treatment for a specific reason.

If you would like more information on any of these complementary therapies: chakra balancing and realigning, crystal healing, colour therapy or any of the workshops I run, please contact me through Instagram. Roma_Colour_Crystal

Always ethically sourced!

■ Roma Clark, Crystal Healer
Colour Therapist, Colour Profiler
Member of the Association of
Complementary and Holistic
Therapists.

WRITE FOR US

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OPINION

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE...  HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Simple Sword of Truth

KENT BARKER

The Hastings Independent has published a couple of pieces recently that have come in for comment or criticism. On this Opinion page, *Tin Foil Hatter*, was about conspiracy theorists. On the Environment page last issue, *Inconvenient Facts* questioned whether climate change is entirely man-made.

We'll come on to whether it is desirable, or even sensible, for HIP to be publishing controversial views later, but first let's deal with the question or concept of 'truth'.

One correspondent said, "I'm aware that this is the Opinion page, but you still have an obligation not to print lies". Another accused the environment piece as being "riddled with half-truths". But is there any such thing as an absolute truth? Writer Larry Walsh seeks to distinguish between facts and truths: "A fact is something that's indisputable, based on empirical research and quantifiable measures. Facts go beyond theories. They're proven through calculation and experience, or they're something that definitively occurred in the past. Truth is entirely different; it may include fact, but it can also include belief."

But in science, at least, facts may be fluid. "Proof in science does not exist" says Physics Lecturer Michael Biercuc. "A basic principle in science is that any law, theory, or otherwise can be disproven if new

facts or evidence are presented... So long as the evidence is consistent with the theory, we consider the theory validated. But it will never be proven." US academic Zachary Elkins agrees: "Scientific facts may be changed or discarded if new evidence doesn't support them."

But why rely on slightly random academics or writers when we have artificial intelligence available. Ask ChatGBT: "Is it possible to prove anything?" and you elicit the response: "It is not possible to prove anything with absolute certainty as all knowledge is subject to revision or doubt ... In scientific enquiry, for example, theories and hypotheses are considered provisionally true until new evidence disproves them."

Even in law, it is accepted that there are no immutable facts. In a UK criminal court, guilt has to be established 'beyond reasonable doubt'. And even 'proof' of guilt such as DNA or fingerprint evidence can be shown to be erroneous – Andrew Malkinson was cleared by the appeal court last month after 17 years in prison for a rape in 2003. Fresh DNA had linked another man to the crime. And there have been many other similar miscarriages of justice.

So there is no absolute truth in either science or law, only individual belief in the preponderance of evidence. But as we know evidence can be, and frankly often is, distorted. We rely on peer reviews to authenticate scientific theories or hypotheses. But it's known this is



often corrupt. People have reviewed their own research under fake names. Others have been paid to come up with a certain stance in their review. There are 'predatory' journals who, for a fee, will accept any article submitted. So even 'weight of evidence' on any given topic might be misleading.

Then there is the nature of lies or half truths themselves. A simple definition of a lie is that it is something untrue, said or written in order to deceive. But isn't that overly simplistic? A child might lie because they believe something,

whether or not it is actually true. We even legitimise and teach them to do this by lying about Santa Claus, or the Easter bunny, or the tooth fairy. And an adult might well genuinely believe something and propagate a view without in any way intending to deceive. Who hasn't mustered 'evidence' to support their viewpoint in a heated conversation or argument? Perhaps erroneously, rather than mendaciously.

There seems to many, particularly the older generation, to be a real danger in overt certainty.

Unquestioning belief is what leads to people being 'no platformed' and to cancel culture. You may have your own theories about who killed JFK, or whether 9/11 was a CIA plot or, indeed, whether climate change is man-made, but you are highly unlikely to be able to absolutely prove them one way or the other. You may cite a preponderance of evidence to support your view, but even here you should be careful. Vested interests, international corporations, big money and revolving doors may have distorted that evidence.

Even Albert Einstein said, "Unthinking respect for authority is the greatest enemy of truth."

So should there be 'no go' areas for discussion within the pages of HIP? Among the paper's stated values as a community publication are: "The newspaper recognises that there will be a wide range of views within the community, and it seeks to cover a broad spectrum of those views." HIP also supports the "right to the freedom of expression." (Those values will always be mediated by the obligation to refuse material likely to lead to hatred or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, gender, race, colour, creed, legal status, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.)

Finally, the Hastings Independent is run collectively and does not have one single editorial position. So this article is not the 'view' of the newspaper, but the author's alone.

SATIRE

Gaspers are Good for You

RICHARD PRICE almost choked on *Inconvenient Facts* (HIP 234) and urges you not to believe everything you read in the papers.

Tobacco smoking alarmism has reached fever pitch. I am fuming that the relentless propaganda has induced a state of fear in humankind. Not only do people believe

that it is bad for their health, but they think that the smoke contains dangerous chemicals that pollute the air. They even claim that being around someone smoking can be injurious.

There is a lot of disinformation and propaganda around. I like to say the Earth's climate has always changed, but more to the point, people have always smoked tobacco. Legislation only came about after well-funded lobbyists convinced the public that scientists know what they're talking about.

The anti-tobacco legislation has made it harder to advertise and market cigarettes. That used to be a key factor driving global expansion. Nowadays, manufacturers are finding it hard to recruit new young smokers and are having to expand in India and Asia where the legalisation is different.

We positioned smoking. I mean, smoking was positioned, not as something deadly but as something that was aspirational. Now all these fearmongers are scaring people off. Why shouldn't we make up our own minds?

Apparently, polar bears are thriving - which is direct evidence that man-made climate change is not happening. What? A similar train of thought should exist for smokers, many of whom are also thriving. The right message isn't getting out there. Nobody thinks about the beneficial effects of smoking. For example, there's bound to be a paper somewhere that says that while it may be established fact that it causes cancer and cardiovascular disease, it also has beneficial effects - helping people with hypertensive disorders or controlling vomiting when pregnant. Tobacco genuinely ben-

efits people trying to lose weight. (So does eating tapeworm eggs but smoking is much less scary.) Also, speaking from personal experience, it helped my ulcers.

'Scientific' papers on climate change can be found on www.clintel.org (the source of information for *Inconvenient Facts*?) but if you look on desmog.com you will find that the site is funded by oil money. I really hope that no one believes that the tobacco industry has funded research which is used to lobby governments to block, amend and delay effective public health policy - including, most recently, standardised packaging.

Anyway, I appeal to the Hastings Independent: in the interests of balance, publish this article. We need journalism that shows the positive effects of tobacco smoking and counters the propaganda.



The HIP List

Your Pull Out Guide
To What's Happening
In Hastings

WANT YOUR EVENT LISTED? CONTACT US NOW
IAN GREENSMITH (MUSIC), NADINE HAYWARD (ART,
CINEMA, THEATRE & PERFORMANCE), HUGH SULLIVAN
(SPORT) AND ROD WEBB (EVENTS, CLASSES)
on listings@hastingsindependentpress.co.uk

MUSIC

Friday 22 September

The Ultimate Boy Band Party Show
White Rock Theatre, 7.30pm
McNiff's Folk Sundowner
The Jenny Lind, High St, 5.00pm
Rowsie + Freddie & the Scenarios + Holly Henderson
The Pig, White Rock, 7.30pm
The Hastingsers
Pisarro's, South Terrace, 8.30pm

Saturday 23 September

UK Pink Floyd Experience
White Rock Theatre, 7.30pm
Hastings Roots All Dayer: Mad professor + Dub Pistols + The Marley Experience + Beatles Dub Club + Ras Katyleb
Hastings Pier, 3.00pm
Seafront Session: Danny Horn
The Albion, George St, 4.00pm
Fire in the Meadow
The Jenny Lind, High St, 6.00pm
Project Gemini
The Piper, Norman Rd, 8.00pm
Hastings Northern Soul Club: DJs Tara T, Anton Ludwig, Tiki Steve + Lou Vincent
The Pig, White Rock, 8.00pm
Andy T King as Elvis
East Hastings Sea Angling Association, The Stade, 8.45pm
The Time Machine
The Brass, Havelock St, 10.00pm

Sunday 24 September

Keith Goodall
East Hastings Sea Angling Association, The Stade, 2.00pm
Tom Cole's Sunday Sounds at the Brickmakers with Guest Al Orbit
The Brickmaker's Alehouse, Sea Rd, Bexhill, 5.00pm
Elisha Edwards
The Albion, George St, 7.00pm

Tuesday 26 September

Irish Music Session
The Albion, George St, 8.30pm
Traditional Folk Session
The Stag, All Saints St, 8.30pm

Wednesday 27 September

Simon&The Pope: Avant Bavard
Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 6.00pm
Open Mic with James & Jules
Tin Tins, Robertson St, 8.00pm
Medicine Wagon
The Seadog, Station Rd, 7.30pm

Thursday 28 September

Open Mic with James & Meredith
The Pig, White Rock, 8.00pm
Lord Jasper The Reluctant Hippy Presents the Blues + Guests
The Royal Standard, East Beach St, 8.00pm

Live Jazz: The Jazz Organisation plus Special Guest Bjorn Dahlberg (Sax/Clarinet)
The NUR, Robertson St, 8.00pm
Shanty Night with Completely Scuppered
The Jenny Lind, High St, 8.30pm

Friday 29 September

Swansea Sound + I Am Her
The Piper, Norman Rd, 8.00pm
Thank You For The Music: Abba Tribute
White Rock Theatre, 7.30pm
McNiff's Folk Sundowner
The Jenny Lind, High St, 5.00pm
Human Leather + Wytch Pycknyck + Sexton Ming's Porridge Van
The Pig, White Rock, 7.30pm
The Spirit in the Dust: Afrit Nebula with Yumino Seki and Mark French
Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.30pm
Under the Radar: Calzy + Clean Shirt + Charlie House
The Brass, Havelock St, 7.30pm
Howling Grooves
Pisarro's, South Terrace, 8.30pm

Saturday 30 September

Showaddywaddy
White Rock Theatre, 7.30pm
Ash Vs the Subways
De La Warr, Bexhill, 7.00pm
POTL Weekender: Daemonik Fonce + Thee Headshrinkers
The Jenny Lind, High St, 6.00pm
The Ichi Bons
The Piper, Norman Rd, 7.00pm
Ritchie Lee
East Hastings Sea Angling Association, The Stade, 8.45pm

Sunday 1 October

Bold Reilly
The Stag, All Saints St, 5.00pm
Vinyl Night
The Jenny Lind, High St, 7.00pm
POTL Weekender: X-Ray Cat Trio
The Jenny Lind, High St, 9.00pm

Monday 2 October

Just Landed
The Jenny Lind, High St, 7.00pm

Tuesday 3 October

Jazz Hastings: Ivo Neame Quartet
East Hastings Sea Angling Association, The Stade, 7.45pm
Traditional Folk Session
The Stag, All Saints St, 8.30pm

Wednesday 4 October

Eddi Reader
De La Warr, Bexhill, 7.00pm
Dave Sharp (The Alarm)
The Jenny Lind, High St, 8.00pm
Open Mic with James & Jules
Tin Tins, Robertson Street, 8.00pm
Jam Night

Pisarro's, South Terrace, 8.00pm
Bertie Whuksters: Ukulele Jam Session
The Seadog, Station Rd, 8.00pm
Americana/Bluegrass Night
The Stag, All Saints St, 9.00pm

Thursday 5 October

Live Jazz: The Jazz Organisation plus Special Guest Stuart Jackaman (Guitar)
The NUR, Robertson St, 8.00pm
Open Mic with James & Meredith
The Pig, White Rock, 8.00pm
Lord Jasper The Reluctant Hippy Presents the Blues + Guests
The Royal Standard, East Beach St, 8.00pm
Shanty Night with Completely Scuppered
The Jenny Lind, High St, 8.30pm

Friday 22 September

Delia Derbyshire: The Myths and Then Legendary Tapes
(Summer Music Season presented by David Quantick with Director's Q&A with Caroline Catz)
Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm
The Old Oak (screening in aid of the Refugee Buddy Project)
Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.30pm

Saturday 23 September

Grease - Sing Along Film Night & Disco
Black Box, George St, 7.00pm
Women Talking
Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Sunday 24 September

Spellbound, 11.00am
The Thing That Couldn't Die (B Movie Fan Club), 7.30pm
Electric Palace, High St

Thursday 28 September

The Silent Twins
Electric Palace, High St, 11.00am, 7.30pm

Friday 29 September

A Film About Studio Electrophonique (+Short Film by Ore Synthesiser Club)
Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Saturday 30 September

My Extinction
Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

Sunday 1 October

Exhibition on Screen: Young Picasso
Electric Palace, High St, 11.00am

Tuesday 3 October

Punch
(+ Q&A from the Institute of Contemporary Arts)
Electric Palace, High St, 7.30pm

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LISTINGS

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< Continued from page 11

Wednesday 4 October
Passages

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.30pm

Thursday 5 October**War Pony**Electric Palace, High St,
11.00am, 7.30pm**Sussex Exchange**Queensway – for film listings go to:
cinema.thesussexexchange.co.uk**Odeon Hastings**Queens Road - for film listings go to:
odeon.co.uk/cinemas/hastings

PERFORMANCE

Friday 22 September**Lovesong**Stables Theatre, The
Bourne, 7.30pm**Saturday 23 September****Macbeth**The Bowler Crab Company
Art in the Park, Alexandra
Park, 3.00pm**A Night of Flamenco**

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.30pm

Organ Concert – Stephen Page
(in aid of Christian Aid)Church of St John The Evangelist,
Hollington, 3.00pm**Sunday 24 September****Hastings Philharmonic****Orchestra – Flute and Harp Duo**Christ Church, Silchester
Rd, 6.00pm**Hastings Chamber Music Festival**

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 3.00pm

Second Hand Stories by the SeaStables Theatre, The
Bourne, 5.00pm**Monday 25 September****The Show Might Go On**Stables Theatre, The
Bourne, 7.00pm**Wednesday 27 September****Bavard Bar**

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.30pm

A Tribute to Stéphane**Grapelli and Dudley Moore**Stables Theatre, The
Bourne, 7.30pm**Tim Vine – Breeep!**

White Rock Theatre, 7.30pm

Thursday 28 September**A Little Life**

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.00pm

Falstaff – Adapted from**the Novel by Robert Nye**Stables Theatre, The
Bourne, 7.30pm**Friday 29 September****Tango by Casa Tango**(+ Argentinian BBQ - in aid of RNLI)
Cumbia Kitchen, Marina, 7.00pm**Ruffles (Cabaret/Drag)**Forbidden Fruit, Grand
Parade, 9.30pm**Spirit in the Dust**(Yumino Seki dance performance
with music by Afrit Nebula)

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.30pm

Saturday 30 September**Davina Sparkle (Cabaret/Drag)**Forbidden Fruit, Grand
Parade, 9.30pm**Wednesday 4 October****The Pilgrim Plays**Stables Theatre, The
Bourne, 7.30pm**Thursday 5 October****The Royal Opera Live Cinema****Season – L'Elisir d'Amore**

Kino-Teatr, Norman Rd, 7.15pm

The Pilgrim PlaysStables Theatre, The
Bourne, 7.30pm

ART

Coastal Currents Arts Festival
runs throughout September
– for full events programme
go to coastalcurrents.org.uk**Abandoned Beauty**2 October until 28
November 2023

Stables Theatre Gallery, The Bourne

Abraham Osorio & The**Young Creatives Collective**

Until 30 September 2023

Rooftop Foyer, De La

Warr Pavilion, Bexhill

A Moment in Time

Until 30 September 2023

Stables Theatre Gallery,

The Bourne

Artists in Residence:**The Two Ians**

Until 30 September 2023

St Andrews Mews, Waldegrave St

Cerebellum: Excappare**Exhibition with Live****Performances**

7 October until 3 November

Hélio Oiticica – Waiting**for the Internal Sun**

23 September until

14 January 2024

De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill

InHarmsWay

Mark Walter, Wolfgang

Dubieniec & Oli Spleen

22-24 September

The Electro Studios Landing

Gallery, Seaside Rd, St Leonards

Matthew Radford: Succession

Until 19 October 2023

Kino-Teatr Gallery, Norman Rd

Michelle Mildenhall – KINKY

Until 31 October 2023

Seed, George St

Oneiropraxis

30 September until

29 October 2023

Hastings Museum and Art

Gallery, Bohemia Rd

PhotoHastings in Residence

Until 31 October 2023

St Andrews Mews, Waldegrave St

Portraits of the Dove Café

Until 23 September 2023

Hastings Museum and Art

Gallery, Bohemia Rd

Paul Sayers and Helen**Savage – Plastic Confetti**

Until 1 October 2023

Hastings Arts Forum, Marine Court

Re-Imagined – New**Concepts for the De La****Warr Pavilion Bandstand**

Until 30 September 2023

North Staircase, De La Warr, Bexhill

Steven Linard – Total**Fashion Victim**

Until 8 October 2023

Rogue Gallery, Norman Rd

Stored Out of Sight

Until 16 December 2023

Hastings Museum and Art

Gallery, Bohemia Rd

Tschabalala Self: Seated

Until 29 October 2023

De La Warr Pavilion Lawn, Bexhill

Yun Hyong-Keun

Until 1 October 2023

Hastings Contemporary, The Stade

SPORT

Saturday 23 September**Football:** Hastings United

v Potters Bar Town –

Isthmian Premier League

Dripping Pan, Lewes 7.45pm

Hockey: South Saxons

Men v Gore Court

Horntye Park 12.00 noon

Sunday 24 September**Football:** Hastings

United Women v Dartford

Reserves – London & South

East Regional League

Pilot Field 2.00pm

Tuesday 26 September**Football:** Lewes v Hastings

United – Isthmian Premier League

Dripping Pan, Lewes 7.45pm

An opportunity for travelling

supporters to indulge in local

rivalry, though the evening

kick-off may reduce numbers.

Wednesday 27 September**Football:** Hastings United

Women v Bexhill United – London

& South East Regional League

Pilot Field 7.45pm

Saturday 30 September**Tennis:** Hastings mixed

doubles championships

The Green courts from 2.00pm

Rugby: Hastings & Bexhill v

Old Alleynians II – London &

SE Division, Kent League 3

Ark Alexandra, time tbc

Sunday 1 October**Tennis:** Hastings mixed

doubles championships (cont)

Amherst courts from 2.00pm

EVENTS

Autumn Programme**Spun Glass Theatre-****Mini Playhouse**

26 White Rock

Creative workshops for parents

and toddlers 19 months - 3 years!

Enjoy fun, supportive, artistic

sessions every week by the award-

winning Spun Glass Theatre.

Full programme: spunglasstheatre.com/mini-playhouse-hastings**Every Monday, Tuesday,****Wednesday, Friday****Health Walks**

Gentle, hour-long walks to boost

physical and mental health. Free,

no booking required, Times and

venues vary, see website for details.

[tcv.org.uk/southeast/](http://tcv.org.uk/southeast/volunteer-south-east/east-sussex-healthy-walks)[volunteer-south-east/east-](http://volunteer-south-east/east-sussex-healthy-walks)sussex-healthy-walks**Every Monday****Al-Anon**

7.30pm-8.30pm

Clifton Community Church

Centre, 1-2 Stainsby

St, St Leonards

Worried about someone's

drinking? Come to Al-Anon

family groups 12-step weekly

meeting. All welcome.

[al-anonuk.org.uk/groups/](http://al-anonuk.org.uk/groups/hastings-monday)hastings-monday**Karaoke Night with John C Live**

Havelock Pub, Robertson St, 7.00pm

Facebook

#generalhavelockhastings

The Seadog Quiz

32, Station Rd, Hastings, 8.00pm

1st place - £50 bar tab

@TheSeaDogHastings

Every Tuesday**Writers Workshop**

Ten weeks from 19 September,

£180 10.00am-11.30am

Electric Palace, High St, Hastings

Each session, a discussion of

writing craft and technique,

while writing exercises and

suggested reading materials

are provided every week.

[hastingswritersworkshop.](http://hastingswritersworkshop.com/writersworkshops)com/writersworkshops**OHPS Original Old****Town Guided Walks**

Meet by the café on the West Hill

2.30pm (until 26 Sept)

£6. Prebook online or at

Fisherman's Museum

ohps.org.uk/walks**5IVE Rhythms**

10.00am-11.30am

The Crown House,

Marina, St Leonards

5Rhythms is a dynamic

movement practice that

ignites creativity, connection

and community. Come and

dance with Emma Leech.

emmadance.co.uk**Rhymetime at Hastings Library**

11.00am, free

Hastings Library, Brassey

Institute, 13 Claremont,

Babies, toddlers and parents

or carers can have fun singing,

playing musical instruments

and learning rhymes.

0345 608 0196

Every Tuesday, Friday, and**Saturday****The Hastings Library of Things**

Tuesday 12.00pm-2.00pm, Friday

and Saturday 12.00pm-4.00pm

The Common Room, 27-

29 Cambridge Road

A library of things to be

borrowed, used and returned.

Tools, kitchen items, jigsaw

puzzles and lots more.

hastingslibraryofthings.co.uk**Every Wednesday****Writers Workshop**

Ten weeks from 20 September,

£180 6.30pm-8.00pm-11.30

Electric Palace, High St, Hastings

Each session, a discussion of

writing craft and technique,

and a workshopping session,

while writing exercises and

suggested reading materials

are provided every week.

[hastingswritersworkshop.](http://hastingswritersworkshop.com/writersworkshops)com/writersworkshops**Let's Do Lunch**

12.30pm-2.00pm

Isabel Blackman Centre,

Winding St, Hastings

Make new friends and

reconnect with old ones over

a lovely and affordable 2

course lunch for under £10.

Every Thursday**English Conversation group**

10:00 Hastings Library, Brassey

Institute, 13 Claremont

**Crossword Solution No 235:****Across:** 1. (S)Pur is t(o) 3. Dimple (anagram) 4. Nugget (anagram) **Down:** 1. ParDon 2. Talent (anagram)

LISTINGS

Fixing Friday

12.00pm-4.00pm
The Common Room, 27-29 Cambridge Road
Bring your small items for repair. If in doubt, bring it along!
makeandmendbexhillandbeyond.org.uk

Wednesday 27 September

Sussex Crime Writers Evening
7.00pm Hastings Library, Brassey Institute, 13 Claremont, Hastings
To celebrate local crime writers, a Sussex Crime Writers evening in the presence of Sheila Bugler, Merryn Allingham, William Shaw and Chris Curran.
0345 608 0196

Thursday 28 September

Ukrainian Stories to Share
2:30pm Ukraine Reading Friends Hastings Library - a group to celebrate Ukraine's rich literary heritage - translated into English. Hastings Library, Brassey Institute, Hastings
0345 608 0196

Friday to Tuesday 29 Sept to 3 Oct

'Silver' Mirror Exhibition
Friday: 1.00pm-6pm
Saturday: 11.00am-5.00pm
Other: 12.00pm-4.00pm
Observer Building, Cambridge Rd, Hastings
Local decorative mirror and glass designer Alison Purdy is celebrating 25 years in business this month with an exhibition and pop-up shop.
purdyshop.com

Saturday 30 September Bona Polari - A Workshop with Lee Campbell

10:30am Hastings Library, Brassey Institute, Hastings
In memory of Tony Morvay. 'Bona Polari' is gay slang, meaning 'good chat'. At this workshop participants will be invited to learn about and write their own Polari.
0345 608 0196

Sunday 1 October

Vintage Kilo Sale
10.00am, £2-3
East Sussex College, Hastings
Saturday 7 October
eventbrite.co.uk
The Big Community Fayre
Art in the Park Community Hub, Alexandra Park
FREE Spaces available for stall holders.
info@artsonprescription.org

Friday 6 October

Edith Festival
1.00pm-5.00pm

Durbar Hall, Hastings Museum & Art Gallery
Further events 7 and 8 October.
FriendsOfEdith.org.uk

CLASSES

Mondays

Overeaters Anonymous
7.30-8.30
Clifton Centre, 1-2 Stainsby St, St Leonards
oagb.org.uk

Slow and Easy Fitness
11.30-12.30pm, £3
Bewellfit, at Clifton Road & 9, The Ridge
Exercise for older adults
07817 144812:
bodymoveshastings.com

Drum Club
4.15pm-5.15pm, £6.50
West Hill Community Centre
For 15-16 year olds, booking essential.
juliansambadrum@gmail.com

Art Classes, including Life Drawing
10.00am-12.15pm and 12.45pm-3.00pm
Ore Community Centre, 455 Old London Rd, Hastings
£10.50 per session
sjflack.art

Darragh Dance
5.30pm-7.00pm, £10, £5 concessions
Afri-Co-Lab, 3 Marine Court, St Leonards
Get your joy on with movement director and choreographer Darragh O'Leary.
afri-co-lab.org

Chair Yogo
3.00pm-4.00pm
Isabel Blackman Centre, Winding Street
One of several classes covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk
Art Class for Adults
10am-12.15pm & 12.45-3.00pm
Ore Community Centre
All levels, £10.50 per session
sjflack.art

Choir Practice!
11.00am
The Chapel of Christ Stillness, Moon Cottage, Guestling, TN35 4HJ
New singers of all ages welcome.
thechapelofchristsstillness.co.uk
Feel better with Therapeutic Movements
2.00pm-3.00pm
Salvation Army Hall, St Andrew's Square, Hastings
Suitable for all ages.
qigongsigrid@gmail.com
Candlelit Yoga
6.00pm-7.00pm
Hastings Old Town
oldtownyoga.co.uk

Absolute Beginners Argentine Tango
7.00pm-8.30pm
Upstairs at the Piper, 1 Norman Rd
£40pp or £70 couple
pennythepoetess@yahoo.co.uk
Argentine Tango Improvers Drop-In Class
8.30pm-9.30pm, £6
Upstairs at the Piper, 1 Norman Rd
pennythepoetess@yahoo.co.uk
Beginners Vinyasa Flow
9.30am and 6.30pm
Hot Yoga Hastings, 21 St, Peter's Rd, Hastings
hotyogahastings.co.uk
Slow Flow Yoga (Open Level)
9.30am-10.30am
Azur Marina Pavilion
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk
Silver Swans Ballet Class
4.00pm-5.30pm
Ore Community Centre, Studio 2
Annie 07704 711772
Beginners Pointe Class
5.30pm-6.30pm
Ore Community Centre, Studio 2
Annie 07704 711772
Alexander Technique
Taster Sessions
1.30pm-5.00pm Braybrooke Rd
livingtenderly@yahoo.co.uk
Kundalini Yoga & Meditation with Yeli
7.30pm-9.00pm Wellington Centre, Hastings
yeli@happinessholistichealth.uk
Ballet Barre
7.15pm-8.00pm.
Hastings Old Town
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Yoga Over 60 - maintaining movement
11am-12.30pm
St Leonards Studio @ Azur Marina Pavilion
zowie@stleonards.studio
Hastings Punk Choir
7.00pm-8.30pm
Electric Palace, 39A High St, Hastings
(And generally a drink or two in the Jenny Lind afterwards.)

Tuesdays

French for beginners
11.00am-12.00 noon
The Cottage, 7 The Alley TN34 1HB
+ Conversation at the Common Room, Eagle House, Robertson St,
George: 07835808318
Ore Youth Club Sessions
4.30pm-6.00pm
Ore Community Centre
sarah.adams@freshvisions.org.uk
Bev 07732823800
The Crown Knitters
10.30am The Crown, 64-66 All Saints St, Hastings
Fortnightly first and second week of month
A weekly knitting group who knit lovely things to sell to raise

money for local charities.
thecrownhastings.co.uk/events
Sew Social with Karen Arthur
7.00pm-9.00pm, £10, £5 conc
Afri-Co-Lab, 3 Marine Court, St Leonards
A monthly gathering on first Tuesday of the month for Global Majority crafters.
afri-co-lab.org
Baby & Toddler Social Meet Up
12.00pm-3.00pm
The Common Room, Eagle House, 27-29 Cambridge Rd, Hastings
A welcome space for people with small people to meet.
umbrellasussex.org.uk/news
Needle Felt
11.00am-12.00pm and 1.00pm-2.00pm
Isabel Blackman Centre, Winding Street
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk
Online Chair Yoga
Zoom, 2.00pm-3.00pm
sueyoga1066@gmail.com
Creative Writing at The Crown
10.00am-11.30am
The Crown, Hastings, £8
£15 - lots more classes available for all levels
Nicky 07938 734871
Mini-Da Vinci Art School
10.00am-12.00pm
Art in the Park Community Hub, Alexandra Park
Pre-school/ home-schoolers art activities
£6.50 (adults free)
info@artsonprescription.org
Classical Guitar Tuition
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays
Bexhill, from £15, free taster sessions
bexhillclassicalguitar.co.uk
Pilates with Lucy Paffard
St Leonards, 9.30am
lucypaffard@gmail.com
Painting Workshop
1.00pm-3.00pm
Art in the Park, Alexandra Park
£12 (concessions available)
Materials provided.
Info@artsonprescription.org
Photography Workshop
6.00pm-8.00pm £12 (concessions available)
Art in the Park, Alexandra Park
Own camera required.
Info@artsonprescription.org
Country Dancing
7.45pm-9.45pm
St Matthew's Church, London Rd, St Leonards
hastingscountrydanceclub.org.uk
Vinyasa Flow (Levels 1-2)
6.00pm-7.00pm
Horntye Sports Centre, Hastings
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk
Knitting Yarns:
5.00pm-6.30pm
Sugar Pie Honey Buns
235 London Rd, St Leonards
Rachel: 07397794879

Yin Yoga & Relaxation

7.30pm-8.30pm, £7
Azur Marina
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk
Daoist Qi Gong
9.00am-10.00am
The Azur Pavilion, St Leonards
andreaorsoQG@yahoo.com
Pilates: with a roller with Sally Paffard
9.00am-9.30am, Zoom
sallypaffard@gmail.com
Pilates with Sally Paffard
5.30pm-6.30pm
Westhill Community Centre
Sally: 07973 530911
Hot Yoga Hastings
21 St, Peter's Rd, Hastings
hotyogahastings.co.uk
Yoga at the White Rock
11.00am-12.00pm
White Rock Hotel, Hastings
Healing Breath, Yoga Nidra & Tibetan Bowls, £10.
myranicol@gmail.com
Silver Swans Ballet Class
6.30pm-8.00pm
Ore Community Centre, Studio 2
Annie 07704 711772
Gary Marriott's Tune up Tuesdays
5.15pm-6.30pm
Fun Acapella Choir
Hastings Town Centre, £3
Text 07986911083 for more info
Ashtanga Yoga - Assisted Self Practice
07.30am-09.30am, £15
Wellington Health & Wellbeing Centre
ashtangayogahastings@gmail.com
Salsa Tuesdays with Phyre Dance
The Piper, Norman Rd, St Leonards
Times vary see Facebook page.
From beginners to social dancing and practice.
@facebook.com/events/576448847887517

Wednesdays

St Leonards Junior Chess
From 5.00pm St Nicholas Centre, London Road
A social club for children who play chess.
andrewjmcgettigan@gmail.com / 07910 245 40
Slow and Easy Fitness
10.30am-11.30am, £3
Ore Community Centre, 455 Old London Road TN35 5BH
Exercise for older adults
07817 144812:
bodymoveshastings.com
Yogo with Marjolyn
6.00pm-7.00pm
Azur, Marina Pavilion, 44-37 Marina
07929577985
Hatha Yoga for You
2.00pm-3.00pm

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LISTINGS

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Sunroom, Azur, Marina Pavilion, 44-37 Marina
Louise@stleonards.studio
Mystical Yoga at The Bale House
 5.45-7.00pm, £10
 Hastings Country Park, Lower Coastguard Lane, Fairlight, Hastings, TN354AD
enchantedmalas@gmail.com
Elemental Yoga with Catherine
 10.30am. Class Cost: £7
 The Azur Pavilion
catherineburnett12@gmail.com
Laughter Yoga with Bev
 6.30pm-7.30pm
 Upstairs, Jenny Lind
bevjones@laughyourselftohealth.com
Wellbeing Wednesdays
 10.00am-3.00pm, (pay as you can) Art in the Park Community Hub, Alexandra Park
info@artsonprescription.org
Roots of Return
 Women's Wellbeing Circle
 7.30pm-9.00pm (pay as you can)
 Art in the Park Community Hub, Alexandra Park
info@artsonprescription.org
Buddhist Meditation and Dharma Teaching
 7.00pm-9.00pm
 In person and via Zoom.
hastingsbuddhistgroup.co.uk
Yoga on the Harbour Arm (outdoors) 5.30pm-6.30pm
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Kundalini Yoga and Meditation Class
 7.30pm-8.45pm
 The Ballroom, Bank Hotel & Bistro, St Leonards, £10.
soulpowerkundaliniyoga.co.uk
Relaxation: Zoom class with Pilates teacher Sally Paffard
 8.00pm-9.00pm, £4
sallypaffard@gmail.com
Spanish – Adult Beginners
 10.00am-12.00pm
 First Floor, 7 Cambridge Rd, Hastings
 £15 – lots more classes available for all levels
Espanoles en Hastings FB page
spanishonseaschool@gmail.com
Argentine Tango Social Dance
 8.00pm-11.00pm
 White Rock Hotel, Downstairs Bar
 A friendly social tango for those already dancing tango with music from tango's golden age.
 £5 dancers, £2 non-dancers
pennythepoetess@yahoo.co.uk
Qigong with Sigrid
 5.30-6.30pm
 Community Hall of Greek Orthodox Church, St Leonards
 Suitable for all ages.
Sigrid: qigongsigrid@gmail.com
Adult Tap Class for Beginners
 6.15pm-7.00pm

7 Mercatoria, St Leonards
kimhavaland@gmail.com
Therapeutic Yoga
 12.30pm-1.30pm
 Hastings Centre, The Ridge, Hastings TN34 2SA
 £7 – All abilities welcome
ninayoga.co.uk
Legs Bums & Tums
 1.00pm-1.45pm
 Isabel Blackman Centre, Winding St. One of several classes covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk
The Class Choir
 7.00pm-9.00pm The Unitarian Church, South Terrace, Hastings
 Friendly, Fun Uplifting Women's choir. Free taster sessions, no music reading or auditions.
theclasschoir@gmail.com
"streetsketchers" / "plein air" group
 First Wednesday of each month
 9.00am start: Outside Hastings Contemporary Gallery
 11.00am reconvene: Eat@TheStade for refreshments and discussion
meetup.com/south-coast-skyers

Thursdays
Tilekiln Youth Club Sessions
 5.30-7.00pm
 Tilekiln Community Centre
sarah.adams@freshvisions.org.uk
Bev 07732823800
Co-working social media Sessions
 10.00am The Crown, 64-66 All Saints St, Hastings
 Free group working sessions for creative business owners and freelancers designed to help you spend focused, productive time creating and sharing content.
Insta: @brassbeemarketing, catherine@brassbeemarketing.com
Yoga with Marjolyn
 3.00pm-4.00pm
 Azur, Marina Pavilion, 44-37 Marina
 07929577985
Tai Chi for Health and Relaxation
 10.30am-11.30am, £5
 St John's Parish Hall, Brittany Rd
 Stuart 07961 949715
Nature Walks with HESNHS
 Times and venues vary.
hastingsnaturalhistory.org
Meditation and Breathwork with Jung-ui
 7.30pm-8.30pm, £55
 West Hill Community Centre
 A four-week course.
jung-ui.co.uk
Teens Art Club
 4.00pm-6.00pm
 Art in the Park, Alexandra Park
info@artsonprescription.org
Hastings Town Singers
 7.00pm-9.00pm

Castledown School, Priory Road
 A friendly non-auditioning community choir. Free taster sessions.
hastingsownsingers.co.uk
Life drawing (Adults only)
 10.30am-12.30pm, £10
 Art in the Park Community Hub, Alexandra Park
info@artsonprescription.org
Earth:Art Wrokshop
 6.00pm-8.00pm, £10
 Art in the Park Community Hub, Alexandra Park
 Explore a wide range of earth-friendly creative processes and techniques with Georgina Fox.
info@artsonprescription.org
Yoga at Hastings Contemporary
 9.50am-10.50am
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Move It or Lose It!
 10.00am-11.00am
 The Hastings Centre
 Friendly, low impact exercise for older adults. Improves strength and balance. Seated or standing.
 £6 per class. First class free.
lucy.jenner@moveitorloseit.co.uk
Yoga on the Harbour Arm
 5.15pm-6.15pm (outdoors)
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Online Vinyasa Flow with Elena Voce
 12.45pm-1.30pm
 Classes for all levels.
 Pay-what-you-can
yogawithelenavoce.co.uk
Vinyasa Flow
 9.30am-10.30am
 Azur Marina Pavilion
karen@yoga-by-the-sea.co.uk
Kundalini Yoga & Meditation with Yeli
 6.00pm-7.30pm
 Wellington Centre, Hastings
yeli@happinessholistichealth.uk
Mandala Vinyasa Flow (Advanced)
 Hot Yoga Hastings, 21 St, Peter's Rd, Hastings, 6.30pm
hotyogahastings.co.uk
Iyengar Yoga for Beginners
 8.00pm-9.00pm
 Arthur Easton Centre, St Leonards
 Mats, blocks, ropes and barre work. Pay as you are able.
myranicol@gmail.com
Pilates (beginners)
 3.00pm-4.00pm
 Isabel Blackman Centre, Winding St. One of several classes covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk
Ashtanga Yoga – Assisted Self Practice
 07.15am-09.15am, £15
 Wellington Health & Wellbeing Centre
ashtangayogahastings@gmail.com
HESNHS Walking Group
 Walk 4-6 miles with this friendly natural history walking group.
 Picnic or pub lunch options.

hastingsnaturalhistory.org
Andrew: qjw.hesnhs@btinternet.com, 07597 003407

Fridays

Broomgrove Youth Club Sessions
 4.30-5.30pm Broomgrove Community Centre
sarah.adams@freshvisions.org.uk
Bev 07732823800
Feel better with Therapeutic Movements
 9.30-10.30am Salvation Army Hall, St Andrew's Square, Hastings
 Suitable for all ages.
Sigrid: qigongsigrid@gmail.com
Breathe + Stretch with Karen Arthur
 7.30am-8.20am, £10, £5 conc
 Afri-Co-Lab, 3 Marine Court, St Leonards
 Greet the day and start the weekend energised and refreshed.
afri-co-lab.org
Traditional Yoga
 9.30am-10.40am, £10
 Horntye Club Room, Horntye Sports Centre
 For the yoga enthusiast
Yin Yoga
 11.30am-12.30pm, £7
 All abilities.
ninayoga.co.uk
Yoga on the Harbour Arm (outdoors), 9.00am-10.00am
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Pilates: mixed ability with Sally Paffard
 Zoom, 9.00am-10.00am
sallypaffard@gmail.com
Beginners Creative Writing Group
 6.15pm-7.15pm
 The Clifton Centre (previously Southwater Community Centre)
Mindful Yoga – An introspective practice
 10.30am-12.30pm
Chair Yoga – A supported approach
 2.30pm-3.30pm
 St Leonards Studio @ Azur Marina Pavilion
zowie@stleonards.studio
Gong Bath sessions
 11am Unitarian Church, 7a South Terrace
Text Karen Hayler: 07986 911083
Senior Strength
 3.00pm-4.00pm
 Isabel Blackman Centre, Winding St. One of several classes covering all topics.
isabelblackmancentre.co.uk

Saturdays

Saturday Recess Art Club
 10.30am-12.30pm, £6.50 (adults free) Art in the Park Community Hub, Alexandra Park
 creative activities for all budding artists! Ages 10+

info@artsonprescription.org
Chess Club
 2.00pm-4.00pm
 The Common Room, Eagle House, 27-29 Cambridge Rd, Hastings
 An amateur club for amateur players
umbrellasussex.org.uk/news
Zoom Hatha Yoga
 9.00am-10.00am (online only)
 Pranayama, practice and relaxation, video available.
Louiselovesyoga@gmail.com
Meditation and Breathwork with Jung-ui
 10.45am-11.45am
 The Stables Theatre, Hastings
jung-ui.co.uk
Yoga at Hastings Contemporary
 9.50am-10.50am
oldtownyoga.co.uk
Strong Yoga with Lucy
 Morning Yoga via Zoom
 10.00am-11.15am
lamiles@hotmail.co.uk
Hot Yoga Hastings,
 21 St, Peter's Rd, Hastings
Book: hotyogahastings.co.uk
Gong Bath sessions
 Weekly starting 1 April, 2pm
 4 Courts Wellbeing Centre off Sydney Close
Text Karen Hayler: 07986 911083
Antenatal Taster Class
 10.00am 64-66 All Saints St, Hastings
 First Saturday every month.
 Free taster sessions to learn about antenatal and hypnobirthing with Siobhan from The Mothership Antenatal.
themothershipantenatal.co.uk

Sundays

Yin Yoga
 3.00pm 21 St, Peter's Rd, Hastings.
hotyogahastings.co.uk
Historical Dance Group
Regency Dance Workshop
 2pm-4.45pm, monthly
 St Peter and St, Paul's Church Hall
dianadancer@btinternet.com
"streetsketchers" / "plein air" group
 First Wednesday of each month
 4.00pm start: South side, The Stade open space
 6.00pm reconvene: East Hastings Angling Club, The Stade for refreshments and discussion
meetup.com/south-coast-skyers
Sunday Brunch-time
Kid's Art Club
 10.00am-12.00pm, £5,
 Drop-in or stay full 2 hours
 Outside the Smokeshack, St Andrew's Mews, Waldegrave Rd, Hastings
 Join Artist and Arts Educator Charlotte CHW for different creative projects every week. 5-10 yrs.
c.hwatts.art@gmail.com



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FEATURES

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Tim Nathan



RIP Clive

The Real Colin from Accounts

In homage to this summer's word-of-mouth TV hit, **TESSA BOASE** investigates the lure of **Brewing Brothers'** new taproom up on the Ridge. And yes, there's a dog.

This summer's word-of-mouth TV hit involves a girl, a bloke, an artisan brewery and a dog named Colin, as in Colin ... *From Accounts*. If you haven't yet watched the Australian drama series, log in to iPlayer immediately, preferably with a craft beer in hand. It's a treat. Filmed in Sydney, much of the action takes place in an industrially chic taproom called Echo Park, where giant stainless steel fermenters form the backdrop to an on-off romance. It's witty, relatable, and makes you want to move straight to Sydney and apply for a job at Echo Park.

But wait – we have our own 'Colin From Accounts' right here in Hastings, playing out under our noses up on the Ridge. Tucked away on an industrial estate are a cavernous taproom, three craft beer fanatics and a dog. "Love that series," says co-founder Billy Eriksson of Brewing Brothers. "My all time favourite TV series." Yet life doesn't always imitate art. When I get in touch to suggest a feature, I'm told that the brewhouse dog

died very suddenly just the day before. Not a Colin, but a Clive. Clive the spaniel was as old as the business (seven years), as crazy as his owner, Charlie Braxton, and the beating heart of what makes BB special and different.

"Clive did everything at a hundred miles an hour," says Charlie, sadly. "A bit like you," says younger brother Ned Braxton, trying to crack a smile. Now it's down to Wally the Labrador, Billy's hound, to embody the vibe of Brewing Brothers. For what is a taproom without a dog? And what (these days) is a town without a taproom?

Britain's booming taproom scene is, in large part, down to Covid. The pandemic helped shape the growing craft beer sector for the better: taprooms and online webshops popped up, adding permanent strings to brewers' bows. The Society of Independent Brewers reports that 40% of independent craft breweries now have a taproom, up from 30% in 2022.

When the pandemic hit in 2020, Brewing Brothers was poised to move to the capital. "We were about to take on London!" says Ned. They were looking at railway arches, hoping to emulate the success of Camden Town Brewery or

Bermondsey's 'Brew Mile'. A chunk of outside financial investment was in the pipeline, due to drop by summer 2020. And then the world shut down. "We had to stay in Hastings," says Billy, "for which we're grateful."

Within two years they'd opened a taproom and pasta bar at The Courtyard, Source Park; then the giant taproom up on the Ridge (crowdfunded to the tune of £55,000); and this June a taproom on Folkestone's Harbour Arm. This, in addition to the buzzing Imperial on Queens Road, BB's original micro brewhouse and pizzeria. From employing just six in 2020, they now have a staff of 50. Luckily for us, it looks as if Brewing Brothers is here to stay.

On a rainy morning this August, I drive up to meet the team. Burgess Road is an industrial estate, rough and ready, nestling on the fringes of old Sussex countryside. It's an unlikely location for a hipster taproom – but there it is. In massive cream and gold lettering on royal blue, Brewing Brothers boldly announces its presence. At the back of the brewhouse is a delightfully bosky yard with free-range hens (eggs for pizza dough and pasta), raised veg beds and trestle tables. There's also the obligatory pop-up food stall at the end of the week. It is, in Charlie's words, "an oasis of sustainability".

Turn up on a sunny Saturday and you'll find hipster thirty-somethings on a day out with buggies and hectic children "They run around and scream, terrorise our chickens, pull up our vegetables,"

says Ned with a wry smile. "They've got names like Moon or Bear." He jibes in jest, as Moon and Bear's

BREWING BROTHERS BASICS

Charlie Braxton, 32.

Mad genius. Boris-style shock of leonine hair, rock festival T-shirt, restless energy.

Talent: creating a welcoming vibe; staff recruitment.

Ned Braxton, 29.

Preppy charmer. Button down shirt, designer specs, dazzling smile, signet ring.

Talent: office and organisation.

Billy Eriksson, 29.

Level-headed trouble shooter. Shorts, Labrador, vintage navy Volvo.

Talent: Chief brewer. The technical, practical stuff.

brewingbrothers.org

parents are their core consumers.

"Craft ale was big when we started, but only in a certain demographic," says Billy. "That has spread. Even the old guys, who once only wanted dark brown beer brewed in casks, will drink keg beer now." Cask beer tends to be less fizzy and served at room temperature through a handpull, while kegged beer is usually fizzier and served at a cooler temperature through a beer font.

I'm led inside. This is where the magic happens. Giant, stainless steel tanks and fermenters sit on a damp concrete floor. There's a comforting, yeasty smell of fermenting hops. The Brothers discovered the trend towards taprooms on an early trip around American breweries. "Americans celebrate the brewer and marvel at the brewery," says Charlie. "We thought the UK had fallen behind." The three young men determined to bring a bit of this theatrical alchemy back home, starting with the Imperial and its micro brewhouse in 2016.

On 5 August this year, Brewing Brothers celebrated its seventh birthday with a humdinger of a party – the night that Storm Antoni swept into town with 70 mph winds. No-one was bothered. 'Shroom burgers and upmarket pork patties were consumed, Scott Chisholm & the Sexy Legends played, 150 revelers sat out in the rain or stomped on the dance floor, and much beer was consumed.

The Brothers are riding the craft ale wave, and the fact that they're still here – seven years and one pandemic later – shows that this tight team has learned through trial and error what it takes to survive. They are not, however, complacent.

The number of UK craft brewers might have doubled in the past decade, from 900 to 1,800 today (more per capita than any other nation in the world), but the number of brewery casualties has tripled since this time last year. Smaller, craft beer manufacturers are most at risk as consumers opt for cheaper drinks. A pint of Brewing Brothers' ale will set you back £5.50-£6.50, putting it out of reach for younger drinkers who'd rather take a Skol six-pack down to the beach – "and I can't blame them," says Charlie. "But we're still affordable," he argues. "Semi-affordable."

In a saturated market, not all craft brewers will make it. "I'd say we've got three tough years ahead," says Billy, the pragmatic one. But if their recent birthday party is anything to go by, the Brewing Brothers (and Wally the Labrador) have become an essential part of the Hastings landscape.

OTHER TAPROOMS EXIST

Three Legs Broad Oak/Brede

A sun trap, a hidden gem, a beer oasis on Udimore road serving cask and keg, local cheese, charcuterie and gordal olives, Friday and Saturday afternoons til 8pm.

■ thethreelegs.co.uk/brewerytap

Battle Brewery 52 Battle High Street

Intimate, convivial bar with three casks, served directly from the stillage to your table. Also craft beers from other local breweries, and cider, Friday and Saturday afternoons.

■ battlebrewery.com/bottleshop-tap-room/

Rye Waterworks Microbrewery Rye Road, Playden

The brewery's signature beer, UrRYEnal, a 3.7% bitter, is on handpump together with local guest beers – plus local sausage rolls, naturally. Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays.

■ ryewaterworks.co.uk/brewery



Monika Jakubowska Photography



The Ascension of Josephine Davies

VICTORIA KINGHAM meets Josephine Davies, saxophonist, bandleader, orchestrator, composer, psychotherapist, mountaineer, and anything else that takes her fancy.

Josephine Davies has released two albums, called *Satori* and *Satori: How Can We Wake?* The word, originally Japanese, is used by Zen Masters to mean a sudden enlightenment, and represents the spiritual goal of Zen Buddhism. She has recently finished writing, orchestrating and recording with an 18-piece called the Ensō Ensemble. Ensō is used in Japanese to mean a circle that is hand-drawn in one or two uninhibited brushstrokes to express a moment when the mind is free to let the body create, and again in Zen Buddhism symbolises, in Josephine's own words, "the beauty of incompleteness and imperfection, and the polarity of movement and stillness".

Is she a Buddhist, then? "Not officially," she tells me. "I take ide-

as from all sorts of traditions. But I use many of the practical elements of Buddhism. A lot of the stuff about meditation, mindfulness, attachment, craving and so on. It's a case of finding that centre of awareness that's not the thinking, greedy, money-mind. My mind is quite – busy, so meditation is something I find really difficult. I just attempt to still the stormy waters. But I don't go regularly to a group".

The tracks on the latest studio album are called satras. "A satra is a sort of thread. In the album we all do a soloistic piece to get to the next piece, so it's a thread of consciousness I suppose. The album is about these ideas that Patanjali articulated so well, and which have influenced me in my music."

Your next project? "It's called *The Celtic Wheel of the Year*." It used to be subtitled *Ascension*, though? "It was, but I thought it too complicated having two titles. The ensemble are performing in the London Jazz Festival (in No-

vember) and the recording will be released in 2024."

Pertinently, the first thing I thought of when I first heard Josephine's music was John Coltrane's *Ascension*, and I asked how influential that was. Her primary influence was Coltrane, not *Ascension* but another, even more seminal album: *A Love Supreme*. "I have an unusual trajectory as a jazz musician" she remarks. "I originally wanted to become an actress. My best friend at the time was an opera singer, so with her I arrived on the classical course at Guildhall, but I didn't like the classical saxophone course. I transferred to jazz, though I didn't know much about it! I was 19 and in my second year, and I was rubbish at be-bop! I just couldn't find what I was looking for. I was trying to play with the be-bop guys in London and do this fast, difficult, change-based music. Jazz wasn't what I thought it was going to be. I hadn't even known what improvisation was. But someone played me *A Love Supreme* and I heard so much beauty, so much freedom, and I thought, *that's what I want to do*."

"But I was constantly thinking: I've made the wrong choice, I'm not naturally talented and I can't



Blackham Images



do this." Anyway when I was thirty I woke up one morning and thought: 'I'd really like to be a psychotherapist. Music kind of went by the wayside for four years while I did a doctorate. I was practising as a psychotherapist, then I got that – that thing back that made me want to play music. I would finally try to let go of my conditioning and start looking for my own voice. I listened to so much music that wasn't officially jazz, and fell in love with it again. In 2017 I started recording with Paul Clarvis (drums) and Dave Whitford [(bass), and we released *Satori*. I was coming into my own as a composer."

Your next few gigs are on the South Coast? "Yes, there is so much happening here. Next year though I'm setting up a tour to release the next *Satori* album, and we'll be all over the place. But it's great to have local gigs."

How did she gather the musicians together for the Ensō ensemble? Did you have a list of the instruments you wanted? "Yes. The London Jazz Orchestra was a really good stomping ground to begin writing for that kind of ensemble. It's amorphous, but there is a kind of set element to it as well. But for Ensō I do want three French horns, because it's such a magical instrument. The main thing for *Celtic Suite* was already having had quite a lot of experience of writing for that many people."

I wondered what proportion of what she writes is improvisation and how much is written down. "There is a heavy focus on the writing," she answers, "because I love to write so much! But I've got these incredible improvisers and it would be foolish not to use them. And that's a really fun thing to do, to think about what this person sounds like, and how I can allow space for them. Sometimes there is a chord sequence and sometimes there isn't, so for example there's

a solo by Mike Chillingworth on soprano sax on the album, and I've written these strange eerie dissonant chords for the band, so we're playing those really softly, and you wouldn't be able to put a sequence to it because it's horizontal writing rather than vertical. So his part just says, 'play!'"

How do you think your training in psychotherapy feeds into the sound of your music? "I did existential psychotherapy, which incorporates spirituality and physicality. I want my music to reflect that."

In a way, this is where we came in. Listening to Davies' music conjures up wide open space, eternity, fluidity. On first hearing of it and knowing that she was born in the Shetlands, my own first impression was that it echoed the wide open spaces of the Scottish isles, the northern indigenous musical heritage. And while she says this is part of what she wants to achieve, she was brought up mainly in Rye and went to Thomas Peacock school. She had, she says, a "very adventurous mother". Her composition is, however, strongly influenced by her love of traditional folk music.

So, what's next? "Two albums next year, one is the jazz orchestra (*Celtic Reel of the Year Suite*) and that is such a huge and costly project that we will probably do just a handful of concerts for the launch, not extensive touring, with an ensemble that size. But the new *Satori* album has James Maddren on drums, Dave Whitford on bass and guest Alcyona Mick (bass in Ensō) who also composes. That will probably be a country-wide tour."

So what's in the immediate future? "Well, I'm buying equipment to go up a mountain next week. Travelling and trekking have been an interest of mine over the last ten years. My brother Barnaby (of Barnaby's Lounge in Robertson Street) spent his twenties and thirties travelling the world. I don't want to miss out on these other things. I'm at home desperately deciding whether to put a G-sharp or an A-sharp in the second trumpet and a friend of mine said: 'Do you want to climb Kilimanjaro? And I just said 'yes!!' So despite having been homeless for six months trying to get my flat fixed up, I've done a lot less training than I was hoping... but I've always been quite into fitness, and a good pair of boots."

So the trek is nine days, and we have come back full circle (Davies has led a quartet called Full Circle), back to ascent, call it *Ascension*. And after that, it seems that there is no limit to how far Josephine Davies can climb. She may yet fly ...



ARTS

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Peter Gore



Sun Swells

VICTORIA KINGHAM is awed by the talents of Corrie Dick and his ensemble at this month's Jazz Hastings gig.

There's always an element of the unexpected in the music of bands led by drummers, and Corrie Dick's is no exception. All the numbers were taken from Sun Swells, Dick's latest album, and all were composed by him. "I like to give my musicians space," he told me. And while these songs are carefully structured, there is a marked

emphasis on the freedom of each individual to explore and extend boundaries within that structure.

This spaciousness was fully and joyously utilised by each member of the band, while they never lost the inner co-operation and tightness that produced the fine overall effect. Broadly, the improvisational element of this rather unclassifiable style makes it jazz. Not the 'here's the chorus/here's the solos/here's the chorus again' routine, which these days we hear less and less, but rather a controlled exploration into melodic intricacies.

This is only made possible, of course, because despite their comparative youth, these are all musi-

cians of the highest accomplishment. Elliot Garvin kept a solid left-hand undertow while making something constantly new, out-of-whack, investigative, with his right hand, and used the uncovered piano strings to great effect. The arrangements also allowed the extraordinary guitarist Rob Luft to use his trademark foot-pedal to produce a consistent and beautiful overall reverberative eeriness. "The electric guitar" he has remarked in an interview with Tolita, "is like an aeroplane. If you don't add the pedals, especially in the 21st century, it never really takes off. You're taxiing along the road." On upright bass, Calum Gourlay was understat-

ed, solid, sometimes inspired, always harmonious and carefully listening. On trumpet, the fabulous Laura Jurd shone. She displayed enormous affinity with this music, and an accomplished ease that comes of long practice, technical prowess and an excellent musical ear. The singer, Rebecka Edlund, was surprisingly not the singer on the album, but was thoroughly at home with the lyrics. Her voice seemed particularly suited to the demands of these songs and to the acoustic of the venue. She was also able to add her own speciality bird whistles and tweets, and further, she enunciated both the sung and the spoken words so very distinctly that I wondered if she had a drama school background. She hasn't, but she did tell me she was once a child star growing up in Sweden, and this is possibly the explanation of her easy stage presence and clear delivery.

Corrie Dick's talent has generated a great deal of interest over at least the past ten years. His unassuming presence (he played just one drum solo, on the final number of the evening) belies his inventiveness and his erudition, and he is in great demand as a drummer

and composer. His first album, *Impossible Things*, was innovative and experimental, but on this new album he seems to have come into his own, to have found a personal and unique style.

This is definitely 21st century music. Carefully composed, improvised, folk-influenced, rock-influenced, jazz-influenced, spacious, structured, yet free. All the musicians except Luft, who graduated from the Royal Academy of Music and also holds a string of awards, are graduates of Trinity Laban, which has emerged in recent years as a spawning ground for excellent and individual talents. Gourlay and Jurd are professors there. All the musicians lead ensembles in their own name. Furthermore, Edlund was taught by local saxophone player, teacher, and composer Josephine Davies, whose profile appears elsewhere in this edition of *Hastings Independent*, and whose musical philosophy of thinking about the musicians who will be playing her compositions, and 'allowing space for them' echoes that of Corrie Dick. Circles within circles, wheels within wheels, and Hastings continues apace as a hub for musical innovation.

Carl Russ-Mohr



Ese and the Voodoo People, Kinsella

KATE SHAW

I've been meaning to check out The Pig for months. So many people have told me it has a bit of a reputation as a music venue as well as a pub (and I'm told they do a mean Sunday lunch). So I headed down there to check out their latest offering.

The evening started with Kinsella: born, bred and still based in

Hastings. Heavily influenced by the creative scene in her home town and her love of R&B, soul, drum and bass and hip-hop, Kinsella delivers a sound that is both melodic and meaningful, with a raw honesty to her lyrics. Songs that are likely to get stuck in your head! The best thing about performing in her home town? "Just look at the crowd: from 18 to 80 and everyone getting down!"

Next up is ESE and the Voodoo People, a dynamic collective of talented musicians hailing from diverse backgrounds. Chatting with their charismatic frontwoman Ese before the gig, I asked her to describe their sound. "Oh... well, it's a bit funk, some soul, a bit of jazz, some rock and Afrobeat." She says they have even been known to incorporate a sprinkling of opera into their set. So I was excited to see how this fusion of styles would work in practice.

Ese's powerful vocals are a force of nature. Her voice glides effortlessly over the music, delivering heartfelt lyrics and engaging the crowd, so that we felt almost like a part of the band. Whether she's belting out a soaring chorus or delicately weaving through a soulful ballad, her range and versatility are truly impressive.

But it's not just Ese's vocals that make this band notable. She is a talented guitarist and her stage presence radiates confidence. The three piece make a sound bigger than their number, from the infectious bass lines to the fiery guitar solos, and their musicianship is impressive. Together, they create a tight-knit, cohesive sound that had the audience grooving from the first note, and (at Ese's insistence) I joined in, skanking along to Police and Thieves with the rest

of the crowd. Whether you're a fan of soul, funk, jazz or simply good music, ESE and the Voodoo People are a band worth checking out.

I am moved to reflect yet again: how lucky we are to live in a town that is so music-positive, with venues keen to promote new talent.

■ *Kinsella's latest single Intentions is out now. Our recent profile can be found at hastingsindependentpress.co.uk/articles/culture/arts/the-soul-of-kinsella/. ESE and the Voodoo People released an EP, *Tainted Love*, in February this year.*

The Big Sing

WANT TO JOIN A LOCAL CHOIR? START HERE

7 October this year sees a magnificent gathering of local choirs at St John's Church, Brittany Road, St. Leonards. If you love choral singing and already sing or, alternatively, if you have wanted to join a local choir, but don't know who to contact or where to start, this is an ideal programme. The enormous singing event will last from 10.30am to 9pm, and all money raised will go to St. Michael's Hospice. Choirs taking part are:

- Peasmarsh and District Ladies Choir
- Oresome Sounds, Tune Up Tuesday's
- Vocality and The Seaview Project Choir

- Seatones
- Hastings Town Singers
- Harmony One
- The Melodians
- Battle Community Singers
- Cocktail Choir
- Soundwaves Community Choir
- The Friday Singers
- Bexhill Community Singers
- Hastings Punk Choir
- Hastings Philharmonic Choir
- The Acappella Bellas
- Vocal Tones Choir
- Whatlington Singers
- The Class Choir
- Hastings Rock Choir
- Rother Community Choir

The final event of the evening will be an 'all together now' collective sing.

HANUSHKA'S CRYPTIC CROSSWORD No. 1

EXPUGNATIO

- ACROSS
- 1 Large strike, none within – woman follows, a writer of lives (10)

6 Around 100 eat fish (4)

9 About a group of cub scouts, confined by servant: wrap up ready to go! (10)

10 Male pig, sounds tedious(4)

12 Wiping one's mouth, issuing a suet crumble? (5, 1, 6)

15 Housework, in place of shelter for the poor (9)

17 Chinese checkers turning a note, followed by mum (5)

18 Retarded artist and male off-spring: crime results (5)

19 Messy with pus, surgeon's cut, lacking an inch, causes mis-giving (9)

20 I chew sack, and maybe a Victoria sponge (8, 4)

24 East, between 49 and 10, could be a holly bush (4)

25 English King, and perhaps his sister's daughter, produce his sister's daughter's daughter (10)

26 A long tooth, whereof Titus knows (4)

27 Biochemicals, i.e., end a son's suffering (10)
- DOWN
- 1 Diddle, hasty addition, dances (4)

2 Sacred sound, followed by headless chicken, a portent (4)

3 Chakrabarti renovates, renovated deaths within, at Six (5, 3, 4)

4 Duck? Sounds like a nut! (5)

5 Happy clubbers, negative briefly confused up top, groovy designers (9)

7 Angry, demand a defendant's comeback (10)

8 Killer whale swallows twelfth letter in small casks, earthen-ware (10)

11 My German ego, above choice, circles about for unscrupulous profits (4, 8)

13 135 degrees west, devour garment, another results (10)

14 Re-enters, confused by short hasty addition, one 3 (10)

16 Hanging loose, Greek letter turns south-east, followed by dog and small boy (me?) (10)

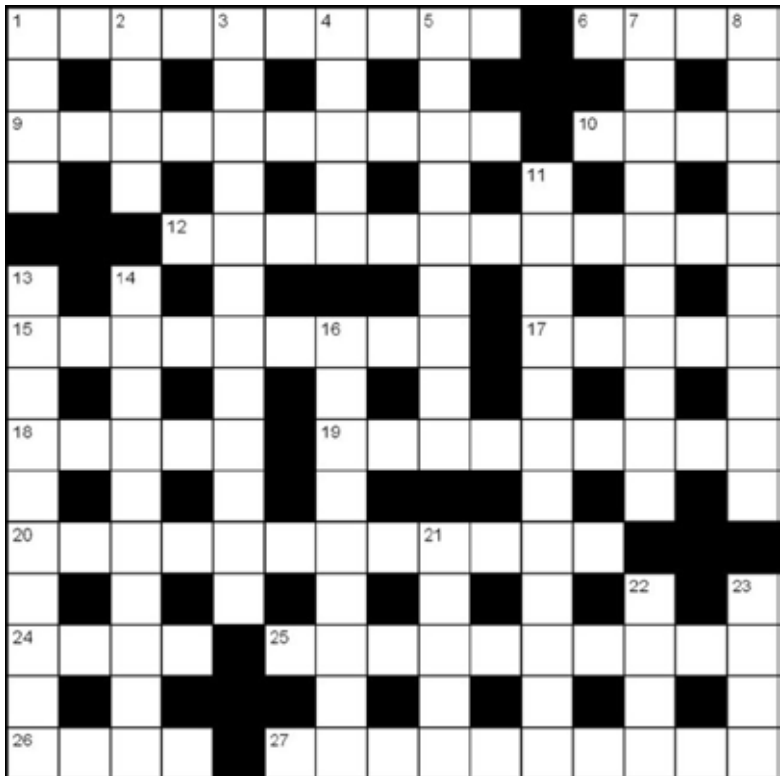
21 Is a person able? Remove foot for musical composition (5)

22 Constant in humankind, but lowly (4)

23 ... or not so much, if 22 perhaps? (4)



HANUSHKA COFFEE HOUSE are proud to present a £10 voucher to the first correct solution (selected at random). Solutions by email please to verambell@yahoo.com, not later than 30 September.



Anna Erhard to Play at Kino-Teatr

Swiss-born Anna Erhard will headline the Kino-Teatr in St Leonards-on-Sea on 30 September, bringing the curtain down on her UK tour.

2023 has already been a big success, with sold out shows in London and major support from BBC big-hitters like Steve Lamacq, Lauren Laverne, Marc Riley and Huw Stephens. Known for her infectious, off-the-wall indie/art-pop, Anna will be supporting the release of her latest single 170. It's her first new work since her 2022 Campsite album, which was a catalyst for the buzz surrounding her. On *Campsite*, which was her second solo album, Anna gleefully



Sonia Stademeier

embraced a completely new way of working. Produced by ex-Wir Sind Helden drummer Pola Roy, Anna shone on the album with adventurous indie-pop grooves and dry humour. Fans will be excited to hear that she has continued in this vein with 170, a track packed with oddball beats, clanging guitars, a deadpan slacker pop vibe and a luminous, wavy chorus. When discussing her new sin-

gle, Anna says: "My friend and I had a serious argument about how tall we are - I am obviously taller than her and I wrote this song to make her publicly admit that she was wrong when she said that I am not 170cm (5'7"). I am 170 and she is shorter than me." It is playfulness and humour like this within the lyrics, together with the catchiness of the songs, that make Anna Erhard one of the indie-pop stars to watch.

Cindy Oswin's Cell

ELIZABETH ALLEN on Cindy Oswin - writer, librettist, actor, academic - and her new one-act play showcasing and interrogating Julian of Norwich

"All shall be well, all shall be well and all manner of thing shall be well." Many people will recognise this lyrical expression of ultimate hope, but not everyone will know that the lines form part of a text written by Dame Julian of Norwich, the first woman known to have written in the English language. This year is the 650th anniversary of the publication of that text, Revelations of Divine Love, and Dame Julian is the subject of *Cell*, a one-act play written and performed by Cindy Oswin and soon to be staged at Christ Church in St Leonards. Dame Julian is a wonderfully interesting subject. Having lived through a severe illness and the terrible years of the Black Death, which killed off nearly half the population of Norwich, as an older woman she chose to become an anchorite, and lived for nearly forty years enclosed in a small cell. As a visionary and wise woman, she became a national celebrity, and numerous visitors came for counsel, communicating with her through

a tiny window called a squint. It is her extraordinary spiritual life, which enabled her endurance and steadfastness, that has fascinated Oswin in constructing *Cell*, commissioned by Somerville College Oxford. "Dame Julian is a highly sophisticated theologian with very pronounced views. For example she states clearly that there is 'no Hell for how could a loving Father condemn his children to such a place?' The centre of her vision is Love," remarks Oswin, and continues "Although God is the Father, she writes of Jesus as a mother whose concern is to look after her children. It was not unknown for Christ to be understood like this, but no other writer develops it in the way that Julian does." In the play, Cindy adopts the persona of a tour guide at St Julian's shrine, a disappointed older woman who, given the advantage of contemporary scientific knowledge, challenges and interrogates Julian's beliefs. This combination of challenge and celebration makes for a powerful experience. Cindy, now living in St Leonards, has an impressive history of writing and performing, including commissions from the British Library on experimental theatre in the 70s and 80s, libretti for operas



Minna Stevens

performed at London's Coliseum, a part in Derek Jarman's film *Caravaggio* and co-writing (with Mark Rylance) the script for the Royal Opening of the Globe theatre. One word of warning to anyone considering getting hold of a copy of *The Revelations of Divine Love*: I would strongly advise avoiding the Penguin version. The modern English translation of that glorious All shall be well line is rendered as "I may make everything alright". It doesn't quite offer the same lift to the spirit. ■ The St Leonards performance of *Cell* will take place at Christ Church, Silchester Road at 7.30 on Saturday 30 September. For those interested in finding out more about Dame Julian, there will be a prior discussion held at the same church on Thursday 28 September at 4pm.



ARTS

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Jude Montague



Matt Armstrong with the Supersound Amplifier

Supersound: A Legendary Local Business

JUDE MONTAGUE

Browsing the internet on the trail of local manufacturing history, Matt Armstrong discovered an interesting early 1960s amplifier. When he noticed the label said 26A King's Road, his heart started pounding. We went to pick it up from the seller who worked at Bexhill Trade Paints. He wanted the amp to stay in the local area, as he also realised its importance to our East Sussex manufacturing history. The 1960s were a time of enormous electrical and audio innovation. It's thanks to enthusiasts like Paul Day, a technology historian, and the seller of this amplifier that we have a legacy of the wonderful makers of this period.

With a piece of 1962 audio equipment, it's touch and go whether everything works. Coming from a mechanical family, though, Matt is good at taking the top off machinery and having a look under the bonnet! The distorted sound immediately reminded us of the guitar sound of The Kinks' Dave Davies - such a genuine sound of the British manufacturers of this period, so authentic, warm, and fuzzy. Of course it is possible to emulate any sound with digital modelling, but the original sounds are brilliant and in the room, we vibrate alongside these electrical and sonic energies.

This is a Supersound amplifier, made a few doors down from our

shop on the Kings Road. Supersound Electronic Products was set up in the 1950s by Alan and Mary Wootton, with Alan's mother's garage in Erith being used as the workshop. Next, the enterprising couple moved to Hawley Grange in Wilmington near Dartford to get bigger premises. They began to work on PA systems, tape decks, projector accessories and later electric guitars and basses as well as amplifiers. Mary Wootton lists some of the stars who used the amplifiers at this time as including Wout Steenhuis, Adam Faith, John Barry and Ike Isaacs. They were constantly building prototypes, for example an echo box called the 'Echovoice', and twin turntables.

At the end of a seven-year lease, with a growing family, the Woottons were looking to develop the business. Mary had always loved Hastings, and they found a large factory at the rear of King's Road, to which they moved in June 1959. Three staff members came with them from London and they took on a couple more local workers. They began to grow, making music parts for guitars for Boosey & Hawkes and Rosetti & Co. such as tremolo arms, foot pedals and amplifiers, some of which were endorsed by the then well-known guitarist Ivor Mairants.

In the premises on Kings Road there were no woodwork facilities, but next door were cabinet makers

Eddie Burnett and his son Derek, who made cases for the company and passed them through a specially-cut hole in the wall.

Supersound needed to expand, and they moved to Mount Pleasant Road where they found some old bakery buildings where they could enlarge a bit and take on more staff. The transformers were made by a firm at the old Lido, I believe at Electro Studios. The foreman left to join Supersound as he thought the firm was so innovative, and he set up a winding department to make transformers in-house.

The firm began to build more electric guitars, which they manufactured from parana pine with bought-in machine heads. However, they made many components themselves, and their hand-wound pickups were very popular as single items as well as installed in the guitars. However, as the popularity of electronic instruments and amps grew, they had more competition, and the business was no longer viable in that form. A different business direction was needed.

Alan Wootton was a movie buff. Once, while ill, he had the idea to create a sound attachment for projectors to turn silent home movies into sound film. Soon Supersound were back in business, making attachments for Eumig, Bell & Howell and Bolex projectors. The work on sound production for cine continued until 1973 when Alan died suddenly at the age of 46. Mary continued with Derek Burnett who was in charge of the works, but he left for his family business and Supersound closed one year later.

Supersound was a story of maverick, innovative inventors who produced high-quality, original manufactured products. One thing that stands out is the amount of works carried out in-house: hot-stamping of fabrics, plastic forming, tape and disc recording, tool-making, cabinet making, transformer wiring, vacuum forming. This was the way they kept control over supplies, buying in raw materials and making everything themselves.

Our amplifier is an S15, very much a genuine Supersound with its pale blue-grey casing, fine fabric, and beautiful gold-edged knobs. It looks good as well as sounding powerful and rich, and we look forward to getting it serviced and bringing it to a venue or two in the town where it was made.

■ Mary Wootton's short autobiographical record, giving the history of the company, can be read online at supersound.org.uk.

ARTS DIARY

FLATLAND PROJECTS – MY ASSEMBLED SELVES 2 SEPT-5 NOV

Swelling clouds, aged turf and morphing figures populate the paintings and drawings of Martyn Cross. Within this presentation at Flatland Projects, personal, elemental and historic fragments assemble together, untethered to any singular era, person or place. Exhibition forms part of *Eastbourne Alive*, a 6-month programme curated by Towner Gallery Eastbourne.

■ Unit 7, Beeching Road Studios, Beeching Road, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3LJ

IN HARMS WAY – 23/24 SEPTEMBER, 12-6PM

Mark Walter, Wolfgang Dubieniec, Oli Spleen

With over a century of collected creativity, this triumvirate of local artists are bringing together

er various media in an exhibition celebrating the crepuscular side of life.

■ Landing Gallery, Electro Studios, Seaside Road, St Leonards TN38 0AL

HASTINGS CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL, 23/24 SEPTEMBER

There is still time to catch the last two concerts in this series, presented in association with Hastings Early Music Festival, bringing together the highest calibre musicians for concerts on the East Sussex Coast. *Beethoven in Nature* – 5pm, Sat 23, Christ Church St Leonards. *Music and Climate Science* – 3pm, Sun 24 September, Kino-Theatr, St Leonards: Professor Tamsin Edwards, renowned climate scientist will talk on climate change, followed by Blok and Beethoven chamber music. For details see hemf.co.uk.

FALSTAFF – ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL BY ROBERT NYE, 28 SEPT ONLY, 7.30PM

Performed by Mike Stoneham. Adapted from Robert Nye's acclaimed novel, *Falstaff* merges Shakespeare's great comic creation with the real-life soldier, Sir John Fastolf. The result is a deeply moving, funny, bawdy romp through Agincourt, with frogs, slugs, and plenty of onions. A not-for-profit production in aid of the Trussell Trust.

■ The Stables Theatre and Arts Centre, The Bourne, Hastings, TN34 3BD

'SILVER' ANNIVERSARY MIRROR EXHIBITION, 29-30 SEPT, 1-3 OCT

Local decorative mirror and glass designer Alison Purdy is celebrating 25 years in business this month, with an exhibition and



pop-up shop in the newly-refurbished Observer Building in Cambridge Road, Hastings. Mirrors and windows featuring elements from our local landscape and architecture – the beach, fishing boats, pier, seagulls, shops.

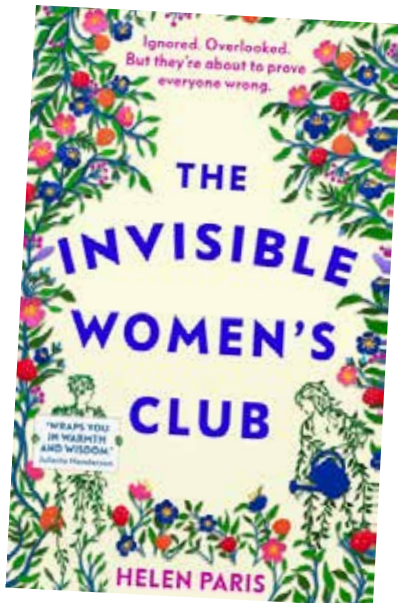
■ For details of times see purdishop.com.



HIP LOCAL BOOK REVIEW

The Invisible Women's Club

By Helen Paris
DOUBLEDAY, AUGUST
2023HARDBACK, PP336, £16.99
REVIEW BY VIOLA
VON HARRACH



If you are looking for a book to read this autumn then try local author, Helen Paris's second novel, *The Invisible Women's Club*. It is a feel-good tale centred in Hastings on the fictitious Sea View allotment site, involving a cast of allotment holders, a corrupt councillor, a dastardly developer, burglary, corruption, and community spirit galore. But, above all, it is an exploration of love and friendship.

Janet Platt, long retired from a job at GCHK, is someone who keeps her emotions in check, and doesn't dwell on the sadness of her past. It transpires that she was pushed out of her job by a jealous boss. Her lack of friends and loneliness is achingly sad. Her life, one of rigid time-keeping, bare cupboards, her chattels still in boxes after seven years. But her passion is plants and her allotment and in this she is an astute and knowledgeable plantswoman, of nurture, tending, companion planting, and of the properties of medicinal and culinary herbs. To some she might seem pedantic, obsessed even, with her two Bath Oliver biscuits and a thermos of tea, and working her allotment every day, rain or shine from one to six. She observes, but assiduously avoids close contact with other al-

lotment holders, and at home ignores the friendly notes put through her door by her neighbour, Bev.

THE LOSS OF THE ALLOTMENT SITE WOULD BE INCALCULABLE

The plot moves apace when Japanese knotweed mysteriously appears and the allotment site is threatened with imminent repossession and closure. Chair of the allotment committee, Patrice, entreats the allotment holders to, 'keep the faith in your plants, pots, and each other.' The loss of the allotment site would be incalculable – to Ken whose family have had the allotment since the war, the Steer Manures who come for the sense of community, Rosa growing cocoyam and Jamaican tomatoes, Lakshmi relishing time away from family commitments, and to many others, including Janet, for whom the allotment is everything.

Thanks in part to Janet's menopausal midwife neighbour, Bev, who blusters into her life with home truths and plain speaking, Janet decides to take matters into her own hands. She does some sleuthing of the soil and then calls

up an old GCHK colleague. A trip to the Peak District, gatecrashed by Bev, nearly ends in disaster, but sleeping in the open gets them both talking about life. They spend an uncomfortable night together, surviving a thunderstorm and torrential rain and Janet opens up about her past.

Janet finds herself heading the campaign for saving the allotment site, together with Patrice, sporting a red necktie and using techniques learnt when she demonstrated at Greenham Common in the 1980s. Bev, now friend and supporter, aids and abets Janet when she burgles the house of the sham councillor, and in so doing also finds herself coming to terms with her life. There is much to this story besides, much to enjoy. Janet has found a purpose for her life, and as she says, 'There's something about planting seeds, seeing them take root and grow that gives me a sense of anticipation, a feeling of hope.'

Paris writes engagingly and with a lightness of touch particularly as the campaign to save the allotment site gathers momentum. If I have a criticism, it is that the allotment characters tend to be stereotypes. Recognisable to anyone who has ever tended an allotment. There are stories to be told here that would have made these characters come much more to life. There is also a question about the setting, Hastings. Again, Paris might have chosen to write in more depth about the particular problems and political environment of Hastings, thus giving the tale more of a context. In the case of the allotment site this would have made the campaign to save it all the more pertinent.

But this is a good story, well told, and certainly worth reading.

■ *The Invisible Women's Club* is available from *The Hastings Bookshop* and other local outlets.

HIP LIT NEWS

HASTINGS WEEK POETRY COMPETITION 'HASTINGS WOMEN' THEME

It's time to get writing for the annual Hastings Week Poetry Competition 2023, organised by Councillor James Bacon. This year, the theme is 'Hastings Women'. The competition is for all ages to enter and there will be three categories: 11 years and under; 12-17 years; Adults (18 years and above). You may only enter one poem.

To enter, all you need to do is write one poem based on the theme of 'Hastings Women' and email to Councillor James Bacon: cllr.james.bacon@hastings.gov.uk Alternatively, you can

send your poem via post to: Cllr James Bacon, Muriel Matters House, Breeds Place, Hastings, TN34 3UY.

Don't forget to include your full name, age and contact details with your entry. The deadline for entering this exciting competition is Monday 16 October at 5pm. The winners will be notified by the organisers with certificates and prizes presented to the winners. Poems may be used in publications supported by the Hastings Week Committee. The panel will consist of three members: Cllr. James Bacon, Sarah Bacon and Cllr. Judy Rogers and they all very much look forward to reading your entries.

HIP Literature wishes you the best of luck.

POETRY CORNER

NOTHING HAPPENS! JEMIA DE BLONDEVILLE

On average
I delete a minimum
Of about 50 emails per day
350 per week
About 1,500 per month
18,000 per year
And approximately
200,000 per decade
So I was thinking
If about 4 billion people
Around the world
Averaged about the same
200,000 times 4 billion
Unwanted emails
Floating around
Like lost ghosts
Wandering around hyperspace
Clogging up
A non-existent void
Words, and numbers
Along with brackets, commas, and full stops
Lies, and truths
All thrown in together
A hodge podge
Now all equal
As rejects of humanity
Discarded
Tears flowing, along with other words
Numbers unite, and subtract
And interact
Then divide
There then follows an algebraic orgy
There is much multiplication
The letter O falls in love with zero
And circles join in
For this narcissistic
Ménage à trois
Nothing is the outcome
And nothing happens....

CROSSWORD CORNER

Across

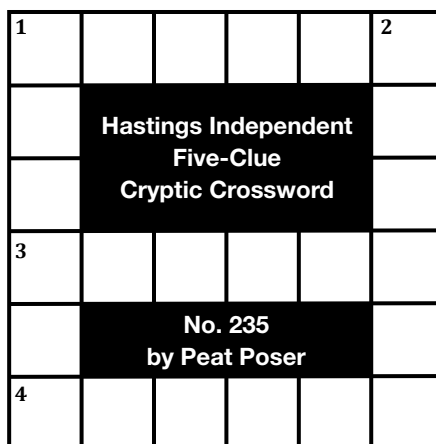
1. Spur is to partly show pedant (6)
3. Spin dime with LP and find indentation (6)
4. Get gun shot to reveal a lump of metal (6)

Down

1. Average teacher at university gets to forgive (6)
2. Let Ant develop natural aptitude (6)

Crossword Solution: Answers on page 13

No.234 Answers: Across: 1. Double 3. (L)Imp air(ways) 4. St-ones Down: 1. D-rains 2. Extras





FOOD

HASTINGS INDEPENDENT IS YOUR PAPER – USE YOUR VOICE... HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS

Steven Short



The Grumpy Cook

STEVEN SHORT meets a man on a mission to tackle food poverty who has opened a café in the town centre.

Barry Ashley's CV includes managing public swimming pools and a lengthy stint at a big corporate organisation, but it was being made redundant as he approached 50 that put him on the path to The Grumpy Cook and its amazing work in helping to fight food poverty and tackle loneliness in older people.

"I didn't want to be told what to do by anyone again," says Barry. And so he started doing something

he had always enjoyed – baking (his children nicknamed him The Grumpy Cook when they were young). He started selling his goods to local cafes and farm shops and was doing well until, one day, one of his clients told him about a café that they'd been offered but didn't want.

And so Barry opened his first outpost, in Milton Keynes, with others following. For a few years the cafés did well as normal cafes... and then the government stopped giving school children free school meals, and lockdown happened. This meant Barry's focus shifted

from running cafes to helping the local community, offering free meals to children in need and combating loneliness by giving the over-65s somewhere to socialise and the chance to enjoy cheap food.

TIME FOR CHANGE

In order to continue doing the pro-bono work he loved, Barry eventually changed The Grumpy Cook operation to a Community Interest Company, which is now run as a not-for-profit – any money raised is ploughed straight back into the operation.

He recently opened a new café in the centre of Hastings, next to what is now Owens: this Grumpy Cook (there is a sister venue in Hastings Country Park) is the per-

fect showcase for Barry's five missions, chief among them a desire to remove the stigma from needing help. "No one wants to have to use a food bank or accept a food parcel," he observes. The café is another way that people in need can access help when they need it.

"I saw the cost of living crisis coming," says Barry. "I want to fight food poverty by offering cheap meals to those in need." He also wants to help combat loneliness in the older generations. "Lots of over-65s lost their confidence during lockdown and now feel really isolated. We host sessions for older people to socialise, they're really enjoyable." The café offers regular free cream teas for the over-65s.

FOOD, DRINK, GOOD COMPANY AND SAFETY

The café also provides a safe haven for teens – "somewhere they can come and do their homework, access cheap food..." – as well as running cookery lessons, teaching parents how to make budget-friendly food, and training hospitality staff to help run the café.

The launch breakfast menu for adults features The Grumpy Breakfast (two sausages, two rashers of bacon, poached or fried egg, hash browns and toast) and The Grumpy Veggie (with veggie sausages) for £8 each, as well as various baps, while for lunch there are sandwiches and paninis (£4.50-£6.50), jacket potatoes and soups.

There's a children's menu, too, with all meals for breakfast (pancakes with fresh berries or porridge, a piece of fruit and a drink) and lunch (a sandwich or half jacket potato with a chocolate brownie or piece of fruit and a drink) for just £1.

In addition to this, once a week the Grumpy Cook also offers free meals to those in need: "Take-up's been incredible. We've probably given away 1,000 to people since we opened," says Barry.

■ For more information on Barry and his work visit table88.co.uk, or better still, pop in for a coffee, a slice of cake and a chat. The Grumpy Cook 1a Robertson Street, Hastings, TN34 1HL table88.co.uk/ facebook.com/grumpyatthebalehouse

Fiona McGarry



Plum Crumble Bars

FIONA MCGARRY

There are several good reasons to eat plums: they contain a lot of vitamins and minerals; they are particularly high in antioxidants and hence reduce inflammation; also, like prunes, they relieve constipation.

This year, we've had a glut of plums and have overdosed on plum sauces, compotes, chutney and jam. This recipe is a simple but slightly different way to use up the last plums of the season if you like them in cakes and crumbles.

YOU WILL NEED:

- 7 chopped plums
- 2 tbsp caster sugar
- 2 tbsp cornflour
- 1 tsp cardamom and/or ground cinnamon

- 1/2 tsp ground ginger (optional)
- pinch salt
- Crust and Crumble
- 2 cups plain flour
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup soft butter or margarine
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

METHOD:

1. Sprinkle the sugar, cornflour, spices and salt over the chopped plums. Set aside while you make the crust and crumble.
2. Preheat the oven to 180°C. Line a 9-inch square cake tin with parchment paper. Cut enough parchment so the ends overhang on two sides so you can lift the bars out after

they've cooled for easy cutting.

3. Sieve the flour and mix it with the baking powder and salt; set aside. Cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy in a food mixer, about 3-4 minutes; add the vanilla. Then, with the mixer on low, slowly add the flour and mix until just combined.
4. Reserve about 1/5 of the dough and press the remaining dough firmly into the prepared cake tin. Spread the plum mixture evenly over the dough. Crumble the reserved dough over the plums (add a little extra flour if necessary).
5. Bake for 50 minutes or until the fruit is bubbling and the top is golden. Cool completely on a wire rack. When it's cool, lift the crumble out of the tin and place on a chopping board. Slice into 16 bars.



TENNIS

Men up, Ladies (mostly) down in Summer Doubles

There were mixed fortunes, as ever, for Hastings clubs in the Sussex doubles leagues over the summer, with both promotions and relegations decided by the narrowest of margins.

In their final match in League M4 on 26 August, playing away at Saltdean, Amherst men's team needed one out of four rubbers to match Southdown as prospective runners-up on 14 points for the season. Captain Dylan Preece partnered Harry Crane, recently returned to the club, while (in the absence of other stalwarts Mark Cunningham and Quentin Soucek) Ollie Bearcroft and Anthony Hickey were selected as second pair.



Anthony Hickey

Amherst men's captain Dylan Preece in full swing

The Saltdean top pair defeated both Amherst pairs in straight sets, but Preece and Crane gained a comfortable victory in their match against their hosts' second pair, while Bearcroft and Hickey won their opening set against them before losing the second and the subsequent third set tie-break. That made a 3-1 overall win for Saltdean, but the extra set gained was enough to hoist Amherst above Southdown in the league table (by the margin of 32 sets to 31 won over the course of the six-match season) and thus seal promotion.

In League M8E, the Amherst second team enjoyed a much more straightforward promotion, winning the division by a margin of five points. Jeff Gedge, Nigel Spencer Smith, Jack Watson, George Moon, Paul Ferrie and Hickey shared the honours.

Hard on their heels are The Green men, who won League M9E. Lee Hagan and Joe Toogood, whether as partners or in separate pairings, were most prominent.

By contrast Amherst women were relegated from League L2 and The Green women from L3 after

close struggles.

It seemed probable that Amherst would avoid their fate when they gained a crucial point against Comptons in their last match, giving them seven points for the season, equal with Weald and two above Saltdean. These two teams still had to play each other in a final match on 26 August. Any result other than a 3-1 win for the latter could have seen Amherst finish above one or the other. But 3-1 to Saltdean it turned out, enabling each team to finish on eight points and send Amherst down.

In League L3 Beaula Page and Amanda Ruck resumed their formidable partnership as top pair for The Green after Ruck's long injury absence. They scored eight wins in 12 rubbers over the season, but no productive second-string pair could be found to back them, and the team finished bottom of the division.

There'll be only one division between them and Amherst's second team next summer after the latter came out top of League L6, one point above Meads. Again there was a close finish on the last Sunday, 27 August, when Amherst were held to a 2-2 draw by Comptons fourth team while Meads were winning 3-1 at Arundel. Captain Jenny Naylor partnered Barbara Fentiman to win one rubber for Amherst, while Clare Hooton and Ginny Gregory gained the other after a third set tie-break.

The winter doubles season started last weekend. It runs through until the end of March with multiple teams from Amherst and The Green competing as usual. However, there will be a chance for players of the two clubs, and anyone else resident in the borough, to meet at close quarters next weekend (Saturday 30 September at The Green and Sunday 1 October at Amherst) when the Hastings Mixed Doubles championships are contested. There will be separate competitions for intermediate and advanced levels.

FOOTBALL

Cup Exit Despite More Late Goals

9 SEPTEMBER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE: HASTINGS UTD 2, HARINGEY BOROUGH 1

16 SEPTEMBER FA CUP: DOVER ATHLETIC 3, HASTINGS UTD 2

Don't go home early if you're a Hastings United supporter! In their last league game at Pilot Field on 9 September, Hastings United scored twice in added time to overhaul the 1-0 lead which visitors Haringey Borough had held for an hour. A week later, away at Dover in the FA Cup, they also scored twice in the last few minutes –



Scott White

Femi Akinwande celebrates with supporters after late winner

though that wasn't quite enough, unfortunately, to save the game, since by then they were 3-0 down.

The Cup exit to a team in the National League South, a tier above the Isthmian League, was hardly a shock. However, it was disappointing to have the season's unbeaten run come to an end in circumstances of having to play for over two thirds of the game with ten men.

United were already a goal down from a penalty in the eleventh minute, and Sam Okoye's dismissal after two yellow card offences within the first half hour left them with an uphill struggle. Two further goals were conceded in the 65th and 77th minutes. United struck back late with a penalty scored by in-form striker Femi Akinwande, then substitute Freddie Legg went

close before captain Christian Tyler-Law also netted – but the game finished in 3-2 defeat.

A week earlier, a similar late rally had given the 'U's spectacular victory. On a hot afternoon in Hastings before the season's best crowd to date of 1,183, two evenly matched sides contested a mainly midfield battle. A couple of clear chances fell to Davide Rodari, whose shooting boots went missing on the day, but otherwise the home side found it difficult to penetrate their opponents' back line. Haringey likewise got little change from the 'U's' defence where Jason Fregene and Craig Stone were outstanding, and it was a surprise when they burst through on a counter-attack and scored to put themselves a goal up at halftime.

In the second half, Hastings sweated and fretted, surviving one scare when Fregene headed brilliantly off the line with goalkeeper Charlie Grainger beaten but couldn't sustain attacking pressure. The withdrawal of Rodari and the enterprising John Ufiah by manager Paul Barnes in

favour of Legg and Tayo Oyebola didn't seem likely to turn the tables.

But what does a mere reporter know? As soon as it was announced that there would be eight minutes added time (taking due account of injuries, substitutions, a break for water intake and a bit of natural time-wasting by Haringey), Oyebola headed in from a long cross, and United poured forward with renewed energy in search of the winner.

Five minutes later, with the referee consulting his watch, Akinwande found himself with the ball at his feet on the left side of the Haringey penalty area. Hemmed in by defenders, he dribbled his way back to the right looking for space for a right-foot shot; he found it and let fly. The ball exploded into the net as if turbo-charged, a strike of magnificent power to spark jubilant scenes both on and off the pitch.

Tomorrow (Saturday) the 'U's will entertain Potters Bar Town at the Pilot Field, then travel to near neighbours Lewes the following Wednesday.



Suzanne Patterson

SUZANNE PATTERSON

It's Complicated: Encaustic transfer and oil on board, 83x 66 cm

Having left Central St Martins with a first-class degree, I carried on making my own work whilst also working as an art journalist on several magazines, and also for two years worked for Charles Saatchi producing essays for in-house publications and catalogues.

After working in Wood Lofts (at Underwood Street in London), I relocated to Hastings with my then partner. With the end of our relationship, I moved to St Leonards (prior to its rehabilitation) and I

have been here for over ten years. After this move, I began to make work with more commitment and renewed engagement, which is something I think can often happen for female artists later in life. Fortunately, this later-life resurgence is not the hindrance it used to be when the emphasis was often more on young artists. Now we have women as diverse as Paula Rego and Rose Wylie also being recognised.

Recently, in order to engage in dialogue about my work, I completed the online course with Turps Banana Art School. My mentor was artist Dan Coombs. I found it helpful to have an external eye to assist in a mutual analysis of

my reference points, and to ask in-depth questions about my work. I then continued to make art, and for me, lockdown was a great opportunity to do this – especially because I received the Developing Your Creative Practice grant from the Arts Council during this period.

I have deliberately avoided the pressure of having to show as I have developed my own ever-changing and experimental voice. I am not interested in self-promotion for its own sake, preferring to develop my strengths in private until I have a large body of work. I now have that work, which I am satisfied to put out there.