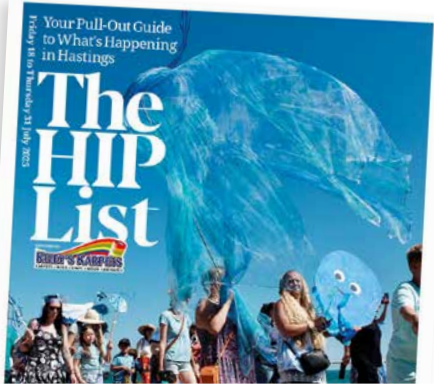


Inside:
Your Pull Out
Guide to What
is Happening
in and Around
Hastings



Become a Friend of
Hastings Independent Press

Dino Hero

11 →

Love Food, Haste Waste

16 →

Hastings Gaza Protesters Arrested

KENT BARKER

A childminder has been arrested for alleged criminal damage with a rock after writing in chalk on the road during a protest, while a St Leonards man is waiting to hear if he will be charged under the terrorism act after his arrest at a London demonstration.

46-year-old Grace Lally spent seven hours in police custody following her detention outside the General Dynamics arms factory in Hastings before being released on police bail pending further investigation. The protest was organised by the Hastings & District Palestine Solidarity Campaign who said Ms Lally was in the process of writing 'Stop Arms to Israel' and 'Stop Genocide' in chalk on the ground outside the factory.

In a separate incident, 51-year-

old Gabriel Carlyle was among 29 people arrested at a demonstration in Parliament Square. They were protesting against the government's decision to outlaw Palestine Action as a terrorist organisation. He is currently on bail waiting to hear if he will be charged with a terrorism offence. Mr Carlyle was carrying a sign 'referencing' Palestine Action. It also contained the words 'I support nonviolence' and 'I oppose genocide'. Amnesty International has condemned the Government's decision to ban Palestine Action under anti-terror laws, as an 'unprecedented legal overreach.' The vote in parliament was supported by Hastings MP Helena Doolittle.

There have been dozens of protests outside the main site of the arms manufacturer's factory in Castleham Road, St Leonards. Ms Lally was told by police that General Dynamics might need to "retarmac



Gabriel Carlyle Arrested

Lightning Fibre

Hyperfast Broadband
#FullFibreRocks

Sale

500Mb for £25*

Fixed for 24 months

per month

www.LightningFibre.co.uk

ROCKS!

*T&C's Apply. Offer ends 30th September 2025. Normal price £32 per month.



YOUR DESIGN, OUR COVER
Let's see your seagull on our cover!
Details from design@yourhip.co.uk

EDITOR'S NOTE

The hot summer continues, accompanied by simmering protests. In parallel with national disaffection at the Labour party's lurch to the right, HIP reports on the launch of the New Left Party.

As dissent becomes increasingly criminalised, a Hastings childminder is charged with criminal damage for allegedly writing on the road outside a Hastings arms factory, and a local man is arrested when objecting to terror laws banning Palestine Action.

There's also news of a growing revolt among teachers and parents appalled at ARK Alexandra Academy Trust's punishment-prioritised educational ethos.

In the Community pages we pose (the rhetorical question, 'What's the point of Recycling?', and on a related theme, our Food section story, 'Love Food, Hate Waste', explains how to eat sustainably at home.

We also cover the 'Protestival' grassroots gathering of a range of local campaigns, including Save the Bathing Pool, Save Sandrock Beds, and Housing Rebellion among many others.

Elsewhere, the Arts section covers international-standard classical piano playing from Fairlight Hall, modernist music from Christchurch and a review of Mencap's variety show at the De La Warr.

CONTACT

Editorial Enquiries & Submissions info@
Sales Director Ian Lydon-James advertising@
Newsletter Editor Ben Bruges, info@
Zakir Mohiyuddin
Social Media Editors Kayla Power
and Erin Ward via our Instagram page
Content Coordinator #281 Dave Young
News Coordinator #281 Kent Barker newsdesk@
design@
yourhip.co.uk
Art Director Jason Ellis

Section Editors
Rod Webb community@
Kent Barker opinion@
Susan McFie hande@
Ben Bruges features@
Nadine Keats, Hugh Sullivan,
Harry Hawkins, Melitsa Nicolaou, listings@
Owen Prachar arts@
Victoria Kingham literature@
Pete Donohue food@
Edwina Hughes business@
Jordan Connelley sport@
Hugh Sullivan yourhip.co.uk

Sub Editors
Rod Webb, Fiona McGarry, Gill Goldenberg,
Celia Partridge

Contributors
Robin Holton|Tim Barton|Tony Collins
Mary Upton|John Chapman|Andrew Swan
Gabriel Carlyle|Warwick Mansell
David E P Dennis|James Prentice|Polly Gifford
Joan Osbaldeston|EBM Humphreys
Leon Cuthbertson|Fiona McGarry
Otelia Ferch Rhos

Have Your Say letters@
yourhip.co.uk

Telephone 01424 559085

Hastings Independent Press CIC
57 Linton Road Hastings TN34 1TN

News



Grace Lally chalking the road before her arrest

the road” because of her actions. Earlier this year, as HIP reported, three protesters were acquitted after being arrested in a previous demonstration at General Dynamics. The ‘Hastings Three’, as they became known, were found not guilty of aggravated trespass after a peaceful sit-down protest in 2024.

As we went to press, Hastings Borough Council was due to debate a call for an “immediate and permanent ceasefire to stop the catastrophic loss of life in Gaza and the West Bank and the return of all hostages. And to urge the UK gov-

ernment to: Immediately cease all arms sales and military support to Israel.” A previous council meeting was abandoned in March last year after protests that a Green Party motion on Gaza would not be debated. Following local council elections that summer, the Green Par-

ty now runs the council through a minority administration. HBC owns the site of the General Dynamics factory and is under pressure to revoke the lease on the grounds that the company is involved in ‘illegal or immoral’ activities.

Attack on Freedom of Speech

GABRIEL CARLYLE

Why did I risk arrest and a possible jail sentence by joining the demonstration in Parliament square earli-

er this month? Instead of fulfilling its legal obligations under the Genocide Convention and ending all UK arms sales to Israel, the UK government has instead chosen to allow the ongoing sale of British arms to Israel – most importantly, the supply of

vital spare parts for the F35 planes used to bomb Gaza’s population – and to misuse anti-terror powers to repress nonviolent protest and freedom of speech about these sales.

On 3 July, Amnesty International condemned Israel’s ‘continued use of starvation to inflict genocide against Palestinians’. This followed: Amnesty’s earlier (Dec ‘24) finding that Israel is ‘committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza’; Human Rights Watch’s finding (also in Dec ‘24) that Israel had ‘intentionally deprived Palestinian civilians in Gaza of adequate access to water since October 2023, most likely resulting in thousands of deaths and thus committing the crime against humanity of extermination and acts of genocide’; the issuing of an arrest warrant by the International Criminal Court (in Nov ‘24) for Israel’s Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for ‘the war crime of starvation as a method of warfare; and the crimes against humanity of murder, persecution, and other inhumane acts’; and the Jan ‘24 ruling by the International Court of Justice that there was plausible evidence that Israel was carrying out genocide in Gaza.

Today, though, it is apparently perfectly legal to endorse Israel’s

‘right’ to deprive Gaza’s population of power and water—as Keir Starmer himself did in Oct ‘23—or support its bombing of Gaza into oblivion. There is only one legally-permitted answer to the question: ‘Do you support Palestine Action—yes or no?’

Surely this is one of the worst attacks on free speech and the right to protest in the UK in the last thirty years.

Meanwhile, though our local Hastings’ MP, Helena Dollimore, is prepared to cry crocodile tears about the Israeli government’s ‘appalling’ actions and the ‘intolerable’ human suffering in Gaza, she has never once acknowledged that these crimes have been taking place – and continue to take place – with the active support of her government through continued UK arms sales and RAF overflights of Gaza.

I call on her to disavow her recent vote to ban Palestine Action, to acknowledge that Israel’s actions clearly fit the legal definition of genocide and to join other Labour MPs in signing Early Day Motion 1310, calling for the immediate suspension of UK arms sales to Israel.

Read how a Hastings 12 year old raised nearly £2,000 for Gaza families. Letters 4

HASTINGS TIDES						
DATE	HIGH AND LOW TIDES			SUNRISE	SUNSET	MOON
FRI 18 JULY	H 4:50	L 11:33	H 17:15	5:05	21:02	THIRD
SAT 19 JULY	L 0:08	H 5:53	L 12:34	5:06	21:01	
SUN 20 JULY	L 1:14	H 7:05	L 14:59	5:09	20:59	
MON 21 JULY	L 2:25	H 8:20	L 14:59	5:10	20:57	
TUES 22 JULY	L 3:40	H 9:35	L 16:17	5:10	20:57	
WEDS 23 JULY	L 4:59	H 10:43	L 17:34	5:11	20:56	
THURS 24 JULY	L 6:09	H 11:39	L 18:37	5:13	20:55	NEW
FRI 25 JULY	H 0:05	L 7:05	H 12:27	5:14	20:23	
SAT 26 JULY	H 0:05	L 7:52	H 13:09	5:15	20:52	
SUN 27 JULY	H 1:33	L 8:34	H 13:48	5:17	20:51	
MON 28 JULY	H 2:11	L 9:09	H 14:26	5:18	20:49	
TUES 29 JULY	H 2:47	L 9:39	H 15:01	5:20	20:48	
WEDS 30 JULY	H 3:22	L 10:05	H 15:35	5:21	20:46	
THURS 31 JULY	H 3:56	L 10:34	H 16:10	5:23	20:45	

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



Crowd at speakers corner



Henning Wehn

Inappropriate Development

FIONA MCGARRY went along to the Protestival in West St Leonards to see whether a new form of protest combined with a community festival could have any hope of changing the council's mind about the housing and leisure development planned for the site

Some 250 people came along to the Old Bathing Pool site in St Leonards ... a mixture of local residents, concerned members of the community and curious visitors. The afternoon had a celebratory atmosphere with music from Simon and the Pope, Hastings Punk Choir and a twirling display team: the Tornado Twirl-stars.

The event was billed as "An afternoon for families, friends and communities coming together to protect our town from inappropriate development." 3,000 local residents have petitioned against the plans of developers West Marina St Leonards Limited (WMSLL). The

part of the site demarcated by the developers for community activities and events was cordoned off to show how small this proposed area is.

The 'protest' element of the day kicked off with a symbolic tug of war between two teams: 'local residents' versus 'developers' wearing 'fat cat' masks: reassuringly, the local residents' team won.

This was followed by short talks from a range of community group speakers throughout the afternoon, including Jane Ripley of Standing Up for Nature Hastings and Rother; Richard Watson of Energise Sussex Coast; various housing groups, including Ethan Oshoko from ACORN

Hastings; Dawn Dublin from Black Butterfly; disability rights campaigner, Sophie Khan and local builder, Chris Dodwell.

In the words of one of the organisers Lucie Mason, founder of SOBS (Save our bathing pool site), the space "belongs to all of us," and it should be "protected for future generations". There was a general sense that it was time for community groups to work together and galvanise residents of the town to stand up for this iconic open space and save it from corporate development.

As previously reported in HIP, West Marina St Leonards Limited (WMSLL) has been granted a 250-

year lease of the site by Hastings Borough Council (HBC). Neither party has disclosed any of the terms of that lease, but in April and May this year the company publicly exhibited draft designs showing an intention to build up to 151 new homes there. A petition signed by over 3,000 residents has called for the area to be retained as a community and leisure space. Community groups had previously drawn up their own plans for a mixed development on the site with far greater public access.

Anna Sabin, a member of the West St Leonards Neighbourhood Forum which has been working with local residents to create a

Neighbourhood Plan for HBC, points out the council have said that what they want from the development of the Old Bathing Pool Site is "a viable and attractive proposition to transform the West Marina into a destination point in line with the objectives of the seafront strategy, provide enhanced leisure opportunities and see much-needed investment in the area." Campaigners believe that the current proposals fall far short of that aspiration. Ms Sabin said "It's no good having a plan if no attempt is made to stick to it." The tug-of-war battle between community and developers is likely to continue for months to come.



Tug of war between communities and developers

Ark School in Pupil Exodus

WARWICK MANSELL, founder and chief journalist for the investigative website Education Uncovered, writes exclusively for HIP on what he's uncovered about Hastings' controversial Ark Alexandra Academy

Teachers at the Ark Alexandra Academy on the Ridge, St Leonards, are being monitored on whether or not they hit a target of at least 25 pupil detentions a week – regardless of behaviour. As the school ramps up expectations on pupils and staff in a drive to improve what teachers have been told are the “basics” of school behaviour, staff at the secondary section of the school have been instructed to hand out “sanctions” to children who fail to “track” their teacher with their eyes, or if they slouch in their chairs, having been told not to.

However, Department for Education figures show that a large percentage of pupils have been leaving the school since the imposition

of its hardline behaviour policy, including as many as one in six children from its younger group. The number of pupils in what were year groups seven to nine in 2023 shrank by 16 per cent as of January this year when they were in years nine to 11.

The new figures, which show net reductions in pupil numbers, so departures are offset by any newly-arrived pupils, come with separate data, released through a Freedom of Information response, disclosing how Ark Alexandra lost around one in eight pupils through deregistration during 2023-24 alone.

The changes have been exacerbated by the arrival in September 2023 of new leadership at the school, which has faced intense controversy

including criticism from the local MP Helena Dollimore about pupil departures feeding into large numbers of children being home educated in the town. The National Education Union has described the academy as being run under an “authoritarian regime pushing out young people and demoralising staff”. Last September, the school was the subject of widespread media coverage after it launched an outright ban on pupils' use of mobile phones

A year seven child with ADHD, autism and bowel problems left the school last autumn after his mother said he had been given three hours of detentions in his first 12 days at secondary school. She told Education Uncovered that his rapid slide into anxiety was caused by policies such as minor uniform infringements which, she said, were needlessly strict. Another parent described the school under its current regime as a “hostile environment,” which had left her children with “longstanding anxiety.” One parent told me her child had faced detentions for not having a clear pencil case, forgetting his blazer and walking too far from a corridor wall. There have also been claims of detentions for children not putting an arm up straight, their pens running out and not sitting up straight.

An open letter, sent from the National Education Union's Hastings district to the local Labour MP Helena Dollimore in April, criticised the academy calling it “a school in crisis [with a] mass student exodus, an authoritarian regime pushing out young people and demoralised



JASON ELLIS

staff, [a] constant turnover of teachers and senior leaders [and] zero community accountability.”

As reported by HIP (Issues 270 and 271) the MP said she was particularly concerned about some local schools failing to address their children's needs – particularly for children with Special Educational Needs (SEND). “I have particular concerns about this at Ark Alexandra, and was shocked to hear that in the last term alone [autumn term 2024] 123 children were removed from Ark, about 10 per cent.” She had added: “I urge Ark to engage more closely with parents to consult on school policies. It is clear that many families are not confident that Ark can provide the right provision for their child and this needs to change.”

Ark Schools said the Alexandra

Academy had improved rapidly over the past 18 months, and that it was “proud of the journey the school is on”. A spokesperson told me Ark Alexandra is “not a school in crisis,” as the NEU's Hastings branch had said in April, “rather the reverse”. “Since we implemented our new behaviour policy, suspensions have decreased significantly and there have been no permanent exclusions this academic year. We understand that the new policy is not to everyone's liking – but it has already had a positive impact. Attendance is up, and survey feedback from staff, parents and pupils recognises improvements at the school.”

Read the full stories on the Education Uncovered website: educationuncovered.co.uk/news and search for 'Ark Alexandra'

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

✉Letter

ARK CLAMPDOWN IMPROVES BEHAVIOUR

Re your article *Academy Chain Shortlist*, I would be interested to know what ‘experiences and concerns’ Helena Dollimore is so worried about in relation to the leadership of Ark Academy schools. Is it the policy of no make-up, fake eyelashes or heavy earrings? Maybe it's the rule that students have to wear skirts that cannot be rolled up into very short skirts? Is it the zero-tolerance of failing to turn up with the necessary pens, pencils and ruler? Or perhaps it's the policy of no mobile phones allowed to be brought to school?

This latter rule certainly seems the most divisive (one parent even suggested that it should be referred

to the European Court of Human Rights). As a parent, I can tell you that no mobiles at school is a pain. But not only can you learn to cope with it, in many ways it gives Ark pupils an independence and responsible attitude that is so missing these days. My daughter attends Ark Alexandra and her view is that since these ‘draconian rules’ have been applied, she has felt a massive improvement in behaviour, has seen less bullying and enjoyed far more pupil interaction.

Ark is in the early stages of encouraging a better attitude to learning, respect and kindness from students (and parents). It's not perfect but the building blocks are there – they have a plan. A vision. Perhaps Helena Dollimore should focus on the local schools that seem to be totally lost and struggling to provide leadership and direction for our young students. Oh, and

Helena, if you are reading this, perhaps you would have the decency to engage with my wife who has written to you three times to discuss the other side of your ‘experiences and concerns’ in relation to the Leadership of Ark schools.

Christian Clark

✉Letter

YOUTHFUL GAZA FUNDRAISING

Hello, my name is Noah and I am 12yrs old. I am writing to you about a sponsored walk I did along the seafront in Hastings on the 7 April 2025 to raise money for families in Al Mawasi in Gaza. I walked 11 kilometres with my friends and raised £1,863.50. We are doing another sponsored walk on the 20th of July and we are hop-

ing to get even more people involved this time. I am sharing our leaflet and would love it if you could let people know what we are doing so that we can help as many people as possible. I will also include a picture from our sponsored walk in April.

Thank you,
Noah Sims

✉Letter

BENEFITS OR WEAPONS

Why has an article highlighting the increase in numbers of PIP claimants (PIP – Personal Independence Payment), been included in HIP, without any reference to the disgraceful cuts to essential disability benefits? As a disabled person, the only inference I can take from this article is that HIP

is somehow agreeing with Starm-er's government that something needs to be done about the increase in the numbers of disabled people now eligible for PIP and that the only response is to drastically cut the numbers. This action will save the government money so they can then spend it on more weapons, but the reality is thousands of disabled people will be thrown out of work and into poverty. I have worked all of my life and PIP has been a crucial benefit that has enabled me to stay in work because it covers some of the additional costs related to disability.

It is a disgrace that a Labour government has chosen to target the disabled community by labelling us as workshy benefit scroungers – why isn't HIP seeking to highlight this instead!

Tara Flood

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

✉ letters@hastingsindependentpress.co.uk

📘 facebook.com/hastingsindependent

📷 instagram.com/hastingsindependent

NEWS IN BRIEF

THOUSANDS PETITION
PARLIAMENT OVER
CONQUEST CARDIAC
CLOSURE

More than 6,000 Hastings residents have petitioned parliament in a bid to prevent cardiac facilities being transferred from the Conquest Hospital to Eastbourne. As reported in the Hastings Independent in 2023, many surgical procedures will cease to be carried out at the Conquest as the cardiac surgery team would be concentrated solely at the Eastbourne District General Hospital.

Now a change.org petition to try to reverse the decision started by Hastings resident Barry Upton has received 6,088 signatures.

The government is obliged to provide a written response if an e-petition receives 10,000 signatures, while if 100,000 are received, the Petitions Committee will consider it for a debate in Parliament.

HOTEL ROOM
OF YOUR OWN

A studio 'flat' with a sitting tenant in the former Vive Hotel building is up for sale for offers over £100,000. The estate agent's details show only a bedroom, bathroom and a tiny kitchenette. As reported in HIP last month, the hotel at 44 Havelock Road in Hastings town centre had closed after two companies involved in its management – Havelock Property Limited and Havelock 1 Limited – were declared insolvent and put into administration. The cost of the refurbishment of the hotel was supposed to have been covered by selling 97 studio units to 'investors'. One HIP reader commented, "It looks as if they are now trying to sell or re-sell what is basically a hotel bedroom for over a hundred grand – and you can't even live in it as there's a tenant already there." The studio is being marketed as an investment property, which could attract a rental income of "£12,000 a year". For the tenant, that works out at nearly £33 a night. Local hotel rooms are available for around that price, and they offer cleaning, a change of linen and, in some cases, breakfast as well.

HEFTY FINE FOR
LANDLORD

A Hastings landlord, Ali Mohamed – known as Patrick Moss at the time of the offence – was found guilty at Hastings Magistrates' Court last month for failing to respond to a formal request by Hastings Borough Council for information required by the Housing Act 2004. The court ordered him to pay a £3,000 fine, £1,200 victim surcharge and £3,000 in costs to the council. He had failed to disclose who was 'in charge' of a house in multiple occupation in Hughenden Road. Cllr Glenn Haffenden, leader of HBC said "The council is committed to holding non-compliant landlords and those involved in manag-



ing rental properties accountable and will take further action against those who fail to engage with us in order to protect the safety and rights of tenants across the borough."

'UNACCEPTABLE'
HBC ACCOMMODATION
OFFERED

Hastings Borough Council has received a formal complaint about the allocation of housing for a woman who had suffered domestic abuse and fled with her three children. As the council announced a further £742 million was available through the Household Support Fund, the mother of the abused woman has complained that the property she had been offered had broken glass and dead rats in the garden, two bedrooms and a hallway lacking any flooring, holes in walls, and no connectivity for phone, wi-fi or TV. The mother and grandmother, Mrs B, said her daughter had been informed that if she refused the property in St Leonards she would be removed from the housing list. She said housing officers had not inspected the flat in advance. "What (my daughter) has experienced reflects a broader failure of duty of care for vulnerable individuals fleeing trauma. This must not be allowed to continue unchecked. We do not live in a third-world country. The current situation is not only distressing, it is dangerous and unacceptable," she said.

Meanwhile, the council is seeking applications for grants from a fund to support local households who are finding it difficult to pay for the cost of food, energy and water. They say there is "limited funding available" and it will be distributed on a "first come first served

basis". It is not known if the daughter of the complainant would be eligible to apply.

HEADING UP
FIRE RISK TABLE

Landlords and building owners in Hastings and East Sussex have been issued with the fifth highest number of fire safety warnings in England and Wales (excluding London). According to the CE Safety Consultancy, in the last two years, the East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service issued 229 fire safety enforcement notices which are formal documents addressing serious fire safety deficiencies. They outline specific actions needed to comply with fire safety regulations and are issued when a fire inspection reveals significant risks to occupants. The notices are legally binding, and failure to comply can lead to further enforcement action, including potential prosecution.

MP ROUND-UP

Hastings' MP Helena Doolimore has been busy recently. She's called for the Bayeux Tapestry to be displayed in the town that gave its name to the 1066 battle. She's called on Hastings Borough Council to clean up the 'overgrown' Hastings cemetery after meeting a group of local residents who had expressed concerns about the poor maintenance of graves. She has also sifted through 200 constituents' suggestions as to how to spend Hastings' £20 Million Plan for Neighbourhoods. In Parliament she voted in favour of making the Palestine Action group a proscribed terrorist organisation and voted for the government's hastily amended Universal Credit and Independent Payments bill.

Hastings Independent

BUY US A CUPPA

Support Free, Independent, Community-based Journalism

For the price of a coffee each month you can help us to keep going



HASTINGSINDEPENDENTPRESS.CO.UK/BECOME-A-FRIEND

ST LEONARDS CHURCH
SATURDAY MARKET



Arts, Crafts, Antiques & Collectibles
Vintage Chic, Clothes & Jewellery
Coffee, Food Court & Licensed Bar!

OPEN EVERY SATURDAY 10am to 4pm
London Road (corner of Pevensey Rd)
Saint Leonards-on-Sea TN37 6AS

stall hire + info - loveamarket.co.uk

What's the Point of Recycling?

CLLR TONY COLLINS explains what happens when you drop a can in the recycling bin



is the largest MRF – Materials Recovery Facility – in Europe.

The site is noisy, filled with conveyor belts, and thronged with birds – starlings, pigeons and seagulls flutter everywhere. The offices are strikingly clean and uncluttered. Head of Municipal Development, Stephen Martins, insists everyone don work boots, yellow jackets, gloves, helmets, goggles and headsets. “We haven’t had an accident in a month,” he shouts over the racket. What is the most frequent injury? Glass in the fingers.

The belts churn ceaselessly; the plant operates 24/7, with maintenance on Sundays. Huge diggers delve into the piles of waste, filling their hods for transport to the waiting hoppers.

You would expect such an operation to be largely automated, and so it is. A long trommel – imagine the elongated drum of a tumble dryer, on a vast scale – grades refuse by size; jets of air toss lighter plastics up for capture; magnets seize steel fragments; electric pulses jolt aluminium cans free. But teams of pickers stand besides belts to grab what the machines have missed, often plastic or cardboard. Shredded paper (a bane to process: stuff it in an envelope) rains steadily across the site.

Every day brings fresh oddities. On one belt tosses a tired umbrella, gaining a few feet then rolling back down the slope. Stephen shows us a pile of indigestible chunky objects, mainly heavy duty worn and broken plastics such as containers for builders’ rubble. “There’s bound to be one here,” he comments, “there always is – ah, yes, there we are.” He points to a loo seat. Then he gestures to a trolley full of yard-long helium cylinders. “We handle metal scrap, but we can’t process

anything that solid.” Loitering casually in front of the cylinders stands a raven, utterly unfazed by the inhospitable surroundings. Along one wall scurries an immense rat: it looks as big as a beaver. Back in the office Stephen answers questions.

WHO PAYS FOR THE RECYCLING?

The municipal authorities – ultimately, you and me.

WHEN RECYCLED MATERIALS ARE SOLD, WHO GETS THE MONEY?

The same authorities receive 100% of the resale value.

HOW MUCH DOES RECYCLING EARN?

It depends on the market for commodities, but when prices are high municipalities can profit.

WHO BUYS WHAT?

Cardboard goes mainly to Vietnam, which turns it back into boxes for China (China uses 80% of the world’s cardboard). Paper waste goes to India, by far the world’s largest consumer of newsprint. Aluminium heads for Greece, Germany, the UK and – despite impending tariffs – the US. Glass, plastics and steel remain largely in Britain.

SHOULD YOU RINSE RECYCLING BEFORE THROWING IT AWAY?

From a hygiene perspective, yes, but the recycling industry doesn’t check. Toothpaste tubes can be recycled, and no one washes those out.

WHAT CAN’T BE REUSED?

About 12% of waste sent for recycling – mainly food, textiles, green waste and nappies – is simply too

contaminated to be worth sorting. This ends up as SRF, Solid Recovered Fuel and is valuable in its own right, sold as pellets or powder for use in furnaces. SRF emits 70% less carbon than the equivalent weight in coal, the residual ash being used in construction, or as road aggregate.

WHAT IS THE MAIN HEADACHE FOR THE INDUSTRY?

The lack of standardisation. Europe-wide packaging legislation is coming down the pipe, and the UK may fall into line: producers are pressing for a common framework. The rest of the world, however, is far from following suit, and in the UK there is no common policy between councils as to what is collected, and so investment in machinery is tricky. And the situation changes constantly: plastic bottles and cans will be covered by a deposit scheme which comes into effect in October 2027 – “less profit for us,” Stephen points out – and household food waste will be collected from 2026.

Vapes and lithium batteries are a constant fire risk. You can’t easily extinguish a lithium fire: it has to burn out. Pressurised containers are another hazard. None of these should go in any household bin.

“Plastics can be a problem,” explains Stephen. “Ideally you want everything to offer a simple binary choice: yes/no. But lots of stuff is labelled “Recycle at larger supermarkets.” There’s a simple rule about most household plastics: if it springs back to shape when you squeeze it, then put it in the green bin.”

And those loo seats? Take them down the tip.

The HBC website has lots of good advice: just log on to My Hastings and type in ‘recycling’.

Recently a team of Green councillors from Hastings Borough Council visited the N+P Group plant near the Dartford crossing. N+P, a Dutch-based company founded in 1992, handles recyclable material from Hastings and 26 other authorities including councils in London, West Oxfordshire, Kent and Surrey. It processes 350,000 tons a year and

Local Push for Parkinson’s Hub

MARY UPTON describes plans for improving the lives of people with Parkinson’s in Hastings/St Leonards

Parkinson’s disease is often described as the Cinderella of NHS services, and in East Sussex this is a reality. Until my husband was diagnosed, four years ago, I had virtually no knowledge of its existence, but since then it’s been a whirlwind of googling symptoms, chasing appointments and trying to look like we’ve got it all together, when actually, we’re just making it up as we go along.

Parkinson’s nurses are as rare as hen’s teeth, and when you find one, they are so overloaded that you’re

lucky to get one consultation every six months – and then it’s over before you’ve barely sat down. Until very recently, there was just one Parkinson’s nurse based at the Conquest Hospital to care for 700 patients. He deserves a medal.

This situation changed when we joined a group run by Parkinson’s UK in Battle and began to exchange information with others in our situation. From that point, the idea of opening a Parkinson’s centre in Hastings/St Leonards crystallised and a small working group is now



Mary Upton

up and running. We are a mixed group of carers and people who suffer from Parkinson’s. The idea is now becoming a reality.

Our idea for opening a centre has been met with great enthusiasm by carers, Parkinson’s patients and NHS professionals: Parkinson’s UK has also been very positive. Greatly encouraged, our local group has now written a constitution and we

are working hard to establish a sound financial base.

The search for a venue has already started. We envisage the space to include a social hub, an area for exercise facilities and a variety of other therapies which help improve both physical and mental well-being. In addition, we will provide a solid base of support for carers, who mostly form the foundation upon which people suffering from Parkinson’s depend. We aim to work alongside the NHS and provide a useful resource to which people with Parkinson’s can be referred with confidence.

The English Devolution White Paper (2024) relating to the devolution of funds to assist local resources, is inspiring. A local Parkinson’s Centre would tick every single box. In response to this Government initiative we’ve already contacted our local MP, Helena Dollimore. Her team is now fully informed of our plans, and we look forward to meeting her in the near future.

Whether you’ve got Parkinson’s, care for someone who does, or just think this sounds like a good idea,

we would like to hear from HIP readers. Please sign the Parkinson’s Petition organised by Movers and Shakers (see link below). We are trying to raise 100,000 signatures (it’s currently 96,399 on going to print) which will lead to a full debate in Parliament – one last push.



To sign the Parkinson’s Petition go to parkinsons.org.uk/get-involved/sign-parky-charter. For information on Movers And Shakers go to moversandshakerspodcast.com

PARKINSON’S STATISTICS

- Parkinson’s Disease is the fastest growing neurological degenerative disease.
- There are approximately 150,000 people living with PD in the UK.
- Hastings/St Leonards and the local area has 1,690 people with Parkinson’s
- Numbers are rising at a rate of 80/100 annually in the 45+ age group.



Amy Burt with dogs

JOHN CHAPMAN

From Berlin to the Bus Stop

JOHN CHAPMAN

In the 1999 film *Being John Malkovich*, people could enter the mind and body of actor John Malkovich. After meeting Amy Burt at her Bus Stop Studios, my thoughts turned to that film. Everything dear to Amy – teaching, embroidery, art, creativity, community – was on display. The studios could be called ‘Being Amy Burt’.

Despite this, you notice a sense of order as you enter the studios – which Amy downplays saying “my brain is not as organised as this shop”. But the business is working well; some students have become firm friends and have been dropping in to 53 London Road since the Studio’s arrival in St Leonards in 2023.

Amy’s initial plan was to focus on teaching embroidery in all its forms. There are few people better qualified, as she’s an expert in 28 different embroidery techniques. However, when more space became available, she decided that a shop

selling stationery, art supplies and haberdashery would be a perfect complement to the courses. Being Amy, she insisted that the stationery isn’t mainstream but “quirky, fun and playful”. A further expansion occurred when she thought of having an exhibition space.

But Amy’s life has been far from linear. She spent several years in Berlin “working as a DJ and doing many other things. We had lots of fun; there wasn’t a lot of hard work.” Those many other things included being a nanny, a kindergarten teacher, an English teacher, a spell at a conservation company, where she regained her love of stitching, and occasionally partying the night away.

Then, one day she woke up and thought that she needed a better life for herself and her dog. Looking wistful, Amy adds: “I guess everything clicked into place after Berlin, I started to focus after a rather hedonistic life.”

Three years on, Amy graduated from the Royal School of Needlework

(RSN) and now combines work as an RSN tutor with running Bus Stop Studios – but we are moving too fast. After graduating from the RSN, she lived in London, where she spent a few years at the Haute Couture fashion house Ralph & Russo. But although enjoying the travel, London was becoming too claustrophobic and was not providing her with the type of life she’d had in Berlin.

There was only one solution, she took her dog and headed for the coast. Getting off the train at St Leonards Warrior Square, she discovered the King’s Road array of cafes, restaurants and charity shops. Amy knew that this would be Bus Stop Studio’s home.

Fast forward, and there are now over a dozen courses available at the studios, including embroidery, crochet, drawing & painting, clothes dyeing and knitting. There is also a packed summer school schedule, offering the usual courses, as well as French lessons and a kids’ sewing workshop.

Since Berlin, Amy has always had a love for community life, one where people would do anything for friends and neighbours. She has found that same community spirit in St Leonards and she gives as much as she can to keep that spirit going. Bus Stop Supplies is a member of the Safe Haven initiative which aims to create greater safety and well-being in the community by allowing vulnerable people to seek support from small businesses and organisations. She also gives local artists a chance to display their work, such as the current exhibition *Home*, celebrating the creative community of St Leonards, and regularly gives talks to local organisations. Interestingly, many of her students have said that coming to a Bus Stop Supplies course has improved their mental health.

As we end our chat, Amy looks philosophical and muses: “None of it was planned, it just happened.”

encouraging, endorsing our mission to provide interesting and informative information about the town – including how to get access the activities and entertainment on offer in the HIP list. Whether you agree or disagree, we’d love to hear from you.

Not only that, several volunteers stepped forward – this section itself needs an editor – and a number of readers agreed to subscribe. So thanks to Anton for organising the event and supporting the paper, and we hope to see you again in a month’s time.



To volunteer for the paper or provide feedback, get in touch on info@yourhip.co.uk. To subscribe, go to hastingsindependentpress.co.uk/become-a-friend, to donate go to hastingsindependentpress.co.uk/product/donate



HIP volunteers engage the public

Street Market Greets Visitors

ROD WEBB

Kings Road market was in full swing at the beginning of the month, having dodged the tropical downpour that hit the country the following day. Visitors to St Leonards arriving by train saw the town at its independent best, with its wide range of shops supplemented by market traders and street cafes doing a roaring trade.

Hastings Independent was there to soak up the atmosphere as well as to promote the paper, gather feedback on how we are doing, and to drum up support: financial support, by signing up as a Friend of the paper, and active support with the recruitment of volunteers.

The feedback was particularly



'Pay as you can' workshop

WAVE ARTS

Compound Interest

FIONA MCGARRY and ROD WEBB finally visit The Compound and find a hidden gem

There are so many interesting things going on in Hastings that it’s not easy to keep up. HIP has been meaning to write about The Compound since it opened in 2023, but it took Edible Open Gardens, organised by Town Grown, to finally take a look.

W.Ave Arts, who run The Compound, was set up in 2020 as a grassroots arts exhibition, sparked by a group of neighbours who had “generously offered up their parking spaces in a humble alleyway”. Since then, they’ve come a long way.

What started as a local effort to showcase creativity has grown into a movement – transforming derelict buildings into vibrant, freely accessible art spaces (two of which got brief mentions in the paper!). “But that wasn’t enough,” says Carol Cook, founding member and co-ordinator. “Inspired by the power of community, we felt called to do more – support more, share more, and build something lasting for everyone.”

Three years later, they found the perfect building to expand their horizons, a building that was due for demolition, at 161 Bexhill Road: “Safe to say we managed to stop that from happening.” After lengthy discussions the landlord gave them a chance to refurbish the building with a year’s free rent. The idea was to be self-sufficient and not rely on funding.

They named the premises The Compound to reflect their vision, “composed of multiple elements, mirroring our desire to be a diverse collective of creative minds”.

Clearing and renovating the space on a modest budget was a “labour of love”, symbolising the beginning of a new chapter for W.Ave Arts. But Carol says that their journey at The Compound is still only beginning, and that there are still

people who don’t know “who we are and what we do”.

So to clarify, W.Ave Arts envisage The Compound as “a hub of positivity, impacting the community in myriad ways”. Carol acknowledges that although this is ambitious, it is grounded in their core values. “We aim to offer ‘pay what you can’ workshops and events, breaking down financial barriers and fostering growth, confidence, and empowerment... we believe its impact will ripple through the community, ushering in an era of creativity, collaboration, and communal well-being.” Ambitious indeed.

But since opening in August 2023, The Compound has indeed blossomed into a vibrant hub of creativity and connection. And their gallery showcases a rich tapestry of moments and milestones in their journey, reflecting the organic growth shaped by the community’s vision (wavearts.org/blog).

Carol explained that, despite being located in an often-overlooked area of West St Leonards, The Compound “continues to surprise newcomers with its cool, unexpected charm”. We were certainly seduced by its charm during our visit.

To add to the charm, a secondary area was opened, called ‘The Depot’. This is a bus refurbished thanks to funds from Arts Council England; a delightful space that can be used for exhibitions, co-working space at £5 a day, workshops and meetings.

A visit is certainly recommended.



For more on W.Ave Arts take a look at their blog at wavearts.org/post/we-just-can-t-stop (scroll down past the first seven entries)

Opening Doors to a Brighter Future

FIONA MCGARRY celebrates the success of less advantaged young people with Villiers Park Educational Trust



winning students with the Vice Lord Lieutenant and Villiers Park CEO

Hastings is the most deprived local authority in Southeast England, with almost 40% of young people in Hastings living in poverty, compared with 29% for England as a whole. One reason is that, according to recent government research, 8.9% of young people in Hastings leave school without pursuing further education, employment, or training.

So how can we help our teenagers to improve their academic outcomes and achieve their full potential? One organisation trying to do just that is Villiers Park Educational Trust – a social mobility charity that supports young people aged 11 to 19 through their coaching and skills projects. Over the past 16 years, the Hastings & Bexhill branch of Villi-

ers Park has partnered six local schools to help teenagers from under-represented backgrounds to develop their personal and employability skills. Other branches of the trust operate in four areas of the country with similar “low participation in higher education and persistently high levels of deprivation”.

Programme Coordinator Musetta Ripamonti invited HIP along to their Future Leaders Celebration Event at Ark Alexandra Academy on 9 July to meet some local Villiers alumni and find out more about the projects they’ve been involved in. The event celebrated the progress of bright and ambitious teenagers in Years 10-14, and recognised the achievements of many of them, including ‘Change Leaders’, ‘Change Makers’ and ‘Change Champions’.

The students are encouraged to develop the skills they need to aim high and apply for apprenticeships and university places – including Russell Group and Oxbridge Universities. They also take part in insight days out and residential stays at universities where they speak to student ambassadors and get a taste of student life. Importantly, the programme is said to have a positive effect on the whole school as well as students within the programme.

The ceremony featured the local Villiers Progression Coaches: Emma Cross and Clara Smith, a successful alum of the programme herself. Coaches work directly with the students to help them plan and deliver

activities that develop confidence and leadership skills. This cohort had organised beach clean-ups, litter collections and sports tournaments; they had taught lessons to Year 7 students – including physics; some had also undertaken research, written articles and given presentations.

The awards were compered by two of the students, Daisy and Katie, and presented by Vice Lord Lieutenant Graham Peters DL, Bexhill Mayor Paul Wilson and Hastings Deputy Mayor Nigel Sinden. Proud families and supporters were there to cheer on the participants – and eat the wonderful array of cakes. Winners included the Mike Baker Future Leaders of the Year: Pearl Hunter (Year 10); Michael Wren (Year 11); David Sosoi (Year 12) and Millie McKinnon (Year 13).

Afterwards, I spoke to participant Jamie O’Doherty who said that Villiers Park had “opened doors” for him. He is hoping to study Engineering and was motivated by a four-day stay at Bath University. He praised the coaches who “discuss what you’re doing now and help you decide what you want to do. They can help you so much with your application forms and personal statements.”

The evening was memorable for its positive energy. I was impressed by the motivation of ‘the yoof’ and their clarity about what they were aiming for. Let’s hope the programme will continue to expand to help more teenagers reach their potential.

Local campsite in UK’s top 150

With summer holidays fast approaching, you might be looking for somewhere nearby to camp in style. Campsites UK have just revealed the annual list of *Outstanding Sites for 2025* in which a local campsite in Battle was included.

The Bluebell Coppice Park, Crowhurst, Battle is a quiet and secluded camping and touring spot in the heart of the 1066 country. There are two camping fields, some with ensuite touring and glamping pitches, a children’s playground, a camping shop and a coarse fishing lake. And if you can drag yourself away from the beautiful countryside, Hastings is just 20 minutes away.

Guests continue to heap praise on the site, with comments like: “A gem of a campsite right in the heart of nature!” and “A small, safe and secure campsite with just what you need with a young family!”

For more information visit bluebellcoppice.com

Seals Raise Funds for Royal Marsdon

POLLY GIFFORD

Many people will have stood on the beach in Hastings, staring out to sea and wondering what it would be like to swim out... and just keep going to France. In August, five women from in and around Hastings are going to find out, when we take on the challenge of swimming the Channel in a relay team.

We will swim at least 21 miles from England to France. Each of us will take it in turns to swim for an hour in rotation until we reach French soil. Swimming the Channel in a relay team takes an average of 15hrs but it can often take longer. No wetsuits either, just a cozzie, a cap and a smile!

We call ourselves The Sussex Seals (not related to the Worthing



Five seals: Berry, Cat, Hannah, Polly and Tash

Mencap Sussex Seals) – Berry White, Cat Bray, Hannah Collison, Polly Gifford and Tash Holt – and we are raising funds for the Royal Marsden Cancer Charity. All of us know people who have faced the far greater challenge of a cancer diagnosis and we will be holding those people in our hearts and minds as we swim.

The motivations to do the swim can be very personal. “Following some health challenges a couple of

years ago, I was keen to set myself a new physical challenge,” says Cat. “Why not be more like a seal! The sea is my happy place, and I’m looking forward to this adventure.”

“I’m from a family of swimmers,” says Hannah. “The toughest aspects so far have been cold water training – I get so numbingly cold! – the fear of the sea conditions changing and of course the fear of failure. I lost my mum to cancer last year so

through these tough moments I have held in my mind the amazing bravery she showed through treatments that were unpredictably changeable and rough, like the sea.”

For Tash, swimming the Channel has always been on the bucket list, “I just never thought I would get the opportunity to actually do it alongside such an incredible group of women and for such a worthwhile cause. One of the biggest challenges

will be the mental hurdles that will need to be overcome – sea sickness, swimming in the dark, sleep deprivation, sea creatures and the unknown of what’s beneath you, to name but a few!”

The swim is fulfilling a childhood ambition for Berry too: “Nature is my great love and the sea is a wild and mysterious unknown. I’ve always wanted to have a go at a cross-Channel swim. I know it will be tough but I’m excited for the challenge, and to raise money and awareness of the Royal Marsden, who have given lifesaving treatment to dear friends and family alike.”

For me, there are also some mixed emotions. I’m very conscious that I am choosing to cross this stretch of water, when many people make the journey out of desperation, fleeing war and persecution, with too many losing their lives in the attempt.



Whatever is driving us, The Sussex Seals will be giving everything they’ve got to this challenge.

We are being generously supported by local businesses Kiley’s Carpets, David Neil Dental, PJ Skip Hire and accountants Ashdown Hurrey. We have already raised over £6K through our crowdfunder and are aiming for £10K. You can support us at justgiving.com/page/sussex-seals.

Hastings Big Flea!



PRE LOVED FINDS,
FOOD & MUSIC

SUNDAY 3RD AUGUST, 10-4
SAINT LEONARDS CHURCH, LONDON RD, TN37 6AS

SPONSORED BY **LOADFAST**
Waste Disposal

Inseminating an Intelligent Artifice

ROBIN HOLTOM
admits to
some juvenile
confusion
concerning the
facts of life

I was living on a small dairy farm when I first heard the term AI. At the age of 10 I witnessed a vet pulling on large rubber gloves and pushing his hand inside a cow for reasons which seemed entirely obscure. Eventually it was explained to me that this was how baby cows were made! It was known as "AI" or Artificial Insemination, and it was very modern. I embraced this information with enthusiasm as it supplanted my previous rather vague ideas of reproduction.

In fact, for a while I gained considerable kudos among my friends for illuminating them too. To their admiration, I announced that ba-

bies used to be produced by a rather messy process called sex, but our generation would be relieved to know that this unhealthy procedure was now redundant. I explained to the rapt attention of my friends that now when a man and woman wanted a baby all they had to do was ring a vet to come and make use of this amazing modern AI.

As I grew up, I realised that the messy and bewildering process of creating babies and maintaining the circumstances for offspring to flourish was just a tiny bit more complicated, not to mention considerably more interesting, than my previous earnest and over-simple conviction allowed.

Today, of course, AI is more often associated with Artificial Intelligence than Artificial Insemination. There are, however, some similarities. Not least is the overconfidence that today's advocates proselytise AI rather like the cockiness I had shown as a ten year old.

Perhaps the particular characteristic they have in common is ignorance. This ignorance is combined with a need to make an impression and gain approval - and of course



KENT BARKER

money. Just as my immature self claimed that our new generation would be spared unhygienic and unnecessary sex, so we are asked to believe that Artificial Intelligence will simplify and accelerate everything that is currently unnecessarily complicated and slow.

I must confess that I am not an early adopter of technology. I am not impatient to embrace modern gadgets. But I do try. Some years ago I started to send my self-assessment tax return online instead of

by post. Unfortunately, this year my computer refused to recognise my Unique Tax Code. I phoned HMRC for a paper Tax Return in early January and went through a number of conversations with helpful and sympathetic humans. I also sent many letters which had no response at all except automated replies threatening a series of escalating fines. Eventually I received a paper tax return at the end of March. The system seemed reluctant to risk any normal hu-

man response. It seemed to be unable to deal with the elderly incompetent person I felt I was in danger of becoming. I did eventually appeal the fines successfully, but what is clear to me is that highly automated systems fail to connect with human beings - both those who are served by it and also those human beings who serve it.

Now I wonder, did that inseminated cow of my youth perhaps feel some important direct contact had been missing?

SATIRE

Minifear

HIP's Whitehall reporter overhears a senior civil servant initiating a new recruit.

Sir Humphrey: Welcome to your first day in the civil service, Smith. We noticed that your master's dissertation was on Machiavelli, so we've assigned you to MOF.

Smith: MOF? What's MOF?

Sir H: The Ministry of Fear, of course. Or in current speak, 'Minifear'.

Smith: Right. And what exactly is it that Minifear does?

Sir H: Well, look at this headline in the morning paper: 'Global warming will wipe out cereal crops and end the British breakfast'. A classic Minifear plant - so to speak!

Smith: You mean it's not true?

Sir H: Now don't get all metaphysical on me, discussing the nature of truth. One man's truth is, as they say, another man's disinformation. I'm sure there was a report, and I'm sure some part of it could have been interpreted to suggest that cereal crops might be affected by rising temperatures. But our skill was in linking that to the idea that your cornflakes



and your toast are about to disappear off the breakfast table.

Smith: But how does the government get that into the press? You can't exactly put out a press release on paper headed 'The Ministry of Fear' can you?

Sir H: Good heavens no. We sim-

ply ensure that it goes out on X, or Instagram or Bluesky or whatever, and that editors get to see it.

Smith: But why? Why would you want to?

Sir H: Ah, now that is the question. Remember what your man Machiavelli said: "It is far safer to

be feared than loved"? In other words, to stop the anarchy of people doing just as they please, rulers must maintain control through fear.

Smith: Actually, in *The Prince* he said it was better to be both feared and loved.

Sir H: Exactly. First instill fear, then appear to combat the problem and the people will love you for it - or at least they'll remain compliant!

Smith: So, you raise the fear of global conflict and tell everyone in the UK they must prepare for war. Then they'll be willing to spend more on defence even if it means having their taxes raised to do so?

Sir H: Precisely. You've got it. Things on that front had gone steadily downhill since the Cuban Missile Crisis and the end of the Cold War. That Political Economist bloke Robert Higgs said "Were we ever to stop being afraid of the government itself and to cast off the phoney fears it has fostered, the government would shrivel and die". So thank god for Netanyahu and Putin.

Smith: So, tell me, was Covid a Minifear creation?

Sir H: Not exactly. But we did manage to ramp up the fear around the virus to a quite extraordinary degree, and people didn't seem to notice that their civil liberties were being trashed. Or, if they did notice, they didn't complain too much.

Smith: So what are we doing now to keep people paranoid?

Sir H: Good heavens. Just look through the papers: 'Alcohol should carry cancer warnings' - 'Heatwave expected to kill 600' - 'Climate change putting cups of tea at risk' - 'Reservoirs empty; drought on the way; hosepipe bans imminent' - 'Record number of migrants cross channel' - 'British woman dies of Rabies', it goes on and on.

Smith: But don't people realise that they are being manipulated?

Sir H: Just occasionally the cat is let out of the bag. Some idiot advising the government's Emergency Scientific Group SAGE on COVID let slip: "the perceived level of personal threat needs to be increased among those who are complacent, using hard hitting emotional messaging." But we just dismissed this as a conspiracy theory.

Smith: Surely Minifear IS a conspiracy theory.

Sir H: Yes, of course, that's the joy of it. It is a conspiracy theory and at the same time it is actually true. And so we are back in the realms of metaphysics again. By the way, what's your first name?

Smith: Winston, sir. Winston Smith. You may remember me. Some time ago I did an internship at the Ministry of Truth when you were running it... back in 1984.



Baryonyx seaside scene

David Brockhurst – Dinosaur Hero Of The 1066 Coast

In which our intrepid hero
DAVID E P DENNIS meets
Dave Brockhurst, dino hunter!

Dave Brockhurst is now a retired quarryman. Over the last thirty-four years of his working life, he has discovered twenty-six dinosaur species, including the world's smallest dinosaur, in the Wealden Clay beds of a quarry in Turkey Road, Bexhill-on-Sea.

Dave explained to me that millions of years ago, the coast from Beachy Head to Dungeness was a vast delta braided by many rivers and streams. In the rainy seasons and humid climate period, the rivers ran fast, causing flash floods that overwhelmed the dinosaurs. In the drier periods lakes formed. Here at the lakesides, 140 million years ago, there roamed round-toothed dinosaurs feeding on vegetation. These were preyed upon by carnivorous monsters whose sharp teeth were endlessly replaced, just like the sharks of today.

The names of these dinosaurs do not easily trip off the tongue. For example, the Dromaeosaurs, Iguanodon, the fish-eating Baryonyx spinosaur, Ankylosaurs, Polacanthus, Megalosaurus and the famous Tyrannosaurus rex, which Dave tells me were of a special 'Bexhill variety'. These were joined by crocodilians, fishes, turtles, small mammals, insects and many kinds of

plants. The area from Bexhill through Hastings to Pett Level was especially rich.

LOCAL DISCOVERIES

Dinosaurs were first recognised in the Hastings area in the 1830s when Gideon Mantell (1822-1896) found, near Battle, the remains of the Ankylosaur named Hylaeosaurus foxii. Later, the notorious faker of the Piltown Skull, Charles Dawson (1850-1916), did find a real type of Iguanodon now named Barilium dawsoni in Shornden Quarry, now a part of Alexandra Park, Hastings. Many years later, at the Ashdown Quarry in Turkey Road, Bexhill, Dave Brockhurst discovered a new genus—the graceful Iguanodon named Hypselospinus fittoni.

Now there is mounting evidence that the 1066 coast area from Bexhill to Pett Level could easily be a rival to the Jurassic Coast of Dorset, although neither the 1066 Coast nor the Jurassic Coast are quite as rich as the amazing Isle of Wight fossil beds.

THE EVOLUTION OF BIRDS

Dave Brockhurst has been instrumental in finding links between dinosaurs and birds. Just how did this amazing evolutionary transformation occur?



Dave Brockhurst

It is hard to imagine that the robin on your fence or the sparrow in the hedgerow is the direct descendant of a ferocious dinosaur — but science now confirms that birds are not just related to dinosaurs. They are dinosaurs. More specifically, birds evolved from a group of fast, two-legged carnivores known as theropods, a lineage that includes famous predators like Velociraptor and Tyrannosaurus rex. But while Hollywood focuses on teeth and claws, the real story of bird origins is written in feathers — and remarkably, part of that story was uncovered right here on the Sussex coast.

The evolutionary link between birds and dinosaurs was once controversial, but over the last three decades, fossil discoveries, particularly from China, have cemented the connection. Fossils of small theropods like Anchiornis, Microraptor, and Sinosauropteryx show clear impressions of primitive feathers, and some even had wings capable of gliding.

These creatures weren't 'almost birds' — they were feathered dinosaurs. Their skeletons include wishbones, hollow bones, and even backward-pointing pubic bones, all shared with modern birds. Yet, these were not tropical animals. Some of their close relatives once lived in what is now Bexhill and the Weald of Sussex, in the dense river-valley forests of the Early Cretaceous, around 130 million years ago.

In 2009, Dave Brockhurst, our local fossil hunter from Bexhill, made an extraordinary discovery

while sifting through sediment at the Ashdown Quarry. Among the clay and ironstone nodules, he uncovered the delicate bones of a tiny meat-eating dinosaur. Realising its significance, Brockhurst passed the specimen on to professional palaeontologists for study.

Two years later, in 2011, palaeontologists Darren Naish and Steve Sweetman formally described the fossil as the remains of a tiny maniraptoran theropod, part of the same group that gave rise to birds. Although no feathers were preserved, the skeletal structure — including long arms and delicate legs — placed it firmly within the feathered dinosaur lineage.

This fossil, now known informally as the Ashdown Maniraptoran, may be the most direct evidence yet that feathered, bird-like dinosaurs were living in what is now East Sussex, flitting between ancient conifers and hunting insects in the undergrowth.

"It was a very exciting find," Brockhurst later recalled. "You don't expect to find the dinosaur that led to birds when you're digging in clay with a trowel."

The specimen now resides in Bexhill Museum's collection, continuing to inform research into the

Early Cretaceous ecosystems of Britain. This is what the Bexhill Bird Dinosaur may have looked like.

Surely a great achievement in anyone's lifetime, Dave has found twenty-six species of dinosaur in the Bexhill to Pett Level area and may be on his way to his twenty-seventh — although scientific secrecy shrouds what may be to come! But the actual density of dinosaurs in the vast river-rich landscape was as low as one or two per kilometre. What pooled them all together in a mass of finds at the Ashdown Quarry beds was almost certainly catastrophic flash flooding.

Today Dave still helps with searches, supports museums and schools with advice and conducts parties of amateur palaeontologists to experience the thrill, first-hand, of finding the remains of amazing creatures from millions of years ago. Long may his work continue, and we hope for new announcements as the remarkable past is gently teased out of clay with trowels on the 1066 coast.

Dave says that his searches and discoveries are admired by a possible future generation of dinosaur hunters—his grandchildren think it's cool to have a grandad who finds dinosaur bones.

HASTINGS INTERNATIONAL CERAMICS FAIR
SATURDAY 19TH & SUNDAY 20TH JULY
THE OBSERVER BUILDING
9:30AM - 5PM & 10AM - 4PM

* FEATURING LOCAL CERAMIC ORGANISATIONS *
COMMON MORMON STUDIOS, THE MUDWORKS, COMMON CLAY CIC,
EASTBOURNE STUDIO POTTERY, ST LEONARDS CERAMICS !

Time for a New Left Party

Why would we need a new left party in Hastings? Don't we already have Greens, Hastings Independents (no relation to this paper) and Labour? HIP Feature Editor BEN BRUGES asks those involved



SONSKA PHOTOGRAPHY

A year after Labour's landslide election victory, it's clear that anger is building over the government 'balancing the books' by cutting winter fuel allowance to pensioners and benefits for disabled people. Promises to improve the NHS and tackle the cost of living crisis seem long forgotten while Labour are staying fully committed to their pledge not to raise taxes on the rich. Shamefully, rather than oppose the genocide in Gaza, they are actually continuing to supply Israel with weapons, intelligence and political support. This is not what they were elected for.

You may have heard that there's talk of a new national party to oppose Starmer's Labour from Zarah Sultana and Jeremy Corbyn.

What you may not know is that a group of people in Hastings have already been working on setting up a local branch of the 'new left party' for the past two months. A group describing themselves only as 'socialist activists' decided to get a head start on the national organisers, by putting out a call for like minded people to join them in creating a new left party locally. They immediately garnered over 60 supporters, and their founding meeting of over 30 people at the end of May has been followed by a flurry of sub-groups working on everything from film nights and outreach stalls, to educationals and mapping campaigns. This kind of local initiative, which is one of many taking place

all over the country, is being encouraged by Jeremy Corbyn, who dropped in on one of the group's Zoom calls to wish them well. Jamie Driscoll, who is leading the 'majority movement' in Tyneside, has also been in touch to offer his support.

Rather than focus on policies or programmes at this stage, the group has chosen to focus instead on issues and activism, and they say they want to do a lot more listening and engaging—and recruiting—before declaring themselves the final article ready to stand in elections.

The second meeting of the group at the end of June included a training session on community organising, an educational discussion on economic alternatives to neoliberalism, and a planning meeting where members discussed the various campaigns they are already involved in, including the Communities V Developers Protestival aimed at tackling issues around housing and the environment, and a local Unite campaign for greater disabled access in the town.

I joined the group's lively WhatsApp chat and asked members to share their reasons for getting involved in this project which has clearly galvanised some very enthusiastic supporters.

Rachel Ray, a local teacher, parent and renter said: "I'm disillusioned and frustrated after throw-away messages, hollow intentions and many broken promises from the current powers. There's not

enough time left to wait for systemic change; we have to provide that shift ourselves."

For Andrea Cowhig, it seems that it was the pressure of living with disabilities and poor housing that pushed her into politics: "I've been upset by recent changes in parliament that are very discriminatory to disabled people and not equal to all. Our housing also needs to be made accessible to everybody, and I helped set up the Hastings Area Southern Housing Tenants Association because I think it's so important for tenants to have our own independent voice."

As with many other members, it seems to be the party's focus on activism that has attracted Andrea's support: "When I was younger I shied away from politics. I didn't really like politicians because they promise great things but they never really deliver. What I like about the new left party is that it's about campaigning, not just 'politics', and it's about community and it's honest. It's from the grassroots, from the people to the top, not the other way round."

The new left party already has a sub-group for young people, and for Ted McIntosh, a college student who at 17 said he was "born under the shadow of New Labour" it's clear the mainstream parties are not an appealing option: "The extreme centrism of the modern Labour Party broadly falls in line with the Conservative status quo when it comes to doing nothing to address the real needs and conditions of vulnerable people. The two parties play bipartisan pass-the-parcel—defunding the NHS and public services, increasing tuition fees, turning a blind eye to Israel's genocide, and parroting anti-immigration rhetoric."

As well as newcomers to politics, the party also has some well-known local supporters, including Peter Chowney, former council leader, who wrote: "Trashing the Labour Party's socialist heritage has left a huge void in British politics. We need a new political movement, building progressive policies from the bottom up to sort out the problems that affect people's day-to-day lives."

Many lifelong Labour supporters feel that in moving so far to the right, it was the Labour Party who left them. One supporter Dee Howard explained how she fell foul of the outrageous witch-hunt within Labour by the party's Blairite wing, in alliance with the national media, when they used false claims of anti-semitism to undermine Corbyn and his supporters, "When I posted online about my Jewish late husband being suspended from the Labour Party for anti-Semitism, I was expelled myself!"

The bruising experience of the Corbyn years in Labour is clearly shaping how people feel about the new party they are creating. Documentary maker Archie Lauchlan is clear: "It's not called 'The Ruling Class' for nothing – the Establishment's political wing, in collusion with the various media outlets it

controls, keeps itself perennially in power. Traditionally, it was just the Conservative Party doing its bidding, but what we're seeing now is pretty much a uniparty system, with the Tories, Reform, LibDems and Labour all working hard to maintain the rightwing status quo."

THE CURRENT SITUATION IS NOT OK

Antonia Berelson, NHS nurse and Royal College of Nursing steward is one of a number of trade union organisers supporting the party, and she wrote "As a working-class nurse and single mother, I want to join the new left party to seize the narrative from the establishment and fight for a more just and equal future. I reject Westminster career politicians and believe in grassroots power to challenge the systems that are failing us. Only by defending public services and empowering workers can we build a truly fair and compassionate society."

With so many grassroots activists involved, it's no surprise that a key focus for many is about having a community voice. Kay Green, a local activist and blogger wrote: "Most people are pretty clear by now that party politics is working mainly for national banks and global corporations. I'm interested in avoiding national-level corruption by making it possible for localities to vote for MPs they know and trust."

People may remember the controversy around the selection of Helena Dollimore as the Labour candidate for Hastings, when she was foisted on the local membership after local candidates were ruled out by the Labour head office. Her voting record shows why, as she continues to vote for every government attack on her working class constituents. Kay is hoping the new left party can put up a different kind of candidate "who would go to Westminster thinking things like 'how do we change the planning system so that residents' voices are more important than developers and housing associations?' or 'there are areas of my town where no-one can get to see an NHS dentist or doctor without a long, frustrating struggle. How do we change the system to work for them?'"

HOPE IS RADICAL AND MUCH NEEDED

Grace Lally is a local funding activist and one of the founders of Hastings Friends of Al Mawasi and, like many other supporters of the party, was involved in the Corbyn movement in the election of 2017. She wrote "Of course everyone knows we lost the election, but what many of us also know from that experience is that you can stand for a complete change in society and millions of people will rally to that cause. We learned that we can build a mass popular movement for justice, of us, the majority, against the rich and powerful, and that the establishment, including the Labour Party, are absolutely terrified by that and will do everything

to destroy that hope."

Reflecting the sense of urgency behind this fledgling party, Grace wrote: "I wouldn't have believed back in 2017 how much more dangerous and unstable our world would become. In a time of genocide, climate crisis and radical discontent being channelled towards the far right, the victory we hoped for as a beautiful possibility back then, has become an absolute necessity now."

For Peter Chowney, rebuilding a sense of hope is vital: "People are deeply dissatisfied and in despair. They need renewed hope. I think that a new socialist political movement, built locally and coordinated nationally, is the way to achieve that."

Leah Levane, who was also a local Labour Councillor and remains chair of Jewish Voice for Labour, wrote about her own sense of hope in this new type of politics: "Clearly Labour is not a party interested in actually changing things in the way that I would support and is, instead, tied into corporate and other powerful interests. I'm excited by the potential to link up with those in other parts of the country who share similar values."

WHAT'S THE PLAN?

Archie Lauchlan describes the aim of the group: "We want to create a vibrant, bottom-up movement spearheaded by a campaigning, popular, electable party whose policies will be formed by, and for the benefit of, the people it'll represent – ie, the majority of us." Maya Evans, Former Labour Deputy Leader of Hastings Council, currently Campaigns Organiser at Jeremy Corbyn Campaigns agrees: "For the sake of a healthy democracy and to demand the change people deserve, we need a proudly left wing party, from the grassroots, driven by communities, creating campaigns that will shape the agenda of our policies. There's lots of energy and excitement for a new left party, there's a huge appetite for change."

Some people might agree with those sentiments but still feel worried by the warnings that a new left party would 'split the vote' or 'let in Farage'. The truth is, we don't know how the national party will develop and it's certainly ambitious to launch one here in Hastings on our own. But some people might also say that's exactly what makes this project special. And I'm with Andrea on this when she says: "You can't just sit back and assume someone else is going to sort it out for you."



Whether the new left party has an impact or not depends on what you do now. If you want to join me in signing up to the founding statement, go to linktr.ee/hastings-newleftparty. Follow the QRcode for fuller versions of statements from all of these contributors and more on the website version of this article



Gabrielė Sutkutė enjoys Ravel

PETER MOULD

transcribed it later for solo piano, but as a piano piece it is rarely performed because of its extreme difficulty. Sutkutė's achievement seemed to me outstanding: the high spot of a unique weekend event.

INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS

An acquaintance remarked to me during the interval "Isn't it amazing to hear this? In little Hastings!" And indeed this is one of many events that make little Hastings a wonderful place to live. The competition (this season's patron is eminent British pianist Stephen Hough) now draws world-wide attention, and four flags were flown on the roof of Fairlight Hall to celebrate the internationality of the performers: Lithuanian, Taiwanese, Canadian, and Russian. And none of them currently live in the country of their birth. "Such is the life of an international pianist" remarks Nicky Webb, the organisation's communications director.

An 'entry-level' concert pianist can earn perhaps £45,000 a year. Over the twenty unpaid years it takes to achieve even this status, that probably makes a classical pianist one of the lowest-paid professionals in the world. A world-class music professor who happened to live in the flat below us in Islington once said to me "some people think, that just the notes are enough." If the effect of a solo piano piece on a listener is one of joy, or wonder, or simply 'relaxation', it's only because the endless work behind its accomplishment makes it look effortless. The effect of this piano weekend was to demonstrate to the audience the truth that indeed, the notes are only the beginning.



Since winning a place in the competition, Gabrielė Sutkutė has remained to work locally, giving

concerts and talks on behalf of Hastings International Piano at St Michael's Hospice, in schools, and other community settings. For more about the work of Hastings International Piano both in outreach locally and competition nationally, see hastingsinternationalpiano.org.

The Notes are Just the Beginning

VICTORIA KINGHAM

It's undoubtedly a privilege to watch skilled professors of music talking with gifted young performers about their interpretations of pianistic works of great genius. The weekend event organised by Hastings Piano Concerto competition afforded the audience that opportunity. Saturday afternoon saw wonderful Master classes. On Sunday there were four brilliant solo performances by former Competition winners and runners-up.

Aaron Storr is head of piano at the Scottish Conservatoire: his emphasis, discussing with Curtis Phill

Hsu a fine performance of Debussy's lovely Voiles prelude, was on the exactitude of Debussy's phrasing and dynamics; the precise speed for the full effect of a rallentando; the completion of a phrase. Vanessa Latache is Artistic Director of Hastings International Piano. Having listened to Gabrielė Sutkutė, she concentrated on the dynamics: "Everybody thinks it impressive to play the piano fast and loud," she remarked. "What you learn as a performer is that the most difficult thing is to play it slowly and softly." She also noted an *infinitesimally* small mistake that nobody without her extraordinarily tuned ear could have picked up – "you've done that three times now," she tells Sutkutė

(incidentally also one of her regular pupils), "it has to stop!" She explained that as a pianist your hands tend to replicate a mistake, which must be eradicated before becoming ingrained.

PICNIC PERFORMANCES

One of the more telling things one learnt from these unique, expert insights is that to make a piano piece sound fresh and new and exciting, as though it has just come out of the composer's mind, in fact it takes years of dedicated, exacting and gruelling practice. Foregrounding this idea was a remarkable performance of Chopin's Fantaisie-Polonoise II by Harmony Zhu at the Sunday afternoon picnic event. She played with great panache and with what seemed to me, tremendous daring. Chopin's polonaises are based on a traditional Polish dance; the 'fantasy' title however allowed him to write something relatively 'free' like the introductory slow section to this piece, with its state-

ments, pauses, and questions. Zhu added to this section rhythmic originality, dynamic phrasing, drama, and romance. Mariamna Sherling played two Chopin Mazurkas and Ravel's fabulous Alborada del Gracioso, French impressionist music based on Spanish melodies and dramatic traditions. Curtis Phill Hsu, who won last year's competition, at 21, while modest and unassuming, already a seasoned professional, gave superb renderings of Granados and Debussy.

Sutkutė played an older piece – a Rameau 'Joyeuse' with intense joy and delicacy. She followed this with an altogether astonishing performance of Ravel's La Valse. Ravel must himself have been joyeuse after finishing this most complex piece: it incorporates huge fortissimo runs up and down the entire length of the piano, and challenging arpeggios in the extreme bass, requiring from the pianist exceptional strength and control. It was originally written for orchestra; Ravel

Modernist Music at Christ Church

VICTORIA KINGHAM

Marcio Da Silva seems to have boundless ambition for his choir and orchestra – so much so that for this particular concert he strayed a long way from his baroque comfort zone to direct the music of an Estonian, an Austrian-American

(both twentieth century) and a Norwegian (twenty-first century).

Watching him conduct the Hastings Philharmonic Choir a couple of weeks ago brought home to me just how skilled he is at bringing out the best in musicians. The choir is open to anyone who can manage sustained singing; not all of them read music or have vocal training. They are well rehearsed by his singing

phrases to them, in the correct pitch, until they are sure of their parts.

The Arvo Part *Berliner Mass* isn't easy; it's full of very close harmonies, not all of which are played in the orchestral part, and some of which are unconventional or unexpected. It's one of the few modern Masses which still has a specific liturgical purpose besides being a concert performance. It is beautiful and searing, and demands from the singers close attention and correctness. Gjeilo's *Sunrise Mass* is perhaps an easier piece to sing; one member of the choir described it as having some 'cheesy' tunes, and listening to it, I could hear what he meant. Gjeilo

himself has said, in fact, that he was inspired by film scores. Conversely, compositions of a century ago from people like Mahler and Rachmaninov, inspired future film music. The Schoenberg orchestral piece, *Verklärte Nacht* [Transfigured Night], is emotive, evocative, and dramatic. It's a wonderful piece for a small orchestra, and was played well by the Hastings Philharmonic, with evident pleasure.

One advantage of the particular acoustic in Christ Church, and the relatively small size of the orchestra, is that the choral and solo parts don't get obscured by the volume of the instruments. I've some-

times been at full orchestral/choral performances of Beethoven or Verdi (for example) where the orchestra overwhelms the piece, and the choir part-despite its beauty and complexity-becomes almost incidental. But in this setting, the balance was good and both choir and orchestra were heard to their best advantage. It was an evening to remember, augmented by the joy of the performers and the enthusiasm of the audience.

Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir, conducted by Marcio da Silva, sang the *Northern Lights* on Saturday 5 July at Christ Church, Silchester Road, St Leonards.



No Apology Necessary Mencap Loud and Lovely

JOAN OSBALDESTON

When a friend asked me if I would write a review of Mencap's *Let's Get Loud* show at the De La Warr, I hesitated, imagining an awkward school show with dodgy production values – something only a mum or dad could love. Well, there is nothing more satisfying and educational than having your preconceptions thrown out of the window.

On a balmy evening, a sell-out crowd at The De La Warr, were treated to a fast-paced, joyous and creative mixture of comedy, drama, music and film performed by more than 50 Mencap service users. We moved from *Guys and Dolls* – to *Wicked* via *Hello Dolly* and *Wo-men in Black*, driven by the passion and inventiveness of the participants, tutored over the year by Active Arts. Huge screens, well-produced soundscapes, and creative props and costumes added to the professional output. Favourite local comic Henning Wehn compered the show brilliantly, with dry wit and irreverence.

There were many highlights: the

quirky alien puppets – including poor E.T. – shown no mercy by the alien-busting CIA agents and the spellbinding nature animation accompanied by birdsong, stick in my mind. A mesmerising Boathouse dance performance, using signing, was captivating too. But it was Charlotte Dennis's tender rendition of the song *A Thousand Years* that finally brought me to tears. When her last note rang out, the audience erupted, and I could feel the applause vibrating through my glass.

This is not *Britain's Got Talent*. It's about teamwork, confidence-building, exploring creativity, developing resilience and being an individual, as well as being an integral and valued part of a community – core Mencap values. And as the company sang along to the words from *The Greatest Showman*, 'I make no apology – this is me,' I stood up with the others around me to cheer them on.

Let's Get Loud was performed at the De La Warr Pavilion on 2 July 2025. For further details of the local Mencap organisation see hastings-bexhill-mencap.org



Sam Brown

Messy: A Theme for Unravelling Times

EBM HUMPHREYS

Although the name 'Poetry Brothel' is pretty edgy, I've always rather liked the boldness of it. We headed down to the White Rock Hotel on 5 July for probably our fourth PB Hastings, trusting we'd be served with a unique night of poetry, music, story and burlesque. You are quite safe here, whether you want to be or not! However, one-to-one readings are available with the performers in the intermission.

Even after several visits I still felt scared to have a private reading. Some people are braver. Those who succumb to the temptation always come back intact, confirm-

ing what you'd expect: it's intense. But I knew I had to go for it. I chose carefully and consented to be blindfolded – making the experience both more richly-sensory and less scarily-intimate.

I have never experienced more sumptuous framing or more careful curation of live poetry than that of PB Hastings' resident hostess Madame Bibi Synthe. This is a night where everything has been thought of, every performer has been very carefully selected – maybe even pruned a little to make the themed poetry-garden glow and grow. I fancy that this quality control suits those who are a bit afraid of poetry – I personally enjoy the solidarity of anything-goes poetry nights, but it's not for everyone.

The July PB theme was 'Messy', offering "creative journeys ... uncharted waters ... a cabaret bursting with wonder, rebellion and the unexpected", and it certainly was full of surprises. Featured on stage (and off) were: hard-hitting local star Reanna Valentine, super-sultry wild-thing Embala, completely captivating Luna Saudade visiting from the London PB, sticky-storytelling changeling SpiritDoll, delectable PB 'virgin' Silver Star, omni-talented burlesque artist Canary Monarch with next-level costume, superb local violinist Sam Brown and delightful musical guest visiting from Brighton, Charlie O'Connor. Not to mention the lavish compere herself experimenting on us artistically, also while blindfolded.

The subtle association with sex-work is actually more important than we might think – any blurring of lines between art and work can only help us to break down the sexist hypocrisies still surrounding sex-as-work. And on this particular occasion, a possibly gin-soaked Madame Bibi made this particular feature of the night clear as crystal, expressing her uncompromising solidarity.

The next Poetry Brothel Hastings will take place in September – follow them on Eventbrite, Facebook or Instagram (best pictures) and make sure you are there!

PBHastingsMESSY.eventbrite.co.uk
[@poetrybrothelastings](https://www.facebook.com/ThePoetryBrothel-Hastings)
[facebook.com/ThePoetryBrothel-Hastings](https://www.facebook.com/ThePoetryBrothel-Hastings)

Horror Comes Home, in an East Sussex Production

LEON CUTHBERTSON

Prepare for a nerve-shattering theatrical experience at The Stables Theatre (Hastings) this month, as they present Henry James' classic ghost story, *The Turn of the Screw*. It's a fitting tale to be told in Hastings, given that James completed writing this most famous novella in 1898,

while living at Lamb House in Rye.

James' disturbing and enigmatic story has inspired many adaptations over the years, including portrayals by Marlon Brando, Ingrid Bergman, and Nicole Kidman (*The Others*, 2001), a screenplay by Truman Capote (*The Innocents*, 1961) and an opera by Benjamin Britten.

One of the stars of the show, professional actor Ed Nash, explains

why he was attracted to the role. "The play brings a little of everything, which makes the role so challenging," he told us. James' story involves themes such as class, mental health and sexuality, topics that are absolutely relevant to today. Nash continues that it is "an amazing experience to be a part of it, and particularly special to be allowed to perform in its premiere, back here where it was conceived!"

Described by Steven King as "one of the only truly great supernatural works of horror," the theatrical experience promises a haunting atmosphere, psychological depth and gripping suspense. This brand-new adaptation from St Leonards-based playwright Tim Blackwell promises to deliver chills on a summer evening. It certainly won't be your average trip to the theatre. Whether you're familiar with the story or encountering it for the first time, the intense atmosphere and psychological tension are sure to leave you questioning what is real and what is not. Prepare for a night of suspense, mystery, and thrills – this is *The Turn of the Screw* as you've never seen it before!

Dates: 16-19 July and 30 July-2 August
Venue: The Stables Theatre, The Bourne, Hastings TN34 3BD
Tickets: 01424 423221 – stablestheatre.co.uk



BOOKBUSTER REVIEW

Left Behind

BY PAUL COLLIER
PUBLISHED BY PENGUIN BOOKS,
2025, RRP £10.99
REVIEW (PART 1 OF 2) BY TIM
BARTON

Collier’s project here is to discuss what he calls ‘a new economics for neglected places’, which we can readily apply here. The book has a global perspective, covering for example parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America. But he reserves a special place in his analysis for England. Part One of the book, ‘Spiralling Down’, is the story of damaging ideologies and the politics of greed’ and how they impede attempts to narrow the wealth-gap and keep the base of an economy fluid and viable through investment and welfare. Thus, Eng-

land is seen through the lens of an extreme version of the ‘free market’ imposed on us from Thatcher’s 1980s onwards, one he sees as more extreme than any other country: despite the propaganda, ‘far from remedying the syndrome, market forces accentuate it’. He also accounts for England’s special status as a failing economic state by reference to other countries’ choices to devolve power, investment, and both public and private finance.

Collier has relatively little to say about ‘class politics’, but does point out the need for workers unions, willingness to compromise and co-operate between workers and bosses, and the need for resilient welfare support. The latter has been especially badly dismantled in the UK, especially since 2008, with little sign of the recent change in government addressing that, with the Labour government instead stating that it is only interested in ‘working people’. And so we fall yet further behind.

MANY IN HASTINGS
DRIVEN INTO THE GROUND

Let’s get an elephant in the room out of the way. Collier has a warped perspective regarding ‘the South-

LEFT BEHIND

A New
Economics
for
Neglected
Places

PAUL COLLIER

exists in ‘the South-East’ too, if he didn’t show such a caricatured anti-Home Counties bias.

Perhaps this is a misperception explained by the relative recentness of this phenomenon, at least in its current form. After years of austerity driven by elite economists’ and politicians’ choices in how to address the 2008 banking crisis, plus the rise in popularity of AirBnBs, the economic pressure pushing many away from an overly expensive capital, the effects of Brexit on small businesses, and the iniquities of the Universal Credit system that replaced the fairer and stabilising Working Tax Credit system, many in Hastings have been driven into the ground, compounding the growth in the wealth-gap.

Nevertheless, these pressures that we suffer here are acknowledged in other areas of the UK, and in other countries. So, if we put aside his biases, this first part of *Left Behind* is as important and valid for us here as for his much-lauded post-industrial Yorkshiremen, which means we, as readers, can roll our eyes at him but still join the dots ourselves. A ‘society’s spirit’ can be ‘crushed by despair’, and Collier analyses ‘social psychology’ to explain ‘social fragmentation’ in neglected places.

Part Two of the book, ‘Spiralling Up’, however, is a detailed look at how previously ‘left behind’ places have in fact triumphed

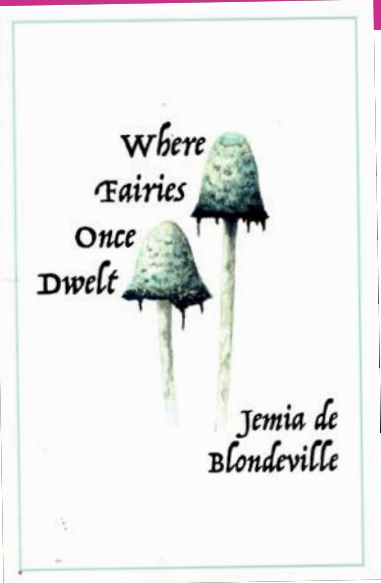
and reversed the trends. This is much more positive, and represents the meat of the book, taking up two-thirds of the narrative, with chapters on, for example, ‘how places renew from the grass roots’, ‘inclusive prosperity’, ‘building the sinews of the State’, and ‘the morality of common purpose’. And it is to this I will return next time...

Left Behind is available from Bookbuster, 39 Queens Road, Hastings TN34 1RE

HIP POETRY REVIEW

Where
Fairies
Once
Dwelt

BY JEMIA DE BLONDEVILLE
DE BLONDEVILLE PRESS, 2025,
£2.99 ALL PROCEEDS TO
HASTINGS WELLBEING GROUPS
REVIEW BY PETE DONOHUE



Jemia De Blondeville has been around on the Hastings poetry scene for a good few years and our paths have crossed at several events. HIP has published some of her work on this page’s Poetry Corner. Now she has gifted us this delightful collection of lyrical feel-good poems in her new chapbook *Where Fairies Once Dwelt*.

Her poems here are divided into three sections: The Fairy Moon, Dark Butterflies and The Girl and the Dragon. The overall feel of this collection is an ethereal one, as might be expected from the title and section headings, with themes of nature, fantasy, surrealism and a little philosophy thrown in. Jemia uses repeat words in different poems – zephyrs, butterflies, flowers, velvet, fairies – linking us into the optimistic and childlike (but not

childish) view of her creative world. She also explores different styles of poetry from regular verse through to haikus, an acrostic, a poetic prose piece and an ‘A-Z of British Birds’.

At £3 for a collection of 30 (10p per poem!) this wonderful chapbook, which includes photos and illustrations, is a great tonic to uplift our spirits during times when the world may seem overcomplicated and less than harmonious. More good news is that all proceeds go straight back into our community, namely to Arts in the Park and its wellbeing groups.

Where Fairies Once Dwelt is currently available from Bookbuster, 39 Queens Road TN34 1RE, 1,200 Postcards at 80 Queens Road, and soon other outlets around the town.

East’, one typically found ‘up north’. We are, apparently, all terribly well-off down here. Only the post-industrial North, Wales, and Cornwall are badly ‘left behind’. This is disappointing in what is, in many ways, a compulsory read, dense with information. And ironic, too, because he in general acknowledges that many places outside the capitals or resource-rich regions of countries can easily be ‘left behind’ as the wealth-gap expands, as it is doing, and rapidly, in our country. It is a

patchwork with mixed results, such that areas such as Hastings can experience a growth in ‘average earnings’, driven in part by equity-rich blow-ins, and at the same time evisceration of the base economy that mainly impoverishes locals and previous generations of, equity-poor, blow-ins – also driven in part by recent equity-rich blow-ins. This has the effect of masking a detrimental ratcheting down of our community. This is a phenomenon Collier would be sure to recognise

CROSSWORD CORNER

Across

- 1. Stand psychedelic experience with overdose (6)
- 3. Courage needed to contain the drink (6)
- 4. Dee ran around and got money (6)

Down

- 1. Fall clumsily as an acrobat can (6)
- 2. Rely on changing PD need (6)

Crossword Solution: Answers on page 5 of The HIP List

1					2
3					
4					



PHOTOS: ANDREW SWAN

Getting the most out of delicious tomato scraps

Love Food, Hate Waste – Tips from the Experts

EDWINA HUGHES
AND ANDREW SWAN

We all know food is pricey; quality ingredients and healthier options can be even more expensive than the norm. Once we've spent money on an item of food we want to use it up, but for one reason or another that doesn't always happen. WRAP, a British NGO focusing on waste prevention, carries out periodic research looking at food waste trends. Its most recent estimate of food waste in the UK is 10.2 million tonnes (2021/2022). WRAP calculates that household waste accounts for 58% of this total. What this means is that aside from waste at farm level or in other parts of the food journey, the vast majority of food waste in Britain is happening in households.

This feels like a missed opportunity; even for those who are making ends meet, food is expensive – there are plenty of ways we could be throwing out less and eating more

of what we buy. That's why in this edition we are focusing on how to prevent food waste. Below, you'll hear from people working in food and hospitality in Hastings on their tips and tricks for repurposing leftovers – from organising your fridge, to keeping the scraps – our experts will give you some suggestions for making the most of your food.

MASTERCHEF

While it's often more convenient to buy large volumes of food at a time, our experts suggest it can be easier to keep an eye on what needs to be used up if you have a less full and better organised fridge.

Development Chef Jordan at Bill's suggests organising your home kitchen like a professional chef. He says: "The best tip for reducing food waste would be a 'first in first out' system. Date label (use masking tape) your foods and plan your meals around using the oldest first. George at Porter's in the Old Town recommends buying produce more frequently in smaller volumes instead of doing the 'big shop', especially

with meat and fish, as there's less chance that it will be forgotten at the back of the fridge. Sean at Beak & Tail recommends making as many meals as you can from one animal which ensures the whole animal is used up and you save money. A whole bird can make a roast, a curry with left overs and a soup or noodle stock with the carcass.

'MILK IT' – GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE FOOD YOU BUY

Whether it's beak to tail with a chicken, using the shells of seafood or using up the stalks of mushrooms, there are inventive ways to get the most out of your food purchases.

Ben at Winifred's trims the excess fat on a Sunday roasting joint, renders it down separately and uses it to flavour his roast potatoes. Similarly, **Henry and Olivia at The Cove** in Fairlight make pie pastry from their beef dripping (fear not – vegans are warned!). They then make the base for their bitterballen (deep fried meatballs) from chicken carcasses and butter from excess cream.

We may not all be cooking roast dinners weekly, but when it comes to using up vegetables, **Freelance chef Daniel Ibbotson** has some relatable advice. He uses mistakes to his advantage! He suggests that if you overcook or burn roast veg, carry on the process and turn it into complete ash. The powder can be blended and stored indefinitely and rubbed over meats for a bitter smoky charcoal flavouring. The ash can also be soaked in a neutral oil and turned into a smoky mayonnaise. **Mark and Roo of Supernature** have a hack for mushroom stalks. Roo suggests, "Take your mushroom stalks, add whole milk, a garlic clove, dark soy sauce and some seasoning – put it all together in a pan, bring to a simmer and blend. It will be the nicest cream of mushroom soup you've ever had." **Lloyd, Executive Chef at The Plough and Union** makes "binchi" or "trim chi". He uses kale stalks to make kimchi and serves them on Maldon oysters as a spicy option. "If you have vegetable



Mushroom stalk soup

waste, make kimchi!" **Alexander at The Pump House Cafe** in Alexandra Park makes a huge volume of bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwiches. He saves tomato ends and slowly cooks them into a rich shakshuka sauce. Just like the flavour you get in mushroom stalks, seafood shells can add huge flavour to a dish. **Dan at Holy Mackerel** suggests that luxury sauces like crab or lobster bisque can be created with just the shells. Fish frames and heads, especially flat fish like plaice, sole and halibut are perfect for making fish stock. **Kim at Tonka** seconds this, "Whenever we feature prawns on the menu we ask the fishmonger to give us the heads and tails as well as the peeled prawns. The heads and tails get cooked down with lots of garlic, herbs and butter to make a super fragrant prawn butter that is perfect on pasta with parmesan for staff meals. It can be added to any number of meals to add an umami hit".

DOUGH!

Bread is one of the four top wasted foods in British households (the others are milk, chicken, and potatoes). Our experts have some suggestions. **The Ginger Baker**, Rob says "Stale, harder, older loaves, especially sourdough can be refreshed in the oven after a little soaking in water, plus there's always the possibility of croutons and panzanella salad!". **Emmanuel Hajaandreou**, baker and author, recommends freezing fresh sliced bread – this allows you to take one slice out of the freezer at a time. Frozen fresh bread defrosts and refreshes really well, especially in the toaster. While, **Pasha at Small Batch Babka** turns her uneaten babka (sweet braided bread) into babka french toast ("If there are any leftovers!"). She's also planning to experiment with some babka bread and butter puddings – delicious.

FREEZE IT?

Many foods can be frozen and used later on, a hack overheard this week was for over-ripe bananas – chop them up and freeze them, then use

them later on in smoothies. **Andrew at The Crown** recommends collecting and freezing cheese rinds in a tupperware. "If you plan to make a ragu or bechamel, you can take a rind from the freezer and let it melt into your sauce. Parmesan works best to give a salty umami hit, but anything will do, even blue cheese which could provide a twist in a classic mac and cheese." **Jay at Carroll's Greengrocer** recommends buying in bulk when produce is cheap and in season and freezing it down to save on the cost of out-of-season food.

DON'T ASK, DON'T GET

Our contributors also had some ideas for asking local food suppliers for a little extra – this could be animal bones for stock – or **Paul Hodges of Hastings Fish Market** suggests asking your fishmonger to smoke some fish bones for you, it will add a great twist to your fish stock flavour. Particularly good for Sussex Smokies and fish pies.

UNUSUAL USES FOR SURPLUS ITEMS!

There are some interesting by-products from food; some items can have a novel second life as fertiliser or even exfoliant!

Kim at Tonka says that, "Coffee grounds make excellent hand exfoliant. Mix them with a little salt and sugar and essential oil. Our kitchen team uses them at the end of a shift to get rid of cooking smells, they leave your hands super soft and will last around a week." **Dan at Holy Mackerel** suggests using smashed up shellfish shells and oily fish heads in your compost to create fertiliser for your garden, and he will happily donate waste products to his customers. **Robbie Omrod at The Hastings Project Brewery** waters his plants with stale beer rather than pouring a half drunk bottle down the sink. He says, "It makes a great natural fertiliser. I found this out when I ditched a batch in one spot in the garden. The grass went mad!"

Buying food in a purposeful way can help to reduce household food waste. Whether you decide to buy more purposefully or adopt some of the ideas here, you'll be able to get more value out of your food shopping and throw out less.



Hastings project lager - use every last drop!

Plum & Almond Cake

INGREDIENTS
SERVES 8-10 PEOPLE

Cake

- Roughly 12 plums (550g) stoned and quartered
- 185g unsalted butter at room temperature
- 175g golden caster sugar
- 2 largish eggs (beaten)
- 75ml oat or dairy milk
- 125 plain flour
- 125g self raising flour
- Pinch of salt
- 100g ground almonds (or breadcrumbs if nut allergies are a concern)

Topping

- 50g unsalted butter
- 50g golden caster sugar
- ½ tsp cinnamon powder
- 1 beaten egg

DIRECTIONS

Cake

1. Preheat oven to 180°C
2. Use a 23cm cake tin – spring-form or regular – greased and lined with greaseproof paper.
3. Cream butter and sugar together until light and fluffy.
4. Add milk to the beaten eggs and then add gradually to your butter and sugar mix and mix/beat well.
5. Sift the flour into the mix in three batches with a pinch of salt and then fold in lightly with a metal spoon until incorporated.
6. Scrape into the tin and sprinkle the ground almonds or breadcrumbs on the surface (this helps prevent the plums from sinking).
7. Add the quartered plums cut side facing up starting from the outside of the tin and work towards the centre.

Topping

8. Melt the butter in a small pan, stir in the sugar and cinnamon, remove from heat for five mins.
9. Add the beaten egg and mix.
10. Pour over the surface of the cake.

11. This will create a lovely glaze and prevent the plums from drying out.
12. Cook for about an hour and 10 minutes – use a skewer to check if it needs longer – when the skewer comes out clean, it’s baked.
13. Leave the cake to cool for at least 10 minutes in the tin, then remove and cool on a wire rack
14. Enjoy warm with a dollop of yogurt. Leftover cake wrapped in foil can be warmed through at 180°C for ten mins or so.



A little more about our contributing chef - Sian Coakley. In the 90s and 2000s, Sian worked in film in Hong Kong. After 20 years there, she wanted a change and left Hong Kong for London to become a self taught cook. Sian set up her own catering business in 1999 and began by catering small events for interior design companies and businesses such as SCP and Roche Bobois, she then began catering private events and receptions for central government departments including the foreign office and even Number

10. Sian came to St Leonards in 2021 and met Stephanie, the owner of Graze, who needed a head chef. Sian applied for and secured the role and is currently the head chef at Graze. From the beginning, Sian has championed vegetarian, seasonal, fresh ingredients. Alongside her role at Graze, Sian continues to cater small private events in the Hastings area and London specialising in canapes, small plates and, of course, baking!

Instagram @Coakley_Cooks

YOUR LIBRARY

East Sussex
County Council



Library and Information Service



WITH YOU ANYWHERE

Dive into thousands of free eBooks, audiobooks, and magazines, wherever you are.

SCAN ME



eastsussex.gov.uk/YourLibrary

It Takes a Village

JORDAN CONNELLEY

Hastings is full of beloved small businesses and taking a stroll down Queens Road, you only need to peer into the cozy Prince Albert or packed Imperial and you'll see a throng of loyal patrons who turn up night after night for a pint and some good vibes. On a recent tour of the old town I got to meet Kimberley Duke the owner-chef at a business that has benefited from the town's legendary community spirit which has taken her business on a successful journey.

Old Town-based restaurant Tonka, which has been open for a year and a half, offers a decidedly Hastings take on Mauritian food, inspired in part by the cuisine of Kim's Mauritian inlaws. The restaurant is the culmination of Kim's decade-long experience of training, learning and working deep in London's highly



Taro fritters

competitive culinary world, taking inspiration from her time in Bao of Borough market and her deep passion for Southeast Asian food. Kim was also co-founder, with business partner Ryan Riley, of the immensely successful CIC Life Kitchen, working with food industry A-listers like Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall of River Cottage fame, and Nigella Lawson, as well as TV personalities including Sue Perkins, to develop cooking classes, cookbooks and recipes for the taste-blind.

It's fair to say that Kim has seen and done a massive amount in the world of food, but having her own restaurant has always been her dream – "I've always felt happiest in the kitchen, and I just want to create beautiful tasty food." And that's precisely what she's been doing at Tonka, which has attracted rave reviews for its menu staples like tapioca fried chicken, prawn toast in courgette flowers and her famous mac and cheese.

But, notwithstanding the praise,

it has been a struggle for Kim and her team to keep the business afloat with costs going up and a reduced council marketing budget hitting summer tourism. As Kim says "Many people expect business owners to be wealthy, especially if they are DFL'ers (Down from Londoners) but that's not the reality, as most of us live and operate month to month with no parachute."

In a twist worthy of a tv drama, television Producer Susie Liggat of Black Mirror fame got talking after a mix-up with a Deliveroo order, starting a conversation which, over time, came to change Tonka. Susie was in love with Tonka's menu but could see the business was struggling. One night, over dinner in Tonka, Susie offered to step in and help give Tonka the renovation and vibe she felt it deserved, drawing on the resources of the tight-knit Old Town community. Within months, Tonka was transformed with the help of artists Louis and Ian Skelton, Dennis the handyman, local carpenter Kai, helpers Clare, Michelle, and Feona, and a host of other local business people and patrons too extensive to list, all of whom asked for nothing in return for their generosity.

Kim could hardly put her surprise into words and said at the time she

was wondering "Why are all these amazing people doing this for me?" As our interview develops, it becomes clear that this generosity of spirit, comradeship, and solidarity is very much a key Hastings strength, and one that those, like Kim, coming to the town often cite as one of the main reasons they choose to relocate here. As she puts it, "Tonka has so many loyal and passionate followers, and other small businesses are great too, there's no competition here, we all work together—and it's very satisfying."

Kim sees Hastings as "a town full of cool, forward thinking people who want to do interesting things" and in our hour-long interview, she namechecks other food industry businesses including the Sri Lankan food at Colombo 16 in Marine court, Raj's offering of travel inspired bowls at Three Souls in a Bowl in St Andrews Mews, and the beer and summer vibes at Seadog.

It's clear that Kim has found her community: from the Old Town Committee to other independent business owners such as Tess from The Crown pub, who has offered to mentor her. And having received such sterling support in her early months here, Kim is ready to give back and pay forward that same passion.

321

save

MORE BUS LESS FUSS

Funded by
UK Government

East Sussex
County Council

single fares
for just

£1, £2 or £3

on buses
in East Sussex

find out more:

[eastsussex.gov.uk
/bus-fares](https://eastsussex.gov.uk/bus-fares)



CHILDRENS SPORT

School's Out – Sport's In

Active Hastings have announced a wide range of free and/or low cost sport and physical activities for kids during the school holidays at a range of venues in Hastings and St Leonards.

BEACH VOLLEYBALL
Ages 14 to 17
Cost: £3 per session but some free or discounted places
Where: Beach Volleyball Court, Pelham Place
When: Tuesday evenings 22 July, 5 and 19 August: 6-7.30pm
Saturday afternoons 26 July, 16 and 30 August: 2-3.30pm

TABLE TENNIS
Ages 8 to 13
Cost: £3 per session but some free or discounted places
Where: St Leonards Academy
When: Thursday afternoons 7 and 21 August: 1.30-2.30pm

JUNIOR MUAY THAI (MARTIAL ARTS)
Ages 8 to 14
Cost: £3 per session but some free or discounted places
Where: Broomgrove Community Centre
When: every Thursday evening from 17 July to 25 September: 5.15-6.15pm

STREET BITES (MIXED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY)
Ages 7 to 14
Cost: £3.50 per session but some free places

Where and when: Downs Farm Mondays 4 and 18 August: 11am-3pm
Farley Bank: Tuesdays 29 July and 12 August: 11am-3pm
Hollington Bowl: Mondays 28 July and 11 August: 11am-3pm
Quantock Gardens: Tuesdays 5 and 19 August: 11am-3pm

STREET DANCE
Ages 6 to 11
Cost: £3 per session but some free or discounted places
Where: Play Sport Fitness Hub
When: Mondays 11 and 18 August: 10-11am

FAMILY STREET SPORTS
All ages – children + accompanying adults
Cost: free
Where and when: The Beach Hut, St Leonards: Wednesday 30 July: 9.30-11.30am
Gensing Gardens Play Space: Friday 8 August: 1.30-3.30pm
The BOS Field, Elphinstone Road: Friday 15 August: 1.30-3.30pm
Downs Farm: Friday 22 August: 1.30-3.30pm


All sessions need to be booked in advance through the Hastings Borough Council website www.hastings.gov.uk/holiday-activities. For general queries, contact Active Hastings on 01424 451051 or activehastings@hastings.gov.uk.

CRICKET



Caleb Laloo - 61 not out against Preston Nomads

Priory Surmount Injury Knocks

5 July			
Hastings & St Leonards Priory	202	for 5	
St James's Montefiore	205	for 5	
12 July			
Preston Nomads 2nd XI	148		
Priory	149	for 3	

HUGH SULLIVAN

It's been a fortnight of contrasting fortunes, both individually and collectively, for the cricketers of Hastings & St Leonards Priory. Captain Harry Scowen broke his thumb in fielding practice before the away match against St James's Montefiore at Hassocks on 5 July and could do nothing to assist his team-mates as they went down to their first defeat in two months. This despite a brilliant century by Greg Devlin. Scowen will be out of action for the rest of this month.

Then Devlin himself, keeping wicket for Priory the following Saturday as they hosted Preston

Nomads 2nd XI at Horntye, also suffered a serious injury to his finger (he spent much of the afternoon being treated in the Conquest Hospital A&E department). However, with both injured men eventually present on the sidelines, the Hastings team completed a comfortable seven-wicket victory over Preston to avenge defeat by them in the corresponding away fixture in early May.

The game against St James's was cut short by ten overs as a result of rain. Priory won the toss and elected to bat. By the seventeenth over they found themselves four wickets down with only 44 on the board. Devlin (110 not out off 96 balls) led an excellent recovery supported first by Tom Gillespie (21), then by Seaver Cowley (34 not out).

Scowen judged the eventual score of 202 for five sufficient to declare on, aiming to give his bowlers 45 full overs to bowl out St James's. Unfortunately, the home batsmen had other ideas, and knocked off the runs with five wickets and a couple of overs to spare. Cowley bowled economically and

took two wickets, but Freddie Hulbert's six overs cost 34 runs, and Adam Page's two wickets were expensively earned.

NOMADS DOWNED
The course of the game against the Nomads was altogether more satisfactory from Priory's perspective. Hulbert, captaining in Scowen's absence, lost the toss but wasn't unhappy to see the visitors take first knock on a dry pitch which had uneven bounce and took spin. The openers scored 58 in a first wicket partnership, but it took them more than 21 overs to do it against tight seam bowling from Cowley and Hulbert. Then Priory's spinners Adam Page (5 for 29) and later Shawn Johnson (3 for 50) took control, and Preston could muster only a further 90 runs from their remaining nine wickets, finishing with 148 in 52 overs.

With little time pressure on Priory's openers, Caleb Laloo and Iden McCleave, they could adopt a measured approach, playing straight and defending good balls while punishing the looser deliveries. Their own 50 partnership took only 13 overs. McCleave (30) eventually drove a catch to mid-on, and Ryan Hoadley was dismissed cheaply, pinned lbw by a ball that kept low.

But Laloo continued imperturbably to a first half-century of the season, finishing with 61 not out, while Shawn Johnson's breezy 28 ensured there would be no faltering in the middle order. Both men combined expansive drives with aggressive running between the wickets, and the target was reached with only three wickets down and 20 overs to spare.

The win seems to confirm Priory's penchant for bowling first and chasing a target rather than having to set one themselves. They've won all five Sussex League matches this season when they've batted second – only one when they've batted first.

The win also consolidates their league position. With Division 2 leaders West Chiltington & Thakeham comprehensively beaten last Saturday at Worthing, while third-placed St James's also lost in a high-scoring match with Brighton & Hove, Priory have kept themselves well-placed in the second promotion slot.

Next up is an away trip to Brighton & Hove, then a visit to Horntye by Buxted Park. Scowen and Devlin are unlikely to be fit for either match, which might render the batting line-up a trifle thin. But the side has shown strength in depth so far this season: it's an opportunity for others to shine.

SUSSEX CRICKET LEAGUE - DIVISION 2 TABLE (TOP FOUR)

	P	W	DL	L	A	B	B	PTS
WEST CHILTINGTON & THAKEHAM	10	7	0	2	1	4	14	238
HASTINGS & ST LEONARDS PRIORY	10	6	1	2	1	28	8	226
ST JAMES'S MONTEFIORE	10	5	1	3	1	33	14	207
EASTBOURNE	10	5	3	1	1	20	23	203

Ponbay Lodge

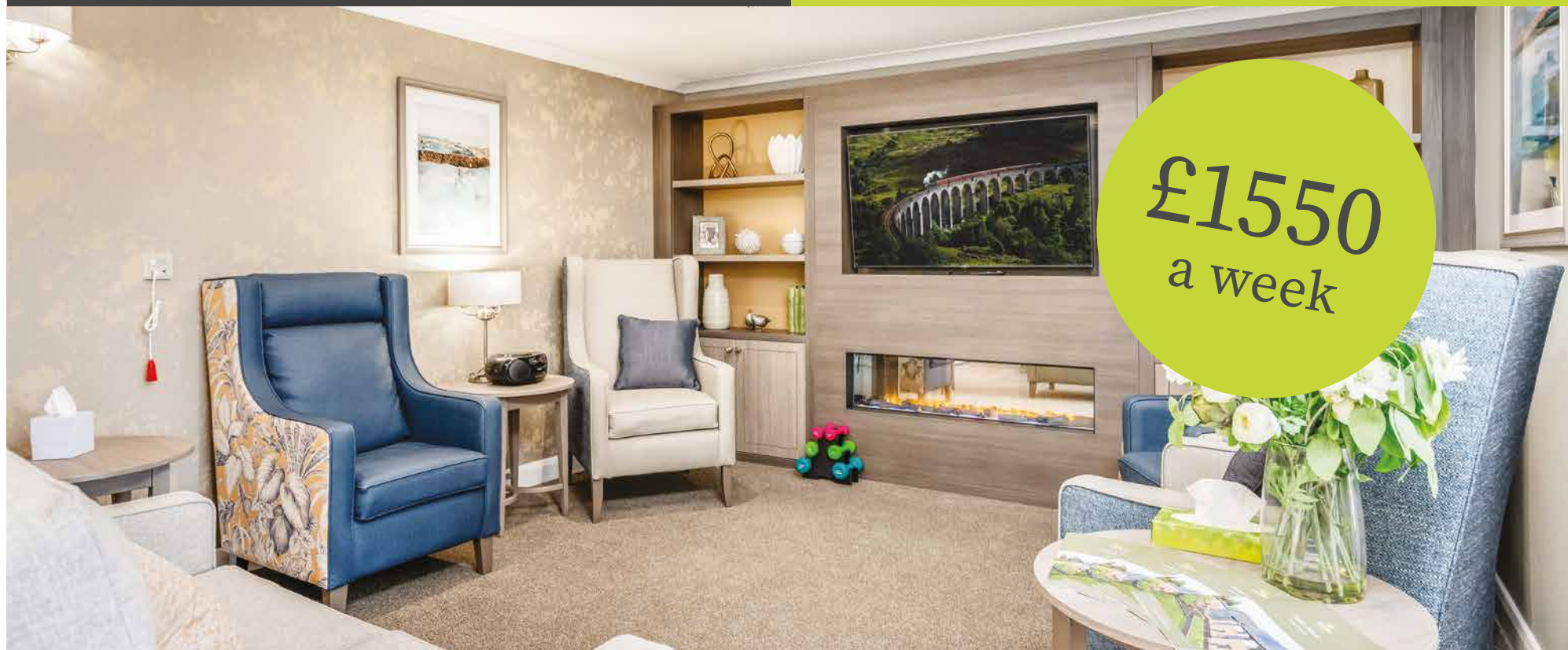
Opening August 2025

Be among the first to discover Ponbay Lodge

- ✓ All rooms en suite
- ✓ All-inclusive pricing, no hidden costs

Our **all-inclusive** offering includes not just exceptional care – but everything else that makes a house feel like a home:

Home-cooked meals, engaging activities, trips out, personal grooming, even newspapers and snacks.



Can't wait to view Ponbay Lodge?

Come and explore life at Collington Park, our beautiful, nearby care home in Bexhill – now welcoming new residents.



Ponbay Lodge
187 The Ridge
Hastings
TN34 2AE
01424 533454

Scan to find
out more and
book your tour

OysterCareHomes.co.uk

