

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



Crime Rise, or Better Reporting?

HUGH SULLIVAN

A survey of police records has revealed the borough of Hastings has the highest crime rate out of 64 local authority districts in the South East of England.

And a separate study by the Open Research Forum (ORF) last week identified Hastings as suffering a higher increase in instances of shoplifting over the past three years than any other local authority area in the UK.

But Sussex Police say that overall crime in the borough is down; it is the reporting of crime – in particular shoplifting and antisocial behaviour – which has increased, and thus enabled them to take more effective action.

The crime rate statistics have been collated by property data platform Crystal Roof from police records over the 12 months to June 2026. There were 12,544 criminal offences reported over this period, a rate of 127 per 1,000 at-risk population, compared to a regional

average of 79, which amounts to a 60% increase above the norm. Areas of highest crime rate are, as would be expected, the town centres of Hastings (Castle ward) and St Leonards (Central St Leonards and Gensing wards).

Analysis shows that shoplifting, antisocial behaviour, public order offences and criminal damage (including arson) are criminal categories that feature highest.

Meanwhile, the ORF has calculated a 200% rise in incidents of shoplifting, i.e. a virtual trebling, over the past three years.

By contrast, instances of non-retail property theft, whether by robbery, burglary or other means, are recorded in aggregate below the national average.

And it is acknowledged that the overall crime rate has fallen substantially in Hastings – or at least records of crimes have fallen – over the past 15 years. In 2011 the rate of offences was 161 per 1,000, so that the 2026 figure of 127 represents a drop of nearly 27%.

This accords with the view



HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL



Lightning Fibre
Hyperfast Broadband

Switch Smart. Switch Local.

It's time to switch to better broadband.
No mid-contract price rises

01323 380260 | LightningFibre.co.uk





YOUR DESIGN, OUR COVER

Let's see your seagull on our cover!

Details from design@yourhip.co.uk

EDITOR'S NOTE

Can Hastings be simultaneously mired in crime, surrounded by sewage and yet the "best seaside town in England"? Find out in HIP's news pages, which also report that, with one exception, local education academies have not achieved good exam results in comparison with the rest of the country. Must try harder.

Those who paid attention in geography lessons may recognise the term 'longshore drift' – the unlikely basis of an engaging and eccentric feature by David Dennis who manages to weave Dickens, Marx, Engels, suffragism and the pier into a perspective of Hastings' place amid political changes.

In Arts, Sam Davey, one of the founders of the Book Festival, is editing an anthology of work by members of the Hastings Writers Group.

This year's book festival, the 9th and largest so far, begins on 10 September and offers 40 events and 80 speakers including workshops, live performances and interactive children's sessions in various venues around town.

Improvements in the fortunes of Hastings and St Leonards sometimes hapless cricketers lend some positivity to our Sport section, and somehow, despite the heat and rock-hard ground conditions, the football season has begun with the 'U's on good form.

CONTACT

Complaints: complaints@yourhip.co.uk

Full details on HIP webpage

Editorial Enquiries & Submissions info@yourhip.co.uk

Sales Director Ian Lydon-James advertising@yourhip.co.uk

Newsletter Editor Ben Bruges, Zakir Mohiyuddin info@yourhip.co.uk

Social Media Editor Ben Bruges @instagram

Interns Toby Bula-Edge

Content Coordinator #309 Dave Young

News Desk #309 Hugh Sullivan newsdesk@yourhip.co.uk

Art Director Jason Ellis design@yourhip.co.uk

Section Editors

Mel Steel and Fiona McGarry community@yourhip.co.uk

Kent Barker opinion@yourhip.co.uk

Susan McFie hande@yourhip.co.uk

Ben Bruges features@yourhip.co.uk

Nadine Keats, Hugh Sullivan, Harry Hawkins listings@yourhip.co.uk

Victoria Kingham arts@yourhip.co.uk

Pete Donohue litterature@yourhip.co.uk

Ella Lowden food@yourhip.co.uk

Hugh Sullivan sport@yourhip.co.uk

Sub Editors

Rod Webb, Fiona McGarry, Gill Goldenberg, Celia Partridge

Contributors

Chris Connelley|Mark French|Tina Morris
Jude Montague|Paul McLaughlin|Tim Barlow
David EP Dennis|Sarah Milne|David Milton
Ian Lydon-James|Nick Pelling|Helen Murphy
Gail Borrow

Have Your Say letters@yourhip.co.uk

Telephone [01424559085](tel:01424559085)

Hastings Independent Press CIC

57 Linton Road Hastings TN34 1TN

News

Shoplifting: some further responses

A SPOKESPERSON FOR THE OFFICE OF THE POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER, KATY BOURNE: "PCC Bourne has encouraged the Chief Constable to really grip retail crime. Now Sussex Police have an effective Business Crime Team (BCT) that works closely with local businesses, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and BCRPs. Over the past 12 months the BCT investigated 83% of all shoplifting offences reported to Sussex Police, and the dedicated retail crime response – Operation Apprentice – secured 1,782 charges against 138 repeat offenders.

"To tackle the scourge of repeat



shoplifters, my office launched Operation STOP in October last year. The Shop Theft Offender Pilot (Op STOP) sees police apply for Criminal Behaviour Orders from courts which mean persistent shoplifters are electronically tagged and monitored, as well as provided with tailored rehabilitation support. Early evaluation of the pilot is that the tagged offenders have stopped or reduced reoffending."

JOHN BOWNAS, MANAGER OF LOVE HASTINGS: "The local increase in shoplifting is almost entirely due to just one store making a decision to report almost every incident of shoplifting to the police. Typically stores only report around 5% of these crimes, making shoplifting one of the most under-reported offences in the UK. As a direct result of this effort, the police have secured a large number of convictions and criminal behaviour orders, proving that reporting shoplifting can result in prolific offenders going to court, and this in turn sends out a strong message to others."

A SPOKESPERSON FOR HASTINGS BOROUGH COUNCIL (HBC): "Shoplifting has a significant impact on local businesses, staff and the wider community, and we remain

JET SKIS ON HASTINGS SHORELINE

In HIP 308 – Swimmers Raise Jet Ski Concerns - we reported that, according to Hastings Borough Council, jet skis were permitted to be

launched on Hastings seafront only from certain restricted sites which included the Hastings and St Leonards Angling Association. The HS-LAA have asked us to make it clear that they have never allowed jet skis to be launched from their club.

HASTINGS TIDES						
DATE	HIGH AND LOW TIDES			SUNRISE	SUNSET	MOON
FRI 7 NOV	L 6:23	H 11:36	L 18:46	7:00	16:22	
SAT 8 NOV	H 0:02	L 7:06	H 12:25	L 19:30	7:02	16:20
SUN 9 NOV	H 0:50	L 7:50	H 13:16	L 20:14	7:03	16:19
MON 10 NOV	H 1:42	L 8:36	H 14:12	L 21:03	7:07	16:17
TUES 11 NOV	H 2:40	L 9:29	H 15:18	L 22:01	7:07	16:16
WEDS 12 NOV	H 3:49	L 10:34	H 16:31	L 21:11	7:08	16:14
THURS 13 NOV	H 5:02	L 11:50	H 17:44		7:10	16:13
FRI 14 NOV	L 0:28	H 6:12	L 13:07	H 18:56	7:12	16:12
SAT 15 NOV	L 1:44	H 7:20	L 14:19	H 20:01	7:13	16:10
SUN 16 NOV	L 2:49	H 8:19	L 15:16	H 20:53	7:15	16:09
MON 17 NOV	L 3:40	H 9:06	L 16:03	H 21:34	7:17	16:08
TUES 18 NOV	L 4:22	H 9:46	L 16:41	H 22:09	7:18	16:07
WEDS 19 NOV	L 4:57	H 10:21	L 17:12	H 22:41	7:20	16:05
THURS 20 NOV	L 5:24	H 10:53	L 17:37	H 21:11	7:22	16:04

LIFEGUARD PATROLS ONLY COVER WEEKENDS FROM THE 13TH SEPT ONWARDS
PREDICTED TIDE TIMES ARE PROVIDED FOR CASUAL USE ONLY, NOT TO BE USED FOR NAVIGATION.
L= LOW TIDE H = HIGHTIDE For beach safety advice visit: mli.org/safety/beach-safety



committed to working with Sussex Police and our partners to tackle it.

"While robust enforcement is essential, experience in Hastings has shown that enforcement alone is not enough. Many prolific offenders are facing complex issues, including poverty, drug and alcohol dependency, and homelessness. Addressing these underlying issues is critical if we are to reduce repeat offending.

"We have been working closely with Sussex Police to pilot a method of electronic tagging of key prolific offenders in Hastings. The wearers agree to a programme of support which has enabled a lot of them to make positive changes in their behaviour. We understand the operation has been successful in both reducing shoplifting and in helping offenders to rehabilitate.

"We encourage all businesses to

report shoplifting to Sussex Police, either online or by calling 101, and to engage with their local Business Crime Reduction Partnership (BCRP)."

COMMUNITY SAFETY LEAD AT HBC, CLLR BECCA HORN: "Last year, East Sussex County Council cut Adult Social Care funding by £4m. This has had a real-life impact on our most vulnerable residents: counselling, housing support and addiction services have all taken a huge hit and had to strip back their services.

"The very real impact of these cuts is playing out on our streets and in our local businesses. We continue to call for the government to urgently step up funding for mental health and addiction support services for our town."

taken by Sussex Police. Detective Superintendent Jay Mendis-Gunasekera said last week: "We have worked alongside our communities and partners to encourage the reporting of crime and antisocial behaviour. As a result, crime reporting has increased, with offences such as shoplifting rising due to more effective reporting practices.

"The positive aspect of this increase is that we have been able to deal with these offences effectively through business engagement and preventative actions with powers available to us through the court."

He points out that during the last 12 months, 14 Criminal Behaviour Orders have been secured in Hastings, the highest number in Sussex. Furthermore, using civil powers to tackle antisocial behaviour, Sussex Police have obtained five closure

orders and two civil Injunctions, while issuing three Community Protection Notices and ten Community Protection Warnings.

"These measures have helped us address persistent issues and improve safety within our communities", the Detective-Superintendent says. "Recently a local resident informed us about antisocial behaviour and street-related drug use and supply in Castle ward, and in a police operation on 31 July, 200 wraps and £10,000 was seized." An Enfield man, 26, was arrested and charged with possession with intent to supply Class A drugs. He was remanded in custody with a court date to be fixed.

"We continue to engage through our patrols, engagement events and the town centre hub, and we are committed to making sure our communities feel safe."

Exam Results: Pluses & Minuses

Figures published by exams regulator Ofqual show that school pupils in Hastings have scored the least number of Grade 7 or above GCSE results this summer of anywhere in the South East (only Havant scores lower in any district south of Staffordshire).

The results, however, vary between schools, with St Leonards Mulberry Academy in the forefront of celebrations for individual and collective success stories. They issued a press release celebrating what was described as “a significant rise in GCSE outcomes”.

The proportion of its students achieving passes in both English and mathematics has risen, it said, by 12 percentage points compared with 2025, amounting to the academy’s strongest ever results in these subjects. Its ‘Attainment 8’ score, a measure which aggregates scores over eight core GCSE subjects across the school-year group, is also reported to have risen by around four points. There have been “record pass rates” for students with special educational needs.

Drew Greenall, Head of Mulberry Academy, St Leonards said:

“So many of our students have achieved fantastic individual re-



Results day at St Leonards Mulberry Academy

sults, including a large number of Grades 9, 8 and 7. Every result represents an individual story of hard work, determination and progress.”

Cllr Paul Soane, East Sussex County Council’s lead member for Education, Inclusion and SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability), issued a statement last week congratulating every student across the county on receiving their results: “These achievements reflect

not only their hard work, resilience and determination, but also the support of families, teachers, school staff and governors who have helped them along the way.”

Nevertheless, a 10.2% proportion of top grades across Hastings compares with 10.6% in 2025, and contrasts with Mid Sussex, where 29.9% of entries have received Grade 7 or above, and Brighton & Hove where the percentage is 28.6.

Gulzar Pleads Old Age as Defence to £1.3m Debt Claim

HUGH SULLIVAN

On 12 August, Sheikh Abid Gulzar, owner of Hastings Pier, attended a High Court hearing in London to defend his company, Golden (Lions) Eastbourne Limited (‘Golden Lions’), against a winding-up petition brought by British Gas Trading Limited (‘British Gas’). The petitioner claims that Golden Lions, of which Mr Gulzar is sole director and shareholder, owes it an unpaid debt of £1.3m.

Golden Lions is the freehold owner of Eastbourne Pier. It is the second time in four years that British Gas has petitioned to wind up the company for unpaid debts.

The company was legally unrepresented in court, but Mr Gulzar appeared, accompanied by Brett McLean, described on the Eastbourne Pier Facebook page as an “executive of the new management team” of both Eastbourne and Hastings Piers.

Mr Gulzar told the presiding judge, Lord Michael Briggs, that he was 82 years old (his self-recorded entry at Companies House puts his age as 80) – “the oldest man in this room” – and that he had been “treated very badly” despite being the “biggest donator to charities in Eastbourne, especially children”.

Asked how the company intended to defend the petition, Mr McLean requested an adjournment so as to dispute the claimed bill.

He described it as being far too much for a pier, claiming: “Most UK piers would spend no more than £200,000 on their bills”. The company could pay this latter sum in instalments.

Mr Gulzar, however, chipped in to say: “Not £200,000. More like £25,000 – and I have offered them £10,000.” He repeated that he was an old man and had no electricity at his home since being cut off 17 months ago; it is understood that this is at the former Boship Lions Farm Hotel, now closed.

Judge Briggs, dealing with the case as one of a long list of company disputes, cut him off from expressing further personal grievances and directed that Golden Lions should present their evidence bundle to the court by 9 September, to be followed by a pre-trial review in October.

Mr Gulzar is due back in court – this time Brighton Magistrates – next Wednesday 2 September on an unrelated criminal charge, which he denies: possession of a knife blade or sharp pointed article in a public place.

Derailment at Lewes

Investigators from the Rail Accident Investigation Branch (RAIB) say they have found an “irregularity” in the tracks to the north of Lewes station where three carriages were de-railed and tumbled down an embankment on 13 August. Two passengers were seriously injured, while 18 others were treated in hospital.

The extreme heat and drought conditions are being reckoned as potential factors, since the clay embankment and the material underneath it are sensitive to changes in moisture content. The air temperature shortly before the crash was recorded as 33C (91.4F).

However, regular passengers on the line between Lewes and Haywards Heath have told press reporters that this stretch of track was well known for a long time before the accident for its uneven surface, which used to cause bumping and jostling of reading matter or coffee cups as trains passed over.

Repair work is on-going. It is hoped to reopen the line from next Tuesday 1 September.

Over on the Southeastern train



line to London, major engineering work required between Tonbridge and Wadhurst has been scheduled for the autumn half term week and weekends at either end – Saturday 24 October to Sunday 1 November (inclusive). Rail replacement buses will operate between Tonbridge and Battle throughout this period.

Passengers are advised to allow extra time for their journeys.

SAINT LEONARDS CHURCH SATURDAY MARKET

LONDON ROAD SAINT LEONARDS ON SEA

10AM – 4PM

WE'RE BACK EVERY SATURDAY RIGHT THROUGH TO CHRISTMAS!



LOCAL MAKERS



VINTAGE FINDS



STREET FOOD



DRINKS IN THE FOOD COURT

BOOK A STALL FROM ONLY £25 AT LOVEAMARKET.CO.UK



‘Best Seaside Town in England’, Says National Survey

The citizens of Hastings and St Leonards are accustomed to claim extreme highs and lows for their town – most sunshine hours, most creative activity and, at the same time, ‘most deprivation’. Now it has just been ranked as No. 1 in *Time Out*’s 2026 list of 11 best seaside towns in England, and superseded only by Saundersfoot in West Wales among the 16 best in the UK.

Ski Vertigo, specialists in ski chalet holidays but analysing the *Time Out* short list for the purposes of local short-break planning and guidance, praise Hastings and St Leonards for its history, promenade and mixed food scene, advising – “Rooms near Hastings Old Town or the seafront favour walkable sightseeing, while St Leonards suits visitors who want the promenade, cafés and a quiet-

er evening atmosphere close by.”

Brighton, the only other town on the Sussex coast to feature in the *Time Out* list, is described as “work[ing] better for people who want a denser city itinerary”. But would-be visitors are warned that a cheap-looking booking there can become “an expensive short break” when parking costs, remote station access and distance to the beach are taken into account.

The website of the 1066 Country Marketing Partnership, which Hastings Borough Council agreed to re-join last month in order to promote visitor numbers, naturally endorses *Time Out*’s choice. It advises its clientele “to soak up Hastings’ history, wander the preserved Old Town’s winding streets and tiny twittens, crammed with Tudor houses and flower-bedecked cottag-



es, and inhale the hard-working fishing quarter with its towering net huts and ramshackle huts on the beach.” St Leonards is credited with an “alternative vibe... its architecture provid[ing] a striking backdrop for art galleries, antique shops, chic boutiques and a thriving café culture.”

Southern Water Stink

PAUL MCCLAUGHLIN

The unmistakable stench of raw sewage once again hung over Bultrey the last Thursday morning (20 August), after Southern Water began discharging untreated wastewater from its Bexhill and Hastings No. 2 combined sewer overflow (CSO) at 9:18am. The outflow pipe releases the sewage roughly two miles out to sea, but the acrid smell quickly drifted back to shore and lingered across the town for much of the day.

Southern Water attributed the discharge to intense rainfall, explaining that the release was necessary to relieve pressure on the

sewer network and prevent backups that could have flooded homes, businesses, and roads. The discharge continued for 4 hours and 44 minutes and resulted in pollutants that are harmful to both swimmers and wildlife being pumped into the sea.

The downpour dumped up to 12mm of rain on Hastings, but the recent hot, very dry weather has left the ground hard and parched. Instead of being absorbed, the rainwater ran off rapidly into the drains, overwhelming the combined sewer system and triggering the overflow.

Under current regulations, water companies are permitted to discharge raw sewage via storm overflows during and after heavy rainfall, provided the rate exceeds 10mm per hour. However, according to the Check-For-Flooding service on the gov.uk website, the Hastings Baldslow gauge recorded just 12mm of rainfall between 4am and 10am on Thursday morning – an average rate of only 2mm per hour – and peaked between 6am-7am at 4.6mm, far below the permitted threshold.

A spokesperson for Southern Wa-

ter said the company “understands the public concern around storm overflows” and is committed to reducing reliance on them. The water company is investing £1.5 billion as part of its Clean Rivers and Seas Plan and says this has already prevented hundreds of storm overflow releases in its first year. They also have plans to spend more than £100m to upgrade water and wastewater networks in Hastings.

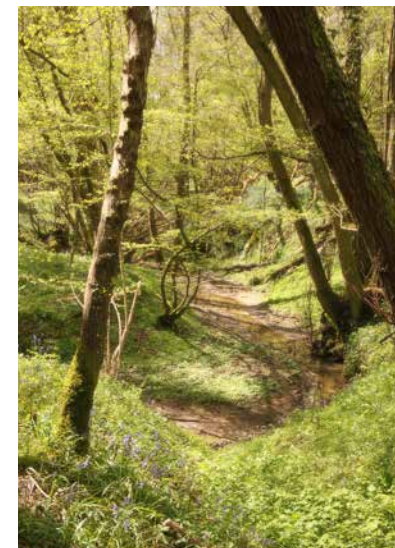
Local MP Helena Dollimore said: “It beggars belief that after just 12mm of rain, Southern Water discharged sewage into our sea, after one of the driest summers on record – yet again violating environmental regulations and polluting our coastline. The Labour Government has already taken important steps to ramp up regulation, fines, monitoring and criminal prosecutions. But we must now go further to fix our broken water system. After an era of extraction, with money siphoned off by shareholders instead of spent maintaining vital infrastructure, we need to see water back under public control.”

Planning Changes ‘Will Damage’ Sussex Countryside

CPRE Sussex has warned that the updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), unveiled last week by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and immediately coming into force, “will cause irrevocable damage and destruction to green spaces”. According to the campaign group, it will render councils “powerless to argue against destructive development in our villages, towns and countryside”.

The policy document introduces new procedural rules designed to drive economic growth and speed up house-building by limiting the scrutiny of local authority planning committees. But the CPRE believes that it will allow sewage and water systems to become increasingly overloaded, and that it takes no account of action needed on climate change, while failing to promote adequate provision of affordable housing.

The CPRE points out that previous references to valued landscapes outside nationally designated areas have been removed from the new versions of the NPPF, as has any



suggestion that the countryside has intrinsic value.

Supporters are urged to write to their local MPs demanding revisions of the document. HIP has asked Helena Dollimore, MP for Hastings & Rye, for her response, but at the time of going to press she has not replied.

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

✉ Letter

WHOSE FREE SPEECH?

Dear HIP

Helena Dollimore MP and Grumpy Cook owner Barry Ashley are right to criticise the Reform-run East Sussex County Council (ESCC) for ending holiday meal vouchers for some of the poorest families in East Sussex (Reform in Reverse, HIP 308).

Moreover, ESCC’s leader, Andy Woolley, has made himself a laughing stock by threatening to report them both to the police for this criticism.

However, Ms Dollimore’s attempt to chide Reform for its hypocrisy on free speech (“I know that Reform UK includes ‘defence of free speech’ as amongst its policies”) is a case of the kettle calling the pot black.

After all, it was only last year that Ms Dollimore joined Nigel

Farage and Andy Burnham to proscribe the nonviolent protest group Palestine Action under the Terrorism Act, thereby introducing severe restrictions on the free speech of everyone in the UK. For example, there is now only one legally permissible answer to the question “Do you support Palestine Action?”

As you yourselves report, two local pensioners are now facing a possible 14-year jail sentence for uttering an entirely innocuous 12-word sentence in public.

If Ms Dollimore has really had a Damascene conversion to the cause of free speech, then this should be welcomed. But if that’s the case, then her next step must be to publicly renounce her decision to ban Palestine Action and to call on Andy Burnham’s government to reverse this appalling decision.

Gabriel Carlyle

NEWS IN BRIEF

WAGES UP, JOBS DOWN

Workers in East Sussex have received an average 4.6% wage increase over the past 12 months to July, according to news wire platform Wagesight. Median gross pay across the county is now £2,483 per month, up £109 in cash terms.

The rise compares with an official inflation rate of 2.9%, meaning that those in work should on average have an extra £40 to spend per month in real terms.

Less welcome is the news that payrolled employment has declined over the same period – there are 300 fewer jobs in East Sussex than a year ago.

CAMBER DROWNING

An 18-year-old man drowned off Camber Sands beach on the evening of Sunday 9 August. Two other teenagers, aged 18 and 16, were brought ashore safely. All three were known to each other and are understood

to have travelled to Camber together from London.

HM Coastguard Rescue teams from Rye Bay and Romney Marsh, the Pett Level Independent Rescue Boat, a Coastguard Search and Rescue helicopter and South East Coast Ambulance were all involved in the emergency search and rescue operation.

Sussex Police say there were no suspicious circumstances but there will be a coroner’s inquest.

We would love to hear from you.

✉ letters@hastingsindependentpress.co.uk

📘 facebook.com/hastingsindependent

📷 instagram.com/hastingsindependent

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

PONBAY LODGE CARE HOME

Residential and Dementia Care

RATED
9.8/10

carehome.co.uk
July 2026

Living well, every day

*"You'll feel at home
the moment you walk
through the door."*

—
Anthea Turner,
Crystal Care Collection
Ambassador

Residential, dementia and respite care with an **ALL-INCLUSIVE FEE**

**When you make Ponbay Lodge your home, you are
choosing the perfect blend of independence and support.**

As well as your own spacious, en-suite bedroom, you can enjoy the boutique cinema, afternoon tea in the cafe, a quiet moment in the library and lots more.

Ponbay Lodge offers residential, dementia and respite care for one all-inclusive fee. The caring team will create your personalised care plan, prepare home-cooked, nutritious meals and design a programme of activities to help you pursue your hobbies and try new ones.

Pop in to meet our residents and team, or contact us to find out more:

01424 533454

187 The Ridge, Hastings TN34 2AE

What3Words /// Path.Snake.Bridge


Crystal Care
— COLLECTION —
www.crystalcarecollection.co.uk





Supermum Heather Black

Supermums Help Female Entrepreneurs Embrace AI

Hastings businesswoman Heather Black is launching a new national initiative to help women embrace AI and technology— whether they are running a business, freelancing, returning to work after having children or looking to future-proof their careers. It will provide access to technology training, coaching, consultancy and a business network designed to help female entrepreneurs harness AI and digital technology to start, grow and stay ahead of technological change.

The Supermums Business Hub will be available to women across the UK. But while the ambition is national, Heather believes meaningful change needs to start locally, which is why the first physical Supermums Business Hub will be opening in Hastings in November this year.

The Hub will be a place where female founders, freelancers and women returning to work can work alongside one another, learn practical AI and technology skills, access business support, coaching and consultancy, and build business relationships. They will also have the chance to connect with female freelance AI Champions and technology specialists who have graduated through the Supermums training programmes over the last 10 years – and to become those experts themselves.

AI is rapidly changing how small businesses operate – from marketing and administration to customer service, websites, CRM and business operations. Heather believes that, for many female entrepreneurs, the challenge isn't whether they should embrace AI, it's knowing where to start: they need to know which tools

genuinely matter and who they can trust to help them implement them.

The organisation particularly focuses on mums returning to work, women looking to reskill or upskill and female freelancers whose existing roles are being transformed by AI. According to the International Labour Organisation, in high-income countries 9.6% of female employment is in occupations with the highest exposure to generative AI, compared with 3.5% of male employment.

For Heather, the mission is personal. She spent 25 years designing and delivering business support and employability programmes and 20 years running businesses of her own so has experienced firsthand how embracing technology could create opportunities for flexible, well-paid and meaningful work. After settling near Hastings to start a family, she decided to use that experience to help other women do the same and launched Supermums in 2016 following the birth of her second child.

Now she believes that AI represents the next major turning point for women. She says: "Ten years ago, technology changed the direction of my own career. I saw the opportunities it could create for women to build flexible, well-paid careers, and I wanted other mums to have access to those opportunities too."

"Now we're standing at another turning point with AI. It's transforming businesses and it's transforming jobs. I don't want women to be frightened of that change or left behind by it. I want women to be at the forefront of it."

Visit supermumsbusinesshub.com



Seafood, Wine & Music Festival

Hastings Seafood, Wine & Music Festival is just a few weeks away, running from Friday 11 to Sunday 13 September 2026. ELLA LOWDEN gives a glowing preview.

Hosted in the Stade Open Space, just a few steps from the sea, visitors will be able to taste an array of local catches, from fresh oysters to crispy fish rolls and seafood pael-

la. Vendors from across Sussex and Kent will be offering up delicious artisan produce, including Judges Bakery, The Albion Pasty Shack and Oui Creperie.

Alongside the food stalls there will be a variety of local vineyards and breweries, showcasing spectacular English wines and craft beer. There will be an opportunity to learn more about local wine-making with a talk and demonstration happening on Sunday.

Over the course of the weekend 13 incredible live bands will perform, following a different musical theme each day, an exciting new addition to the 2026 festival!

The weekend will kick off with a Northern Soul themed night. The Hastings Northern Soul Club will deliver a fantastic DJ set, followed by Buddy Curtess and The Grasshoppers. This brilliant 10-piece band is guaranteed to get you dancing!

On Saturday, country music will take centre stage. Sister Suzie and local band, Wildflowers and Moonshine will offer up Bluegrass Americana and Country tunes to get your toes tapping.

Sunday will be all about jazz, blues and soul. Hastings' very own world-class jazz musician, Lianne Carrol, will start the day with her Jazz Breakfast, which is bound to be one of the highlights of the weekend. To end with a bang, Bexhill-based band Ska-Per, will bring high-energy Ska and Reggae to The Stade, bringing the weekend to a fantastic close.

Stade Events CIC is offering Weekend Festival Passes free when you buy a ticket for either the Jazz Breakfast or Northern Soul Night.

For tickets and more information visit stadeevents.co.uk



Help Foodbanks this Summer

Local foodbanks are calling for donations of everyday essentials as families face extra pressure during the school summer holidays.

To help shoppers support their local communities, supermarket Aldi is promoting the products charities say are needed most, making it easier for local customers to donate while doing their regular shop.

According to Aldi's charity partner Neighbourly, the most in-demand items this summer are: tinned food, toiletries, tea/coffee, breakfast cereals, juices and soft drinks, UHT milk, laundry and cleaning products, rice and pasta, cooking sauces/oils/condiments, pet food and baby essentials.

Customers can donate any of these items at community collection

points in Aldi stores, with all donations distributed to local foodbanks and charities.

Luke Emery, National Sustainability Director at Aldi UK, says: "The summer holidays can be a particularly difficult time for many families, with the cost of keeping children fed while they're home from school putting extra pressure on household budgets."

"We know our customers are incredibly generous and want to support people in their local communities. Even adding just one extra everyday essential to your weekly shop can make a real difference."

Steve Butterworth, CEO at Neighbourly, says: "When schools break up for summer, many families lose access to the support they rely on during term time, while household food costs often increase. That's why donations of everyday essentials are so important."

Alongside customer donations, Aldi expects to donate an estimated two million meals to charities, foodbanks and community organisations across the UK this summer, helping ensure good food reaches people instead of going to waste.

Donations can also be made at most branches of other major supermarkets.



Shrek The Musical

SARAH MILNE AND OUR ROVING
REPORTERS



Donkey in the moonlight

The Summer Youth Project at White Rock has become one of the highlights of my theatrical year. I am always amazed by what can be achieved in just two weeks with a group of enthusiastic, committed and talented children and young people, supported by their adult production and creative team. This year's production of *Shrek the Musical* was no exception.

This time, I was joined by two young budding reviewers, Una, aged eight, and Effie, aged six, who were watching the show with their grandparents. Their verdict is an important part of this review.

The production itself was quite a feat. With around 100 young performers involved, there were moments when the stage was packed, yet the whole enterprise was impressively managed. There were numerous songs, plenty of dialogue and a great deal to learn in a very short rehearsal period, but everyone seemed to know exactly where they were meant to be and what they were meant to say. Above all, there was a real sense of enthusiasm from the cast.

Josh Stevens and Amerleigh Peacock made an engaging central pair as Shrek and Princess Fiona. Both

held their characters and accents well throughout, while Amerleigh brought a particularly strong Disney-princess quality to Fiona, combining confident acting with lovely singing.

Una's favourite was Donkey, played by Jordan Phillips. "He was very funny," she said, particularly enjoying his take on Eddie Murphy's distinctive accent. His performance had plenty of energy and warmth and was clearly a hit with the younger members of our reviewing panel.

The familiar world of fairy tales was brought to life with an effective video backdrop, some lovely costumes and, of course, a dragon puppet. Una and Effie particularly enjoyed spotting all the well-known nursery rhyme and fairy tale characters, including Pinocchio, the Three Little Pigs and the Gingerbread Man. Thankfully, the dragon was judged exciting rather than too scary.

The show's message – that it is okay to be different and that appearances are not everything – came through strongly and seemed to resonate with this young audience.

For Una and Effie, the best moments were the scenes between Shrek and Fiona. They loved the duet *I Think I Got You Beat*, the burping contest, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, all the fart jokes. Sometimes you simply cannot compete with that level of comedy when you're six and eight.

Watching through their eyes was a reminder of exactly what the Summer Youth Project does so well: it gives young people the chance to take on a huge challenge, work together and create something that brings real enjoyment to audiences of all ages.

I wonder what the team have up their sleeve for next year? Whatever it is, I'm already looking forward to finding out.



The dragon

IS A DISABLED FACILITIES GRANT FOR YOU?

Would a stairlift or level-access shower make it easier for you or a family member to stay in your home? Did you know that the council can offer disabled facilities grants to eligible residents to make adaptations to their homes?

Applications can be made for multiple adaptations including creating downstairs bedrooms and bathrooms, kitchen adaptations, external access ramps, door widening, stair lifts, level access showers, and electronic door entry systems. To be eligible, you need to intend to live at the property for at least five years, whether you own your own home or rent privately or from a housing association.

The first step to applying for a grant is to speak to your GP and get a referral to an occupational therapist who will carry out an assessment of your needs and recommend adaptations. A grants officer will then arrange a visit and explain the next stage of the process. The council's Adaptations Support Service can help you to complete the grant application form and to prepare and draw up the proposed plans.

Between April and June this year, 34 disabled facilities grants and 40 adaptations were completed at a total cost to the council of £376,597.08.

Residents who have had work completed are delighted with the results. One resident said: "I love having a beautiful new bathroom, especially new tiles to the ceiling. The two bathroom fitters were very considerate, they left everything very clean and tidy each day. I have a lovely clean, hygienic bathroom."

Another said: "Being able to have a shower and washer toilet has helped me so much and really made a difference to how I live. Absolutely amazing. And the front access to my home too. I'm so, so grateful, thank you."

Cllr Glenn Haffenden, leader of the council and lead councillor for housing, says: "It's great news that disabled facilities grants have made such positive differences to residents' lives. The positive comments about the adaptations that have been done are lovely to hear. If you rent your home and think this isn't for you, please talk to your landlord: they can apply for you, and in many cases, a financial contribution isn't needed from residents."

Held in Loss, Moving in Life

WEEKLY THERAPY GROUP
FOR GRIEF AND LOSS

Grief can change the shape of life. This weekly therapy group offers a confidential, therapist-facilitated space to explore loss alongside others who are also finding a way forward.

STARTS

Tuesday 15th September
Tuesdays, 6:00–7:30pm
12 weekly sessions
6–8 people

FORMAT

A contained, ongoing group experience that develops over 12 sessions, with attendance required throughout.

To find out more, including fees and lower-cost places, please contact me:

Email: sean@seankelly.org.uk
Phone: 07798 740 830
Website: seankelly.org.uk



Beachy Head

Longshore Drift

DAVID EP DENNIS

Charles Dickens came to Hastings in 1861 to perform a public reading of *A Christmas Carol* in the Old Music Hall, now called Yates's Wine Lodge. This event is celebrated during the Hastings Literary Festival in the autumn as *Dickens Day* during which other aspects of Dickens' life are highlighted. He saw poverty all around him in workhouses and factories and described them in harrowing detail in books such as *Oliver Twist*, *Bleak House*, *Little Dorrit*, *David Copperfield*, and *Great Expectations*.

When he came to Hastings, he may well have walked on the seafront and watched the waves shooshing the shingle from Eastbourne to Hastings in a slow rolling movement that has never ceased since the beginning of the world. However, the first recorded use of the precise term 'longshore drift' was not written down until 1893 by an unknown wizard of coastal geomorphology. It refers to the geological process by which sediments such as sand and gravel are transported along a coastline, parallel to the shore, by waves approaching at an angle.

The word 'long' derives from the Old English word 'lang', meaning 'having considerable linear extent.' 'shore' comes from the Old English 'scora', meaning 'land adjacent to a large body of water'. 'Drift' stems from the Old English 'drifan', meaning 'to drive' or 'to force along,' which evolved to denote movement caused by external forces.

But this article is not purely about shingle movement. Instead, it is about the drift of ideas along the shoreline from Eastbourne to Hastings.

Karl Marx was born on 5 May 1818, in Trier, Prussia (now Germany). His great friend Friedrich Engels

was born on 28 November 1820, in Barmen, Prussia (now Wuppertal, Germany). They first met on August 28, 1844, when Friedrich Engels visited Karl Marx in Paris, where Marx was living in exile. They spent ten days discussing philosophy, economics, and revolutionary politics, forming an instant intellectual and political bond. This meeting led to their first major joint works, *The Holy Family* (1845), and later *The Communist Manifesto* (1848).

Much later, Volume 1 of *Das Kapital* (Kritik der politischen Ökonomie – Critique of Political Economy) was published on 14 September 1867 in Hamburg, Germany. The book analysed capitalism's structure, introducing key concepts like surplus value, class struggle and commodity fetishism.

Marx and Engels both visited Sussex, coming to Eastbourne in the autumn of 1881 because Marx had bronchitis and pleurisy. In those days, the seaside with its alleged iodine atmosphere (really the smell of rotting seaweed) was recommended by physicians for its sea air and mild climate. Coming to the seaside was also an intellectual escape from the pressure of London.

Marx then died in 1883, but Engels continued to come to Eastbourne and other coastal towns to relax – but also to continue developing Marxist Theory. Engels died in London on 5 August 1895 aged seventy-four at his home at 122 Regent's Park Road, Primrose Hill and, being a resolute atheist, he wanted to be cremated.

This growing movement away from churchyard internment had already become associated with radical freethinkers and secularists. He had his wish at Woking Crematorium in Surrey, Britain's first crematorium established in 1878. A large group of colleagues and friends attended this ceremony, including Eleanor Marx, who was Karl Marx's daughter. There were also

Eduard Bernstein, a leading socialist for the Social Democratic Party of Germany (SPD), August Bebel, co-founder of the SPD; and William Liebknecht, who was a Marxist convert and friend of Engels. There were many other people there from the British Social Democratic Foundation (SDF).

Part of Engels' time in Eastbourne had been spent walking on the beautiful landscape of Beachy Head with its massive chalk cliffs, downland scenery and iconic Belle Tout Lighthouse – which became operational from 1834 with money from slave-owner and slavery supporter John 'Mad Jack' Fuller. And following

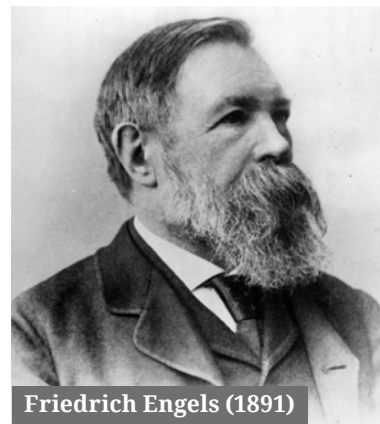


Mary 'Slasher' Richardson

Engels' wishes, most of the people who attended his cremation service at Woking then travelled to Eastbourne where Eleanor Marx and others, in a simple secular ceremony, cast his ashes into the westerly breeze – out over Beachy Head cliffs and down into the grey-blue sea where the longshore drift carried him ever so slowly towards Hastings.

With each angled wave, the tiny particles of Engels' dust came along the coast, adding to patches of fine low tide sand as they settled in deep by Hastings Pier, opened in 1872.

The portion of Engels' powdered remains that had embedded itself in the low tide sands of Hastings may have touched the toes of a man



Friedrich Engels (1891)

called Robert Noonan, an Irish-born socialist who was walking on the shore in 1901. The dust of Engels perhaps caused him to mystically author his famous book *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropist*, using the name Robert Tressel. This described poverty, exploitation, and harsh working conditions. By 1910 Tressel was ill, and poverty-stricken himself. He died of tuberculosis in 1911 in Liverpool on his way to Canada for a better life.

However, before he left Hastings, he and others formed the Social Democratic Federation (SDF): a Marxist group hoping to counteract the dominance of Tory capitalist ideology. The SDF in Hastings actively campaigned against local councillors who were perceived to be colluding with big businesses, particularly concerning utilities like William Murdoch's invention of gas lighting and Michael Faraday's electricity – inspired during his time at Pelham Place, Hastings.



Muriel Matters

The SDF efforts sought to expose and challenge corruption, advocating for the rights and welfare of the working class.

Members organised public meetings, distributed literature, and engaged in discussions to raise awareness about socialist ideals. These activities aimed to educate the people of Hastings on issues of social justice, workers' rights, and economic equality.

Although social hero Noonan was no more, his intellectual shockwave stirred the sea at Hastings and longshore waves that developed, still sparkling with the sunlit grains of Engels, flowed over the paddling feet of suffragettes, who did like to be

beside the seaside – beside the sea.

So, here, like ornate shells collected by a seaborne swirl, were the Hastings suffragettes. Elsie Bowerman who lived in St Leonards and had survived the sinking of the Titanic via Lifeboat 6 and crested the wave of women's protests by speaking in 1910 to an audience of 1,000 in Hastings on the subject of Votes for Women.

Then there is the great Muriel Matters, the suffrage icon, who lived at 7 Pelham Crescent, skinny-dipped at Pelham Beach and chained herself to the iron grill of the Ladies Gallery in the House of Commons that obscured the female view of democratic debate.

Another campaigner who dipped her toes was Barbara Bodichon of 9 Pelham Crescent – that great precursor of women's suffrage who wrote: *A Brief Summary in Plain Language of the Most Important Laws Concerning Women*.

And there was also the brave Mary Richardson, who toiled with Emily Pankhurst, was force-fed under the Cat and Mouse Act of 1913 and who managed to damage the Rokeby Venus, that very Roman Goddess who had been formed from the foam of the sea. Brave Mary later died in her flat at St James's Road, Hastings, yet before she left us, she had told the Times of London: "I have tried to destroy the picture of the most beautiful woman in mythological history as a protest against the Government for destroying Mrs Pankhurst, who is the most beautiful character in modern history. Justice

is an element of beauty as much as colour and outline on canvas."

Nowadays women are still not treated with sufficient respect for the wonderful work they do. Nevertheless, though the nature of the barnacle people of Hastings is edged with iron resolve, most of us steer sharply away from the excessive revolutionary radicalism of Marx and Engels – a vision ruined by Joseph Stalin.

However, we, men and women alike, the ever-present proletariat who keep safe the tides of life and home, still do wish, like Noonan, for social improvement and a great reduction in the gap between rich and poor – if you get my drift.

THE HASTINGS SEAFOOD, WINE & MUSIC FESTIVAL



11-13 SEPTEMBER 2026

3 DAYS CELEBRATING THE BEST OF SUSSEX!

- Fresh seafood & local producers
- Live fish preparation & cooking demonstrations
- Local Vineyards offering tastings & demonstrations
- Watch skilled local fishermen demonstrate traditional net-making
- A themed weekend of live music
- Over 13+ live bands: Northern Soul, Country & Western, Americana, Soul, Jazz and Ska.



SPECIAL EVENTS INCLUDE...

FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER

NORTHERN SOUL NIGHT WITH BUDDY CURTESS & THE GRASSHOPPERS
AND HASTINGS NORTHERN SOUL CLUB

SUNDAY 13 SEPTEMBER

JAZZ BREAKFAST WITH THE ACCLAIMED LIANE CARROLL

PLUS MUCH MORE!

SCAN HERE



WWW.STADEEVENTS.CO.UK

STADE OPEN SPACE, OLD TOWN HASTINGS TN34 3DW



MASS Observations

DAVID MILTON

One of the many kiss-of-death committees which blight the lives of all small towns decided at the planning stage that De La Warr Pavilion could do without a signature sculpture. For better or worse they spared us Frank Dobson's *Persephone*, leaving a conceptual and actual void. With its tagline "Meet Artists Shaping Sussex" MASS (organised by ZEROH, the 3D-art studio who like All Caps) more than fills it with a brilliant and ambitious one-day sculpture garden.

MASS *Gathering* supplements Tschabalala Self's seaside-postcardy *Seated* to visibly transform DLWP, and refract both human presence (how other people look when they interact with big art objects) and the environment (how you see the beach or Beachy Head; how light plays on the works of art and your brain). In the absence of what the building actually merits – a Moore or a Hepworth, say – it should become a regular, much longer annual event.

Among over three dozen works, Christian Funnell's *Single Use* has the best spot, by the domed shelter. From afar it's like a giant aban-

doned crown; up close its wire tendrils form a junkyard nest. From inside you can people-watch or look out longingly towards the distant cliffs. Monuments from Liz Wilson's *Of Confluence* multi-media installation stand like heavyweight sandcastles, pebbledash navigation buoys that have somehow been beached on the sun-bleached lawns. The steel strands of Almuth Tebbenhoff's *The Hedge* wave from the terrace towards a DJ who with nods and grimaces aplenty attempts to deliver a redundant party vibe.

INSIDE

Inside DLWP's auditorium an Airbnb aesthetic abounds. The MASS *Exposure* art fair offers works in wood, paper, metal, clay, fabric, even Rachel Ring's plastinated tea-bags. There are competent stabs at Hans Arp-like *objets d'art* for the second home owner's mantelpiece; some Goth burnt offerings which one imagines Nick Cave might hang in his bathroom; plenty of clunky Perryesque pots of the kind that mistakes brash for bold. But there's nothing on a par with the conceptually robust and technically exquisite work of Katie Boccaccini-Meadows, the best of Bexhill's Common Clay potters; or with the



Christian Funnell, *Single Use*

wow factor of Cătălin Filip's ceramic curtain, *Petrichior*, at Fresh Salad Art's *Pylos* exhibition at Electro Studios last autumn.

Best in show: Isobel Smith whose *Sunday Papers* performance sees the artist transform herself into a work

of art, a newsprint-bound gargoyle left sitting forlornly at a table of mute soft toys. Compelling, authoritative and hilarious, she should be featured in DLWP's main gallery.

Providing the punters with a sophisticated but discomfiting



Isobel Smith, *Sunday Papers* performance

take on muzak is the day-long, collectively realised *Passing Through*, organised by James Wilkie, director of the pioneering SONO festival. The performers are hidden behind a gauze curtain through which can be glimpsed an ominous pendulum. Its dense pulsating cloudlike clusters of sound and contemplative ambulatory tonalities would work much better among the sculptures in the open air, to drift as we do weightlessly between and through solid forms.



MASS was at De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill, on 16 August 2026 as part of Bexhill Art Weekender. Visit zerohstudio.com.

Into the Mystic House? A local artist in a medieval setting

HELEN MURPHY AND NICK PELLING

Patrick Altes is a French artist, born on the Algerian shores of the Mediterranean, who has nevertheless slowly come to appreciate the aquatic mysteries of living in St Leonards-on-Sea. However, his recent exhibition, *Living Pillar*, was installed not in Hastings, but in the tiny medieval hamlet of Alfriston. Patrick chose the 'Clergy House' there because it was a place with an almost unbroken line of prayer, reaching back into a time when Christianity lay



heavy on the souls of both simple and sophisticated folk. The artist is drawn to the spiritual, and his work seeks to explore the strange ways in which Christian and Pagan mythologies – entangled with his own very personal iconography – almost chemically co-mingle.

THE TRUE CROSS

We caught up with Patrick in the ancient timbered communal hall, standing next to his enigmatic sculpture. (It has to be said that he cut a fine figure, with his brown eyes and tangerine trousers.) The tall sculpture is undergirded by a black figurative frame that has ech-

oes of the cross, but Our Lord is notably absent. The painted work over it seems to offer itself up as a set of puzzles. At the base, red coils and circles writhe around, suggesting rhizomatic root systems. At an angle, a found piece of driftwood juts upright, as though a shard of the true cross had somehow penetrated the thatched roof and impaled itself near our feet. The shifting shadows on the wall behind the piece added a little to the sense of uncertainty. Undoubtedly, his work leaves much unanswered.

BURIED WORLD

Patrick's work is in fact part of a much wider collective of artists' work, all of which approaches and explores the realms of spirituality that lay buried under our crass modern world. The collective has been set up by the Nellimya Arthouse, based in Arrano in southern Switzerland. The idea behind this project is to find ways for artists to open dialogues and collaborations with each other: a sort of conversation in visual form that flows beyond borders. It all sounds pretty ambitious, but may be all the better for that.

With the seemingly irresistible rise of right-wing politics in Europe, it felt curiously uplifting to find an artist still wrestling with the deeper stuff that lurks behind the veils of rationality.

Classical Music News

Max Baillie, violinist, musicologist and entrepreneur, has been touring with his outstanding and unusual Lodestar Trio, who many of you will have heard when they played for the first time at Christchurch St Leonards in 2024. *Folk Odyssey* (with works by Bartok and Grieg) was recently recorded live for German national radio and broadcast at the Schleswig-Holstein Music Festival, where the trio has appeared several times. The project was also recorded live for Belgian national radio last year, and there are plans for an album in November.

Other of Baillie's concerts have included playing with celebrated cellist Laura van der Heijden at the Ryedale Festival, another programme seen first in St Leonards. He also played his first concert at the Hamburg Elbphilharmonie with star saxophonist Jess Gillam, in front of 2,600 people.

Upcoming concerts in St Leonards are on 20 October 24 November: two great programmes with fabulous guests. October will see piano quintets by Vaughan Williams along with Schubert's Trout, featuring Simon Crawford Phillips and other special guests. The November concert at St John's Church

will be the majestic and complex Goldberg Variations, with acclaimed cellist Laura van der Heijden and internationally-recognized violist Hélène Clément. Not to be missed.

HASTINGS PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA AND CHOIR

Meanwhile Hastings Philharmonic Orchestra previewed their new season with a performance of Mozart's *Magic Flute* on 22 August. Coming up they have a trio performing works by three notable female composers – Fanny Mendelssohn, Clara Schumann, and Lily Boulanger. They have a program of John Williams' film theme music at the White Rock in October, and in early November the Hastings Philharmonic Choir and Orchestra perform fabulous works by Saint-Saëns, Schubert, and Debussy, plus Aaron Copland's glorious clarinet concerto. Full details on their website.



Tickets and details: StLeonardsConcerts.stlconcerts.co.uk/events, HastingsPhilharmonic.hastingsphilharmonic.com/2026-2027-season



Editor Sam Davey

How Elite French Transformed Anglo-Saxon

JUDE MONTAGUE

14 October 2026 is the 950th anniversary year of the Battle of Hastings. From that point on, modern English would be permanently changed through the imposition of French. Ways of naming, writing and speaking evolved into the mixed syntax we have today. Grammatical roots have remained Germanic. The law and the church adopted Latin for formal occasions and French became the preferred language of the elite.

Since then, language speakers have benefitted from the contrasting associations of the two systems. Clever use of Anglo-Saxon words, say in a satirical monologue, can

pack a punch, especially after a French or Latin set up.

Sam Davey, author and chair of the Hastings Writers Group, is editing an anthology of work by local writers that explore this linguistic shift. 36 writers, 66 pieces. "The French and Latinate words represent the paved tarmac of modern civilisation, corporate systems, but no matter how much polite, multi-syllabic refinement is laid over our modern lives, the raw, heavy, Anglo-Saxon mud is always waiting just an inch beneath the surface," says Sam.

Dialect terms from ancient Germanic and local Sussex (fyrd, burh, twitten, lane, Stade) have been embedded inside contemporary narratives, creating vivid literary landscapes. Ben Bruges, whose poem *Talking English* introduces the col-

lection, describes English as "the world's greatest word-hoard".

The themes are varied and surprising. Edith Swan-Neck, King Harold's handfasted (non-church wedded) wife was depicted in medieval art gathering up his body parts from the battlefield. She appears in the book repeatedly, a metaphorical ghost with resonance for our times.

The anthology analyses the language roots of each piece. The standard split in contemporary English, in normal day-to-day usage, is roughly 65-70% Anglo-Saxon to 20-25% French, the remainder influenced by other sources such as Arabic, Indian, Greek, and many others. The writers consciously play with this vocabulary, and the balance tilts and shifts.

The anthology has been funded by the Norman Heritage Fund (HBC) and the Magdalen and Lasher Educational Trust.



Any monies raised from sales will go to the Hastings Community of Sanctuary.

It showcases at Hastings Book Festival on 19 September, and will be launched on 16 October during Hastings Week.

Hastings Book Festival Goes Larger

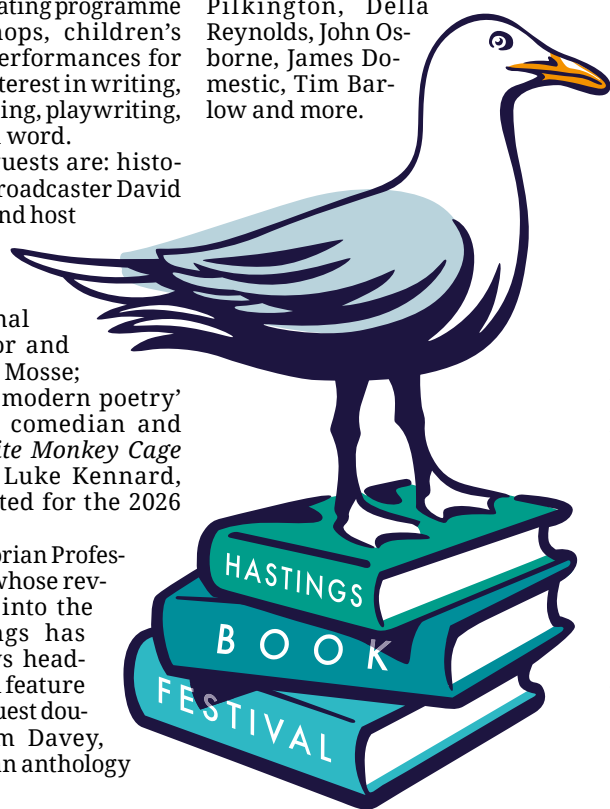
TIM BARLOW

The 9th annual Hastings Book Festival will take place from 10 to 20 September, featuring 40 events and more than 80 speakers and performers. This year's festival promises another fascinating programme of talks, workshops, children's events and live performances for anyone with an interest in writing, poetry, screenwriting, playwriting, and/or the spoken word.

The headline guests are: historian, writer and broadcaster David Olusoga (creator and host of the wonderful BBC programme *A House Through Time*), international bestselling author and broadcaster Kate Mosse; 'the godfather of modern poetry' Roger McGough; comedian and host of *The Infinite Monkey Cage* Robin Ince, and Luke Kennard, currently longlisted for the 2026 Booker Prize.

Renowned historian Professor Tom Licence, whose revelatory research into the Battle of Hastings has made global news headlines recently, will feature in a Norman Conquest double-bill with Sam Davey, who is compiling an anthology

of local writing focusing on the way 1066 changed our language. Spoken word artist Naomi Wood will perform her amazing one-woman show *Monster*, and a great line-up of poets of local and national renown will be taking to the stages: Henry Normal, Salena Godden, Andy Riley, Penny Pepper, Katie Taylor, Grace Pilkington, Della Reynolds, John Osborne, James Domestic, Tim Barlow and more.



The popular annual Book Fair will be held at the Observer Building on Saturday 12 September, with over 30 publishers, booksellers, authors and other stallholders. There will be workshops and panel discussions for writers covering routes to publishing, crime writing, horror, short story writing, playwriting with acclaimed playwright Owen Thomas, worldbuilding in fiction, collage and writing.

Scriptwriter, director and patron of the Festival Trix Worrall will introduce science writer Piers Bizony at a special screening of the sci-fi thriller *Hardware* at the Electric Palace. David Quantick will host a literary quiz at French's Bar on Robertson Street, and 15 writers and poets will perform short works on the Feral Writers Tour, a Fat Tuesday-style peripatetic event which will roam around seven town-centre bars and cafés.

And there are also six events for children, a Polari LGBTQ+ night with popular local author Paul Burston, a poetry open mic evening at 1200 Postcards with the crew of *A Load of Poets*, along with published local authors including Jake Arnott, VG Lee, Alex Preston, Michael Smith, Sam Davey, Helen Jacy and David Quantick.



Finally, you can still enter the Festival competitions for short stories, poetry and creative non-fiction – the deadline is 31 August. To see the full programme of events, head to the Festival website at hastings-bookfest.org

JOIN US AT THE 2026 HASTINGS CAREERS, TRAINING & APPRENTICESHIP EVENT

Connect with local companies and organisations to help you take the next step in your career journey.

WEDNESDAY
30TH
SEPTEMBER
2026

10AM - 1PM

FREE TO ATTEND FOR
ALL JOB SEEKERS
AND STUDENTS

HASTINGS CENTRE,
THE RIDGE, HASTINGS,
EAST SUSSEX, TN34 2SA

Gain insights from industry experts on CV building, interview tips and career development.

For more information visit:
www.yourofficeeventsteam.co.uk

SUPPORTED
BY



Hastings
Independent

YOUR OFFICE
EVENTS TEAM



After Dark Michelle Mildenhall Returns with a new exhibition

After Dark, a striking new exhibition by latex artist Michelle Mildenhall, opens at the Electric Palace Cinema on 5 September, with Michelle on hand to meet visitors and talk about the inspiration behind the work.

Inspired by the unique atmosphere of the Electric Palace and a lifelong fascination with classic cinema, *After Dark* captures legendary



COURTESY OF MICHELLE MILDENHALL

Audrey Hepburn in latex

screen icons in intimate, nocturnal moments. Suspended between glamour and shadow, each portrait invites viewers to wonder what happens after the cameras stop rolling, where hidden stories unfold in the

shadows beyond the spotlight.

Renowned for her distinctive portraits created entirely from hand-cut sheet latex, Michelle transforms an unconventional material into bold, graphic artworks that blur the boundaries between fine art and alternative culture. Her work combines dramatic colour, layered composition and meticulous craftsmanship to create images that are both instantly recognisable and rich with intrigue.



Artist views:
Saturday 5 and 12
September at The
Electric Palace. The
exhibition will also
be available to view

before and after every film screening throughout September as part of The Coastal Currents Arts Festival. All artworks will be available to purchase throughout the exhibition. Visit michellemildenhall.com for details and further work.

900 Years of Embroidered History

The monumental Hastings Embroidery will be on public display for the first time since an exhibition at the Bridge Point Arts Centre in Rye in 2019. The embroidery was created in 1966 for the 900th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings by the Royal School of Needlework. It will be on display at Hastings Town Hall for the first time in many decades. The full embroidery is kept in storage as it has proved impossible to house the entire 27 panels safely in a permanent local setting owing to its scale and fragility.

The exhibition opens on Saturday 29 August and will be open, free, from Thursdays to Mondays until October.

Julia Hilton, deputy leader of the council and lead councillor for regeneration, says: "We're delighted that the Hastings Embroidery is out

on display again to coincide with the Bayeux Tapestry being at the British Museum. It's an incredible piece of work, covering 900 years of history and Norman heritage."

She added that the exhibition was just one part of our celebrations of the Year of the Normans, marking the anniversary of the birth of William the Conqueror, and that there would be events with a Norman theme and flavour happening, across Hastings, to mark the anniversary.

Details: visithastings.co.uk/whats-on/tickets: tinyurl.com/42344akh

Nadia Reid at Henry Ward

Nadia Reid's fourth album *Enter Now Brightness* was released at the beginning of last year. She has been thinking about the past decade. "Ten years of documenting my life in song," is one way she describes it. "The highest privilege" is another. "You have points in life that when you look back, you see were a time of almost cellular change," she continues; a realisation now that so many of these new songs have been drawn from the times when "all my cells were changing." At that time in her native New Zealand, Covid restrictions were some of the toughest in the world. Shortly afterwards she had two daughters.

The result of this period of reflection has been the finest songwriting of Reid's career. *Enter Now Brightness* is a record of poise and great beauty, the sound of a cellular shift, of pain giving way to tenderness and joy.

Reid was joined in Port Chalmers' Chicks Hotel studio by her long-standing guitarist Sam Taylor and producer Tom Healy. Later, the intricate processes of impending motherhood and raising her daughters

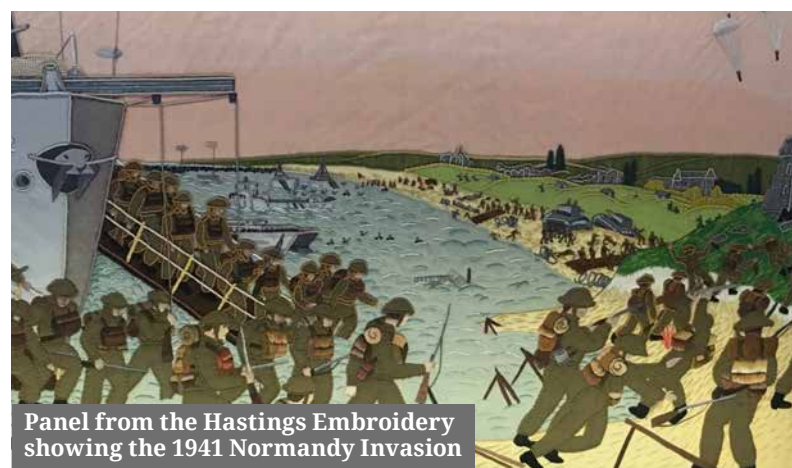
brought a new focus to her songwriting.

On this latest album, Reid moves ever further from her earlier folk inclinations, establishing a sound that is distinctly her own. "I still feel uncomfortable about the word folk, and being a folk singer. It makes me sort of cringe," she says. She writes in a way that is wide open, and she sought a similar unguardedness in the music.

This past year, Reid has finally relocated to the UK, settling in Manchester. With this move has come a reassessment of her career and her craft. *Enter Now Brightness* feels different. It is an album of departure and questioning that has reminded her how songwriting can be "the most useful thing to do with pain and joy and thoughts and feelings and anger."



Nadia Reid: Live with Strings comes to Hastings on Friday 25 Sept at Henry Ward Hall, 7 pm. Tickets: alttickets.com/nadia-reid-tickets



COURTESY OF BATLEAKE

Panel from the Hastings Embroidery showing the 1941 Normandy Invasion

Coastal Currents 2026

TINA MORRIS

After the privilege of producing this festival for 15 years, one thing has become abundantly clear: this area is full of extraordinary people making extraordinary work. Every year, Coastal Currents offers a glimpse into that creativity, bringing together artists, musicians, performers, writers, makers, producers, organisers, volunteers and audiences from across the area. Some are established, some are just starting out, but all play a part in shaping the rich diversity of the festival.

This year feels particularly significant. As conversations about the future of our town gather pace, I hope culture continues to be central to that story. Creativity helps us understand where we are, who we are and what kind of place we want to be. It helps us solve problems, innovate, delight, surprise, play and connect. Whether through clay, paint, dance, sculpture, performance or poetry, there are endless ways we express our love for this place and share what matters to us.

For one month, we have a shared date in the diary – a reason to come together. To show our work, support

one another, discover something new and celebrate the extraordinary creativity that exists here. Fifteen years on, I am still incredibly proud of what we achieve together as a community.

We're delighted to have Arts Council England and Hastings Borough Council support this year for our young people and early-career artist programmes, helping us create opportunities for the next generation of creative talent. The rest, as ever, is home-grown. Whether you're just starting out or have been doing this for decades, whether your work entertains, challenges, inspires or simply brings joy, it belongs here.

For more details visit coastalcurrents.org.uk



Bohemian Rhapsody

A local musician makes his mark

CHRIS CONNELLEY

Some musicians start early. Mozart, for example, is rumoured to have composed his first piece at the age of five, while Prince mastered the piano by the tender age of seven. Others take longer to get started, and join the party much later.

Hastings-based rapper, Noah Rockett, 20, sits firmly in the second camp. He spent his teenage years stuck in his room playing video games, but that all changed when he started listening to the old school hip hop so admired by his dad. It intrigued, then snared him, and led to his exploring more deeply, and getting passionate about epic performers like Wu Tang Clan and A Tribe Called Quest.

From here, it was just a (hip) hop and a jump, from listening to others to rapping along himself. This in turn led to him writing his own material, sharing it on social media and releasing five EPs (under different names) in short succession.

Like any new starter, it took time and effort to hone his craft and find his authentic voice, and reflecting back with ruthless honesty, Noah describes his early efforts as “pretty bad”. But, having gotten the bug, he kept at it, listening, learning and developing. Now, after a period out of the public gaze, he’s back with a new incarnation, Sun-z, and a stack of new material on a brand new EP, *Who Am I?* It’s been a year in the making, but he’s confident that the time is right: he’s now ready and “good enough to go back out there and go for gold”.

Against the backdrop of this summer of intense heat, he has pushed his new EP relentlessly on social media and has started per-

forming live, which he admits has been a surprise highlight of his year and that he really enjoys.

Over recent weeks, he has formed part of the bill at the Kofi Stone gig at the De la Warr Pavilion, performed a short set on the overhead walkway at the intimate St Andrews Mews, and rapped to a sizeable audience of around 300 at the Oval as part of Remi Vibesman’s feted Hidden Beach Festival.

Looking forward, he is hoping to build his profile on social media, having recently notched up over 2,000 followers on Instagram. He would of course love to secure a record deal, and is busy making contacts with that end in mind. As an accomplished wordsmith, he’s also contemplating dipping his toe into the burgeoning local spoken word and poetry scene, recognising the potential for exciting collaborations and crossover in a town that oozes culture from every pore.

As he puts it: “The great thing about Hastings is that there are loads of cool, creative people and everyone is trying to build something for themselves and each other, with lots of support out there.”

Heading towards autumn, Noah is in a confident mood, in it for the long run, and clearly enjoying himself. All of which comes across clearly in his new tracks. If you haven’t encountered him yet, it’s time to check him out. So prepare for something sassy, soulful, authentic and grown up. And expect to be delighted.



To find out more, hear some of his tracks, and details of how to buy the new CD, go to *Solsun-Z* on Instagram or to his website, sun-z.co.uk.

Big Band at Flatland

HARRY HAWKINS AND VERA BELL

Staged within the space of Tawfik Nas’s installation at Flatland Projects in Bexhill, the 17-piece incarnation of the Statue of Liberty Big Band (SoL) was brimming with inchoate noises – and this is a small format for them.

As before, SoL performed to raise funds for the local Refugee Buddy Project (see details below). Arriving early at Flatland to browse some of the art installations and exhibits, I could hear the band settling themselves, although it occasionally sounded like some contorting machine, freewheeling electronics running against clusters of horns.

Produced and conducted by Ed Baxter, the group capped off the first day of Bexhill’s Art Weekend, performing a particularly inspired, inclusive selection of glorious tunes, many politically motivated. The works of composers and musicians from Chile and Peru were represented, as were some from Sweden and Japan (composed by the fiercely improvisational saxophonist Eiichi Hayashi), among other gems such as *Pretty Fly*, Walter Schumann’s eerie, premonitory theme from *The Night of the Hunter*.

Moving closer to home, they played *Another Green World* (the Arena tune) by Suffolk-based ideas genius and producer Brian Eno. Eno was/is seminal as a musician in Roxy Music and with Robert Fripp, and producer of class acts Talking Heads, Devo and Coldplay, but achieved immutable world-wide fame as composer of three-and-a-quarter seconds of *Windows 95*, *bing-de-bang-bong*, *bang-bong* – you know the one!). Hastings-based improvising minimalist from Slapp Happy, Anthony Moore, generated the electronics. Baxter clearly carefully chose the set for its universality, its radical nature and its inclusiveness, characteristics which also exactly represent the ethos of the Refugee Buddy Project.

The band’s personnel is employed comprehensively, to great effect. The work of the percussion section – Kit and Julian – was particularly impressive. It brought strong momentum and some lively, Latin-tinged grooves like *Entradita de la Cabana*, whilst Adam’s vibraphone feature on the classic *Left Bank Two* theme perfectly fitted its art environment. Music of political resistance was expressed through the words of Chilean political martyr Victor Jara’s *El Derecho de Vivir En Paz* (The Right to Live in Peace), sung passionately by Spanish-speaker Otti Albietz.

The closing suite (combined Sun



Statue of Liberty Big Band

Ra and Anthony Moore) ensured plenty of rebellious, free-form wailing by horn players Toby Bula and Stuart Griffiths. A fitting end to a marvellous afternoon’s music.

On 15 August, The Statue of Liberty Big Band was: Ed Baxter: producer and conductor, Otti Albietz guitar, voice on *El Derecho de Vivir en Paz*, Matt Armstrong: bass, Ted Barrow: electronics, Kit Bula: drums, Toby Bula-Edge: sax, Adam Bushell: vibraphone, Julian Humphries: percussion, Anthony Moore: electronics, feedback generator, Lucy Griffiths: oboe, sax, Stuart

Griffiths sax, Helen Heleni: voice on *Pretty Fly*, Kitty McCarron: voice on *Bad Samaritan*, Love in Outer Space and *Slow Moon’s Rose*, Vladimir Miller: piano, Jude Montague: keyboard, Robbie Robson: trumpet, Eoghan McCarron: mixdown.



Refugee Buddy Project: therefugeebuddyproject.org.uk; Flatland Projects: flatland-projects.com.

Review by Resonance fm: tinyurl.com/yc2x2amy

Trash Cannes 5-Day Film Competition

MARK FRENCH

This is a unique opportunity to take part in the annual Trash Cannes Film Challenge and Coastal Currents Arts Festival during September. The challenge is to make a short film on a given subject in just five days. Your film will be entered for the competition screening at The Printworks, Hastings on 20 September with awards and prizes for best film, best actor, best cinematography and audience choice amongst other categories.

Originally known as ‘The Hastings 5-Day Film Challenge’, this event has been a staple in the Hastings art scene for over twenty years. Twelve years ago, it was revitalised by Trash Cannes, a collective dedicated to promoting events that have a DIY ethos in the Hastings area. Today, it stands as one of the high-

lights of the local calendar, attracting filmmakers ranging from complete novices to seasoned professionals. The challenge provides a unique opportunity to unleash your creativity and discover what you can accomplish in just five days.

You pick a title, a genre and a prop out of a hat, then you have five days to make a three minute film on that subject. Online applications will receive a random selection. If you’re new to film making, we can help you get started, and we especially encourage young film makers. Any format can be used, from mobile phones to professional equipment, and free editing software is widely available. It’s never been easier to make a film your way.

Sign up at Reel Cafe, Kino-Teatr, Norman Road, St Leonards on Saturday 29 August 10am – 4pm, or online at trashcannes.co.uk.

HIP BOOK REVIEW

Escape From Germany – Another Side

YOU CAN GO NOW... BUT LEAVE THE BUTTER
BY BARBARA SCHULTZ
THE BOOK PRESS, £10.99
REVIEW BY VICTORIA KINGHAM

A few weeks ago we previewed Barbara Schultz’s memoir of her mother, who escaped from the GDR in 1953 at the height of the Soviet occupation. The very successful book launch took place at Crown House on 20 June.

There’s more to be said about it: It functions not only as a personal memoir, but also as an unusual window into the social history of East Germany. Memoirs and fiction, or autobiographical writing, about escape from Germany predominantly foreground the excruciating hardships of Jewish (and subsequently Polish) people managing to evade the Hitler authorities and escape death, leaving for Europe or the Americas. These extraordinary stories indicate resilience, courage, and ingenuity in the face of the alternative – extermination. From Anne Frank through Primo Levi to recent works by Michael Calvin and Naftali Schiff, they rightly document an appalling and unforgettable period of history.

Schultz’s book, however, highlights something perhaps less frequently acknowledged (at least by

the Allied victors), the hardship and penury inherent in the lives of fairly ordinary residents of rural East Germany through two world wars, then afterwards in the restrictions set up by the Soviets in the name of Collectivism and enforced by the Stasi (Ministry of State Security). As in the Chinese equivalent, almost anyone in town or village communities could have been recruited or pressganged into secretly spying on their neighbours, resulting in an unimaginable lack of personal freedom.

PLANS FOR ESCAPE

These Machiavellian controls, and the ban on leaving the country, coupled with her (rather late) acknowledgement of the horrors of the Nazi administration and subsequent guilt at membership of the vile party that had once been thought to embody progress (Make Germany Great Again?), caused Schultz’s mother to organise an escape from her small village farming life. Her husband, captured as a POW by the British in 1945, had subsequently



in a life of endurance and rather gruelling subsistence.

PIGS AND POTATOES

There were undoubtedly people in the village who were worse off; her farmer husband Willi had been a paeon of individual enterprise from a young age. Elzbeth brought with her things from her own mother, from her old, relatively bourgeois, life in a small town. She describes good china, ‘good’ clothes, embroidered tablecloths, nice furniture. She has to adapt to pig farming, chicken cleaning, saving pig waste for manure, planting, sowing, reaping, and ensuring through the spring and summer that they will have enough supplies (particularly of potatoes) to last them through freezing winter months. Her children are all recruited to help as they reach ages four or five, and the elder sister Karin appears to have acted as a mother’s help in raising the two youngest, twins Barbie and Bernd. It’s interesting that though the book is written by Barbara, there’s some emphasis on Bernd, who is clearly marked out as his mother’s favourite. Whether this is true or mere authorial licence is impossible to know; it’s apparent from the narrative but documented, by his twin, seemingly without resentment.

Schultz writes predominantly from Elzbeth’s point of view, using source material from her mother’s journal. As her contribution to village life, Elzbeth had brought with her plays written by her father, and produced and staged them with the other occupants for a number of years. These are not further described in Schultz’s memoir but it does tell of the fact that she had friends and family in the village or nearby, to aid her eventual exit. Aside from personal courage and enterprise, the book documents courage, determination, hard winters, and (surprisingly, in the face of everything that needed to be done) an abiding love of the countryside.

POETRY CORNER

heatwaves
PETE DONOHUE

the memory of rain upon this land
dragged from a cooler distance
called out several weeks beforehand
when times seemed somehow greener
squeezes a tear out onto my dehydrated face
barely enough to irrigate my feelings

at supptime yesterday
a bold moon took issue with the sun
challenging its known ferocity
altering the skyline & silencing animals
to the general delight of most
albeit only temporarily

we will have longed-for water
upon this land once more
only how then we choose to use it
& how long it may this time last
becomes the burning question
for each & every one of us.

made his home here, in Basingstoke. So over two years, after being knocked unconscious and permanently wounded by the butt of a Russian soldier’s gun, her mother (Elzbeth) formed plans to leave the GDR, along with her three children, and join her husband. Her escape, her interrogation and knock-back, only to try again and succeed, are documented in the last few chapters.

An escape from a country where you are effectively a captive is necessarily laced with drama and trauma. But the prose description, in these latter chapters, is no more dramatic than at any other point. By the time Elzbeth actually managed her exit, the action was just one more in a long line of incidents

CROSSWORD CORNER

Across

1. Slight burn found in disc or channel (6)

3. Bee or beetle in subgroup? (6)

4. Flag printer’s unit of measurement with gesture (6)

Down

1. Sir Ted moves to a decisive step (6)

2. Speed up process moving as then (6)

Crossword Solution: Answers on page 5 of The HIP List

1					2
	Hastings Independent Five-Clue Cryptic Crossword				
3					
	No. 309 by Peat Poser				
4					

CRICKET

Priory Thriller Ends in Tie

15 August	
Hastings & St Leonards Priory	154 all out
Bognor Regis	155 for 4
22 August	
Priory	237 for 9
Horsham	237 for 7

HUGH SULLIVAN

After suffering a comprehensive home defeat at the hands of Bognor Regis on 15 August, the cricketers of Hastings and St Leonards Priory tied a thrilling game with Horsham last Saturday. Those results taken together send Priory back to the foot of the Sussex Premier League, needing to win at least one and perhaps both of their two remaining games

to save themselves from relegation. But their effort to salvage even spoils from the game at Horsham, which they played with a weakened side and looked at several stages bound to lose, shows that anything is possible. First choice batsmen Joe Billings, Caleb Laloo and Shawn Johnson were missing from the Priory lineup, as was opening bowler Freddie Hulbert. Captain Harry Scowen opted to bat first on winning the toss but may have rued the decision when he was dismissed for a seven-ball duck. Alfie Hunter (50) and Eddy Finch (43) put together a solid second wicket partnership of 95, but after both were trapped lbw by home captain William Beer (four wickets for 29 in his ten overs), the middle order foundered and at 131 for six, the innings was in danger of meltdown.



Troy Henry makes lbw appeal against Bognor Regis

Young Troy Henry (43), promoted up the order, and veteran John Morgan (25), fought back with a stand of 63, and lusty blows at the death by Adam Pye and Adam Page hoisted a final total of 237 off 50 overs. For the next two hours, that did not seem likely to be enough. In Hulbert's absence, Adam Pye and John Morgan delivered tidy opening spells, and Henry also bowled his spinners tightly. But the home bats-

men found themselves gradually able to accelerate their run rate against Adam Barton, Page and Hunter and after 44 overs, found themselves needing only 31 more runs from the last six, with two batsmen Nick Oxley and Chris Nash well set and seven wickets in hand. A run out accomplished by Priory wicket keeper Greg Devlin dismissed Nash for 37, then Pye and Barton took a further wicket apiece.

Nevertheless, with 11 balls remaining, Horsham's score had risen to 232 for six: just six runs were wanted with four wickets remaining; Oxley was 74 not out and on strike. Priory's defeat was surely inevitable. Or was it? Pye had Oxley caught by Scowen, and conceded only two runs off his last four balls. Barton bowled the last over, allowing only one run off the first four balls. Two were now wanted off two. One was scrambled off the fifth and another off the sixth, leaving the scores tied. A week earlier Priory had succumbed with little fight at home to Bognor Regis. After early dismissals of Hunter and Finch, Billings (56) and Scowen (27) dug in with a third wicket stand of 66. But when Scowen was bowled out, the absence of Laloo and Johnson exposed a brittle middle order and meek tail-end. The eventual total of 154 was hit off by their West Sussex visitors inside 27 overs, Hulbert and Henry sharing the four wickets which fell, but no bowler able to stem the flow of runs. Tomorrow (Saturday) Priory host Three Bridges at Horntye. Their final league game will be away to Preston Nomads at Fulking on 6 September.

FOOTBALL

Top of the League

15 August	
Hastings Utd 2	AFC Croydon 1
18 August	
Eastbourne Town 0	Hastings Utd 2
22 August	
Ashford Utd 1	Hastings Utd 3

HUGH SULLIVAN

Hastings United have made a perfect start to their Isthmian League campaign. Their FA Cup exit a fortnight ago has been followed by three league wins in eight days, two of them away from home, which puts them at the top of the South-East Division for a few days at least. In the home game against AFC Croydon on 15 August the 'U's conceded first but hit back with goals from Max Walsh and Callum Erskine to lead 2-1 at the break. In an open second half, both sides had chances to score more, but Hastings held on, backed by usual levels of raucous support. Three days later, away at East-



Manager Ronnie Dolan At the Pilot Field

bourne on a pitch which manager Ronnie Dolan described as "not ideal for either team", it took the 'U's 39 minutes to open the scoring through Kesna Clarke, but thereafter they largely controlled the game. Dolan himself hit a fine shot from outside the penalty area to double his side's lead with 11 minutes left of the 90. Last Saturday the 'U's travelled to traditional local rivals Ashford United. Their Kent hosts were captained by former Pilot Field stalwart Jack Dixon and also had one time Hastings midfielder Sam Hasler in their ranks. Erskine and Ollie Black put the Sussex visitors two up inside the first half hour, while home defender Harrison Hume was first yellow-carded and then sent off, reducing his team to ten men with two thirds of the game still to play. On the hour mark the 'U's were awarded a penalty when Freddie

Legg was brought down, duly dispatched by Clarke to make a 3-0 scoreline. Ashford scored a consolation goal late on. Next up for Hastings are two home games. Tomorrow (Saturday) they entertain Hendon in the First Qualifying Round of the Isuzu FA Trophy. The North London visitors were relegated from the Isthmian Premier League in April 2025 along with Hastings, but found themselves in the Isthmian South Central Division, rather than the South East. There they finished last season - also like Hastings - only two places above a further relegation. However, they have won all of their first four league and cup matches this month, scoring an aggregate of 18 goals. On Monday Crowborough Athletic will come to the Pilot Field. The traditional bumper Bank Holiday crowd there will hope that the 'U's resume their early league form.

CARS WANTED CASH TODAY

Vans / Motorhomes / Campervans

Min £500 - £25,000

ANYTHING CONSIDERED

7 days a week 24/7

Well established family business that won't be beaten on price.

1/2 HOUR ANYWHERE

07415 119394



CURIOUS TO TRY SOMETHING NEW?



Discover hundreds of courses starting this September in **art, crafts, photography, floristry, business, IT, cookery, beauty, wellbeing, music and more.**

Whether you're starting a hobby, developing your skills or gaining a qualification, there's something for everyone.

Scan the QR code to view our NEW Adult Course Guide online or pick one up at one of our campuses.

Community Learning
Discover courses in crafts, cookery, wellbeing and creative writing.

Online Courses
Study flexibly and gain recognised qualifications from home.

Qualifications & Leisure
Build new skills with expert tutors and purpose-built facilities on campus.

University Courses
Retrain, upskill and progress with accredited higher-level qualifications.