

Community NEWS



WINTER 2022



Christmas Cracker!

The festive season kicks off in St Albans District with a fantastic street party on Sunday 20 November.

Much of the City Centre is closed to traffic for the free-to-attend event, called the St Albans Christmas Cracker.

The action starts at noon and continues until 6pm with the Christmas lights switched on around 5pm after a countdown. The event is organised by the Council with the support of St Albans BID.

Among the attractions will be dozens of food, drink and gift stalls,

Santa's grotto, street entertainers and funfair rides.

There will also be live music from some of the District's most talented musicians.

Another highlight of the festive season is the St Albans Christmas Charter Market.

This will launch on Thursday 1 December with the Market taking place every Thursday and Friday thereafter in the run-up to Christmas Day as well as the usual Wednesdays and Saturdays. There will be an extra day's trading, too, on Sunday 18 December.



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Community News is published by St Albans City & District Council

www.stalbans.gov.uk



Approved by Plain English Campaign

Christmas Across The District

Harpenden Christmas Carnival and Light Switch On, Sunday 27 November, noon to 6pm

Harpenden Town Council is excited to bring this magical event to the High Street once again. The Carnival will include traditional features such as a Santa's Grotto, food stalls, outdoor bars, a market, live entertainment, a procession, crafts and, of course, the spectacular Christmas Lights Switch On at 5pm.

Further information can be found on the website: www.harpenden.gov.uk.



London Colney Lights Switch On, Sunday 4 December, 3.30pm to 6pm

A fun afternoon featuring a market, carols, funfair rides and other attractions at Chester Gibbons Green and the High Street.

Redbourn Christmas Market, Sunday 27 November, 11am to 5pm

There will be around 100 stalls selling gifts along with delicious food and drink in the High Street. This not-for-profit event is organised by volunteers for the benefit of the community.

<https://redbournchristmasmarket.com/>



Batford Christmas Lights Up, Thursday 1 December, 4.30pm to 6.30pm.

This is a small community event with carol singing by local schools, crafts and free hot drinks.



Southdown Christmas Lights and Lanterns Extravaganza, Friday 2 December, 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

This event opens with the stunning annual Lantern Parade and includes carol singing, stalls, craft activities and Santa's grotto.



Timetable agreed for our new Local Plan

A timetable for producing a Local Plan for the District has been approved.

The Plan will identify land for future housing, commercial and infrastructure developments over 15 years.

It will also provide safeguards for the environment, enable adaptation to climate change and secure high-quality and accessible design.

Our schedule has a provisional date of December 2025 for the adoption of a new Local Plan.

Residents, community groups and businesses will be consulted throughout and their feedback will help shape the final proposals.

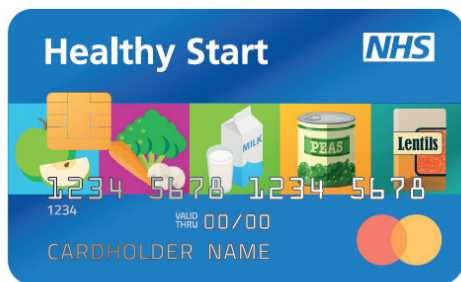
Get your Community News every month

We are now providing residents with a monthly edition of Community News which is emailed to subscribers.

This will keep you up to date with Council activities and news as well as details of events from around the District. To sign up to receive these monthly bulletins, go to <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKSTALBDC/subscriber/qualify>



Cost of Living Help



Healthy Start

If you are more than ten weeks pregnant or have a child under four, you could get help to buy healthy food and milk.

Those eligible will receive a Healthy Start card with credit worth £4.25 a week that you can use in some shops. Benefits are added every four weeks.

You can use the card to buy milk, formula milk, vegetables, fruit, pulses and vitamins.

To apply for the card, email healthy.start@nhsbsa.nhs.uk or call **0300 330 7010**.

Herts Help

Our partner organisation Herts Help offers a wide range of support to people during these difficult times.

They can, for example, give advice on arranging and funding care for people with a disability or serious illness.

If you need support or are suffering a crisis, please contact Herts Help on **0300 123 4044**. You can find more information at www.hertshelp.net/hertshelp.aspx.



Energy hotline

A new service to help St Albans District residents improve the energy efficiency of their homes and reduce bills has been launched.

We have joined forces with the National Energy Foundation to create the St Albans Home Energy Support Service which provides households with information, advice and possible financial support.

You can call a free helpline and be put in touch with experts from the Foundation's Better Housing, Better Health (BHBH) team.

They can advise on how to save energy at home and whether you are eligible for funding to make energy efficiency enhancements to your home.

You may, for example, qualify for the Sustainable Warmth scheme which could get you up to £10,000 worth of free improvements.

The service is available to all local households, regardless of income, by calling **0800 107 0044** on weekdays from 9am to 5pm, by emailing bhbh@nef.org.uk or by going online at www.bhbh.org.uk.

Foodbank

St Albans and District Foodbank is helping to prevent anyone in our community from going hungry.

They can provide three days' worth of nutritionally balanced emergency food and support to local people in crisis.

The foodbank is part of a nationwide network of foodbanks, supported by The Trussell Trust, which is working to combat poverty and hunger across the UK.

For more information, including how to donate food and money or to volunteer, go to: <https://stalbandsdistrict.foodbank.org.uk/>



More details about the cost of living support available for residents in St Albans District is available on our website: <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/cost-living-support>.



Food and Drink Festival Street Party

Thousands of people thronged the City Centre for the highlight of the Enjoy St Albans Food and Drink Festival – a six-hour-long street party.

The City Centre was closed to traffic for the fun event known as the St Albans ‘Festival’.

Attractions included almost 100 market stalls selling a vast variety of food and drink products, live music, street entertainers and a children’s zone with free arts and crafts activities.

One innovation this year was the use of British Sign Language interpreters at the cookery theatre.



Food and Drink Festival Awards

The winners of the Enjoy St Albans Food and Drink Festival Awards 2022 have been announced.

Eight award winners were presented with their trophies at a glittering ceremony at St Michael’s Manor.

The Festival, now in its 15th year, is organised by us with the help of a steering group and is sponsored by SA Law and St Albans BID. Its aim is to promote the District’s food and drink businesses.



The winners were:

Restaurant of the Year: DavVero Italian Restaurant, The Quadrant, Marshalswick.

Best Pub or Bar: The Engineer, Southdown, Harpenden.

Best Café: The Potting Shed, Carpenter’s Nursery and Farm Shop, Sandridge.

Best Food or Drink Shop or Market Stall: Buongiorno Italia, Lattimore Road, St Albans.

Best Takeaway or Street Food: Peru Sabor, St Albans Charter Market.

Best Local Producer: Carpenter’s Nursery.

Best Newcomer: Punchin’ Palooka, Verulam Road, St Albans.

Kate D’Arcy Award for Customer Service: Charlie Powell of Charlie’s Coffee, London Road, St Albans.



New Audit Chair

An Independent Chair of our important Audit Committee has been appointed.

Jonathan Flowers is the first independent person to hold the key position as previously a Councillor has chaired the Committee.

He has held a number of senior positions in Local Government and in recent years has had a portfolio of other roles including the Chair of Rothamsted Research’s Audit Committee.

His appointment follows a Council decision to improve the Committee’s effectiveness and ensure it operates in line with best modern practices.

Experts from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy conducted a review and recommended this change.

Eco News

Climate Champions available for talks

Would your community group or business like to learn more about climate change, how to reduce emissions and help the District become carbon net zero by 2030?

Climate Champion volunteers were recruited from across the community to inform and encourage organisations throughout the District.

They are available to help raise awareness about the climate emergency and highlight actions that can reduce carbon emissions.

This could be for an informal lunchtime discussion to engage employees or an evening presentation to your club or society.

You can find out more about booking a Climate Champion for your event at <https://sustainablestalbans.org/contact/>.



Your Tree Our Future

We have been supporting the Your Tree Your Future scheme which has 100,000 trees to give away to neighbourhoods across Hertfordshire.

The initiative offers residents the chance to claim free trees and help improve air quality, reduce the carbon in our atmosphere and enhance biodiversity.

Most of the 6,000-plus trees allotted to St Albans District for this year have already been claimed, although some might still be available.

However, thousands more will be available over the next three years with residents able to choose from eight different native species or a hedgerow pack.

To claim a tree and for more information about the scheme, run by Hertfordshire County Council, go to: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/yourtree.

New trees for Rothamsted Park

Twenty-eight new trees are to be planted in Rothamsted Park to further enhance the natural environment.

This follows the removal of 14 Lawson Cypress trees that were adversely affecting a nearby block of flats.

Those trees were twice the recommended height and the flats' developer has agreed to fund their replacement with a more appropriate beech hedge.

The 28 new trees, which will also be paid for by the developer, will be planted elsewhere in the park.



Wood burning plea

Wood burning in open fires or stoves can produce more pollution than petrol-fuelled motor vehicles, recent studies have shown.

Residents across Hertfordshire are encouraged to use alternative heating sources such as electric or gas heaters and radiators. This is not only better for air quality, but better for people's health, too.

Hertfordshire County Council's Let's Clear The Air campaign highlights some of the small actions we can all make to protect ourselves from air pollution. More information is available at <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/clean-air/what-you-can-do-to-reduce-air-pollution-in-your-area.aspx>

Huge interest in solar panel scheme

The St Albans Solar Together scheme was a success with more than 3,000 households registering an interest in acquiring solar panels.

The group buying scheme helps make savings through bulk purchases, finds the best suppliers and manages the installation.

Those who registered were sent a recommendation with no obligation to accept.





Use quieter fireworks!

Please think of others during the festive season and consider using quieter fireworks.

Research shows that the noise of fireworks can be a terrifying experience for dogs as they have highly sensitive hearing.

Cats, horses, farm animals and wildlife can also be upset by the noise. The RSPCA is running a campaign called **#BangOutOfOrder** that seeks to spread awareness of the issue.

Loud fireworks can also upset more vulnerable people. The National Autistic Society has warned the sudden noises can cause anxiety among some autistic people.

Quieter fireworks are widely available with many internet retailers stocking them.

We are also encouraging people and businesses to limit the use of fireworks to specific dates such as New Year's Eve rather than throughout the festive season, so people who are adversely impacted are not taken by surprise.



Get Your Flu Shot Today!

Protect yourself against flu

GPs and pharmacists have started giving seasonal flu vaccinations to safeguard people this winter.

Those in eligible groups are already being invited into their GP practice to have the jab or to make an appointment with a local pharmacy.

It is safe for flu and COVID-19 vaccinations to be given at the same time.

Getting vaccinated against flu and COVID-19 will provide protection for you and those around you for both these illnesses.

More people are likely to get the flu this winter than usual as fewer people will have built up immunity to it during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This year, the offer of the free flu vaccine has been widened to include more groups. The most vulnerable people are being offered protection first.

More information on vaccinations is available at <https://hertsandwestsexics.org.uk/covid-19>.

Volunteer for the Rail Partnership



We are members of the Abbey Line Community Rail Partnership which supports projects to help the surrounding community.

The partnership encourages greater usage of the historic 6.5 mile line that dates back to 1858 and links St Albans with Watford.

We have made station enhancements, held fun days and a Santa train, worked with schools on rail safety awareness and promoted the local economy.

You can find out more at <https://abbeylinecommunityrail.org.uk/> and enquire about a volunteering role by emailing info@abbeylinecommunityrail.org.uk.

Help for Blue Badge drivers

The Council has created a new disabled bay in the City Centre to give greater access to Blue Badge holders.

Five parking spaces are now available in Chequers Street, close to the HSBC Bank branch, for the use of less able motorists.

The initiative is part of our commitment to improve accessibility to key areas of the District.



WHAT'S ON at the museums

St Albans Museum + Gallery, St Peter's Street, St Albans, AL1 3DH
Verulamium Museum, St Michael's Street, St Albans, AL3 4SW



For detailed information about the events programme, go to: www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk.
Visit regularly to catch these and other great exhibitions and events.

Exhibition: Henry Moore - Drawing in the Dark

Friday 16 December to Sunday 16 April 2023,
Weston Gallery, Museum + Gallery, Free

Experience the first exhibition to explore the celebrated sculptor and artist Henry Moore's coal mining drawings. Moore was the son of a miner from Yorkshire. In 1942 as a war artist, he sketched Wheldale Colliery where his father had worked. Curated by University of Hertfordshire Arts + Culture, this exhibition takes inspiration from a new book, *Drawing in the Dark* by art historian Chris Owen, to be launched with the exhibition.



Exhibition: Frederic Kitton - From Pickwick to Preservation

Until Monday 2 January 2023,
Keeper's Galleries, Museum +
Gallery, Free

Enjoy exquisite drawings by talented artist and journalist Frederic Kitton. He captured St Albans' past through its architecture, pubs, street views and surrounding countryside in pencil and watercolour compositions. An expert on Charles Dickens, a number of his published books about the author are also on display.

Museum Talks, Museum + Gallery, £6 on Zoom or £10 in person



A new series of monthly history talks covering a range of topics from local history and seasonal topics to our current exhibitions.

Talk: Picturesque Pubs, Thursday 17 November, 7pm

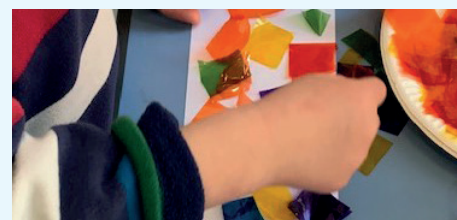
Reflecting artist Frederic Kitton's interest in pubs, uncover other St Albans pubs that were recorded by Victorian artists.

Talk: Christmas Through Time, Tuesday 13 December, 7pm

A history of Christmas traditions, discovering what we have kept since Tudor times and what we have left behind.

Museum Minis, Museum + Gallery, 2nd Monday of every month, 1pm-2pm and 2pm-3pm, £5

Join us for a Christmas story and craft activities. Suitable for children aged 2-4years, accompanied by an adult.



Celebrate in style at St Albans Museum + Gallery!

Are you looking for a unique place to host a celebration?

St Albans Museum + Gallery is a fantastic venue for an event and we still have availability for this year's festive season. Choose from the grandeur of our Assembly Room to the quirky nature of our Courtroom.

Contact us at museumevents@stalbans.gov.uk
to make your booking today.





Support local charities

You can support local charities by taking part in the St Albans City and District Community Lottery.

Good causes which are receiving support include those involved with mental health, sport, heritage and disability. Among those being helped are refugees, the homeless, children and older people.

Tickets cost just £1 with 50p going to a good cause of your choosing. There is a weekly draw with a top prize of £25,000.

You can play the community lottery or sign up to it as a local group to raise funds at <https://www.stalbansdistrictlottery.co.uk>.

Festive Season

Recycling and Waste Collection Dates 2022 -23



Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection Day
Monday 26 December	Wednesday 28 December
Tuesday 27 December	Thursday 29 December
Wednesday 28 December	Friday 30 December
Thursday 29 December	Saturday 31 December
Friday 30 December	Tuesday 3 January 2023
Monday 2 January 2023	Wednesday 4 January
Tuesday 3 January	Thursday 5 January
Wednesday 4 January	Friday 6 January
Thursday 5 January	Saturday 7 January
Friday 6 January	Monday 9 January
Monday 9 January	Tuesday 10 January
Tuesday 10 January	Wednesday 11 January
Wednesday 11 January	Thursday 12 January
Thursday 12 January	Friday 13 January
Friday 13 January	Saturday 14 January

Keep an eye out for our canvassers

Electoral registration canvassers are visiting households in St Albans District to encourage residents to secure their vote.

They are approaching around 5,000 households that have yet to respond to a canvass form that was sent to them.

Every year, we conduct the annual canvass to keep the electoral register up to date.

If your name is not on the register, you will not be entitled to vote at elections, including next May's District Council and Parish Council elections.

If you are not registered to vote at your current address, you can do so online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.



Have your say... we welcome anything you want to say about our services.

We hope you enjoy reading Community News. If you can spare a moment, please email communications@stalbans.gov.uk and let us know your views on this edition.

St Albans City & District Council,
Civic Centre, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3LD

Website: www.stalbans.gov.uk

For latest service information, updates and general enquiries please go to the Council's website.

Telephone: 01727 866100.

Alternative formats: If you want to receive this newsletter in an alternative format, such as Braille, please call 01727 819572. See www.accessible.co.uk for information about access to local facilities.

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