

# Community NEWS



WINTER 2017



Sat 25 November –  
Sat 23 December  
Mon, Tue, Wed &  
Fri 11am-6pm  
Sat & Sun 10am-6pm  
Thu 11am-8pm

Also, bag a bargain at  
**ST ALBANS CHARTER MARKET**  
Wednesdays, Saturdays  
and every day from  
17-24 December

## St Albans Christmas Lights Switch-On – Sunday 26 Nov

 This year's fabulous St Albans Christmas Market, in the stunning grounds of the Cathedral, will be open until Saturday 23 December. The spectacular launch party and Christmas Lights Switch-On is on Sunday 26 November from noon. There's brilliant community entertainment on offer in the City Centre, including music, costumed performers, Santa and loads of family fun.

Bring your family and friends for some festive cheer, St Albans style. See [www.enjoystalbans.com/christmas](http://www.enjoystalbans.com/christmas) for details of this and other local events.

Sunday 26 November is also the date of the fabulous Harpenden Christmas Carnival and Farmers Market (from noon). The Harpenden Christmas Lights will be switched on at 5pm ([www.harpenden.gov.uk](http://www.harpenden.gov.uk)).

Redbourn Christmas Market is on Sunday 3 December, 11am – 5pm – fun for all the family ([redbournchristmasmarket.com](http://redbournchristmasmarket.com)). And don't forget the Abbey Flyer Santa Special which leaves St Albans Abbey station on Saturday 9 December with a VIP red coated, bearded passenger aboard (see [www.abbeyline.org.uk](http://www.abbeyline.org.uk) for times).

## Weekly food recycling – make a whopping impact!

 Since new arrangements were introduced last year, recycling has increased from 53.2% to 59.6%. But to bust the District's 60% target, we need everyone to get involved.

Food waste is the biggest problem. It's heavy, costs a fortune to send to landfill, smells bad, gives off noxious gas, and attracts pests.

The Council has put in place the infrastructure for **everyone** to recycle their food waste. All homes have a weekly food collection and special kitchen caddies. Houses have kerbside caddies too, and flats with communal facilities have food waste bins. Please help make St Albans District a top recycling area. Thanks for all your efforts.




## Don't have a rubbish Christmas!



For seasonal waste and recycling news, including Christmas collection dates, see pages 6 and 7.

## Snow and flood news online

 When it snows, all the latest Council service updates can be found online at [www.stalbans.gov.uk/snow](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/snow). See useful updates on waste and recycling collections, flood advice and lots more. You'll also find links to Hertfordshire County Council information such as school closures, and gritting and salting routes. See back page for Facebook and Twitter details.

Community News is published by St Albans City & District Council

[www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk)



Approved by Plain English Campaign





## Councillors - how they can help

**X** Alongside their community leadership and advocacy roles, Councillors can help residents with all sorts of practical matters. District Councillors can help with planning issues, or getting concerns about parking, housing, or waste collections addressed, for example. Or if it's a County Council matter such as roads maintenance, schools, social care or verge cutting, your County Councillor may be able to help. You can find councillors' contact details online: District Councillors – [www.stalbans.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/councillors); County Councillors [www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/councillors](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/councillors); or see the 'Where I Live' tab at [www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk). In Parish Council areas, your Parish Councillors may also be able to help.

## Leisure centre use up 97%

**X** You might think investing £37 million in new leisure centres at a time of public sector cuts is a rather surprising decision for a Council to take. That is, until you realise that the facilities are now earning money instead of making losses.

Since 2011, Westminster Lodge and Batchwood Sports Centre in St Albans, and Cotlandswick Leisure Centre in London Colney, have all been redeveloped.

In the old days, the Council paid operators £1.5 million a year to run the leisure centres. Now we get £500,000 a year in income from them, money that is used to finance the investment made.

Visits to the rebuilt Westminster Lodge topped one million last year, a 67% increase on visits to the old centre. It's a similar good news story at Batchwood and Cotlandswick, where sports participation is flourishing. Overall, there is a rise in visits of 97%.

The Council has now turned its attention to redeveloping leisure and cultural facilities in Harpenden. The £18.8 million project is due to be completed in 2020.

There's loads of fun and fitness on offer at local sports centres.

See: [www.enjoystalban.com/leisurecentres](http://www.enjoystalban.com/leisurecentres) for details.



\*Charity registration no. 1051868.

Become part of the St Albans story

## A special Christmas gift

**X** For a £250 donation, have your name, or that of a loved one, engraved on limited edition oak panels at the new Museum and Art Gallery.

The magnificent panels are part of the £7.75 million Town Hall conversion project led by local charity\* St Albans Museums and Galleries Trust. £400k remains to be raised. Many of the donations are being made as gifts to children and grandchildren or in memory of loved ones.

Make your donation by Friday 15 December and the Trust will send you a certificate to present as a gift. Thanks to everyone who has contributed so far.

To apply, complete and return the leaflet delivered with this edition of Community News, see [www.honoursboard.org.uk](http://www.honoursboard.org.uk) or contact [georgina.bawden@stalbanstrust.org.uk](mailto:georgina.bawden@stalbanstrust.org.uk) (01727 296148).



# WHAT'S ON

The Museum of St Albans in Hatfield Road is now closed while we develop the new museum and gallery at the Town Hall.

## at the museum

Verulamium Museum, St Michael's Street, St Albans, AL3 4SW.  
[www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk](http://www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk) 01727 751810

All children must be accompanied by an adult. Museum entry charge for non-residents.

### A Christmas Celebration

Sat 2 Dec, 11am – 3pm (last entry 2.40pm).  
£1.50 per child for the craft activity.

A festive family fun day! Create a decoration for our Christmas tree and make your own festive baubles to take home. Listen to some cosy Christmas stories and spot the stars in our gallery trail.



### Adult Craft Workshop – Wreath Making

Sat 2 Dec, 10am – 12.30pm. £27.50.

Decorate a Christmas wreath and bring festive cheer to your home. Materials supplied. Limited places. Please book (01727 751810).

### Crafts in the Colonnade

Wed 20, and Wed 27 Dec, 2 – 4pm  
(last entry 3.40pm). £1.50.

Simple festive crafts inspired by the museum's collections.

### Museum Explorers

Thurs 21, and Thurs 28 Dec, 9am – 5pm. Free.

Borrow items from our explorer kit to help you investigate the museum. What will you discover?



### Tots Tales

Wed 13 Dec, Wed 10 Jan, & Wed 14 Mar. £3.  
10.30 – 11.30am,  
11.45am – 12.45pm  
and 1.30 – 2.30pm.

Join us for a story, craft activity and museum hunt. Limited places, please book (01727 751810).



## Win a meal for 2 at The Stables

 Oaklands College is offering a lucky prize draw winner a meal for two at their new restaurant! **The Stables** is a fully functioning restaurant, built to the highest standards to train the next generation of chefs, restauranteurs and hoteliers. It's at Oaklands College in Hatfield Road, St Albans.


To enter the prize draw, please email your name and telephone number to [communications@stalbands.gov.uk](mailto:communications@stalbands.gov.uk) by 30 November 2017, stating 'Stables Prize Draw' in the subject box. Entries will be passed to Oaklands College. Terms and conditions apply.

**YOUR VOTE MATTERS  
DON'T LOSE IT**



## Recently moved?

Make sure you're registered to vote.

 The revised Register of Electors will be published on 1 December 2017. If you recently moved home and haven't yet registered to vote, it is important to do so now.

It's easy to register online by visiting [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote). Alternatively, a paper application form will be sent to you on request. District Council elections are taking place on 3 May 2018. If you're not registered, you won't be able to vote.

If you would prefer to vote by post or proxy, please contact the Electoral Services Office ([elections@stalbands.gov.uk](mailto:elections@stalbands.gov.uk), 01727 819294). For further information visit [www.stalbans.gov.uk/elections](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/elections).



## Register your event now!

 Last year over 100 groups and organisations took part in Sustainable St Albans Week, which next runs from Saturday 21 to Sunday 29 April 2018.

Across St Albans, Harpenden and local villages there'll be walks, talks, bike rides, films, food, crafts and community events galore. It's a celebration of all things environmental, making a practical difference to the sustainability of the District.

If your group or organisation would like to get involved, register now and become part of this award-winning week of environmental action.

Registration closes on 15th January. See [www.sustainablestalbands.org](http://www.sustainablestalbands.org) for details.



# Civic Centre – a hub for info and advice

**X** At the Civic Centre in St Albans, you'll find lots of advice, information and guidance on offer from all these local organisations.

See [www.stalbanshub.org.uk](http://www.stalbanshub.org.uk) for details of each organisation's opening times or call 01727 866100.



## Missing out on a Council Tax discount?

**X** People diagnosed with a severe mental impairment such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's Disease, or learning difficulties, may be missing out on a discount on their Council Tax. Such residents do not have to pay Council Tax if they are living on their own. If they are living in a two-person household with another adult, they may qualify for a 25 per cent discount. To claim, please contact: [counciltax@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@stalbans.gov.uk) (01727 819204). More information about Council Tax exemptions and discounts is available on our website.

## Local Plan – have your say

**X** The Council is moving forward with preparing the District's Local Plan 2020-2036, the long-term planning strategy and development blue-print for the District. The final Plan will include policies on what can be built, where, over the next two decades. Our previous Local Plan work was halted following the outcome of a court case. The new Plan will take account of this, and higher housing numbers assessed by central government in their draft consultation.

We will be seeking initial views on our new draft Plan 'Issues and Options' in a six week consultation starting on 9 January. Full details will be on our website ([www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk)) nearer the date.



## Universal Credit – need help?

**X** More local people can now claim Universal Credit, a new state benefit. Universal Credit replaces Housing Benefit, Tax Credits, Income Support and some types of Job Seekers Allowance / Employment Support Allowance for working age claimants.

It is administered by the Department for Work and Pensions and is paid directly into your bank account. If you would like help with things like budgeting or debt advice, please contact [benefits@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@stalbans.gov.uk) (01727 819220). St Albans Credit Union and Citizens Advice may also be able to help. To claim Universal Credit, see [www.gov.uk/universalcredit](http://www.gov.uk/universalcredit).



## St Albans - City of Expertise

Did you know that St Albans, Harpenden, and the wider District, are home to a huge number of chartered surveyors, engineers, legal experts, accountants and financial services professionals? Members of this professional services cluster have come together to promote St Albans as a unique 'City of Expertise'. To find out more, including how your professional services company can get involved, see [www.cityofexpertise.com](http://www.cityofexpertise.com)



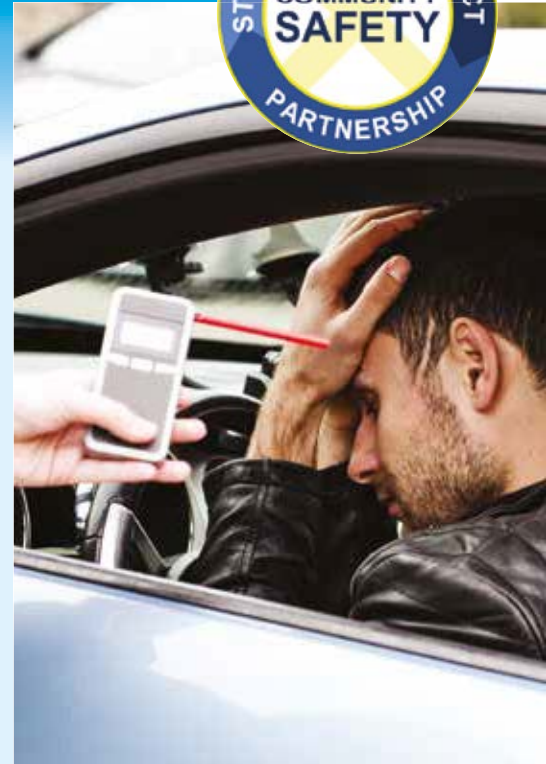
## Houses in Multiple Occupation

The Council monitors and enforces standards in Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) locally. HMOs have at least 3 tenants forming more than 1 household, sharing toilet, bathroom or kitchen facilities (details at: [www.gov.uk/private-renting/houses-in-multiple-occupation](http://www.gov.uk/private-renting/houses-in-multiple-occupation)). Larger HMOs need a licence. The Council can provide advice and support to those living in an HMO, or to prospective and current landlords. If there is an HMO in your neighbourhood causing you concern, please contact [privatesectorhousing@stalbens.gov.uk](mailto:privatesectorhousing@stalbens.gov.uk).



## Christmas party? Stay safe and legal

Police are asking residents to plan your trip home after a festive night out and book a licensed taxi, or agree who will drive and not drink. Hertfordshire Constabulary will be conducting breathalyser checks including during the morning rush hour. While many people know the dangers of driving home after a boozy night out, far fewer know they can still be over the limit the morning after. Make sure you don't get caught out!



## Mental health – local support

As well as your GP, there are a number of other sources of mental health help and advice available locally.

**Mind in Mid Herts** has counsellors you can talk to confidentially about experiences, feelings and concerns ([www.mindinmidherts.org.uk](http://www.mindinmidherts.org.uk); 01727 865070).

**CAMHS** (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) provides

support for young people ([www.bit.ly/2zUeR6v](http://www.bit.ly/2zUeR6v)), as does **Youth Talk** ([www.youthtalk.org.uk](http://www.youthtalk.org.uk)).


The **Hertfordshire Partnership Wellbeing Service** offers free and confidential talking therapy and practical support to Hertfordshire residents experiencing problems such as worry, low mood, insomnia and stress. You can self-refer at [www.bit.ly/2xxkPYq](http://www.bit.ly/2xxkPYq) (0300 777 0707).



# GREEN ISSUES



## Leaf fall

 At this time of year, our contractor, Veolia, is busy keeping the streets clear of fallen leaves before they turn into an unsightly, squidgy, mess. Extra teams and specialist equipment are brought in and streets with lots of trees get special focus. If you spot any issues, please let us know – [wastemanagementservices@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:wastemanagementservices@stalbans.gov.uk) (01727 809019).

Fallen leaves can quickly block gullies, leading to flooding. That's why we will be suspending parking on some roads for a short period so that Veolia can get their machines in and sweep up properly. We know this can be frustrating and we're really sorry for the inconvenience.

## Cold home? – help is at hand

 If you're worried about the cost of heating your home, Herts Warmer Homes may be able to help. They offer free or discounted household improvements such as insulation to make heating homes easier and cheaper. For more information and other support, see [www.stalbans.gov.uk/energygrants](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/energygrants) or contact [info@hertshelp.net](mailto:info@hertshelp.net); 0300 123 4044.




## Christmas waste and recycling collection dates

Please put your bins and boxes out by 7am.

Usual collection day	Revised collection day
Monday 25 Dec	Wednesday 27 Dec
Tuesday 26 Dec	Thursday 28 Dec
Wednesday 27 Dec	Friday 29 Dec
Thursday 28 Dec	Saturday 30 Dec
Friday 29 Dec	Tuesday 2 Jan
Monday 1 Jan	Wednesday 3 Jan
Tuesday 2 Jan	Thursday 4 Jan
Wednesday 3 Jan	Friday 5 Jan
Thursday 4 Jan	Saturday 6 Jan
Friday 5 Jan	Monday 8 Jan
Monday 8 Jan	Tuesday 9 Jan
Tuesday 9 Jan	Wednesday 10 Jan
Wednesday 10 Jan	Thursday 11 Jan
Thursday 11 Jan	Friday 12 Jan
Friday 12 Jan	Saturday 13 Jan

## Waste collections in icy weather

 In winter, ice and snow may disrupt waste collections. Here's what we do.

If disruption lasts for a day or two, collections will roll on one day until we catch up. Crews will work on Saturdays until backlogs are cleared.

Where disruption is more severe, lasting 3 days or more, recycling collections will be suspended for those streets we can't access. In these roads, all rubbish and food waste will be sent to the tip as landfill. You may prefer not to put your food caddy out until the next week, so the content can be recycled instead. Other recycling will be collected on the next scheduled collection day, weather permitting.

Updates will be posted online at [www.stalbans.gov.uk/snow](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/snow), on Facebook (@RecycleforStAlbans and @StAlbansCouncil), and on Twitter (@StAlbansCouncil).

 Web [www.stalbans.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling)

 Email [wastemanagementservices@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:wastemanagementservices@stalbans.gov.uk)  Call 01727 809019

 Twitter @stalbanscouncil  Facebook [recycleforstalbans](https://www.facebook.com/recycleforstalbans)

# Rubbish Christmas?

Top tips for a happy recycling yuletide!



## Christmas trees

As part of our kerbside garden waste collection services, crews can collect real Christmas trees. Please put your tree out for collection with your green waste bin before the end of January. If you live in a flat with communal recycling, without garden waste collections, please don't leave your tree in the bin area. Please take it to a local Household Waste Recycling Centre ([www.wasteaware.org.uk](http://www.wasteaware.org.uk)), removing all decorations first!

Some garden centres will collect your tree for a small fee (including Ayletts – **01727 822255**).



## Bottles, foil, cans and glass

These all go in your black recycling bin (or recycling boxes in some areas). In flats, please put them in the labelled bin in your communal recycling area. Please squash plastic bottles.



## Food waste

Food waste is collected weekly. Put it out for collection in your kerbside caddy, or (for flats) your communal food bin.

## Cardboard

As usual, please flatten your card and put it out for collection (so it can't blow away) with your paper recycling box. Or (for flats) please put it in your communal paper and card bin. Please remove all plastic first.

## Wrapping paper and Christmas cards

Put them in your paper recycling box, or (for flats) in your communal paper bin, removing bows and ribbons first.

## Bread bags for food waste? – Yes!

Good news! You no longer have to use compostable liners in your food caddy, due to the way food waste is now treated – through anaerobic digestion. All wrappings, whether they are recyclable or not, are now removed by the food waste team at the Agrivert processing site near Colney Heath. They use big hooks to do this. You can continue to use biodegradable or paper bags, or switch to bin liners (not black!), carrier bags, bread bags or paper wrappings.




## CHRISTMAS COLLECTION DATES

Your collection day will change over Christmas and New Year (**see opposite**). Look out for your 2018 collection calendar being delivered to local homes in December.





## Empty nest?

 As students pack their bags for university or far-flung shores, Hertfordshire County Council is calling on their parents to consider fostering.


Empty nesters can make great foster carers because they've already got the skills and experience needed to look after children and teenagers. It can be very rewarding and the County Council will be there to guide you every step of the way. See: [www.bit.ly/2y2NGIJ](http://www.bit.ly/2y2NGIJ) for details.

## Council Christmas opening times

Normal opening hours resume on Tuesday 2 January.

Dates	Opening Times
Monday 18 Dec	Open
Tuesday 19 Dec	Open
Wednesday 20 Dec	Open
Thursday 21 Dec	Open
Friday 22 Dec	Closed from noon
Monday 25 Dec	Closed
Tuesday 26 Dec	Closed
Wednesday 27 Dec	Open
Thursday 28 Dec	Open
Friday 29 Dec	Closed
Monday 1 Jan	Closed

## Could you be a volunteer driver?

 Local charities urgently need volunteer drivers to help local people attend medical appointments. It doesn't matter if you can volunteer only once a month, or several times a week, whatever you can do will make a real difference. You can fit it around family and work commitments. Volunteers will be friendly and patient people, with their own vehicle. Training and expenses are managed by the charity you choose to volunteer for. To find out more, contact the St Albans & District Volunteer Centre ([volunteering@cvstalbans.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@cvstalbans.org.uk); 01727 814644).

## Do it online!

 More and more of your Council business can now be done online. Report a missed recycling collection, pay a bill, tell us you've moved, renew your parking permit, request council home repairs, and much more, all at [www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk).

The latest innovation is 'Where I live'. Click on the tab, top right on our homepage, type in a postcode, and get public services information tailored just for you.



My Council Services App



*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](mailto:communications@stalbans.gov.uk) and let us know your views and what else you want us to include.

**St Albans City & District Council**, Civic Centre, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts AL1 3JE  
**Website:** [www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk) **Email:** [contactus@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:contactus@stalbans.gov.uk)

**Customer Service Centre opening hours:** Mon-Thurs 8.45am-5pm, Fri 8.45am-4.30pm

**Refuse & Recycling:** [wastemanagementservices@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:wastemanagementservices@stalbans.gov.uk), 01727 809019

**Council Tax:** [counciltax@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:counciltax@stalbans.gov.uk), 01727 819204/819205

**Benefits:** [benefits@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:benefits@stalbans.gov.uk), 01727 819220

**Planning:** [planning@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:planning@stalbans.gov.uk), 01727 866100

**Alternative formats:** If you want to receive this newsletter in an alternative format, such as Braille, or in another language, please call 01727 819572. See [www.disabledgo.com](http://www.disabledgo.com) for information about access to local facilities.

**All Other Enquiries:** 01727 866100

 **Twitter:** @StAlbansCouncil

 **Facebook:** St Albans Council

 **Facebook:** Recycle for St Albans District