

Community NEWS



SUMMER 2021



Back in action!

Shops, pubs and restaurants have re-opened as the COVID-19 lockdown has eased – and so have the services that we provide residents.

Our four major leisure centres are back in business with group sports and activities returning.

Westminster Lodge, Batchwood and Cotlandswick have already attracted thousands of visitors.

So, too, has the brand new **Harpenden Leisure Centre** which was completely rebuilt as part of a £20 million Council project.

This initiative includes the creation of a new culture centre, named after the town's comedy legend Eric Morecambe.

Located on the edge of Rothamsted Park, it will have a 511-seat theatre and is scheduled to open later this summer.

The **St Albans Museum + Gallery** - including its highly popular café - has opened its doors again as has **Verulamium Museum** with its famous collection of Roman mosaics and other artefacts.

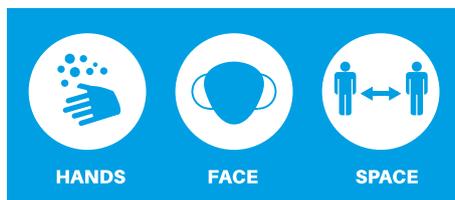
The **Charter Market**, held every Wednesday and Saturday, has seen the return of dozens of longstanding stallholders.

During the height of the pandemic, only food and other essential goods were allowed to be sold.

Now, many familiar faces are back selling an amazing range of goods including arts and crafts, toys, clothes and jewellery.

In September, the District's **Food and Drink Festival** returns with an action-packed programme of events.

Throughout the pandemic, we have been promoting important NHS health messages and will continue to urge our residents to be cautious as the virus remains a threat.



That includes the advice to remember the basics – **hands, face, space and fresh air.**



Community News is published by **St Albans City & District Council**

www.stalbans.gov.uk



New playground

A new £220,000 children's playground at Clarence Park in St Albans has opened in time for the busy summer months.

The exciting attraction boasts over 35 features including a rope bridge, musical bandstand, swings, multi-play unit, slide and zip wire.

The Council, which manages the park, delivered the project with the local community group Clarence Play.

Clarence Play helped organise efforts to raise funds and were consulted about the concept designs.

The play area was constructed by specialist firm Kompan which was also the contractor for the Verulamium Park play area which opened late last year.



New Mayor

Councillor Edgar Hill has been elected the new Mayor of the City and District of St Albans – choosing Youth Talk as his charity for the year.

He was made Mayor for 2021/22 at the Annual Meeting of the Council following the Thursday 6 May elections.

Cllr Hill, who succeeds Janet Smith, has been a District Councillor since 2014 and becomes the City's 477th Mayor with the first having been appointed in 1553.

He will chair Full Council meetings and represent the District at a variety of events, often involving voluntary and charity groups.

His deputy for his year in office is Cllr Helen Campbell who was first elected to the Council in 2018.



Pedestrianisation survey

A major part of the City Centre was pedestrianised during the pandemic to encourage social distancing and provide outdoor space for businesses

Now Hertfordshire County Council – the highways authority – is considering whether to make any permanent changes.

Before any decisions are made, they want to hear the views of residents from around the entire District as well as businesses and other organisations.

You can voice your opinions in an important online survey.

The roads that have been pedestrianised and closed to traffic are George Street and Market Place as well as the High Street. The latter road runs past the Clock Tower, linking Verulam Road to St Peter's Street, and is usually one of the main thoroughfares through the City. Spencer Street, Upper Dagnall Street and Waddington Road may also be affected.

You can give positive and negative comments about the impact of the scheme and the plans to make permanent changes.

Issues you may want to give feedback on include the displacement of traffic to other streets or the increase in outdoor dining opportunities. The survey closes on Sunday 11 July and can be found at <https://surveys.hertfordshire.gov.uk/s/HighStreetsStAlbans/>. You can also email your views to HighStreetRecovery@hertfordshire.gov.uk or phone 0300 123 4047.

Eco Issues

Help trees thrive

We planted 1,500 saplings and 58 standard trees during the recent tree planting season in various open spaces.

Planting more trees is one of the 100-plus actions the Council is taking as part of its commitment to reducing the District's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030.

Residents can help with the scheme by watering any staked sapling they see near their home to encourage its growth.

This is especially helpful during any dry spells that may occur this summer.



Top of the Plots

An allotment society from St Albans District has been invited to exhibit at one of the most prestigious garden shows in the country.

Sandridge Road Allotment Association is one of only 13 such groups from England that will take part in this summer's Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival.

The show, one of the biggest in the world, is run by the Royal Horticultural Society and the association is in the running for the Best Community Allotment title.

Their ambitious exhibit will be wildlife friendly to highlight the importance of the natural environment. It will be on a six by three metres plot with a shelter and three vegetable and flower beds.

The team behind the effort includes not only plot holders and supporting businesses, but schools and charities.



Car Club

The Council has joined forces with Enterprise Car Club to give residents and businesses access to electric vehicles on a pay-per-hour basis.

The exciting pilot scheme to be launched later this year will make two cars available at a prime City Centre location.

Membership will also give people access to 1,400 vehicles across the country with the rental cost being as little as £6.20 an hour.

The club is intended to mark the beginning of a new era when car ownership is no longer seen as essential.

The pay-as-you-go alternative will save people money, reduce the street space needed for parking and prevent air pollution.

More details will appear when the scheme nears its launch here: www.entreprisecarclub.co.uk/gb/en/programs/regions/south-east-england/st-albans.html.

Changes to your Council garden waste collection service from 1 July



New opt-in garden waste paid subscription service – sign up now!

From 1 July 2021 the Council's garden waste service will be by annual paid subscription only.

This applies to all residents who live in a house or flat where the Council collects garden waste.

For full details please see:

www.stalbans.gov.uk/garden-waste-subscription-service.
(See also the letter delivered with your Council Tax bill in March 2021.)



AccessAble

Your Accessibility Guide

AccessAble

AccessAble is a website and app that gives information about the accessibility of spaces and venues of all kinds.

It uses 33 symbols to provide residents and visitors the detailed information they need to work out if a place is going to meet their accessibility requirements.

Everybody has different needs – from hearing enhancement to facilities for assistance dogs – and AccessAble’s trained surveyors work closely with the Council and St Albans BID to check out every single place in person.

AccessAble’s Detailed Access Guides cover hotels and guest houses, places to eat and drink, places to visit and much more and consist entirely of facts, figures and photographs.

They cover everything from the width of doorways to staff training and accreditation which can make preparing for a day out much easier. Find somewhere that meets your needs at www.AccessAble.co.uk.



Quaker Garden

An historic garden in the City Centre has been closed temporarily during the construction of a major housing and commercial development.

The Quaker Garden, in Victoria Street, has been screened off by hoardings to allow for the next phase of building work at an area known as the City Centre Opportunity Site (CCOS) South.

St Albans Quakers were consulted about the plans which they agreed to and were also actively involved in drawing up designs to improve the garden.

The work to enhance the garden, including new seating, will be supervised by an archaeologist because of its past as a burial ground.



Welcome back!
We've missed you! Can't wait to see you!

Shop Safe - Shop Local

Remember - hands, face, space!

European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

HM Government

St Albans
City & District Council



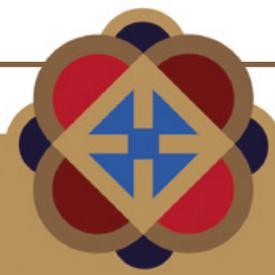
Flytipping advice

Make sure that if someone takes away your unwanted items for disposal they have a waste carrier licence and give you a receipt.

If they illegally dump the rubbish and it is traced back to you, you could be liable for a fine if you didn't take these precautions.

You can also take your rubbish to a household waste recycling centre or arrange a bulk collection by contacting us on 01727 809019 or wastemanagementservices@stalbans.gov.uk.

It is also worth knowing that leaving items outside a closed charity shop or by a litter bin is flytipping and can be punished by a fine.



A MEDIEVAL SUMMER

Celebrating our medieval heritage



St Albans Museum + Gallery

**ST. ALBANS
CATHEDRAL**

Exhibition: Chroniclers of History

Friday 30 July – Sunday 31 October, Museum + Gallery, Free

The medieval monks of St Albans produced a wide range of works, taking in science, literature and religious texts, but the monastery of St Albans became especially famous for the quality of its chronicles. The breadth of coverage and detail meant they formed the basis for the modern history of medieval England. This exhibition brings together the finest examples of medieval manuscripts made here.

Workshop: Glittering Gilders

Sunday 24 October, 10am-5pm, Museum + Gallery, £80

Join us for a workshop to discover how the Chroniclers produced their manuscripts and recreate them.

Illuminated manuscripts are among the most dazzling and intriguing objects ever created and this is your chance to join renowned scribe and illuminator Patricia Lovett MBE on this one-day masterclass to learn the skills and techniques. Under her guidance, you'll choose your own miniature animal from a small selection from medieval bestiaries and find out how to bring it to life with colour and gold.

Talk: History in the making in medieval St Albans

Sunday 26 September, 3pm, online and in-person, Museum + Gallery, £8

Join Professor James Clark as he reveals the history of the chroniclers of St Albans and their importance. The chronicles are a record of national and regional history, a testimony to how history was made in the Middle Ages and a witness to the craft and creative art of the Abbey and the City.

Talk: Medieval Manuscripts at St Albans Abbey

Wednesday 1 September, 7.30-9pm, St Albans Cathedral and online, £15

Christopher de Hamel, expert in medieval manuscripts, joins us for a talk exploring the riches of the manuscripts created and kept by medieval St Albans Abbey. Many found their way into the collection of Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury 1559-1575.



Workshop: Creative calligraphy for families

Wednesday 18 August, 11am-1pm, Museum + Gallery, £5

You can become a Chronicler at any age! Come along to this drop-in craft session for families to learn to brush-letter your name in a modern calligraphy style with local artist Jen Roffe.



Workshop: Pressing issues: printing and reflection with Suman Gujral

Sunday 3 October, 3-5.30pm, Museum + Gallery, £35

Print has been used as a medium for protest and social commentary throughout history. Suman Gujral will share her reflections as a poet and her expertise as an artist in this medium. We will be trying linocut and monoprint and exploring techniques of how to make prints at your kitchen table as well as using a small table-top press.



For more details about all these events and to book, please visit our website www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk.

Photographs © copyright of the British Library.



Hertfordshire Trading Standards are advising residents to say no to traders who turn up uninvited on the doorstep.

Rogue builders and gardeners often trick people into paying high prices for unnecessary or shoddy work and give false names and addresses.

- Only deal with callers by appointment.
- Always ask for ID and check it carefully.
- Do not keep large sums of money at home.

- Do not buy goods or services at the door.
- Don't be a victim – say **NO** to doorstep callers.

If you need to have home improvement work carried out, consider using Hertfordshire Trading Standards Which? approved traders. Information about this can be found on the County Council's website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk

For advice and to report cold callers, contact Trading Standards (via Citizens Advice consumer helpline) on 0808 223 1133.



Verges plea

Residents, delivery drivers and tradesmen are urged to take care of roadside verges and avoid damaging them.

There have been complaints, including in the Sandridge and Marshalswick areas, about the condition of some verges in residential areas.

Damage can be inflicted by vehicles driving over the verges or parking on them while skips or pallets of building materials can also cause harm.

Turf can be ripped up, and ruts and muddy patches created while tree and plant roots can be compacted.

Such damage makes verges unsightly, reducing the appeal of the surrounding area, and can be costly to repair.

People are being urged to take care to protect this amenity and report damage to Hertfordshire County Council via their website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk.

Electrical Safety

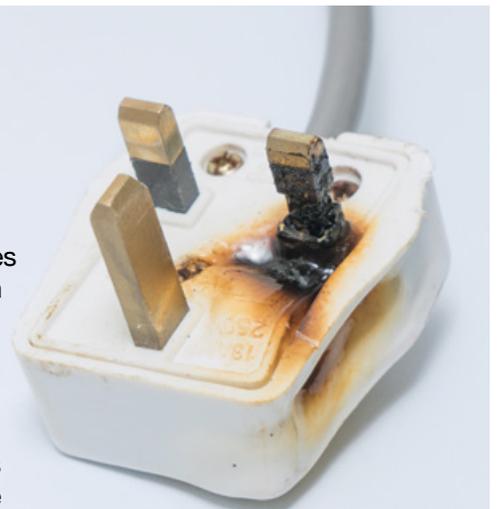
Regulations to ensure the safety of electrical installations in private rental properties were introduced last year.

Landlords must ensure their properties are inspected by a competent person at least every five years and have an Electrical Installation Condition Report or Minor Electrical Installation Works Certificate.

Failure to comply with the regulations could lead to further action and a fine of up to £30,000 per offence.

Further details can be found on our webpage – www.stalbans.gov.uk/landlords.

If you have any concerns regarding these regulations please contact the Private Sector Housing Team at privatesectorhousing@stalbins.gov.uk.



E-billing

Over 10,000 residents have now opted to receive their Council Tax Bill electronically.

This is an environmentally-friendly initiative as it reduces the use of paper while also saving taxpayers' money.

To sign up to e-billing, please visit www.stalbans.gov.uk/manage-your-council-tax-online.

We encouraged residents to join the scheme by holding a £2,000 prize draw. The winner was Mr Peter Gulliver of Park Street.



Food and Drink Festival Returns

The District's hugely popular Food and Drink Festival will be returning in September now that the lockdown has been eased.

Among the highlights is the CAMRA Beer and Cider Festival which will have a Back to the Pub theme.

This will involve the event taking place in smaller venues across the District, rather than in the Alban Arena.

An exciting feature of the Food and Drink Festival will be two street festivals with one in Harpenden being included in the programme.

This will be on Saturday 18 September and will involve dozens of stalls showcasing the very best of the District's food and drink produce.

There will also be a music stage, pop-up restaurants, cookery theatre, tasting tents, children's entertainment and street performances.

The street festival in St Albans on Sunday 26 September will be just as amazing.

More details about the Festival, including how to vote in the awards, will appear on the website www.enjoystalbens.com.



Two new benches have been provided for residents in popular spots in the City Centre.

One of the seats, sponsored by St Albans BID, has been installed in front of the Museum + Gallery.

It was 'opened for business' by Maureen Sivyer (pictured) who had campaigned for almost a decade to have a permanent bench placed there.

The other bench, sponsored by the St Albans Rotary Club, is located a few metres away in St Peter's Street.

More social housing

Eighteen more homes for social rent have been created after an ageing sheltered housing block in St Albans was refurbished.

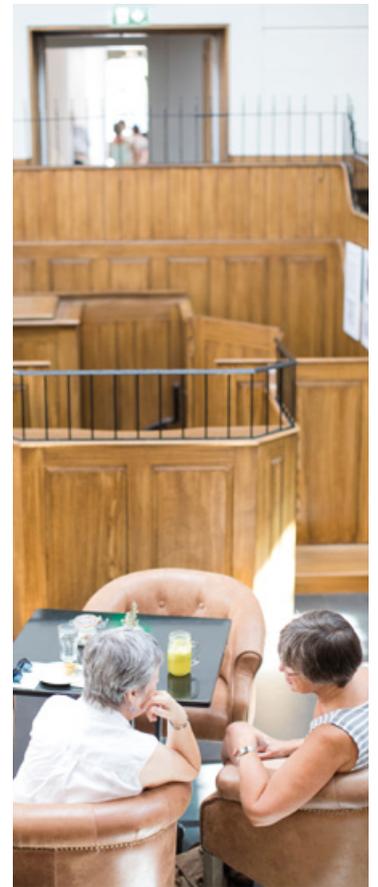
Mereden Court in Tavistock Avenue, Sopwell, was converted into 14 one-bedroom and four two-bedroom flats and renamed Hawksley Court.

The £3.2 million project, supported by a Homes England grant, was finished earlier this year with all 18 homes now being rented by people from the Council's housing and transfer register.

It follows the creation of £4.8 million Warner House, in Cell Barnes Lane, which provided 24 new homes for over-55s. A sheltered block, Wavell House, that stood on the site was demolished.



AMAZING VENUE FOR HIRE



Celebrate at St Albans Museum + Gallery The perfect venue for a wide variety of events

Are you looking for a special space to hold a long awaited celebration?

St Albans Museum + Gallery is the ideal place to reconnect and gather again with loved ones in the heart of our historic city.

From small, intimate gatherings to weddings and larger celebrations we are able to meet your needs.

Our dramatic and unique Edwardian Courtroom will get all your guests talking while our Assembly Room's surroundings provide a sumptuous and classic backdrop.

For booking enquiries and to arrange a personal tour, please email museumevents@stalbans.gov.uk or telephone 01727 751814.

St Albans Museum + Gallery café

The most prominent
café in the City Centre
is back in business.

Relax indoors with a coffee and a freshly baked pastry or cake or enjoy an al fresco lunch with friends on our vibrant terrace from a menu of locally sourced dishes.

11am – 5pm, daily.



St Albans
City & District Council

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 **Email:** contactus@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.disabledgo.com for information about access to local facilities.

 **Twitter:** @StAlbansCouncil.

 **Facebook:** St Albans Council.

 **Facebook:** Recycle for St Albans District.