

Community NEWS



WINTER 2019

St Albans Christmas Street Party

Thousands expected at spectacular City Centre event on Sunday 17 November

The festive season will get underway in St Albans District with a fantastic Christmas street party.

The City Centre will be closed to traffic on Sunday 17 November for the free-to-attend event called the St Albans Christmas Cracker. The fun will start at noon and carry on until darkness falls around 6pm. There will be a special light show at 5pm.

Among the other attractions will be Santa's grotto, funfair rides, live music and dozens of food, drink and gift stalls.

This year, businesses, community groups and other organisations have joined forces with the Council to create a fabulous programme of Christmas events.

Look out for a brochure, due to be delivered with your Community News, which will give details of all that's on offer in the weeks ahead.

Among other events, St Albans BID will run Santa's Post Office from Thursday 14 November to Sunday 22 December at Christopher Place. They will also be running a treasure trail around the City with a chance to win a St Albans Gift Card.

Another highlight will be the launch of the highly-popular Charter Market's Christmas season on Sunday 15 December with live music and other entertainment.

The Market will then run every day, instead of the usual Wednesday and Saturday, finishing on Christmas Eve on Tuesday 24 December.

Further information will be available on the website at: www.enjoystalbens.com



New Website

The Council is making major changes to its website to make it more user friendly. See **page 2**.

Festive Recycling

For the Christmas and New Year waste and recycling collection dates, see **page 8** for a cut-out-and-keep guide.

Civic Centre Hub

See **page 5** for information about community groups active at the Civic Centre Hub where you can get advice and support on debt, housing, health and other issues.



Community News is published by St Albans City & District Council

www.stalbens.gov.uk



New Website To Be Launched

The Council is revamping its website to make it more user-friendly – with the new version due to be launched on the week beginning Monday 16 December.

Among the changes on www.stalbans.gov.uk that you will notice is a complete reorganisation of the website's structure so you can find information much more easily.

We have simplified pages, cut out the jargon and ensured it will take less time to carry out transactions such as paying for a service, making an application or reporting an issue.

The transformation follows consultations with users, including residents, businesses and community groups. Our goal is to make it easier for you to do the things you need to do, when you want to do them.

We will be looking for feedback in the weeks following the launch and you will be able to give your views through a MyStAlbans District Account or Community Viewpoint, see below.



Sign up with
MyStAlbans
District Account

Go Green By Using A MyStAlbans District Account

More than 15,500 residents have now signed up to MyStAlbans – an online account offering quick and easy access to many Council services.

Signing up to an account is also an environmentally-friendly act as it reduces the need for paperwork.

For example, you can use the account for receiving information

about your Council Tax bill and arranging to make your payments.

This e-billing service will help us reduce the amount of paper we use – and the more people who go paperless, the greener we can be.

You can also use the account to report a fly-tip or antisocial behaviour or apply for a parking permit.

There are also services for housing tenants including the ability to check rent balances and see recent transactions.

More services are being added all the time and it only takes a couple of minutes to sign up. Just go to www.stalbans.gov.uk/mystalbans



Pub In The Park

Businesses, residents and community groups are asked for their views on the first Pub in the Park event in St Albans.

More than 18,000 people attended the three-day food, drink and live music show hosted by celebrity chef Tom Kerridge at Verulamium Park.

The Council gave permission to the organisers to hold the event which included 87 food and drink exhibitors, live music and ten pop-up restaurants.

St Albans was one of eight locations chosen for this year's tour with Bath, Warwick and Leeds among the others.

It is believed the organisers will apply to hold the event at Verulamium Park again in 2020.

Now we want to hear from residents and organisations whether they felt Pub in the Park was a success and if they would be happy for it to return next year.

You can send your views to: events@stalbam.gov.uk.

Have Your Say

Let your voice be heard on major issues affecting the District by joining the group Community Viewpoint.



We want to hear from you on the important subjects that the Council has to deal with.

You will be notified by email of any consultations we have on our parks, green policies, housing initiatives and other services.

To join Community viewpoint and take part in the debate, you will need to open a MyStAlbans account. Please visit www.stalbans.gov.uk/communityviewpoint

Mayor's Carol Concert

Everyone is welcome to attend one of the most popular festive events in St Albans – the Mayor's Carol Concert on Sunday 8 December from 4pm. The Mayor, Councillor Janet Smith, will host the event by the Clock Tower with mulled wine and mince pies available to add to the cracking atmosphere. Funds raised will be donated to the Mayor's charity, Citizens Advice.



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

St Albans Museum + Gallery

For detailed information about the events programme, go to: www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk



Pageant Fever! St Albans Performs its Past

Friday 15 November 2019
to 23 February 2020.
Keeper's Galleries, Free.

Three times in the twentieth century St Albans caught 'pageant fever'. In 1907, 1948 and again in 1953, the people of the City came together to perform episodes from its rich history.

This exhibition tells the story of the St Albans pageants with objects, voices, pictures and film. It shows how the pageants were organised, how they represented local and national history – and considers what they meant to the people of St Albans and surrounding towns and villages.



Museum Minis

Tuesday 26 November, 10am – 11am and 11.30am – 12.30pm,
Learning Studio, £3 per child.

Looking for a way to keep little ones occupied? Join us in the morning or afternoon for a story, craft activity and a museum hunt inspired by our museum collections. Suitable for children aged 2 – 4 years, accompanied by an adult.

Town Hall Tour: Mayors, Magistrates & Museums

Tuesday 19 November, 2:30 – 3:30pm,
Grand Staircase Gallery, Free but ticketed.

Be guided through the newly-restored building to discover the fascinating functions and features of the different historic spaces. You will hear about the glittering galas and balls in the Assembly Room and the tough conditions for prisoners held in the basement cells. Please note that the cells can only be accessed by stairs, so let us know in advance if you have any access needs.

International Toilet Day Quiz

Tuesday 19 November, 7.30 – 10pm, £10 per person, drinks available to buy on the evening.

Hosted by the London Loo Lady, Rachel Cole-Wilkin, this will be a quirky evening talk and quiz for International Toilet Day. Discover why Rachel has made toilets her passion before being quizzed on everything from historical loos to global sanitation.



St Albans Christmas Cracker

Sunday 17 November, 12 – 6pm.

Pop into the Museum + Gallery for festive fun during the St Albans Christmas Cracker! Father Christmas will be visiting so why not see him in his grotto. Don't forget to try your hand at some festive craft activities in the Assembly Room. A small charge will apply to visit Santa.



Novum Organum Scientiarum: Science in St Albans

Until March 2020, Weston Gallery, Free.

This fascinating exhibition celebrates some of the incredible scientists who have lived and worked in St Albans District. Learn about Francis Bacon's new experimental method, described in his book *Novum Organum Scientiarum*. His ideas still shape the way we do science today. The exhibition also highlights Rothamsted Research, in Harpenden. Eleanor Ormerod, a pioneer in the study of insects, and physicist Stephen Hawking, who both lived in St Albans, also feature.

Verulamium Museum

Archaeological Poo!

Saturday 16 November,
12-4pm, £2 per child.

Held in the run-up to International Toilet Day, see some fossilised 'specimens', discover how the Romans kept themselves clean and join in other interesting activities.



Housing Issues



Call for Landlords

Mosaic Lettings is a Council service that has added benefits for landlords.

It works to provide good homes in the private-rented sector for local people and is keen to hear from landlords.

The extra benefits available to landlords include no tenant search fees, no monthly charges and no tenancy set-up costs.

There's a £200 bonus when you let a property, up to a maximum of £600 per landlord, and free regular inspections undertaken by professionals.

Interested landlords should contact the team at mosaic.lettings@stalbans.gov.uk or 01727 814674.



Housing First

A major initiative to help rough sleepers in St Albans District take a new direction in life was launched on Thursday 10 October, World Homeless Day.

Housing First is an interventionist approach to rough sleeping that recognises that a home is fundamental to a person's life and wellbeing.

The programme is run by Hightown Housing Association on behalf of St Albans City and District Council and Dacorum Borough Council.

It is financed by a £100,000 grant obtained earlier this year by the Councils from a Government fund to help rough sleepers.

The money will be used to support eight to twelve rough sleepers from the District and Dacorum and give them a fresh start.



Car Park Changes

A major change has been made to the way public car parks in St Albans District are managed.

The Council has taken back full control of 15 car parks it owns in St Albans and three that it has in Harpenden. They had previously been run by a private firm.

In the short term, most motorists will notice little if any change to the parking facilities and services with charges remaining the same. In the longer term, it is planned to further modernise the car parks with significant investment in new technology and other features.

This will be helped by the Council retaining all the revenues generated by the car parks rather than sharing them with a contractor.

The Council has also taken control of parking enforcement for the District.

Have your say on the North St Albans Masterplan

St Albans City and District Council is working with the landowners and land promoters at this site in north St Albans to develop a Masterplan. This will deliver high-quality infrastructure and homes, including affordable housing, alongside exceptional green spaces and supporting services.

We need your help to develop the vision for this new community.

Still at the early stages, there will be a number of opportunities for local people to get involved in the coming months.

For updates and to find out how you can get involved, visit

www.northstalbans.co.uk





The Hub

Community groups from throughout the District have a presence at The Hub – an information and advice centre located at the Council’s Civic Centre offices.

You can learn about opportunities for voluntary work from Communities 1st, seek advice about various issues from Citizens Advice or find out about courses available at Oaklands College.

These are just a few of the groups that are active at The Hub during the week. The full timetable is here:

Citizens Advice: 10am – 4pm, Monday to Thursday, and 10am – 1pm, Friday.

Communities 1st: 10am – 4pm, Monday to Wednesday.

Oaklands College: 10am – 2pm, Monday and Wednesday.

St Albans Credit Union (helps with savings and loans): 10am – 1pm, Wednesday.

Community Navigator, a group that helps people access the different sources of help available to them: 10am – 1pm, Monday (drop-in) and Friday (by appointment).

Herts County Council Stop Smoking Service: Tuesday 1pm – 4pm.

Herts Asian Women’s Association: 10am – 1pm, alternate Fridays.

St Albans Women’s Outreach: 9am – 5pm, Monday.

Hertfordshire Practical Parenting Programme: 10am – 4pm, Monday, 10am – 2pm, Wednesday.

Shaw Trust (provides employment opportunities for those with disabilities): 10am – 5pm, Wednesday.

Age UK: 1.30pm – 4.30pm, alternate Tuesdays.

Mind In Mid-Herts: 1pm – 4pm, Thursday.



Some of these sessions are drop-in and others are by appointment. Please check with the organisation concerned before making a visit.



Heathy Hub

A new Healthy Hub initiative will launch later this year to run alongside the main Hub.

Funded by Hertfordshire County Council, it will offer a range of health-related support and will be a ‘one-stop shop’ where residents can get information, advice and guidance to boost their physical and mental health. There will also be mini-health MOTs on offer.

As it develops, there will be a monthly newsletter containing information about the services available. To find out more, visit the website www.stalbans.gov.uk/contact-us/hub/ or drop in to The Hub for a chat.

We are always looking for new partners and ideas that could enhance the Hub. You can do so by emailing Healthy.Hub@stalbans.gov.uk.



Shape Up

Shape Up is a free, male-only weight management course specifically designed to tackle obesity for the long term.

On our 12-week courses you will learn how to lead a healthy lifestyle and avoid yoyo dieting by enhancing your knowledge of food.

On top of this, participants can expect to take part in fun, group physical activities such as circuit training, walking football, boxing drills and more.

Two of our coaches will be there to guide you through the course and provide you with regular feedback on your progress.

The next course in St Albans District starts in January 2020. You can register your interest at www.shapeupherts.com and see how much weight you can lose.

Focus on Green Issues

Herts Warmer Homes

You may be eligible for subsidised home insulation, boiler repairs or a new heating system to keep your house warm this winter. You may qualify if you are on a low income, have a particularly cold home, a health condition or young children.

For a free assessment, please contact the Herts Warmer Homes scheme by calling HertsHelp on 0300 123 4044 or by e-mailing info@hertshelp.net, quoting Herts Warmer Homes. Please note that the scheme will be closing in spring next year.



Schools in Bloom

The winners of the Schools in Bloom contest for the St Albans District have been chosen from a record number of entries.

Twenty schools entered the competition, now in its sixth year, which encourages infant and primary school children to take an interest in nature and gardening.

All of this year's categories were on the theme of wildlife gardening to highlight the need to provide habitats for bees, birds and other creatures.

The winners were presented with their awards at a ceremony at the offices of St Albans City and District Council which organised the contest.



Where recycling goes

Almost all of our recycling, including plastics, glass and textiles, is processed either in the UK or Europe. If you would like a full breakdown, you can contact wastemanagementservices@stalbens.gov.uk or check out www.wastedataflow.org

The latter is a public website and every quarter we post details on it of where recycled materials have gone.



Climate Crisis Response Working Group

The Council has set up a Climate Crisis Response Working Group which is meeting to consider what action is needed locally to respond to the Climate Emergency.

This is a cross-party group with input from a wide range of community groups including Sustainable St Albans, the Building Research Establishment, Rothamsted Research, Plastic Free Harpenden and the Ver Valley Society.

This follows the declaration of a Climate Emergency by the Council in July.

Recycling at Major Events

Improvements are being made to the way waste from major City Centre events is disposed of. In the past, most of the rubbish generated by such events has gone to landfill which is costly for the Council and damaging to the environment.

Now efforts are being made to ensure as much of the waste as possible is recycled.

Visitors are being encouraged to separate their rubbish into recycling bins placed at strategic points around the City Centre.

The new system was used at the St Albans Festival in September when more than 10,000 people descended on St Peter's Street to browse dozens of food and drink stalls.

Council officers were on duty at the colour-coded bin stations to answer questions about recycling.

They also helped people correctly dispose of their rubbish, including

plastic, cans, paper, cardboard, glass and food scraps.

The system will be in operation at future events including the Christmas Cracker on Sunday 17 November and next year's Alban Weekend.





Cyber Security of the Over 65s

The Community Safety team has been working in partnership with Oaklands College and Hertfordshire Constabulary on a course for over 65-year-olds on staying safe online.

It teaches basic digital skills, accessing shopping sites securely and creating strong passwords. There is also a wealth of information about cyber crime from the Police.

The course is held for two hours a week over five weeks and is free apart from a £10 registration fee.

To enquire about enrolling in one of the courses, please call **01727 737154** or email acl@oaklands.ac.uk.

More than 80% of thefts from vehicles involve unlocked cars
WHY?
Because it's... **EASY**

EASY to forget to lock your car and close the windows at night.

EASY to leave your valuable possessions highly visible.

EASY to assume that because it's parked on your driveway or outside your house that it's somehow 'safer'.

EASY for the thieves, as stealing from an unlocked car means that they are less likely to be seen and so more likely get away with it.

Don't make it EASY, lock your vehicle.

Herts Police, St Albans Police
 @HertsPolice @HarpendenPolice @StAlbansPolice @LdnColneyPolice
 hertspolice

If you see a crime in progress, call 999.
If reporting retrospectively call 101. Or www.herts.police.uk/contact
Join OWL www.owl.co.uk to receive emails about crime in your local area.



Earthworks is a small, award-winning local charity nurturing people with learning disabilities – known as Earthworkers – to reach their full potential.

Earthworkers, volunteers and staff all work and learn together through social and therapeutic horticulture to manage 3.5 acres of eco-gardens in Hixberry Lane, St Albans with a focus on sustainability, organic growing and traditional countryside skills.

Earthworks' inspiring pilot project, Earthworks on Wheels, sees Earthworkers travelling into the community to use their skills to care for the gardens of vulnerable people.

The charity's work, its beautiful eco-gardens and its compassionate staff and volunteers encourage people of all abilities to develop skills, build confidence, boost health and wellbeing, and champion social inclusion.

You can visit Earthworks between 9.30am and 3pm to buy seasonal produce. We also have a stall at the St Albans Farmers' Market on the second Sunday of every month.

You can support Earthworks in other ways too, such as attending its open garden event and fairs, donating good quality gardening items or donating online.

The Council has supported Earthworks with the award of a £2,520 community grant for window blinds to be fitted at their classroom.

These allow users with sensory and cognitive impairments to better enjoy the space and for teaching to be carried out more effectively.

Visit www.earthworksstalbans.co.uk to find out more or follow us on social media, [@Earthworks_](https://www.instagram.com/Earthworks_) or [@earthworks.stalbans](https://www.instagram.com/earthworks.stalbans).



Christmas Waste and Recycling Collection Dates

Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection Day
Monday 23 December 2019	No Change
Tuesday 24 December 2019	No Change
Wednesday 25 December 2019	Friday 27 December 2019
Thursday 26 December 2019	Saturday 28 December 2019
Friday 27 December 2019	Monday 30 December 2019
Monday 30 December 2019	Tuesday 31 December 2019
Tuesday 31 December 2019	Thursday 2 January 2019
Wednesday 1 December 2019	Friday 3 January 2019
Thursday 2 January 2019	Saturday 4 January 2019
Friday 3 January 2019	Monday 6 January 2019
Monday 6 January 2019	Tuesday 7 January 2019
Tuesday 7 January 2019	Wednesday 8 January 2019
Wednesday 8 January 2019	Thursday 9 January 2019
Thursday 9 January 2019	Friday 10 January 2019
Friday 10 January 2019	Saturday 11 January 2019



St Albans Feastival

Thousands of people shrugged off rain showers to enjoy a spectacular six-hour street party – the St Albans Feastival.

The City Centre was closed to traffic for the free-to-attend event, a showcase for the District's booming food and drink industry.

Among the attractions were around 90 stalls, a cookery theatre, pop-up restaurants, live music and children's activities. See pictures from the event on the right.

The Feastival is one of the highlights of the St Albans Food and Drink Festival which is organised by the Council with the help of a steering group.

This year, the Festival took a step away from single-use plastics and encouraged businesses to use alternative containers made of recyclable material.



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 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 **Email:** 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, 01727 809019

Council Tax: counciltax@stalbans.gov.uk, 01727 819204/819205

Benefits: benefits@stalbans.gov.uk, 01727 819220

Planning: planning@stalbans.gov.uk, 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.

All Other Enquiries: 01727 866100

Twitter: @StAlbansCouncil

Facebook: St Albans Council

Facebook: Recycle for St Albans District