

# Nene Valley news

YOUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Apply for rural business grants up to £50,000

Using monies received from the government's Rural England Prosperity Fund, North Northamptonshire Council has re-launched a grant scheme to support existing rural businesses, with applications now open for the final time.

Applications are now being accepted for capital projects that can start quickly and be delivered in full by 28th February 2025. A particular target for this round is rural diversification, including business diversification and projects which support the visitor economy.

Cllr David Brackenbury, the council's Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, said: "This is the last chance for businesses to apply for grants of up to £50,000 - money which will make such a difference to rural businesses in North Northants."

Applications for this round of funding must be received by 16th December 2024 and interested rural businesses who wish to apply for funding in Round 5 (final round) should email [ukspf@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:ukspf@northnorthants.gov.uk) to request an application form, eligibility criteria and guidance notes.

# Green living roofs

Raunds Town Council has announced the installation of two vibrant, eco-friendly living roofs at Marshalls Road Car Park. These lush green additions are designed to bring a host of environmental benefits to the heart of Raunds, enhancing the town's aesthetics while supporting local biodiversity.

The new living roofs, carefully planted with a mix sedums, offer an urban oasis for birds, bees and other pollinators.

Beyond their beauty, the roofs will help to reduce carbon emissions, improve air quality, and absorb noise pollution. The

initiative aligns with the Town Council's ongoing commitment to sustainability and nature conservation.



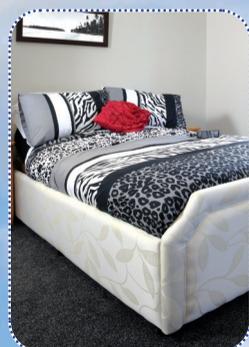
Councillor Ollie Curtis, Chairman of the Environment, Leisure and Recreation Committee, expressed the Council's excitement about the project: "These living roofs showcase the Town Council's firm commitment to creating a greener future for our residents. They add an element of nature to our town centre, providing an essential

habitat for wildlife. We're looking forward to watching the space evolve into a flourishing, biodiverse area."

The living roofs were installed in collaboration with Bridgman & Bridgman, specialists in green roofing projects. Residents are encouraged to visit the town centre and enjoy a closer look at this innovative project.

SHOWROOMS: 69-71 WASHBROOK RD • RUSHDEN • NORTHANTS NN10 6UR [action2mobility.co.uk](http://action2mobility.co.uk)

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## Council Tax Support proposals in North Northamptonshire discussed at Executive

Assistance available to people paying their Council Tax in the North Northamptonshire Council area is set to remain unchanged from previous years.

A report before the authority's Executive on 14th November recommended that – under the Local Council Tax Support Scheme – help for the 2025-2026 financial year would stay at the same proportion as for 2024-2025.

This means that all eligible working age claimants would only have to pay a minimum of 25% towards their Council Tax liability.

Following approval by the Executive, the proposal will go before the authority's Council meeting on 5th December for final sign-off.

Cllr Lloyd Bunday, the Council's Executive Member for Finance and Transformation, said: "We're aware that some residents may be struggling to pay their bills, therefore I'm delighted that we're able to maintain the scheme at the same rate as for the previous few years.

"I would encourage Council Tax payers to apply

for Council Tax Support, more information can be found on how to apply and the qualifying criteria on the Council's website."

In addition to the Council Tax Support scheme, the Council has a scheme in place where people who are finding themselves in difficulties can apply for a Council Tax Discretionary Discount, which is used to mitigate any unforeseen or exceptional hardship circumstances that threaten taxpayers' ability to pay the Council Tax.

The Council's revenues and benefits social inclusion team is on hand to help customers apply for Council Tax support, Council Tax discretionary discounts and also other areas such as discretionary housing payment applications, personal independence payment applications, utilities and general money and debt advice.

Cllr Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "I'm pleased to see this recommendation going before Executive for approval prior to going to Council, as it demonstrates our continuing support for our residents."

## GENEALOGY JOTTINGS

WORDS BY  
JAN PEARSON

When I was a child, my parents spoke in 'backslang' if they wanted to talk about anything that they didn't want me to know. This could be anything from what to get me for my birthday, to subjects of a more delicate matter. What they didn't realise at the time was that children pick up languages very quickly. Sadly, I don't recall them talking about anything scandalous that happened in the family history.

However, it might be that you have stories in your families that have been a tad 'sanitised' – or even not mentioned at all. It might be that you are told about events that put ancestors in a better light than the truth would and events that have been glossed over or even lied about.

I was told that great uncle Walter fought in WW1 but, upon arriving back in Blighty, changed his name from Goldsmith to Smith and disappeared "up north". No-one knew the reason why – or they weren't saying. His brother Ernie tracked him down and my cousin Ray remembered meeting him in

Blackpool. But nobody knew – or was letting on – the reason behind the mystery. Years later, I tracked down Walter's army record. He had enlisted on 29th February 1916 but was discharged on 19th May, less than 3 months later, on medical grounds. He had epilepsy.

At this time, epilepsy was largely misunderstood and stigmatised. Employment prospects for people with the condition were virtually non-existent and many ended up in asylums. It is possible that this happened to Walter. However, he married in 1926 and was a master painter by the time of the 1939 Register. He and his wife also went on to run a boarding house. It could well be that his name change and move to Lancashire was as a result of the attitude to his epilepsy. Perhaps I will never know.

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You can also subscribe to Nene Valley News for £1.50 per issue.

Nene Valley News is produced by KM Media & Marketing, County House, 9 Checkpoint Court, Sadler Road, Lincoln LN6 3PW.

Copy dates for Nene Valley News

Publication date: Saturday 7th December  
Articles to the editor by: Wednesday 27th November

Publication date: Saturday 21st December  
Articles to the editor by: Wednesday 11th December

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## Changes to burial policies and regulations on Executive agenda

A recent meeting of North Northamptonshire Council's Executive received two reports on proposed changes to cemeteries across the area.

Following on from a consultation earlier in 2024, Executive approved plans to harmonise burial reservation policies into one unified policy across North Northamptonshire. The proposals are intended to help bring consistency to the reserving of graves across the area.

Under the new policy, North Northamptonshire residents would have the option to pay a fee and reserve one plot at a time, before burial. A grave could also be reserved at the time of burial, for a partner or family member to be buried next to each other.

Executive also approved a report on proposals to apply lawn cemetery regulations to the new extension at the council's Shire Lodge Cemetery in Corby. In 2020, planning permission was obtained to extend the cemetery to create an additional

2,978 graves.

A lawn cemetery is a cemetery where only headstone memorials are installed by families in a defined headstone border, with no additions outside the headstone border. This means the cemetery has a formal, orderly and peaceful appearance. Currently a mix of memorial types are permitted across the existing cemetery.

The proposals will also help the site be better managed in the future and help with ensuring the site is available for the longest possible time.

The report also looked at other operational changes including simplifying the opening hours of the site to match the hours across other council-owned cemeteries in North Northants.

Cllr David Brackenbury, the council's Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, said: "With a growing population across North Northants and an increased demand for cemetery places, it is important that we ensure that all cemeteries run by

the council are as future-proof as possible. This includes looking at our burial reservation policy and proposals to apply lawn cemetery regulations to the new extension at Shire Lodge.

"We know this is an emotive topic and residents should be assured the Executive will consider both reports very carefully before making any final decisions."

Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "As an authority, we have a responsibility to make sure that services are fair and equal across the area and introducing a new area-wide burial reservation policy would help us achieve this.

"But we also need to look locally and following the extension to Shire Lodge in Corby, it is important that we make sure this is available to use for many years to come, which the introduction of Lawn Cemetery Regulations would assist with."

The Executive met on Thursday 14th November at 10am at the Corby Cube.

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# SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS MADE IN IMPROVEMENTS TO PLANNING SERVICES AT NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Significant improvement has been made in bringing positive transformation to North Northamptonshire Council's planning department – according to a recent progress review of the service.

The peer team particularly noted the move to two planning committees and the updated scheme of delegation, demonstrating a proactive approach to streamlining the decision-making process.

The review team also noted the significant progress to coordinate data for developer contributions and providing greater transparency and accountability by publishing an infrastructure funding statement.

The review team was impressed by the culture of collaboration and mutual support demonstrated within the planning department and it was also lauded for establishing apprenticeship programmes to support the development of planning officers.

They also recognised the ongoing efforts to implement a new IT system intended to further enhance the efficiency of the planning service.

However, the update report also recognised that more work is still needed to be done and it was identified that the Council continued to face challenges regarding resource and recruitment, which is common across planning services nationally.

The need for good communication and timely correspondence between the planning service and its stakeholders was regarded as essential and whilst some improvements were noted, it was acknowledged that further improvement was required in this area.

Cllr David Brackenbury, the council's Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, said: "After the initial visit by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) we embarked upon our improvement journey as it was essential that we brought about rapid change.

"I welcome this progress report and we're very pleased that it shows real positive change in the department, which is excellent news. While we're moving in the right direction there is no room for complacency, and we're committed to continuing on the right trajectory.

"I would like to acknowledge the hard work of planning colleagues who have shown tremendous resilience and determination to bring about this improvement. Additionally, I would like to thank the Peer Review team for their expert analysis and would also like to thank everyone who engaged in this process."

Cllr Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "This progress report has highlighted widespread improvements that have been made – especially streamlining the decision-making process – and areas where we still need to make further changes.

"I'm grateful for everyone's hard work in bringing forward these changes and I would like to express my gratitude to the planning improvement board for their diligent efforts in identifying and addressing the challenges we have encountered.

"The original peer review was requested by myself back in 2022 as they are a great way of making sure services can transform in the right way. It's now essential we keep up the momentum to ensure the service is in the best possible shape for the residents of North Northamptonshire."

In September 2022, the initial peer review of the Council's Planning Service was undertaken by a PAS Peer Review Team. This included an extensive set of interviews and focus groups with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders.

Following an invitation by the Council, PAS made the second visit to the Council to conduct a progress review in May 2024, where they were also requested to undertake a desktop-based review of the Council's use of Extensions of Time (EOT) on planning applications.

PAS is part of the Local Government Association and is funded by government. Among other activities, PAS undertake peer reviews for local planning authorities.

Peer reviews can be done for any service and operate through a 'sector led' approach, where local authorities help each other to continuously improve.

## Consultation on the proposed school admission arrangements in North Northamptonshire for September 2026

North Northamptonshire Council's School Admissions Team is co-ordinating a consultation on the proposed changes to the admission arrangements for own admission authority mainstream schools in the authority for the September 2026 intakes.

To find out which schools are consulting and for more information, please visit: <https://northnorthants.citizenspace.com/school-admissions/consultation-on-school-admission-sep-2026>

The consultation will take place between 11th November 2024 and 29th December 2024.

North Northamptonshire Council is not proposing to make any changes to the admission arrangements for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools for September 2026.

**If you would like to respond to this consultation, then please email School Admissions at: [Schooladmissionsconsultation.NCC@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:Schooladmissionsconsultation.NCC@northnorthants.gov.uk) no later than 29th December 2024.**



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### NOVEMBER

Wed 20 Kew Gardens at Christmas  
Sat 23 Banbury Christmas Market  
Sun 24 Skegness, Christmas by the Sea  
Thu 28 Bury St Edmunds  
Fri 29 Worcester Christmas Market  
Sat 30 Bath Christmas Market  
Sat 30 Cadbury World at Christmas

### DECEMBER

Sun 1 Rochester Christmas Market  
Tue 3 Bluewater Shopping Complex  
Tue 3 Lakeside Shopping Complex  
Thu 5 Christmas Lunch River Cruise  
Sat 7 Melton Mowbray Christmas Market  
Sat 7 Nottingham Christmas Market  
Sat 7 Stratford Upon Avon Christmas Market  
Sun 8 Oxford  
Sun 8 Stratford Upon Avon Christmas Market  
Thu 12 Windsor OR Windsor Castle  
Fri 13 Ambassador Cruise Liner, Lunch & Show  
Sat 14 Hyde Park Winter Wonderland  
Sat 14 Manchester Christmas Market  
Sun 15 Stratford Upon Avon Christmas Market  
Sat 28 Skegness

### JANUARY

Fri 3 London's Christmas Lights & Fish n Chips  
Sat 4 Boundary Mills, Grantham  
Sun 5 Birmingham January Sales & Primark  
Wed 15 Seasonal Surprise  
Sat 18 Strictly Come Dancing

### FEBRUARY

Sat 1 York's Ice Trail - free event in the town  
Wed 5 St Albans Market Day  
Sat 8 Warwick & Leamington Spa  
Sun 9 Birmingham International Tattoo  
Wed 12 Boston Market & Baytree Garden Centre  
Sat 15 Houses of Parliament  
Sat 15 London Museums OR Free Time  
Tue 18 Melton Mowbray  
Wed 19 Seasonal Mystery Tour  
Thu 20 Ely  
Fri 21 Cotswold Farm Park - Adam Henson  
Sun 23 Orchids at Kew Gardens  
Tue 25 Barnsdale Gardens Snow Drops

### MARCH

Tue 4 Springfields  
Tue 4 Spalding  
Thu 6 Cotswold Tour  
Sat 8 York OR Jorvik Viking Centre  
Sat 8 National Railway Museum

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### NOVEMBER

29 NOVEMBER-2 DECEMBER BELGIUM CHRISTMAS MARKETS - £519.00pp

Hotel Alize, Half Board. Mouscron is a Walloon city and municipality located in the western part of Belgium, near the border with France. Some of the tourist attractions you can find in Mouscron are Eglise Saint-Barthelemy, the largest church built in the 19th century in the neo-Gothic style; Parc du Chateau, a large park that surrounds a beautiful castle and Les Moulins de la Marliere, a group of windmills built in the 18th and 19th centuries to name just a few.

### JANUARY

27-31 JANUARY YORKSHIRE DELIGHTS - £379.00pp

Burn Hall Hotel Huby, York. Half Board including excursions. Yorkshire is known for its Roman and Viking heritage, as well as its Norman castles, medieval abbeys, and 2 national parks. The largest area is North Yorkshire which covers nearly 3500 square miles and is known by the locals as 'God's own county', it is celebrated for its varied landscape. York, founded by the Romans, is home to the 13th-century cathedral York Minster, Tudor houses and medieval walls. The interactive Jorvik Viking Centre recalls the area's 9th-century Norse occupation.

### FEBRUARY

10-14 FEBRUARY 2025 SEASIDE MYSTERY - £359.00pp

Half Board including Excursions, £359pp. On the way to our chosen hotel we stop usually for morning refreshments and somewhere for lunch and arrive at our 'mystery' hotel in plenty of time before dinner. On the 2 - 4 day, after a leisurely breakfast and usually much discussion about what the day might have in store, we depart for a full day excursion. On the final day, we make our way home via another place of interest. A different experience every time.

### MARCH

9-12 MARCH 2025 FLOATING ON THE RIVER SEINE IN PARIS - UPPER DECK £609PP/MAIN DECK £599.00pp

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## Creating a Dementia Community Centre of Excellence

Public Health in North Northamptonshire Council is working with Northamptonshire Dementia Research and Innovation Centre (NDRIC) at the University of Northampton (UON) with the aim of creating a Centre of Excellence for Dementia awareness, support and care offering high standard, quality provision.

The Orchard Project will look to align current dementia care provision in an existing local community centre, The Autumn Centre in Corby, with best contemporary dementia-friendly practices, as they work towards enhancing their Dementia Friendly status.

Lee McCormick, Centre Manager at The Autumn Centre said: "The Autumn Centre is thrilled to be involved with Public Health, North Northamptonshire Council and the University of Northampton in such an exciting project to become a Centre of Excellence. This will be a great opportunity to tackle the early onset of dementia with research and a proactive inclusive programme."

As part of the project there will be a series of specifically designed public awareness activities and events linked to both early identification of cognitive decline and maintenance of positive Brain Health. This 12-month programme of events and activities will be co-produced and co-designed with people with dementia and carers, staff and Trustees at the Centre, and the wider community.

The project also aims to create and develop a model of support and outreach that can be

potentially rolled out to other similar services, benefitting more North Northamptonshire residents. It will explore the barriers to access and engagement with local health care and related services in relation to support for those effected by a dementia diagnosis.

Councillor Gill Mercer, North Northamptonshire Council's Executive Member for Adults, Health and Wellbeing said: "I am delighted that we have recently appointed a PhD student who will be working with Professor Jacqueline Parkes and Dr Alison Ward from the university to plan, advertise, recruit, and deliver the activity/event programme. They will also be evaluating its effectiveness and impact, especially on how dementia can affect accessing healthcare.

"This is a project which I hope will have far reaching benefits for those of our North Northamptonshire residents in cognitive decline for years to come."

Project lead, Professor Jacqueline Parkes from the University of Northampton said: "This is a very exciting project which could provide a blueprint for a community-based pathway approach to dementia support and care."

Groups such as local schools, faith groups, voluntary, third sector, and community organisations will also be invited to attend sessions to embed dementia awareness into their work.

This work links into Integrated Care Northamptonshire's Dementia Strategy's ambition to raise awareness and reduce stigma in relation to Mild Cognitive Impairment and dementia.

## YOUR HEALTH – MAKING BACK PAIN WORSE

*A lot of things you've read in my articles have been about how to help your back pain, or how to prevent it. This week, let's take a look at five things that won't help your back pain – and might even make it worse.*



**WORDS BY  
CLAIRE SHORT**

1. Lying in bed all day - It's so tempting to stay under the covers, but resting can actually do more harm than good. Gentle movement is key to getting your back feeling better.
2. Painkillers and pain-relieving gels - Pain relief medication can be very helpful as it can allow you to keep moving, but the recommendation is not to use it for long periods of time. Finding the right treatment and exercises for your injury should give you more long-term pain relief.
3. Self-diagnosing on the internet - As you already know, this is a rant of mine. An internet
4. Being hard on yourself - Stress is a major factor in making pain feel worse, so try to find ways to keep your stress levels down and not to beat yourself up for having pain. With all the help available to you, back pain shouldn't be long-lasting.
5. Ignoring the pain - I know, you're tough! But ignoring back pain can lead to bigger problems down the line. If you're feeling sharp or persistent pain when you're active (e.g. mowing the lawn), it's your body's way of telling you to be careful. Listen to it. I'll talk about more positive stuff next time!

**Claire Short is a Registered Osteopath and runs The Ashgrove Clinic in Higham Ferrers. Send questions to [claire@ashgrovehealth.co.uk](mailto:claire@ashgrovehealth.co.uk)**

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# New bus services to help connect communities

More new and enhanced bus services are being introduced across the North Northamptonshire Council area.

The services have been subsidised by the council from its own budgets and through funding targeted from the previous Government's Bus Service Improvement Programme, as well as from developer contributions.

The move supports the council's own Bus Service Improvement Plan, which was approved by Executive this year, and is in addition to other service improvements announced in September.

Cllr Matt Binley, the Council's Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets, said: "I'm delighted to announce further improvements to bus services in the North Northamptonshire area – a welcome addition to our network and a great way for people to get to work, go shopping or just meet up with friends.

"There are so many advantages to people making journeys by bus. I hope that people will start using these new routes as that is essential if they are to continue and hopefully for many of the services to eventually become fully commercially viable."

Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "It's important that we do what we can to develop our well-connected communities and I'm pleased that we're able to strengthen our bus network.

"Buses play a major role in reducing congestion on our roads, reducing pollution and helping us meet our ambitious carbon reduction targets."

## New services

- Stagecoach 5 – Corby, Corby Village, Little Stanion and Magna Park – Mondays to Saturdays

## Enhanced Services

- CB3 Lawsons – Corby, Corby Village, Gretton, Cottingham, Rockingham, Wilbarston, Ashton to Market Harborough (Replaces existing Welland Wanderer) – Tuesdays (shopping journey)
- 2 Stagecoach – Extension of Service 2 from Corby to Kettering via Priors Hall, Weldon, Oakley Vale and Kettering General Hospital – Mondays to Saturdays, hourly (not evenings)
- 2C Stagecoach – New late evening service from Corby town centre to Corby estates – Mondays to Fridays, one additional journey
- 94 – Rushden Lakes to Oundle – Monday to Friday, four journeys

## Demand Response Service

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# Oundle Christmas MARKET

FREE PARKING	Saturday 7 December 2024 10.00am - 5.00pm	3.30PM CHRISTMAS LIGHT SWITCH-ON
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100+ Stalls - Santa's Grotto - Reindeers - Hot & Cold Food  
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Herbie Lamb Quartet live in Queen Victoria Hall



Oundle Town Council

[Oundle.gov.uk](http://Oundle.gov.uk)

## NENE VALLEY NEWS - EVENTS

### > SATURDAY 23RD NOVEMBER, 7.30PM

**Rutland Sinfonia Concert** - St. Peter's Church, Oundle. Tickets £5-£15. [www.rutlandsinfonia.org.uk](http://www.rutlandsinfonia.org.uk). Mozart Piano Concerto No. 24, Bruckner Symphony No. 4 ('Romantic')

### > SATURDAY 23RD NOVEMBER, 7-9.30PM

**Unschooling Ordinary Men - a Christian Vision for Men event** - Park Road Baptist Church, Park Road, Rushden NN10 0RG. Booking online at [www.tickettailor.com/events/christianvisionformen/1321152](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/christianvisionformen/1321152).

### > SUNDAY 24TH NOVEMBER, 10.15AM

**Morning Worship with Holy Communion - preacher: Rev George Rogers (Peterborough)** - Whitefriars Church, Whitefriars Primary School, Boughton Drive, Rushden NN10 9HX.

### > SUNDAY 24TH NOVEMBER, 10AM-4PM

**Art & Craft Fayre** - Masonic Hall, Wellingborough Road, Rushden NN10 9YJ. Free entry, car parking available. "There will be a variety of stalls from Waxology, jewellery, pottery, crafts and beautiful art from local artists to homemade cakes and goodies, tombola and a children's colouring competition. Plus this year we are providing refreshments too."

### > WEDNESDAY 27TH NOVEMBER, 5PM

**The Snow Queen** - St Rumbald's Church, Stoke Doyle, invites you to enjoy a performance of 'The Snow Queen'. Tickets £15 from [liz.sdoyle@hotmail.com](mailto:liz.sdoyle@hotmail.com) or Mob 07713396130. Mulled wine and festive fare served after the performance.

### > FRIDAY 29TH NOVEMBER, 6PM-9PM

**Raunds Library Christmas Craft Fair** - Raunds Community Library, High Street, Raunds NN9 6HT. 01933 623747. Gifts, crafts and so much more.

### > SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER, 9.20AM

**Higham Ferrers Footpath Group** - Saffron Road car park for car sharing. Mark 07462 422097. 6.5-mile circular walk from Warmington, walking past Fotheringhay and Elton.

### > SUNDAY 1ST DECEMBER, 10.15AM

**Morning Worship at Whitefriars Church** - Whitefriars Primary School, Boughton Drive, Rushden NN10 9HX

### > SATURDAY 14TH DECEMBER, 7.30PM

**Oundle and District Choral Society will perform their Christmas concert** - St Peter's Church, Oundle. We are singing Handel's Messiah, Part 1; Vivaldi's Gloria, and Vaughan Williams' Fantasia on Christmas Carols. Tickets £12 available from members or on the door. A glass of wine and festive mince pie included in the ticket price.

### > SUNDAY 15TH DECEMBER, 9.40AM

**Higham Ferrers Footpath Group** - Saffron Road car park for car sharing. Daphne 07709 569415. Christmas Hat 3-mile walk from Seasons Garden Centre, Burton Latimer.

### > SUNDAY 29TH DECEMBER, 10AM

**Higham Ferrers Footpath Group** - Saffron Road car park. Daphne 07709 569415. Our last walk of 2024, a 5.5-mile walk in the Higham Ferrers area.

## Ajay Tegala – Wetland Diaries: Ranger Life and Rewilding on Wicken Fen

Friday 29th November, 7.45pm-8.45pm,  
St Peter's Church, North Street, Oundle

Tucked away in the flat lands of rural East Anglia lies Wicken Fen, loved for its big skies and tiny creatures, boasting over 9,000 recorded species. For 125 years, this wildlife sanctuary has been cared for by the National Trust.

A dedicated team look after this precious wetland of international importance, working with herds of free-roaming horses and cattle, weathering the elements to cope creatively with the dramas of a life outdoors at the cutting edge of conservation.

Wetland Diaries is a seasonal account of ranger life on Wicken Fen, restoring a once widespread landscape and the spectrum of emotions experienced. Ajay Tegala shares the spirit and atmosphere of the Fens, offering an insight into the privileges and pressures of managing semi-wild animals in one of the country's first wetland restoration projects, creating precious breathing space for nature and people alike.

Ajay shares his passion for the natural world through his work as a wildlife presenter. His television credits include BBC Springwatch and Inside the Bat Cave. As a countryside ranger, Ajay is grounded in the world of conservation. At the age of 15, he decided to become a conservationist after a week volunteering with the National Trust in his native East Anglian Fens. He has worked in nature conservation for over a decade,

first on Blakeney Point, North Norfolk and then on Wicken Fen. Ajay is passionate about protecting wildlife and engaging people with nature.

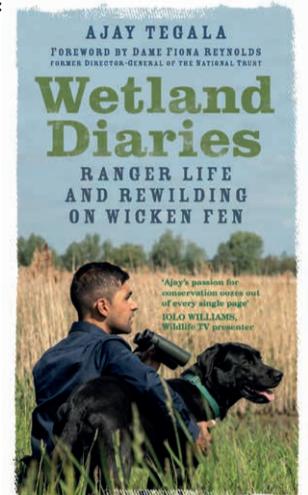
'A wonderfully evocative account of life as a ranger on one of Britain's oldest and best-loved nature reserves, packed with delightful stories of the people and wildlife, and written by one of our brightest young naturalists.'

*Stephen Moss, naturalist, bestselling author, TV producer*

'A hugely enjoyable behind the scenes look at the reality of a life given over to the restoration of nature. Ajay's vivid portrayal of his work at Wicken Fen is written with great honesty and humility, bringing one of the UK's most treasured nature reserves to life in all its tangled, waterlogged glory.'

*Lee Schofield, conservationist, author of Wild Fell*

Ajay will be in conversation with Francis Pryor. Francis was one of the key consultants on Time Team, and the resident Bronze Age and Iron Age expert. He is also famed for the discovery of Flag Fen, a 3,500-year-old Bronze Age site near Peterborough. He has written many books including The Fens. His latest publication is A Fenland Garden, published last year. Francis was awarded an MBE in 1999 for services to tourism.



Ajay Tegala



Francis Pryor

Tickets £8 (£7) available from Oundle Bookshop (cash only), or online at [www.authorsinoundle.co.uk](http://www.authorsinoundle.co.uk). Enquiries contact [info@authorsinoundle.co.uk](mailto:info@authorsinoundle.co.uk)

## Discover the magic of winter at the Nene Park Winter Festival – tickets on sale now!

Step into the magic of winter as the Nene Park Winter Festival returns! Open on 16 selected dates from Saturday 30th November through to Christmas Eve, Ferry Meadows will transform into an enchanted forest filled with magical surprises. Tickets on sale now!

Hosted by Nene Park Trust, this year's festival promises an unforgettable evening for visitors of all ages. Follow the willow sculpture trail, enjoy captivating performances, experience an outdoor cinema screening under the stars and explore magical activities. Indulge in a delicious menu of festive food and drink, and then visit our Christmas Shop for seasonal treats and gifts.

This year, as part of a collaboration with the National Literacy Trust in Peterborough, there will be a brand-new addition! Local author and illustrator Ellie Sandall has created an exclusive storybook, inspired by the enchanted forest, as a gift for you to enjoy at home.

Gather your family and friends and make lasting memories at the Nene Park Winter Festival. Tickets are just £10.50 per person, with free admission for children under 3. Your ticket also includes parking, with entry sessions available at 4pm, 5.30pm, and 7pm. Best of all, every ticket purchased helps support the ongoing care and upkeep of Nene Park.

Find out more and book your tickets now at [www.nenepark.org.uk/winter-festival](http://www.nenepark.org.uk/winter-festival)

# ART AND CRAFTS FAYRE

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## Join the fight **against litter**

Since January 2024, a new volunteer litter-picking group has been working in Rushden & Higham Ferrers, in conjunction with the Wellie Wombles, covering Wellingborough and neighbouring towns and villages.



The group is co-ordinated by Craig Blacha in Rushden and Higham Ferrers and since it was established in January there has been a regular flow of volunteers who have collected 418 bags of litter from Rushden and Higham Ferrers alone.

Craig said: "The volume of

litter collected is eye-watering but in the fight against litter is our small army of volunteers who dedicate their time to making our streets clean. I'm so grateful to each person who has helped us this year in keeping our streets clean. We are always looking for new volunteers and people

can find more information by following our Facebook page @Welliewombles. When Ditchford Lane was initially closed, we collected 100 bags from that small stretch of road."

You can also hire equipment for free from Rushden Library and Higham Ferrers Town Council offices.

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Deadlines for all classifications: 5pm Monday prior to issue date. A complete version of our Terms and Conditions can be found online at [www.nenevalleynews.co.uk](http://www.nenevalleynews.co.uk). Pay by credit/debit card or cheque. All major credit/debit cards accepted. For help and information please call 01522 692542 or visit [www.nenevalleynews.co.uk](http://www.nenevalleynews.co.uk)

### Family NOTICES

Nene Valley News can help you make those important family announcements.

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### PUBLIC NOTICES

#### NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14 (THE HEDGES, HIGHAM FERRERS)

(TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2024  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that North Northamptonshire Council have made an Order the effect of which is to prohibit traffic from proceeding along that length of The Hedges, Higham Ferrers as set out below.

LENGTH OF ROAD TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES: That length of The Hedges, Higham Ferrers between no.56 and no.58.

REASON FOR RESTRICTION: The restriction is required for safety during foul sewer connection.

PERIOD OF CLOSURE: The proposed Order will come into effect on 25th November 2024 and will continue in force for a period of eighteen months. An application may be made for the approval of the Secretary of State for Transport for the Order to be extended if this proves necessary. However, the restriction specified will have effect only at such times and to such an extent as is indicated by the display of signs prescribed by the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016.

EXPECTED DURATION: It is expected that the road will be restricted for up to 5 days.

ALTERNATIVE ROUTES: use St James Close and Handcross Way.

If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler ref:- 24/25 – N450 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T24/660

Dated this 23rd day of November 2024  
SANJIT SULL,  
Director of Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) (Interim)



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# Remembrance Day Parade and Service – Rushden's heartfelt tribute to our heroes

On Sunday 10th November, Rushden came together for a moving Remembrance Day service and parade in honour of those who have served and sacrificed. Organised by Rushden Town Council and supported by the Royal British Legion Rushden Branch, the annual event drew a large gathering of residents and community leaders.

The commemoration began with a parade assembling at 10.15am at Rushden Hall, Hall Park.

The parade proceeded to the Rushden War Memorial, where a service took place, including the laying of over 50 wreaths and a two-minute silence was observed at 11am.

The service continued at St Mary's Church at 11.15am, where attendees joined in further reflection. Rushden Town Council and the Royal British Legion extend heartfelt thanks to all who attended, honouring our shared commitment to remembrance and respect.

**Lest We Forget.**



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