

# Nene Valley NEWS

YOUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Telephone: 01522 692542

We want to hear from you, so please submit your news story or event at [www.nenevalleynews.co.uk](http://www.nenevalleynews.co.uk)

INSIDE this issue



SPOTLIGHT ON HOMES & GARDENS

PAGE 04



HERMITAGE HOUSE CARE HOME: ENHANCING RESIDENTS' LIVES IN THE HEART OF THRAPSTON

PAGE 12

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Chester House Estate receives education badge

The Chester House Estate has been awarded a Learning Outside the Classroom quality education badge after being recognised for its range of unique and inspiring programmes.

The Irchester Estate is steeped in more than 10,000 years of history, and the learning department provides curriculum-aligned school trips to encourage students to connect with heritage.

The Department for Education's guidance on Health & Safety on Educational Visits recommends that schools look for the LOTC Quality Badge when choosing external providers of educational visits.

CLr Helen Howell, North Northamptonshire Council's Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Sport, Leisure, Culture and Tourism, said:

"This quality badge is brilliant recognition for our learning department, being one of only seven locations in Northamptonshire that hold the award – and one of only two museums."

# More than £95,000 awarded to Northamptonshire-based organisations

Since launching the Northamptonshire Young People's Fund in 2024, Northamptonshire Community Foundation has awarded £95,227 in grants to charities and community organisations working to improve the lives of young people, thanks to the generosity of The Wilson Foundation, Constance Travis Charitable Trust and S27 Proceeds of Crime charity donations from the local courts.

Grants awarded from the fund support and enable projects that work with young people aged 11-25, who are at risk of experiencing crime and/or anti-social behaviour.

Funded groups include Northamptonshire Titans Foundation, who are working with more than fifty 11-18 year olds from disadvantaged backgrounds to create a safe and strong support network through their Bounce Back: Basketball for Youth Empowerment initiative.

With their grant award, KidsAid Foundation are

providing 300 trauma-specialised, one-to-one therapeutic sessions in five local secondary schools, for young people at risk of exclusion, anti-social behaviour or crime. And with their funds, Northampton Town Football Club Community Trust are continuing the delivery of their Premier League Kicks programme, providing weekly football, multi-skills and educational workshops for more than 40 young people in Rushden.

Rachel McGrath, Chief Executive of Northamptonshire Community Foundation,

said: "At Northamptonshire Community Foundation, we are committed to tackling our community's most urgent needs through our grant awards supported by generous donors to help young people and to keep them safe and well.

"Our Northamptonshire Hidden Needs Report, which we published in collaboration with the University of Northampton, highlighted that a rise in violent crime involving children and young people is an area of real concern within our county. So, we know that the grants awarded from the



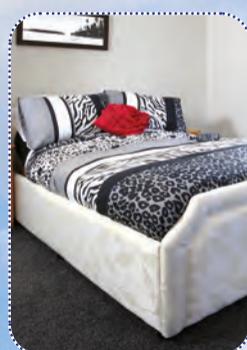
Northamptonshire Young People's Fund are urgently needed and potentially life-saving.

"Our team has worked tirelessly to distribute more than £95,000 from this fund

and we are very proud to support so many grassroots, Northamptonshire-based community groups and small local charities that provide vital support to our younger generation."

To find out more, visit <https://www.ncf.uk.com/>

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



Wet rooms and easy access bathrooms supplied and fitted

## Action<sup>2</sup>Mobility

THE REGION'S LEADING MOBILITY AID CENTRE

Phone us for delivery if you're shielding\*

Simply make your choice and phone through your order to **0800 698 2588**

\*Limited to 25 miles radius from our showrooms in Rushden

CALL FREE: 0800 698 2588 MON-FRI 8am-4.30pm FREE PARKING

Stockist of Cosyfeet and Sandpiper shoes

STAIRLIFTS: FULLY GUARANTEED, FREE HOME SURVEY

## Residents urged to get ready for May elections - less than 100 days to go

With under 100 days to go and the new electoral register published, residents across North Northamptonshire are being asked to think ahead and get ready for elections taking place locally on Thursday 1st May 2025.

On 1st May, eligible registered electors will be able to vote in two elections:

- North Northamptonshire Council elections
- Town and Parish elections

These elections will also see changes to local government boundaries and wards, meaning residents may be voting in a new or different ward, with a list of the new boundaries available on the NNC website.

Partly due to these changes, your polling station might differ from the last time you voted, and so residents are being urged to double check their poll card when it arrives closer to election day.

Anyone wishing to vote in person now needs to bring acceptable photographic ID, an Anonymous Electors Document or a Voter Authority Certificate. If you don't have any form of photo ID from the

accepted list on the council website, or your ID no longer looks like you, you can apply for a free Voter Authority Certificate. Applicants must be registered to vote beforehand. You can apply online for a Voter Authority Certificate via the Government website.

Adele Wylie, Returning Officer for North Northamptonshire Council, said: "This is a really exciting time in North Northamptonshire, with local elections taking place at the beginning of May.

"We are asking residents to think ahead, make sure they are registered to vote and have accepted photo ID or applied for a Voter Authority Certificate before they turn up to vote.

"But there have also been some changes to boundaries and polling stations which will have an impact on residents – so do take a look at the new boundaries online and double check your polling card when it arrives, as you may be voting at a different polling station to usual."

More information about the elections, including deadlines for applying for postal and proxy votes is available on the council website.

## GENEALOGY JOTTINGS

WORDS BY  
JAN PEARSON

In today's electronic age, I see many photographs posted on social media of family events. This is all well and good, but what happens for those who do not have access to Facebook, Twitter and the like? The days of poring over photograph albums seem like a distant memory but if your families have any photographs, they can be invaluable in triggering reminiscences.

When my father moved house, he gave me one of those old cardboard suitcases that was full of photographs. I immediately sat him down and asked him to tell me about the people in them, many of whom I did not know. How else would I have discovered that my great auntie Susie used to visit regularly when my father was small in order to help my grandmother look after him? How else would I have known that I was looking at my great uncle Harry, who died in a motorbike accident at the age of 22 back in 1931? Never be afraid to ask. If you are not as lucky as me and cannot have possession of such photographs, do ask if you can borrow them from

which to make copies. This applies to any certificates or other documents as well. My great grandfather bought a laundry from his father's cousin for £56 back in 1908. We still have the notebook where he paid for it 'on the drip' – a guinea one week, £2 10/6d another – until payment was complete. An invaluable piece of my family's social history!

If you are a member of any forum or use websites such as Genes Reunited or Ancestry and see that other people are also researching your family names, it is always worth dropping them a line. It may be that you find a tree published online and see names with which you are familiar. Do make contact with the tree's owner. Okay, they might not get back to you, but chances are that they will be more than happy to realise that they have made a connection with someone who also has an interest in the family!

**Genealogy Specialists, Tracing Our Past, Discovering Our Genes (TOP DOG)**  
[www.genealogy-specialists.com](http://www.genealogy-specialists.com)

## North Northants bird keepers advised to follow national guidelines

In response to the increased number of cases of avian influenza in poultry, an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) has been extended to cover the whole of the England. With this in mind, North Northamptonshire Council are reminding anyone who keeps birds outdoors that it is a legal requirement to register (if they haven't already) with the Animal and Plant Health Agency.

All keepers of poultry and other captive birds, including pet birds, in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone must comply with the minimum biosecurity measures contained in the AIPZ Declaration. The requirements include:

- ensuring precautions are taken to avoid the direct or indirect transfer of virus contamination onto and between premises, including cleansing and disinfection of equipment, vehicles, and footwear.
- placing foot dip containing Defra-approved poultry disinfectant at the correct dilution rate at strategic points including at the entry and exit of all houses or outdoor areas where birds are kept, and footwear must be cleaned using the dips on entry and exit, or alternatively disposable overshoes or footwear should be changed when moving between bird and non-bird areas.
- feed, water and bedding are stored under cover, and steps are taken to prevent access by wild birds and to minimise the risk of virus contamination.

Requirements also include undertaking vermin control, where possible reducing the movement of people, vehicles and equipment and record keeping. A full list of the requirements can be found online.

The zone is essential for protecting flocks from avian influenza and bird keepers are advised to consult the interactive map and then read the AIPZ declaration requirements.

Cllr David Brackenbury, the council's Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, said: "We know this news is difficult for bird keepers, but we urge everyone to come together to stop the spread of this dreadful disease.

"If you keep birds, please make sure you are up to date with the latest changes via the gov.uk website and report any suspicions of Avian Flu in your own birds to the APHA by calling 03000 200 301."

Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "With this national zone now enforced, it's a good opportunity to make sure your flock is registered with the Animal and Plant Health Agency.

"Registering birds means that keepers will receive important updates relevant to you, including details of local avian disease outbreaks and restrictions. All of this helps manage future, potential disease outbreaks and limit spread."

The AIPZ will be in place until further notice and will be kept under regular review by central government.



### MAYOR'S AWARDS 2024 - 2025

Rushden Town Council is seeking nominations for the Mayor's Awards for Services to the Community for the year 2024 / 2025. The Mayor's Award is given to an individual for their work and commitment within the community of Rushden over a number of years. (Group nominations will not be eligible for an award.)

Please submit the name and address of nominees, together with details of the reason for their nomination, to the Town Clerk at Rushden Town Council, Rushden Hall, Hall Park, Rushden, Northants, NN10 9NG, or e-mail the Town Clerk at [info@rushdentowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@rushdentowncouncil.gov.uk). All nominations should be received by **Friday 21st March 2025**.

## Want to place an advertisement or submit an article?

If you wish to contribute or have any comments please email [news@nenevalleynews.co.uk](mailto:news@nenevalleynews.co.uk) or call 01522 692542. To advertise, call 01522 692542. Alternatively you can email [advertising@nenevalleynews.co.uk](mailto:advertising@nenevalleynews.co.uk)

If you are not receiving your copy of Nene Valley News, please email [distribution@km-media.co.uk](mailto:distribution@km-media.co.uk) or telephone 01522 692542.

If you would like to receive this publication as a download, Nene Valley News is available online as a pdf at [nenevalleynews.co.uk](http://nenevalleynews.co.uk).

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 1st March  
Articles to the editor by: Wednesday 19th February

Publication date: Saturday 15th March  
Articles to the editor by: Wednesday 5th March

**km**  
KM Media & Marketing  
Your partner in publishing

## THE ARTFUL DUCK

60+ Artisan makers & Artists  
from local & beyond.  
Art, Handcrafted, Vintage.  
Picture Framing.



42 Brook Street, Raunds NN9 6LP

[www.theartfulduck.co.uk](http://www.theartfulduck.co.uk)

# Work to continue to deliver fresh bid for South Midlands devolution

The Government has announced that an expression of interest to join the Devolution Priority Programme for the South Midlands Region will not proceed. Joining the Programme would have put the region on track to receive new powers and opportunities from Government through the creation of a new Strategic Authority by May 2026.

**Whilst the South Midlands Region has not been successful in the first tranche, the Government is still keen to explore a future bid from the South Midlands Region and has committed to working with all South Midlands Authorities on developing this.**

North Northamptonshire Council will now work with partners in the region to explore a future bid, which would deliver huge benefits for the council area and beyond.

Jason Smithers, Leader of North Northamptonshire Council said: "A devolution deal has the ability to deliver enormous economic benefits

to our area for decades to come and we're committed to working with Government and local authority partners to make this a reality.

"While it's disappointing to miss out on this initial fast-track programme, we will now continue on this journey to submit a fresh bid for the South Midlands region.

"This is a very exciting time to be working collaboratively with neighbouring unitary councils and the move towards devolution fits perfectly with our BIG50 aspirations to create a proactive, proud and prosperous area for all of us.

"The six South Midlands authorities already have a strong history of working

together to drive economic growth.

"Building on this will only bring more benefits to all of our communities through a devolution deal that could attract millions of pounds of additional investment."

On 9th January, North Northamptonshire Council held an extraordinary meeting of full Council. At this meeting, the Council confirmed its support and commitment to join the Devolution Priority Programme, as part of the South Midlands region, to progress a Mayoral Strategic Authority.

Devolution is used to describe the transfer of

powers from national to local government and in places with a regionally-elected mayor, this also means the transfer of significant investment to drive new infrastructure, jobs and growth.

The proposal covering the six authority areas meets all the requirements, set out by the Government in the Devolution White Paper, for the creation of a strategic mayoral authority.

In September 2024, North Northamptonshire Council along with Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes, Luton and West Northamptonshire councils, submitted an expression of interest for creating a non-mayoral combined authority based on the South Midlands geography.

However, the Devolution White Paper published in December made clear it expected all areas to be covered by a mayor and to be

part of the Devolution Priority Programme.

A strategic mayoral authority is led by a regionally-elected mayor, which is entirely different to civic and ceremonial mayors at town councils and has enhanced powers and funding devolved from national government to make collective decisions on issues such as economic growth, transport, housing, skills and employment.

North Northamptonshire Council is already a unitary authority created in 2021, replacing the two-tier system of county, district and borough. A new strategic mayoral authority, including the North Northamptonshire area would not replace the existing unitary council but could benefit significantly from the greater flexibilities and funding that devolved government can provide.



## North Northamptonshire Adult Social Care Strategy 2024 - 2029 considered for approval

Following public consultation, North Northamptonshire Council's Adult Social Care Strategy (The Lives we Live) has been considered for final approval.

The Executive endorsed the draft strategy on 14th March 2024. It has since been formally consulted on and the next phase of activity, if approved by the Executive at their meeting on Thursday 13th February, is to develop a delivery plan and move into implementation.

An ageing population and more people living longer with more complex needs means the demand on the council's Adult Social Care services is growing. The strategy sets out how people with care and support needs can expect to be supported as they transition to adulthood or at times in their lives when they may need additional support.

North Northamptonshire Council's five-year strategy aims to address the challenges of more demand on services while always striving for the best for the adults in its population. Its focus is on wellbeing, enablement, partnership working and outcomes.

It has been co-produced with people who use the council's services, staff and local partners working in social care, this included their Expert by Experience panel members. Drawing on their knowledge and experience, the draft strategy aims to improve the ways the

council delivers and commissions support.

Cllr Gill Mercer, Executive Member for Adults Health and Wellbeing, said: "The strategy for Adult Services aspires to create an environment where individuals can live their best lives, supported by a responsive and empowering social care system.

"Co-production has played an important role in developing the strategy, gathering the views of frontline staff, strategic partners and people that use services and their carers.

"Now, following a full consultation, this strategy is ready to be approved and if given the go-ahead will move forward into implementation."

Jason Smithers, Leader of North Northamptonshire Council, said: "This strategy is about more than just services, it's about transforming lives. It also sets out how the Council will discharge its statutory functions in relation to adult social care. In doing so, the strategy considers our local context, how we will work with people and communities, including the underpinning approaches that will be used to commission, co-ordinate and deliver services.

"If approved by the Executive, a delivery plan will be implemented, and the strategy will formally move into delivery with appropriate milestones and Performance Indicators."



**FEBRUARY**  
 Tue 18 Melton Mowbray 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  
 Thu 6 Spalding  
 Thu 6 Cotswold Tour  
 Tue 11 Derbyshire & Peak District  
 Sat 15 Saffron Walden a Cosmopolitan Market  
 Wed 19 Seasonal Mystery  
 Fri 21 Ideal Home Show  
 Fri 21 Royal Mews & Free Time  
 Sat 22 Thriplow Daffodil & Country Fair  
 Thu 27 Canterbury OR Canterbury Cathedral  
 Fri 28 Stratford Upon Avon

**APRIL**  
 Sat 5 Norwich  
 Tue 8 Black Country Museum  
 Tue 8 Dudley Zoo  
 Wed 9 London Museums or Free Time  
 Wed 9 Tower of London  
 Thu 10 Fakenham & Sheringham  
 Thu 17 Little Venice to Camden Lock  
 Fri 18 Birdland Park, Gardens & Model Village  
 Sat 19 Banbury Market Day  
 Sun 20 Skegness  
 Mon 21 Great Yarmouth - Bank Holiday  
 Wed 23 Hereford Market Day  
 Wed 23 Hereford Cathedral  
 Sat 26 Oxford  
 Sat 26 Oxford Castle  
 Wed 30 Bury St Edmunds Market Day

**MAY**  
 Sat 3 Carriages of Cambridge with St Ives  
 Sun 4 Lincoln  
 Thu 8 Tina Turner  
 Thu 8 Les Misérables  
 Thu 8 Living Crafts Hatfield House  
 Fri 9 Stamford Market & Boundary Mills  
 Sat 10 Malvern Spring Show  
 Sat 10 Springfields  
 Sat 10 Spalding Flower Parade  
 Sun 11 Hunstanton  
 Mon 12 Derbyshire & Peak District  
 Wed 14 Wye Valley River Cruise & Lunch  
 Sat 17 Clacton on Sea  
 Sun 18 Melton Mowbray Cheese Fair  
 Sun 18 Camden Markets  
 Wed 21 Mystery Full Day & Lunch  
 Sat 24 Warwick Market Day

**NEW DAY TRIP BROCHURE AVAILABLE NOW**

Check out our website for further days out

[www.rbtravel.co.uk](http://www.rbtravel.co.uk)



**MARCH**  
**10-14 MARCH**  
**POTTERS FIVE LAKES ALL INCLUSIVE MID WEEK BREAK - £579pp**  
 The fantastic Potters Five Lakes resort is the UK's newest all inclusive resort that is packed with countryside charm and character. Their award-winning resort combines peaceful countryside surroundings, exclusive activities and amazing all inclusive value. Come and experience their second five-star destination for a break you won't forget. Set in 320 acres of glorious Essex countryside, it is the perfect place to unwind. There is an excellent variety of activities, first class West End quality entertainment, delicious food & drink and everything is included in the price!

**MAY**  
**5-9 MAY**  
**GREAT LITTLE TRAINS OF NORTH WALES - £619pp**  
 The Celtic Royal Hotel, Caernarfon. Half Board including excursions. Caernarfon the county town for Gwynedd is a busy market town and a major tourist centre. The town has a rich past and the Mighty Caernarfon is possibly the most famous of Wales' castles. Standing at the mouth of the Seiont River, at the southern end of the Menai Straits, the fortress dominates the walled town founded by Edward I. This holiday include two train rides and entertainment on 2 nights.

**18-22 MAY**  
**A VICTORIAN STEAM JOURNEY - £659pp**  
 The Winnock Hotel, Drymen. Half Board including excursions. Drymen is an attractive village located in the beautiful Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park. The park consists of 40 mountains ranging from 2500ft to over 3000ft. 22 lochs, 50 rivers and The Argyll Forest Park and the Queen Elizabeth Forest Park. The Campsie Fells hills are to the west of Drymen. Excursions include 2hr cruise on Loch Katrine, boat on Loch Lomond, ride on Falkirk Wheel and Bo'ness and Kinneil Steam Railway with afternoon tea.

**NOVEMBER**  
**23-26 NOVEMBER**  
**MAGICAL CHRISTMAS IN DISNEYLAND PARIS - FROM £975pp**  
 (based on 1 adult + 1 child per room, bed and breakfast) please ask for other options. Embark on a Christmas voyage to your favourite worlds from the Old West to Galaxies far far away, you'll be transported to the enchanted lands of the stories that you know and love from Disney, Pixar, Star Wars and MARVEL! Take off on a fun-filled adventure with over 50 attractions to enjoy, it's the perfect way to spend an unforgettable pre-Christmas time with friends & family! Create memories this Christmas to cherish forever. Includes all coach travel, ferry and 2 day pass to Disneyland.

**CALL NOW ON 01536 791066 TO GET OUR FREE BROCHURE!**  
[taurus@rbtravel.co.uk](mailto:taurus@rbtravel.co.uk)  
[www.taurusholidays.co.uk](http://www.taurusholidays.co.uk)

\*Single-room supplement may apply. Full details in our brochure.

# Spotlight on > Homes & Gardens



Oundle Carpets & Flooring

## > OUNDLE CARPETS & FLOORING

Peterborough and Northamptonshire's Specialist Carpet and Flooring Supplier.

Competitive – Reliable – Conscientious.

A family run business with over 40 years in the flooring industry. For your home or business, whatever the need, Oundle Carpets & Flooring can help you find and then install the perfect flooring; from carpet to hardwood, laminates to LVT and much more.

"Oundle Carpets & Flooring supplies and fits the major flooring brands and most of the quality names in carpets. From our Oundle showroom,

we offer the chance to browse our large flooring stock and samples, and we also offer home visits.

"We have a choice of quality of commercial flooring that is hard to beat. We supply trade and commercial flooring as well as carpets to a wide variety of businesses and organisations up and down the UK.

"We give our customers exactly what they are looking for: a large choice of quality products, very good prices, quick delivery, knowledgeable advice from experienced staff, along with an expert fitting team. We know about carpets and flooring – we care about our customers."

The Oundle showroom is open six days a week – Mon to Thurs 8.30am-5.30pm, Fri 8.30am-5pm, Sat 10am-4pm. Appointments for after-hours visits can be requested.

Oundle Carpets & Flooring, Unit 4-6, Eastwood Rd, Oundle, Peterborough PE8 4DF. Tel: 01832 275009, Email: [sales@oundlecarpets.com](mailto:sales@oundlecarpets.com), or visit the website at [www.oundlecarpets.co.uk](http://www.oundlecarpets.co.uk)

## > REGENT STREET WROUGHT IRON WORKS

"Having been established since 1963 we are a real family business with real values."

Why not call into the showroom, in Regent Street, Kettering where Ian and Jill will share with you their expertise and experience and help you select from the 14 various styles that are on display in the showroom.

Additionally there is now a range of estate gates, which are designed for either manual or automatic operation, and are matched by complementary fencing or walling.

"As we think that customer security is important, we fit (free of charge) locking bolts to our side-entry gates and a lockdown bolt to our double gates. We will also discuss any other security arrangements a customer may feel are necessary.

"We can only do this because every gate is built to each customer's individual specifications and as a family business we believe in giving old-

fashioned service with genuine low prices."

For more details visit [www.regentiron.co.uk](http://www.regentiron.co.uk) or call 01536 485892.

## > CREATE YOUR DREAM BATHROOM WITH HILLERY & SONS

The humble bathroom has evolved into a sanctuary – a place to relax and unwind after a long day. Northamptonshire-based bathroom specialists Hillery & Sons offers thoughtfully designed bathrooms that blend functionality with style. While offering the latest in bathroom design and technology, they also consider the practicalities of life, like maximising storage.

"We offer a wide range of showers, baths, tiles and the latest in wall and floor coverings and bathroom appliances. Our design team will help you choose materials that are both visually appealing and durable.

"Accessibility is also a key consideration in modern bathroom design. As a mobility bathrooms specialist, Hillery & Sons ensures that every individual, regardless of mobility, can enjoy a safe and enjoyable bathing experience. Our zero-threshold showers and wet rooms make it easier for individuals with wheelchairs or walkers to enter and exit the shower area safely. Paired with slip-resistant flooring, handrails and shower chairs this can significantly reduce the risk of falls, providing peace of mind for users and their families. As new bathrooms can be expensive, we offer finance and can also help with VAT exemptions.

"With over 40 years of experience and with accredited electricians and plumbers, Hillery &



A range of gates are available



Regent Street Wrought Iron Works



# OUNDLE CARPETS & FLOORING

Where  
Quality Matters

Why not visit our showroom to see the latest designs at competitive prices.

Carpets • Vinyl  
Engineered & Solid Wood  
Luxury Vinyl Tile  
Stock Rolls • Remnants

Experts in all types of flooring.  
Free Estimating Service.  
Local business that takes  
care of our customers, with  
high quality fitting service.

Opening Times:

8.30am-5.30pm Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm Saturday.

Email: [sales@oundlecarpets.com](mailto:sales@oundlecarpets.com)

01832 275009 07377 950625

Unit 4-6, Eastwood Road, Oundle, PE8 4DF





Hillery & Sons



Hillery & Sons

Sons not only design beautiful bathrooms, but we install them too.

“Visit our showroom at 48 High Street, Kettering or we can visit you for a no obligation design discussion and quote. To see our work visit: [www.mjhillery.com](http://www.mjhillery.com) or call 01536 791914 or 01604 411788.”

**> BOSWORTH'S GARDEN CENTRE**

Nestled in the heart of Northamptonshire, Bosworth's Garden Centre in Burton Latimer has been a much-loved family-owned establishment since 1959. Over the decades, it has blossomed into a comprehensive destination for gardening enthusiasts and families alike.

At the heart of the garden centre lies the Aspen Café, a warm and inviting space perfect for relaxation. Whether you're starting your day with a hearty

breakfast, enjoying a leisurely lunch, or indulging in afternoon tea, the café offers a diverse menu to cater to all tastes. It's an ideal spot to unwind after exploring the extensive plant collections or to catch up with friends over freshly brewed coffee.

Beyond its horticultural offerings, Bosworth's boasts an impressive array of giftware.

From elegant home décor items to unique kitchenware and thoughtful gifts for special occasions, there's something to delight every visitor. The curated selection ensures that you'll find the perfect item, whether you're treating yourself or searching for a memorable gift.

A standout feature of Bosworth's is its expansive plant area, showcasing a vast



Bosworth's Garden Centre

# Regent Wrought Iron Ltd

The Regent Street Wrought Iron Works

180-186 Regent Street, Kettering, Northants NN16 8QH

PHONE 01536 485892

High quality gates and fencing hand made on the premises since 1963



We have 18 styles to choose from. All on show in our showroom. Full fitting & painting service.

**Automatic Estate Gates**

- Highest quality equipment
- Up to 14' opening
- Flat draped or bow topped
- Fully installed & painted
- **FREE** first year service
- Guaranteed for 2 years
- Full back up & yearly service
- We have been installing automation since 1998
- Full pressure tested and certified to BS 12453



We can automate your existing gates (if suitable) or upgrade old equipment to meet BS 12453 safety regulations



Has your garden wall/fence had it? Replace it with wrought iron! **LASTS A LIFETIME • USUALLY FITTED IN A DAY**

**BEAT THE BURGLAR** – Free security locking bolts fitted to all our side entry gates or full range of mortise locks fitted

Visit our website for our online catalogue [www.regentiron.co.uk](http://www.regentiron.co.uk)

FINANCE AVAILABLE

# HILLERY & SONS

COMPLETE PROPERTY CARE

## DON'T BE LEFT IN THE DARK

From household electrics like upgrading to LED lights and installing EV chargers to fault finding and EICRs for movers and landlords, Hillery & Sons electricians have you covered.

**Need a complete rewire or building refurbishment?**

We do that too!

Hillery & Sons is a NICEIC-approved contractor | Operating for 40 years across the East Midlands

Showroom: 48 High Street, Kettering, NN16 8SX

01536 791914 | 01604 411788



[enquiries@mjhillery.com](mailto:enquiries@mjhillery.com) | [www.mjhillery.com](http://www.mjhillery.com)



Grow. Eat. Home.

# Bosworth's

Garden Centre

- ✓ Garden Centre
- ✓ Aspen Cafe
- ✓ Coach Trips -Workshops
- 🌐 [www.bosworthsgc.co.uk](http://www.bosworthsgc.co.uk)
- ☎ Tel: 01536 722635

Finedon Road, Burton Latimer NN15 5QA

selection of flora. Remarkably, many of these plants are cultivated in the centre's own onsite nursery, which produces over a million plants annually. This commitment to homegrown quality ensures that customers receive quality plants, perfect for enhancing any garden.

Bosworth's is dedicated to fostering a sense of community and learning among its customers. The centre regularly organises workshops tailored to inspire and educate, covering a range of gardening topics and techniques. Additionally, for those eager to explore renowned horticultural sites, Bosworth's offers coach trips to various destinations. This year, they are thrilled to announce an exclusive trip to the world-famous Keukenhof Gardens in the Netherlands, allowing participants to immerse themselves in the breathtaking beauty of millions of blooming tulips and other spring flowers.

Throughout its evolution, Bosworth's Garden Centre has remained steadfast in its mission to provide exceptional service and high-quality products. The knowledgeable and friendly staff are always on hand to offer expert advice, ensuring that every visitor's experience is both enjoyable and informative. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or a novice looking to cultivate your green thumb, Bosworth's offers a welcoming

environment to inspire and assist you on your gardening journey.

In summary, Bosworth's Garden Centre in Burton Latimer is more than just a garden centre; it's a community hub where passion for plants, dedication to quality, and a love for learning come together to create a truly enriching experience for all who visit.

#### > THE FURNITURE CENTRE

"At the Furniture Centre, we have been designing, building and delivering high quality furniture for over 15 years. From our base in Northamptonshire, we are proud to create and supply both traditional and contemporary styles of upholstery, living, dining and bedroom furniture for every type of home and office. Today, we are also a top supplier to park homes and leisure lodges across the UK, thanks to our track record for quality, service and value."

Company Office & Showroom: The Furniture Centre Limited, Pytchley Lodge Road Industrial Estate, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 6JQ. Showroom Open: Monday to Saturday 9am-5pm, Sunday 10am-4pm. Contact Tel: 01536 414121, email: [sales@thefurniturecentre.com](mailto:sales@thefurniturecentre.com)

Feel welcome to call the team or visit the showroom today.



  
furniture centre  
stylish home furniture

SPECIAL OFFER VALID UNTIL 28TH FEBRUARY - ALSO AVAILABLE ON OTHER SELECTED LA-Z-BOY MODELS



LAZBOY  
ANNA



**OFFER**  
**THREE SEATER FOR THE  
PRICE OF A TWO SEATER**  
(MINIMUM ORDER OF FIVE SEATS)

Pytchley Lodge Road, Kettering NN15 6JQ  
[sales@thefurniturecentre.com](mailto:sales@thefurniturecentre.com) 01536 414121

## New powers to combat vacant commercial properties on Executive agenda

North Northamptonshire Council's Executive met recently to discuss a new initiative designed to reduce the number of vacant properties on high streets.

The council, as an Early Adopter, has been invited to apply to be part of a pilot scheme which would require landlords to rent out long term vacant, commercial properties to new tenants.

Executive is being asked to sign up to the Government's High Street Rental Auction Early Adopters programme – a scheme that was introduced as part of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023.

High Street Rental Auctions are intended to help local authorities bring long-term vacant properties back into meaningful use and permit local authorities to undertake an auction offering a lease of up to five years upon a privately-owned property.

Cllr David Brackenbury, the council's Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, said: "High streets up and down the country are struggling as residents' shopping habits change and vacant properties are becoming a common site, which is so sad to see.

"Schemes like this will massively help with regenerating areas and bringing life back into our

high streets – something we know is extremely important to residents and business owners.

"It is great that we have been selected to be an Early Adopter and, if this report is approved, can start work on the next steps and regenerating high streets in North Northants."

Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "HSRAs provide councils with a strong tool to use in areas where vacant properties are a real problem and there has been little co-operation between landlords and our teams.

"But it's also about working collaboratively and possession like this would always be the last resort – this scheme just provides us with another tool in our toolbox, should we need it."

It is anticipated that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will confirm the final list of councils that will be part of the programme during the week commencing 17th February.

If the report is approved, council officers will closely work with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government throughout the process and work through the next phases to identify high streets in North Northamptonshire to designate for HSRA before an update is provided to Executive later in 2025.

## Further support for economic growth to be discussed

Government funding designed to help boost the economy was on the North Northamptonshire Council Executive agenda recently.

The council's Executive was asked to approve a report which covers two important programmes:

- UK Shared Prosperity Funding
- Connect to Work Programme

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund has been running since 2022/23 and Government has confirmed it will run for a fourth year from April 2025, with North Northamptonshire receiving an allocation of £1,581,860 for the coming year.

Up to this point, the council have received an allocation of £4.8m alongside £1.1m from the Rural England Prosperity Fund and £1.9m to invest in adult numeracy.

It is proposed that the allocation for 2025/26 covers a wide range of projects designed to help with economic growth including further work to develop the visitor economy, the continuation of the HiStreet initiative, decarbonisation programmes and grants to support innovation, boost growth and create jobs.

The Connect to Work (C2W) programme is a new initiative from Government and will replace the Universal Support programme, run by the Department of Work & Pensions.

The new C2W programme would enable the council to develop a plan to tackle economic inactivity and expand employment

opportunities for those not working. It is hoped that the C2W programme will help those with barriers to work find sustainable work. The Executive report proposes a local delivery plan for North Northamptonshire, which will enable the council to secure funding needed to manage and deliver the programme, working with local businesses and other stakeholders in the area.

Cllr David Brackenbury, the council's Executive Member for Growth and Regeneration, said: "The allocation we have already received from Government under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund has reached communities across the North Northamptonshire area and we hope this next allocation will do the same.

"When funds like this combine with schemes like Connect to Work, we can really start to see the difference to the economy in North Northants."

Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "As a council, we're always looking for ways to help residents whilst boosting the local economy, with the UK SPF contributing to successful projects including helping business start-ups and supporting over 100 community projects.

"In the case of the Connect to Work programme, we'll be working to develop a local plan for the area working with neighbouring councils to harness this togetherness to benefit those living in the area."

## Mediation for couples

*The period following Christmas and the New Year can be especially difficult for families considering separation or a divorce.*

The emotional stress, financial strain, and expectations around the Christmas period can often bring issues to the surface. Wilson Browne supports families during this challenging time, offering practical assistance and the opportunity to review options.

At Wilson Browne, we also offer mediation services that can help couples communicate more effectively, even if they are deciding to part ways. Mediation can assist in finding and agreeing amicable solutions, prioritising children's needs, and avoiding a contentious legal battle.

Obtaining legal advice at an early stage is crucial. Wilson Browne offers clear and practical advice with transparent pricing to help families understand their rights and options and ensuring that they are well



informed to make decisions about future children arrangements, financial plans, and property division. The legal aspects of divorce, dividing assets, financial support, and settling child arrangements can be complex and overwhelming and early legal advice is

recommended to smooth the way to early decision making.

The Wilson Browne Family Team offers an initial free chat by telephone with no obligation.

**Call us today on 0800 088 6004 or visit our website [wilsonbrowne.co.uk](http://wilsonbrowne.co.uk)**

## Higham's best kept secret is right on Market Square...

When you need legal help you'll want a law firm that stands by you. At Wilson Browne we have a friendly, down-to-earth-approach, so we can understand you and you can understand us.

With offices across Northamptonshire and in Leicester, we offer a complete range of legal solutions for individuals and businesses, with transparent costs.



**0800 088 6004**  
[info@wilsonbrowne.co.uk](mailto:info@wilsonbrowne.co.uk)  
[wilsonbrowne.co.uk](http://wilsonbrowne.co.uk)

- Wills, Trusts & Estates
- Managing Wealth & Assets
- Residential Conveyancing
- Family Law
- Employment Law
- Disputes
- Debt Recovery
- Business Services
- Commercial Property

All the help you need



**wilson browne**  
SOLICITORS

# Nene Valley News > RECIPES



**Apple bake with double ginger crumble**

## > APPLE BAKE WITH DOUBLE GINGER CRUMBLE

Serves 6-8

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 35 minutes

Allergens: Gluten, dairy

### Ingredients:

- 3 large, firm baking apples (680-775g total)
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- A few gratings of fresh nutmeg
- Pinch of ground cloves
- 2 tsp Opies Stem Ginger Syrup (or 1 tsp vanilla extract)
- 40g granulated sugar
- Pinch of salt

### For the Topping:

- 150g unsalted butter
- 50g demerara sugar
- 50g granulated sugar
- ¼ tsp coarse salt or sea salt
- 1½ tsp baking powder
- 260g plain flour (add more if needed)
- 1 Opies Stem Ginger ball, diced
- 10g finely chopped Opies Crystallised Stem Ginger (or more to taste)

### Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C / 170°C fan / Gas 5. Peel, halve, and core the apples, then cut into 1-inch wedges. Arrange them into the base of a 9x13-inch baking dish. In a separate bowl mix cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger syrup, sugar and salt. Pour this mixture over the apples and toss to coat.
2. Melt the butter in a large bowl or saucepan. Stir in both sugars, then add salt, baking powder and diced stem ginger ball. Mix in the flour and crystallised ginger until a crumbly texture forms, adding an extra tablespoon of flour if needed.
3. Sprinkle the crumble evenly over the apples. Bake for 30-35 minutes until the crumble is golden, and the apples are tender when pierced.
4. Leave to cool for 10-15 minutes before serving with custard, cream, ice cream – or all three!

### Hints & Tips:

For added texture and crunch, replace a third of the flour in the topping with

ground or finely chopped nuts or a handful of rolled oats.

## > CARAMEL & GINGER HOT CROSS BUN BREAD & BUTTER PUDDING

A decadent twist on a classic pudding! Also, a great way to use up any excess hot cross buns.

Serves 6

Meal occasion: Easter, leftovers, desserts

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 35 minutes

Allergens: Gluten, dairy, eggs

### Ingredients:

- 6 hot cross buns, sliced into 4
- 3 large eggs
- 300ml whipping cream
- 300ml milk
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 75g golden caster sugar
- 3 balls of Opies Stem Ginger, finely chopped, syrup reserved
- 3 tbsps Carnation caramel sauce

### To serve:

- Fresh warm custard
- Some of the leftover caramel sauce

### Method:

1. Take a large oven dish that will fit 6 hot cross buns comfortably and arrange the sliced hot cross buns in the dish.
2. In a large bowl whisk together the eggs, whipping cream, milk,

vanilla extract, caster sugar and 2 tablespoons of the reserved stem ginger syrup.

3. Pour the batter evenly over the hot cross buns. Scatter over the finely chopped stem ginger, cover and leave in the fridge for a couple of hours to allow the hot cross buns to absorb the mixture. You could also leave it overnight. Pre-heat the oven to 190°C / 170°C fan / Gas 3.
4. Drizzle over half of the Carnation caramel sauce and cook in the oven for about 30-35 minutes, until the custard is set but still retaining a slight wobble.
5. Leave to cool slightly before serving with fresh custard and a little drizzle of caramel sauce.

## > TRADITIONAL EASTER SPICED BISCUITS

Makes 20 biscuits

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes

Allergens: Gluten, dairy, eggs

### Ingredients

#### For the biscuits:

- 100g butter
- 90g caster sugar
- 200g plain flour
- ½ tsp mixed spice
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- Zest and juice of ½ lemon
- 1 large egg yolk
- 40g Opies Crystallised Ginger, finely chopped
- 40g Opies Maraschino Cocktail Cherries, chopped

#### For the topping:

- 1 egg white
- Caster sugar

### Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C / 160°C fan / Gas 4).
2. Line or grease baking trays.
3. In a mixing bowl or food processor, combine butter, sugar, flour, mixed spice, nutmeg, lemon zest, lemon juice, and egg yolk. Mix until the dough begins to come together.
4. Fold in the chopped Crystallised



**Traditional Easter spiced biscuits**

Ginger and Maraschino Cherries by hand.

5. Roll out the dough on a lightly floured surface to about ½ cm thickness.
6. Use a round cutter to cut out biscuits and transfer them to the prepared baking tray. Re-roll and cut until all the dough is used.
7. Bake for 10-12 minutes until just starting to set but not golden.
8. Remove biscuits from the oven and lightly brush each with the beaten egg white. Sprinkle with caster sugar.
9. Return to the oven for an additional 4-5 minutes until the biscuits are pale golden brown.
10. Allow the biscuits to cool on the tray for 5 minutes before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

## > SLOW ROAST LAMB SHOULDER WITH ONIONS & PEAS

Serves 6-8

Pre time: 30 minutes

Cooking time: 3 hours +

Allergens: Fish, sulphites, dairy

### Ingredients:

- 1.5kg lamb shoulder joint
- 50g anchovies in oil
- 2 flat cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 sprigs rosemary
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1kg new potatoes
- 1 jar Opies Silver Skin Onions with Red Wine Vinegar
- 325g broad beans

- 300g peas
- 175ml white wine
- 100g feta cheese
- Fresh mint leaves, chopped

### Method:

1. Pre-heat the oven to 170°C / 150°C fan / Gas 3. Place the lamb in a roasting tin and using a knife, pierce the shoulder all over. Drain the anchovies and cut each fillet into three, then stuff a piece inside each hole along with a sliver of garlic and a few leaves of rosemary. Season the lamb generously all over and drizzle with oil, then cover with foil and place in the oven for 2 hours. Meanwhile halve the new potatoes and silver skin onions.
2. Add the potatoes to the lamb tray, turn the oven up to 200°C / 180°C fan / Gas 6 and roast for 30 minutes until starting to brown. Next add the broad beans, peas, white wine and silver skin onions and return to the oven for a further half an hour.
3. Remove from the oven, crumble the feta cheese over, scatter over the mint and serve.

**Opies**  
SINCE 1880

Buy online at  
[www.bennettopie.com](http://www.bennettopie.com)



**Caramel & ginger hot cross bun bread & butter pudding**



**Slow roast lamb shoulder with onions & peas**

## Stick Man returns to Fineshade Wood for a family adventure trail

Families will have the chance to join a new forest adventure as the much-loved character Stick Man, based on the beautiful picture book by Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler, returns to Fineshade Wood in 2025.

From February 2025 to January 2026, Fineshade Wood will host specially designed Stick Man activity trails, where families can follow the beloved character on his journey back to the family tree. Along the way, young adventurers will discover nine interactive activity panels and six spotter panels, offering hands-on experiences from building with sticks to learning about forest wildlife, birds and nests.

Mia Richards at Forestry England, said: "We're delighted to welcome Stick Man back to our forest for what promises to be an exciting year of family adventures. These trails offer the perfect blend of storytelling and outdoor exploration, helping children connect with nature in a fun and memorable way. Through simple activities like building with sticks and discovering forest wildlife, families can create special memories while learning about the

natural world around them. It's wonderful to see how a beloved character like Stick Man can inspire the next generation of nature lovers."

To make the adventure even more special, families can purchase a £4 activity pack. The pack includes materials to create their own Stick Man and a special passport system. Young explorers can collect stamps along the trail, filling in their adventure passports as they complete each exciting challenge.

The passport system encourages children to explore every part of the trail, creating a sense of achievement as they collect stamps and discover new aspects of forest life at each stopping point. This hands-on approach makes learning about nature engaging and memorable for young adventurers.

The trail marks the latest chapter in a successful partnership between Forestry England and Magic Light Pictures, which began in 2014, bringing Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's beloved characters to life in natural settings.

**To plan your Stick Man adventure, visit [www.forestryengland.uk/stickman](http://www.forestryengland.uk/stickman)**

## 21 new Community Orchards for North Northamptonshire

North Northamptonshire Council has received funding to help 21 community groups, schools and parish councils to plant their own community orchards this winter, all of which will be planted on publicly accessible land across North Northamptonshire.

Ranging in size from small sites of five trees to larger ones with up to 100 trees, these new community orchards will provide opportunities for local people to enjoy nature, as well as offering multiple benefits to wildlife.

Funding for the scheme was made available through the Coronation Living Heritage Fund, part of a government initiative which celebrates the King's Coronation and supports tree planting projects across England.

On 28th January, representatives from the schools, community groups and parish councils taking part in the scheme gathered at Coronation Park in Corby to collect their fruit trees and planting kits. In total, 720 fruit trees have been awarded to 21 different groups.

The fruit trees include a variety of traditional and local apples, pears, cherries, plums, quinces and medlars. They were sourced from specialist and certified

fruit-growing nurseries to ensure quality and sustainability. Each tree was provided with stakes, mesh guards and mulch mats to support healthy growth.

To help groups care for their orchards, expert guidance has been provided by Adam Cade from Stamford Community Orchard Group. Through workshops and resources, Adam has been sharing knowledge on orchard maintenance, ensuring these trees thrive for years to come.

CLr Helen Harrison, the council's Executive Member for Climate and Green Environment, said: "It's wonderful to see community groups, schools and parish councils from across North Northamptonshire come together to learn new skills that will help make a positive difference to our local environment.

"Planting these community orchards is a fantastic way of marking the King's Coronation, while also providing important habitats for wildlife and creating green spaces where our communities can connect with nature for years come."

Jason Smithers, Leader of the Council, said: "As well as commemorating His Majesty's Coronation, the community

orchards will make such a huge difference to the area, offering valuable opportunities for education and engagement, while leaving a lasting legacy for our communities and wildlife.

"I look forward to following the progress of these orchards and appreciate the hard work of the community groups making this happen."

Look out for new orchards being planted by the following groups, schools and parish councils:

- Wren Spinney School
- Stanion C of E School
- Lowick Village Hall – Germain Education Foundation
- Kettering Buccleuch Academy
- King's Cliffe Endowed School
- Wilbarston Primary School
- Little Stanion Primary School
- Isebrook SEN School
- Oundle School
- Laxton Junior School
- Fletton Field Association
- Oundle Town Council
- Brigstock Parish Council
- Gretton Parish Council
- Friends of Sywell Country Park
- Deene and Deenethorpe Parish Council
- Cottingham Parish Council
- Coronation Park Growing Project
- Raunds Town Council

## YOUR HEALTH – EAR WAX

WORDS BY  
CLAIRE SHORT

Ear wax – that golden, gooey substance we all love to ignore (unless it's too much). But did you know, this mysterious creation isn't something to fear? In fact, it's our ears' natural defence system! Really, it's true.

Ear wax's scientific name is cerumen. It is produced by glands in the ear canal and has a vital role in protecting our hearing. Think of it as a personal bodyguard for your eardrums, preventing dirt, dust, and tiny bugs from getting too close. Plus, it has antifungal and antibacterial properties, helping keep infections at bay.

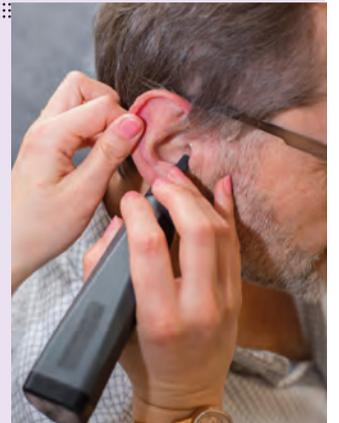
When you get a build-up or when the wax goes hard it can be a problem though as it can block the ear canal.

When this happens, you may start to notice feelings of fullness, muffled hearing, or even ringing in your ears. In extreme cases, it might cause discomfort, itching, or a sense of vertigo. But don't worry! Most of the time, ear wax is nothing to panic about.

**What can you do to help your ears?**

Firstly, don't go digging around with cotton buds. I know, it's tempting, but they can push the wax deeper into the ear, making things worse. Instead, you can try some simple home remedies like using over-the-counter ear drops or olive oil to soften the wax. If that doesn't work, it's time to call in the professionals.

Professionals, like audiologist Georgina Nobel, can safely remove the wax with gentle



techniques such as irrigation or microsuction. The microsuction works just like a little Hoover! Both techniques are quick and easy. And afterwards you should hear better!

As you know, I can't write an article without mentioning my arch enemy, the lawnmower, so I have to say that the only advantage of having thick ear wax is that you can't hear the awful noise the mower makes!

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

## LOW BACK PAIN? NECK PAIN? CURRENT TREATMENTS NOT WORKING?

Do you suffer from...?

- Herniated or Bulging Discs
- Spinal Stenosis
- Degenerative Disc Disease
- Spinal Arthritis
- Posterior Facet Syndrome
- Acute or chronic back pain
- Sciatica



Find out if you are a candidate for **IDD Therapy®**

A comfortable, non-invasive back pain treatment with success rates reaching 92%.

**01933 469043**

[www.ashgrovehealth.co.uk](http://www.ashgrovehealth.co.uk)  
[reception@ashgrovehealth.co.uk](mailto:reception@ashgrovehealth.co.uk)

The Ashgrove Clinic, 11 Market Square, Higham Ferrers, NN10 8BT



# February Half Term Adventures

Get ready for a jam-packed February half term at Ferry Meadows. Full of wildlife workshops and outdoor family fun - there's something for everyone to enjoy from 15th to 23rd February.

Find out what's happening and when, with our guide to half term fun in the Park.

## > ACTIVITIES ON EVERY DAY

- **30% off Pay & Play Watersports at Nene Outdoors:** Make a splash and save with 30% off watersports hire at Nene Outdoors. Book your activities online to avoid the queues and use code FEBHALFTERM to claim your 30% discount!
- **Complete the Holiday Trail at Ferry Meadows:** Pick up an Animal Tracks themed trail sheet from the Visitor Centre for £1 between 9am and 3pm and answer the questions as you explore the Park. Return to the Visitor Centre and claim your prize to grow



at home!

- **Ride the Ferry Meadows Railway:** Sit back and enjoy the ride! Trains will operate daily, weather permitting.

## > EVENTS BY DATE

- **Young Rangers** - Saturday 15th February. Are you 11-17 years old and passionate about the environment? Come and volunteer at our monthly volunteer sessions at Ferry Meadows.
- **Nature Tots & Wild Home Ed Groups** - Monday 17th February. Join the Nature Tots or Wild Home Educator groups for nature-themed fun at Ferry Meadows. Book your first session for free by emailing [education@neneparktrust.org.uk](mailto:education@neneparktrust.org.uk)



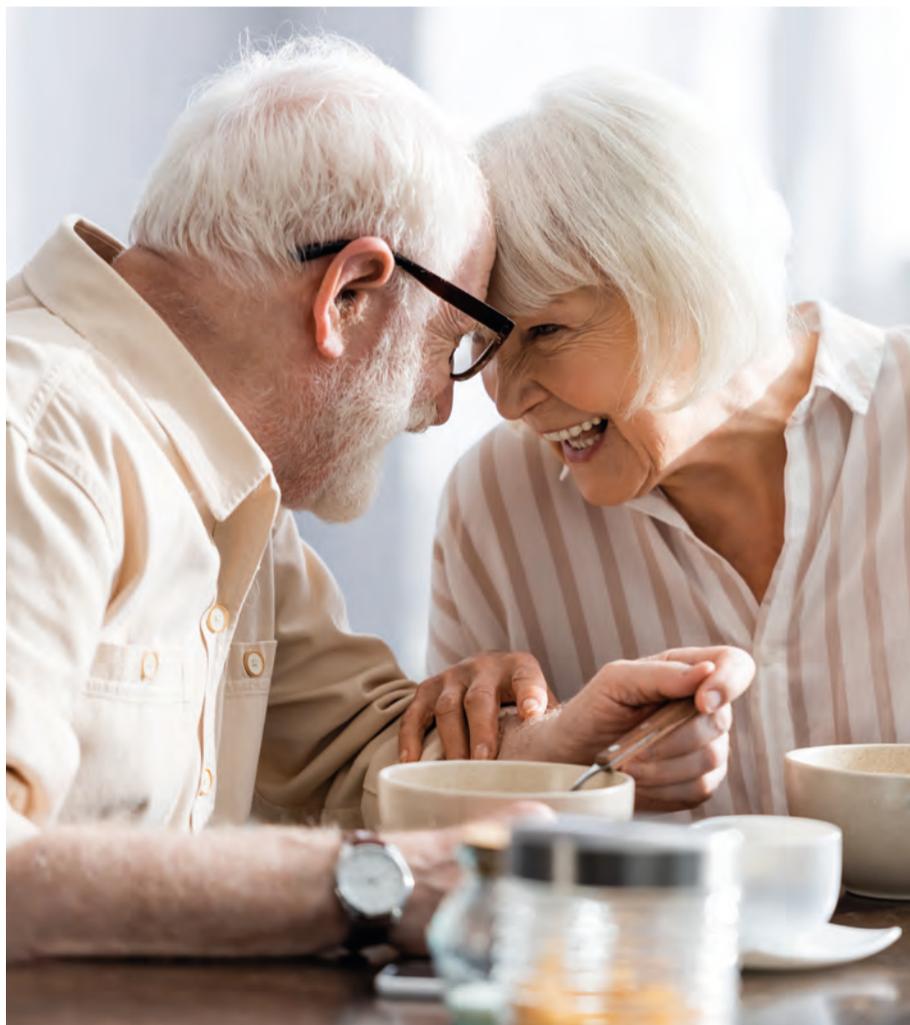
- **Treasure Hunt** - Tuesday 18th February. Explore Ferry Meadows using your super sleuthing skills to work out where the treasure is hidden! Suitable for children aged 4-9, it's £6 per child.
- **Archery** - Tuesday 18th February. Book an indoor archery session and unleash your inner Robin Hood or Maid Marian! Suitable for ages 8 and over, it's £13 each.
- **Orienteering Challenge** - Tuesday 18th February. Learn essential skills to follow directions and find your way around a real orienteering route! Who will be the first to visit all the points? Suitable for children aged 8-13, it's £6 per child.
- **Family Gardening at Nene Nursery** - Wednesday 19th February. Come along between 10.30am and 12noon to take part in a variety of seasonal gardening activities, suitable for all. Tools, gloves and refreshments provided (children to be accompanied). It's £6 per child (adults and under 5s free).
- **Meeting Magical Mammals** - Thursday 20th February. Join a ranger for a walk around Ferry Meadows to discover all about the small mammals that live there! You might see voles,



mice and shrews, and you'll learn all about their habitat, diet and identifying features. Suitable for ages 5 and over, it's £6 each.

- **Climbing Wall** - Thursday 20th February. The climbing wall is back out at Nene Outdoors! Great fun for children. Who will reach the top first? Suitable for everyone over 4, it's £13 each.
- **Animal Tracks and Signs** - Friday 21st February. Discover the creatures that live in Ferry Meadows using the signs they leave behind, and create your own plaster track to take home. Suitable for children aged 5 and over, it's £6 each.

**For more details on Half Term activities, and to book your places, please go to [www.nenepark.org.uk/february-half-term](http://www.nenepark.org.uk/february-half-term). Contact 01733 234193 or email [visitor.services@neneparktrust.org.uk](mailto:visitor.services@neneparktrust.org.uk) for more information, accessibility advice or directions**



The Hawthorns

NORTHAMPTON

## MOMENTS THAT MATTER

Enjoy a worry-free and active retirement at the Hawthorns, where community living is at our heart.

The Hawthorns' Well-being Co-ordinators provide a daily programme of stimulating and engaging activities, social events, trips out, exercise classes and interest clubs to keep your mind and body active and support you in staying healthy.

Studio, 1-bed or 2-bed apartments available for single occupancy or couples.

**01604 358133 | [hawthornsretirement.co.uk](http://hawthornsretirement.co.uk)**

# VOI E-SCOOTERS TO BE AVAILABLE 24/7 IN NORTH NORTHANTS

North Northamptonshire Council, in conjunction with Northamptonshire Police, have agreed to a 6-month trial which will see the popular Voi e-scooters available 24/7.

The changes came in from Monday 10th February. It is hoped that the extension in operating hours will enable more residents to use the scheme - providing a green, affordable and reliable transport option for those who work shifts, or for example, in hospitality.

All e-scooters will have additional reflective strips installed to the front of the vehicles and, as is currently the case, riders are being encouraged to wear reflective clothing and helmets.

Across the next 6 months, Voi, the council and Police will meet regularly to assess the success of the trial.

Cllr Macaulay Nichol, the council's Executive Member for Highways, Travel and Assets, said: "The e-scooter scheme has been popular across North Northants, particularly for commuting, and this trial gives us the chance to better understand whether extended hours will benefit more residents.

"Over the next six months, we'll be carefully monitoring the scheme alongside the Police and Voi, with safety being a key focus. The data and feedback we gather from local communities will play a crucial role in determining if a 24/7 operation is the right fit moving forward, and what additional measures might be needed to ensure the scheme



is both safe and successful. "We encourage anyone using the e-scooters to do so responsibly, wearing reflective clothing and staying aware of other road users."

Matt O'Connell, Safer Roads Team Strategic Manager for Northamptonshire Police, said: "We will support North Northamptonshire Council and Voi in any way we can as the e-scooter scheme goes 24/7.

"Rolling the e-scooters out to be available all of the time will definitely have its benefits, including increased options for greener travel as well as providing transport for night workers, however I would urge everyone riding one to do so safely and responsibly.

"An e-scooter is not a toy. It is a vehicle designed to be ridden on the roads and therefore must be treated with care and responsibility.

"We hope this trial goes well as it will be good for our

local communities, but we would also encourage anyone who spots irresponsible riding to report it via Voi's reporting methods."

James Bolton, Voi's UK General Manager said: "Local riders in North Northants have clocked over 2 million Voi e-scooter trips, using them for work, education, and connections to public transport. We're excited to expand to 24/7 service, giving night-time workers, from hospitality staff to nurses, more mobility options. As the UK's leading e-scooter provider, safety is our top priority, and we're committed to providing training and working with North Northamptonshire Council to offer a safe, affordable travel choice for the community."

Voi e-scooters currently operate in Corby, Burton Latimer, Kettering, Wellingborough, Rushden and Higham Ferrers.



## Nene Valley news

### CLASSIFIEDS

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.



For help and information to place your notice please call 01522 692542 or visit [www.nenevalleynews.co.uk](http://www.nenevalleynews.co.uk)

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14 (BROOKS ROAD, RAUNDS)  
 (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2025  
 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 Brooks Road, Raunds as set out below.  
**LENGTH OF ROAD TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES:** That length of Brooks Road, Raunds – adjacent to the Water Tower.  
**REASON FOR RESTRICTION:** The restriction is required for safety during meter exchange works.  
**PERIOD OF CLOSURE:** The proposed Order will come into effect on 28th February 2025 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 one day.  
**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:** use North Street, Brick Kiln Road, London Road and Denford Road.  
 If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler ref:- 24/25 – N813 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T25/057

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14 (BRIDGE STREET, BRIGSTOCK)  
 (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2025  
 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 Bridge Street, Brigstock as set out below.  
**LENGTH OF ROAD TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES:** That length of Bridge Street, Brigstock – adjacent to Village Hall.  
**REASON FOR RESTRICTION:** The restriction is required for safety during coring and vegetation clearing.  
**PERIOD OF CLOSURE:** The proposed Order will come into effect on 26th February 2025 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 2 days.  
**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:** use High Street and Park Walk.  
 If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler ref:- 24/25 – N814 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T25/058

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14 (RED LODGE ROAD, BULWICK)  
 (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2025  
 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 Red Lodge Road, Bulwick as set out below.  
**LENGTH OF ROAD TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES:** That length of Red Lodge Road, Bulwick from Stamford Road to Private Farm entrance.  
**REASON FOR RESTRICTION:** The restriction is required for safety during works to overhead lines.  
**PERIOD OF CLOSURE:** The proposed Order will come into effect on 19th February 2025 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 one day.  
**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:** use Red Lodge Road, Harringworth Road, Deene, Bulwick Road and Stamford Road.  
 If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler ref:- 24/25 – N830 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T25/087

Dated this 15th day of February 2025  
 SANJIT SULL  
 Director of Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) (Interim)



To advertise in Nene Valley News please call 01522 692542

## ACCOUNTANCY

Jon Essam & Co Ltd  
 Chartered Accountants

- Free initial consultation with fixed fee quotation
- Proactive accountancy and tax service for landlords, sole traders, partnerships and limited companies
- Tax planning and advice
- Registered auditor
- Bookkeeping, management accounts and VAT submissions
- Making tax digital (MTD) submissions
- QuickBooks Platinum ProAdvisor, Partner with Xero and Sage
- Payroll, auto enrolment and CIS bureau service



Email or visit our website to arrange a free consultation  
 23 Cottingham Way, Thrapston, Kettering, Northants NN14 4PL (behind the fire station)  
 info@essamca.co.uk | www.essamca.co.uk | 01832 730280

# HERMITAGE HOUSE CARE HOME: ENHANCING RESIDENTS' LIVES IN THE HEART OF THRAPSTON

Located in the heart of Thrapston, Hermitage House Care Home provides care and support for older people and those living with dementia. The care home has a fulfilling and vibrant events calendar featuring a wide variety of daily activities, organised by the dedicated Wellbeing team. From music and movement sessions to arts and crafts, gardening and baking, each activity is designed to create a positive impact on residents' mood and overall wellbeing.

Hermitage House also offers its residents the chance to take part in the 'Make a Wish' initiative which is designed to create unforgettable experiences. Through this initiative, residents have enjoyed a range of remarkable outings and

activities, such as trips to the races, book launches, off-road driving adventures, and family tea parties. These moments are carefully created to leave residents and their families with cherished memories that last a lifetime.

Dining at Hermitage House is another highlight of daily life. The care home's talented kitchen team prepares nutritious, home-cooked meals that cater to residents' individual preferences and dietary needs. Menus are regularly updated based

on feedback, ensuring a personalised approach to dining. Whether it's a traditional meal or a special occasion like a birthday or anniversary, the kitchen team consistently goes the extra mile to create delicious and memorable dishes.



For more information about Hermitage House Care Home please contact Customer Relations Manager, Jessica Grayson, at 07754 559 526 or via email at [jess.grayson@countrycourtcare.com](mailto:jess.grayson@countrycourtcare.com)



 **Hermitage House**  
A Country Court Care Home

## Bi-weekly Coffee Mornings

Every other Wednesday 10am - 12noon  
\*Starting from 15th January 2025

We warmly welcome our local community to enjoy a complimentary selection of teas, coffees, and homemade cakes. It's a perfect opportunity to meet new friends and share good company.

**No need to book - just pop in on the day!**

To learn more or to reserve a table, please contact Jess, our Customer Relations Manager on 01832 430 084.

Kingfisher Road, Thrapston, Kettering, NN14 4GN

[www.countrycourtcare.com](http://www.countrycourtcare.com)

