

# Nene Valley news

YOUR LOCAL INDEPENDENT COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER FOR EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

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WET WET WET STAR FOR  
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## NEWS IN BRIEF

North Northants  
commemorates  
80th anniversary  
of VE Day

8th May marked the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe (VE) Day and as part of the commemorations, lights were lit and displayed across the local area.

Council offices across North Northamptonshire took part in the Lamp Light of Peace tribute with lamps being displayed in the Corby, Thrapston, Kettering, Rushden and Wellingborough offices.

Lamp Lights of Peace and beacons were lit at locations across the country to allow opportunities for individuals and communities to pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of the Second World War generation.

As well as the NNC lamp lightings, local town and parish councils led local community events in towns and villages across North Northamptonshire.

North Northamptonshire Council is signed up to the Armed Forces Covenant and has pledged to support the defence community. For more information on signing the Covenant, the support available to members of the Armed Forces Community and local Armed Forces events, visit Armed Forces Northants.

## GARDENING GREATS GIVE ADVICE AND GET A PENNY FOR THEIR THOUGHTS

*When young gardener Penny Moth was invited to meet a trio of famous experts, she did not expect to get another surprise invitation.*

Eight-year-old Penny, who has her own 125 square metre allotment – it was a gift from Santa – has become something of a gardening star herself after winning the Best Junior Gardener award at Higham Ferrers Tourism's horticultural show last September and then featuring in newspaper stories and on the BBC news channel.

Thus, when the trustees of The Friends of St Mary's were organising the last of three events – Gardeners' Question Time – to celebrate their recent Arts Weekend, they thought it was a good idea to invite Penny and her mum, Keeley, along to hear what the experts had to say.

Special front row seats had been prepared for Penny and her mum in the town's Bede House, when the audience were introduced to the nationally renowned gardening guests: Bunny Guinness, a landscape architect,

Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medal winner and Radio 4 GQT panellist; Susie Pasley-Tyler of Coton Manor Garden and winner of the Nation's Favourite Garden Award whose new book was on sale at the event; and Joe Whitehead, head gardener at Burghley House in Lincolnshire.

The audience's questions came thick and fast, ranging from pruning and pollinators, to pests, pellets and potatoes (soil suitability... square holes or round holes... and black spot).

When Penny was introduced to the VIP gardeners, they told her it was very hard to get young people interested in gardening, but there were so many careers and opportunities available to them.

"Keep up your interest, you will find you can have the pick of jobs," Joe Whitehead told her.

He advised her to learn all about plants and flowers and learn what



PHOTOGRAPHY: PAM WEBBLEY

**STAR TURNS: Gardening gurus and the newest trophy winner, Penny Moth. Passing on their expert knowledge at the Gardeners' Question Time in Higham Ferrers, were, from the left: Joe Whitehead, Susie Pasley-Tyler and Bunny Guinness**

their names mean. Telling her that his favourite flower was the bell-like Dierama – also known as the Angel's Fishing Rod – which is a native of South Africa, he later invited Penny to visit Burghley House to see his dierama collection.

And he promised he would give her a dierama gift to take home. Penny's mum said they would take up the offer.

Penny also got the job of presenting the three gardening greats with gifts on behalf of The Friends of St Mary's hosts.

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# ELECTION FOR THE HIGHAM FERRERS WARD OF NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL TO BE REARRANGED DUE TO CANDIDATE DEATH

The election for the Higham Ferrers ward of North Northamptonshire Council, due to have taken place on 1st May 2025, will be rearranged following the sad death of candidate William John James Ratcliffe, also known as John Ratcliffe.

All other polls on 1st May 2025 across North Northamptonshire went ahead as planned, including the election for Higham Ferrers Town Council, Higham Ferrers Chichele Ward and parish council election for Chelveston-cum-Caldecott.

Adele Wylie, Returning Officer for North Northamptonshire Council said:

"We send our sincere condolences to John's family and our thoughts are with them at this sad time.

"By law, we must now postpone the election for Higham Ferrers ward on North Northamptonshire Council. The other candidates and electors have been made aware."

An election must take place by 23rd June 2025 and further details about a new date for the election will be announced in due course. New poll cards will be sent to all affected voters once the date is set. Any already returned postal votes for the North

Northamptonshire Council Higham Ferrers Ward will not be counted. Postal voters in this area will receive a new postal vote once the election has been rearranged.

The town council elections for the Higham Ferrers Chichele ward and the parish of Chelveston-cum-Caldecott went ahead as planned.



## GENEALOGY JOTTINGS

WORDS BY  
JAN PEARSON

What about marriage records? One thing to remember is that, as I have mentioned before, the vicar would only go by what the couple told him – no evidence was needed. Therefore, you may find that ages, especially those of minors, might be massaged, as well as marital status.

Anyone under the age of 21 had to have parental or guardian permission to marry. Also, you may find the very unhelpful "of full age" comment in the age column. All this indicates is that the person was aged 21 or over. However, the names and occupations of the happy couples' respective fathers may help you to find the families a generation further back.

The names of witnesses can also be helpful as well – or amusing! One of the witnesses at my Gran's second marriage in 1929 was her former sister-in-law from the first marriage!

Please don't fret if you cannot find the General Register References. The GRO can undertake a search for you – it just takes longer. But if you can provide other information such as the

approximate age of the parties, or a father's name, that can help in the search.

If you obtain a copy of any certificates from the GRO, remember that they are just that – copies of the transcript that they hold. I have a certificate where the vicar's name is in the Bride's Father section, only to be crossed out. This was certainly a transcription error as, when I checked the original Parish Records, no mistake had been made there!

As I said above, the vicar would only go by what the couple told him – no evidence was needed. Therefore, you might well find that the groom is recorded as a bachelor, when in fact, he could still be married to his previous wife. Bigamy was known as the "Poor Man's Divorce". I have found example of this where the previous wife is still alive and kicking but might be recorded as a widow, perhaps to save face.

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# RHTS awarded grant for new floor

The Rushden Historical Transport Society is very pleased to announce that thanks to a grant from the Mick George Community Fund, a new floor has been laid in their large goods shed at their Rushden Station site.



When the railway fully closed in the 1960s, use of the goods shed ceased. It was subsequently used by Northamptonshire County Council, who laid a heavy duty floor for use as a vehicle and materials storage depot. The Society purchased the goods shed in 2018 and has made extensive improvements to bring the shed into being a key venue for society fundraising events and importantly for general hire by

individuals, groups and commercial companies.

The new 150mm thick screeded floor with damp-proof membrane has produced an excellent smooth surface with no water ingress, made its use much safer and has made disabled access easier. Although the original floor had been coated and levelled where practical, the ingress of water continually damaged the coated surface. The Mick George grant has removed all of the old floor's problems.

Several events have already been held in the shed and the new floor has been acknowledged as a great

improvement and much better for any activities.

The Goods Shed is available for hire at essentially any time and the Society can be contacted on [venuehire@rhts.co.uk](mailto:venuehire@rhts.co.uk) or give us a call on 0300 302 3150.

The Goods Shed is always open on Wednesdays and Saturdays, please call in and have a look.

The Society would like to express its sincere thanks to Mick George and Grantscape for awarding the grant, which is a significant fundraising factor in the development of the Society and also helping to maintain what is a community asset to Rushden.



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### MAY

Mon 12 Derbyshire & Peak District  
Wed 14 Wye Valley River Cruise & Lunch  
Sat 17 Clacton on Sea  
Sun 18 Camden Markets  
Wed 21 Mystery Full Day & Lunch  
Sat 24 Warwick Market Day  
Sat 24 Hovercraft Experience to Ryde  
Sun 25 Melton Mowbray Cheese Fair  
Sun 25 Brighton  
Mon 26 Twycross Zoo - Bank Holiday  
Tue 27 Coventry Market Day  
Tue 27 Coventry Transport Museum  
Thu 29 Family Seaside Mystery  
Fri 30 Cannon Hall Farm  
Sat 31 Call the Midwife Chatham Dock Yard  
Sat 31 Rochester  
Sat 31 Skegness

### JUNE

Sun 1 Great Yarmouth  
Sun 1 Coronation Street Tour  
Sun 1 Melton Mowbray  
Wed 4 Sheringham & NNRW  
Thu 5 Chesterfield Flea Market  
Sat 7 Hunstanton  
Tue 10 Nottingham Cruise & Lunch  
Thu 12 Nantwich Market Day  
Sat 14 Cromer  
Sun 15 Gardeners World & Good Food Show  
Fri 20 National Arboretum & Lichfield  
Fri 20 National Arboretum  
Sat 21 Swanage  
Sun 22 Great Yarmouth Wheels Festival  
Tue 24 Windsor Luxury Afternoon Tea Cruise  
Sat 28 Hovercraft Experience to Ryde  
Sun 29 Sheringham

### JULY

Sat 5 Llangollen Horse Drawn Boat Trip  
Sat 5 Llangollen Railway & The Classic Transport Show  
Sun 6 Hampton Court Palace Garden Festival  
Tue 8 Bicester Shopping Village  
Sat 12 Skegness  
Sun 13 Hunstanton  
Mon 14 Bakewell Market  
Wed 16 Rutland Belle River Cruise & Oakham  
Wed 23 Sandringham Flower Show  
Thu 24 Shropshire & Little Switzerland  
Sat 26 Southend on Sea  
Sun 27 Weymouth  
Tue 29 Trentham Estate & Monkey Forest  
Wed 30 Battersea Power Station Lift Tour & Shopping (New shopping Destination)  
London Zoo  
Postal Museum, London

### AUGUST

Fri 1 Chester  
Fri 1 Chester Zoo  
Sat 2 Buckingham Palace

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### JUNE - JULY

#### 8-14 JUNE BANTRY AND THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY - £899pp

The Maritime Hotel, Bantry. Half Board including excursions. Bantry is in the heart of West Cork and is a region of lush vegetation, palm trees and semi-tropical flowers. Hemmed in by high mountain ridges, an azure blue sea and cascading mountain streams, it is a place of unparalleled beauty where the landscape changes with every mood of wind and sky. In this breath-taking mountain scenery, with meandering streams, lakes and woods, where megalithic monuments and ruins of monastic settlements dot the countryside, visitors can find peace and tranquillity.

#### 29 JUNE - 6 JULY THE BLACK FOREST - £1019pp

The Waldeck Spa Resort, Bad Durrheim, Germany. Half Board including excursions. The Schwarzwald (Black Forest) comprises a swathe of deep-green woodland draped across the granite and Sandstone Mountains of Baden-Württemberg in south-west Germany. As the setting of countless Grimm Brothers' fairy tales, the Black Forest happily plays up to its image as a land of cuckoo clocks, cherry gateaux, outlandish traditional garb, hefty half-timbered farmhouses and hill upon hill of dark evergreen forests, celebrated for their unspoilt beauty.

#### 26 - 30 JULY SUMMER MYSTERY - £599pp

Our 'Mystery Tour' is very popular, so early booking is essential to avoid disappointment. Our destinations are always a pleasant surprise. These tours represent excellent value for money and accommodation will be of a very high standard. Half Board accommodation, all rooms are very comfortable and are en suite with TV, tea/coffee making facilities. Could it be country or coastal? Will it be North, South, East or West? We do know you'll be delighted when you get there. Excursions included.

### NOVEMBER

#### 23-26 NOVEMBER MAGICAL CHRISTMAS IN DISNEYLAND PARIS - FROM £975pp

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# Spotlight on > Health & Wellbeing

## > PHYSIOTHERAPY ON SATURDAYS

If you've ever tried booking an NHS physiotherapy appointment, you'll know the drill: call, wait, chase, and then wait some more. Weeks turn into months - and meanwhile, that annoying backache or shoulder niggle just isn't improving.

But good news is finally here for the weary and the achy.



The Ashgrove Clinic

The Ashgrove Clinic in Higham Ferrers is making weekends wonderful by offering physiotherapy appointments every Saturday. That's right - no more calendar juggling, no more painful waits. Just top-quality, hands-on treatment, at a time that actually works for you.

Their in-house chartered physiotherapist (whose credentials and experience are enough to make your spine sit up straight) treats everything from stiff necks and grumbling knees to sciatica, back pain, shoulder tightness, and the everyday wear and tear that comes with real life. You don't need to be an athlete or recovering from surgery - just someone who wants to move, feel, and live better.

And he does a free 20-minute consultation to find out about your injury, so you can meet him, find the Ashgrove parking slots on Midland Road and see whether he can help you.

Don't expect conveyor belt care while you're there! At The Ashgrove Clinic, you'll find a calm, welcoming space where your treatment is tailored just for you. No rushed sessions, no one-size-fits-all approach - just a thoughtful plan to help you get back to doing what you love, whether that's walking the dog or dancing in the kitchen.

In an age where getting an appointment can feel like a game of healthcare bingo, this local service is a real gem. It's professional,

personal, and - crucially - available when you actually have time to go.

So, if your body's been crying out for help and the NHS line keeps ringing out, book a free 20-minute consultation to discuss your pain.

Book your consultation at [www.ashgrovehealth.co.uk](http://www.ashgrovehealth.co.uk), or call 01933 469043. Your back (and your sanity) will thank you.

## > JOHN WHITE GOLF CLUB

Looking for a new hobby? Want to get fit? New to the area and want to make new friends? Then why not try golf! John White golf course is to be found on the outskirts of Rushden on the A6 south.

The course has been established since 1973 and has evolved into a par 3 nine-hole course of well kept parkland suitable for all players. It is ideal for those new to the game and for experienced players wishing to hone their short game skills. It has a friendly and active membership who enjoy a full and varied diary of men's, ladies and mixed competitions. Pay and play golfers are welcome, please ring for tee times.

Annual Membership now just £475 per year. Other facilities include function room hire with catering for weddings, parties, funeral teas etc.

For more details, please contact Alan Bowman on 01933 411140 or Jane Morgan on 01933 359819.

## > SPOTLIGHT ON VOLUNTEER ACTION: 30 YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES IN OUR COMMUNITY

Volunteer Action - 30 years of community, compassion, and connection. Here's to the next 30!

It's time to light the candles and celebrate three incredible decades of community spirit, kindness, and tireless dedication! In 2025, Volunteer Action is proud to mark its 30th Anniversary - a milestone that shines a spotlight on the community heroes among us who have been making a powerful impact in the rural location of East Northamptonshire since 1995.

What started as a humble initiative has blossomed into a lifeline for over 1,200 community members aged over 65 years of age, thanks to two simple but vital services: the Community Transport Scheme and the Befriending Service.

"We may be a small charity, but we've got a big heart - and even bigger ambitions for the future."

Based in offices in Oundle and supporting Thrapston, Brigstock, and 48 surrounding villages including Easton-on-the Hill in the north, Volunteer Action is fuelled by a passionate team of just five staff members and an army of over 150 volunteers. From



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### Driving Change, One Mile at a Time

The Community Transport Scheme is more than a car journey - it's a connection to life-saving healthcare and essential services. In the last year alone, volunteer drivers clocked up 132,000 miles over 12,500 trips - more than half of these were for medical appointments.

In places where buses are few and taxis rare, this service is not just important - it's critical.

### Breaking the Silence of Loneliness

The Befriending Service is a beacon of hope for those feeling isolated. Whether it's a weekly phone call, a friendly visit, or a group event over tea and cake, volunteers are there to remind people they matter. We run regular weekly and monthly socials and are always open to new ideas from volunteers.

"It's not just a chat. It's friendship, connection, and reassurance."

### 30 for 30 Years: Join the Celebration!

To mark this amazing milestone, Volunteer Action invites everyone to take part in the '30 for 30 Years' campaign. Get



creative - run 30 miles, bake 30 cupcakes, do 30 sit-to-stands, or simply donate £30. However you choose to celebrate, you'll be helping to sustain this life-changing work for the next 30 years!

Fundraising packs are available now! Just email: [admin@volunteeractionoundle.org.uk](mailto:admin@volunteeractionoundle.org.uk)

### We Need You: Volunteer Today

Volunteer Action is always looking for more caring hearts and willing hands - especially drivers! All you need is a car,

some free time, and a desire to help. The role is flexible, and mileage costs are reimbursed. It's a great way to give back, meet people, and be part of something truly meaningful.

### Get Involved

Want to find out more or get started? Visit [www.volunteeractionoundle.org.uk](http://www.volunteeractionoundle.org.uk), call: 01832 275433, or email: [admin@volunteeractionoundle.org.uk](mailto:admin@volunteeractionoundle.org.uk). Volunteer Action - 30 years of community, compassion, and connection. Here's to the next 30!

# YOUR HEALTH – HEADACHES

## WORDS BY CLAIRE SHORT

Headaches – whether it's the throbbing tension kind, or a full-blown migraine – can really ruin your day. But before you reach for yet another painkiller, have you considered... needles?

Wait, don't run away! We're talking about acupuncture – the ancient Chinese practice that's been around for over 2,000 years and is surprisingly good at easing headaches.

What the research says:

- A 2016 review published in Cochrane Library looked at 22 studies and found that acupuncture can reduce the frequency of migraines and tension-type headaches. Some lucky participants even had their headache days cut

in half!

- The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) recommends acupuncture for tension-type headaches and migraines.
- One theory is that acupuncture stimulates the nervous system, causing the release of natural pain-relieving chemicals like endorphins and serotonin. Why acupuncture might help you:

- Reduces stress – many headaches are tension-related, and acupuncture helps calm the nervous system.
- Improves circulation – better blood flow = less pain and

pressure.

- Relaxes muscles – especially around the neck and shoulders, where tightness can trigger head pain.
  - Less reliance on medication – great if you're tired of popping pills or dealing with side effects.
- Bonus perk: Most people find acupuncture surprisingly relaxing. Some even fall asleep mid-session (yes, with needles in!). In fact, I'm having acupuncture treatment for shoulder pain at the moment and it's incredible how relaxing it is, yet how energised you feel afterwards.

So, next time your head starts to throb, give acupuncture a try.

**Claire Short is a Registered Osteopath, and runs The Ashgrove Clinic in Higham Ferrers.**

# VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

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## Bosworth's Garden Centre raises £2,506 for Cransley Hospice Trust through Festive Fundraiser

*Bosworth's Garden Centre is proud to announce that an incredible £2,506 was raised over the Christmas period in support of Cransley Hospice Trust, thanks to the heartfelt generosity of its loyal customers.*

The donations came from customers who enjoyed the much-loved singing reindeer display, a festive favourite at the garden centre.

Cransley Hospice Trust, based in Kettering, provides outstanding end-of-life care

for patients with life-limiting illnesses. Their services span specialist palliative care in the community and in their hospice setting, offering compassionate support to both patients and their families when they need it most. To learn more

or to get involved, visit: [www.cransleyhospicetrust.org.uk](http://www.cransleyhospicetrust.org.uk).

Tania Bosworth, co-owner of Bosworth's Garden Centre, extended her thanks: "We are always blown away by the kindness and generosity of our customers. The singing reindeer have become a cherished part of Christmas for so many families, and seeing them bring such joy while raising money for a cause like Cransley Hospice makes it all the more special. Thank you once again to everyone who donated — your continued support means the world to us and truly makes a difference in the community."

The team at Bosworth's is honoured to support such vital local work and looks forward to hosting the singing reindeer again this Christmas.



Sam and Tania Bosworth, owners of Bosworth's Garden Centre, with Rebecca Patenall from Cransley Hospice Trust, celebrating the success of the Christmas donation drive

## OUNDLE FOOD FESTIVAL – A FEAST FOR THE SENSES!

Oundle has announced plans for a mouthwatering day as the town hosts its 15th annual Food Festival on Saturday 21st June, from 9am to 4pm.

This vibrant event in the heart of the beautiful Georgian market town brings together the finest independent food and drink producers from across the region, and is one of the hottest dates on the calendar for East Midlands food lovers.

Local wine guru, Philip Amps said: "The launch of the Food Festival programme is always a highlight, as it gets local traders looking forward to the heady days of June. With the streets closed to traffic, people can wander the stalls, nibbling and sipping as they go. It's a superb showcase of the town and

the wonderful traders the area around it supports."

Taryn Moore, owner of Bumble and Twig is looking forward to it: "It's a wonderful day out with a great atmosphere, perfect for exploring Oundle's pretty streets and independent shops and cafés. It's lovely to wander around with the town bustling with people and stalls."

All local shops, cafés and restaurants will be partaking, and with FREE parking, live music and entertainment throughout the day, it's a paradise for foodies, a fun-filled day for families, and the perfect way to support local businesses while reducing food miles.

Oundle Town Council's Mayor said: "It's a huge operation shutting an A road through town, and the logistics are complex – but



what a showcase for local suppliers, to a great and receptive audience!"

So come hungry, bring your friends, and enjoy an unforgettable day packed with flavours, aromas and foodie delights!

For more information visit [www.oundle.gov.uk/oundle-food-festival](http://www.oundle.gov.uk/oundle-food-festival) or follow on Facebook @[www.oundle.gov.uk](https://www.facebook.com/oundle.gov.uk)

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# Hermitage House Care Home awarded Top 20 Care Homes East Midlands 2025

*Country Court is delighted to announce that it has been awarded a 'Top 20 Recommended Care Home Group 2025' Award by the leading care home review website carehome.co.uk. This is the tenth consecutive year the group has been awarded the Top 20 'Large Group' Award.*

The carehome.co.uk Group Awards 2025 highlight the most recommended care home operators in the UK. The awards are based on reviews from care home residents and their friends

and family. Country Court has a group score of 9.7 out of 10, taken from the average of the 47 care homes in the group.

In addition to the group award, Hermitage House

Care Home in Thrapston has been recognised with a Top 20 Care Homes East Midlands 2025 Award achieving a fantastic review score of 10 out of 10. Unlike other awards, the carehome.co.uk Top 20 award is based on the actual and impartial experiences of people living in Country Court homes making them unique in this respect.

The staff team at Hermitage House Care Home received glowing reviews such as:

'The facilities in this care home is second to none. The staff do everything within their power to make life as comfortable as possible for the residents, sometimes going above and beyond. No

wish is impossible to achieve, and a home-from-home ethos is maintained. I would highly recommend this care home and the staff within.' J.P., friend of resident.

'Just excellent in every aspect. Genuine care, very clean and welcoming atmosphere. Mum went in with dementia and has regained a healthy weight. She has come out of her shell and socialises thanks to the team. I suppose the best bit is mum said she'd recommend this hotel to anyone. That says it all.' S.B., son of resident.

Commenting on the carehome.co.uk Top 20 Group Award, Alykhan Kachra, Co-CEO of Country Court, said: "We are thrilled to receive this recognition from carehome.co.uk and sincerely thank our residents, relatives, and friends for their thoughtful reviews. As a family-led company, we take great pride in our ethos, which



is reflected in the feedback we receive. We are especially pleased to see Hermitage House Care Home recognised in their local area. As one of our newest care homes, it is wonderful to see them thriving within their community and being acknowledged as a leading care provider in the East Midlands."

The carehome.co.uk Top 20 Care Home Awards 2025 highlight the most recommended Care Homes in each region of the UK and the Top 20 Care Home Groups in the UK.

The Awards are based on the Individual and Group Review Score, as of 31st January 2025.



 **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)





# Nene Valley News - EVENTS

## > SATURDAY 10TH MAY, 10AM

### Bluebell event

At Midshires Covert, Kelmarsh Road, Harrington NN6 9ND - including food cooked on the campfire. Details on 07943 307873.

## > SUNDAY 11TH MAY, 10.30AM

### Countryside Walk



Organised by Whitefriars Church, Rushden: 'The Keysoe Row Walking Show' – a 4-mile walk in the north Bedfordshire countryside. Meet near the Kymbrook Primary School, Kimbolton Road (B660) in Keysoe Row, MK44 2HH in time to start at 10.30am. Details on 07943 307873.

## > SUNDAY 18TH MAY, 9.40AM

### Higham Ferrers Footpath Group

Saffron Road car park for car sharing. Contact Ann on 07469 186731. 5.5-mile walk, Raunds to Stanwick Lakes.

## > TUESDAY 20TH MAY, 6.30PM

### Higham Ferrers Footpath Group

Saffron Road car park. Contact Jo on 07758 8450908. A leisurely evening walk in the Higham Ferrers area.

## > SUNDAY 25TH MAY, 1-5PM

### Artist Open Studio



Home studio near Elton (full address provided upon RSVP). Tulli Perry will host a one day event, inviting visitors to view and purchase work directly from her studio. The collection will include larger statement pieces, smaller works, and original sketches all offered at special studio prices. The day will be relaxed and informal, with light refreshments served in the garden (weather permitting). RSVP: [www.tulliperry.co.uk](http://www.tulliperry.co.uk)

## > SUNDAY 1ST JUNE, 9.05AM

### Higham Ferrers Footpath Group

Saffron Road car park for car sharing. Contact Cindy on 07752 993777. 6.5-mile walk from Earls Barton to Summer Leys.



# Authors in Oundle to host talk with acclaimed novelist Tracy Chevalier in May

Tracy Chevalier: *The Glassmaker* – Friday 30th May, 7pm-8pm  
at Great Hall, New Street, Oundle PE8 4GH

## AUTHORS IN OUNDLE



**Bestselling historical novelist Tracy Chevalier will talk about her new work, *The Glassmaker*, a story set in 15th-century Venice, which skips across time.**

The *Glassmaker* is vivid, inventive and spellbinding: a virtuoso portrait of a woman, a family and a city that are as everlasting as their glass.

The setting is Venice, 1486. Across the lagoon lies Murano. Time flows differently here – like the glass the island's maestros spend their lives learning to control. Women are not meant to work with glass, but Orsola Rosso flouts convention to save her family from ruin. She works in secret, knowing her creations must be perfect to be accepted by men. But perfection may take a lifetime.

Skipping like a stone through the centuries, we follow Orsola as she hones her craft through war and plague, tragedy and triumph, love and loss. Her creations will adorn the necks of empresses and courtesans from Paris to Vienna – but will she ever earn the

respect of those closest to her?

Tracy does a lot of research for her novels, since they are mainly set in other times and places. She likes to learn the same skills as her characters, which she says makes it easier to understand them and describe them. She tried

painting when she wrote *Girl with a Pearl Earring*; quilting for *The Last Runaway*; needlepoint for *A Single Thread*; and making glass beads for *The Glassmaker*.

Tracy Chevalier has been visiting Venice regularly since her honeymoon there 30 years ago. She is the author of eleven novels, including *A Single Thread*, *Remarkable Creatures* and *Girl with a Pearl Earring*, an international bestseller that has sold over five million copies and been made into a film, a play and an opera. Following the success of this book Tracy was able to write full-time.

'A triumph... a brilliant idea carried out with confidence and brio and a deep love of an extraordinary city. The ingenuity of the time-skipping is beyond admiration' *Philip Pullman*

'The sparing intensity to Chevalier's scene-setting, her vital lightness of touch, her ability to show that historical fiction, at its strongest, always tells a story of the present as well as the past – these are qualities born of the kind of painstaking practice that requires not just talent but something every bit as amorphous as molten glass: time.' *The Guardian*



To submit your event please contact us via our website [www.nenevalleynews.co.uk](http://www.nenevalleynews.co.uk) or call 01522 692542. Please supply in the following format: Date, event, place, time, admission fee (if applicable), contact information, 15 word description.

Tickets £14 (£9) available from Oundle Bookshop, (cash only) or online from [www.authorsinoundle.co.uk](http://www.authorsinoundle.co.uk). For enquiries contact [info@authorsinoundle.co.uk](mailto:info@authorsinoundle.co.uk)



# 'Evenings in the Big Top' at Ferry Meadows: events now on sale

*Silent Discos and an East Meets West Dance Party will extend the Peterborough Celebrates Festival vibes and bring you exciting evenings in the Big Top in Ferry Meadows on Friday 16th and Saturday 17th May.*

On Friday 16th May go along and boogie in the Big Top at two unforgettable Silent Disco sessions – perfect for all ages. Grab your multi-channel headphones and hit the dance floor as three live DJs spin the tunes – from epic sing-along anthems and feel-good floor fillers, to high-energy house, garage and drum & bass, plus a vibrant blend of Afro beats and Bhangra rhythms. Expect high-energy vibes, glowing lights and a magical festival atmosphere that'll keep you dancing like nobody's listening!

The two silent disco sessions are 5pm-6.30pm and 7.30pm-9.30pm. Find out more and book your tickets at <https://www.nenepark.org.uk/Event/boogie-in-the-big-top-silent-disco>

On Saturday 17th May, when the FREE festival winds down, keep the celebrations going in the Big Top for a dance party like no other, hosted by the nationally-acclaimed Punjabi Roots Academy. Think Beyoncé meets Bhangra – with live dhol drummers, vibrant Bhangra dancers and an international DJ spinning global party anthems as East meets West in this exciting fusion of music and dance.

Bring your best moves to the Big Top dance floor for an unforgettable night of energy, rhythm and celebration! The party will be 7.30pm-9.30pm. Find out more and book your tickets at <https://www.nenepark.org.uk/Event/east-meets-west-dance-party>

On both evenings, festival vendors will be open for food, drinks and snacks just outside the Big Top at Ferry Meadows. Standard parking charges apply.



Steph Peachey, Head of Visitor Experience at Nene Park Trust says: "We're so excited we can offer visitors more new events that bring people together in our spaces. Either come along to Ferry Meadows on Friday evening to enjoy boogie-ing

at our silent discos or extend your day out at our FREE Peterborough Celebrates Festival on Saturday with our East Meets West Dance Party! We can't wait to be partying with everyone in the beautiful surroundings of Ferry Meadows over that weekend."

**For all the information on Peterborough Celebrates Festival and the 'Evenings in the Big Top' events, go to [www.peterboroughcelebratesfestival.co.uk](http://www.peterboroughcelebratesfestival.co.uk)**

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# CAKE AND CUPPA RAISES FUNDS

On Friday 2nd May the Silver Strength exercise classes all came together and held a cake and cuppa morning in aid of Dementia UK. They raised a fantastic £256.80 to help those and their families living with dementia.

Silver Strength is a set of chair-based and Otago falls prevention exercise classes run by Niki Dunkley and held in Rushden, Higham, Raunds, Irthlingborough and Northampton. These are not your usual exercise classes and Niki is proud of that. They welcome members who are wheelchair users, who have been registered blind and who have many health conditions that limit their ability.

"Each week these amazing people get together to exercise, to chat, beat loneliness and to laugh," said Niki, "and while this our first charity event for 2025, it won't be the last."



## Northamptonshire family launches fundraiser fun day to remember

A Northamptonshire family has launched a fundraising community day in support of the Northamptonshire Health Charity's Twinkling Stars Appeal – a day to remember, reflect and support parents and families who have lost children.

Carmen and Chris Smith, parents to Esmé Smith who passed away at 38 weeks gestation, are hosting a family fundraising day on Tuesday 27th May to raise money to support the build of the new maternity bereavement suite at Kettering General Hospital.

Carmen Smith, Esmé's mother and organiser of the event, said: "We heard about Northamptonshire Health Charity's Twinkling Stars Appeal whilst we were still in hospital with Esmé. We were inspired by our incredible midwife, who has taken on multiple challenges to raise money for the appeal, and now we want to do our bit and support more families with similar grief and loss that we have experienced.

"The idea for the day came about by thinking about Esmé being 3 this year and the party that we would be throwing for her. Keeping her name and legacy alive is our way of parenting her, so we knew we wanted her name at the forefront of everything about the day.

"When experiencing the loss of a child, it's difficult to comprehend being in that space in the delivery ward, so by having a separate, bespoke suite for families to grieve in their own time and have access to bereavement midwives makes a

huge difference. Having people say her name and remember her is how we knew we could start grieving – so we hope families in similar circumstances can come down to Esmé Day and feel safe to grieve and a sense of belonging."

Esmé Day will be hosted at The Chester House Estate, on what would have been Esmé's 3rd birthday. Activities including raffles, tombolas, games, children's theatre entertainment, and a dedicated moment of reflection for those who have lost babies will take place in celebration on Esmé's birthday.

Local and national businesses, including NNBN, Stu Vincent Photography, Laugh Out Loud Theatre, Pebble Play, Pink Octopus, and Massive Hits FM, are supporting the event. Businesses and individuals interested in supporting can contact Carmen or Chris to see how to get involved through the contact form on The Chester House Estate's website.

Admission to the event is free for the whole family, but a donation is appreciated on arrival, and donation buckets will be dotted around the Estate throughout the day.

The Estate urges visitors to park at their main visitor car park at Claudius Way. Accessible and disabled parking is available on a first-come, first-serve basis at the onsite Lime Avenue car park (NN29 7EZ). For more information about the day, to reserve your free ticket and to find out how to make a donation, please visit Esmé Day on The Chester House Estate's website.

  
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# "HENRY VIII" VISITS HISTORIC HIGHAM FERRERS ADDING A MEMORABLE TOUCH OF MAJESTY

*A young Henry VIII has visited Higham Ferrers – and the imposing king, dressed in his historically accurate Tudor costume of fine clothes and jewels, received a right royal reception.*



**The crowning glory: Pupils from Higham Ferrers Junior School – as well as those from Henry Chichele Primary School – got the chance to have their picture taken with costumed re-enactor Henry VIII**

Although a hush fell over the packed audience when the handsome larger-than-life Henry VIII (aka David Smith) first entered the Hope Methodist Church, they were soon applauding him.

King Henry, played by a professional historical costumed re-enactor, was holding court where his young subjects – pupils from Higham Ferrers Junior School and Henry Chichele Primary School – entertained him with a range of typical Tudor dances.

Henry had been invited along by the Friends of St Mary's group of volunteers, who were celebrating the first of three events marking their annual Arts Weekend.

Earlier, Carol Fitzgerald, a Friends of St Mary's trustee, said that the children were studying the Tudor period at school and that Henry VIII always went down well with them because of his brutal beheading of two of his wives.

However, as the re-enactor explained later, the young Henry VIII who was visiting Higham Ferrers was aged about 30 and was still married to his first wife Catherine of Aragon, and there was hint of divorce.

Another VIP, Higham Ferrers deputy mayor, Gary Salmon, had also been invited to the event and after Carol and fellow Trustee, Brenda Lofthouse, recounted some of the historical facts about Tudor times to the audience, the children took to the floor.

They first danced Greensleeves, a medieval court dance, with the music said to have been composed by Henry VIII himself; then they showed off their Hornpipe skills, followed by the Galliard dance. The dances were choreographed by Kitty Denton with the Tudor-era music played by Rosemary Nayyar.

Both schools danced the Hornpipe together at the end of the Tudor festivities, with parents being invited to join in. Henry did not stand on ceremony and surprised the audience by

taking up the offer and showing off his own dance moves. Then, addressing the court in his booming voice, he told pupils that he was a dancer himself and that "it was joyous to see you perform...keep you well and good health," he said.

'Henry', who is based in Essex, carries out some 12 similar costumed engagements a year and as well as running historical workshops for schools, two notable dates in his diary this year are the Hampton Court Palace Festival in June (Hampton Court was the home of Henry VIII) and the 500th anniversary celebrations of Christ Church College, Oxford, in July.

After the dance performance, the Friends of St Mary's took Henry on a tour of the medieval town, which has connections with the famous Tudor king.

"The town lost a castle and most of Chichele College under Henry VIII's instruction. We had to show our Henry the college," Carol Fitzgerald explained.



**A stately visit: Striking a kingly pose, Henry VIII is welcomed to Higham Ferrers by the town's deputy mayor, Gary Salmon**

## Nene Valley news CLASSIFIEDS

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## > PUBLIC NOTICES

### NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL

#### ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14 (BULWICK ROAD, SOUTHWICK)

##### (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2025

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that North Northamptonshire Council intend, not less than seven days from the date of this Notice, to make an Order the effect of which will be to prohibit traffic from proceeding along that length of Bulwick Road, Southwick as set out below.

**LENGTH OF ROAD TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES:** That length of Bulwick Road, Southwick from structure 3303.

**REASON FOR RESTRICTION:** The restriction is required for safety during masonry repairs to parapet through to arch ring.

**PERIOD OF CLOSURE:** The proposed Order will come into effect on 28th May 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 13 days.

**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:** use Glaphorn Road, Benefield Road and Stamford Road.

If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler

ref:- 24/25 – N1005 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T25/273

#### ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14 (ST PETERS ROAD, OUNDLE)

##### (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2025

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that North Northamptonshire Council intend, not less than seven days from the date of this Notice, to make an Order the effect of which will be to prohibit traffic from proceeding along that length of St Peters Road, Oundle as set out below.

**LENGTH OF ROAD TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES:** That length of St Peters Road, Oundle from outside no.10 to St Wilfrids Road.

**REASON FOR RESTRICTION:** The restriction is required for safety during change of faulty substation.

**PERIOD OF CLOSURE:** The proposed Order will come into effect on 28th May 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 9 days.

**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:** use St Wilfrids Road, Bellamy Road and St Peters Road.

If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler

ref:- 24/25 – N1010 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T25/279

#### ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 – SECTION 14 (RAUNDS ROAD & BROOK STREET, RAUNDS)

##### (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF THROUGH TRAFFIC) ORDER 2025

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that North Northamptonshire Council intend, not less than seven days from the date of this Notice, to make an Order the effect of which will be to prohibit traffic from proceeding along those lengths of Raunds Road and Brook Street, Raunds as set out below.

**LENGTHS OF ROADS TO WHICH RESTRICTION APPLIES:** That length of Raunds Road between either entrance for Brook Street and Brook Street from junction with Raunds road to outside no.2.

**REASON FOR RESTRICTION:** The restriction is required for safety during overhead cable works.

**PERIOD OF CLOSURE:** The proposed Order will come into effect on 28th May 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 roads will be restricted for one day.

**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:** 1. Brook Street. 2. Kimbolton Road, Chelveston Road, Grove Street, High Street, Midland Road and Hargrave Road.

If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler

ref:- 24/25 – N1008 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T25/287

#### 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 from outside no.26 – no.36.

**REASON FOR RESTRICTION:** The restriction is required for safety during new water connection works.

**PERIOD OF CLOSURE:** The proposed Order will come into effect on 21st May 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 three days.

**ALTERNATIVE ROUTES:** use Raunds Road, Denford Road and Brooks Road.

If you require any further information please contact Steve Fowler

ref:- 24/25 – N972 Steve.Fowler@northnorthants.gov.uk PKG/T25/258

## > ACCOUNTANCY

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Dated this 10th day of May 2025  
SANJIT SULL, Director of Law & Governance (Monitoring Officer) (Interim)



# Charity teams up with Wet Wet Wet's Graeme Duffin for a musical evening at The Castle

Multi-award winning musician Graeme Duffin, who is lead guitarist with the world famous Wet Wet Wet, is hosting a musical evening for leading charity SERVE.



Graeme, who has had a string of hits with the band, including 'Sweet Little Mystery' and 'Love Is All Around', will be at The Castle theatre in Wellingborough, on Friday 23rd May at 7pm, for a fun evening of music and chat.

Tickets are just £20 and proceeds will go to SERVE, a Northamptonshire charity which supports independent living.

SERVE CEO, Tony Gibbs said: "This is an intimate opportunity to hear first-hand about the life of a legendary band and to enjoy music and insights from a man who appeared on Top of the Pops 50-plus times."

Graeme said: "I'm excited to support SERVE at The Castle in the heart of the community."

He will be playing some of the hits by Wet Wet Wet, as well as tracks from his own jazz album and looks forward to meeting members of the audience at an informal, meet-and-greet on the evening. SERVE's fundraising manager, Nick Tite



said: "2025 is the year our charity is opening its portfolio of events – we are looking at a host of fun, packed dates for your diary and to give opportunities to find out more about us and support our goals."

"We are really excited about this evening and would love to see you there."

The evening is being supported by Able Assist, breakdown and 24-hour recovery specialists. Its managing director, Darren Mason said: "Able Assist Ltd is delighted to be sponsoring this event and looks forward to building further on our

relationship with SERVE in the future.

"Look out for SERVE's 'New Events Vehicle', which we are also pleased to be providing to support this award-winning charity, which is so beneficial to the local community."

For ticket details, please visit the Castle website booking page at [parkwoodtheatres.co.uk/castle-theatre/whats-on/an-evening-with-graeme-duffin-of-wet-wet-wet](http://parkwoodtheatres.co.uk/castle-theatre/whats-on/an-evening-with-graeme-duffin-of-wet-wet-wet)

**You can also find the details on SERVE's events pages at An Evening with Graeme Duffin of Wet Wet Wet – Serve**

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