

# Community

## news Autumn 2009



# Birchwood Car Rally

Despite an early downpour the Birchwood Car Rally took place on 7 June 2009. Attwirlettes Majorette Troupe were able to perform their routine once the ground had dried slightly and as Knebworth Classic

Bike Rally was cancelled some of their participants also turned up to the Birchwood show to display their bikes. The Mayor, Councillor Caron Juggins, presented prizes to the winners.



### Contact Details

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**Town Clerk** – Carrie Lloyd

**Deputy Town Clerk** – Paul Widdicombe

Our office is open 9am – 4:30pm  
Monday to Friday.

### Website:

www.hatfield-herts.gov.uk

## Hertfordshire Constabulary Launch New Initiative to Target Distraction Burglars

Hertfordshire Constabulary are calling on neighbours to look out for suspicious behaviour in a bid to reduce distraction burglaries. The call comes as part of a new initiative which detectives hope will help tackle the problem.

Residents are being asked to display new 'burglar beware' window stickers in their homes and cars.

Detective Chief Inspector Paul Williamson, from the Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: "Distraction burglary means quite literally that a criminal will attempt to distract a person in their home while they or a colleague carry out a burglary. They tend to target the elderly and more vulnerable people in our communities and can be very convincing.

"We're asking people to display the stickers in their homes to act as a warning to offenders that the residents of the county are keeping a watchful eye on them. But we hope they will have a dual message for residents to report any behaviour which they believe is suspicious, or simply out of the ordinary."

In a recent example in West Watford, a man dialled 999 to report two men who were acting suspiciously near some sheltered accommodation in his street. Minutes after his call, police officers had arrested the men. They were later found guilty of carrying out a distraction burglary in the home of an elderly man, and are now serving a combined prison sentence of over nine years for the offence.

Detective Chief Inspector Paul Williamson, from the Serious and Organised Crime Unit, said: "We rely on immediate information from residents to be able to apprehend these criminals and this is the main focus for the new initiative. We're asking everyone to look out for their older and more vulnerable neighbours and report suspicious behaviour to the police immediately with as much information as possible, such as descriptions or car details."

DCI Williamson continued: "I can understand that some people feel like they may be wasting police time by reporting suspicious behaviour, but we'd rather people report it in the first place and it turns out to be innocent, than not report it at all."

If you would like a sticker, please contact your local safer neighbourhood team. Contact details can be found on [www.herts.police.uk](http://www.herts.police.uk).

Distraction burglaries account for a small proportion of burglaries in the county, however Hertfordshire Constabulary gives the following advice to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of distraction burglary, or bogus callers:

- **Rule One: If a stranger calls – Not sure? Don't open the door!**  
If you are not expecting anyone and you don't recognise them, don't let them into your home. Be aware, bogus callers can be very convincing and will often pretend to be representing a utility company; a genuine caller won't mind coming back at a time when you can arrange to have somebody you trust with you.



- **Rule Two: If you are expecting a caller:**

Only open your door when you are happy that you know the person. If you can't see who is calling and need to open the door, use your door chain and ask for identification or a pre-arranged password before you let them in.

- **Rule Three: Never keep large amounts of cash at home**

If you ensure that large amounts of money are securely in a bank or building society account and any valuable jewellery is safely and discretely locked away then, even if a criminal cons their way into your home, there is nothing of value for them to steal.

More advice and information about can be found on [www.herts.police.uk](http://www.herts.police.uk).

## Making it easier to see a GP

A new kind of GP surgery – Spring House Medical Centre, is now open in Welwyn Garden City, near the QEII Hospital.

Open from 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week, every day of the year, Spring House is for anyone who wants to use it – and you don't need to be registered with the centre to use its services.

Open to everyone living, working or visiting east and north Hertfordshire (not just Welwyn Garden City), Spring House Medical Centre offers:

- Pre-booked appointments to people registered with the centre
- Pre-booked appointments to people not registered with the centre, and

- A walk-in service (no appointment needed)

Anne Walker, Chief Executive of NHS East and North Hertfordshire said, "I am delighted with this new service which gives people more choice in how and when they see a GP. With its longer opening hours over an increased number of days, Spring House Medical Centre will complement the two thirds of existing GP surgeries in the area that also offer extended opening hours to their patients."

Spring House Medical Centre  
Ascots Lane  
Welwyn Garden City  
Hertfordshire  
AL7 4HL

To register with Spring House Medical Centre or to book an appointment, phone 01707 294354, or visit [www.springhouse.nhs.uk](http://www.springhouse.nhs.uk) to find out more.



## Could you foster for Hertfordshire?

If you're enthusiastic about working with children and young people, have a spare room and want to work from home, why not think about becoming a foster carer for Hertfordshire?

Every day foster carers are helping children and young people turn their lives around. Sometimes it's the ordinary things like being a good listener or being there to give a reassuring hug that can make all the difference.

### Why do we need foster carers in Hertfordshire?

Foster carers are very important as they offer stability, support, care and

encouragement at a crucial time in a child or young person's life. By doing ordinary everyday things for them, foster carers make an extraordinary difference and help to create positive futures.

In return you'll receive full training and support, plus a fee and allowance of up to £392 per child per week.

### Shared care

Hertfordshire County Council also provides a shared care service for children and young people with disabilities. Shared carers are people from all walks of life who look after a child or young person with disabilities

for short breaks on a regular basis. Visits can be anything from a few hours a week after school, to a day at the weekends or in the school holidays, to even a regular weekend stay, depending upon the needs of the child. They can look after them in their own home, the child's home, or take them out and about. It allows children to become more independent, visit new places and meet new friends, while their parents get a break from full time caring.

If you would like to find out more about fostering or shared care in Hertfordshire, please call us on freephone 0800 917 0925 or visit [www.hertsdirect.org/fostering](http://www.hertsdirect.org/fostering)

## Get ready to take part in your first General Election!

Have you turned 18 since May 2005? Or are you celebrating your 18th birthday in the next few months? If so, the forthcoming General Election could be your first chance to have your say on who represents you at Westminster.

But to cast your vote, you'll need to be on the electoral register. A General Election can be called at any time between now and June 2010, so now's the time to act.

Look out for the registration form arriving at your address from Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council over the next few days. When the form arrives, make sure you read the instructions carefully, fill it in and send it back to the Electoral Registration Officer, Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts AL8 6AE

And that's it! When the General Election is called, you will be able to vote. You can do this in person, at a polling

station, or by applying for a postal vote or a proxy vote (where someone you trust casts your vote on your behalf).

Research from the independent Electoral Commission has shown that 22% of students in the UK are not registered to vote in elections. If you are student, and live away from home during term time, you can register at your term time address as well and vote there instead should the election be scheduled while you are away from home. Remember, you can only vote once.

The independent Electoral Commission has a website, [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk), packed with information about registering to vote, who can register and the different ways of having your say – you can even visit a virtual polling station!

Registering to vote takes a few minutes. Don't miss out on your chance to make your voice heard.

## On your bike!

Mums, dads and delighted kids got on their bikes at Howe Dell Community Centre for the Tour de Havilland on 14 June.

Borough Mayor Councillor Kim Langley and her husband Neil came to wave off the first group on the three-mile circuit. The route began at Howe Dell Community Centre, and took riders round the old airfield on the extensive network of new cycle paths. Kids answered Treasure Hunt questions on the way, and the police security-marked bikes free of charge.

Several families said it was the first time they had all been out together on their bikes. James Humphrey and his son

Harrison (5) were one of the first groups back. James said: "It was brilliant, Harrison has only had his stabilisers off three months."

The youngest rider was Chloe Richardson at three and a half. Her mum Karen said: "It was a lovely route, I hadn't realised there were so many nice quiet places to cycle around here."



Volunteers and riders gather



Families enjoyed cycling together

## Isabel Hospice

**Rotary Horse Ride –  
Sunday 4 October 2009**

Sponsored Charity Fun Horse Ride In aid of Isabel Hospice, Riding for the Disabled and other Rotary Charities. In the Beautiful Hatfield Park Hertfordshire. By kind permission of the Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury. Raffle and refreshments available on the day.

Event photographers will be there to offer souvenirs of your occasion. A rare opportunity to ride a marvellous eight mile course now with added optional jumps, passing through mainly parkland of outstanding natural beauty.

Co-ordinator John Perrin tel. 01707 327289 email [John.f.perrin@ntlworld.com](mailto:John.f.perrin@ntlworld.com)

**Voices for  
Isabel Hospice -  
Sat 10 Oct 2009  
19:00 - 22:00**



Voices for Hospices is a 'Mexican Wave' of simultaneous concerts, held round the globe, on the same day, once every two years. The next of which will take place on October 10th, 2009.

This event for Isabel Hospice will be taking place at Haileybury College Chapel in Hertford Heath. Youth Choir Cantate will be providing the music for the evening.

Involving up to a million people each time and raising at least a pound for every one of those people; the concerts raise awareness and encourage new volunteers for each local unit involved.

Contact Maria Alexander for tickets on 01707 382500. [www.cantate.co.uk](http://www.cantate.co.uk)

## Lights of Love Sun 29 Nov 2009 16:00 – 17:00

The Hatfield "Lights of Love" ceremony will take place at Hatfield Galleria. Isabel Hospice have eight ceremonies taking place throughout the East Herts area. There will be a short Carol Service followed by countdown

to lighting the tree. Donations will be made and lights will be lit in memory of loved ones at Christmas.



## Fun Day, Centenary Park - Saturday 1st Aug

Guinness Trust organised a Fun Day which this Council also part grant funded. Hatfield QEII Rugby Club ran some passing drills and touch rugby, there was a bouncy castle, a display by the Cameron Show Dancers, Friends of the Earth with environmental advice and children's activities and safety advice from the police.



## Millwards Play Area

The new roundabout has been installed at Millwards Play Area. This was funded through partnership working with the Re;Play Partnership and Big Lottery Fund. We have been advised of a health and safety issue which occurred during installation of the new surfaces in the play area. We would like to apologise to local residents, we have changed our procedure for the inspection of contractors' work so that this will not happen again. The contractor has taken internal disciplinary action against their employee responsible for leaving the area unfenced.



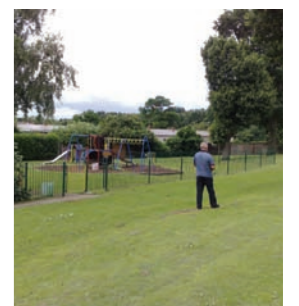
## Ellenbrook Play Area

The new swings and roundabout have been installed at Ellenbrook again thanks to partnership working with the Big Lottery Fund and Re;Play Partnership.



## Coppice Close and Newstead

New play equipment will be installed at these two sites as the final phase of our partnership with Re;Play and the Big Lottery Fund. Please let us know what new piece of play equipment you think should go on these sites – email [enquiries@hatfield-herts.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@hatfield-herts.gov.uk) or phone 01707 262023



## Playscheme – October Half Term

During the Summer Playscheme we got very wet at Stanborough Lakes, met mini beasts and bugs, roared with the lions and tigers at Paradise Wildlife Park, learnt to plate spin and stilt walk, buried the staff in the sand at Walton on the Naze, built space rockets, saw birds of prey at Aldenham Country Park and played in the Fun Zone every day.

Want to know what is planned for October half term?

We are now taking bookings for our October Half Term Playscheme. Please call us on 01707 262023 or see our website [www.hatfield-herts.gov.uk](http://www.hatfield-herts.gov.uk)



## New Councillor

Councillor Stan Laver-Walton was elected to represent the Villages ward at the election held on 4 June.



**Cllr. Mike Alder**  
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**Cllr. Sarah Atkinson**  
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**Cllr. Hannah Berry**  
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**Cllr. Ron Smith**  
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## TOWN COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are usually held at Birchwood Leisure Centre, Longmead, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 0AN at 7.30pm unless stated otherwise on the agenda.

Date & Time	Meeting	Venue
21 October at 7.30pm	Resources & Policy Committee	Sportsman Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre
4 November at 7.30pm	Council / Planning Committee	Sportsman Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre
25 November at 7.30pm	Leisure Committee	Sportsman Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre
2 December at 7.30pm	Planning Committee	Sportsman Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre
9 December at 7.30pm	Resources & Policy Committee	Sportsman Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre
16 December at 7.30pm	Council	Sportsman Room, Birchwood Leisure Centre

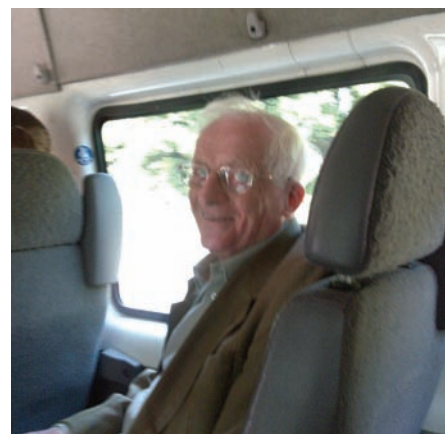
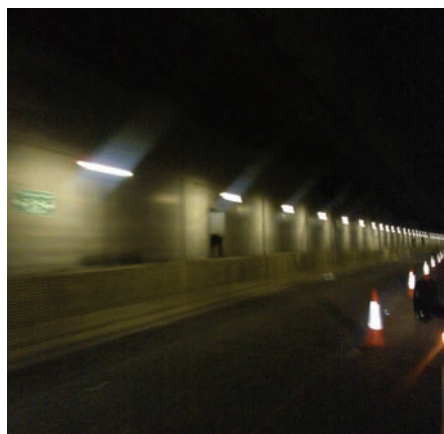
The first fifteen minutes of each meeting is set aside for members of the public to raise questions on issues relating to the work of the Council. Please contact the Clerk if you would like further information.

## Hatfield Tunnel

A leaflet will be sent out shortly updating everyone on progress on the work. Concerns regarding air quality in the tunnel were addressed in August. SKANSKA Balfour Beatty and the Highways Agency will also be reminding

drivers that the average speed limit cameras are set for 40mph and drivers exceeding this speed will be fined. The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council were able to view the work taking place at first hand recently when

they were escorted in a minibus through the north bound tunnel. Leader of the Council, Councillor Howard Morgan commented that he was impressed by the level of recycling of material from the tunnel.



Councillor M Clark on the minibus

## Be Prepared – Choose Your ‘Flu Friends’ Now

You can be prepared for swine flu this autumn by making some ‘flu friends’.

A ‘flu friend’ is a relative, workmate, neighbour or friend who can collect your medicines if you get swine flu, so that you don’t have to leave home. They should be someone who has a car or who can access public transport easily. It is a good idea to find several ‘flu friends’ just in case one of them has flu at the same time as you.

Please offer to be a ‘flu friend’ for a vulnerable person. If you have elderly neighbours, talk to them about swine flu and volunteer to help them.

Anyone collecting antiviral drugs (e.g. Tamiflu) will need to produce some identification for themselves and for the person with swine flu. Find some suitable ID now and put it somewhere handy so you can give it to your flu friend easily. You can find out more by visiting [www.enherts-pct.nhs.uk](http://www.enherts-pct.nhs.uk)

If you have symptoms of swine flu please call 0800 1 513 100 or go online to [www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu](http://www.direct.gov.uk/pandemicflu)

## National Play Day

The Mayor Councillor Caron Juggins joined the young people from our playscheme in National Play Day on 6 August 2009.

