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## South Woodham Ferrers

**Happy New Year**

**2026**



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Business Partners**

*Delivering 6,000 copies across South Woodham Ferrers*

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Issue  
6

**FREE**



## Happy New Year!

We hope you all had a great Christmas and are looking forward to what 2026 has to offer.

A big thank you to the Whalebone who donated one of the competition prizes last month and also to Our Town c/o Glen Ashley for the Hampers. We had some fantastic caption corner entries, I hope you all enjoyed reading them. We have had a terrific entry once again to the competitions but we would like more input from budding young photographers, we will keep running it, and maybe if they are good enough can put them on the front cover.

This month we have a new caption corner so win yourself £50 by just scanning on the QR Code, or you can enter via the website, [ourtownswf.co.uk](http://ourtownswf.co.uk) or from our facebook page.

We are thrilled to announce the addition of a new member to the 'Our Town' team, Ruth Beams. Many of you may have had the opportunity to meet her during the recent Christmas Fayre, where she was actively engaging with the public.

For those who haven't met her yet, Ruth may have visited your offices or locations to introduce herself and share a warm greeting. During these visits, she took the time to answer any questions you might have and provide insight into her role. We are confident that Ruth's skills and enthusiasm will be a great asset to our team as we continue to serve the community.

Here's a bit about Ruth in her own words: "I'm a proud mom of two daughters who have both graduated from university and have now settled into their own homes! When they were younger, we loved spending time together walking along the river, visiting Marsh Farm, and enjoying meals at Shaw Farm."

After becoming a widow, I decided to close my preschool business in Billericay, which I ran for 27 years, and I've since moved to South Woodham Ferrers with my dog. I absolutely adore how dog-friendly this area is, and there are so many lovely walks!

You'll often see me along the river or catching up with friends in the Park. In my spare time, I enjoy musical theater, diving into a good book, staying active, and cherishing moments with family and friends."



Ruth Beams

If you would like to know how to become one of our business partners then get in touch.

**email:** [wendy@ourtownmagazine.co.uk](mailto:wendy@ourtownmagazine.co.uk) or **Tel:** 01245 203123



A brand-new classic **Fish & Chip Shop** is coming soon, and we're excited to bring back the true chippy experience!

- Enjoy golden crispy batter
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- All served hot and fresh, full of that comforting taste everyone loves.

We're taking our time to ensure everything is just right, from the ingredients to the fryer. When we open our doors, you'll be greeted with the authentic fish and chip aroma, infused with warmth and care.

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Whether you're craving a late-night snack, a family meal, or just a bit of comfort food, come on down and treat yourself. Once you try our offerings, you'll understand why our customers keep coming back!

**We look forward to seeing you!**



Advertisement Feature

## RECLAIM YOUR CONSERVATORY IN 2026!



If your conservatory is too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter, then read on...

REMEMBER the pleasure of owning your brand-new conservatory, having that extra space you had longed for and dreamed of relaxing in the evening, as the sun went down...

Those dreams have soon evaporated as the sun's heat made the space too uncomfortable to sit in, with worse to come as winter approached. Noise of rain hitting the roof means you can hardly hear yourself speak and your conservatory becomes cold, damp and uninhabitable.

It is a common fact that most conservatories remain unused for up to six months of the year.

Greenoak Concept & Design's Supalite Roof System is the answer, by transforming your conservatory into a space you can use all year round at a price you can afford. Our chosen system can be installed in just a few days. When finished, your conservatory will be cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter, making it always

accommodating.

Supalite by Greenoak Concept & Design is an established brand and is a proven solution for changing your existing conservatory roof into light weight insulated tiled conservatory roof.

Supalite roofs are installed and guaranteed by Greenoak Concept & Design overseen by full Building Control by your Local Council and Stroma.

Greenoaks chosen system has been designed to fit onto your existing window and door frames and already has over 2000



installations in place throughout the Country. You can get yourself prepared for the seasons that follow. With a choice of designs in a selection of tile and slate colours, matching fascia, soffits and internal finishes, a Greenoak Concept & Design installation will allow you to fall in love with your conservatory once again.



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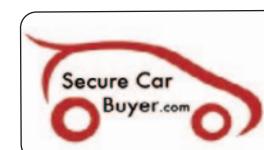
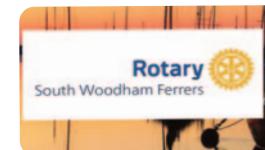
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Watch out for all our latest competitions

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## Congratulations



Our three lucky hamper winners were:

Christine Walker  
Laraine Clark  
Carole Jenkins

Our lucky kidz photo competition winner

Reece Kain



Our lucky £50 caption corner winner

Nick Storry with:

"You hit that so hard it's ended up in Our Town"

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## Guy Lehan & Son Interview

Meet Guy Lehan & Son, a professional painting, decorating and plastering company serving South Woodham Ferrers and the surrounding areas since 1989. A family business with a personal touch to meet our clients individual needs. From smaller projects to larger projects including Heritage & commissioned Charity work with many established clients.

### **What made you decide to start your own business in South Woodham Ferrers?**

I moved to South Woodham in 1993 and soon realised that there were only two other professional decorating companies in the Dengie/Woodham area, so I saw a good opportunity.



### **How many years of experience do you have as a painter?**

I left school and served my apprenticeship back in the 80's, so over 40 years experience.

### **How much of your work comes from advertising and how much would you say word of mouth?**

In the early days, being new to the area compelled me to invest heavily in advertising. However, over the years, we have established an excellent reputation, and now an impressive 70% of our work comes from recommendations.

### **What sort of hours do you work and is it the sort of job that you need to work irregular hours?**

We do some commercial work (estate agents and shops) but 90% is residential work, so we work any hours that are required to get the job done.

### **What steps do you take before painting a room and how important is it to prep a room before you start?**

As everyone knows, preparation is key to a successful job. However, many clients have specific requests regarding access, pet welfare, or simply accommodating their unique needs. With more people working from home and often attending virtual meetings, it's crucial to minimise noise and disruptions during our work.

### **Is it important to use quality branded paints, and does that determine how many coats of paint you use?**

Absolutely, using quality branded paints is important, but it's primarily about ensuring the protection of the work environment—specifically, the clients' homes. The right paint can influence the durability and finish, which ultimately affects how many coats are needed for a flawless result.



Before and after

### **What do you think is the most challenging issues that painters face?**

Customers—really it is usually managing people's expectations. You can't make a silk purse out of a pig's ear, but I always try to make the best job out of what I am presented with. Being honest with a client goes a long way.

### **What do you do that sets you apart from others in your trade?**

I'm exceptionally good at what I do, and the decorating that I produce is outstanding. But just as important is the customer service. I treat clients and their homes the same way I would expect to be treated, and my own standards are extremely high.

### **Do you have any projects you have worked on that you are proud of?**

I have been quite fortunate in my decorating career, having worked on some truly remarkable projects. I've decorated hotels for the Hilton and Marriott groups all over the world, and I had the honor of decorating the athletes' village at the 1990 Commonwealth Games in Auckland, New Zealand. Additionally, I undertook a two-year contract at Claridge's in London, where I decorated the hotel suites—an experience that was both traditional and fascinating. Locally, I was commissioned to work on Edwins Hall in Woodham Ferrers, which we fully decorated top to bottom over a six-year period. More recently, I completed an extensive project at Old Riffhams in Little Baddow.

### **What relevant training and painting certifications do you have?**

I am a time-served decorator and used to be a Dulux Select Trader. I have completed courses at the Dulux Academy to keep abreast of new technology, trends, and techniques in the field of decorating.

### **What skills do you think are important for painters and which do you have?**

I believe that patience and diplomacy are crucial skills for painters. Patience is essential when working on a piece, as it takes time to achieve the desired result. Diplomacy comes into play when collaborating with clients or other artists, ensuring that communication is smooth and constructive. I possess both of these skills, which I believe enhance my work as a painter.

### **What is it you like about South Woodham Ferrers as a community and what do you do in your spare time?**

South Woodham Ferrers is a lovely community with some good people living here.

Guy Lehan

**Watch out for all our latest competitions**

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## Why you should be putting a Lasting Power of Attorney in place



When organising your estate, there will be plenty of things to consider, from writing a Will to collating all your assets, but you should also be thinking about putting a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA) in place.

There may come a time when your circumstances change, such as an accident or sudden health scare or if you are diagnosed with an illness like Dementia or Parkinson's disease.

In the same way that people of any age should prepare a Will, an LPA should be made while you are in charge of your own mental faculties, even if you do not believe it will be implemented for many years, if at all.

This may leave you in a difficult position where you cannot make decisions for yourself and this is where an LPA helps.

LPAs are legally binding documents that allow you to appoint family members, friends or a solicitor to make decisions on your behalf should you be unable to.

They help you plan for the future, but if you don't have one in place, you lose control and decisions may be made that do not reflect what you want.

### What can happen if an LPA is not put in place?

Having an LPA in place is essential if you still want to control your own estate and affairs.

Not having that means you lose that element of control, your wishes may not be met, feuds within your family can arise, financial challenges can appear and the risk of legal disputes increases.

Assets are likely to be frozen and banks are very reluctant to release funds without an LPA because of their own strict compliance procedures, meaning there will be delays in accessing funds.

*Read more: [ourtownswf.co.uk](http://ourtownswf.co.uk)*

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# New Year, Healthier Spine: Simple Steps to Protect Your Back in 2026

January is often seen as a fresh start – a time to reset routines, refocus on health, and make positive changes that last. While many New Year's resolutions focus on diet or fitness, one vital area of health is often overlooked: **your spine and back**.

Back pain remains one of the most common reasons people struggle with everyday activities, take time off work, or avoid exercise altogether. In fact, it affects people of all ages – from office workers and parents to retirees and active individuals. The good news? Small, consistent habits can make a big difference.

### Why January Is the Perfect Time to Act

Cold weather and reduced activity often make back pain worse, but January also brings renewed motivation. Small, consistent changes now can help prevent discomfort from becoming a long-term issue.

### Simple Habits That Protect Your Back

- **Keep moving:** Gentle activities like walking or stretching help maintain flexibility and reduce stiffness.
- **Watch your posture:** Sitting and scrolling habits can put unnecessary strain on your spine.
- **Warm up properly:** Ease into exercise to avoid sudden injuries.



- **Support your sleep:** The right mattress and pillow help your spine recover overnight.

### Don't Ignore the Early Signs

Recurring stiffness, aches, or limited movement are often warning signs. Addressing problems early can make recovery quicker and easier.

### How Chiropractic Care Can Help

Chiropractic care focuses on improving spinal movement, easing tension, and supporting the body's natural ability to heal. At Life Chiropractic Wickford, back pain is the most common condition treated, with care tailored to each individual to support both relief and long-term spinal health.

### Start the Year Feeling Stronger

A healthier back means better movement, improved sleep, and greater confidence in daily life. If back pain has been holding you back, the New Year is the perfect time to take that first step towards feeling better.

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## Why Balance Matters More Than You Think



We often think of balance as something that only becomes important when we start to lose it, but in reality, it's a skill that underpins almost everything we do. From walking and climbing stairs to reaching, bending, or even standing still, balance is at the heart of safe and confident movement.

As we get older, our balance systems which involve the muscles, joints, eyes, and inner ear, naturally start to decline. Small changes like reduced ankle strength, slower reflexes, or tight hips can quietly increase the risk of falls or injuries.

The good news? Balance can be trained, strengthened, and restored at any age.

Targeted physiotherapy exercises help to:

- ✓ Build strength in stabilising muscles
- ✓ Improve joint mobility and coordination
- ✓ Reconnect your body and brain through specific balance training

Whether you're recovering from injury, returning to sport, or simply want to stay steady and independent, balance training is one of the best investments in your long-term wellbeing.

If you've noticed feeling a little more wobbly than usual, or you want to future-proof your movement. Why not book an assessment with our physiotherapy team – Call us on 01245325037.

We'll help you stand tall, move freely, avoid falls, and stay confident on your feet.

### Some simple strategies:

Make like a flamingo! Start somewhere safe like facing the kitchen counter or stand in a corner where you can steady yourself with your hands. Please don't attempt if you aren't confident – come and check with us first.

Can you stand on one leg without wobbling for 10 seconds –

Can you do it without holding on?

Want more of a challenge? Try standing on one leg while turning your head slowly to the

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## Our Town Competitions



If you missed our previous competitions then fear not—we have brand new ones for you to enter with cash prizes up for grabs!

How to enter:

1. Scan the QR code or visit [ourtownswf.co.uk/competition](http://ourtownswf.co.uk/competition)

Winners will be notified by email on the 31st January 2026.

Good luck everyone!



Scan the QR code to enter the competitions



### Some of the many captions that were sent in last month

When time away from people in the sun can't get any better - Maddie Crosson

Well this ruined a nice walk - Phillip Dalton

I thought I hit the ball a fair way on the firsway - Sue Poole

Gareth was delighted to nail his first birdie. Unfortunately the pigeon never recovered. - Barbora Mann

Oops! At least now i'll get a look at my neighbours new decking!!! - John Bunyan

Squad goals: Arrive in style, leave with double bogeys - George Gilbert



Last months caption corner photo

## Wildlife Photos

First prize is £20

Second prize is £10

A chance for all you keen young photographers to send us your wildlife photos and a chance to win £20 and you could even get on the cover of the next magazine!



Children must be between 13 & 18 years of age to enter  
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Winner of Kidz competition Reece Kain

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