

South Woodham Ferrers

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Chillies celebrate 20 years
in the town

Latest book reviews

Interview with Sarah Petherick -
Emotionally Healthy Minds

Competitions

Church & Hawes long standing
Team Member retires



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Issue
11

FREE

OUR TOWN BLOG

Due to the success of the website and all the fantastic feedback we continue to receive from our advertisers, you may have noticed that the printed magazine has gone even bigger!

A year ago, we launched the new online magazine — an idea originally created by Glen Ashley to bring something a little different to the community and provide content for all ages. If you haven't already, take a look at the online magazine, uploaded every Wednesday, featuring new events, business showcases, and current local news.

We also listened to our advertisers and readers, who told us that the next step was to launch a printed magazine to help grow the brand even further. The magazine is now hand-delivered to 6,000 homes across South Woodham Ferrers, helping us reach all audiences within the community.

One thing our readers really enjoy is the competitions, which continue to attract fantastic entries every month. Just take a look at last month's Caption Corner entries on pages 4 and 5 — how do you all come up with such brilliant ideas? I hope you enjoy this month's challenge too. It's a photo I took while out shopping a few years ago, and I simply couldn't resist using it. I look forward to reading all your entries!

Ahead4, your number one stop for all your tech issues,

has kindly donated a wireless keyboard and mouse for this month's competition prize.

Please keep sending in your photos! This month's theme is South Woodham Ferrers, and the competition is open to everyone. If we receive enough entries, we may even look at producing a calendar for next year.

A big shout-out to Chillies, who recently celebrated 20 years of trading in the town with a VIP guest helping to open the celebrations — see page 14, we also have an interview with Sarah Petherick, Founder of Emotionally Healthy Minds on pages 20 & 21.

Watch out for local businesses World Cup Offers on the online website and check out the Big Breakfast on p.31.

If you would like to get in touch then please contact us by email, message, or phone.

e: wendy@ourtownmagazine.co.uk
t: 01245 203123

Our Town Ltd takes every care in compiling the contents of the magazine in good faith but takes no responsibility for any loss or damage arising from any article or advert. The views expressed within some of the articles are not necessarily that of the publishers and contributors are solely responsible for the accuracy of their content. We reserve the right to edit any copy if needed. Reproduction of any content within the magazine is strictly prohibited without permissions.

The image shows the entrance to 'Istanbul Vip' barbers, featuring a blue arched sign with the text 'Istanbul Vip' and 'Art of Turkish Barber' below it. The phone number '01245 948 054' is also visible. To the left of the entrance is a detailed price list for various services including haircuts, shaves, and fades. To the right is a large, colorful advertisement for the shop. The ad includes the shop's logo, a list of services (Hair Cut, Shave, Skin Fade, Hot Towel), and five small images showing different grooming techniques. It states 'OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK' and 'Complimentary cold and hot drinks are available.' The opening hours are listed as Monday-Friday 9:00am-7:00pm, Saturday 8:00am-6:00pm, and Sunday 10:00am-4:00pm. The contact number '01245 948 054' and the address '15 Reeves Way, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford CM3 5XF' are at the bottom. Two QR codes are also present.

CAPTION CORNER - WHAT A FANTASTIC ENTRY SEE BELOW!

Don't look now but our town is watching us! - **Louise Clark**
 Who are you voting for? **Emma Petherick Ware**
 Can you hear me or are you frozen to the spot? **Sharon Burrus**
 Psst, doesnt this remind you of a previous caption - **Chris Bohannan**
 "I'm not arguing. I'm just explaining why I'm right" - **Steve Bonner**
 Honey I pooped in the cave again - **Chris Keable**
 It's Coming Home - **Joe Bell**
 Hey! Did you hear what happened at number 30? - **Wendy Milledge - Pearce**
 I'll always be your lookout Marty - **Tony Ridgwell**
 ' So we need keep an eye out for the competition' - **Ann Quare**
I think someone's stolen your keyboard! - Ian Chiswell (Winner)
 "Who do you think is buying the Police Station" - **Suzanne Russell**
 Have you heard about SWF's new book shop? Apparently it also sells Nuts?!! - **Chris Breen**
 "Karen from burrow 3 said WHAT?!" - **Jayne Harrington**
 Fancy a pint in the Crier mate? - **Kevin Cloete**
 Have you heard the latest? - **Adele Stirrup**
 Psst, don't look now but there's a bunch of humans staring at you... - **MJ Porter**
 POV: you and your bestie hear snacks are on the way - **Finn Langdale**
 What's the word on the burrow? - **Michaela Brown**
 Have you heard the one about.....? - **Lesley Sefton**
 Sshh I think we're busted, stand still they'll think we're ornaments - **Lee Wooding**
 I told her you were shopping for her birthday present, not at the pub. I think she bought it. - **Alisha Caddell**
 Shhhhhh, don't move Ethel. I forgot Gertie and Bertie were coming for dinner and I've snacked on all the caterpillars and spiders. - **Angela Curtis**
 I've got something to tell youuu.... Im not supposed to tell you but I've got to tell you...**Pamela Sippit**
 Don't look now but he's right behind you! - **Mark Sippit**
 I have to tell you a secret... **Gracie Ridgwell**
 Noah is only allowing two of us on the ark so keep it on the down low - **Dean Ridgwell- Malell**
 It seems there is a nice worm over in that hole... **Harry Hoo Hoo**
 Do you want to know a secret - **Marilyn Mc Gee**
 I'm not saying your bum looks big... I'm just saying I know where all the missing nuts went!"- **Melanie Brady**
 Don't look now, but I think we're being followed. - **Brian Ashton**
 Psst... stay still. We haven't been spotted yet. - **William Moss**
 Listen - do you want to know a secret? Promise you won't tell. - **Frances Ashton**
 Secret whispers - **Natalie Park**
 "Hold still... I'm trying to see if you've got brain cells in there."- **Jason Thomas**
 I told you Donald Trump was crazy!, now he's started a war ! - **Gayle Sargeant**
 Don't tell anyone we went to the moon - **Hannah Shurmur**
 Psst, can I tell you a secret?? - **Abby Fennell**
 Let me tell you a little story - **Rosie Shurmur**

April's Compet



Aprils' Caption Photo

Competition Winners

"Don't look now, but I think we're being watched..." - Yasmin Deacon

Listen very carefully , I will say this only once !!! - Mick Fry

Shh, I can see the sun! - Kathryn Mc Carthy

Hold still while I wipe your nose. - Helen Lyall

I can't tell you it's a secret squirrel - Steve Lucas

I spot a grey hair! - Claire Ridgwell

Oi Dave, I said open-plan curry house... not put us on the menu! - Georgia Broom

"I've just farted!"- Emily Foskett

Where did you hide the nuts? - Jackie Wilkinson

Chillies meal for 2 to the value of £50 is - Pamela Mahoney

Eatery Voucher - Rosie Shurmur

Caption Corner - Ian Chiswell

Winning caption - I think someone's stolen your keyboard!



Winner - Emily Thomas



Second place - Jessica Chiswell

**For more competitions
see page 30**

ADVERTISE IN OUR TOWN!

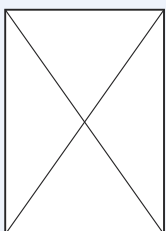
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- » Online magazine with direct links to your website
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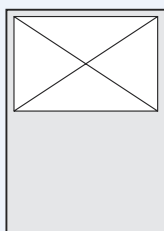
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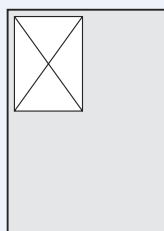
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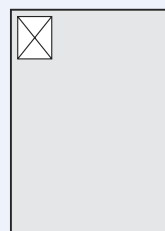
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OUR TOWN

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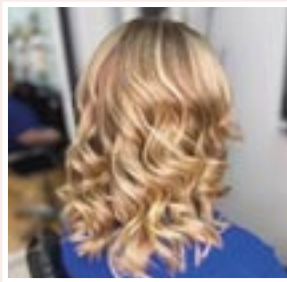
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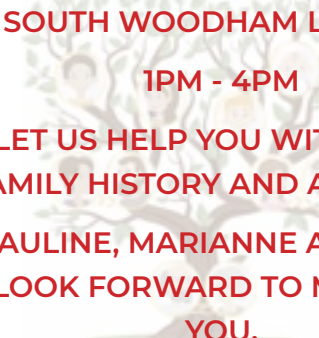
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FATHER SAVED BY AIR AMBULANCE JOINS APPEAL FOR MORE BYSTANDER CPR



Garth Jones and wife Corrine

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance was called to 167 cardiac arrests from January to the end of March, making up a third of the 545 critical missions it has attended so far this year. While, encouragingly, patients received bystander CPR in three quarters of those incidents (76%), it is still not always attempted on patients who suffer a cardiac arrest. The charity is using the latest statistics as a reminder of the importance of bystander CPR.

Each year, around 40,000 out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur across the UK, with survival rates below 10%. Every minute without CPR reduces the chance of survival by 10% making early intervention critical. Essex & Herts Air Ambulance wants to get to a position where everyone across the region feels confident to deliver CPR.

No one knows this more than Garth Jones from Wivenhoe who has made a short film with the charity about his experience. In August 2023, Garth (52), a college professor and otherwise healthy individual, suffered a sudden cardiac arrest at home, saved only because of the immediate actions of his wife and young son and the work of the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance and the East of England Ambulance Service.

The last thing Garth remembers is sitting up in bed reading then everything fading out and vaguely hearing his wife's voice telling him to wake up. He didn't until five days later, in a bed in Basildon Hospital ICU. His wife Corrine had dialled 999 and his son, who was ten years old at the time, held the phone and relayed the instructions for doing CPR to his mum who did chest compressions until the first responders arrived.

Corrine remembers: "My son was basically relaying the instructions to me. He was saying 'mum, 1, 2, 3, 4' and I would do 1, 2, 3, 4 with the chest compressions. The paramedics told us afterwards without this he wouldn't have survived".

Paramedic Adam Pitcairn, who leads on cardiac arrest for Essex & Herts Air Ambulance's Centre for Excellence, said:

"Garth was one of the lucky ones. His experiences show how bystander CPR can mean the difference between life and death. While the numbers delivering CPR so far this year are really heartening, we still go to all too many scenes where no one has felt able to intervene and it's simply too late, which is devastating. No-one expects to have to do CPR on a loved one – or a stranger, but it can make all the difference. I'd urge anyone who's unsure about how to do it to brush up on their skills now so they're ready should the need ever arise".

Garth, who has been a supporter of the air ambulance charity ever since his recovery, and has shared his experience in a new film for the charity, said: *"I'm so grateful to my family and to the air ambulance team – it's like I've been given a second chance at life, and I won't ever take that for granted. I can't imagine other families having to go through this and not getting such a positive outcome. It makes you realise how important it is to get the right care and attention at every stage and we can all play our part by learning CPR".*

Essex & Herts Air Ambulance is dedicated to advancing emergency pre-hospital care, continually investing in research, innovation and education through its Centre for Excellence to improve patient care, including its CPR Smart™ programme, which offers free CPR and defibrillator training to schools across Essex and Hertfordshire.

For advice on how to do CPR: <https://ehaat.org/life-saving-first-aid/> and to find out more about Essex & Herts Air Ambulance or to donate, please visit ehaat.org

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SCHOOL RECEIVES £5,000 GRANT TO ENHANCE WELLBEING SUPPORT



Runwell Community Primary School pupils celebrating the grant

In celebration of Mental Health Awareness Week, Runwell Community Primary School, in Wickford, has announced it is the successful recipient of a £5,000 grant to enhance its mental health provision for its pupils.

The grant will enable the school's community to access mental health support from myHappyMind – an NHS commissioned programme that helps young people build positive mental wellbeing, resilience, confidence and self-esteem.

Charlotte Castle, Deputy Headteacher and Inclusion Manager at Runwell Community Primary School, said: "We're proud to say, thanks to the new grant and our existing provision, our school is a space where children truly feel supported. As the programme's support kicks into full swing, we look forward to continuing to further equip our children with the skills, experience and knowledge they need to understand their emotions, learn and thrive."

Through the support, the school, and its on-site nursery, will have access to additional mental health resources, including an NHS backed curriculum for its pupils, an app that provides wellbeing resources for parents and carers at home, and a separate wellbeing programme for the school's staff. myHappyMind mentors have also been training a group of pupils, dubbed Happiness Heroes, on how they can successfully support their peers' wellbeing during the school day.

A pupil trained as a My Happy Mind ambassador said: "The training has been really fun. I think it's important for everyone to feel happy, and I'm excited to help my friends and class feel good every day."

Alongside the new programme, Runwell Community Primary School offers its pupils a range of existing wellbeing support, including regular visits from therapeutic support dogs. To learn more about the school, its on-site nursery, and curriculum, visit: <https://runwellprimary.co.uk/>



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George with his Pride of Essex Award

If you have something to donate that is not on our list then please give us a tinkle on 07933-233012.

We are so passionate to support everyone in our charity circle but we cannot do this without your donations.

Our son George has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy and is working hard to advocate for many charities and people with disabilities - please help us keep our very worth while circle turning.

Much love and thanks always

TJ & George x

CONGRATULATIONS

At the Town Council meeting held on the 12th May 2026, the Town Council elected Councillor Bob Massey as Town Mayor for the forthcoming year 2026/27.

Supporting the Mayor with his duties will be Councillor Lisa Kelly as Deputy Town Mayor for the 2026/27.

To request/invite the Town Mayor or Deputy Town Mayor attend your event or function, contact details are below;

CLLR. BOB MASSEY, TOWN MAYOR

CLLR. LISA KELLY, DEPUTY MAYOR

MEET THE MAYOR AND DEPUTY MAYOR 26/27

Mayoral Engagement

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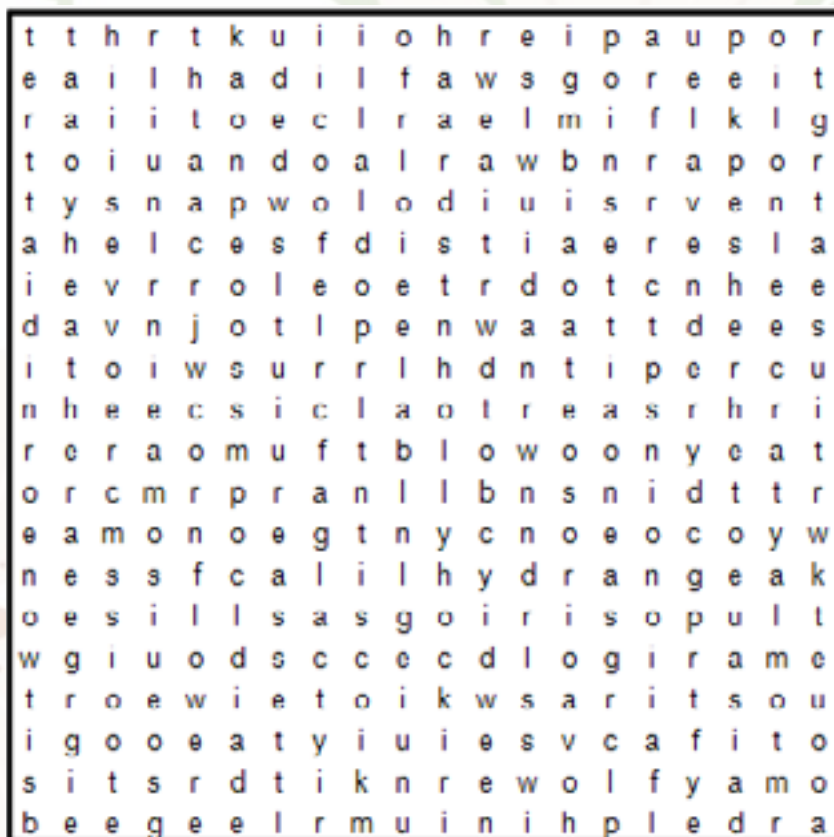
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Word Search

The theme for this month is Flowers. How many words can you find from the list below?



- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| Buttercup | Mayflower |
| Cornflower | Pansy |
| Dahlia | Poinsettia |
| Daisy | Primrose |
| Delphinium | Rhododendron |
| Flower | Wallflower |
| Gladiolus | |
| Heather | |
| Hollyhock | |
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HOW TO MAKE YOUR CHILD'S DEVICES SAFER



We know it's not always easy to keep up with the latest technology. Devices and apps are constantly changing, and that can make it harder to know how to keep your child safe.

To help, we've put together some simple steps you can take to make your child's devices safer to use.

Parental controls

Most game consoles and devices come with parental controls. These let you manage things like screen time, spending, and what your child can access.

We recommend setting these controls before your child starts using a new mobile phone, console, game or app, so everything is ready and safe from the start.

Here's a guide to help you find and set up parental controls on popular devices and gaming consoles.

Router Safety

Enabling parental controls on your router is essential to help protect children from inappropriate content and limit screen time during unsupervised hours.

1. Login to your router

- Open a browser and enter your router's IP address (e.g. 192.168.0.1 or 192.168.1.1).
- Use your admin login.

2. Enable parental controls

- Navigate to Advanced > Parental Controls.
- Select your child's device by name or MAC address.

3. Set time-based restrictions

- Define a schedule to block internet access from e.g. 9pm to 7am, Sunday to Thursday.
- Use the Whitelist option with no websites added to block all access during these hours.

4. Save and apply settings

- Confirm and apply changes.
- Ensure the router's system time is correct for the schedule to work properly.

UK broadband providers offering free parental controls

- BT – Network-level filters via BT Parental Controls
- Sky – Sky Broadband Shield
- TalkTalk – HomeSafe and eero Secure
- Virgin Media – Web Safe filters

These can be activated via your provider's account dashboard and apply to all devices on the home network.

iOS Devices

Open Settings on your child's device.

1. Tap Screen Time.
2. Select This is My Child's Device.
3. Set a Screen Time passcode to stop your child from changing the settings.
4. Tap Content & Privacy Restrictions and turn it on.

What you can control

- **App limits** – Set daily time limits for apps and games.
- **Content filters** – Block adult websites, explicit music, and age-restricted apps.
- **Purchases** – Stop in-app purchases or App Store downloads.
- **Communication** – Limit who your child can call, message or FaceTime.
- **Game features** – Restrict multiplayer games and adding friends.
- **Privacy settings** – Control access to location, camera, and microphone.

Manage remotely

If you use Family Sharing, you can manage these settings from your own device.

Android Devices

Option 1: Use Google Play Parental Controls

These controls apply only to the device you set them on.

To set them up:

Open the Google Play Store app

1. Tap your profile icon (top right).
2. Go to Settings > Family > Parental Controls.
3. Turn on Parental Controls and create a PIN your child doesn't know.
4. Choose the type of content to filter (apps, games, films, books, etc.).
5. Set maturity levels for downloads and purchases.

Note: These controls don't block content found through search or direct links.

Option 2: Use Google Family Link

This free app gives you more control and works across multiple devices.

To get started:

1. Download Google Family Link on your device and your child's Android device.
2. Create or link your child's Google Account.
3. Follow the steps to connect both devices.

What you can manage:

- Screen time limits and device bedtime
- App permissions (e.g. camera, location)
- Web filters for Chrome and SafeSearch
- App approvals before downloads
- Activity reports showing app usage
- Location tracking (optional)

Family Link gives you remote access to settings and lets you adjust controls as your child grows.

[For more devices go to ourtownswf.co.uk/how-to-make-your-childs-devices-safer](https://ourtownswf.co.uk/how-to-make-your-childs-devices-safer)

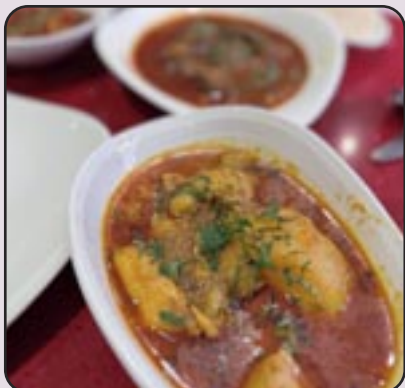
CHILLIES CELEBRATE 20 YEARS OF TRADING IN STYLE



Sir John Whittingdale OBE joined invited staff and customers to celebrate Chillies Indian Fusion Restaurant's 20th anniversary in South Woodham Ferrers.

The celebration, held on Wednesday, 6th May, featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony led by proprietor Kam, with staff and loyal customers coming together to mark the special milestone.

To celebrate the occasion, guests were treated to an evening of delicious Indian and Bangladeshi cuisine in honour



of the restaurant's anniversary.

The entrance to Chillies was decorated beautifully, with clusters of balloons and a garland leading from the foyer up the stairs to the restaurant.

Visitors to Chillies can enjoy a vibrant dining experience that blends a

distinctive ambience with exquisite dishes and authentic culinary styles from India and Bangladesh. Upon arrival, guests are welcomed by smartly dressed staff who are on hand to guide them through the comprehensive menu and recommend dishes to suit every taste. From appetising starters to mouth-watering main courses, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

The food is always professionally presented, and the restaurant proudly holds a 5-star food hygiene rating, reflecting the highest standards in food safety. This rating is reviewed annually, with inspections carried out without prior notice.

Chillies is also one of our business partners and occasionally sponsors a meal for two on our competitions page. It is the perfect opportunity to enjoy a wonderful dining experience and sample the excellent cuisine that Chillies has to offer — you certainly won't be disappointed.

Check out Chillies:

ourtownswf.co.uk/business_category/food-and-drink/

chillies

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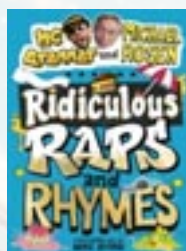
by Hazel Murrell

What a month May has been, the weather has been changeable from freezing cold rain and hailstones to record breaking temperatures. But whatever the weather, it always seems perfect for curling up with a good book. It might be under a blanket with a warm drink while listening to the rain or sitting in the dappled shade of a large tree with the summer breeze, there is always an opportunity to lose yourself in a story.

You may have noticed our bookshop opened in town and it has been an absolute pleasure to meet our incredible community of book lovers. The power of the book remains strong in our hearts and the enthusiasm I have seen from people browsing the shelves or coming along to our reading socials is encouraging, we are a town of readers. For every book there is someone who will love it and for every person there is a book they will love, sometimes we may have just not discovered yet. That is why I strive to provide a glimpse into what new releases are coming out each week on the Our Town website, and each month in the magazine. I am hopeful that if you have not found the right book for you yet, one day you will.

Looking back at my recommendations this month, I have picked out these ones as the very best. I hope you enjoy them too.

In Children's books we saw a two very different (but also very similar) popular storytellers team up to create '**Ridiculous Raps by MC Grammar and Michael Rosen (9781398560833)**'. Published with a parental advisory for extremely silly poems, these masters at their craft have put together a high-energy rhyming adventure. From chocolate cake to silly snakes, the raps and rhymes are engaging and entertaining for children, and adults alike.



For fans of thrillers there is the gripping '**Five by Ilona Bannister (9780008770563)**'. The train to London Victoria is due to arrive in five minutes. We are introduced to five passengers, one of which will die when the train arrives, but which one? Readers learn about each passenger with interconnecting stories and might make up their mind who they would prefer to die and who they want to live. An interesting twist on psychological suspense that is both engrossing and unsettling.



Fans of The Midnight Library will be delighted to discover that Matt Haig has finally written '**The Midnight Train (9781837262137)**'. When your life flashes before your eyes, what will

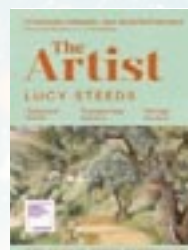


matter most? Our protagonist is on the brink of death when a train arrives that can take him back in time to relive his most important moments. Much like The Midnight Library, this is a story of second chances and the impact small changes can have on your future. Matt Haig's stories have a tendency to last in your mind, long after you have finished reading them.

In Non-Fiction books we have '**Ripening: Why Women Need Fairy Tales Now by Sharon Blackie (9781914613524)**'. An insightful look into the role fairy-tales have played in our lives, inspiring women through history and teaching particularly in these modern times, to find their inner strength and be bold. These tales of transformation from trauma to empowerment offer encouragement to face the challenges of modern society with courage and claim the future dreamt of.



Finally, '**The Artist by Lucy Steeds has come out in paperback (9781399819589)**'. This award-winning book takes the reader to sun-drenched Provence in the 1920s where reclusive painter Edouard Tartuffe resides in a remote farm house with his visiting niece Ettie. Aspiring journalist, Joseph, is invited to visit and is determined to make his name by interviewing the great Artist, however in the sweltering heat of the summer and the darkness of the warm nights, secrets are uncovered. A phenomenal book and perfect for reading in the summer sun.



Looking forward to June, we are excited to see that Essex author Michelle Harrison has written her first adult thriller (having previously written children's books). '**Two Little Liars (9781835015100)**' comes out on 4th June and with the setting drawn from her experience growing up locally. We are thrilled to be hosting an evening author event with her on 9th June when we can delve into this gripping story and the inspiration behind it. I hope to share some of what we learn in next month's article.



Take a look at the Our Town Website for weekly book updates, or pop into **The Book Nut** where we are regularly taking deliveries of newly published books.

Until next time, happy reading.

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NEARLY 500 MOTORCYCLE RIDERS WERE INJURED IN A COLLISION IN ESSEX LAST YEAR.

Nearly 500 motorcycle riders were injured in a collision in Essex last year.



Young riders are particularly vulnerable, which is why the Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) is helping parents and carers to equip their young person with the skills and knowledge to stay safe on two wheels this spring, and beyond.

Spring typically marks the start of the motorcycle season, with consistent warmer and drier conditions expected over the next few weeks. Young riders are particularly at risk, with 32% of motorcycle related death or serious injury following a collision involves a rider under the age of 25.

The Street Spirit campaign calls on young riders to enhance their knowledge on safe riding by watching five short videos and completing a quiz. Young riders are also able to watch a virtual reality film which teaches about safe positioning, filtering and manoeuvring from a first-person perspective.

The Partnership is also offering free on-road training sessions for young riders who have completed their CBT, with a view to build on existing knowledge and give them additional riding skills and exposure.

Louise Curtis, Road Safety Manager for Essex Fire and Rescue Service and P2W lead for the Partnership, said: "We know that in the event of a collision a motorcycle rider is 50% more likely than a pedestrian or a cyclist to die, or suffer a serious or life-changing injury. We also know that due to age and inexperience, the risk for young riders is increased.

"Our data tells us that injury rates decline with age, which is why we are empowering parents and carers to help keep their young rider safe during peak motorcycle season and beyond.

"Our Street Spirit campaign has been a great success in enabling us to engage with current and potential young riders and provide some useful learning about the risks and consequences of being

out on the roads. We ask parents to direct their young person to the high quality and engaging resources on the website and to consider contacting us about a free on-road training session, if they've completed their CBT.

"We all have a part to play in road safety and drivers will soon see billboard advertising at key motorcycle collision hot spots, reminding them to look out for bikers. Our vision is for all road-users to be mindful of how we use the roads and for all to get to their destination safely and without injury.

"We know how difficult it can be to have conversations around safety with young people, but we also know that keeping them safe is always a priority. Call or email us, (03330 137590, driverintervention@essex.gov.uk) to see how we can support you."

For more information on the Street Spirit campaign, please visit Motorcycling – saferessexroads.org. Here, visitors will find links to the campaign including the virtual reality film, and the flyer promoting our free on-road skills session.



OPEN GARDENS

South Woodham Ferrers



Could you open your garden on Sunday 5 July 2026?

A wide variety of gardens is ideal for this event, and it doesn't matter if your garden is big or small, wild or landscaped. It is a lovely way to show off your garden to visitors and bring your community together while raising vital funds for Farleigh Hospice.

If you feel your garden isn't suitable but you know another garden that is, please pass this on.

For further information, please contact Sue Lamb on 07832489796 or email lambssue58@aol.com or the Fundraising team on 01245 453411 or email fundraising@farleighhospice.org



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At Millmark Electrical Solutions Ltd, we're proud to be a local business supporting our community in 2026 and beyond.



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“When Children Don’t Fit the System”: Why Emotional Wellbeing Must Come Before Learning

Many children are walking into school every day carrying invisible struggles — anxiety, overwhelm, low confidence and emotional exhaustion that can make learning feel impossible. For some families, finding the right support can feel like an uphill battle, especially when children do not fit neatly into traditional systems or expected pathways.

Founded in South Woodham Ferrers in 2022, Emotionally Healthy Minds CIC was created to bridge that gap. Through emotionally informed tutoring, counselling, coaching and family support, the Essex-based organisation helps children and young people feel understood, rebuild confidence and reconnect with learning.

Sitting down with founder Sarah Petherick, we explore why emotional wellbeing and education are so deeply connected, what today’s children are really struggling with and why emotionally informed support matters now more than ever.

What inspired you to start Emotionally Healthy Minds?

As a class teacher, I saw so many children struggling in school. Some were anxious, overwhelmed or lacking confidence. Others were neurodivergent or masking so well that their struggles were often missed completely.

I also met exhausted parents fighting hard to get support for their children, whilst often feeling unheard and unsupported themselves.

Working in schools, I always wanted to go the extra mile and be everything every child and parent needed, but the reality is that schools are under huge pressure and cannot always provide the level of individual emotional support some children need to truly thrive.

It can often feel like emotional wellbeing and education are treated separately, when in reality, they are deeply connected. Many children are trying their best to learn whilst carrying huge levels of anxiety, overwhelm or emotional stress underneath the surface.

School can be an amazing place, both of my own children are there, but for some children it can feel overwhelming and they may need extra emotional or educational support to help them thrive.

I wanted to create something different, a place where all children could feel safe, understood and supported both emotionally and academically.

“By the time families reach us, they often just want somebody to truly understand their child.”



Sarah Petherick, Founder, Emotionally Healthy Minds

What services does Emotionally Healthy Minds provide and who do you support?

EHM provides tutoring, emotion coaching, counselling and parental support for children, young people and families across Essex.

We support children from 4–18, especially those struggling with anxiety, emotionally based school avoidance (EBSA), low confidence, burnout, emotional dysregulation and neurodivergent needs such as autism, ADHD and PDA.

Some children come to us needing academic support to rebuild confidence in learning, whilst others need emotional support through coaching or counselling before they are able to engage academically again.

Alongside supporting children, we also work closely with parents, schools and local authorities.

Why was it important to create a more holistic approach?

Children do not exist in separate boxes and neither do the challenges they face. Emotional wellbeing, confidence, behaviour and learning are all deeply connected, so it never made sense to support only one part of the child whilst ignoring the rest.

A child may appear disengaged academically, but underneath there may be anxiety, burnout, sensory overwhelm or low self-esteem affecting their ability to learn. Equally, when children begin to feel emotionally safe and understood, we often see confidence and engagement with learning naturally begin to grow again.

That is why EHM brings together tutoring, coaching, counselling and parental support in a more joined-up and relational way.

What are some of the most common challenges families are facing when they come to EHM today?

For some children, it is about gently reigniting that spark for learning again. For others, the struggles run much deeper and they need

emotional support through coaching or counselling before they are able to engage academically.

Parents often tell us they feel exhausted from fighting for support. Some children are masking all day at school and then falling apart at home. Others have completely lost confidence in themselves and their love of learning.

I think many people still underestimate how exhausting it can be for some neurodivergent children to navigate environments that do not fully meet their needs. Many children spend huge amounts of energy masking, coping and trying to fit in.

By the time families reach us, they often just want somebody to truly understand their child and what they need.

What are some of the most powerful or rewarding changes you've seen in children and families through the work EHM does?

Ah, there are so many.

Watching a child who once refused to enter a room begin to feel safe enough to engage.

Seeing a child who would not even pick up a pen choose to write again.

Watching a child laugh after months of anxiety or hearing them say, "Nothing bad happens when I make mistakes," after perfectionism has held them back for so long.

Success is not always huge academic leaps straight away. That will come. Sometimes it is a child beginning to believe in themselves again, a

young person feeling safe enough to unmask, or a parent feeling hopeful for the first time in months.

What is your vision for Emotionally Healthy Minds?

We are already beginning to develop plans to franchise Emotionally Healthy Minds into other areas so more families can access this kind of support. Alongside this, we would also love to continue expanding our training within schools and supporting professionals working with children more widely.

I would love to see a world where emotional wellbeing is not treated as secondary to education but recognised as foundational to it.

For many families, the hardest part is not knowing where to turn when a child is struggling emotionally, academically or both. Sarah hopes Emotionally Healthy Minds can offer families something many have been missing for a long time — understanding, reassurance and hope.

As EHM continues to grow across Essex and beyond, its mission remains the same: to help children feel safe, understood and able to thrive by supporting the people and environments around them.

Parents, schools and professionals wanting to learn more about Emotionally Healthy Minds, access support or explore training opportunities can visit emotionallyhealthyminds.com or follow the organisation on social media.

IS YOUR CHILD STRUGGLING EMOTIONALLY OR ACADEMICALLY?

At Emotionally Healthy Minds, we specialise in supporting children who may feel anxious, overlooked, or unable to reach their potential in traditional settings. By combining expert tuition with emotional support, we help children rebuild confidence, re-engage with learning and feel good about themselves again.

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THE IMPACT

Children who work with us often:

- > Feel calmer, happier, and more confident
- > Re-engage with education
- > Develop resilience and emotional awareness
- > Make meaningful academic progress
- > Build stronger relationships at home and school

This wasn't just about teaching and learning, but about looking at each child holistically... — **LEX**

Without EHM, my boy would be in a very different situation. — **KELLY**

LET'S HELP YOUR CHILD THRIVE

You don't have to navigate this alone.

Get in touch today to find out how we can support your child.

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Essex County
Fire & Rescue Service

TEN NEW FIREFIGHTERS COMING TO A COMMUNITY NEAR YOU



Meet Ben, Charlie, Demi, Ian, Jack, Jacob, Kya, Mark, Randall and Richard...our county's newest firefighters.

They've been welcomed into Essex County Fire and Rescue Service after completing their basic training course in Witham.

The new recruits all live or work within five minutes of an on-call fire station and will respond to incidents when paged.

They will be heading to Epping, Great Baddow, Ingatestone, Manningtree, Rochford, Thaxted and Wickford fire stations.

The team completed their two-week intensive training course in Witham and will continue their training at their home stations.

Firefighter Demi Ward, a lorry driver, will be joining Wickford Fire Station. She said:

"I've always wanted to be a firefighter, but I was never in the catchment area before. After I moved and saw the role come up on social media, I knew I had to go for it."

"Wickford is such a close-knit community, and being part of something that protects and supports that community, while finally doing something I've always wanted to do - means a lot to me."

Firefighter Charlie Sutton is heading to Ingatestone Fire Station and works as a football coach by day.

He said: "For me, it's about protecting my community. Through coaching I already work closely with people locally, and becoming a



Firefighter Charlie Sutton



Firefighter Demi Ward

firefighter felt like another way I could step up and support them - especially in situations where people really need help and reassurance."

More than three quarters of fire stations in Essex are staffed by on-call firefighters.

They all live or work within five minutes of the fire station and are paged when there is an incident. This means they can go about their daily business working or spending time in their community while helping to keep the fire station available when needed.

As well as responding to incidents, on-call firefighters also carry out home fire safety visits, attend community events and visit community hubs like schools and care homes to give safety advice.

If you live or work within five minutes of an on-call fire station, you could be paid to protect your community as an on-call firefighter.

Find out more by searching "Join Essex Fire".

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Thursday, 11 June 2026

Mexico v South Africa - Group A - Mexico City Stadium
Korea Republic v Czechia - Group A - Estadio Guadalajara

Friday, 12 June 2026

Canada v Bosnia and Herzegovina - Group B - Toronto Stadium
USA v Paraguay - Group D - Los Angeles Stadium

Saturday, 13 June 2026

Haiti v Scotland - Group C - Boston Stadium
Australia v Türkiye - Group D - BC Place Vancouver
Brazil v Morocco - Group C - New York New Jersey Stadium
Qatar v Switzerland - Group B - San Francisco Bay Area Stadium

Sunday, 14 June 2026

Côte d'Ivoire v Ecuador - Group E - Philadelphia Stadium
Germany v Curaçao - Group E - Houston Stadium
Netherlands v Japan - Group F - Dallas Stadium
Sweden v Tunisia - Group F - Estadio Monterrey

Monday, 15 June 2026

Saudi Arabia v Uruguay - Group H - Miami Stadium
Spain v Cabo Verde - Group H - Atlanta Stadium
IR Iran v New Zealand - Group G - Los Angeles Stadium
Belgium v Egypt - Group G - Seattle Stadium

Tuesday, 16 June 2026

France v Senegal - Group I - New York New Jersey Stadium
Iraq v Norway - Group I - Boston Stadium
Argentina v Algeria - Group J - Kansas City Stadium
Austria v Jordan - Group J - San Francisco Bay Area Stadium

Wednesday, 17 June 2026

Ghana v Panama - Group L - Toronto Stadium
England v Croatia - Group L - Dallas Stadium
Portugal v Congo DR - Group K - Houston Stadium
Uzbekistan v Colombia - Group K - Mexico City Stadium

Thursday, 18 June 2026

Czechia v South Africa - Group A - Atlanta Stadium
Switzerland v Bosnia and Herzegovina - Group B - Los Angeles Stadium
Canada v Qatar - Group B - BC Place Vancouver
Mexico v Korea Republic - Group A - Estadio Guadalajara

Friday, 19 June 2026

Brazil v Haiti - Group C - Philadelphia Stadium
Scotland v Morocco - Group C - Boston Stadium
Türkiye v Paraguay - Group D - San Francisco Bay Area Stadium
USA v Australia - Group D - Seattle Stadium

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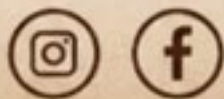


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HAPPY RETIREMENT TO LONG SERVING DIRECTOR AT CHURCH & HAWES



Paul Rayfield

Paul Rayfield has been selling properties in South Woodham Ferrers & villages since 1984

As the saying goes, all good things must come to an end.

Paul has taken the decision to take early retirement after serving the community of South Woodham Ferrers for 42 years!

Back in 1984 Paul began his career at Bairstow Eves in South Woodham Ferrers, before joining Church & Hawes in 1989, he settled into our prominent office in 1991 and has never looked back.

Many of you know him as the Estate Agent with either the Sierra Cosworth or the numerous Subaru rally cars.

Paul often likes to mention that he remembers whilst pointing towards March Farm, "that all this used to be trees!"

Grant Flashman the manager at Church & Hawes has been by his side since 1998 and will continue to serve the residents of this great town, and looks forward to welcoming both old and new clients in the future.

I'm sure we would like to wish Paul a very happy and fulfilling retirement.

Happy retirement Paul from everyone at the 'Our Town' magazine!

Feedback

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO SWF'S MOBILE BREAST SCREENING UNIT. Ref. issue 10

Hi Wendy,

I was pleased to see that Dr. John Cormack has highlighted the disappearance of our breast screening unit.

I clearly remember the town meeting where the proposal to move all GP services to the new CVMC was discussed. Promises were made that we would have better access to services without having to travel so far.

I drive for the local Community Care Scheme, I have spoken to a number of ladies who have received appointments for the screening unit in North Melbourne, Chelmsford.

The ladies had no idea where North Melbourne is and were disappointed to discover that you can not get there easily on public transport from SWF.

Anon

*If you have any views on any of the articles, then send it to me and we can put it in for discussion or any other topic you would like to raise.
email: wendy@ourtownmagazine.co.uk*

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"The back room was going well until he unearthed a problem, but like a true professional he gave brilliant advice and options for us, he over-came this issue and all I can say is WOW and just to add, he even came back on the day he flew out on holiday to finish it."

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ESSEX NHS TRUST EXPANDS SPECIALIST SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE AFTER BABY LOSS

A specialist NHS mental health service in Essex is now offering support to more women and birthing parents who have experienced the loss of a baby during pregnancy or shortly after birth.



Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust (EPUT) has extended the time people can access its 'EPUT By Your Side' service, from one year after a loss, to two years.

The service supports women and birthing parents who are struggling with their mental health after experiences such as miscarriage, repeated miscarriage, stillbirth, termination, or the death of a new born baby up to 28 days postnatal.

The change means more people will be able to get specialist therapeutic care, grief therapy and emotional support, recognising that grief and mental health difficulties can continue or appear long after the loss.

The service brings together mental health specialists, maternal mental health midwives, and other support organisations across Essex to provide joined-up care.

During Mental Health Awareness Week (11-17 May), Stephanie Lambert, Principal Practitioner Psychologist and Clinical Lead for EPUT By Your Side, said:

"We know that the emotional impact of perinatal loss does not follow a fixed timeline. For many, the intensity of grief and associated mental health difficulties can persist or even emerge well beyond the first year. By extending our referral window to two years, we are acknowledging this reality and ensuring more people can access compassionate, specialist support when they are ready to seek help. Our aim is to be alongside individuals during one of the most difficult experiences they may face, offering understanding, therapeutic care, and hope."

Referrals can be made by healthcare professionals including GPs, midwives, health visitors, social workers, and mental health staff.

Parents who are struggling with their mental health during or after pregnancy, but who have not

experienced baby loss, can still access support through other specialist perinatal mental health services offered by EPUT. Urgent mental health support is also available through NHS 111 and relevant charities.

The expansion of EPUT By Your Side reflects the Trust's focus on providing personalised, inclusive mental health support and improving access to trauma-informed care closer to home.

Delivered in partnership with maternity teams, mental health services and voluntary sector organisations across Essex, the service also demonstrates EPUT's wider commitment to joined-up community care, prevention, and working collaboratively across the health and care system to improve outcomes for local people.

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