

Community NEWS



WINTER 2025



All welcome at the Christmas Cracker

Get ready for our fabulous **Christmas Cracker** – the street party that launches the festive season in St Albans District.

The City Centre will be closed to traffic for the free-to-attend event with the fun starting at noon on **Sunday 16 November** and continuing until 6pm.

Among the attractions will be 100 food, drink and gift stalls, street entertainers, a funfair, a toddler play space and live music.

There will be a Santa's grotto provided by St Albans City Centre BID and a seating zone for your Christmas catch ups, sponsored by Costa Coffee in St Albans.

You can also enjoy the Christmas lights which will include the illuminated installations that have become a major hit in recent years.

Another highlight of the festive season will be the additional December dates for the twice-weekly Charter Market.

The Market will take place every Thursday, Friday and Sunday, 9am to 3pm, in the fortnight leading up to Christmas Day as well as the usual Wednesdays and Saturdays.

There will be an extra day's trading, too, on Tuesday 23 December – a perfect time to pick up a last-minute gift.

Main photo: © John Andrews



Christmas across the District

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Your recycling and waste collection calendar for 2025/2026 and the festive season

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More than 35,000 trees given free to residents

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www.stalbans.gov.uk



Christmas across the District



Harpenden Christmas Carnival and Lights Switch On, Sunday 23 November, noon to 6pm

Harpenden Town Council invites you to this free event. There will be an abundance of entertainment including children's activities, outdoor bars, market stalls, live music, funfair rides, Santa, a fantastic procession and the lights switch-on.

London Colney Lights Switch On, the High Street, Sunday 23 November, 3.30pm to 6.30pm

A fun afternoon featuring a funfair, mini-Christmas market, food stalls and Santa's grotto. A free event, no ticket required.

London Colney Christmas Panto, Caledon Community Centre, Sunday 7 December, 1pm to 3pm

London Colney Parish Council presents their community Panto, Rapunzel, with tickets on sale via their website, www.londoncolney-pc.gov.uk.

Redbourn Christmas Market, Sunday 30 November, 11am to 5pm

Local crafts, fabulous food and festive entertainment. This is a not-for-profit event run by volunteers

with funds raised paying for the village's Christmas lights in and around historic Cumberland Gardens.

Seasonal music will be provided by the best of local talent and there will be a Yule Raffle with magnificent prizes from local businesses. Fun for all the family.

Wheathampstead Lights Up, Thursday 27 November, 5.30pm to 8pm

Wheathampstead Parish Council is organising a fun, festive evening in the heart of the village. There will be shopping, eating, funfair rides and other activities. Visit Santa in his grotto, pet farm animals in a live nativity, listen to carol singers and enjoy live entertainment. Lights switch on at 6pm - free parking available.



Chiswell Green Christmas Market and Santa's Grotto, Sunday 7 December, 2pm to 5pm

This event organised by St Stephen Parish Council takes place at Greenwood Park Community Centre and includes stalls full of seasonal gifts, handmade crafts and delicious treats. There will be a free Santa's grotto and a candlelit carol service at 5pm.



Batford Christmas Lights Switch On, Thursday 27 November, 4.30pm to 6.30pm

A wonderful community event which includes carol singing, craft making and free festive refreshments.

Southdown Christmas Lights Switch On, Friday 28 November, 5.30pm to 7.30pm

A variety of entertainment including carol singing, fairground rides and stalls. Enjoy free entry to meet and greet Santa. Local businesses will also be involved with special Christmas themed offerings.



Sign up for your monthly Community News

You can keep up to date with what is happening across St Albans District by signing up to our monthly edition of Community News.

This free publication is emailed to subscribers and has updates on the Council's activities and news.

It will also keep you informed of many other local issues and events. To subscribe to these monthly bulletins, use the QR code.

You can also follow us on Facebook and other social media channels, [@StAlbansCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansCouncil).



Traders of the Caribbean

Say hello to Carmen Richards-Messam who has been trading at St Albans Charter Market since 2007.

She runs her Caribbean Kitchen takeaway with the help of husband Patrick and serves a variety of jerk meat and fish dishes as well as curries.

Carmen was taught her cooking skills by her mother and father who both came to the UK from St Kitts and Nevis.

She said: *"I love the buzz of the Market and am very proud of the great food that I serve. I have built up a loyal customer base with many regular customers."*

"I would encourage anyone who is thinking of trading at the Charter Market to give it a go. It's hard work but very rewarding."

If you are thinking of launching a business at the Market, please email markets@stalbans.gov.uk.



More than 35,000 trees given away

We are giving away another 12,000 free trees this year to residents and community groups who applied under the Your Tree Our Future campaign.

That means we will have distributed over 35,000 free trees to residents since the scheme - run in partnership with Hertfordshire County Council - began three years ago.

The trees - including Hornbeam, Wild Cherry and Field Maple - are suited to the District's climate and soil.

This year's successful applicants will be informed by email when their trees are ready for collection which is likely to be in early December.

You will find the waiting list to take part in next year's scheme by searching online for the Your Tree Our Future website.



Use quieter fireworks

We are asking residents and businesses to think of others during the festive season by using quieter fireworks.

Loud bangs and flashes can upset vulnerable groups such as autistic people and those who suffer anxiety. They can also terrify dogs and other animals.

Quieter fireworks are widely available with many internet retailers stocking them.

We also encourage limiting the use of fireworks to specific dates such as New Year's Eve or Diwali rather than throughout the festive season, so people are not taken by surprise.



Warm Homes Grant

Residents can apply for grants of up to £30,000 to make energy efficiency improvements to their homes.

We have £1.5 million available to help finance enhancements to privately-owned houses.

The money is from the Government's Warm Homes Fund and will help cut harmful carbon emissions.

Around 100 homes in the District will benefit with an average grant of around £15,000.

Improvements may include insulation, double glazing, solar panels and low carbon heating systems such as air source pumps. Use the QR code or phone 0800 107 0044 for more information.



Thank you for Recycling Right

St Albans District is one of the best performing areas in England for recycling. Keep this information safe, so you can refer to your revised bin collections over the festive period.



Christmas food waste



Your food waste is collected weekly. Please use your food waste bin. Food waste is turned into fertiliser or used to produce energy. **Please wrap your food waste in paper, biodegradable caddy liners, or even plastic bags.**

Please don't use black bags or put any other plastics in the food waste bins. All wrappings are removed by the processing plant.

Wrapping paper and cards



Please put these in your recycling bin/box for paper and card. **Please remove any ribbons or bows first.** Please note: Foil backed wrapping paper, glittered items and polystyrene are not recyclable – please put in your general waste bin.

Recycling of small domestic appliances and clean textiles



Dry textiles and **small electricals** can be put out weekly, next to your bins, in separate carrier bags. **Batteries** will also be collected in separate carrier bags to avoid a potential fire hazard. We only collect batteries, textiles and small electricals from kerbside properties.

Revised Christmas collections

Usual Collection Day	Revised Collection Day
Monday 22 December	No change
Tuesday 23 December	No change
Wednesday 24 December	No change
Thursday 25 December	Saturday 27 December
Friday 26 December	Monday 29 December
Monday 29 December	Tuesday 30 December
Tuesday 30 December	Wednesday 31 December
Wednesday 31 December	Friday 2 January
Thursday 1 January	Saturday 3 January
Friday 2 January	Monday 5 January
Monday 5 January	Tuesday 6 January
Tuesday 6 January	Wednesday 7 January
Wednesday 7 January	Thursday 8 January
Thursday 8 January	Friday 9 January
Friday 9 January	Saturday 10 January
Normal collections resume on Monday 12 January 2026	



IMPORTANT There is no garden waste collection service for two weeks from 25 December as outlined in the terms and conditions. The service restarts on 9 January 2026. Extra garden waste can be presented next to garden waste bins on your first scheduled garden waste collection day following this period. Garden waste subscribers can also present Christmas trees for collection at this time, either beside or in your green bin.

Working in partnership

Waste and Recycling Calendar 2025/2026

From 31st March 2026, Simpler Recycling legislation means we can accept clean Tetra Pak and aluminium foil as well as tubs and trays. From this date, you will be able to place these items in the black bin or recycling box. Further details will be published on our website ahead of the implementation date.

CALENDAR KEY

- General waste and food collection*

- Dry recycling, garden and food collection*

- No garden waste collection

- Collections over the festive period will be 1-2 days behind

If you receive a weekly general waste and/or recycling collection, your collection frequency will not change. Please don't put any bulky waste in your bin area. If you need to dispose of bulky items, please use the contact details below to arrange a collection. For flats, if items have been fly-tipped in the bin area your management agent should be contacted to get them removed.

Sign up to monthly online Community News to keep up to date with collections at bit.ly/3Y29ItS

Normal collections resume on Monday 12 January 2026. Please check the website should any additional bank holidays be announced or amended in 2025/26

*Food waste is collected weekly.

Week 1

October 2025							November 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2025							January 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2026							March 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1							1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

Week 2

October 2025							November 2025						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5						1	2
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December 2025							January 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7				1	2	3	4
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
29	30	31					26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2026							March 2026						
M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1							1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
							30	31					

Find out which week you are by visiting: www.stalbans.gov.uk/recycling-and-rubbish

Real Christmas Trees

For Christmas tree collections please visit the website above for more information



Need more information?

Email wastemanagementservices@stalban.gov.uk
Visit www.stalbans.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling



Your 2026/27 annual calendar will be issued in the Spring edition of Community News

Keeping the streets safe

Residents are being kept safe by our CCTV team who are on duty 24/7 every day of the year.

A team of six operators and a manager monitor more than 200 cameras sited in St Albans, Harpenden, London Colney, Redbourn and Wheathampstead.

At their control centre, they are in constant communication with the police and alert them to suspicious incidents.

They help with investigations into a wide range of crimes including antisocial behaviour, shoplifting, assaults and drink driving.

Among many recent successes, an operator spotted three men wanted for a phone shop robbery. The police were able to swoop and arrest them before they committed further crimes.

The service is fully funded by the Council.

Photo: the Council's Principal Community Safety Officer Neil Kieran at the control centre.



Do you need to renew your postal vote?



Postal votes now last a maximum of three years.

After that you must reapply to continue voting by post.

All postal voters who applied before 31 October 2023 must re-apply before 31 January 2026.

Scan the QR code or visit www.stalbans.gov.uk/postal-vote-reapplication.



Meet your new Neighbourhood Sergeant

St Albans has a new Neighbourhood Sergeant who is keen to increase high-visibility foot patrols and deal with local issues.

Sergeant James Keene (pictured), heads up the St Albans Central, North and West Neighbourhood Policing Team who work on solving issues such as anti-social behaviour, speeding and drugs use.

He said: "I'm keen to prevent and detect crime and anti-social behaviour. I want my team to hear directly from you about your concerns."

Mark Essam is the Harpenden and Rural Neighbourhood Sergeant and Hannah McLaughlin is the London Colney, St Stephen and St Albans East Neighbourhood Sergeant.

You can contact them via email firstname.surname@herts.police.uk or online at www.herts.police.uk/report.



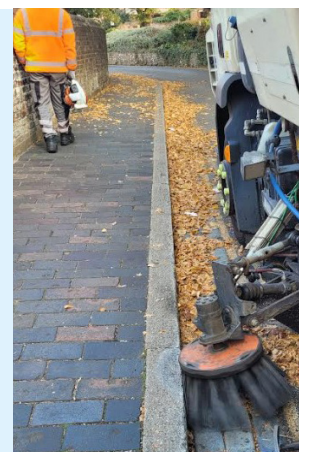
Leaf clearance underway

Our annual programme to keep the District's streets clear of autumn leaves has begun.

More than 100 roads have been targeted for regular sweeps over the next few weeks by our street cleansing contractor Veolia's dedicated team.

You can request a sweep in your neighbourhood if there is a build-up of leaves. You can do so by emailing wastemanagement@stalbans.gov.uk.

Residents are politely asked, though, not to blow leaves from their own properties onto public roads.



WHAT'S ON at the museums

St Albans Museum + Gallery, St Peter's Street, St Albans, AL1 3DH
Verulamium Museum, St Michael's Street, St Albans, AL3 4SW

For detailed information about the events programme, go to: www.stalbansmuseums.org.uk.
Visit regularly to catch these and other great exhibitions and events.



Inns and Alehouses in Victorian St Albans, St Albans Museum + Gallery, Keeper's Gallery, Friday 28 November to Sunday 15 March, Free

Towards the end of the 19th century, St Albans boasted just under a hundred commercial drinking establishments.

This exhibition looks at the different types of venue that served the City's population from beerhouses to taverns and the reasons that they flourished or failed as St Albans moved into the 20th century.

Worlds Connected: St Albans and the Islamic World, St Albans Museum + Gallery, Weston Gallery, until Sunday 22 February, Free



Excavations at St Albans Abbey uncovered the surprising fact that in 1291, Abbot Roger de Norton was buried with his heart in a case inscribed with Islamic text. This multi-sensory exhibition will explore the many connections between St Albans and the Islamic World - from scientific discoveries to a fondness for coffee.

Image: Trustees of the British Museum.

Christmas and New Year Opening Hours for St Albans Museum + Gallery and Verulamium Museum

Wednesday 24 December – Friday 26 December, Closed.

Saturday 27 December – Tuesday 30 December, Open 10am – 4pm.

Wednesday 31 December – Thursday 1 January, Closed.



Landlord Forum

We are holding our next Landlord Forum on Tuesday 25 November and you can book a place now.

This is a chance for private landlords and letting agents to network, learn new information and discuss housing issues.

The Forum takes place from 6.30pm at the Civic Centre and you can book your place by emailing landlordforum@stalbens.gov.uk or calling **01727 814674**.



Winter Fuel Payments

This winter, people born before **22 September 1959** could receive a **Winter Fuel Payment** of either **£200** or **£300**.

Most eligible people do not need to claim their Winter Fuel Payment. It should be paid automatically in November or December, normally into the same bank account as your State Pension or other benefits.

If you earn over £35,000 per year, however, the Inland Revenue will take your payment back by changing the amount you are expected to pay in Income Tax.

For details, including eligibility, see www.gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment.

Helping residents improve their digital skills

MORGAN SINDALL
PROPERTY SERVICES

Our housing repairs contractor **Morgan Sindall Property Services (MSPS)** is working with local charity **Computer Friendly** to help residents learn digital skills.

This includes using a mobile phone, computer or printer. The free drop-in sessions are held every week at various locations across St Albans District.

Bespoke sessions for community groups and local charities can be arranged.

In addition, MSPS are also offering residents access to more than 700 online courses through its Staff Skills Academy.

These courses range from using Microsoft Office to improving customer service skills. You can learn at your own pace from your phone or laptop and a certificate is issued for every completed course.

To enquire about these free opportunities, please contact CSRbox@morgansindall.com.

New social housing

The Council is transferring ownership of an ageing tower block in St Albans to Hightown Housing Association.

Telford Court was built more than 50 years ago and would cost many millions of pounds to refurbish.

The building will now be demolished and the site redeveloped with Hightown committed to maximising the amount of new social housing.

The Council will retain the right to nominate all future tenants for the social rent properties from its Housing Register.



Jobs at the Council

If making a real and direct impact on your local community matters to you, then a career with St Albans City and District Council could be the perfect fit.

We're always looking for talented individuals and offer a variety of full and part-time roles throughout the year. These include apprenticeships, graduate roles and summer internships

We also offer casual work, election roles and volunteering opportunities. Scan the QR code to visit our jobs and careers webpages.



Have your say... we welcome anything you want to say about our services.

We hope you enjoy reading Community News. If you can spare a moment, please email communications@stalbands.gov.uk and let us know your views on this edition.

St Albans City & District Council,
Civic Centre, St Peter's Street, St Albans, Herts, AL1 3LD

Website: www.stalbans.gov.uk

For latest service information, updates and general enquiries please go to the Council's website.

Alternative formats: If you want to receive this newsletter in an alternative format, such as Braille, please call 01727 819572. See www.accessable.co.uk for information about access to local facilities.

See us on social media
@stalbandsouncil

