

The 'Summer Special' edition. July 2011



## Harpenden. Boom town or bubble about to burst?

### Saving the High Street!

Can Mary Portas help Harpenden?

Tough love for the High Street.

Greedy landlords?

Are the Government 'Cuts' hurting?

### Thriving local business.

Read the success stories of an innovative accountancy service and a home cleaning company.

Planning your garden for 2012.

**FREE PRIZE DRAW TO WIN GRIFFITH PARK SPARKLING WINE**

### What's new?

Harpenden's own beer now available in Station Road.

Art workshops for adults and children.

3D TV in Harpenden July 20

The 'new' White Horse in Hatching Green.

**£2,000 Local Retailer Award to win. See Page 7.**

## From the Editor. Summer

What's the truth behind the front page headline? Judging by the packed Farmers Market on June 26...the busy platforms and trains every week day and the high property prices all is well. Not so with many retailers though. So what do you think?

Speaking of retailers I would like to thank Keith Sammels of LAW Creative for their forthright analysis of trends in retailing and how they affect the Harpenden 'High Street'. Also for their generous support for the Award of £2,000 worth of marketing consultancy to a Harpenden independent retailer.



I have added a second prize of three pages of editorial in the Autumn edition of Harpendia magazine.

Times are tough on the 'High Street' so we all need to support our local stores. Not just as shoppers, but with help from the local council and landlords. The first three editorials give differing views of current issues and how they affect 'life' in Harpenden.



At the end of the day, though, we will have the 'High Street' we deserve. It's not all doom and gloom. This edition features several success stories which may help to inspire.

I am hoping a free prize draw to win Griffith Park sparkling wine will encourage you to recommend a friend to become a Harpendia reader. I know lots of readers enjoy both the magazine and the web site and tell me they 'must' let their friends know. Well here's a great incentive to take positive action.

**Ron Taylor Editor**  
**6th July 2011.**

Please contact me to air your views on the 'High Street'  
[info@harpendia.com](mailto:info@harpendia.com)

PS. The HARPENDIA web site is updated weekly with lots of new information. Why not check it out.  
[www.harpendia.com](http://www.harpendia.com)

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## **Harpedia supports our local schools.**

From time to time we include a youth supplement from the young journalists at Roundwood Park School who produce their own online ezine called ParkLife.

You can follow their work at [http://](http://www.roundwoodpark.herts.sch.uk/students/parklife.php)

[www.roundwoodpark.herts.sch.uk/students/parklife.php](http://www.roundwoodpark.herts.sch.uk/students/parklife.php)



# Tough love for one of Britain's most picturesque and independent high streets.

## UK High Street Limited is dying. It's official!

By Keith Sammels. Creative Director. LAW Creative.

**David Cameron has appointed retail guru Mary Portas to consult with local authorities, businesses and shoppers to contribute their ideas on how to save Britain's High Streets.**

By the Autumn she will have consolidated her views and reported back to the government with a plan of action!



*(Above. Mary Portas on visit to Rugby on June 22nd.)*

We need to get the 'doom and gloom' out in the open so that we are able to face facts and decide whether we can change what is proving to be an unstoppable phenomenon.

Town Centres across the UK saw actual market share fall to under 42% last year. Ernst & Young Item Club raised the prospect that High Street spend would not return to pre-recession levels until 2013 and out of town retailers saw an increase of 11.5% in trade between 2005 and 2010.

Portas recently described Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire as 'in danger of becoming a ghost town'. We know that Dunstable in Bedfordshire has lost 55 out of 200 shops and Margate in Kent has almost 40% of its shops empty.

**Is Harpenden in with a fighting chance?**

And if we go much further afield and look at an even bigger picture, the United States of America has for many years established out of town retail as a preference for shoppers.

So, are we looking at an unstoppable trend? I would argue that for some Town Centres that will be the case. Do I think more specifically that Harpenden is in with a fighting chance to reverse the trend? **Well somewhat strangely I do!**

I have spent the last 20 years working all over the world helping companies to build brands, create customer loyalty and sell products. But, I went to school in Harpenden and currently have offices for LAW Creative in Harpenden [www.lawcreative.co.uk](http://www.lawcreative.co.uk).

I loved the town when I was 10 years old and I still do today.



*(Above. Keith Sammels (right) LAW Creative Director with Brett Sammels LAW Creative Client Services Director)*

**Scroll down to continue reading...**

## Article continues...

### **Rather have empty premises than reduce rents!**

The difference between the survival of Harpenden as a thriving retail environment and some other centres is that Harpenden enjoys a 'certain something' that is capable of attracting shoppers. In my business it is called a differential advantage. Brands or Town Centres can of course create a differential advantage for themselves but Harpenden already has a set of important values which will have the potential to attract custom.



But what might happen is that councils continue to charge rates that retailers say they can't afford, landlords continue to give the impression that they would rather have empty premises than reduce rents and traffic wardens will continue to ward off any brave shoppers who are unwilling to add a £60 fine to their purchase of a birthday card and some wrapping paper.

And if Portas is right when she says she is 'shocked at the apathy that exists amongst shopkeepers', then, maybe it is game over for Harpenden!

I have to admit that rent and rates is not my area of particular expertise. However as a landlord, as well as a marketer, I do take the view that we all feed off each other and sensible recognition and resolution are critical, especially at a time of recession or hopefully recovery.

What I do know, and I suspect everybody else does to one degree or another, is that unless we provide shoppers who still enjoy Town Centre shopping with a myriad of irresistible reasons to tempt them to enjoy the delights of Harpenden then we really are drinking in the last chance saloon along with the other beleaguered retailers in failing Town Centres!

**Mary Portas is a no nonsense retailer and she'll tell it as it is. If she were to tell Harpenden how to revitalise its fortunes she may reach some of the same conclusions as me.**

Customers go to out of town sites partly because of the available stores and products, partly because they can park and the stores stay open longer. Out of town achieves a huge tick for ease and convenience.

### **Are shopkeepers prepared to open stores longer to provide better service?**

Parking is a huge problem in Harpenden. But it has to be dealt with. There's plenty of space and after all what will be the point of having beautiful common open spaces once our Centre has become a ghost town? How pretty will our High Street look then? It's a very simple choice, provide proper convenient parking or people will not shop in Harpenden and more shops will close.



**Scroll down to continue reading...**

## Article continues...

And what about Portas' complacency comment. Not everyone can shop between 9:00am and 5:30pm. Are Harpenden shopkeepers prepared to open their stores longer on a permanent basis to provide better customer service?

It's a fact, retail has become more competitive. But it is a competition that the small specialist retailer can win. The 2011 shopkeeper faces competition on service and price from the internet, and out of town stores. In addition the High Street giants are stealing more and more market share across a multitude of products.

But given a certain set of positive circumstances I still believe that there is an inherent liking for smaller shops and stores. We are all individuals and we all love competent, personal service where we are made to feel valued as customers.

We like independent stores that excel!

I am not sure that we are cash rich anymore but we are still all time poor and a shopkeeper that we trust to provide caring, reliable service is worth his or her weight in gold.

Shoppers will however only 'keep it local' if the shops they are keeping it local for are providing a better all-round service than the on-line and out of town competitors.



### How to make your store a destination!

I have a friend who runs a racquets store in the West End of London. He may not be the cheapest store for tennis, squash and badminton racquets but he has been voted Britain's Best Racquets Store and offers customers an innovative range of services such as expert advice, 24 hour stringing, a racquets hitting area for play before you buy, a new racquets loan service, a customer loyalty scheme and countless other customer focused services including seven day opening [www.wigmoresports.co.uk](http://www.wigmoresports.co.uk). He has made **Wigmore** a 'destination' for racquet sports players.

Leaving the important issues of rent, rates and parking aside, Harpenden is an amazing place and offers shoppers a unique experience. But it must attract an ever increasing number of specialist stores who are prepared to go that extra mile in achieving their business goals. With the advent of Social Media and Digital Marketing it has never before been so inexpensive to compete with much larger businesses from a marketing perspective.

I am an avid Harpenden fan and shop in the town, but in an age of data capture I have never once been asked for my email address. Some of the stores offer great service; some don't, but if the High Street is to survive then a much more professional and customer led approach is essential. And shopkeepers must embrace the digital age in which we operate to ensure maximum exposure for their businesses.

**And without getting into the complexities of marketing, if each of the stores in the town contributed a relatively small amount of money to a promotional campaign, not only would Harpenden own a website that was capable of competing with the best, but also start to capture vast quantities of data with which to cost effectively market the town.**

# Win the £2,000 High Street Retailer Award. Plus win a 3 page feature in Harpendia

## The Awards

- 1) In conjunction with Harpendia, LAW Creative will provide £2,000 worth of marketing consultancy to an independent Harpenden retail business without charge.
- 2) A 3 page editorial/promotional feature in the Autumn edition of Harpendia.

## Who can enter

The owners of independent retail businesses trading with retail premises in Harpenden, Southdown or Batford.

## How to win

You will have to answer 3 business related questions then supply 40 words saying how important it would be to your business to win the £2,000 Award.

## How to enter

Send an e mail from your business address, with your name, business address and contact number to register for the Awards. I will then e mail the entry form to you which will need to be returned by August 21st.

The 2 winners will be announced on September 12th.

## Editor's comment

**“The £2,000 award gives the winning retailer a chance to receive the considerable marketing advice from a top creative Agency. LAW Creative are local and will work with the winner to help them boost their business by giving insight into what are the most effective ways of promoting business on the High Street. The runner up will benefit from the chance to have three colour editorial pages in the Autumn edition of Harpendia.”**

**LAW Creative** is a through the line marketing communications company, based in London and Harpenden. Clients include: InterContinental Hotels and Resorts, David Lloyd Leisure, Holiday Inn, Crowne Plaza, Rank Group Gaming Divisions, Grosvenor Casinos and Mecca Bingo.

[www.lawcreative.co.uk](http://www.lawcreative.co.uk)

**Recent examples of work from LAW Creative.**



The ‘Summertime of your Life’ campaign heralded by an eight page supplement in The Times helped to further establish David Lloyd Leisure as a family destination from which to enjoy summer.



Making a World of Difference - Winner of HMA ‘Best Internal Communications’ Award December 2010 for ‘InterContinental Hotels & Resorts Responsible Business Day’ in partnership with National Geographic’s Centre for Sustainable Destinations.

# Top retailers looking to open in Harpenden.

By Andrew Reed, Reed Fitzpatrick Retail

**In spite of the continuing difficult trading times there are still a number of good retailers looking to secure stores in the town proving that Harpenden represents a strong trading town in which to consider opening in. The problem for many is that the shop units are too small which should mean that units that do become available would suit the local retailers.**

The national retailers release lists of their requirements to those in the retail property industry and we are aware of demand for the town from many popular retailers such **Viyella/Country Casuals, Robert Dyas,** and **East**, to name a few. There is a tendency to over react to hearing that these retailers want to come into a town and the comment “all High Streets look the same” is often made but we should feel more positive that so many well known names want to come into the town. They won’t all find the space they need and some may not get the required planning consent - Domino’s Pizza has had a long battle in Station Road.

In the last 12 months my company has transacted deals for both tenants and landlords from Edinburgh to Bognor Regis and there are many towns which are not looking as healthy as Harpenden and where there is no retailer demand, a lot of vacant stores and for sale signs.

## **New Stores--New Opportunities**

It is a shame when local businesses do close, of course, but new shops do provide new job opportunities and the multiple retailers provide an opportunity for good staff to do well and maybe rise up the career path on to greater things.

## **Not all landlords are greedy**

It is a very unrealistic accusation for retailers to call the landlords “greedy” as so often you read



in the press. If those retailers owned property for rent they would I am sure want the most rent they could get. They also want to sell their product for the highest price they can achieve and maximise their profit levels. In a rent review or lease renewal, the landlord can only fix a rent at a level which is provable based on open market evidence – ie what other retailers have agreed to pay. In a vibrant town centre such as Harpenden there is likely to be strong demand from retailers for property in good locations as there is for houses in the area.

## **It pays to employ professional help.**

The tenant can always employ a chartered surveyor to act for him in negotiating a rent review, lease renewal or lease acquisition and it is surprising how many local retailers do not do this.



*Photos: Harpenden resident Andrew Reed Bsc MRICS on the Harpenden ‘High Street’. Andrew is a Director of Reed Fitzpatrick Retail in London.*  
[www.rfretail.com](http://www.rfretail.com)

# Coalition Cuts and Harpenden

By Lance Thomas. (Below) Local resident and chairman of the Hitchin & Harpenden constituency Conservative Association.

**Understandably, there is a good deal of discussion about the Government's spending cuts and the prospective impact on national life.** There are those that prophesy doom, the erosion of the country's social fabric, and the weakening of the high street economy up and down this great island nation. Unfortunately, little recognition is sometimes paid to the fact that the country has been left in the same sinking boat as Ireland, Greece and Portugal relative to a debilitating deficit. Fortunately, the Coalition quickly acknowledged the magnitude of this perilous state of affairs and acted swiftly with a programme to curtail public expenditure. These measures calmed the financial markets and kept interest rates on our sovereign debt at a reasonable rate.



**So what does all this have to do with Harpenden?** I have talked with many people around the Town regarding their views towards the Government's plans for drastically reducing public debt. A good deal of the comments I have heard relate more to the need for more Defence spending, possible changes to the NHS, and money wasted on bailing out the Euro than they do concerning any deleterious consequence for Harpenden. It is therefore

difficult to accurately assess any real impact the Coalition spending cuts, either implemented or anticipated, are having on the fair citizens of our thriving community. Responses range from the anecdotal to the speculative. However, anyone who has jostled their trolley up and down the aisles of one of our many supermarkets could probably attest to the fact that shopper numbers do not appear to be diminishing. The fact that grocery prices have risen steadily each year over the past five years (flour up by 89%, bread up by 50%, ham up by 39%, carrots up by 33%, etc) is hard to attribute to Coalition spending cuts, especially since the Government has only been in power one year.

**A recently updated survey (February 2011) lists Harpenden as the 6th most expensive place to live in the United Kingdom, and the most expensive place to live in the East.** House prices of £1.5 million aren't exactly rare, and the average price is well within the half a million range. As anyone who is trying to purchase or rent a property knows, you have to be quick, because most decent places seem to last only a few days or weeks before being snapped up. Any well-priced listings on estate agent websites are more often than not gone before a prospective applicant can even phone the agent. As for personal experience; this month I gave notice concerning the house I have been leasing for the past three years, and within two hours there were four prospective clients. By the next day my house had been re-leased. It would seem therefore that Coalition policies have failed to condemn the local property market to stagnation and decline.

**Scroll down to continue reading the article...**

## Article continues...

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**So what else can we look at? As we are considered a 'commuter town', the First Capital Connect service might serve as a bellwether for economic retrenchment!**



Regrettably, I have to assume that anyone venturing into London on their daily morning journey will probably still be grumpy about the fact that it is as difficult as ever to secure a seat during the peak periods. Now mind you, the average rail fares have risen steadily by 30% since 2006, so our commuting populace cannot be too thrilled about that. Albeit, this is a difficult one to impugn the Coalition for. Many of our professionals head for the Square Mile each morning, which still maintains a comparatively robust employment sector, so hopefully these citizens have not been too vexed by Government initiatives. To illustrate the imbalance: in Merthyr Tydfil, South Wales, 33 out of work people compete for every one vacancy. Ayrshire in Scotland is second worst with 31 people chasing each job; Hackney has 24 people chasing each opening. The area with the best chances of getting a job is the City of London, home to the banking sector. Just 0.1

people chase one vacancy. Not to say that local residents have not been affected by any job losses in the City, but the impact does not appear to be threatening the Town's vibrancy.



**The Harpenden high street maintains its vibrancy.** Although there will always be shops which find it difficult to survive, this is likely to be more attributable to the very expensive cost of leasing trading premises than any Government measures.

**Our schools remain the envy of many districts.** Of principal concern here is, however, that due to their popularity, there is a dearth of places available. The State schools are at near capacity, as are the independent schools. As for the latter, normally in periods of financial uncertainty, private schools might witness a decline in their numbers. This does not appear to be the case for the Harpenden independent schools. Not to say that the town does not have its share of residents who may have suffered a job loss due to the cuts in public spending, but the impression seems to be that the Town has been, for the most part, insulated from any real harmful impact.

We are a rather unique place, or to paraphrase the Bard;

*"This precious stone set in the silver sea,  
Which serves it in the office of a wall,  
Or as a moat defensive to a house,  
Against the envy of less happier lands,  
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm,  
this Harpenden"*

*Lance Thomas has been President of a number of small banks in the United States, was Managing Director of a large City recruitment firm, and served as Chief Executive of two satellite media companies in Europe. He is currently Chairman of the Hitchin & Harpenden constituency Conservative Association.*

# The 'New' White Horse... with a little help from Raymond Blanc and Marco Pierre White!

By Ron Taylor, Editor

The recently re-opened White Horse in Hatching Green offers so much more than most Pub/ restaurants in the Harpenden area. For starters and most importantly the management team of Sam King (below right) and Georgi xxxx (below left) have a degree of control to run the business and implement some of their own ideas rather than strictly follow 'Head Office' policy.



## New Owners

Peach Pubs are a small independent group owning 14 pubs in the Midlands and South East England, their philosophy is to deliver high standards of food, drink and service. And judging by the success of their other Pubs they are aiming to repeat the formula here in Harpenden. With a co founder (Lee Cash) who has run Raymond Blanc's flagship brasserie, Le Petit Blanc you know a real 'food' professional has devised a viable strategy.

## Real Pub atmosphere

The Bar serves a range of real ales, spirits and bar snacks and a limited number of cocktails. *"We wanted to retain the traditional Pub feel, so locals can come in for just a relaxing drink."* said Sam. *"We have also introduced innovative ideas like --'Sausage O'Clock' that's between 5.30 - 6.30 each weekday evening when tasty sausages are available free from the bar."* And with the resurgent interest in British gins, they offer 3 tonics to complement the different brands of Gin.

## Superb Restaurant

Good food requires a good Head Chef. They have one of the best in Neal Sealey who has worked with Marco Pierre White at The Criterion in

London. He and his his team use local ingredients, where possible to create a range of delicious meals with a difference. *"We have already listened to customer feedback and will be introducing some 'specials' that reflect their views"*. said Georgi.



## Families welcome

With a large patio and garden area they can cater for people of all ages. Not just outside but inside too as the restaurants seats xxx and Head Chef Neal will make up smaller meals for children at half the cost.



## Business's too!

There's space for xx cars and with WIFI you can stay connected whilst enjoying tea or coffee and free toast in the morning between 10am-11am.

## Find out more

Give them a call on 01582 469290 or why not check out their web site. Log on and you will see all their facilities, menus and prices.

[The White Horse Harpenden, Redbourn Lane, Hatching Green, Harpenden, www.thewhitehorseharpenden.co.uk](http://www.thewhitehorseharpenden.co.uk)

**PS. Look out for my restaurant review on the Harpendia web site soon.**

# Harpenden accountant saves his clients a small fortune.

By Ron Taylor, Editor

**Mark Fordham (below) is one of an exciting new breed of accountants who are transforming the image and old fashioned practices still beloved by many established 'old school' firms.**

TaxAssist Accountants has a bright, modern, shop style location on the 'High Street' in Southdown where you can walk in and be greeted by friendly and helpful staff. They will find out what help you need and then fix an appointment at a time to suit you.



Tax Assist Accountants was formed in 1996 as a franchise business to meet the needs of small and medium sized businesses (SM's) with professional accountancy services at a reasonable cost. Clients can choose one or several services to suit their needs and be free to terminate the agreement once that work has been completed.

**I met up with Mark in mid June to find out more.**

**Q. How long have you been established in Southdown?**

A. I opened the business here two years ago, prior to which I traded from Redbourn.

**Q. How important is it for a small business to have professional accountancy services?**

A. Absolutely vital. It can mean the difference between success and failure. Too many businesses don't keep track of their finances. Plus changes to legislation in 2010 now give the Revenue powers to call in unannounced and check 'the books'. Penalties for inaccurate records can be costly.

**Q. What are the fundamental mistakes that SM's make?**

A. Not having a focused business plan or planning their cash flow are top of the list. Not claiming allowances or being aware of legislation changes plus inaccurate record keeping all make things difficult.



*Photo above: A warm welcome from Nicola Ratcliffe (left) and Laura Cramer (right)*

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**Article continues...**

**Q. How much money can you save for a client?**  
 A. That varies subject to their size, but recently I claimed £50k back from the VAT for one client and £250k from the Revenue for another. But on average it amounts to £10k for the first year.

**Q. What's the difference between your business and a 'traditional' accountancy practice?**  
 A. We are more friendly, approachable and quicker. We can meet clients outside 'normal' hours and at weekends. We have fixed fees and monthly payments by direct debit so clients know exactly what it will cost them.

**Q. How do you source new clients?**  
 A. It's a mixture of referrals, networking and web marketing with a small dose of local advertising.

**Q. With your financial background what sort of investment advice can you offer clients?**  
 Advice about their business plans, taxation issues, business efficiency and profitability.

**Q. Can you help SM's to get bank loans?**  
 A. Certainly. Too many SM's approach their bank with a poorly thought through plan on why they need finance. I would devise a detailed proposition for them.

**Q. Are the accountancy rules and qualifications easier or more difficult than those for an IFA?**

A. Accountancy are probably more difficult.

**Q. Any tips for Harpenden readers on how to invest?**

A. You have to make time to regularly check your personal finances and then ensure that every spare pound works hard. Ensuring you take up your yearly ISA allowance is a good start.

**TaxAssist Accountants Harpenden**

126 Southdown Road  
 Harpenden  
 Hertfordshire  
 AL5 1QQ UK

[www.taxassist.co.uk/accountants/harpenden/](http://www.taxassist.co.uk/accountants/harpenden/)

**Tel: 0800 0523 555**

*(Photo below: Mark Fordham, the owner of Tax Assist Accountants in Harpenden is a big fan of rugby and cricket as well as an active member of the local business community.)*



# Helping to keep Harpenden clean!

## Harpenden's most trusted cleaning company.

By Ron Taylor, Editor

**Homeclean has been in the business of keeping Harpenden homes clean for over 30 years. In fact it was the first house cleaning business set up in Harpenden. It's success is attributable to the founder and proprietor Mary Usher who manages her business with a maternal instinct to ensure that her staff enjoy their work and her customers receive great service.**

**I met Mary in early June to find more.**

### **Q. How important is it to keep your home clean?**

A. Absolutely vital. Not only can dirt and things like dog hairs accumulate and provide a risk of infection or disease but also make your home unsafe with greasy surfaces and floors.

### **Q. So why did you set up a cleaning business?**

A. It was all to do with financial independence. As a young Mum, with a husband starting out on his career I had to take up some part time work as a child minder for friends to earn some extra cash.

Whilst doing this I did some cleaning, which went down very well. Several of my friends suggested that I should start a home cleaning business to earn some 'real' money.



clients over 25 years I can now assess what most clients need over the phone. Alternatively I will make a home visit.

### **Q. When did it all start?**

A. In 1975. I recruited a couple of cleaners who I knew were reliable, promising them a regular job. Then I produced a leaflet and arranged a small scale door drop to activate some business. The results were very positive and soon I was 'in business' with a number of regular clients.

### **Q. How do you assess the scale of each job?**

A. Simple really, I ask clients what they need and having had such a wide variety of

*Photo. Homeclean founder Mary Usher at work on her PC, checking web site responses.*

### **Q. How do you look after your staff?**

A. Several ways...they have fixed hours which fit around their own lives...they are taken to their work and returned home each day by car...we pay well and look after all their NI and tax affairs.

**Scroll down to continue reading the article...**

## Article continues

**Q. What sort of homes do you clean?**

A. Private houses large and small in Harpenden and surrounding areas: Redbourn, Kimpton, Wheathampstead and even a few in St. Albans

**Q. What is the secret of your success?**

A. Trust and value for money are key. Some of my clients have been with me for 25 years and some of my cleaners for 20 years.

That speaks volumes! My staff are insured so if there are any accidents, then it's covered.

Rates are very reasonable and clients provide their own cleaning materials and equipment. It's amazing the variety of products used by different clients.

**Q. How can potential clients find out about you?**

A. My brand new web site has lots of information, including our ironing service and contact

details. I also get several referrals from regular clients.

**Q. It sounds like you enjoy your work. Will you continue to keep Harpenden homes clean?**

A. Most definitely.

You can find out more by visiting the web site: [www.homecleanharpenden.co.uk](http://www.homecleanharpenden.co.uk)

*Photo: Luxury travel to and from work for the staff. Mary Usher with her 'Cleaner Carrier'*



## Classics on the Common. July 27th

Make a note in your diary and give generously at the event to help local charities. More info at [/www.classicsonthecommon.com](http://www.classicsonthecommon.com)



## Art+ Workshops are run by local artist Julie Maginn, from her home studio.

The Workshops are inspired by famous artists, from Monet & Picasso to more contemporary influences like Andy Warhol & Banksy.



Training the eye to see objectively, we will learn the fundamentals of drawing from observation and begin to recognize the relationship between contour, shape, space and light. Students are encouraged to observe and interpret the world around them with imagination and individual expression. Exploring all mediums from pastel to acrylic, experimenting with various techniques.



monty



ruari



curtis



Joe



oscar



sebbie

*These amazing works of art inspired by Claude Monet were created in acrylic by children aged 9 & 10!*

The aim is to build a portfolio of work to be proud of, to see your child's talent develop and to appreciate the importance of "creativity" in our every day lives.

**Scroll down to continue reading the article...**

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learn discover +  
+ explore create



*These incredible Self Portraits were created in pastel. The aim was to draw not only what one sees but to capture one's character.*

**Details about the Workshop classes**

4pm - 5.30pm or 6pm - 7.30pm Tuesday & Thursday.

£15 per student for a 90minute session.

Booking is essential.

Private tuition is also available for adults & children.

**Be inspired...See what the students are learning and creating each week by checking out: [juliemaginn.blogspot.com](http://juliemaginn.blogspot.com)**

You can also visit my online gallery at [www.juliemaginn.com](http://www.juliemaginn.com)

For further information call Julie Maginn on 07811 449940

or email [julie.maginn@btinternet.com](mailto:julie.maginn@btinternet.com)

# Harpenden Gold, Harpenden's own great tasting beer... thanks to That Little Brewery.

By Ron Taylor, Editor

**There's a restaurant in Harpenden that's on a par with some of London's top eateries. Not just great food, but offering it's own home brewed beer. That in itself is now very fashionable as not everyone likes wine and a carefully brewed beer can be matched with lots of dishes.**

I went along in early June to meet chef patron Alec Goodhand who was in the middle of preparing a Harpenden stroganoff. "What makes it Harpenden" I asked. "I try where possible to use fresh local ingredients and the beef is sourced from a small farm in Roundwood Lane."



## Harpenden's Home Produced Beer

Harpenden did boast it's own brewery many decades ago based where Sainsbury's now trade, but that closed down around 1936. So it took real initiative by Alec to start up That Little Brewery and bring brewing back to Harpenden.

## How it's made.

Using a well guarded secret recipe he buys all the ingredients (inc. the finest Maris Otter Malt, English Goldings hops and wheat which gives the 'head') and takes them to the Verulam Brewery where he uses their equipment. The ingredients are mixed together and left to brew. This brew is transferred to barrels and moved into the cool cellar beneath the restaurant where it matures for a further 3 weeks before being bottled. The bottles are left for a further couple of weeks whilst a secondary fermentation takes place, adding more flavour and further head. Finally it is labeled and numbered. Once complete it takes pride of place in the restaurant alongside the wines and spirits.

*Photos: Left. Chef Patron Alec Goodhand in the cellar preparing to start the bottling process. Below: Fixing the tops to the filled bottles.*



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**Harpenden Gold**

It is a premium light ale, golden in colour with a traditional taste, some fruitiness and a crisp biscuity finish. At 4.3% and served cool it makes a refreshing accompaniment to many dishes on the menu.



**Customers love it**

“Reaction from customers has been very positive and it is becoming increasingly popular.”said Alec. At £3.95 for a 500 ml bottle it is super value. It’s only served in the restaurant and as a limited edition it will not be available for long. That is until the next Hop harvest which is at the end of August.

**Book your table soon**

The menu at That Little Place is a real change from the boring, regular dishes on offer elsewhere so why not enjoy the best of local food and now local beer.

**Photos: Left. Harpenden Gold, alongside wines and spirits. Below. Alec Goodhand outside That Little Place in Station Road, Harpenden. Below right. Harpenden Gold.**



**That Little Place  
5 Station Road, Harpenden.  
01582 768925  
[www.thatlittleplace.co.uk](http://www.thatlittleplace.co.uk)**

**Harpenden’s own Beer Festival 2011**

**September 9th, 10th & 11th  
Royal British Legion  
Leyton Road  
Harpenden.**

**Make a note in your diary**



# Planning your garden for next year

By Renata Rybczyk-Savage. The Plantsitter.

This time of year is ideal for two things in the garden: sitting back and enjoying it and planning your beds and borders for the following year. Gardens need some forward thinking and what better than to use the summer to visit gardens across the UK to get ideas for colour schemes, themes and so on.

My advice when visiting open gardens is to take your camera and photograph the type of borders you would like at home. Whilst doing that, it's a good idea to get plant names in the photo too as most gardens to visit will have labels by specimens, so that you can remember their names for buying plants or seeds for the following year. Use your local library or the internet at home to research your preferred plants to see if they are suitable for your garden. Not all plants like the same situations, for example some are shade dwellers and others prefer full sun, while soil types also determine what can be grown.



For next year's propagation, store seeds in a dry environment. It's handy to keep them in an order such as by months when they need sowing so you don't have to spend time reading the seed packets' instructions to sowing times. Then, perhaps, spend some time in the garden listing what you have that's perennial. Taking stock certainly helps when you want to do some work over winter when the beds have



died down. Taking note of the perennials you have will also give you time to plan for lifting and dividing over the winter months. Think about drawing what you have so that you remember where everything is and then you can add to your picture, developing a design for next year.

So, spend your summer enjoying yourself and if you do find yourself short of ideas you can rest in the fact that there isn't a shortage of great gardens to visit for inspiration. Check out the following websites for gardens in the Harpenden and surrounding areas:

[www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk)      [www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)  
[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)



*Photos: Above top. "Take pictures of the plant and the label to help you remember." Above. Renata at work. Left. "Photograph a border or bed that you aspire to have in your own garden."*

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See my next column in the Autumn edition .

## Free prize draw. Recommend a friend to enter.

“Increasing the readership of Harpendia means more people can enjoy the content and Harpendia gains more influence in the local community. Here’s your chance to help spread the word and win a prize.”

**Ron Taylor. Editor.**

### Win a bottle of award winning wine.

There are 2 prizes, a bottle of White and a bottle of Rose from Griffith Park.

### How to enter.

Send me an e-mail with the name and e-mail address of a friend who you think would find Harpendia an interesting read. (Check with them beforehand to ensure they will be happy to become new readers).

Then **your name and your friend’s name** will then go into the draw and the first two names drawn will be winners.

Send your entries to me with

“Recommend a friend” in the subject box to arrive **no later than August 15th 2011. Send to the Editor at:**

[info@harpendia.com](mailto:info@harpendia.com)

### Rules.

- 1) The closing date for entries is August 15. Winners will be notified by e mail on August 20th 2011.
- 2) The draw is open to existing Harpendia readers, who live within a 10 mile radius of Harpenden and are aged 18 or over.
- 3) The recommended friends must be **new readers of Harpendia.**
- 4) Prizes to be collected by the two winners.
- 5) The editor’s decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.



### GRIFFITH PARK TRIUMPHS AT THE 2011 INTERNATIONAL WINE CHALLENGE AND THE 2011 DECANTER WORLD WINE AWARDS

**GRIFFITH PARK Sparkling Brut Bottle Fermented NV.** Bronze Medal – 2011 Decanter World Wine Awards  
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**GRIFFITH PARK Sparkling Brut & Rose is available nationwide at Morrisons, offering customers an exceptional multi-award winning sparkling wine at an affordable price – perfect for celebrations and summertime drinking.**

# Experience 3D TV in Harpenden... ...20th July at the B & O store.

**You are invited to see and hear the sensational BeoVision7.** The BeoVision 7 55 inch LED 3D TV with built in 3D BLU RAY is the latest member of Bang & Olufsen's home cinema family, due to launch at the end of July, but in store on the 20th.



B & O Viewing glasses (below) provided



- Experience the 3D experience 7pm - 9pm July 20th.
- Enjoy drinks and a light buffet with authentic Indian food.
- B & O representative on hand to showcase the TV and answer any queries

## Book now

Harpendia readers have been specially invited to attend, so please phone or email to confirm your attendance on the night as space will be limited.

**Bang and Olufsen Of Harpenden**

82 High Street, Harpenden. AL5 2SP

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