



Christchurch & District Chamber  
of Trade & Commerce

# Christchurch Chamber Chat



## Third time's the charm!

Crowds soaked up the heat in a sizzling third **Food Fest Local**, organised by the **Christchurch BID**.

Held on the High Street and Saxon Square, as a complementary event to Christchurch Food Festival on the Quay, BID Operations Managers Louise Berkhauer and Ellie Howes were delighted with the response from local businesses and residents alike.

*"It takes a whole village of wonderful people to organise an event like this",* beamed Ellie afterwards.

BID Chair Chris Guest was more blunt in his assessment of the event - *"You guys triumphed again!"* He said, *"Christchurch doesn't know how lucky it is!"*

See back page for more pictures of the fun



### EXPERIENCED BUSINESS ADVISORS AND ACCOUNTANTS IN CHRISTCHURCH

We understand the importance of local knowledge and are proud to service businesses and individuals in Christchurch.

With our years of expertise in tax planning, accounts, bookkeeping and financial planning, we will help set you up for success in the most tax efficient way.



**TC GROUP**  
10 Bridge St  
Christchurch  
BH23 1EF

0330 088 7111

enquiries@tc-group.com



SCAN ME TO FIND OUT MORE

[www.tc-group.com](http://www.tc-group.com)

# River Pageant 2026 launched by Rotary



In 2025, Rotary Clubs of Christchurch and Boscombe & Southbourne launched the spectacular Christchurch River Pageant as a fantastic floating fund-raising event for three local charities and raised over £2500 which we distributed equally between them. This year, we hope to make this river spectacle bolder, brighter and better. Once again, we are asking you to come along, participate and dig deep, in order to help us make it an outstanding success and a marvellous addition to the Christchurch Calendar of Events.

The 2026 Christchurch River Pageant is likely to feature a floating menagerie of ducks, dogs and the (very) odd swan along with the usual collection of canoes, barges, decorated floats and homemade rafts. Participants are encouraged to dress themselves and their boats to impress. Think Pirates and Smugglers!!

## Why We Are Running the Event

Stour River is at the heart of our community, and the sea is in our blood. Three seafaring charities have made the river their own for their very different purposes. One to help people to learn to sail and have fun in doing so, and the others to provide a space of recovery and recuperation for survivors of cancer, helping them restore and improve both their physical and mental well-being.

This event raises essential funds so that these charities can continue their support to local people and improve their lives. Your support truly matters.

Our local charities:

The Hengistbury Head Outdoor Centre is a recently created charity whose goal is to take over the disused Hengistbury Head Outdoor Education Centre and run it as a facility for local people to participate in a wide range of outdoor activities and sports.

Bourne Water Dragons (BWD) is an inclusive dragon boating team on the River Stour for all cancer survivors, enabling them to stay active and enjoy themselves by participating in local dragon boating activities which have been shown to aid cancer recovery.

Pink Champagne Breast Cancer Survivors' Dragon Boat Team was established by a group of breast cancer patients alongside the breast cancer team at the Royal Bournemouth Hospital. Dragon Boating is excellent exercise for Breast Cancer Survivors and has been shown to improve physical and mental wellbeing for those who take part regularly.



## All smiles at the Wishing Well walk

The third annual **Wishing Well walk**, from the Cliffhanger Restaurant in Highcliffe to the Rotary Wishing Well at Mudeford Quay, was held on a beautiful May 9 afternoon this year, organised by **Christchurch and Highcliffe Rotary Clubs**.

Entrants could choose to either do a single leg or the full 6 mile return loop of the coastal path, with questions set by the Rotary Clubs along the way.

Chamber President **Tim Lloyd**, pictured above with Highcliffe Ambassador **Karen Goldingay**, not only walked both legs in the sunshine, but was lucky enough to win one of the prizes (a £50 voucher no less) after winning the quiz in an entirely above board fashion. The prize was given to Tim at a presentation dinner at the Captain's Club Hotel & Spa.

The walk was held in aid of **Macmillan Caring Locally**, and raised over £2000 for the local charity.

# President's Update

By Tim Lloyd

MD Captain's Club Hotel and  
President Chamber of Trade



## It has been another busy and productive period

since our Spring edition of Chamber Chat, and I am delighted to share some exciting developments as we continue **shaping the future of the Chamber**.

One of our key new initiatives is "**Christchurch Connected**", spearheaded by committee member Jason Giddings. This project is focused on strengthening engagement, increasing membership, and expanding the Chamber's reach through greater use of social media, digital content, and video reels. We are already seeing encouraging results, attracting new members not only from Christchurch itself, but also from surrounding areas including Highcliffe and Hurn.

Our relationship with **Christchurch Town Council** continues to go from strength to strength. We are establishing regular bi-monthly meetings with Elizabeth Murray, Deputy Town Clerk, and Abi Tuddenham, Senior Community Engagement and Communications Officer, to discuss projects and identify opportunities where we can work together. Areas of collaboration include tourism promotion and planning for Christmas activities within the town.

I was also pleased to attend the annual Town Council meeting and Mayor Making ceremony at Druitt Hall. On behalf of the Chamber, I would like to warmly congratulate **Cllr Maggie Fidler** on her election as Town Mayor for 2026/2027, alongside **Deputy Mayor Cllr Sandra Prudom**. We also extend our sincere thanks to outgoing Mayor **Cllr Viv Charrett**, who has been an **outstanding ambassador** for Christchurch both locally and internationally, and who worked closely with the Chamber throughout her time in office.

Keeping members informed about local developments remains a priority for the Chamber. Recently, we met with Nigel James-Walsh from Vistry Homes, the contractor overseeing the redevelopment of the Magistrates Court site, to discuss the Blaze construction roadworks affecting Barrack Road. While significant infrastructure works are required to support the large-scale housing development, we have been assured that Barrack Road will remain clear throughout the school summer holidays. Progress on the site is moving quickly, with the first homes expected to be occupied by October 2026.

The Chamber is also proud to support local charities and community initiatives whenever possible. A few weeks ago, **Karen Goldingay**, our Chamber ambassador for Highcliffe, took part in the **Rotary Wishing Well Walk** in aid of Macmillan Caring Locally. This enjoyable six-mile walk took participants from the Cliffhanger to the wishing well at Mudeford Quay and back again. It was a fantastic community event and one well worth adding to your diary for next year.

As always, thank you for your continued support of the Chamber. We look forward to working with our members, partners, and the wider community as we continue to **champion Christchurch and its business community**.

## Check out our socials

As part of the Chamber's **Christchurch Connected** initiative, explained by Tim in his column, we have been working hard to give our social media presence a re-vamp.

Spearheaded by Executive Committee member **Rhiannon Stevenson** (right), the aim is to try to explain more of what we do day to day, and give an insight as to how and why we support the local business community. Do check us out on Facebook and Instagram!



At Agilico, we Make Work Easy for businesses across Dorset with workplace tech and expertise you can trust.



0330 058 0505  
hello@agilico.co.uk  
www.agilico.co.uk/dorset



Sustainable  
Managed  
Print.



Finance  
Automation.



Cloud  
Telephony.



Managed IT  
Services.

# Avon Reach abseilers raise £1,000 to help rebuild All Saints



An intrepid pair of care home colleagues have completed a 100-metre abseil to raise more than £1,000 towards a church rebuild appeal.

Ruth Wildman and Denise Marks, Home Manager and Companionship Team Leader respectively at Colten Care's Avon Reach in Mudeford, Dorset, confronted their fear of heights to descend from the top viewing platform of Portsmouth's iconic Spinnaker Tower.

Vocal support came from cheering Avon Reach residents who came along to watch them make their way down to the ground.

The abseil was in aid of the restoration appeal for All Saints Church in Mudeford which was extensively damaged in an electrical fire in 2022, prompting a community fundraising effort to reconstruct its devastated roof and interior.

Ruth and Denise, who also completed a skydive in support of the appeal last year, described what it was like on the abseil.

On arrival, they were taken to the tower's viewing platform where they were fitted with full safety gear and securely harnessed by expert abseilers.

After a safety briefing, they were guided to the external hatch, where their harnesses were attached to dual safety lines ready for the descent.

"I was absolutely terrified," said Denise. "But we did it. So proud of us both and the money we have raised for All Saints Church." Ruth said: "Really proud we did it, an experience never to be repeated."

As well as the residents' party, three church representatives - John and Hetty Ward and Sue Rigdon - also went along.

Sue said: "It was terrifying enough simply watching Ruth and Denise abseil 100m down the Tower. Most of us will never know how they found the courage to step off. Everyone was relieved when they arrived safely on the ground despite sometimes being caught by the wind. The church family at All Saints are not only extremely grateful but also very humbled to know that Ruth and Denise did this for us to help raise funds for the refurbishing of our rebuilt church and community hall. A thank-you, however big, doesn't feel enough!"

As well as fundraising by team members and residents, Avon Reach has supported All Saints since the 2022 fire by providing space for church groups to meet and hosting a monthly service open to parishioners and residents alike.



The Captain's Club is the ideal place to hold your next conference, product launch or meeting. Our function suites are fully equipped with state-of-the-art technology and benefit from floor to ceiling windows providing natural daylight. Our experienced staff are on hand to ensure that your event is a success and will assist you with all your needs, from the initial planning stage right through to on the day management.



Our club lounge, restaurant and terrace offers a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, making it the perfect place to unwind, entertain clients or enjoy after work cocktails.



T: 01202 475111

E: [enquiries@captainsclubhotel.com](mailto:enquiries@captainsclubhotel.com)

Captain's Club Hotel, Wick Ferry, Christchurch BH23 1HU

[www.captainsclubhotel.com](http://www.captainsclubhotel.com)

# Hello from Christchurch BID!

Life of a BID Manager can be complex and diverse, wearing many hats and swapping them at a moment's notice! Jobs include: event management, public realm, governance and finance, marketing and social media to name just a few! Last night I was on a live local radio show and today I have been filming in town. Lou has been organising planter locations and accepting deliveries including plants and all the fun things for Food Fest Local. Louise & I share one full time role between us, we don't let limited hours stop us getting things done in the town, we just work faster and harder! Here are some more updates from us...

Hanging baskets have been displayed and will be under a strict watering regime with our new electric vehicle Joule and Tony at the helm. We still have an interim vehicle, which isn't branded yet, we are expecting the new vehicle to be arriving early June. So please post any photos you have on socials and tag @Christchurchbid if you spot them in Christchurch.

New additional flower pedestals and troughs will be introduced to the town in May and June creating an even more colourful impact in the town.

The Christchurch BID sponsored Distinguished Gentleman's Ride arrived on our High Street in May, after months of coordination with the main event organisers we finally bought 1300 motorbikes for all to enjoy. We couldn't have done it without every single volunteer that came out on a Sunday to help marshal the The Distinguished Gentleman's Ride on their rather dapper bikes. We want to extend our huge thanks to Mayor Maggie, who rallied the crowd on the PA system, Frettons Solicitors, Christchurch Carnival, PP Printing, Christchurch & District Chamber of Trade & Commerce, 1st Response Training, Vanguard Security, and local residents who volunteered, litter-picked and marshalled. These events simply could not go ahead without you. So a huge team community effort which showed to every single biker that visited us.

SEEDL online training is still available to all Christchurch BID Levy payers and we are now introducing a trophy for the best learner of the month and best learner of the year. So keep an eye out on our LinkedIn page for the winners of these prestigious trophies!

We are thrilled to announce that Food Fest Local returned on May 23rd and 24th! We sincerely hope you all had a fabulous time at this well attended event, the weather is set to be glorious, again we have a huge team of volunteers, from the same community groups aforementioned. Not only are they business owners themselves, they sit on different boards and volunteer to help the community where they can. True superstars.

Next time I will be mentioning Christmas! Doesn't the year come round so quickly! Have a wonderful few months and I look forward to updating you again soon.

For any questions or queries, please contact Louise or Ellie on [hello@christchurchbid.co.uk](mailto:hello@christchurchbid.co.uk)

The collage features several icons and text boxes: 'SECURED GRANT & LEGACY FUNDING', 'ENHANCING Christchurch', 'INCREASED FLORAL DISPLAYS INSTALLED', 'CAROLS IN THE SQUARE', 'EXPERIENCING Christchurch', 'LOCAL EVENT SPONSORSHIP', 'FOOD FEST LOCAL', 'CHRIST CHURCH BID', 'SEASONAL WHAT'S ON GUIDES DELIVERED TO 10,000 BH POSTCODE HOMES', 'PROMOTING Christchurch', and 'GOV PRE REL IN P CN'. A circular portrait of a woman with glasses is in the bottom left, with a 'Support Local' heart icon below it.



# Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival celebrating its eleventh year -

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2026.

Well-loved by visitors and locals alike, the Highcliffe Food and Arts Festival has become known as one of the best events on the South Coast. With over 160 stalls selling artisan food, drink and curated crafts, visitors are guaranteed a wonderful day out.

Festival founder and chairman Mary Reader said "We look forward to seeing everyone enjoy the festival and sharing in this brilliant celebration of food, music, and art. We are also thrilled to be **welcoming Meadens Omoda Jaecoo for the first time as our headline sponsors**, they will have four of their cars on show for everyone to see. We are also delighted to be **supporting Macmillan Caring Locally with their new 'Hospice at Home' initiative**.

Taking part in the **'Mary's Kitchen Cookery Theatre'** sponsored by Portman Stone, will be the highly entertaining Nelly Ghaffar from the Great British Bake-off, who will be promoting her book 'Be Free'. Also returning will be TV chef James Golding, Colin Nash recently voted as having the best restaurant in the New Forest area, is appearing with Olly Cooper his talented young chef and also with Joe Willoughby from the highly popular 'Butcher Joe's'. Octavian Cote from the Oaks Pub and Brasserie will be there with his team sharing their summer menus. Multi award winning chef Alex Aitken from The Jetty will appear for the first time with his old colleague Charles Lebas, when 'The Jetty meets Bistro MyWay'.

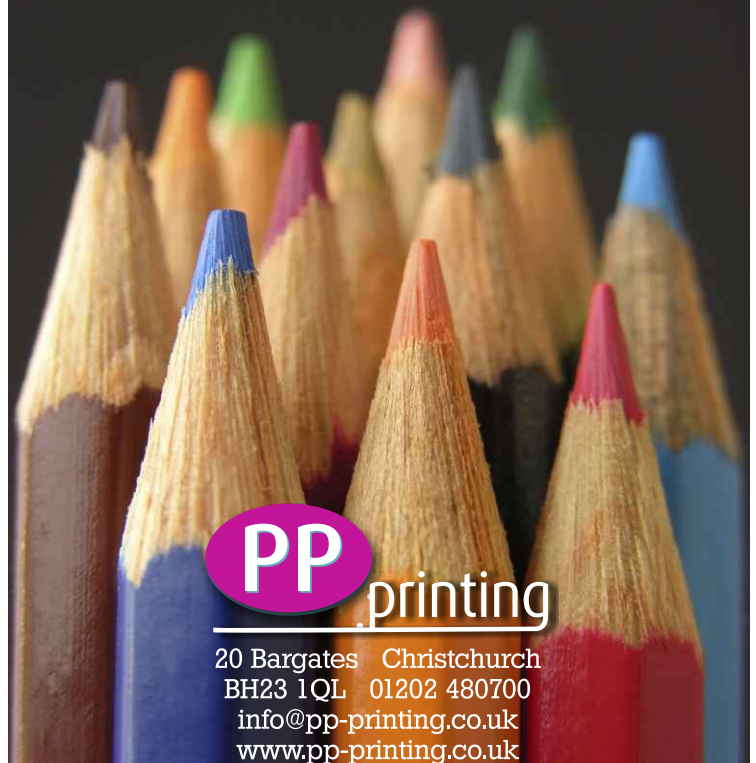
Visiting for the first time will be Dorset-based former MasterChef champion Mat Follas, who will be sharing recipe ideas using his Mûre Liqueurs in recipes, and sommelier Ryan Harris-Smith, who will be running a cocktail masterclass with his Veil Speakeasy. Gerard Molloy, lead tutor from the Kitchen at Chewton Glen will share the secrets of Pan-Asian Cooking, and Vegan chef Magda Zuber will explain her secrets of cooking with plant-based food. Rosie Nguyen from Vietrose Restaurant, will share a colourful tour of the food of Vietnam and Vito and Francesca Capozza from the very popular Da Vito Trattoria in Old Milton, will entice us with recipes from Italy.

Three music stages, organised by the amazing saxophonist, Sarah Bolter, will be featuring leading local musicians and will entertain visitors throughout the weekend with a range of popular music from jazz to soul, with a sprinkling of musical theatre thrown in. A full programme of children's activities will keep the young ones happy with a return of the popular Bubbleologist in the High Street, and Biscuit Icing by Sarah B in the Old School. On the Green, The Circus School, Grow Your Own, Craft-making with the Guides and the colourful Chefs on Stilts will entertain the younger visitors.

Other confirmed sponsors supporting this free-to-enter event are Highcliffe and Walkford Parish Council, Ledger Accountants, The Colin Nash Restaurant, Portman Stone, Just Beespoke Ltd, Dixon Stewart Solicitors, Highcliffe Family Dentistry, The New Forest Food Festival, Highcliffe Residents Association, Morebus, The Daily Echo, The New Milton Advertiser and South-Western Railway.



quality design & print



**PP** printing

20 Bargates Christchurch  
BH23 1QL 01202 480700  
info@pp-printing.co.uk  
www.pp-printing.co.uk

# Bargates cleans up

A happy band of 30 volunteers turned out for the third **Bargates Clean Up Day** on 10 May.

Led by then-Mayor **Viv Charrett**, **Chris Brockway** of the Baptist Church the Chamber President **Tim Lloyd**, the street was given a bit of TLC by way of weeding, sweeping up, litter picking, washing down.

The steps and underpass were also given some overdue attention.

Chris kindly hosted the event at the super sparkly new Baptist Church, and refreshments were generously supplied by the groovy folk of Waitrose. Particular thanks also to Chamber members **Pro2col**, **Fretten**, **Southern Domestic Appliances**, **Matisse** and **Studio 56**



## Tell us your news

Chamber Chat is all about Christchurch businesses small and large. If you are a Member of the Chamber and have news you are happy to share, please do tell us. If you have a contribution you would like to make to the next edition, email [richard@pp-printing.co.uk](mailto:richard@pp-printing.co.uk)

*Disclaimer. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure this publication is accurate, neither Christchurch Chamber of Trade and Commerce nor its editorial contributors and printers can accept, and hereby disclaim, any liability for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions resulting from negligence, accident or any other cause. The views contained in the articles are not necessarily the official policy of Christchurch Chamber of Trade and Commerce and they do not officially endorse any advertising material included within this publication.*

Published by Christchurch Chamber of Trade & Commerce, 10 Bridge Street, BH23 1EF  
Printed by PP Printing, 20 Bargates, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1QL

## Book your ad for our next issue

(August 2026) *Copy deadline 21 August*

### Specifications

1/4 page - 95mm x 138mm 1/8 page - 65mm x 95mm  
Please supply artwork as a high resolution PDF to [web@pp-printing.co.uk](mailto:web@pp-printing.co.uk)

### Advertising Rates

Front or Back Cover - 1/4 page portrait - £120 as sole advert  
Inside on left or right - 1/2 page - £150  
Inside on left or right - 1/4 page - £80  
Inside on left or right - 1/8 page - £45

*We also offer the option on each edition for one company to sponsor the printing of the newsletter for £250 for which they will receive a full page which we would ask it to be 1/2 page advert and 1/2 editorial.*

## Step into the glamour of the 1920s this autumn

as The Isabel Baker Foundation invites the local community to its much-anticipated Great Gatsby Dinner & Dance, an unforgettable evening raising vital funds for families facing childhood cancer.



Taking place at the iconic **Vitality Stadium**, the event promises an unforgettable night of elegance, entertainment and sparkle, all in support of an important cause. Guests will arrive from 6:30pm to a red-carpet welcome before being transported into the dazzling world of the Roaring Twenties, complete with champagne bubbles, vintage jazz and Gatsby-inspired glamour.

The evening will feature spectacular entertainment from Viva Las Vegas, alongside a live jazz band recreating the soulful sounds of the era. Guests will also enjoy a delicious three-course dinner, a luxury photobooth experience, dancing until midnight, and entertainment throughout the evening from our fantastic host and magician.

The Isabel Baker Foundation supports families across the UK who are navigating the unimaginable reality of childhood cancer. From practical support and memory-making experiences to emotional care and respite, the charity works tirelessly to ensure families feel supported during some of the darkest moments of their lives.

We hope the event will not only provide a magical evening for attendees but also help raise essential funds to continue the foundation's work.

Guests are encouraged to fully embrace the theme, with flapper dresses, sequins, feathers, pearls and tuxedos all welcomed as part of the evening's Gatsby glamour.

Whether attending with friends, colleagues or loved ones, the Great Gatsby Dinner & Dance promises to be a night where style truly meets purpose. Every ticket purchased will help make a real difference to families facing childhood cancer.

Business sponsorship opportunities are also available. We would also love to partner with local businesses who would like to support the event and help make a difference for families facing childhood cancer.

To secure your seat please visit [www.theisabelbakerfoundation.com](http://www.theisabelbakerfoundation.com)

For sponsorship enquiries, please contact Sarah at [sarah@theisabelbakerfoundation.com](mailto:sarah@theisabelbakerfoundation.com).

## Magdalen Trust shares £80k to help local families



The Christchurch Magdalen Trust (formerly known as the Hospital of St Mary Magdalen) has been around for more than 800 years. In the middle ages the Charity was the leper hospital for Christchurch situated on the recreation ground in Barrack Road. Thankfully leprosy has now gone! However, the Charity continues as an independent trust helping Christchurch residents who are in need or infirm.

So far in 2026	Grants made for the people of Christchurch	Amount
<b>Citizens Advice, Bournemouth Christchurch &amp; Poole</b>	One year's grant to fund the Christchurch specialist one-to-one benefits advice service.	£14,868
<b>Christchurch Magdalen Trust Hardship Scheme</b> Administered by Christchurch Foodbank+ and the Christchurch Community Partnership.	Grants of financial help for those in dire need in 2026 and payment of a shortfall for 2025.	£21,056
<b>Christchurch Foodbank+</b> Home Equip Furniture Project.	The grant specified is for one year and is the 4th payment of a five year programme of funding to 2027 for household furniture & necessities for those in need.	£6,000
<b>Christchurch Foodbank+</b> CMA Debt Advice service.	The grant specified is for one year and is the final payment of a three year programme of funding to 2026 to provide debt advice for those in financial hardship.	£26,012
<b>Somerford Arc Community Centre</b>	A grant to pay for the Arc Breakfast Club to support children and carers and to provide an avenue to advice and guidance.	£6,901
<b>Green Door Families</b> Mast project supporting men suffering abuse & mental health issues.	A grant to support Green Door's Christchurch group which now numbers over 50.	£600
<b>Diverse Abilities</b> CHAOS Programme for young people with profound learning & physical disabilities	The 2nd instalment of a grant supporting the whole family by providing 120 play sessions within the CHAOS programme provided at the Charity's Treehouse facility at Hurn.	£2,652
<b>Prima Life</b> Supporting older people including those with dementia or suffering isolation.	A grant to support it's Christchurch Carers Group which facilitates interaction between those caring for people with dementia as well as support and guidance.	£1,200
<b>So far in 2026</b>	<b>Total given for the people of Christchurch</b>	<b>£79,282</b>

# Distinguished Gentlemen (and ladies) ride into the High Street

Over 1300 vintage and classic motorbikes roared into Christchurch on 17 May as the Distinguished Gentleman's Ride (DGR) paid a visit.

Crowds lined the street to view the spectacle, which is an annual event with the local leg running from Poole Quay to Sammy Miller Museum in New Milton. Christchurch BID arranged for the town to be a stop off point for this year's event, which entailed a huge parking operation around the town centre.

The event raised over £100,000 for mental health and prostate cancer charities, which at the time of writing placed it the second best ranked in the world, behind only the New York corresponding event!



# Free clinic talks at Bridge Health & Wellbeing

Bridge Health & Wellbeing is holding a series of free talks at their clinic on Bridge Street in Christchurch to help local residents get better, build strength and feel happy and healthy.

Senior Physiotherapist, Josephine Garofalides held a free talk in April on hip pain. Jo held several hip pain sessions last year, all of which were very well attended. Whether it's a dull ache after a long walk, morning stiffness, or sharp pain with movement, painful hips can significantly affect our daily lives, limiting mobility, affecting mood, and reducing overall quality of life. In the session, Jo highlighted some common causes of hip and groin pain and discussed how to manage and treat them.

Expert physiotherapist Mareen Frost held an informative and empowering free talk on women's pelvic health in May. During the event, Mareen busted some myths and broke some taboos around pelvic health, and shared practical tips for long-term wellbeing. Guests left feeling informed, confident, and equipped with simple tools to support their pelvic health every day. There are two more free talks in June.

Senior Chiropractor, Aaron Coode, is holding a Back Pain talk on Tuesday, 2nd June at 5.30 pm. Back pain is a very common, painful and disabling condition. It has been reported that it affects up to 84% of the adult population, with 60-80% affected over their lifetimes. Aaron will be answering some key questions, including what causes back pain, how it can be treated, and what steps can be taken to prevent it from recurring and to stay strong.

Lead Physiotherapist, Paul O'Connell, is hosting a free talk on Knee Pain on Thursday, 25th June at 6.30 pm. The knee is the largest joint in the body and is one of the most important. It takes a tremendous amount of pressure throughout our lives and, unfortunately, often starts to fail as we get older. It is also vulnerable to injury during sporting and athletic activities.

Paul will discuss the common causes of knee pain, common knee injuries, how knee pain can be treated, and the steps individuals can take to prevent knee pain and injuries from recurring.

Both events are free to attend, but numbers are limited, so please book your space by calling 01202 473800 or emailing [info@bridgehw.com](mailto:info@bridgehw.com).

## AVON REACH

WHERE EXCEPTIONAL CARE  
MEETS REFINED LIVING



Discover care that feels made for you, right here in **Mudford**.  
Elegant interiors, beautiful gardens, delicious dining, and enriching activities -  
all with the reassurance of nursing expertise available day and night.  
**It's why local families have trusted Avon Reach for over 30 years.**



SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION  
Or contact **01425 272666**



Managed by Colten Care, your local family company. Est. 1981 \* Correct at time of print.



# What the employment rights act 2025 means for small business

with thanks to **Yvonne Phillips** of **Olyvetree HR**



For many small business owners, employment law can feel overwhelming and often ends up as something to deal with when a problem arises. The Employment Rights Act 2025 will change that. These reforms will almost certainly affect your employment costs, impact day-to-day management and increase your risk from exposure to claims.

The Act is one of the biggest overhaul of UK employment law in years, with changes phased through 2026 and 2027. For smaller employers without in-house HR support, early planning can help prepare for the changes, avoid rising admin costs and costly mistakes.

The good news is that there is still time to prepare, strengthen your processes and protect your business.

## What has already changed?

Some important changes are already in force, including:

- Day-one paternity leave and unpaid parental leave, which may affect staff cover from the start of employment.
- Statutory Sick Pay from day one, with no lower earnings threshold, increasing cost and payroll impact for some employers.
- Stronger whistleblowing protection where workers report sexual harassment concerns.
- A new Fair Work Agency focused on enforcing workplace rights, making compliance even more important.

## What is coming next?

- From 1 January 2027, ordinary unfair dismissal protection will apply after six months' service instead of two years, with the compensation cap due to be removed. That raises the importance of strong recruitment, induction, probation and performance processes.
- From October 2026, trade unions will gain rights of physical or digital access to workplaces with more than 21 workers. If your business is growing, it is worth understanding what this could mean for communication, operations and employee relations. Employers with fewer than 21 workers are expected to be exempt.

## What should you be doing now?

- Review contracts, handbooks and key policies making sure they have been recently updated.
- Train managers so they handle absence, probation and employee concerns consistently.
- Tighten recruitment, induction and probation processes to reduce future dismissal risk.
- Keep accurate sickness, holiday and employee records to support compliance.
- Get advice early rather than waiting until an employee issue becomes problematic, disruptive or potentially expensive.

For small business owners, the Employment Rights Act 2025 is not just a legal update. It is a prompt to get your people processes in shape before problems become costly. If you want practical support reviewing your contracts, policies and management approach or training, Olyvetree HR would love to help and support you with a FREE, no obligation chat.

Call: 01202 835963 or 07525 923329  
Email: [yvonne@olyvetree.com](mailto:yvonne@olyvetree.com)  
[www.olyvetree.com](http://www.olyvetree.com)

# Food Fest Local 2026 - 23 & 24 May



## 1st response training

### Accredited training to get professionally qualified

1st Response Training provides a professional yet friendly approach to all of your First Aid, Fire Safety and Mental Health training needs.

-  First Aid Training
-  Fire Safety Training
-  Mental Health First Aid Training
-  Fire Extinguisher Maintenance/Supply
-  Event Cover

**Contact**  
07467149690  
enquiries1stresponse@hotmail.com

