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# la vida liverpool

YOUR GUIDE TO THE BEST ON MERSEYSIDE!

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WELCOME

## A FEW WORDS FROM OUR EDITOR

Hi Guys!

Welcome to the 6th edition of La Vida Liverpool print magazine -- the latest evolution of the positive news concept I created in April 2018. What started as an online magazine has also become a marketing and PR machine, a radio show that's now on Wirral Wave Radio, a print magazine and so much more and it fills me with joy to showcase all the amazing people, businesses, charities and events in our region!



As with the previous print magazines, this 6th edition has taken so much effort and love to produce! Most publications such as this are put together by big teams but with La Vida, it's just myself, my amazing graphic designer Alec Lawley and the printer I use, Joseph, who is a great guy too. It's a big effort indeed and the previous magazine was all the way back in December 2024, but when I see these magazines finally out there and making people happy, it's so incredibly rewarding!

I often work morning until midnight and as I don't charge very much for my marketing and PR services, I am always so busy! That said, it's a duty and a calling and as they say -- do something that you love and you'll never work a day in your life. This is something I instill into students when giving talks at schools, colleges and universities -- it's important to find a role in this world that makes you happy and gives you purpose and we have an opportunity to make the world a better place whatever we choose to do.



I've had some wonderful students on work experience placements with me and it's been a pleasure helping them build a portfolio through La Vida, as well as gaining radio presenting experience. Student journalists Nikita, Tania and Bailey from City Of Liverpool College have produced some great work, meanwhile Summer, Isabelle and George from Upton Convent and Wirral Grammar schools were all an absolute delight to mentor.



Young people of today get a lot of criticism but what I experienced with these students was a breath of fresh air. I think the combination of the education system not teaching children crucial things about being a human being, a lack of focus on love and values and social media all have a lot to answer for. But what I learnt from work experience is that when you get young people engaged in something they're interested in, they really can excel. The students I've worked with were so lovely and that gives me hope for the future.



I always emphasise to students the power of positive media and that as storytellers we have a very important role to play in society -- we can come from a place of love or push fear, anger, hatred and division as the mainstream media mostly does. And that's what La Vida Liverpool is all about. It was an honour to promote and judge the Primal Live charity song contest back in April and congratulations to talented young artists Short Notice and Eaglestone for winning -- once again, fantastic young people!



I've enjoyed some great collaborations these past few months, including podcasts with Ash White from Australia and Linda B from Iceland. It's always nice to collaborate with other local marketing and media outlets and it was great to attend the Prolific North Awards with Justine McLaughlin from Phantom Digital back in May. I also attended the prestigious British Kebab Awards in Westminster with the guys at Casa Rima earlier this year, as Masterchef Kemal Coskuncay scooped another Chef Of The Year Award!

As if I'm not busy enough running this big operation by myself, I'm organizing the inaugural Liverpool Book Festival on 7th September -- a very exciting event indeed! You can read all about this on page 56. I really do put the hours in but I love what I do and do take some time out here and there. I had an epic few days away to Iceland, staying with my dear friends Linda B and Bjorgvin, and have attended three weddings of fantastic couples I know. I also play 9ball pool once a week and enjoy epic bike rides when the opportunity arises.



I guess the key message from all of this is that life is short -- do the things that make you happy, find a purpose, enjoy unforgettable moments with loved ones, celebrate each other and be a good human being. Try your best, enjoy this crazy ride and remember that every day is an opportunity to make the world a better place -- the universe is always watching! Much love and thank you for choosing La Vida and positive news.

Until Next Time x



imagine a world where  
all the mainstream  
media outlets had a  
huge focus on **love,**  
**peace, happiness** and  
**wellbeing.** imagine the  
impact on society. we  
need to ask ourselves  
why they aren't doing  
this.





**FOOD & DRINK**



**la vida liverpool**

**MAGAZINE**

## FOOD & DRINK

# LA VIDA LIVERPOOL'S BEST RESTAURANTS OF 2024!

In this feature we take a look back on 2024 and the best restaurants we featured last year. Our region is full of gems and here at La Vida Liverpool magazine we love to showcase them in all their glory! If you're looking for somewhere new to try check out these incredible eateries! Which of these is your favourite and which would you like to try? In alphabetical order....



### 21st Amendment, Hoylake

Having recently received their 5\* hygiene rating and crowned Winners of Wirral's Best Roast, 21st Amendment is home to superstar chef Darryn Jones. Located in Hoylake on The Quadrant, this cool joint offers Monday Night Club set menus, Express Lunch offers Mon-Fri, a buzzing quiz night on Thursdays, Bottomless Brunch on Saturdays and a wide range of wines, cocktails and beers. And of course the Sunday roasts everyone's been raving about!

**21st Amendment Hoylake / The Quadrant, Hoylake, CH47 2EE**

Visit [21stamendmenthoylake.com](http://21stamendmenthoylake.com) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



### Arthur's, Hoylake

Another Hoylake gem, Arthur's is a neighbourhood wine bar and eatery serving brunch, small plates, pizzas, sharing boards, specials and Sunday roasts to die for! With stylish and quirky decor, Arthur's is one of the must-visit hotspots of Wirral — rapidly gaining

a fantastic reputation for quality food and drink since opening in 2023. Whatever time of day you visit, you're in for a real treat!

**Arthur's / 22-24 Market Street, Hoylake, CH47 2AE / 0151 294 6436**

Visit [www.arthursofhoylake.co.uk](http://www.arthursofhoylake.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



### Casa Rima, Halewood

Having recently won the Business To Consumer Award at the prestigious Knowsley Business Awards, Halewood's Casa Rima is an exceptional Mediterranean restaurant serving pizzas, pastas, steaks, specials and more. With so many 5 star reviews since opening in 2023, Masterchef Kemal Coskuncay, Head Chef Ali Kavlak and the talented team have an array of individual awards between them too. Fine dining without the fine dining prices — prepare to be blown away!

**Casa Rima / 9A Baileys Lane, Halewood, L26 2XB / 0151 245 8599**

Visit the [casarima.co.uk](http://casarima.co.uk) and follow on INSTAGRAM





### Gauchos, Liverpool

Set in an iconic building on Water Street with a 200 seat cover, private dining rooms and live entertainment, the stylish Argentinian steakhouse has cemented itself as one of Liverpool's finest restaurants since opening in 2023. Gauchos presents premium quality steaks and specials alongside signature cocktails in a unique setting and do check out their bottomless Sunday roasts! Divine!

**Gauchos Liverpool / 7 Water Street, Liverpool, L2  
ORD / 0151 702 9000**

Visit [gauchosrestaurants.com/restaurants/liverpool/](https://gauchosrestaurants.com/restaurants/liverpool/) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



### Man Tsuen Ho's, Liverpool

This new 'super restaurant' in Chinatown has been a huge hit since opening in 2023 – accommodating up to 300 people over three floors and private dining available. Open 7 days a week, the restaurant has countless 5 star reviews already and offers thousands of combinations of dishes, unique ones you won't have tried before, an extensive Dim Sum lunch menu and a 'Create Your Own Dish' menu.

**Man Tsuen Ho's Restaurant / 18 Nelson Street,  
China Town, Liverpool, L1 5DN / 0151 708 4900**

Follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



### Malmaison, Liverpool

Malmaison Bar & Grill, located within the Malmaison Hotel at Princes Dock on William Jessop Way, is a slice of dockside paradise! Perfect for romantic dining in the classy restaurant or al fresco dining, cocktails and fun during the summer months, Malmaison Bar & Grill is a stylish fusion grill restaurant that offers a contemporary dining experience with classic and seasonal dishes using the finest produce.

**Malmaison Bar & Grill / Malmaison Hotel, 7  
William Jessop Way, Liverpool L3 1QZ / 0151 363  
3640**

Visit the [malmaison.com/locations/liverpool/](https://malmaison.com/locations/liverpool/) and follow on FACEBOOK



### Mt Everest, Liscard

Wirral's first ever Nepalese restaurant has been a huge success since opening in 2023 – offering Wirral diners mouth-watering authentic Nepalese cuisine alongside Indian classics. Bringing something completely new to the Wirral dining scene, it has been a big hit – with the Nepalese MoMos (dumplings) and Gurkhali Chicken proving particularly popular.

**Mt Everest / 45 Wallasey Road, Liscard, CH45  
4NN / 0151 458 8906**

Visit the [www.mteverestcuisine.co.uk](https://www.mteverestcuisine.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



## New Brighton Bar & Lounge, New Brighton

Situated in the vibrant Victoria Quarter, New Brighton Bar & Lounge is a stylish eatery, bar and live music and sport venue with a hotel upstairs. The new kitchen team have been working wonders, with a new menu featuring small plates, lunch, loaded fries, rice bowls, pizzas, signature and classic mains and incredible Sunday roasts, also available Wednesdays! Great value and great quality and a stylish setting!

**New Brighton Bar & Lounge / 93 Victoria Road, New Brighton, CH45 2JB / 0151 638 3568**

Visit [www.newbrighton-hotel.co.uk](http://www.newbrighton-hotel.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK



## Piri Siri, Moreton

Piri Siri is a quality Moreton restaurant and an amazing success story. Nepalese civil war escapee Jeevan Kandel has amassed almost 1,000 5 Star reviews across all platforms within two years of opening — offering colourful and fun Mexican food from classics such as burritos, tacos and chimichangas to steaks and specials such as lamb chops, swordfish and seabass.

**Piri Siri Mexican restaurant / 223 Hoylake Road, Moreton, Wirral, CH46 0SJ / 0151 678 5899**

Visit [www.pirisirimexican.co.uk](http://www.pirisirimexican.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



## Nickel City, New Brighton

One of the best hangouts in Wirral, Seabank Road's Nickel City is a real gem that people travel for miles to for unique dishes! Nickel City offers NY deli style ciabattas, sandwiches and specials, jacket potatoes, tapas and sharing boards, Best Pizza In Wirral 2024 and top Sunday roasts. Washed down with fine wines and craft beers, whilst enjoying a super cool soundtrack and atmosphere, Nickel City is a must visit!

**Nickel City / 235 Seabank Road, New Brighton, CH45 1HE / 0151 923 9842**

Visit [nickelcitykitchen.org](http://nickelcitykitchen.org) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



## Silk Road Tapas, Heswall

Heswall's incredible Silk Road Tapas has recently had a stunning new look, a mouth-watering new menu and has a whole host of offers throughout the week. Having just celebrated its 7th birthday, the Telegraph Road gem brings you tapas dishes in Para Picar, Meat, Fish, Wok, Salad & Garden, Pizzette & Pasta and Sharing sections — with dishes such as Moo Ping, Pad Thai, Sticky Beef, Beef Shin and Salmon Orzo.

**Silk Road Tapas / 166 Telegraph Road, Heswall, Wirral, CH60 0AH / 0151 345 6463**

Visit [www.silkrd.co.uk](http://www.silkrd.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM





### Smoke & Dough, Liverpool One

Liverpool's bottomless BBQ restaurant, Smoke & Dough, was voted La Vida Liverpool's Best Restaurant Of 2023 and could go close again! The award winning independent has become famous for its sizzling meat platters — with a bottomless meat option for just £22.99. Their bottomless brunch is unreal — a two course meal and unlimited beer, prosecco, cocktails or mocktails for 2 hours — just £29.99 or £34.99 on Saturday!

**Smoke & Dough / Chavasse Park, Liverpool One**

Visit [smokeanddough.co.uk](https://smokeanddough.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



### The Hut, Hoylake

Wirral's first ever Sri Lankan restaurant, The Hut, opened on Market Street in Hoylake in 2023 and has been a huge hit ever since. Serving mouth-watering authentic dishes that locals have been raving about, at The Hut you'll find incredible dishes cooked with fresh herbs and spices shipped over from Sri Lanka. From Deviled Corner and 'Hoppers' to Mutton Curry and 'Beach Combo', you're in for a treat!

**The Hut / 88 Market Street, Hoylake, Wirral, CH47 3BD / 0151 632 0223**

Follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



### The Magazine Hotel, New Brighton

This historic gem on the banks of the Mersey is loved by many for its character, charm and idyllic location. The multi-award winning pub is renowned for great beer but the food has also been getting rave reviews this past year. Dean, Andy and the kitchen team use fresh, local produce to create home-cooked gastro pub classics alongside alternative dishes from around the world such as Bunny Chow and Thai Fried Rice.

**The Magazine Hotel / 7 Magazine Brow, New Brighton, CH45 1HP / 0151 630 3169**

Visit [the-magazine-hotel.co.uk](https://the-magazine-hotel.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK



### The Tapas Kitchen, West Kirby

Having recently celebrated its 7th birthday, this multi award winning and much loved tapas restaurant in West Kirby has consistently ranked high on Trip Advisor and with hundreds of 5 star reviews. The 8 sections of their refined menu include For The Table, Charcuterie, Vegan, Seafood, Inspired, Meat, Arroz Al Horno and Sides — a top quality restaurant located on Banks Road.

**The Tapas Kitchen / 95 Banks Road, West Kirby, Wirral, CH48 0RB / 0151 625 8111**

Visit [thetapaskitchen.co.uk](https://thetapaskitchen.co.uk) and follow on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM



### **Voisin, Heswall**

Located on Telegraph Road in Heswall, next door to sister venue Silk Road, this charming little bistro serves up French classics prepared with a modern twist. Expect dishes such as Croque Monsieur, Moules Mariniere and Steak Frites, expertly crafted by their talented chefs, as well as quality breakfasts, freshly baked croissants pastries, cakes, coffees and incredible Sunday roasts!

**Voisin / 172 Telegraph Road, Heswall, Wirral,  
CH60 0AH / 0151 203 3888**

**Visit [www.voisincafe.co.uk](http://www.voisincafe.co.uk) and follow on  
FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM**



### **Support Your Local Hospitality Businesses!**

It's getting tough out there for hospitality businesses and it's been sad to see some real gems closing. There's never been a more vital time to support our local restaurants, pubs and bars if you are in a position to and there are some incredible places on this list well worth a visit! Which of these is your favourite and which would you like to try? Plenty of 'food for thought' for sure!



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## Discover the New Brighton Hotel Bar and Lounge

[www.newbrighton-hotel.co.uk](http://www.newbrighton-hotel.co.uk)

Looking for the perfect venue for your next gathering? The New Brighton Hotel Bar and Lounge offers an inviting space for all kinds of functions. Whether it's a birthday, anniversary, or corporate event, we've got you covered with tailored food packages to suit your needs.

This summer, indulge in our delicious menu featuring a variety of fresh, seasonal meals that cater to every taste. Don't miss out on our special offer: 3 small plates for just £19.95! Perfect for sharing, or simply treating yourself to a variety of flavours.

With beautifully decorated interiors, our hotel provides a comfortable and stylish setting for your stay. Relax, enjoy great food, and make memories at the New Brighton Hotel Bar and Lounge!



**Call us for  
more info**



**0151 638 3568**

**Book your next event with us today!**



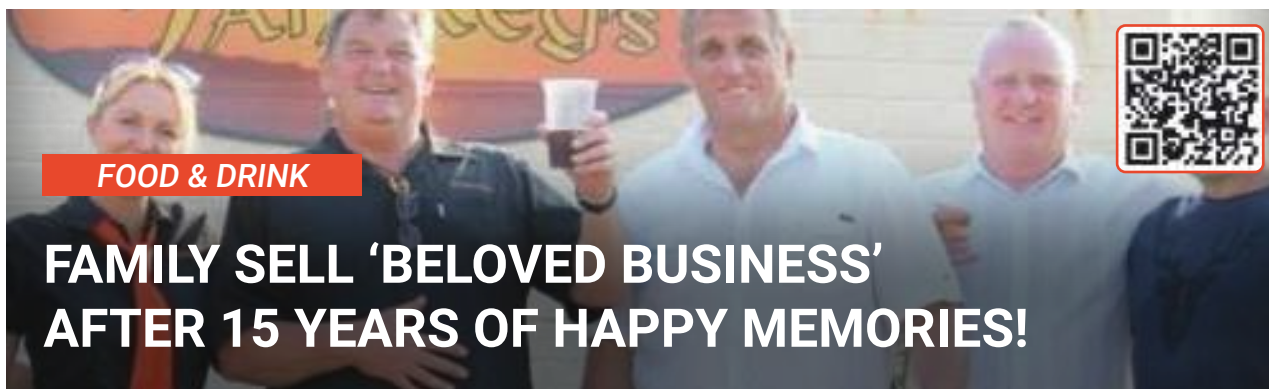
93 Victoria Rd, New Brighton CH45 2JB



[newbrighton-hotel.co.uk](http://newbrighton-hotel.co.uk)



[info@newbrighton-hotel.co.uk](mailto:info@newbrighton-hotel.co.uk)



**FOOD & DRINK**

## FAMILY SELL 'BELOVED BUSINESS' AFTER 15 YEARS OF HAPPY MEMORIES!

A Wirral family have sold their 'beloved business' after 15 years of joy and 'unforgettable memories'. Hannah Cleator and her family have sold popular waterfront bistro, Tanskey's, and are passing the business onto Head Chef, Jonathan Green, and Maureen Hanson, who say it's 'a dream come true' to be taking ownership.

Located on West Kirby promenade with stunning views over to Wales, Tanskey's has become one of Wirral's most popular destinations for breakfast, brunch, lunch, events and private hire. A labour of love for Hannah, her family and dedicated staff, the quaint little bistro has been a big hit in the seaside town since opening in 2010.

Tanskey's has hosted some great events over the years, such as movie nights, wine tasting, themed nights, live music, dinner parties and Sunday jazz afternoons. Meanwhile, over 1000 successful private functions have been hosted, 14 of which have been stunning weddings in an idyllic location on the coast.

Tanskey's has raised tens of thousands of pounds for charities and causes over the years, such as Glow With The Flow charity walk, The Wilson Trophy, RNLI, Children Appeal in Africa, West Kirby Live, Cancer Research and others. Tanskey's has won a number of awards too, such as Wirral Life's Bar Of The Year award.

That said, the business has had to endure a number of adversities over the years. In addition to the cost of living, Brexit, energy price, workplace pensions and Covid challenges, Tanskey's was majorly hit by the marine lake wall construction and parking charges. Then there were the floods in both 2013 and 2024. The business has continued to thrive despite all this but now it's time for a change.

Owner Hannah Cleator and her family have loved their 15 years at the helm of one of Wirral's most beautiful bistros but all good things must come to an end at some point. Having hosted many stunning events at the venue, Hannah is now planning to set up her own business as an events planner for both private and corporate events.

Hannah said: *"It's been an amazing 15 years owning our beloved family business and we've worked so hard to create a special place where unforgettable*

*memories have been made. We wish the staff well with their new management and I would like to take the opportunity to thank every single one of our customers from the bottom of my heart as I wouldn't be here today without every one of them. So thank you and farewell!"*

From July 2025, Tanskey's will be owned by Head Chef Jonathan Green and staff member Maureen Hanson, who say it's 'a dream come true' to be taking on the business they've been working at for years. The dynamic duo have some exciting plans for Tanskey's with a new menu and more to be announced soon, as Hannah Cleator and her family lock the gates of the quaint bistro for the last time this June.



**Tanskey's, South Parade, West Kirby, CH48 0QG / 0151 625 3882**

**Follow Tanskey's on INSTAGRAM**





**FOOD & DRINK**

## LIMITLESS OPEN NEW PROTEIN CAFE ON DALE STREET!

Liverpool's multi-award winning gym, Limitless Lifestyle Community, have opened their new protein cafe on Dale Street — aiming to bring new, healthy, high protein alternatives that taste great. The cafe is open to the general public, not just gym members, and offers a wide range of healthy, high protein food and drinks.



A perfect choice for people looking for healthy options in the city centre, from professionals to gym-goers, The Protein Cafe is open 7 days a week and offers high quality food and drink. The cafe offers protein shakes and smoothies, meal prep, overnight oats, granola yoghurts, high protein Biscoff cheesecakes, healthy drinks, protein bars and snacks, coffee and more.



Healthy meal prep meals are high protein and low calorie and include the likes of Salt & Pepper Chicken, Kentucky Crispy Chicken, Beef Stroganoff and vegan/veggie options such as Sweet Chilli Falafel and Katsu Paneer Curry. Meanwhile, there's a delicious range of protein shakes and smoothies — with hundreds of 'create your own' options.

The Protein Cafe is based at Limitless Lifestyle Community gym, located opposite The Municipal Hotel on Dale Street. The first of its kind gym opened in June 2023 and offers unlimited personal training has won multiple awards, including Best Gym In England at Englands Business Awards. The new cafe cements their status as a leading health and fitness company.



Co-Founder Alex Sloan said: "Our first of its kind gym has gone from strength to strength and we now have over 80 members and 6 full time members of staff. The new cafe is our great new addition — not just for our members, for anyone in the city looking for healthy, nutritious and high protein food and drink."

Co-Founder Levi Osborne said: "There's a distinct lack of healthy options in the city, especially for people who are active and want high protein and low calorie food and drink to complement their fitness routines. There are some great gyms and restaurants out there but few with the wide range of dedicated healthy options that we have at The Protein Cafe. We feel we're filling a gap and it's needed."



The Protein Cafe is open 7 days a week and offers a wide range of healthy, high protein food and drinks — including protein shakes and smoothies, meal prep, overnight oats, granola yoghurts, high protein Biscoff cheesecakes, healthy drinks, protein bars and snacks, coffee and more.

**Limitless Lifestyle Community / The Protein Cafe  
/ 89 Dale Street, Liverpool, L2 2JD**

**Check out the Limitless Lifestyle Community  
WEBSITE at [limitlesslifestylecommunity.com](https://limitlesslifestylecommunity.com)**

**Check out Limitless Lifestyle Community on  
FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM**

FOOD & DRINK

## WHY I LEFT DUBAI FOR A LIVERPOOL MEAL PREP COMPANY!

A 25-year-old has left the high life in Dubai for a Liverpool meal prep company. Laura Davies, from New Brighton, was a high flying Cabin Crew member of Emirates Airlines but has now returned home to run Benno Box — Liverpool's leading healthy meal company.



Founded in 2020, Benno Box offers delicious high protein meals, oats pots and snacks and during the past 5 years the company has supplied over 2,000 customers with over 100,000 healthy meals. Despite the company's great success, Founder Andrew Kelly, known as Liverpool's 'Ultra Marathon Man', has decided to relocate to the U.S to pursue his running career.



With Andrew looking for someone passionate to take on the business, Laura Davies stepped forward and returned home. Whilst living in Dubai gave her a life of luxury, she missed home and Benno Box was the perfect opportunity to fulfil her dream of working in nutrition.



The bold move is already paying off — with Benno Box providing more meals than ever! Whilst the company delivers throughout Merseyside, order have started to come in from further afield, as far away as London. Meanwhile, Benno Box remains the premier choice for athletes and busy people who want a healthy diet.



Laura said: "I moved to Dubai in March 2022 and what an experience it was! I got to live in one of the most dynamic and dazzling cities in the world — a place where the skyline looks like something out of a sci-fi movie and every day feels like an adventure. Leaving was tough but sometimes life pulls you in different directions. I missed family, friends and the deep rooted connections you can only find in the place you grew up. "

She continued: "Working for Emirates and travelling the world completely changed my outlook on food. Experiencing different cultures opened my eyes to flavours and ingredients I'd never tried before. I went from choosing convenience food to learning how to cook with fresh, wholesome ingredients, especially vegetables. That's why finding Benno Box was such a game changer for me and now I'm all about making nutrition easy and enjoyable for others."





Since moving back home and taking over Benno Box, business has been booming and Laura has 'found her calling in life'. With hundreds of delicious meals such as noodles, pastas, steaks, meatballs, curries and more, as well as lots of breakfast, oats and snacks, food is flying out the kitchen and 5 star reviews are coming in just as fast.



Laura summarised: *"Coming back home was a culture shock at first – readjusting to UK life was tricky as Dubai and Liverpool are worlds apart! It's been so good to re-connect with family and friends though and helping people live health lives through Benno Box is like finding my calling in life! Knowing that I'm helping people be the best version of themselves through a nutritious diet makes me so happy!"*



A 25-year-old has left the high life in Dubai for a Liverpool meal prep company. Laura Davies, from New Brighton, was a high flying Cabin Crew member of Emirates Airlines but has now returned home to run Benno Box – Liverpool's leading healthy meal company.

**VISIT THE WEBSITE AT [BENNOBOX.CO.UK](http://BENNOBOX.CO.UK)**

**Follow Benno Box on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM**

**To enquire about stocking and supplying Benno Box email [info@bennobox.co.uk](mailto:info@bennobox.co.uk)**



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## FOOD & DRINK

# THE HISTORIC WIRRAL PUB WHERE THE FOOD IS 'BEST ITS EVER BEEN'



Wirral's historic pub, The Magazine Hotel, is celebrating culinary success — with owners Steve and Mary saying their food is 'the best its ever been'. The iconic multi-award winning pub, located in New Brighton on the banks of the Mersey, has been getting rave reviews since chefs Dean Griffiths and Andy Pilling came on board.



The Magazine Hotel, built in 1759 and steeped in history, is loved by many for its character, charm and dream location on Magazine Brow looking out to the Mersey — with a cracking beer garden to the rear. Many awards have been won, such as CAMRA's Wirral Pub Of The Year, Wirral Community Pub Of The Year and a feature in The Good Beer Guide, but it's the food that's got people talking the most recently.



Having just received a 5 star food hygiene rating, The Magazine Hotel has become one of the best destinations in Wirral to enjoy quality food in a charming setting. Dean, Andy and the kitchen team use fresh, local produce to create home-cooked gastro pub classics alongside alternative dishes from around the world such as Bunny Chow and Thai Fried Rice.



The new summer menu has been going down a storm, with small plates and colourful dishes perfect for al fresco dining in the sun. The burgers have been flying out as have the Sunday Roasts — excellent value at £12.99, two courses for £16.99 or three courses for £19.99.



As such, 'The Mags' is a very popular choice for both summer promenade walkers wanting to dine in the sun and those seeking a cosy traditional pub dining experience. Landlord Stephen Brady, who has recently celebrated 25 years at the pub, said: "Dean and Andy really have been a revelation and we've literally doubled the takings on food since they came on board at the back end of 2023. Mary and I are grateful to the whole team for the work they put in to maintain our reputation as an iconic pub and raise our standards even higher."







Stephen continued: *"The food here has never been better and whilst we remain a traditional pub, we've moved with the times with some improved furnishings and necessary maintenance and repairs to the outside of the building. It's been a great summer here so far, with a bar and grill in the beer garden and the big beer festival in July, whilst we have great live music every Friday and Saturday night."*



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The Magazine Hotel / 7 Magazine Brow, New Brighton, CH45 1HP / 0151 630 3169

TO BOOK A TABLE CALL 0151 630 3169

Check out [www.the-magazine-hotel.co.uk](http://www.the-magazine-hotel.co.uk)

Check out The Magazine Hotel on FACEBOOK



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**FOOD & DRINK**

## HISTORIC WIRRAL VENUE SAVED BY GROUP OF FRIENDS!

A group of friends have saved a historic Wirral building from ruin, investing around £800,000 and transforming it into a stunning gastropub and events venue. Panayiotis and Elisha Miltiades, Holly Davis, Sam Hull and the team want Eastham Ferry Hotel to bring people the same kind of 'happiness and memories' they have enjoyed there over the years.



Located on Ferry Road in Eastham Country Park and with captivating views over the River Mersey, Eastham Ferry Hotel is steeped in history. Built in the early 19th century by Sir William Massey Stanley, a prominent local figure, the hotel has long been a destination for travellers and locals alike, offering a warm respite with views of the river. Sadly, the building became dilapidated since closing in 2022.



Today, thanks to an extensive refurbishment, Sir William Massey Stanley's great work has been saved by a group of local friends. Panayiotis, Elisha, Holly, Sam and the team have put their heart and soul into the Grade II Listed building to create one of the most vibrant and grand dining and events venues in the region — with superb quality gastropub food 7 days a week and exciting events.



The new-look Eastham Ferry Hotel has already received its 5 Star Food Safety rating and serves hearty breakfasts and quality lunch and dinner — as well as incredible Sunday roasts. There are regular events such as Greek Night and Monday Night Quiz, whilst there are huge free community events and 'GlastonFerry' returning on August Bank Holiday Weekend. The venue is also available for private dining and private hire.



Panny said: "Eastham Ferry Hotel has a special place in my heart, as I used to share special times here with my wife and children for many years. It has made me sad to see such a wonderful building, with so much history and memories, just left to ruin. A few of us began to think about restoring it and bringing back these kind of memories for people."







Holly added: *"It's been a huge project but a labour of love. It was in a really poor condition with damp, ceilings coming down and all sorts. We're all so proud and when we see people enjoying our food, drinks and events after such a big refurbishment. People have been travelling from far and wide since we opened and we've been having an amazing summer in our newly landscaped garden"*



Now restored to its former glory, Eastham Ferry Hotel is a timeless and elegant gastropub where elevated British cuisine can be enjoyed at affordable prices. Expect classic British fare, afternoon tea, Sunday roasts, fine wines, local craft beers and cocktails. Meanwhile, The Stanley Suite is available to hire for private dining and events and the venue is dog friendly – ideal for Eastham Country Park dog walkers.



Holly summarised: *"A lot of thought and love has gone into restoring this iconic and historic building, but of course it's much more than just bricks and mortar. It's a place where so many memories have been made for so many people over the years. We have a great team here and we're all determined to keep this magic going for many years to come."*

A group of friends have saved a historic Wirral building from ruin, investing around £800,000 and transforming it into a stunning gastropub and events venue. Panayiotis Miltiades, Holly Davis, Sam Hull and the team want Eastham Ferry Hotel to bring people the same kind of 'happiness and memories' they have enjoyed there over the years.

**Eastham Ferry Hotel / Ferry Road, Eastham,  
Wirral, CH62 0UA / 0151 309 4942**

**TO BOOK A TABLE CALL 0151 309 4942 OR  
VISIT [WWW.EASTHAMFERRY.CO.UK](http://WWW.EASTHAMFERRY.CO.UK)**

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FOOD & DRINK

## ADOPTED SCouser CESAR OPENS LITHERLAND BISTRO!

A 63-year-old 'adopted Scouser' from Honduras has opened a gorgeous little bistro in Litherland and locals are loving it! Cesar Augusto Moya Mejia has become a local legend since moving to Liverpool in 1987 and his new venture, Cesar's Bistro on Linacre Road, has been getting rave reviews from his loyal following



Located on the corner of Inman Road, Cesar's Bistro offers classic English breakfasts, omelettes, lasagna, salads, lunches, steaks, specials, Sunday roasts and desserts with a unique South American twist. Having previously worked at restaurants across the city and recently based at The Rydal gym until it sadly closed, old customers and gym-goers have followed him to his new bistro.



Referred to as a 'wizard' and 'magician' by boxers and athletes at The Rydal gym, such is the quality of his food many of them now eat at his bistro daily. His culinary creations are simple yet high in protein and have his own unique spices and twists — as one diner recently said: "Cesar can make a piece of toast taste full of flavour!"



Cesar's journey to opening his own bistro hasn't been easy, however. Brought up in poverty in Honduras with no father, he helped his mother cook for his family from an early age until he was selected to work on Italian cruise ships around the world, where he gained his catering qualifications. He came to Liverpool in 1987 after meeting his Scouse wife-to-be on the ship and has 'grafted hard ever since'.



Cesar explained: "Ever since coming to Liverpool, I've grafted. I've worked at many restaurants across the city, the Adelphi Hotel and then later as a builder. A couple of years ago I had a heart attack, so when I went to look at a job at The Rydal gym I saw the potential to go back to catering and open up a little cafe in there. Everyone from the gym loved my food but sadly the gym closed last December."

He continued: "I was going to retire but someone from the gym said I could have their property off Linacre Road and encouraged me to open up here. I'm so glad that I did now, as many people from the gym have been loyal and followed me here for my food. Some come here every day. I work long hours here but I love it and there's a great sense of community. We have some amazing conversations in here."





Cesar's Bistro is open from Tuesday through until Sunday, from 8am and often into the evening. Whilst he works long hours there, his second wife Rebecca and his children are relieved that he gave up being a builder following his heart attack and decided to go back to the place he's happiest – in the kitchen cooking for people.



Cesar summarised: *"Cooking for the people of Liverpool is something that brings me lots of happiness and I put love into every single dish. I have become an adopted Scouser since arriving here almost 40 years ago and it's funny – some call me Cesar and some call me Moya, depending on what part of Liverpool they know me from. It feels great to have my own little bistro – it's basically a place where I cook for my friends."*



A 63-year-old 'adopted Scouser' from Honduras has opened a gorgeous little bistro in Litherland and locals are loving it! Cesar Augusto Moya Mejia has become a local legend since moving to Liverpool in 1987 and his new venture, Cesar's Bistro on Linacre Road, has been getting rave reviews from his loyal following.

**Cesar's Bistro / 49A Linacre Road, Litherland, Liverpool, L21 8NW / 07594 727 291**

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FOOD & DRINK

## AUTHENTIC NEW ORLEANS KITCHEN OPENS IN CITY CENTRE!



Two American friends have opened an authentic New Orleans kitchen in Liverpool city centre, after falling in love with the city. Reggie Pulliam and Adam Williams are bringing a taste of the Deep South to Liverpool with SuSu's New Orleans Kitchen, based at Molly Malone's on Victoria Street.



SuSu's New Orleans Kitchen has opened on Monday 9th June and offers Scousers some truly unique and flavoursome Deep South dishes — some of which will be a first in Liverpool. At SuSu's, you can expect mouthwatering delights such as Shrimp Bread, Gumbo, Jambalaya, PoBoys, Baked Oysters and more. The pair have been treating locals to samples prior to opening and the feedback has been unreal!



So, why have two Americans left the Deep South to open a food venture in Liverpool? The story starts when Reggie became a big Everton fan due to American players such as Joe-Max Moore, Tim Howard and Landon Donovan playing for the club. As CEO of an insurance firm, he'd visit London and every time he was there he'd fly up to Goodison to watch a match.



As many people do, Reggie soon fell in love with the city and its charm so when he sold the insurance firm, he and his wife Cassie would visit frequently — staying at The Titanic Hotel and going to Everton matches. What followed was a strange sequence of co-incidences that made the move to Liverpool something they just had to do.



Reggie explained: "I've been crazy about Everton ever since Joe-Max Moore played for them back in the 90s. I attended his football camp in my native Alabama from that point on I was hooked. When I sold the insurance company, my wife and I would visit Liverpool regularly to go to the matches and then lots of things started happening that made us absolutely fall in love with the city and decide to open SuSu's."





He continued: "Firstly, Davey the concierge at The Titanic arranged for us to meet all the Everton players. Then an official Everton photographer snapped a photo of me that went viral. We had discussed the idea of opening a restaurant here and shortly after that met a couple who said they could help us and also a bartender who knew everything about Deep South cuisine. When my wife met a taxi driver from Liverpool in Florida, the universe had told us enough."



Reggie named the concept after his mother and brought his good friend Adam Williams on board who has extensive hospitality experience. He, in turn, fell in love with Liverpool. Adam, however, has decided to become a Liverpool fan 'just to p\*ss Reggie off'. Much like the way Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney have done huge things at Wrexham FC, Reggie and Adam are aiming to make waves in Liverpool's culinary scene.



Adam explained: "At first I thought Reggie and Cassie were crazy wanting to open a New Orleans kitchen in Liverpool, but after visiting the city a few times I totally understood why they fell in love with the place. Scousers are amazing and people are so friendly here. Prior to opening we've been giving locals free samples of our dishes and the feedback has been amazing so we're really excited to be open!"



Adam continued: "We have big plans for SuSu's New Orleans Kitchen but it's not just about bringing incredible, unique dishes to Liverpool. We're using local suppliers for our ingredients and we're also a Living Wage restaurant so we'll be offering our team a profit share scheme — I believe we may be the first hospitality business in Liverpool to do this. We're all about ethics and supporting the local people and economy."



SuSu's New Orleans Kitchen has opened at Molly Malone's on Victoria Street in Liverpool from Monday 9th June and will be open 7 days a week for dine in or takeaway orders. The new kitchen will serve unique Deep South dishes such as Shrimp Bread, Gumbo, Jambalaya, PoBoys and Baked Oysters — some of which will be firsts in the city.

**SuSu's New Orleans Kitchen / Molly Malone's,  
25-27 Victoria Street, Liverpool, L2 6QE /  
07538914256**

**For more info and the menu visit  
[sususuneworleanskitchen.com](http://sususuneworleanskitchen.com)**

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# MUSIC & NIGHTLIFE

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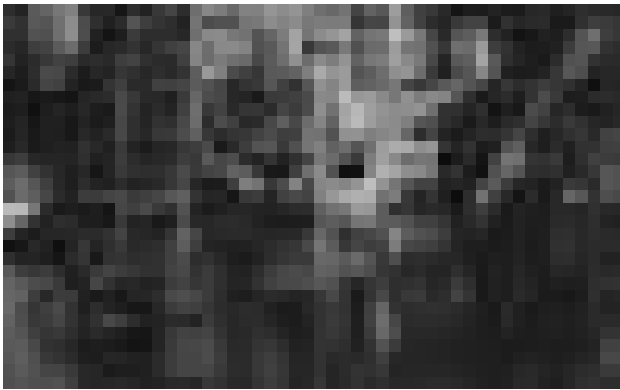


MUSIC & NIGHTLIFE

## THE BOO RADLEYS: CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF WAKE UP!



In this feature we bring you a little exclusive Q&A with 90s legends The Boo Radleys, who are celebrating 30 years of their No.1 album Wake Up, including the massive hit single Wake Up Boo! We talk to frontman Simon Rowbottom aka Sice about starting out in Wallasey and becoming Indie legends....



**LVL:** So, 30 years of that amazing album Wake Up! What do you have planned for it?

**SICE:** We've got a fair few gigs throughout the year. We're a little restricted as our bass player Tim is a teacher but we're packing a lot in. We've had gigs in Manchester, London and Glasgow and we had our 30th Anniversary gig at Rough Trade in Liverpool on 30th March where we played the whole Wake Up album at a gig for the first time. We've got festivals throughout the summer too, so it's a great year for sure.



**LVL:** How did it feel to be playing back in your home city?

**SICE:** It's always amazing coming back. Like a lot of people, we moved away from Liverpool and found ourselves in London. We get to see a lot of our family and old friends when we return so it's always a bit of a celebration coming home. It's always quite nostalgic too, as we used to play so many gigs in Liverpool when we were starting out.

**LVL:** How did you guys form back in the day?

**SICE:** We all grew up in Wallasey and New Brighton and all went to school together. We started playing together and doing local gigs at the likes of The Krazyhouse, Planet X and Yesterdays and things just naturally picked up. We started getting some London gigs and ended up getting dragged into the whole Britpop movement. It was such a wonderful way to spend our 20s and it was a bit of a whirlwind.

**LVL:** How did Wake Up Boo and the Wake Up album change your lives?

**SICE:** It changes your life enormously. The travel around to places such as the U.S and Japan and your lifestyle and job role completely changes. You can expect it to last forever but for most people it comes down and it's all about preparing for that. But the whole thing was incredible and changed all our lives.





**LVL:** Any moments that stand out for you in particular?

**SICE:** *So many! Playing Glastonbury twice was amazing, playing such a large scale event! On the Holapalooza tour in the U.S we played some incredible venues such as The Gorge in Washington State which was based in a huge gorge like The Grand Canyon. Playing those kind of venues and getting to see the likes of Nick Cave, The Beastie Boys and Nirvana close up.*

**LVL:** Are there any times where you've been a bit star struck or had a 'pinch me' moment?

**SICE:** *Yeah loads of times! Being on Top Of The Pops with Stevie Wonder, hanging out with Radiohead and Oasis and people like that who are global stars. Just great memories to have and we're very grateful.*



**LVL:** What are you doing outside of The Boo Radleys?

**SICE:** *I'm a psychologist with my own private practise, helping people with their mental health. I'm also involved heavily in the Music Industry Therapist Collective — a project that offers mental health support to people in the music industry, led my psychologists who have been in the music industry before.*

*The downside about all the wonderful stuff I was saying is that the industry can be very exhausting and it can have a really effect on mental health. You can see the effects of the industry on artists such as burnout, alcohol and drugs and suicides.*

*So I spend time working for people in the industry, we go on tour providing support, run workshops and have therapists from around the world to help people in the industry. We're trying to change the culture and give people in the industry better education and support. I absolutely love being a psychologist and have found my calling outside music.*

**Follow The Boo Radleys on FACEBOOK and INSTAGRAM**



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# STANLEY'S CASK

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Friday 1st – Amazing Kappa Band (9:30pm)  
Saturday 2nd – Free Spirit (9:30pm)  
Sunday 3rd – The Connection (6:30pm)  
Friday 8th – Jonny and the Radars (9:30pm)  
Saturday 9th – Stranglehold (9:30pm)  
Sunday 10th – Mule Train (6:30pm)  
Friday 15th – No Music Due to Football  
Saturday 16th – The Species (9:30pm)  
Sunday 17th – The Swillers (6:30pm)  
Friday 22nd – Old School (9:30pm)  
Saturday 23rd – Collider (9:30pm)  
Sunday 24th – Blind Horse (6:30pm)  
Friday 29th – Los Amigos (9:30pm)  
Saturday 30th – The Klubbs (9:30pm)  
Sunday 31st – Dr Strangelove (6:30pm)

## SEPTEMBER

Friday 5th – The Nowhere Men (9:30pm)  
Saturday 6th – The Vinyls (9:30pm)  
Sunday 7th – TBC (6:30pm)  
Friday 12th – The Band-Its (9:30pm)  
Saturday 13th – The Hurricane Blues Band (9:30pm)  
Sunday 14th – TBC (6:30pm)  
Friday 19th – Acme Soul Co (9:30pm)  
Saturday 20th – The Bite (9:30pm)  
Sunday 21st – Mule Train (6:30pm)  
Friday 26th – The Loving Cup (9:30pm)  
Saturday 27th – TBC (9:30pm)  
Sunday 28th – The Undertakers (6:30pm)

## OCTOBER

Friday 3rd – TBC (9:30pm)  
Saturday 4th – Jon Casey Blues (9:30pm)  
Sunday 5th – The Oil Chickens (6:30pm)  
Friday 10th – Amazing Kappa Band (9:30pm)  
Saturday 11th – Lovable Rogues (9:30pm)  
Sunday 12th – Blind Horse (6:30pm)  
Friday 17th – Stranglehold (9:30pm)  
Saturday 18th – Shaky Ground (9:30pm)  
Sunday 19th – Mule Train (6:30pm)  
Friday 24th – Red Rock (9:30pm)  
Saturday 25th – Old School (9:30pm)  
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Friday 31st – The Mysterons (9:30pm)

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**FRI 8th AUGUST**  
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**FRI 22nd AUGUST**  
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**FRI 29th AUGUST**  
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FRIDAY 1st AUGUST  
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(CLASSIC ROCK)

SATURDAY 2nd AUGUST  
**GRUNGE HEAVEN**  
(SEATTLE EXPERIENCE)

SUNDAY 3rd AUGUST  
**RIVER CITY CARTEL**  
(BLUES)

FRIDAY 8th AUGUST  
**THE BAND-ITS**  
(PUNK & NEW WAVE)

SATURDAY 9th AUGUST  
**DR. STRANGELOVE**  
(ALL OUT ROCK)

SUNDAY 10th AUGUST  
**BCG PROJECT**  
(CLASSIC ROCK)

FRIDAY 15th AUGUST  
**MARAUDER**  
(ROCK & METAL)

SATURDAY 16th AUGUST  
**WILD AFFAIR**  
(CLASSIC ROCK)

SUNDAY 17th AUGUST  
**BIRKENHEAD VAMPIRES**  
(THE SWINGING ARM SUPER GROUP)

FRIDAY 22nd AUGUST  
**GARY MOORE**  
(TRIBUTE BY JAMIE CLAGUE)

SATURDAY 23rd AUGUST  
**AC/DC**  
(TRIBUTE BY POWERAGE UK)

SUNDAY 24th AUGUST  
**BETO BOB**  
(ORIGINALS & INSPIRED COVERS)

## SEPTEMBER

FRIDAY 29th AUGUST  
**BLACK SABBATH**  
(TRIBUTE BY PRINCESS OF DARKNESS)

SATURDAY 30th AUGUST  
**THE BITE**  
(ROCK & METAL)

SUNDAY 31st AUGUST  
**S.A.S BLUES**  
(BLUES)

FRIDAY 5th SEPTEMBER  
**BLACK VELVET**  
(FEMALE FRONTED SOUTHERN/CLASSIC)

SATURDAY 6th SEPTEMBER  
**RUSH**  
(TRIBUTE BY RUSHED)

SUNDAY 7th SEPTEMBER  
**PUNK AFTERNOON**  
(TBC / RITEBACK / TBC)

FRIDAY 12th SEPTEMBER  
**CHERRY BOMB**  
(CLASSIC ROCK)

SATURDAY 13th SEPTEMBER  
**PANT - TEARER**  
(GRUNGE & METAL)

SUNDAY 14th SEPTEMBER  
**THE LOVING CUP**  
(SOUTHERN ROCK)

FRIDAY 19th SEPTEMBER  
**DR. STRANGELOVE**  
(ALL OUT ROCK)

SATURDAY 20th SEPTEMBER  
**THE SWILLERS**  
(CLASSIC ROCK)

SUNDAY 21st SEPTEMBER  
**THE POLICE**  
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## What's On Guide

★ ★ ★ the ultimate ★ ★ ★  
**MOTOWN**  
★ ★ ★ SHOW ★ ★ ★  
LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Ultimate Soul & Motown Show - Cherelle  
plus the Outstanding Ste Devine

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 30th August 2025

Joe Wall  
INCREDIBLE TRIBUTE  
PHIL COLLINS

Incredible Tribute to Phil Collins & Genesis -  
by Joe Wall

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 13th September 2025

★ ★ ★ the ultimate ★ ★ ★  
**MOTOWN**  
★ ★ ★ SHOW ★ ★ ★  
LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Ultimate Soul & Motown Show - Ebie Isaacs  
plus the Sensational Sasha Soul

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 27th September 2025

THE BEST LIVE COMEDY  
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**Stephanie Aird**

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audience and book  
your tickets TODAY.  
Saddy over 18s only

STEPHANIE AIRDS LOLs - LIVE TOUR 2025

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Friday, 3rd October 2025

**DEFINITELY**  
Dolly

Definitely Dolly - Sensational Dolly Parton  
Tribute

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 11th October 2025

★ ★ ★ the ultimate ★ ★ ★  
**MOTOWN**  
★ ★ ★ SHOW ★ ★ ★  
LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Ultimate Soul & Motown Show - Lascel plus  
the Outstanding Soul Diva Keri Whip

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 25th October 2025

INCREDIBLE  
**GEORGE  
MICHAEL**

Incredible George Michael Tribute - Randall  
Butler

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 8th November 2025

INCREDIBLE  
**FREDDIE  
MERCURY  
& QUEEN  
TRIBUTE**  
By Joey Linden

Incredible Freddie Mercury & Queen Tribute  
- by Joey Linden

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 22nd November 2025

★ ★ ★ the ultimate ★ ★ ★  
**MOTOWN**  
★ ★ ★ SHOW ★ ★ ★  
LAST SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH

Ultimate Christmas Soul & Motown Show -  
Matt Phillips plus the Outstanding Nick  
James

@ Liverpool Naval Club

📅 Saturday, 29th November 2025



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# WHAT'S ON MERSEYSIDE

- 07/08/25 **TOBY LEE**  
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- 05/09/25 **A GUY CALLED GERALD X THE JUNGLE DRUMMER** 30 YEARS OF BLACK SECRET TECHNOLOGY LIVE
- 12/09/25 **JENNY COLQUITT WITH FULL BAND**  
WITH SUPPORT FROM VISIONS OF ALBION
- 13/09/25 **ANIKA NILLES & NEVELL**  
DRUMMING MASTERCLASS & GIG
- 21/09/25 **DIRECT INPUT - VOLUME TWO**  
MUSIC FROM PLAYMATE, VEVE, THE CHERRY WAVES, PETRICHOR
- 27/09/25 **ERICA HARWOOD**  
ALBUM LAUNCH WITH SUPPORT FROM LAURA CARR AND HELEN DELAMERE
- 03/10/25 **THE LUNAR PULL**  
OFFICIAL ALBUM LAUNCH SHOW WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MEMORY CLUB
- 09/10/25 **BLUES & COUNTRY DOUBLE HEADLINER**  
LIZ JONES & BROKEN WINDOWS WITH LEANNE BRUMFITT AND HER FULL BAND
- 10/10/25 **XANDER & THE PEACE PIRATES WITH FULL BAND** WITH SUPPORT FROM LIZ OWEN + AMY ANTROBUS
- 17/10/25 **MARK KERMODE PRESENTS GANG OF THREE**  
WITH THE DOSE AND GRENADES AS SUPPORT
- 18/10/25 **NICOLA HARDMAN**  
EP RELEASE SHOW WITH SUPPORT FROM IGLOO HEARTS
- 21/03/26 **NAVIGATION FESTIVAL**  
ALL DAY ALTERNATIVE ARTS FESTIVAL  
MUSIC STAGE: MERYL STREEK, BRUISE CONTROL, PAPER HATS, GROOL AND CHINAROSE  
POETRY STAGE: JOAN COOPER SNARK, GUERILLA LIPS, TS IDIOT AND MORE
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A promotional poster for Craig David's TS5 event. The background features a large, historic stone building with multiple gables and windows, identified as Walton Hall. In the foreground, a man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a black jacket, looks down. The text 'CRAIG DAVID' is in large white letters, with 'PRESENTS' in smaller white letters below it. A large white box contains the text 'TS5' in large white letters. Below this, a blue banner contains the date 'FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2025' and the location 'WALTON HALL & GARDENS' in white letters. At the bottom, 'WARRINGTON • CHESHIRE' is written in white. There are several pink, metallic-looking spheres and a pink bowl-like shape scattered around the central text. Logos for 'WaltonLive', 'New Vision', and 'XTRA' are at the bottom, along with a QR code in the bottom right corner.

**CRAIG DAVID**  
PRESENTS

**TS5**

**FRIDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2025**  
**WALTON HALL & GARDENS**

WARRINGTON • CHESHIRE

  
WaltonLive

New Vision

  
XTRA  
LIVIN' YOURS







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ARTISTS IN THE REGION!

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WINS EACH HEAT AND MAKES  
THE FINAL!

A CHANCE TO WIN PRIZES AND  
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[WWW.PRIMALLIVE.CO.UK](http://WWW.PRIMALLIVE.CO.UK)





# POSITIVITY CLUB CIC

## POSITIVITY CLUB

### AGES 3-11 YEARS

Positivity Club is a super special club like no other, where we focus on all things mental health and wellbeing in a FUN way! Themes include resilience, kindness, self love, anger, worries, gratitude and lots more.

**SAINTS CATHERINES & MARTINA RC CHURCH, HOYLAKES SATURDAYS 10-1130 AM**



Positivity Club CIC  
PositivityClubCIC  
jess@positivityclubcic.co.uk



11 SESSIONS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

## TIME FOR TEENS

### AGES 10-16 YEARS

Time for Teens is a small youth group with a mental health and wellbeing theme. Time for Teens provides a safe place to chill and chat for teens who are having difficulty with their mental health, socialising and friendships. We have themed sessions and activities around the members' interests such as baking, board games, crafts, quizzes and group games. We also organise trips and guest speaker visits.

**ST LUKES' METHODIST CHURCH, HOYLAKES FORTNIGHTLY THURSDAYS 7-8.30PM**

Positivity Club CIC  
positivityclubcic  
jess@positivityclubcic.co.uk



## TIME FOR TEA

### AGES 18+ YEARS

Time for Tea is a welcoming mental health support group where people can come and talk in a safe place filled with love and kindness.

**WEEKLY WEDNESDAYS 6.30-9PM, LATERAL CAFE, WEST KIRBY**



Time for Tea Mental Health Support Group  
timeforteasupportgroup



the mainstream media  
will have you believe  
that people and  
society are 90% bad.  
we have problems  
but this is not the  
case. most people are  
mostly **good** and this  
needs more coverage.





# ARTS & CULTURE



**la vida liverpool**  
MAGAZINE



Welcome to La Vida Liverpool's art gallery, where we showcase some of the incredible art from our region's finest artists! From abstract and modern to watercolour and canvass, we bring you ingenious creations from local artists every quarter.

**MELISSA GOFF**

[www.instagram.com/melissagoff\\_artist](https://www.instagram.com/melissagoff_artist)



*To submit your art for future editions please email [lavidaliverpool@gmail.com](mailto:lavidaliverpool@gmail.com)*



ARTS & CULTURE



## PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE QUARTER

In this section we showcase some of the wonderful photographs from local photographers. The Liverpool region is a photographer's paradise -- from urban and industrial backdrops to stunning coastal settings. Our area inspires many local photographers and in turn they inspire us with their captivating captures. So sit back, relax and enjoy this season's selected photographs....

**NATHAN FAIRBROTHER**

[www.instagram.com/nf93\\_photography/](https://www.instagram.com/nf93_photography/)



*To submit your photographs for future editions please email [lavidaliverpool@gmail.com](mailto:lavidaliverpool@gmail.com)*

## POETS' CORNER

The Liverpool region isn't short of wordsmiths and in this section we bring you a poem from one of our region's greatest wordsmiths. From the poignant and profound to the silly and surreal, here you'll find poetry at its finest...

### WAR

*I do not want your kiss you are too close!  
I can feel your chilling breath, and I can taste your bitter scent.  
The stillness of your voice, that recalls the sound of death, you belong in far off fields, in Former days and distant lands.  
Do not make me see your eyes, or touch your fragile hands.  
So safe for me to glance at poppy fields, and ordered rows of white and chiselled stones, markers of the fallen and the lost, fixed so firm and fast, that stand in mournful regiments, on trimmed and even grass, but you?  
Move your countenance from me, and stand more distant, more alone,  
for your beauty is as piercing as splintered wood, Or shattered glass.*

*How can I not see?  
You are the whimpering of a child  
clinging to the darkness of a bombed out room  
you are flinching at the tapping rain, beneath the cold and heartless moon, you are the raped, the beaten, the tortured, the woman who longs for stillness and rest  
from the soldier's reckless rage,  
where men, no longer men, now are so much less,  
as they quell the song of innocence,  
and break the heart within your shattered breast.  
Do not hold on to me so fast, or breathe your disquieting words, for in your voice I hear the grief  
beneath the sirens and the blasts,  
the tears you stem,  
so deep,  
there is the fear that you may drown.  
My sight is now lowered to ground,  
for that dark and cavernous space behind your eyes,  
is filled with echoes of your silent prayers,  
my fortress heart cannot perceive,  
I do not want your kiss  
You are too close to me*

ERIC THE BIRKENHEAD PRIEST

To submit a poem email [lavidaliverpool@gmail.com](mailto:lavidaliverpool@gmail.com)



## GED SAID



Ged Thompson is a one-man literary force, a world-renowned performance poet, storyteller, author, and a true bard of the oral tradition. His titles including 'Middle Earth Magic' & 'Diaries of A Man Who Believes in Angels' have touched the hearts and minds of readers around the globe, daring them to hope, to love, and to be kind – wherever and whenever they can.



## STAN &amp; MARY

*I love people's stories, and I heard one the other day I just had to put down in writing. I'm a great believer that there are stories everywhere if you have eyes to see and ears to listen. This one came second hand to me from someone who has those eyes and ears. I do some work in a nursing home and one of the girls who works there watches this story unfold every day...*

*Stan and Mary have been married for over fifty years, and now in the twilight of their lives they both have quite severe dementia. So much so that one does not know who the other is, and vice versa. Unable to care for themselves, they have both ended up in separate rooms in the same residential nursing home. Of a morning, Stan wakes around eight o'clock; he becomes restless, paces the floor, and is a little aggressive at times. It is as though something is troubling him, but he can't quite figure out what it is. He goes down to breakfast. Mary wakes a little later and comes for breakfast at around ten o'clock every day. When she enters the room, Stan's eyes light up; he goes from anxious to infatuated with this lady he thinks he has never set eyes on before, this lady that Stan thinks only just walked into his life that very morning. He rises to his feet and is drawn to her like a magnet, takes the seat closest to Mary at the table, and just stares at her in awe. His whole body language changes and a serenity envelops him as he takes his place by her side. It's as though he's found the lost piece of the jigsaw of his life that was missing when he climbed out of bed that morning, and he can now be at peace. If you ask Mary "Do you know who this man is?" she can't remember his name, but she goes bashful and coy, and starts to blush, she obviously still thinks that this man is very handsome. Mirroring this, Stan thinks she is the most beautiful lady he has ever laid eyes on. After breakfast, Mary moves to her armchair and Stan follows, like a shadow to Mary's form. They sit together all day, neither knowing who the other is,*

*neither knowing that they have a past together, or a family, or even where they are; they just know that they are in the right place when they are together. They get to fall in love for the first time every morning but then forget each other as they drift off to sleep each evening. Perhaps they merge lovingly into one another's dreaming. It's like a perpetual cycle of romance and forgetting. Mary took a fall a couple of weeks ago and bruised her arm quite badly, when Stan saw this, he kept holding her hand and kissing her arm for hours in an attempt to heal her.*

*My friend who witnessed this became quite overwhelmed and started crying. Presumed as maybe too sensitive by the other carers, she told me that she just couldn't understand why they couldn't all realise the enormity of what was occurring; how Stan and Mary were obvious proof that love is something that is beyond mind and knowledge. In her words, "That love is something spiritual". I think that's very true. I hypothesise that perhaps love is a frequency that is felt, witnessed and lived, rather than a thought or process. It is spiritual as she said, but maybe also chemical, sensory and intuitively led, certainly guided by a sixth sense that becomes awakened in the presence of a soul mate. Somebody said once that "love is hard" and I disagreed, relationships yes! But not love. It's the barriers inside us that make 'loving' hard, psychological memory being probably the greatest barrier. Emotional debris in the form of cardiac scars due to past hurts, resentment, bitterness and judgement, all causing resistance to us loving unconditionally. Psychological memory is what Stan and Mary seem to be totally free from, and just maybe, that makes their love even more beautiful than ours in a strange way, because they can love without memory or imagination, love in that very moment, every single day, from breakfast until bed.*

*From Ged's book "Diaries of a Man who Believes in Angels"*

## ARTS & CULTURE

# THE GEM OF A FRAMERS & GALLERY THAT SUPPORTS LOCAL ARTISTS!

A gem of a framing shop and art gallery in Hoylake is doing great work to support local artists. Hooked Up on Birkenhead Road offers gorgeous bespoke frames that help artists sell their work and also displays their work for sale in the shop — selling a few pieces a week for local artists.



Hooked Up was opened by art lover Sean Hughes in 2022, purely by chance. A granite and marble specialist and a top DJ for the likes of Cream, Sean's life changed forever when he visited the framing shop, then called Acorn, to choose a bespoke frame for his latest piece of art.



Sean got talking to the owner at the time, who told him he was going to retire after being there for years. He discovered that high street picture framing shops were a dying breed, largely due to cheap online offerings from the likes of Ikea, but despite the risk he thought about it over Christmas and decided to buy the little business and save it.

It has proven to be a great move by art lover Sean. He changed the name to Hooked Up and decided to blend the shop with a gallery to display local artists' work and it's taken off big time! Three years later and he's busier than ever — working long days and seven days a week to keep up with art lovers' and artists' demand for his beautiful bespoke frames.



Sean explained: "In the modern age of internet shopping and rising costs, it's tough for little high street businesses. Big corporates come in and try to out-price them and take over the market. I used to love coming in to Acorn Framing to purchase a new frame for my latest piece of art, as I'd chat to the guy about art and you really got that personal touch."

He continued: "I felt quite sad to think that he'd be closing and it might not be there after he retired. I feel it's important to keep these little high street gems alive so after lots of thought I decided to quit my good job with my brother and take it on. It was a big risk but introducing a mini art gallery to help support local artists was a great move — they buy frames from me and I help them sell their work."



Hooked Up has developed a positive eco-system for art lovers and artists alike, whilst keeping the little high street business going — in a niche industry that's becoming more rare. Whilst Sean works long hours and often seven days a week, it's the connections with customers and artists and knowing he's saved a business that keeps him going.





Sean summarised: *"I often leave here late at night but I love what I do. I love chatting with customers about art and creating the perfect bespoke frame for their piece of art, favourite photograph, portrait, poster, sports memorabilia, vinyls or anything else."*

He continued: *"I meet some cool artists and display some amazing work. It feels great knowing I've saved this little business — we need to keep places like this going otherwise we'll be living in a cold world of online shopping."*



Sean Hughes owns Hooked Up, based at 42 Birkenhead Road in Hoylake, and offering bespoke framing for art, photographs, portraits, posters, memorabilia, vinyls and more — with thousands of different options available. Sean works on a free quotation basis and also displays local artists' work for sale on a revolving basis.

**Hooked Up / 42 Birkenhead Road, Hoylake,  
Wirral, CH47 3BW / 07511 689073**

**FOR A FREE QUOTE FOR FRAMING CALL 07511  
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# Thank you for choosing positive news



PEOPLE & LIFE

## MAN DITCHES CORPORATE LIFE FOR NEW BRIGHTON BOOK SHOP!

A Company Director has ditched the corporate life to open a 'gorgeous' independent book shop in New Brighton. Peter Frost, 56, has quit his role as Director of World Of Glass in St Helens and opened Messrs Fletcher & Frost Community Bookshop on Mount Pleasant Road — fulfilling a lifelong dream.



Returning to his hometown of New Brighton, Peter has opened a quaint little book shop that supports local authors and stocks a revolving range of 'hidden gems' — often one you won't find in large stores or supermarkets. Open Tues-Sat, 11am-5pm, Fletcher & Frost Community Bookshop also has a quirky little coffee shop at the back.



What really sets Peter's little book shop apart is the community ethos. With the aim of bringing people together through literary love, there are regular events such as Book Club and Poetry Club, monthly on Thursday evenings, Mums Club and Under 5s reading classes twice a month, Improving Confidence workshops and dementia sessions. Authors are also welcomed to host book launches.



Very much a passion project for Peter, Fletcher & Frost Community Bookshop aims to keep alive the local community book shop in a world that's dominated by retail and online giants. The idea is to offer the latest fiction and non fiction for adults and children, encourage local people to buy physical books from local authors and to read more, and also to bring people together.



Peter explained: *"I am originally from New Brighton and have so many happy memories here from growing up. I spent years teaching before becoming a Director of a large glass company but have always loved books and it's always been my dream to open my own independent book shop. My father passed away recently and it made me realise that you only live once so it's important to follow your dreams."*

He continued: *"To come back home to New Brighton and open is very special. High street community book shops are a dying breed with online and retail giants, but there's something special about little independent book shops and buying a physical book. It's very much about community too — my regular events aim to connect people through the love of literature."*





The regular events such as Book Club, Poetry Club, Mums Club, Under 5s reading classes, Improving Confidence workshops and dementia sessions aim to improve mental health and literacy, whilst combatting loneliness and isolation. Through Fletcher & Frost Community Book Shop, Peter has created more than just a book shop — it's a community hub.



Peter summarised: *"It's very much a passion project for me. I have taken a big risk and decrease in income by quitting my role as Company Director but this isn't about money for me — it's much more than that. Since opening in April the feedback has been incredible — people love coming in and discovering some real gems and I've met some wonderful people in the shop. That makes it all worthwhile."*



Peter Frost, 56, has opened Messrs Fletcher & Frost Community Bookshop at 51 Mount Pleasant Road in New Brighton — just a few doors down from The Telegraph Pub. The book shop offers gems from famous novelists alongside local authors and has regular clubs and classes. Peter also offers free delivery and special gift wrapping.

**Messrs Fletcher & Frost Community Bookshop /  
51 Mount Pleasant Road, New Brighton, Wirral,  
CH45 5EN / 07496 060162**

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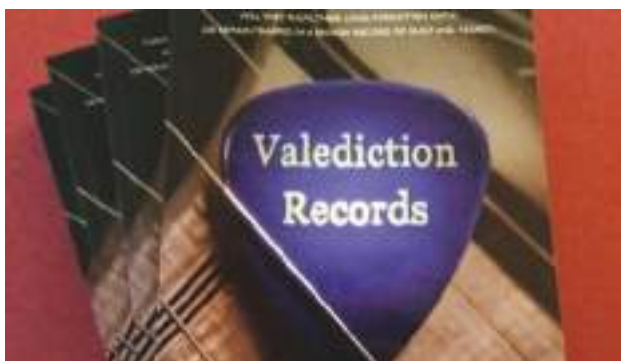
# **Thank you for choosing positive news**



ARTS & CULTURE

## 7UP DOCUMENTARY STAR'S GRIPPING MUSIC NOVEL!

Liverpool's 7UP documentary star, Peter Davies, has released his debut novel at the age of 68. *Valediction Records* is a gripping and nostalgic story about three former band members who re-unite after 40 years and is a must read for lovers of music and fiction novels.



Lauded by readers far and wide, *Valediction Records* delves into the lives of a group of friends who form a band during the post-punk era, exploring their rise to fame, bitter breakup, and a pact that binds them together. Powerful and poignant, it dips in between characters and timelines – taking the reader on an awe-inspiring journey through their lives.

A story of friendship, love, music and life, it's a novel written with heart from someone who has very much lived all these things to the fullest. Peter Davies became a star in the public eye at the age of just seven – appearing in the hit Granada documentary series 7UP, that followed the lives of ordinary people from the age of seven, and he has been on quite the journey since.



A public figure since childhood, he went on to become a teacher and Crown Prosecutor whilst starring in the 7UP series every seven years. However, whilst attempting to live a 'normal' life amidst being a star of one of the most famous documentary series of all time, he has found his true calling and passion in music and now writing.



Peter explained: *"Having balanced being in the 7UP series pretty much all my life with living a 'normal' life as a teacher and family man, my creative outlet has always been music. Originally, I was in fairly punky new wave bands before falling in love with a grittier, rootsier kind of country music. I've been in a band, The Good Intentions, for many years now and it has inspired me to write my first novel."*

He continued: *"Valediction Records is about how we deal with time passing, with growing older. Our regrets. Our losses. And how we cope with all of that. Some parts were emotionally tough to write, especially those dealing with mental illness and dementia. One of the characters suffers from depression, which I've dealt with on and off in my life. Another deals with dementia, something I've seen up close in my family. If you want to write something meaningful, you have to be brave and confront the darkness."*





Now retired, Peter's creativity has hit new heights — from being a musician to recently Co-Writing and Producing the hit country musical theatre production Under The Mersey Moon that sold out The Floral Pavilion on multiple dates. He has now released his debut novel, Valediction Records, and is enjoying some incredible feedback from music and book lovers alike.



Peter summarised: *"You've got to write a novel because you need to. Because it won't let you go. Valediction Records is about people bonded by music and the past, and what happens to them in life. It's emotional. The project's ongoing. Things are beginning to stir. That's all I can say. But I don't think you've heard the last of it."*



Liverpool's 7UP documentary star, Peter Davies, has released his debut novel at the age of 68. Valediction Records is a gripping and nostalgic story about three former band members who re-unite after 40 years and is a must read for lovers of music and fiction novels.

**SCAN THE QR TO BUY VALEDICTION RECORDS**

Images 4 & 5 courtesy of John Hollingsworth



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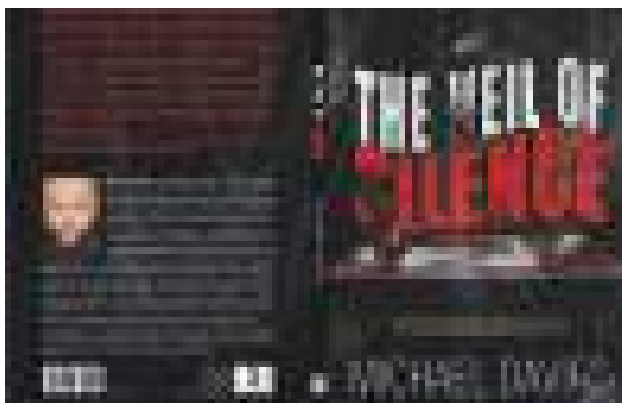
# Thank you for choosing positive news



PEOPLE & LIFE

## FROM A HORROR ACCIDENT TO CRIME NOVEL SUCCESS!

A father-of-four from Ellesmere Port has become an acclaimed crime novelist after a 'horror fall' led him to become a writer. Michael Davies, 48, was left with 'life-changing' injuries after an accident but has now achieved global success with his crime thriller, *The Veil Of Silence*.



Set in Liverpool, Michael's gripping psychological thriller follows the story of hospital worker turned serial killer, Thomas Greene, and takes the reader on a fascinating journey through the twisted mind of a psychopath. *The Veil Of Silence* has received rave reviews on Amazon, Waterstones, WHSmith and other platforms and such is its success, Michael has been nominated for a Crimson Quill Award.

After its launch in November 2024, the first print run of *The Veil Of Silence* sold out in the UK within the first few months and with a new print run now arrived, a film of the novel is now in discussion too – with plans for filming in Liverpool in 2026. Michael also has two sequels in the pipeline – *The Fractured Veil*, due to be released later this year, and *The Unravelling Veil* to complete the trilogy.



Michael's overwhelming literary success is something he could never have imagined prior to March 2023, when he suffered a serious fall assisting with a road traffic accident whilst working for the NHS. The accident resulted in no feeling in one of his legs and one of his arms, leaving him resigned to a wheelchair and now a walking stick. Facing the darkest times of his life, he turned to writing as an outlet.



Michael explained: *"I was rubbish at English in school and have since been diagnosed as autistic, which explains a lot about getting into trouble at school. I studied hard though and ended up having a good career in the NHS at The Countess Of Chester Hospital and Arrowe Park Hospital, becoming a family man too."*

He continued: *"Prior to 2023 I would've laughed at the idea of me being a novelist – that is, until I stayed late at work to help with a road traffic accident and fell onto some building materials in the dark. I suffered spinal and nerve damage and was left with no feeling in one arm and one leg – it was severely debilitating and I lost a lot of independence. During that time of darkness, I had to find something to do."*





With lots of time on his hands and lots of time to think, Michael conceived a crime novel based on a hospital worker and so, The Veil Of Silence was created. Putting pen to paper, he spent his recuperation relentlessly writing his novel and rather impressively he has penned both his debut novel, the sequel and over 30 movie scripts in just two years. He now has huge plans in the pipeline.



Michael summarised: *"What started as a hobby to keep my mind occupied has become a new career. The response to The Veil Of Silence has been overwhelming and sales have been flying in, so I'm now planning to release The Fractured Veil later this year. We have a film planned too that's set to be filmed in Liverpool in 2026."*

He continued: *"Life is very difficult since the accident. I am in constant pain and have to take morphine every day. If it wasn't for my family and writing I wouldn't be here and having something creative to focus on gets me through each day. It's all surreal how the book has taken off but if it wasn't for the accident I'd never have become a writer, so in a strange way I'm grateful for the accident."*



A father-of-four from Ellesmere Port has become an acclaimed crime novelist after a 'horror fall' led him to become a writer. Michael Davies, 48, was left with 'life-changing' injuries after an accident but has now achieved huge success with his crime thriller, The Veil Of Silence.

Michael Davies / The Veil Of Silence

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# Thank you for choosing positive news



# LIVERPOOL'S LARGEST EVER BOOK FESTIVAL THIS SEPTEMBER!

Liverpool's largest ever book festival is coming to Invisible Wind Factory and Make CIC on Sunday 7th September! The unique, first of its kind event will feature over 60 different authors selling their books directly, celebrity special guests, Q&As, live music, free workshops, street food, artisan stalls and more!



The exciting new book festival is an opportunity to meet some of the region's most talented and award winning authors and will showcase a wide range of their books for sale — including autobiographies, crime, horror, thrillers, sci-fi, romance, comedy, historical, children's books and everything in between!



The event will feature an array of special guests including — Lord Mayor Of Liverpool Barbara Murray, broadcasting legend Billy Butler, Sunday Times Bestseller Caroline Corcoran, Amazon Bestseller Conrad Jones, acclaimed horror novelist Ramsey Campbell, Marvel writers Tim Quinn and Alan Cowsill, Beano artist Nigel Parkinson, award-winning comedian Gary Skyner, celebrity chef Dave Critchley, punk legend Phil Jones and many others.



Award winning mind coach Alison Blackler will be in attendance, as will renowned life coach Linda Baldvinsdottir, who is flying in from Iceland. Meanwhile, respected publishers will be attending such as Estelle Maher from Tauk Publishing, Canelo, Northodox Press, Susan Westoby and Louisa Herridge. Wonderful book shops such as Bob Stone's Write Blend will also be at the event.



The festival will feature fascinating Q&As on stage, as well as live acoustic music from talented local acts such as Primal Live winner Sam Leyden and Medicine Men DJs. Meanwhile, there'll be street food from the likes of Devina's Mauritian Kitchen, Piadina Pronto and Rhok Crepes and artisan stalls selling quirky and artsy products.

Liverpool Book Festival is family friendly and there'll be plenty of activities for children. Workshops throughout the day include storytelling from Wish Upon A Party, children's creative workshops from Helen Poole and poetry from Zonked. Top coach John Bullock will also be providing a 'Find Your Flow' workshop for adults.





The festival is being hosted by award winning local magazine, marketing and PR company, La Vida Liverpool. The aim is to provide a platform for local authors — connecting them with fellow authors, publishers and book shops and a great opportunity to sell their books to enthusiasts. For avid readers, it's a chance to meet the authors directly and get their books signed in person — you can even have your portrait done by the original Dennis The Menace illustrator!



La Vida Liverpool's Justin Hopper said: *"I've owned La Vida Liverpool for 7 years now and have promoted many different people, businesses, charities and events. Every time I do marketing and PR for authors it always strikes me how difficult it is for them to get their books out there and sell direct to readers without getting lost on big online platforms that charge huge commissions."*

He continued: *"As a writer myself, I am passionate about supporting creatives and I'm proud to have done that really well through La Vida these past 7 years. With Liverpool Book Festival, I'm aiming to take that one step further for writers — connecting them with book lovers in a fun event with loads going on! I'm making it really affordable for all too — that's very important to me."*

Two charity partners will both receive a free stand at the event and will both receive a 10% donation of ticket sales. Builder Book, founded by Natalie Reeves-Billing and Jude C Lennon, provide creative and literacy packs to children to help bridge the gap in education. Inspiring Minds CIC will also benefit, to help raise money for their Embracing The Extraordinary book about parenting neurodivergent children.



Tickets to the festival are just £10 and there are big plans for it to be hosted bi-annually. The event aims to offer more than a standard book fair — with lots going on throughout the day and something for everyone, whilst celebrating the rich literary talent in Merseyside.

Justin summarised: *"There are so many talented authors in our region and so many people love reading so I'm excited about providing this platform to bring them together. It's tough for authors to get noticed and you can't beat a good physical copy, so it's a win win situation — in a digital world with artificial intelligence we must fight to keep our creativity alive and I'm hoping this festival will help in some small way."*



The inaugural Liverpool Book Festival has been announced for 7th September 2025! The debut event is taking place at Invisible Wind Factory and Make CIC from 12pm and will feature over 60 different authors selling their books directly, celebrity special guests, Q&As, live music, free workshops, street food, artisan stalls and more!

**Liverpool Book Festival / Sunday 7th September 2025, 12pm – 5pm / Invisible Wind Factory & Make CIC, 3 Regent Road, Liverpool, L3 7DS**

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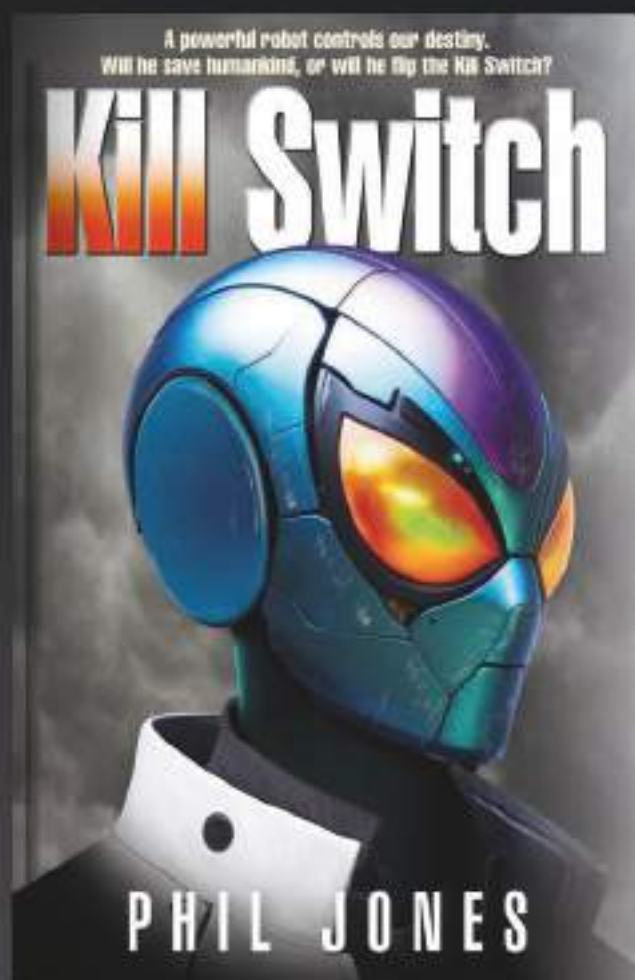


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ARTS & CULTURE

## WIRRAL WAVE RADIO CELEBRATES 6TH BIRTHDAY!

The month of July, 2025, marks a major milestone for Wirral Wave Radio, as the forward-thinking community radio station celebrates six years on air. Run entirely on passion, creativity and an unwavering commitment to the local community, the station has grown from a small idea into a vibrant and diverse platform powered by volunteers.



Founded and operated by Paul Harris, alongside his daughter Amanda Harris and with David Murrell as Non Executive Director, Wirral Wave Radio has become a vital voice for the Wirral area. From its humble home on Hemingford Street, just a stone's throw from the Birkenhead Bus Station, the station has cultivated a loyal listenership with its rich mix of programming.

With 26 shows on rotation, Wirral Wave Radio offers something for everyone and you can listen on the internet 24/7 globally. Whether you're tuning in for insightful talk shows, upbeat music segments, lively chats about beer, thoughtful discussions on wellness or mouthwatering explorations of local food, there's a unique, personal voice behind every mic.



The station is also home to La Vida Liverpool Live — the show from multi-award winning local magazine La Vida Liverpool that's also just celebrated its 7th birthday. On this thought provoking show, the magazine's owner Justin Hopper interviews the many wonderful people, business owners, charities and creatives that La Vida promotes.

Behind the scenes, Paul Harris is the engine keeping it all running. Known for his tireless dedication, Paul devotes countless hours to producing, editing, mentoring, and making sure every show sounds polished and professional. The station operates as a Community Interest Company (CIC), ensuring its primary focus remains on public benefit rather than profit.

One of Wirral Wave Radio's standout contributions is its role in education and development. The station actively partners with institutions like Liverpool Hope University, Wirral Met College, and Liverpool John Moores University to offer work experience opportunities to students. Aspiring broadcasters, producers, and media students get hands-on experience in a real-world environment—learning everything from mixing and mastering to show planning and live presentation.



The sense of community extends to the presenters themselves, who receive strong support from the station's core team. Whether it's technical training, editing guidance, or simply a welcoming environment, Wirral Wave Radio ensures every voice has the tools and confidence to be heard.

As Wirral Wave Radio celebrates six incredible years, it stands as a shining example of what passion, teamwork and local pride can achieve. Here's to the voices of Merseyside — and many more years of broadcasting from the heart of the Wirral.

**Wirral Wave Radio / 6 Hemingford Street,  
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PEOPLE & LIFE

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PEOPLE & LIFE

## I LOST MY BUSINESS OVERNIGHT: NOW I'M ABOUT TO HIT £1 MILLION!

A Wirral marketing agency owner is on course to hit the £1 million turnover figure after losing her business overnight. Justine McLaughlin was at risk of losing everything when her business partner walked away but set up Phantom Digital and has now become one of the region's most successful agencies within three years.



After the abrupt closure of her previous agency, Justine got straight to work and founded Phantom Digital — employing all the staff from the previous business and saving their jobs. Phantom Digital, based in Hoylake, offers business strategy, website design, digital marketing, content creation, social media marketing, email marketing and more to businesses of all sizes.



In just three years of setting up the new agency, Justine is on course to hit the £1 million turnover figure — with hundreds of happy clients. Such is Phantom Digital's success, it has won Best Digital Marketing Agency 2025 and Client Service Excellence Awards 2025 at the UK Enterprise Awards 2025 and was a Finalist at the Prolific North Champions Awards.



Furthermore, Phantom Digital has helped many charities such as Wirral Rotary, Wirral Bikeathon, The UTS Foundation, Candice Colley Foundation and Boss Birches. Meanwhile, Justine is a Patron of The Tim Cogley Foundation — raising over £370,000 and saving the lives of hundreds of people in the process. This work has led Justine to be nominated for Merseyside Woman Of The Year 2025.



Speaking of her success, Justine said: "Back in 2023, it was a big shock when my business partner walked away from our agency. We had different visions ultimately and things came to an abrupt end. I was immediately thrust into fight or flight mode and was very worried about my future and the future of all our staff."

She continued: "I created Phantom Digital almost straight away. I knew that I had to work quickly to protect myself and my staff. I have an incredible team so we hit the ground running and I'm absolutely delighted about our rapid growth. We're really good at what we do so we have a strong client retention rate of 80% and most of our clients are on ongoing retainers. It's been hard work but we're smashing it!"





Phantom Digital has helped both big brands and small businesses since its conception, with many happy clients and 5 star reviews. The agency has not only retained all the previous staff, it has also taken on new employees and is about to become 9001 and 14001 ISO certified. Fast approaching the £1 million turnover figure, Justine has created one of the most successful and fastest growing agencies around.



Justine summarised: *"In life and business, things can change in a heartbeat. Often things are out of our control and when things come to an end unexpectedly, this is where we discover our true strength of character. At first I was worried about the future and panicked but I'm now super proud of what I've created with Phantom Digital and have big plans for even more growth of the business."*



Justine McLaughlin is the Founder of Phantom Digital – an award winning marketing agency based in Hoylake offering business strategy, website design, digital marketing, content creation, social media marketing, email marketing and more to businesses of all sizes. She has recently been nominated for Merseyside Woman Of The Year.

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## PEOPLE & LIFE

# FINANCIAL ADVISER BRINGS FACE-TO-FACE ADVICE BACK TO THE HIGH STREET!



Respected and trusted Independent Financial Adviser, Richard Jones, has launched his own financial advisory practice, Smart Independent Financial Advice Ltd, in the heart of West Kirby. Through his new practice, located at 164 Banks Road, he is bringing face-to-face advice back to the high street.



As Director and Chartered Financial Planner of Smart Independent Financial Advice Ltd, established in 2021, Richard offers truly independent financial and estate planning services – a rare commitment in today's landscape, where many advisers are shifting towards restricted financial advice models. His approach ensures clients receive unbiased, whole-of-market recommendations tailored to their unique needs.



Located at 164 Banks Road, West Kirby, the new office is a welcome addition to the community – especially at a time when traditional banks are disappearing from our high streets. The office was officially opened by Councillor and former Mayor of Wirral, Jeff Green, marking a new chapter in local access to professional face-to-face independent financial advice with a high street presence.

With over 20 years of experience in the financial services industry, Richard has built a reputation for trusted advice – having previously held financial advisory roles at HSBC and Santander. A lifelong Wirral resident, Richard is passionate about delivering a face-to-face service rooted in the local community. His new financial hub in West Kirby offers a rare blend of industry expertise, truly personal service, and a warm, approachable presence on the high street.



Holding both a Maths degree and a Master's degree in Maths, as well as his professional Chartered Advanced Diploma, Richard brings an analytical, detail-focused approach to financial planning. He is particularly known for helping clients navigate complex issues such as inheritance tax, retirement advice and legacy planning – always with the client's best interests at heart.



Richard commented: *"I'm thrilled to open my own high street practice after two decades in the financial services industry. With the decline of both local bank branches and independent advice, it's more important than ever for people to have access to reliable, face-to-face financial support. I look forward to welcoming and meeting the local community – especially on Fridays when I keep my diary open for anyone wanting to drop in."*



As a whole-of-market adviser, Richard is not tied to any one provider. This means he can recommend products from across the entire financial marketplace, ensuring clients receive the most suitable solutions for their individual circumstances.

His services include:

- Inheritance Tax Planning
- Retirement Planning & Pensions
- Savings & Investments
- Wills, Trusts & Estate Planning
- Equity Release
- Financial Protection & Insurance



With inheritance tax frequently in the news – especially as the Government considers changes that could pull pension funds into the inheritance tax net from April 2027 – Richard has seen rising demand for clear, trusted advice in this area. He explains options in plain English and helps clients make informed decisions about their financial future.

Richard is a Chartered Financial Planner – one of the highest levels of professional recognition in the industry – and a member of The Society of Will Writers. He is also an affiliate member of the Society of Trust and Estate Practitioners (STEP) and is working towards full STEP membership. His qualifications and continued commitment to professional development reflect his dedication to delivering outstanding advice and service.

He adds: *“Earning Chartered status is something I’m extremely proud of. It not only recognises my qualifications but also reflects my commitment to putting clients first – without exception. Many of my former customers from my banking days have followed me into this new chapter, and I’m always keen about helping new customers as well.”*



Fridays when he keeps time aside for anyone wishing to pop in. If you’re making a special trip, a quick call ahead is appreciated, especially as Richard also offers home visits for those less able or prefer not to travel.

**For more information or to arrange an appointment, visit Smart Independent Financial Advice Ltd at 164 Banks Road, West Kirby, or get in touch today. [WWW.SMART-IFA.CO.UK](http://WWW.SMART-IFA.CO.UK), 07944 648080. [Richard@Smart-ifa.co.uk](mailto:Richard@Smart-ifa.co.uk).**

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PEOPLE & LIFE

## IDYLIC WIRRAL CARE HOME RECEIVES 'EXCELLENT' PAMMS RATING!

Wirral's idyllic Mariners' Park Care Home has received an 'Excellent' PAMMS rating – the tool used to rate the quality of care delivered by providers of adult social care services. The stunning residential home, located in Egremont on the banks of the Mersey, has bedrooms available for any retiree over 60 years of age.

Mariners' Park Care Home is open for applications from any retiree or anyone needing care. The 36 bedroom home has state of the art facilities, excellent levels of service, stunning views over the Mersey and comes in cheaper than most residential homes in the region.

Refurbished to a high standard, the home offers 24/7 residential nursing, dementia and palliative care. The dedicated dementia wing is led by a team of dementia champions, a specialist dementia nurse and an admiral nurse who can provide life changing support for families affected by all forms of dementia.

Much investment has gone into staff development which has been recognised by a Gold Investor In People Award. The team of over 60 staff who deliver very high standards of care receive 28 days holiday pay and also sick pay, something that is rare in the care industry.



Manager of Mariners' Park Care Home, Grace Holley, is a Registered Nurse with a wealth of experience working at Mariners' Park and at hospitals. She works alongside Clinical Lead and Deputy Manager, Siobhan Napier, who is also a Registered Nurse. Their team of over 70 staff, including hospitality, domestics, healthcare and nursing, are all passionate about fostering a culture of excellence and compassion.

The team at Mariners' Park Care Home ensure that there are many activities to keep the residents entertained. From live entertainment, visits from specials guests, games and flower arranging to cheese and wine afternoons and movie nights, there's always something going on at Mariners' Park Care Home.



With Head Chef John at the helm, food at Mariners' Park Care Home is exceptional. John has 42 years' experience working at various schools and hospitality businesses and serves up three delicious meals per day, including afternoon tea, cheese, wine, snacks and supper. From Full English breakfasts to steak, pub classics and roast dinners, residents certainly don't go hungry at Mariners' Park!



Director Andrew Jones said: *"The recent Excellent PAMMS rating, and also our Gold Investor In People Award, are great honours and fine examples of the dedicated work we've been doing here. We've also been Finalists in the National British Care Awards on more than one occasion and we're thoroughly proud of our team. We have fantastic rooms available at the Care Home."*

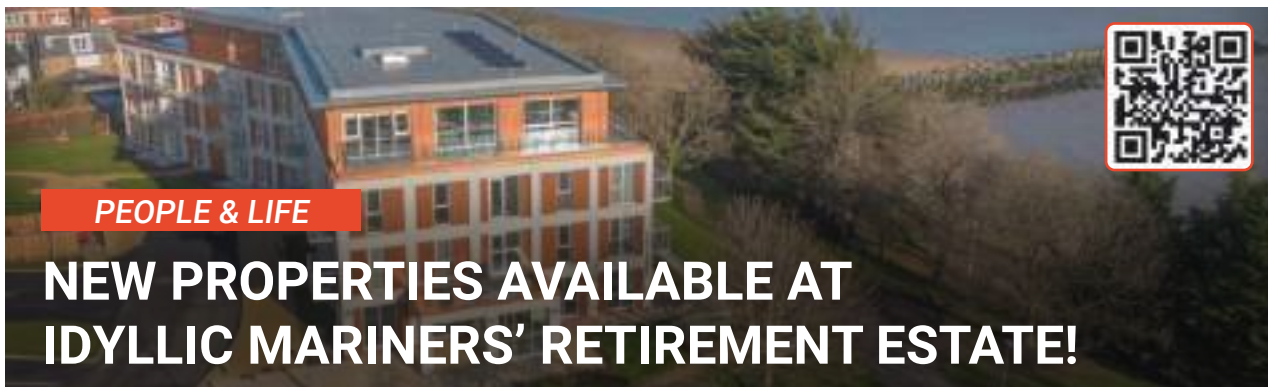
Wirral's idyllic Mariners' Park care home has received an 'Excellent' PAMMS rating – the tool used to rate the quality of care delivered by providers of adult social care services. The stunning residential home, located in Egremont on the banks of the Mersey, has bedrooms available for any retiree over 60 years of age.

**Mariners' Park Retirement Village / Egremont,  
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PEOPLE & LIFE

## NEW PROPERTIES AVAILABLE AT IDYLIC MARINERS' RETIREMENT ESTATE!

Properties have become available at Wirral's idyllic retirement estate, Mariners' Park, and accommodation is available now for retired Merchant Navy, Royal Navy and Maritime professionals. The stunning estate, located on the banks of the river Mersey, has a number of properties available to let, including 2 bedroom apartments within its award winning new multi-million pound development.



Until now, the stunning Mariners' Park Estate was designed for retired Merchant Navy servicemen and women of over 20 years' service, however due to the fact that those serving 20 years at sea is now very rare, eligibility for property will be managed based on the length of service, situation and care needs.

The estate has luxury facilities, excellent levels of service, stunning views over the river Mersey and comes in much cheaper than most privately rented apartments — with rent starting from just £630 per month for 1 bed properties and from £740 per month for 2 bed properties. There are excellent transport links and the estate is located just a couple of miles down the coast from the seaside town of New Brighton.

At Mariners' Park Estate there's an on site bistro, snooker room, gym, salon, beauty spa and more. With immaculate grounds maintained by an excellent gardening team, a bowling green and lots of activities on site, Mariners Park Estate is a place to retire in luxury — with excellent levels of service and support from the staff who work there.

The on-site hub hosts a weekly meeting of the Mersey Maritime Radio Officers' Association who operate out of a specially designed room allocated by Nautilus Welfare Fund. The charity has also secured funding for an external travel company who will be organising regular off-site activities and days out, as well as trialling a mini bus shuttle to local amenities — further enabling independence.

Should your care and support needs change, the estate has a wide range of properties available — with an apartment complex staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is also an excellent on-site care home, meaning whatever your situation, Mariners' Park Estate will be able to support your needs — whilst the ethos is to maintain your independence for as long as possible.

Care Manager Mike Clarke said: *"Mariners' Park Estate is truly a unique and special place at the centre of our hearts. I feel so honoured to call this my workplace and it takes my breath away daily when I walk onto the estate each morning with how beautiful it is. I am blessed to have an amazing team around me who want to come to work each day with the view of really making a difference to all the residents."*

Director Andrew Jones said: *"Our new criteria is a game changer for retirees who have served in the Merchant Navy, Royal Navy or as a maritime professional. We deliver top quality care, staff and facilities and our recent Gold Investor In People Award is a fine example of the dedicated work we've been doing here."*



Properties have become available at Wirral's idyllic retirement estate, Mariners' Park, and accommodation is available now for retired Merchant Navy, Royal Navy and Maritime professionals. The stunning estate, located on the banks of the river Mersey, has a number of 1 and 2 bedroom properties available to let on the estate and within its award winning new multi-million pound development.

**Mariners' Park Retirement Village / Egremont, Wirral, CH44 0HN / 0151 346 8840**

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PEOPLE & LIFE

## MEET THE INDEPENDENTS AS LARTON LIVERY TURNS 50!

Located in the picturesque little village of Frankby, Wirral, Larton Livery is a tranquil countryside oasis and home to some incredible independent businesses. Set in acres of beautiful farmland, Larton Livery is a perfect destination for gardening enthusiasts, animal lovers and families – with quaint boutique businesses and something for everyone.



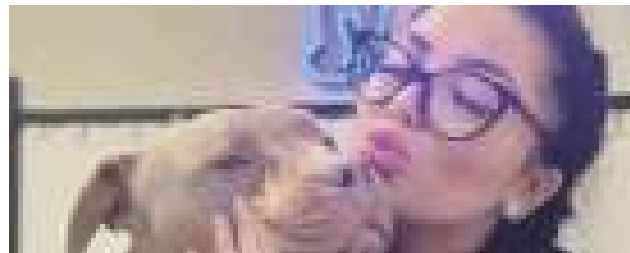
**Larton Livery** was established in 1975 when William Titley bought his first plot of land, initially to build his family a home with lovely surroundings. From just a couple of small businesses on site, Larton has evolved into the independent village it is today – one of Wirral's true hidden gems with a warm, welcoming community.



As you enter **Larton Livery** down its hidden little track, with acres of fields all around, you'll first notice the beautifully landscaped fishery. **Larton Coarse Fishing** is a mixed coarse fishery, stocked with a variety of species such as carp, bream, tench, rudd and roach, with five ponds in a stunning setting and very reasonably priced memberships.



Need some bait? **Larton Livery's Pet Food Superstore** has everything you need for animals, pets and livestock whether that be fish, dogs, cats, horses, birds and everything in between – from food and essentials to toys. A superstore for all your animal needs, it's a great reason to visit this gem of an independent village.



Here you'll also find **Lookin' Pawgeous** dog salon! This gorgeous farm based groomers offers full grooms, ear cleaning, nail clipping, wash and blows, deshedding, spa packages and more. An idyllic salon to take your pooch for a pamper, you can enjoy the many independent gems Larton has to offer whilst they get Lookin' Pawgeous love!



It's not just animals who can enjoy a pamper at Larton! **Amanda B's Hair Hub** is without doubt one of the quirkiest salons in Wirral – based in a cosy little hut and offering a super friendly service and great value for ladies, gents and children. With 35 years' experience and a loyal customer base who travel for miles for a fresh look, Amanda B's is a gem of a salon!





If you're looking for somewhere luxurious for your pet to stay whilst you're on holiday, **Larton Pet Resorts** offer 5 star boarding in the Wirral countryside! With comfortable housing, lots of land and exercise in the fresh air, quality food and of course plenty of love from the experienced team, Larton Pet Resorts is the perfect choice!



**Jackson's Animal Rescue** are also based in the mini village. The Wildlife Centre at Larton Livery is an RSPCA approve wildlife rescue that helps hedgehogs and other small mammals. They can have hundreds of animals with them at any one time, all receiving care and treatment from their caring and experienced staff and volunteers.



If your pet has sadly passed away, **Larton Lakes Pet Crematorium** provides a respectful and dignified final journey for your cherished companions. Here they offer individual pet cremation, guaranteeing that your pet's ashes are returned to you with the dignity they deserve. To provide a lasting tribute they offer a selection of beautiful ornamental caskets.

If you're an avid horse rider or wanting to learn, **Larton Riding School** offers a welcoming and professional environment for riders of all ages and abilities. With experienced instructors, well-schooled horses and excellent facilities, it's the perfect place to learn, improve, or simply enjoy the joy of riding.



Larton provides tailored lessons and a supportive atmosphere that keeps riders coming back. Their schedule includes private lessons, groups, stable management days, birthday parties and hacking through the picturesque Royden Park. Mention 'La Vida' when booking your very first lesson to receive a £5 discount!



For all things equine, you'll be needing **Colberry Saddlery**. This small, family run tack shop, stocking all your equestrian needs from yard to competition, is ran by Claire Huyton – a classically trained BHSAI with competition experience in British Eventing and British Dressage. She spent 15 years course managing and lecturing at an outstanding land-based college in Cheshire before taking the reins of Colberry Saddlery.



Meanwhile, **Shinzato Dojo** is a Karate club in a Japanese style building that was founded by Sensei Steve Gouldson, 8th Dan Okinawa Goju Ryu Karate Do (E.G.K.A, I.O.G.K.F). Students have the opportunity to train in structured classes, or individually, and the dojo benefits from a number of experienced black belt students – various sessions are available and all ages and levels are welcome.



If you're looking for a friendly, welcoming and experienced Pilates group in Wirral, **Reform Pilates** offers traditional mat and reformer Pilates classes, as well as one-to-one sessions, in a gorgeous environment. Whether you're recovering from injury, building core strength, or simply exploring movement, their classes led by experienced professionals offer a structured and supportive environment.



For budding gardeners, **Larton In Bloom** garden centre features all sorts of flowers for your garden, home or as a gift and you can even ask to have flowers arranged for you by one of the lovely staff members. From daffodils to geraniums, you'll find a wide range of colours and varieties in this flower lovers paradise!



Looking for something for your home? **Brand Designs** is an Aladdin's Cave of homeware — from vintage and chic to rare and unique! With a revolving range and a diverse selection of homeware, from stylish lighting and cozy cushions to exquisite furniture and captivating wall art, Brand Designs is a treasure trove of bargains and great finds!



With energy bills at home sky high and a hot topic, now is the perfect time to explore Solar PV! Simon at **Peninsula Solar** is a trusted electrician with years of experience and has helped home owners throughout the North West save thousands off their electricity bills with his solar and battery storage solutions — in some cases completely eradicating bills! Contact him for a free installation and energy saving quote!



Finally, after hours exploring all these independent gems, you'll be ready for some quality food and drink at **Baked Cafe**! With a mouthwatering menu of breakfast, brunch, lunch and specials, including the finest coffee and sweet treats and cakes, there aren't many bistros around that offer such quality in such an idyllic location.



As Larton Livery celebrates 50 years as one of Wirral's true hidden gems located off the beaten track in the Frankby countryside, the wonderful little community of independent traders continue to thrive — loved by those who know of their existence. If you haven't visited yet, it's a nature lover's paradise and you're in for a treat!

**Larton Livery / Frankby Stiles, Frankby, Wirral,  
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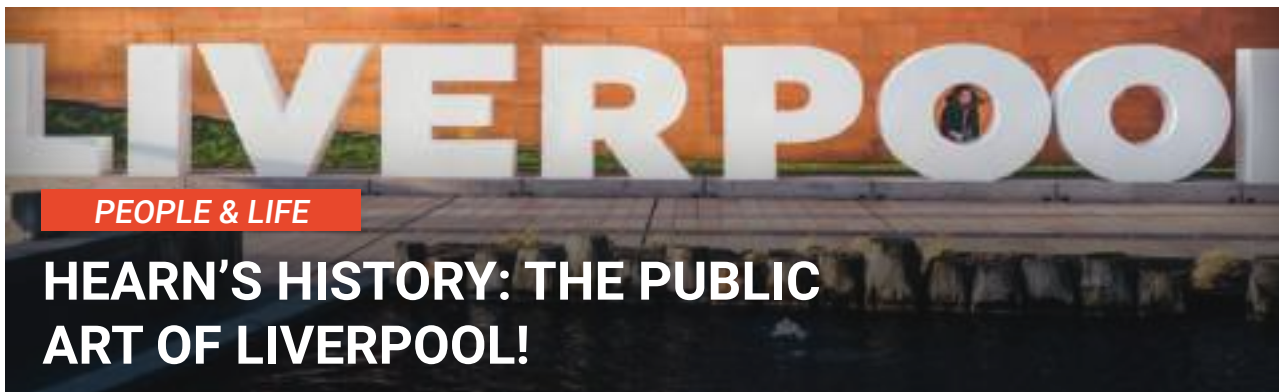
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In this regular La Vida Liverpool feature, guest writer and historian David Hearn educates us on some fascinating local history. With a wealth of knowledge, David gives talks and walking tours on subjects such as the history of Liverpool, wars, slavery, maritime, Liverpool's links with America and more. In this feature he talks us through the public art of Liverpool...

When we are in Liverpool city centre we always seem to be busy – trudging to work, shopping, meeting friends or any of a dozen other reasons but, if we take our time to look, Liverpool is a free open air art gallery. Let's have a quick look around the city centre to see if I can remind you of some things you may have seen before or show you some public art that you had not even noticed.



Over the arched window of the Lobster Pot opposite Central Station you can see a loaded camel lying down – ruined at some stage by brackets being fastened around it for a long lost sign. Williamson Street is a narrow street off Church Street but on the building at the corner of this street and Church Street you can see two white bas reliefs of twin-tailed mermaids holding sheets full of coins. These are by the great Liverpool sculptor Tyson Smith and the building was originally a bank designed by the world class Liverpool architect Herbert J. Rowse.



Very high on the Basnett Street wall of the TK Max shop there are a number of wonderful carvings but perhaps the most interesting one shows a First

World War tank bristling with guns. Countless people walk past this every day, blissfully unaware of its existence.



Liverpool's Cenotaph in front of St George's Hall is accepted as one of the most prestigious war memorials in Britain. Designed by Lionel Budden of the University of Liverpool and with bas reliefs by Tyson Smith it manages to be both simple and dramatic at the same time.

On one face there are people mourning the loss of loved ones during the war – in the section shown here there are four people, the couple on the left appear to be wealthy and are dressed in fine clothes but the young woman third from left clearly cannot afford shoes and stands bare-footed. It didn't matter if you were a millionaire or poverty stricken the loss of a loved one was equally distressing.



It may sound like a silly question but where in Liverpool would you find a carving of some balls of wool and two knitting needles? The answer is on the Hope Street side of the building that is on the corner of Hardman Street and Hope Street. This building was once the School for the Blind and knitting is one of the skills that was taught there.





Even if UNESCO have removed Liverpool from the list of World Heritage Sites the City remains a “~Maritime Mercantile city” as proved on many buildings around the city and none more so that the magnificent portrayals of Mercury – the God of trade and commerce and Neptune – the God of the Sea which can be found on the front of the Adelphi Hotel.



The Spirit of Liverpool is almost always represented by a woman except, of course, the representation of Liverpool Resurgent on the former Lewis's building. This well known Liverpool landmark was created by Jacob Epstein but how many people walk past the three bas reliefs created by the same artist on the same building? The images of children were inspired by Epstein watching his grandchildren and their friends playing.



Not all art in Liverpool is “old” nor is it all formal, indeed in a city where the only people who walk alone are those who want to here is a message to the whole city from an unknown street artist. Simple and perhaps not the most sophisticate design, but nice all the same.



You may, or may not, be surprised to meet a walrus on a wall in Rainford Gardens off Matthew Street. Whilst revellers are living it up at The Cavern Club, The Grapes and many of the vibrant venues on the party street, taking photos with the Cilla statue, most of them will be unaware of this colourful character.



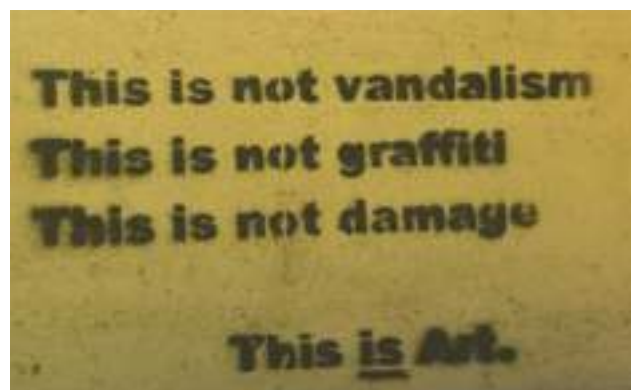
While I was wandering through Harrington Street looking for suitable images to photograph I suddenly became that I was being photographed myself. This image of Paul McCartney is by the talented local artist Paul Curtis.



The statue of Eleanor Rigby by Tommy Steele in Stanley Street sits on a bench and is a popular place for people to have their photographs taken but have you noticed that on the bench there is a carving of a copy of the Liverpool Echo and on top of that is a tiny bird?



“Street Art” may not be to everyone’s taste but it is part of modern culture and there are some very talented artists creating work all over the city so let’s leave the last word to an unnamed street artist in Lower Castle Street....



The next time you’re in the city, if you’re not in a crazy rush to be somewhere, take some time to have a look around. The city is full of little surprises and it’s a free public art gallery for those with a keen eye. And if you see a guy staring at a building for hours, that’ll be me!

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## LINDA B: LIFE IS A LOVE STORY....

Welcome to our quarterly feature from our resident life coach, Linda B! Linda B is a leading international life coach from Iceland and is a LET Communication Consultant, Trauma Resiliency Model expert, Former President of the Icelandic Coaching Federation and Board of Icelandic Women's Business Association.

We met Linda whilst working with global charity, The Unity Of Faiths Foundation, as she was one of their Ambassadors. Linda is an inspiring woman with a wealth of knowledge about social issues and she is also a published author. Her latest book, *Book Of All Seasons*, is a book of useful life advice and quotes and has been met with critical acclaim globally. Here's her latest La Vida feature....

*I believe we often forget what an incredible gift life truly is. We rush through our days, unaware that we are writing our own love story — one page at a time. If we want our story to be beautiful, meaningful, and worth rereading (by ourselves and others), we need to be mindful of what we put into it. Here are a few essential ingredients:*

### Self-Love

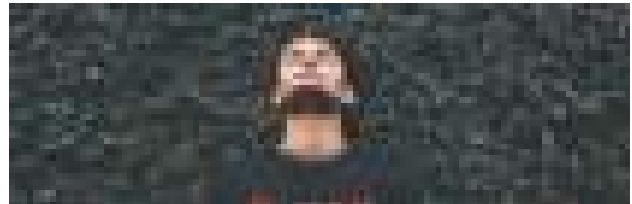


*When I talk about self-love, I'm not referring to selfishness — though that's a common misconception. Healthy self-love means tending to our well-being and striving for balance in body, mind, and spirit. Self-love shows up in the way we care for our hygiene, the food we choose, how we present ourselves, and how we treat others.*

*Self-love also knows that some days, we fall short of our ideal selves — and on those days, we need self-compassion, a pat on the back, and a gentle reminder that we're doing our best. Self-love is the foundation for loving others. If we cannot love ourselves or appreciate the life we've been given, we cannot offer love in a whole and healthy*

*way. We cannot give what we do not have. Self-love is a sacred agreement between you and life itself — a love story authored by you, for you.*

### Respect



*When we fully grasp that life is a gift, we begin to treat it with greater reverence. A deeper kind of respect emerges — one that fills our hearts and influences our actions. We realize that life, as delicate and miraculous as it is, requires care and tenderness.*

*This means we don't allow others to treat us poorly, and we stop doing so to ourselves. We live in gratitude and mindful presence — with respect for ourselves, for nature, and for the miracle of being alive. We accept ourselves, wherever we are on life's path. And we forgive ourselves for being human.*

### Commitment and Responsibility

*We hold the responsibility that comes with freedom. Each day, we create ourselves*



anew. We are responsible for how we feel — our thoughts, our self-talk, and the energy we release into the world. We do not abandon ourselves or escape into addiction or avoidance.

*Instead, we show up for our lives and own our emotions. In doing so, we remain loyal to ourselves and to life. We are also responsible to our families, our communities, and the Earth itself. We engage with everything around us through the lens of love and care.*

## **Boundaries**



*We must set healthy boundaries in our lives — and with those we interact with. We do not tolerate abuse, manipulation, or disrespect. We don't say yes when we mean no. We draw lines around harmful words and actions and refuse to be victims. We choose instead to become victors — by protecting our worth, our peace, and our well-being. Boundaries are not walls. They are bridges to healthier relationships — with ourselves and others.*

## **Honouring Our Dreams**



*Our dreams matter. They reveal what kind of life we long to live. They guide us toward our purpose and help us take the necessary steps to achieve what we truly desire. Everything you have today was once just a dream — whether it brought you joy or pain. If you're not satisfied with where you are, dare to dream again. And create something new. We are powerful creators. Our words, our vision, and our action steps are the magic wands. As Nike said: Just do it. Go after the life you truly want.*

## **Standing By Yourself**

*Respect your values, beliefs, and opinions — and don't let anyone belittle them. They form the essence of who you are. But let's not fall into the trap of thinking our views are the only truth. They arise from our unique experience of the world. Standing by yourself means not shrinking for the sake of popularity or falling into co-dependency with those who try to control your voice or your emotions. Stand strong in your truth if it's born from your heart and reflects your soul's deepest knowing.*

## **Cheering Yourself On**



*We should be our own biggest cheerleaders — especially in the moments that demand courage and resilience. When we rise after failures and hard times, it's because we've learned to love ourselves without conditions. This kind of love doesn't just happen — it requires awareness, growth, and the willingness to emerge from the cocoon, like the butterfly.*

*And as we grow, we often feel a deeper desire to understand the world around us. With knowledge comes empathy — for different cultures, beliefs, and paths. And that, in my view, is how we begin to create heaven within ourselves and peace on Earth.*

## **In Closing**

*To grow in love — for ourselves, nature, and life itself — is to lay the foundation for a more healed world. One that our children and their children can inherit with hope. A worthy mission, wouldn't you say?*

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# INSPIRING WOMEN WIRRAL

Showcasing some of the incredible women from  
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INSPIRING WOMEN

## FROM BURNOUT TO MULTI-MILLION POUND TRAVEL AGENCY!

A mother of two from Wirral is celebrating her travel agency business becoming a multi-million pound turnover company, just five years after she set up the business. Sorrel Ashton, 36, set up Sorrel Travel in March 2020, just before Covid lockdowns, but despite that has enjoyed £2.5 million in sales to date.

As a franchisee of Travel Counsellors, Sorrel offers her clients 'hidden gem' holidays – specialising in bespoke tailored holidays and drawing on her extensive knowledge of travel. Using agents on the ground all over the world, she supports local independents and provides boutique holiday experiences that most people wouldn't be offered using standard travel agents.

Sorrel gets paid a booking fee by suppliers and has a price parity with them, so she'll find the best deal for her customers and it doesn't cost them more to book through her. She takes the stress away from booking holidays and does all the work for the customer – like having a real life human expert with the reach of an online platform, yet without passing costs on.

Sorrel has developed a formidable reputation for customer service and going above and beyond, receiving a multitude of word of mouth referrals and becoming 'the go to girl' for unforgettable holidays of a lifetime. This has resulted in her hitting over £1 million in sales in 2024 and over £2.5 million since forming in 2020 – astounding considering there were two years of on and off lockdowns.

This achievement hasn't come without a great deal of stress however. Sorrel became a travel agent after hitting burnout balancing family life with her high pressure role as a Marketing Director for a global company. Then, just weeks after she launched her new business, Covid travel restrictions came in and her family had to rely on just one income.

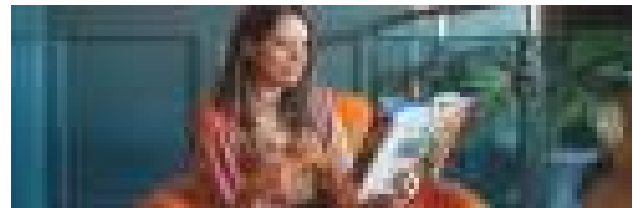
Sorrel said: *"I've always loved travel and have lived and travelled all over the world. I fell into a career in marketing and became very successful but it really took its toll on me trying to balance family life with it. I'd always have to rush to pick my kids up from school and they were often the last ones to be collected – not to mention the fact that I was always exhausted. This had a negative impact on us as a family."*

She continued: *"When I finally reached burnout and decided enough was enough, I took the leap of faith and fulfilled my dream of becoming a self-employed travel agent in March 2020. But then as we know, Covid travel restrictions came in and put all my business plans into disarray. My husband is a paramedic so was extremely stressed out anyway, never mind us struggling on one household wage."*

As part of her business model Sorrel only gets paid when clients travel, therefore money was extremely tight for her and her family. Despite all the uncertainty, she kept the faith and continued to book holidays in the hope that travel restrictions would lift. Thanks to lots of hard work, when restrictions fully lifted she had developed a good enough reputation to hit the ground running and enjoy rapid growth.

Sorrel explained: *"The travel industry is very competitive and I've only really had three full years as a business, so to become a multi-million pound turnover business already is something I'm really proud of. It's mostly down to my customer service – really getting to know people and the things they're looking for in a holiday and tailoring something magical to them."*

She continued: *"I always go the extra mile for people, whether that be arranging a rooftop proposal in Venice or a helicopter ride over The Rockies. I even managed to get one client a flight out of a war zone! I love what I do and making people's dreams come true! I've had to work really hard and have overcome adversities but I have so much more flexibility and time with my family now and that's priceless."*



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INSPIRING WOMEN

## THE MINDFULNESS EXPERT SAVING WOMEN FROM BURNOUT!

A mindfulness coach from Wirral is saving women from burnout through her unique wellbeing retreats at gorgeous locations on the peninsula. Julie Perrigo, 56, discovered mindfulness after reaching burnout herself — she gained a Masters degree in Mindfulness and has since been hosting ‘magical’ retreat days for women.

Julie’s retreat days take place throughout the year at idyllic locations in Wirral and last 4-6 hours, including mindfulness, meditation, calming exercises, stress reduction techniques, connecting with other women, nutritious food and more. Each retreat day has a different theme and includes little gifts such as limited edition branded candles and meditation tools.

Having helped hundreds of people through 1-2-1 coaching, online courses and the retreats since creating ‘Just Breathe’ in 2020, the feedback has been profound — with some saying working with her has been ‘life changing’. The retreat days have been particularly well received as they not only give women an escape from the daily hustle and tools to take away, the connection with other women is also a magical aspect.

With expertise in the mind, emotions and neuroscience, Julie gained a Masters in Mindfulness in 2019 after reaching a crossroads in her life. Amazed by the impact that her new knowledge and tools had on her own life, she quit her job in I.T and created Just Breathe in 2020 — with the aim of giving others the tools to lead calmer, less stressful lives.

Julie said: *“We spend a good deal of our energy focusing on our external world, trying to solve situations we cannot control. When we look within, we’re able to work out what we truly need and that is where the magic happens. This is where mindfulness can take us.”*

Speaking of her journey, Julie explained: *“As a child I suffered a great deal of bullying at school. Now that I have an understanding of neuro-science, I can see how that shaped my life. I studied hard to ‘prove them wrong’ and gained degrees however I became an unhappy workaholic in I.T. I thought it was just stress but on reflection, I probably had underlying anxiety amongst other things.”*

*“It was such a profound experience that I wanted to learn more, so I enrolled on a Mindfulness Masters programme at Aberdeen University. What I learned about the mind, emotions and neuroscience changed my life so I qualified as a teacher with the Mindfulness Association.”*

With her new found knowledge and tools, Julie founded Just Breathe and set out to help others control their minds and live a calmer, more balanced life. The online courses she’s created have been popular for a wide range of people attracting international clients including men who don’t want a face to face discussion but prefer to follow the course at home in their own time.

Her retreats have had striking feedback, with one woman recently saying: *“The whole day was just incredible it exceeded all my expectations. The welcome, location, food, content, pace and overall experience was just incredible. Julie’s pace led the group along seamlessly and the tasks were perfect. The mindfulness sessions were embedded into the day for maximum effect and I left with a just had a massage feeling of chillness and contentment.”*

Julie has various retreat days booked throughout 2025 — starting at just £75 and featuring a wide range of activities, practises, connection and nutritious food. The groups are intimate and always sell out, therefore early booking is essential. She also offers a free consultation to provide information about mindfulness and discuss 1-2-1 and online services available.



FOR MORE INFO & TO BOOK A RETREAT VISIT  
JULIE’S [JUSTBREATHESOLUTIONS.CO.UK](https://www.justbreathesolutions.co.uk) OR  
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INSPIRING WOMEN

## WIRRAL MIND COACH NAMED ONE OF UK'S BEST FEMALE ENTREPRENEURS!

A multi-award winning mind coach from Wirral has been named one of the UK's best female entrepreneurs by Small Business Britain's 'f:Entrepreneur' campaign. Alison Blackler founded 2minds Limited in 2010 and has helped thousands of people and businesses unlock their full potential by using psychology and the power of the mind.

One of the best mind coaches in the country, Alison helps many people — from those who are 'lost' and lack purpose to those who face issues such as stress, anxiety, burnout, self doubt and more. Featured by The Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, Metro, BBC and others, she is also a motivational speaker and author and has worked with the likes of Sainsbury's and BMW.

Through her expertise in human behaviour, combined with a practical and results-oriented approach, Alison delivers impactful coaching and development programmes — whether that be on a 1-2-1 basis or within businesses. She empowers individuals to unlock their potential, build resilience, and achieve their goals — with many profound case studies and testimonials.

One of Alison's clients recently said: *"We have worked with Alison for more than 3 years and she has been integral to us as a team providing us the tools for growth, team cohesion, and communication. We wouldn't operate as a team like we do without her guidance and leadership. On a personal level, there are not enough words to describe how she has helped me become mentally resilient and confident!"*

Another said: *"I thoroughly recommend Alison and 2minds. Alison is a superb observant listener; she is an excellent and insightful coach. Running a small business by myself, it has been invaluable to me to review the way I handle stressful situations, allocate my time resources and improve my business relationships, with someone who is as knowledgeable and empathetic as Alison."*

Alison's journey began when she was young and had no confidence — with limiting beliefs holding her back — but things changed when she started to understand her own mind. She studied and learnt more about the way that humans are wired and this enabled her to challenge her inner critic and the unhelpful thoughts. She founded 2minds in 2010 and

has since transformed the mindset and lives of many.

Alison explained: *"When I was younger, I did not believe in myself like I do now. I have been on a gradual learning curve for many years. The wealth of my journey started to unfold when I became curious about my thoughts and realised that I could not free myself from my 'baggage' and limiting beliefs without understanding its purpose and reason, and thereby change my thinking."*

Having just entered her 15th year in business, Alison has just been awarded Executive Coach Of The Year 2024 at the Innovation & Excellence Awards. To add to this, she has now been recognised amongst 100 inspirational female entrepreneurs from across the country, as part of the Small Business Britain campaign to celebrate the multi-achievements of women running businesses in the UK today.

Michelle Ovens CBE, founder of Small Business Britain, said: *"It's wonderful to have Alison from 2minds feature in this year's #Also100. It is vital that we recognise the impressive contribution of the UK's female business owners and do all we can to support and encourage them throughout their entrepreneurial journey, from start-up to scale-up. As well as making a huge economic contribution to the UK, female entrepreneurs also create a wider positive impact that ripples across society and local communities too."*



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INSPIRING WOMEN

## LIVERPOOL LIFE COACH RECEIVES TOP AWARD!

A Liverpool-based life coach has been recognized with the prestigious 'Life Coach of the Year' award at the National Coaching Awards. Angela Spencer, CEO of Virago Wellness, received the accolade for her outstanding work in helping hundreds of women rediscover themselves through empowerment and self-discovery.

Through Virago Wellness—named after the Latin word for 'a strong, brave, and courageous woman' Ange provides 1:1 coaching, group programs, events, and retreats, supporting women of all ages and backgrounds on their journey to self-rediscovery. Since launching in 2020, she has received countless heartfelt testimonials from women who say working with her has been truly life-changing.

In a world where women juggle multiple roles—mother, daughter, partner, business owner, employee, and more—it's easy to feel lost. This was exactly the case for Ange at age 36. Despite a successful career and a happy family life, she felt a deep sense that something was missing.

Balancing demanding work hours with home life, she found herself burned out, overwhelmed, and disconnected. Seeking guidance from a life coach, she was asked a simple yet profound question: "Who are you?" Her answer focused on what she did rather than who she truly was. That moment sparked a powerful journey of self-discovery, leading her to retrain as a life coach and dedicate her life to helping other women reclaim their sense of self.

Reflecting on her journey, Ange shared: *"On paper, I had the life I always wanted—my wonderful husband, our home, a strong career, and two beautiful children. Yet, deep down, I felt like something was missing. Anxiety, stress, and even panic attacks became part of my daily life. I realised something had to change."*

She continued: *"I committed to prioritising myself, and the more I reconnected with who I truly was, the stronger I became. I wanted other women to experience that same transformation, so I walked away from my corporate job, trained as a coach, and founded Virago Wellness. Within six months, 125 women had worked with me, proving that I wasn't alone—so many women were struggling with the same disconnect. Almost five years and hundreds of*

*transformations later, I've never looked back."*

In addition to her coaching work, Ange is also the Co-Founder of Trinity Wellness CIC, a collective of wellbeing professionals dedicated to bridging the gap for women in society. Trinity Wellness provides physical, mental, and emotional support to women and girls across Kirkby, Bootle, and Litherland, helping them build resilience and reclaim their power.

Angela's dedication and impact have not gone unnoticed. She has been recognized with multiple awards and accolades, including a nomination for Northern Power Women's 'Mentor of the Year' and a Silver Award for Best Coach at the Best Business Women Awards. Her most prestigious achievement to date being named 'Life Coach of the Year' at the National Coaching Awards—serves as the ultimate testament to her passion and commitment in an already fulfilling and rewarding career.

Angie summarised: *"I'm truly honoured to receive this award, especially knowing how many incredible life coaches there are across the country. It means so much to be recognised in this way. While awards are a wonderful celebration, the greatest reward for me is doing my job – seeing women feel connected to themselves and empowered about their future is the best feeling in the world!"*



Angela Spencer / Virago Wellness

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INSPIRING WOMEN

## HOW MY DAUGHTER'S CONDITION LED ME TO NATURAL HEALTH

A mother-of-two from South Wirral has become a natural health expert in the quest to help her daughter. Anne Archer turned to alternative therapies due to her daughter Helena's medical condition and has since helped hundreds of people live healthier, better lives through Anne Archer Holistic Health.

After embarking on a journey of education in natural health over 10 years ago, Anne has trained in Epigenetics, Homeopathy, Neuroplasticity, nutrition, the microbiome, BodyTalk, Lymphatic Drainage, Source Point Therapy, Bach flower remedies and Indian Head Massage to name just a few. She has helped clients with a wide range of conditions on a 1-2-1 basis and also through 'life changing' retreats. Anne's retreats offer a unique blend of practices, including yoga, meditation, sound healing, shamanic rituals, self-care workshops, sharing circles, and hydrotherapy.

Her holistic hen parties and private events are especially popular, offering a refreshing alternative to traditional celebrations. Each retreat includes nourishing, wholesome food and remains highly affordable, reflecting Anne's mission to make holistic well-being accessible to as many people as possible.

Anne's devotion and unwavering commitment to her daughter, Helena, who has cerebral palsy and complex developmental challenges, fueled her passion for natural health. She pursued all available conventional medical avenues, including speech therapy and physiotherapy, which proved beneficial.

However, concerned about medication side effects, surgical interventions and sensing a missing piece in addressing the interconnectedness of Helena's physical, developmental, and emotional well-being, Anne began a tireless search for natural therapies.

Anne explained: "As a mother, you'll do absolutely anything for your child's health. Raising Helena, who has cerebral palsy, presented immense challenges, including complex developmental needs and associated behavioural issues. I was driven to explore every possibility, delving into Eastern medicine, quantum and energy healing, and countless other therapies and techniques." Helena's journey with the BodyTalk System has been truly transformative, particularly in improving her posture, balance,

and coordination. BodyTalk techniques work by enhancing the reciprocal relationships between different body parts, ensuring they function together in greater harmony. Through this process, Helena experienced improvements in her gross motor skills, which are essential for everyday independence.

By addressing imbalances in the body's energetic and neurological pathways, BodyTalk helped Helena's muscles, joints, and nervous system coordinate more effectively. This newfound synchronization made movements smoother and more controlled, allowing her to sit, stand, and move with greater ease. As a result, she gained more confidence and ability in essential daily activities such as feeding herself, getting dressed, and navigating her environment and has avoided the need for surgeries.

Helena, now 26 years old, has surpassed expectations and continues to thrive without the need for medication or surgery, to the point that she is even living semi-independently in supported living. Driven by the results of her natural therapies, Anne decided to dedicate her life to helping others in the same way and has since helped hundreds of people with a wide range of conditions. As well as her 1-2-1 work, she also hosts the beautiful retreats.

Anne said: "After seeing the incredible results with Helena, it became my mission to help others. I pursued extensive studies and qualifications in a range of holistic modalities, and discovered powerful tools to empower families like mine to take control of their health."



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INSPIRING WOMEN

## WIRRAL'S LARGEST PILATES GROUP OPENS SECOND VENUE!

A Wirral Pilates group that started with just three people in a village hall has now opened a second venue in Moreton due to overwhelming demand! Pilates By Physio, founded by Deborah Paterson in 2013, has around 400 people through its doors in Heswall per week and has now opened a new venue at 215 Hoylake Road in Moreton.

Wirral's largest and only Physio-led Pilates Studio, Pilates By Physio has 46 classes ran by 13 highly qualified instructors who all have a Physio or Specialist Clinical training. Classes include Mat Pilates, Reformer, Antenatal, Postnatal, Online, 1-2-1 and even Cancer Rehabilitation, with profound testimonials from people of all walks of life — improving people's mental and physical wellbeing.

Pilates is a variety of exercises that are based around strength, posture, good breathing techniques and mind and body connection. Pilates is used by hospitals as well as private practices and gyms around the world and physiotherapists often call on it to help people rehabilitate from injuries. At Pilates By Physio, Pilates is practised to both keep people fit and avoid injury as well as to help people recover from injuries.

Pilates has actually been around since the first world war and Physiotherapists have been using it in their treatment plans for decades. Recently it is experiencing an unprecedented boom. This may be largely due to its ability to counteract the issues we are facing today with 'busy-ness' and more sedentary jobs. With the mindful movement and flow, you really do get an incredible workout from head to toe, targeting mind and body. People report better sleep, more productivity and reduced pain after attending Pilates.

What started as a small group of people in a village hall, Pilates By Physio has grown to become a huge community — with many people creating life-long friendships through the classes. Some regulars are still coming every week some 12 years on and people from various walks of life have spoken of 'life-changing' results from regular sessions.

Founder Deborah Paterson said: *"It's quite amazing when I think back to when I started out back in 2013 — just a handful of people in a village hall — and to now with hundreds of people coming every week*

*and having to open a second venue. It's really caught on and due to word of mouth we've grown to a level where we have no choice but to expand with a second venue."*

Deborah continued: *"I set up the business because I was a physio of 10 years at Clatterbridge and turned to Pilates due to pelvic pain when I was pregnant. Amazed at the results, I trained to become a Pilates instructor and hosted the classes at village halls, churches and gyms for years before opening the Heswall venue in the midst of the lockdowns in 2020. It's grown massively and we have an amazing team!"*

Classes are inclusive, accessible and great value — starting at just £12.50 for single class or £63 for a 6 week block. The new Moreton venue is opening at the end of March at 215 Hoylake Road and is taking bookings for classes and block bookings — with plans for the business to expand and open more venues in the future.



Pilates By Physio / 54 Pensby Road, Heswall,  
Wirral, CH60 7RE / 215 Hoylake Road, Moreton,  
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INSPIRING WOMEN

## WIRRAL MOTHER'S SIMPLE IDEA LEADS TO TOP FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR AWARD!

A mother-of-two from Wirral has turned a moment of family care into a global success story, earning recognition as one of the UK's top 100 female entrepreneurs by Small Business Britain's 'f:Entrepreneur' campaign. Deborah Monks, founder of Adaptive Apparel, has created a specialist clothing range designed to restore independence and dignity to people recovering from injuries.

The inspiration for Adaptive Apparel came during a challenging time in 2021 when Deborah's stepmother suffered a serious fall, leaving her unable to use her left arm for months due to a broken bone. Struggling to find suitable clothing that could accommodate her stepmother's cast and sling, Deborah realised there was a gap in the market for practical and comfortable alternatives, so she created her own.

Drawing on her lifelong love of sewing, Deborah designed and hand-stitched a range of cotton t-shirts with discreet hook-and-loop fastenings. These simple yet innovative garments provided a solution for her stepmother and quickly became a lifeline for others facing similar challenges.

Since its launch, Adaptive Apparel has reached people across the globe of all ages, from children to elderly individuals recovering from surgeries or injuries. The clothing has been praised by customers worldwide for its comfort, practicality and life-changing impact, receiving hundreds of heartfelt five-star reviews.

Deborah's work has even caught the attention of healthcare professionals, with hospitals like Arrowe Park on the Wirral recognising the value of her designs in helping patients maintain their dignity and independence by allowing them to get changed easily by themselves. Such is the impact of her simple but effective idea, she has now been ranked as one of the UK's Top 100 female entrepreneurs.

Reflecting on her journey, Deborah said: *"The idea started from a place of care and necessity. Seeing my stepmother lose her independence was incredibly hard. I never dreamed that sewing in my summer house, something I used as an escapism, would lead to this. But hearing from customers who say my clothing has made their recovery easier, restored their confidence and gave them independence has*

*been the most rewarding part of it all."*

Deborah's own life has been shaped by resilience and determination. Balancing a full-time job in the legal technology industry and raising a daughter with complex needs, she found solace in sewing. This creative outlet eventually became the foundation for a business that is now recognised on a national stage.

In being named one of the UK's Top 100 female entrepreneurs, Deborah will join other inspiring women at the House of Lords on International Women's Day 2025, an acknowledgment of her extraordinary impact. The f:Entrepreneur campaign, launched in 2017 by Small Business Britain, celebrates the achievements of female business owners while highlighting their contributions and impact to communities and the wider economy.

For Deborah, this recognition is about more than accolades. She said: *"What means the most to me is knowing that my work helps people regain a sense of independence during their recovery. It's been a humbling journey, and I'm so proud to be able to make a difference."*

A mother-of-two from Wirral has turned a moment of family care into a global success story, earning recognition as one of the UK's top 100 female entrepreneurs by Small Business Britain's 'f:Entrepreneur' campaign.



FOR MORE INFO ON INJURY CLOTHING VISIT  
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**INSPIRING WOMEN**

## THE WIRRAL BOUTIQUE IMPROVING MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH FASHION!

A Wirral boutique is improving women's mental health through fashion. Run by ethical fashion experts Hilary James and Sue Byrne, Wardrobe At The Cross in Neston stocks sustainable Scandinavian clothing with a big focus on body positivity and has launched a ground-breaking new personal styling service.

Celebrating their 2nd birthday, Hilary and Sue opened the gorgeous little boutique in April 2023 and the pair set out to empower women and make them more confident through expert advice, personal styling and beautiful clothing. Such is their success, five-star reviews have flooded in and the shop has just come second in the huge national New Independent Boutique of the Year category by Boutique Magazine.

Taking things to the next level, Hilary and Sue have launched a ground-breaking new personal styling service that offers women a free video styling and shopping service. From the comfort of their own home, women can book in a video consultation where Hilary or Sue will give them free style advice, show them around the shop and help them choose suitable clothing – even trying clothes on for them. The new service bridges the gap between in-store shopping and online shopping in a major way.

Whereas many women prefer to shop in-store, many are unable to due to the travel distance, mobility issues, anxiety, agoraphobia or other reasons, and many women become disheartened with online shopping due to never finding the right clothes for them.

What's more, Sue's background is in food and nutrition. She uses this experience to offer weight management services which support women – particularly those experiencing hormonal changes during perimenopause. Hormone shifts during this time can cause weight gain, which often affects confidence in clothing. Sue's services focus on hormone management and body confidence.

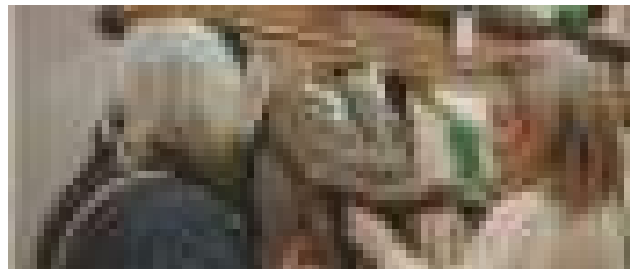
Both Sue and Hilary are dedicated to helping women find the right clothes that improve their confidence and body positivity. A recent survey from Parliament revealed that over 6 in every 10 women feel negatively about their bodies. Diet culture, post-partum pressures, being bombarded with images

of photoshopped, edited and sexualised women as well as the aging process and the lack of visual representation of older women are all things that women said cause them to suffer with poor body image.

Hilary said: *"Sue and I have many qualifications and years of experience in the fashion industry, but we've always shared the same dream of owning our own little boutique—one that promotes body positivity, supports positive mental health, and helps women feel confident in how they dress. We've pooled our skills and knowledge to give women expert style advice and help them choose clothes that are perfect for them."*

She continued: *"We love having women visit the store because we can connect with them and add that personal touch. But then we thought about the women who don't like online shopping or can't visit us—whether because Neston is too far or due to mobility issues, anxiety, or agoraphobia. That's when we came up with the idea of personal styling and shopping via video consultations."*

Wardrobe At The Cross stocks a wide range of stunning clothing including dresses, blouses, skirts, bags, accessories and more from sustainable Scandinavian brands like Saint Tropez, My Essential Wardrobe and Fransa. The boutique also stocks local ethically sourced products such as candles, bees wax products, jewellery and skincare brands.



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INSPIRING WOMEN

## COUPLE WHO SOLD HOME FOR WOMEN'S CLOTHING BRAND HIT SIX FIGURES!



A couple who sold their home to set up a women's clothing brand have hit six figure sales in the first year. Amy Goodman and husband Marc sold their family home to create MELYR – a clothing brand designed to help women feel more comfortable, particularly those going through the menopause and changes in their body.

Most people wouldn't gamble their home to launch a fashion brand in midlife – especially not in the middle of menopause. But for Amy Goodman, the risk felt necessary. "I couldn't find a pair of trousers that didn't dig in when I sat down," she says. "Everything either clung in the wrong places or made me feel frumpy. I didn't want 'flattering' to mean hiding – I just wanted to feel good again."

So, in her mid-40s, Amy and her husband Marc made a bold decision: they sold their dream family home, and used the proceeds to launch a womenswear label designed for grown-up bodies and real-life dressing. One year later, their slow fashion start-up, MELYR, has quietly built a loyal UK following, shipping thousands of orders nationwide and passing six-figure sales in its first year of trading.

*"It was terrifying," Amy admits. "We didn't have outside investment or a big team. Just a belief that we couldn't be the only ones fed up with how fashion made us feel."* Marc, who spent years running Giancarlo Ricci, a successful menswear store on Liverpool's Bold Street, brought retail and operations expertise. Amy brought a lifetime of lived experience – and a deep understanding of how style impacts self-worth, especially in the messy middle of life.

From a small warehouse in Birkenhead, the couple began designing clothes with stretch, movement and confidence stitched into every seam – timeless pieces that move with the body, rather than working against it. Amy didn't set out to be the face of the brand. But what started as a personal frustration has become something bigger – a brand built on real women, stories, and bodies that shift with age, hormones, and experience.

*"We've had women write to us saying they feel like themselves again," she says. "That something actually fits. They wore our trousers to a big meeting and didn't think about their waistband once. Those messages mean everything."*

MELYR's collections are small, slow and made with care – from responsibly sourced fabrics to inclusive UK sizing. But perhaps what's most refreshing is what they're not trying to be: not trend-led, not youth chasing.

As one customer recently said: "Like many women, my shape has changed in the past five years. Finding a top that works with my midriff without drowning me was impossible – until now. In my mind, MELYR nailed it."

With a growing community, 5-star reviews across Trustpilot and social media, and nearly 50,000 Instagram followers, the brand is picking up momentum – but Amy is clear that her mission hasn't changed. She explains: "I didn't do this to be an influencer. I did it because I needed clothes that understood me. If MELYR can make even one woman feel a little more confident in her skin, it's all been worth it."

A couple who sold their home to set up a women's clothing brand have hit six figure sales in the first year. Amy Goodman and husband Marc sold their family home to create MELYR – a clothing brand designed to help women feel more comfortable, particularly those going through the menopause and changes in their body.



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**INSPIRING WOMEN**

## **CROWDFUNDER LAUNCHED TO HELP PARENTS OF NEURODIVERGENT CHILDREN!**



A Crowdfunder has been launched to help fund a groundbreaking book that will help parents of neurodivergent children. Embracing The Extraordinary is a profound book written by parents for parents and is full of tips, advice and shared knowledge to help other parents on their journeys.



Led by Inspiring Minds CIC, Embracing the Extraordinary: The Reality of Parenting Neurodivergent Children, is more than just a book – it's a beacon of hope and understanding for families who often feel unheard.

This collaborative book features raw, honest stories from parents, experts, and educators, sharing real-life experiences and strategies that have helped children with ADHD, autism, and other neurodivergent conditions thrive.

The goal of this book is simple yet profound: to provide practical solutions, emotional support and a sense of solidarity to parents everywhere. Each chapter offers valuable insights into overcoming daily struggles, nurturing mental and physical well-being and celebrating the unique strengths of neurodivergent children.

But to bring this vision to life, your help is needed. To publish Embracing the Extraordinary and get it distributed to parents in Merseyside who need it the most, Inspiring Minds CIC are aiming to raise £20,000. This funding will help cover essential costs such as writing, editing, design and printing and ensuring that this resource reaches as many families as possible.



The book is being self-funded by dedicated contributors, including parents sharing their stories, but additional support to complete this vital project. Every donation will bring them closer to their goal of creating a comprehensive guide for parents, caregivers and educators of neurodivergent children.

By supporting this project, you're not just funding a book – you're helping to create a lifeline for families who feel overwhelmed and isolated. You're contributing to a movement of understanding, inclusion, and empowerment that will resonate far beyond the pages of this book. Every contribution, no matter the size, will play a crucial role in making Embracing the Extraordinary a reality. Your donations will:

Your donations will:

- Cover publishing costs to ensure the book is of the highest quality and widely accessible.
- Enable them to offer the book at a reduced price or for free to families in need, removing financial barriers for those who need it most.
- Fund workshops and training sessions to help parents and contributors refine their stories and share their insights.

All profits from the book will go directly back to Inspiring Minds Group CIC, supporting ongoing projects like financial literacy programs, entrepreneurial resources, and neurodiverse learning initiatives. This means that by supporting Embracing the Extraordinary, you're also contributing to a brighter future for countless families and children.



For those who donate, exciting rewards are on offer! For example, for every £20 donation you can pre-order a copy of the book and for every £40 donation, you receive a copy of the book and a free ticket to the big launch event. This big launch event will feature talks from guest speakers, live entertainment and a chance for parents to connect and seek support if required.

A Crowdfunder has been launched to help fund a groundbreaking book that will help parents of neurodivergent children. Embracing The Extraordinary is a profound book written by parents for parents and is full of tips, advice and shared knowledge to help other parents on their journeys.

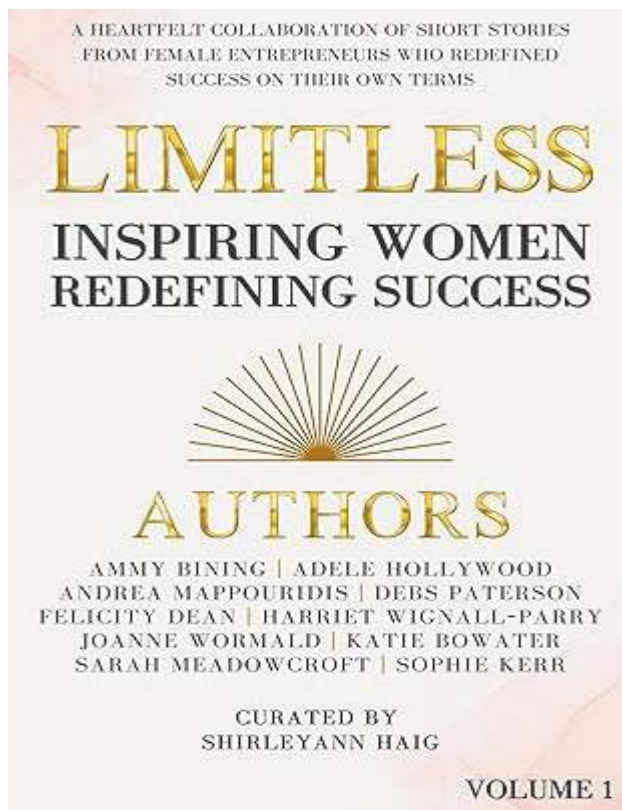
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**INSPIRING WOMEN**

## BOOK DESIGNED TO INSPIRE WOMEN BECOMES AMAZON BESTSELLER!

A book designed by female entrepreneurs from Merseyside to help inspire other women has become an Amazon Bestseller within just a few weeks of being published. *Limitless: Inspiring Women Redefining Success* is a powerful collection of real stories from women who've overcome obstacles, defied expectations and built success on their own terms.



Hosted by entrepreneur and ethical passive income coach Shirleyann Haig, this inspiring book showcases female founders, innovators, and leaders who have turned adversity into opportunity and challenges into stepping stones. Inside, there are honest accounts of resilience, reinvention, and redefining what it truly means to thrive in business, in life and beyond.

Born out of the Inspiring Women Wirral network, the book gives voice to real women who walked away from burnout, rigid 9-5s, trauma, or life-changing challenges to create freedom, flexibility and fulfilment through entrepreneurship. From battling imposter syndrome and navigating neurodiversity to surviving loss, redundancy, and reinvention, these women prove that success isn't about fitting into a box—it's about breaking it open.



The book has become a big hit on Amazon — becoming a No.1 Bestseller and No.1 Hot New Release in Biographies. Rave reviews have been flooding in, with many readers stating the book has been a game changer for them — helping them realise that they're not alone and that it is possible to find happiness in today's world where women have so many demanding roles.



Shirleyann Haig said: "I run *Inspiring Women Wirral* — a group of amazing women who are all doing great work in the world, despite having faced adversities and hardships. We decided to come together and create a book that tells our stories — covering a wide range of challenges — in order to help and inspire other women. It was written and published through Estelle Maher's TAUk Publishing within six months!"



She continued: *"Limitless is a love letter to every woman who ever felt like she had to choose between career and care, ambition and authenticity, or motherhood and money. These stories are here to inspire women everywhere to redefine what success means—without apology. If we can help one woman through this book, we've done our job. The feedback so far has been incredible and some of the reviews have been profound!"*

The official book launch is taking place at Liverpool Central Library on Thursday 10th July from 4.30pm and will also feature business networking — an opportunity to be one of the first to purchase a physical copy of the book and also to connect with local business leaders. The book will also be showcased at the inaugural Liverpool Book Festival in September.



Shirleyann has also recently been invited to lead a groundbreaking project at City of Liverpool College, where she's redesigning how business is taught to young people. From September, business owners—not just academics—will be delivering the Business Studies curriculum, using real-world experience to inspire the next generation. The Limitless authors are playing a key role in this shift, proving that success comes in many forms—and that lived experience can be the most powerful teacher of all.



Shirleyann summarised: *"The role of a woman in today's world is a demanding one and can often involve juggling running a business with the pressures of family life and being a wife, mother, sister, daughter. Then there are adversities, traumas and the unexpected things that happen in life that can hit hard. This book is a celebration of overcoming all this no matter how treacherous the journey and we hope it brings strength, courage and inspiration to other women."*



Limitless: Inspiring Women Redefining Success is a powerful collection of real stories from women who've overcome obstacles, defied expectations and built success on their own terms. The book is available on Amazon and the official launch is taking place at Liverpool Central Library on Thursday 10th July from 4.30pm and will also feature business networking.

**Limitless: Inspiring Women Redefining Success**

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HEALTH & BEAUTY

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MAGAZINE



## HEALTH & BEAUTY

# THE WIRRAL MENOPAUSE EXPERT GIVING WOMEN THEIR LIVES BACK!

A menopause expert from Wirral is 'giving women their lives back' by helping them navigate the difficult changes they face. Amanda Prince, 57, is a medical expert with years of experience and a member of the British Menopause Society who dedicates her life to helping other women after her own struggles.



Something that affects every woman, yet something that is lacking expert support, the menopause can be extremely debilitating. A recent survey from the British Menopause Society revealed that 36% of women said their menopause symptoms impacted their social life, 50% said it affected their home life, 50% said it affected their sex life and more than a third said it affected their work life.

Indeed, 42% of women said that their symptoms were worse or much worse than expected yet only 50% of women sought professional advice. Even those who do go to their GP are likely to only receive a brief consultation, leaving many women feeling disillusioned and alone, and this is why Amanda Prince is bridging the gap and offer more in depth support.



Amanda has a wealth of qualifications, experience and knowledge to help guide women through their changes. She offers an initial free consultation and following this, an in depth consultation that explores medical history, lifestyle and symptoms. This consultation is up to 60 minutes in length and provides women with the best management plan, treatment options and, when necessary, HRT prescriptions.

Amanda explained: *"My experience of menopause started when I was mid 40s although the signs were probably there earlier. Even though I am medically trained I wasn't educated in menopause back then and didn't realise or understand the impact it would have on my life. Looking back now realise that I had been experiencing hot flushes, sleeplessness, brain fog and fatigue that was at times all consuming."*



She continued: *"I also started to experience stiff and painful joints that prevented me from exercising for a couple of years. I never for one moment thought of menopause, you don't really as a busy working woman with children to support. You don't tend to think about getting older or putting your needs first. I was taking the contraceptive pill but without having periods it's difficult to monitor where you are with menopause."*



With a business background in health foods, holistic therapies and sports nutrition followed by a degree in biomedical sciences and 15 year career in the NHS as a Paramedic and later as a Physician Associate, Amanda started exploring solutions.

She managed to create a lifestyle that alleviated many of her symptoms and went on to gain more specialist qualifications in menopause, with the aim of helping other women in the same way. Amanda is also fully qualified in all aesthetics treatments and still has clinic days doing this as it's something that she enjoys — making people feel their best.





Amanda explained: *"I started pilates and it played a big part in my recovery from joint problems. I became pretty expert at it and continue it now. I can remember waking every morning at 3-4am and because I couldn't sleep, I'd do pilates — it's been a huge help throughout menopause. I'm also very health conscious and aware of my diet, making it as nutritious as possible, and this was so important."*

She continued: *"My HRT journey was a revelation. I felt like I was back to being me again. My energy levels and 'zest' returned and I felt like leaping out of bed in the morning instead of rolling over and going back to sleep. I was fortunate enough to have a medical background with skills and knowledge behind me but so many women lack support, so I've made it my mission to help as many women as possible."*



Amanda also offers Vaginal HIFU and Laser CO2 as a solution to symptoms commonly caused by menopause and childbirth. HIFU utilizes focused ultrasound energy to stimulate collagen production and promote tissue re-modelling in the vaginal walls and as it has grown in popularity, over 90% of women who have tried it report positive results. HIFU not only enhances vaginal tightness but also plays a crucial role in improving lubrication, which significantly enhances sexual pleasure.

CO2 vaginal rejuvenation laser is also a life changing treatment for women with these symptoms — it gently delivers energy to the vaginal skin wall, creating small dots of thermal trauma and causing collagen denaturation and production of new collagen. Amanda is a fully qualified aesthetics practitioner and is now a champion of Vaginal HIFU and Laser CO2 treatments to change women's lives.

Amanda has some profound testimonials, with one client saying: *"I had given up on my GP, he just didn't take me seriously. I am now looking forwards to a better future."* Another client stated: *"Thank you so much for your help and support, these past 2 years have been horrendous. I had lost faith in being listened to."*

Amanda Prince is a menopause expert from Wirral. She has Dip HE Paramedic Practice, Pg Dip Physician Associate Studies, Menopause Special Skills Course and Management of Menopause qualifications. She is a member of British Menopause Society, Faculty of Sexual & Reproductive Healthcare, Royal College of Physicians, Faculty of Physician Associates and Health & Care Professions Council. She is CQC registered and also offers menopause support in the workplace.

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HEALTH & BEAUTY

## NEW SKIN CLINIC OPENS WITH GROUNDBREAKING TREATMENTS!

A plush new all-natural skin clinic has opened within The Port Of Liverpool Building, offering a number of treatments including the ground-breaking Plaxel Plasma Pen. Opened by experienced practitioner Paula Rimmer, Plaxel Plasma Liverpool is receiving incredible feedback from clients – notably for the revolutionary new skin treatment.



Plaxel Plasma Liverpool offers hyperbaric oxygen facials, crystal clear microdermabrasion, all natural skin boosters, cold plasma, plasma micro channelling and more, but it's the Plaxel Plasma Pen that's got everyone talking. A non-electric solution that all other pens offer, the innovative new pen uses true plasma and has a quick recovery time and incredible results.



Unlike other products currently on the market, Plaxel+ is true plasma and cold plasma technology – not electric energy. The pen uses cutting-edge technology to stimulate the production of collagen and elastin in the skin, resulting in non-surgical and non-invasive skin tightening and lifting. A big hit in the U.S, Plaxel Plasma Liverpool is the first and currently the only clinic in the North West to use it.



Located at one of Liverpool's most iconic buildings on the waterfront, the clinic has been offering fantastic value packages that often combine a number of treatments. From lips, crows feet and eyes to cheeks, jawline, neck and body, the results from the Plaxel Plasma Pen have been incredible and far superior to many other electric pens out there.

Clinic Owner Paula said: "I've worked in beauty and aesthetics on and off for over 35 years and discovered the Plaxel Plasma Pen thanks to my son who lives in the U.S. I looked into it and saw how it was taking off in a big way out there so decided to take the qualifications and bring the technology to Liverpool, combining it with other state of the art treatments in a gorgeous new waterfront clinic."



She continued: *"Unlike other devices, PLAXEL+ features true plasma technology, which provides faster recovery, less trauma and enhanced results compared to any other device on the market. It's a non-invasive device which works by generating plasma through a targeted micro-beam which causes sublimation and results in no influence on surrounding tissue. It's a versatile device that can be used for a wide range of treatments."*



Paula has also recently introduced Plaxel Plasma RF EMS non surgical face lifts. This powerful muscle lifting, completely natural solution has minimal down time and last 3-5 years minimum. The treatments take place over a six weeks and there's nothing quite like it out there! Other new treatments that are completely natural solutions are HBOT Hydrogen/Oxygen steam therapy, RF Ultrasonic and Oxygenations Skin Analysis.

She has also introduced EMRFACE -- electronic muscle stimulator device that's the first on the market and utilised the simultaneous application of both the synchronized RF and high-intensity facial electrical stimulation energies. Synchronized RF remodels & smooths skin by heating the dermis and increasing the levels of collagen and elastin fibers. While the high-intensity facial electrical stimulation technology restores & elevates support of facial tissues by selectively contracting muscles and increasing density & quality of muscle structure.



Paula owns Plaxel Plasma Liverpool, based at The Port Of Liverpool Building on the Liverpool waterfront. Through the clinic, she offers hyperbaric oxygen facials, crystal clear microdermabrasion, all natural skin boosters, cold plasma, plasma micro channelling and the revolutionary Plaxel Plasma Pen technology that's making waves in the industry.

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HEALTH & BEAUTY

## MICHAEL FRANKS: LIVERPOOL'S ECO FRIENDLY SALON!

Liverpool's highest rated and multi-award winning salon, Michael Franks, has established itself as a 'Green Salon' — with a number of measures in place to ensure their impact on the environment is limited. The salon has teamed up with Kevin Murphy and Green Salon Collective to become as eco friendly as possible.



Michael Franks, based at Liverpool One, is the highest rated salon on Salon Spy and has won many awards such as Best Salon In Merseyside, the L'Oreal Colour Trophy and Diversity & Inclusion Award at the LGBTQ+ Business Awards. The team have also appeared at Download Festival, London Fashion Week, Paris Fashion Week, Copenhagen Fashion Week and The Liverpool Wedding Show during this past year.

To add to the salon's commitment to innovation and forward thinking, green initiatives have been integrated into their operation. They've partnered with Kevin Murphy hair products — using recyclable packaging, paper and cardboard, product shape design, investing in regenerating and improving areas where ingredients are harvested, treating water and more.



Michael Franks also works with Green Salon Collective — such as collecting and recycling waste chemicals through hair colouring such as foil and colour tubes, recycling waste properly and collecting and recycling hair for things such as oil spills in rivers, lakes and sea. The salon uses disposable and compostable towels to cut down on energy when washing and drying and is on a green energy tariff.

Salon owner and celebrity stylist, Michael Franks, said: *"We take great pride in being ethical in everything we do. We're an inclusive salon and price our services on hair length rather than gender, for example, and cater for different religions such as Muslims who don't wish to show their head in public. The environment is a big area of focus for us too, as salons do use a great amount of energy."*



He continued: *"At Michael Franks Salon our aim to create an environment that both the client and staff member feel comfortable and confident to be themselves. As part of this we want to make sure they are happy with the choices that we make, one of the choices we make is to look do our best to limit the negative effect we have on the environment."* In addition to running Liverpool's No.1 salon and



leading the way in many initiatives, Michael also engages in great causes. He and the team recently provided free services for the Strictly For Liverpool Women's Hospital dancing event that raised £75,000 for the hospital and the salon is involved in the Hair & Care project for blind women and Hair Reborn that offers free treatments for chemotherapy patients.

**Michael Franks / 33 Strand Street, Liverpool, L1 8LT / 0151 345 6148**

**TO BOOK A TREATMENT AT MICHAEL'S SALON VISIT [MICHAELFRANKSHAIR.CO.UK](http://MICHAELFRANKSHAIR.CO.UK) OR CALL 0151 345 6148**

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TRAVEL

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## TRAVEL

# LA VIDA LIVERPOOL EXPLORES ICELAND!

The greatest gift La Vida Liverpool has given me is friendship and thanks to this magazine I have met some truly wonderful people during the past seven years. One of those people is Icelandic life coach Linda Baldvinsdottir and we have worked together on some beautiful collaborations, including our Happiness Podcast.

In January 2025 she visited Liverpool with her fantastic partner Björgvin and it was great to show them around – including a historic pub crawl. In May 2025 they returned the favour in a massive way as I stayed with them in Iceland – a four day whirlwind of exploration, nature, culture and connection.



I flew out on Sunday morning (just £200 through Easyjet and there are now flights from Liverpool too) and arrived at midday after less than three hours in the air. I was greeted by my two dear friends and glorious sunshine – the weather was exceptional during my stay and was, in fact, one of the hottest few days in May on record.

Whereas Icelandic winters are long and dark with only three hours of daylight most days, the spring and summer days are the exact opposite – with very little darkness at night – yet often rainy and very rarely above 20 degrees. I was extremely lucky to experience some incredible weather during my visit!



The Icelandic weather saved its best for me, it seemed, and an epic mini-adventure commenced from the moment I arrived. I was met at the airport by the warm, welcoming smiles of Linda and Björgvin and was whisked away on an awe-inspiring road trip straight away!

The first thing that struck me was the barren, rugged and other-worldly terrain, before driving through Grindavik – a small town located perilously in a danger zone with the threat of an earthquake at any time. Only the brave, stubborn and foolish remained living in the mostly abandoned town.



We travelled along many winding roads as I looked out of the window in awe at the alien landscape, with mountains bearing down on us wherever we were, before reaching our next destination. The blue lagoon at Kerið was truly breathtaking, whether admiring it from above or at surface level, and I managed to capture a beautiful photograph of my hosts at the basin of the lagoon.



We then visited Friðheimar or 'World Of Peace' – a famous tomato plantation and eatery that sells THE best tomato soup imaginable! Not to mention tomato beer, tomato cocktails, tomato ice cream and pretty much anything you can think of using tomato as the main ingredient. It was here that the reality of the cost of things in Iceland dawned on me – all I can say is that most things are double the cost of the UK so basically, take twice the spending money you'd usually budget for.





As we travelled further along the mesmerising land, Linda and Björgvin answered my endless questions about their country. They told me about their menacing volcano Eyja Fjalla Jokull (I still can't pronounce it, even after Linda buying me a mug with its name on) — a volcano that erupted in the 1700s and caused widespread deaths in Iceland and as far as in Europe. It was a stark reminder of the power of nature in this surreal country.



The next stop on our epic road trip was Seljalandsfoss and gljúfrabúi waterfalls — powerful and beautiful in equal measure, with a rainbow posing perfectly across them for a photograph. We explored the caves and waterfalls that gushed into them — the sheer beauty of nature at its finest!



We then headed to the capital, Reykjavik — a quaint and charming little harbour city with lots of cool bars and restaurants. If you visit one of the bars, be sure to play 'Spin The Wheel' where you can win up to 10 beers for the price of two — saving you a fortune if you win — although on second thoughts, don't listen to me!



Linda and Björgvin were the best hosts and I managed to get a few hours sleep despite it never truly getting dark. The following day, we visited the outdoor baths — a popular concept in Iceland (their tiny little hometown of Hafnarfjörður 20 minutes outside of Reykjavik has three) — where showering before entering is both mandatory and customary. It's these little things that set countries apart — I mean, could you imagine public outdoor baths in the UK? Absolute carnage for sure and good luck policing the hygiene rules!



We then embarked upon another epic road trip that I will never forget! Once again, the striking landscape captivated me as we travelled along roads that felt like they shouldn't be there — man-made concrete paths built for vehicles on an island where nature is at its most dominant.



Let's be truthful here, there's only one winner in this battle and visiting the Gullfoss waterfall was a stark reminder of that — the sheer power and sound of the water was breathtaking and the thought of falling in was extremely humbling. I think we all need that realisation sometimes — that nature always wins and there is a greater force that rules us.

We next visited the Geysirs — spectacular and strange in equal measure. Yet again, nature showcasing its sheer strength and dynamism — this time through both heat and water. There really isn't a country like the 'land of fire and ice' and despite there being long, dark and bleak winters, Iceland remains one of the happiest countries on earth.

Linda and Björgvin taught me a saying, þetta reddast (pronounced Theta Reddast), which essentially means 'we've been through so much already, so everything is going to be alright'. I think the fact that Icelanders have survived, thrived and become happy on an island that's constantly under threat from volcanos and earthquakes is a most inspiring example of the strength of human spirit and this quote will remain instilled within me forever.



We enjoyed pizza and pints at one of their popular food halls before watching the stunning midnight sunset over the golf course and ocean in their picturesque hometown. Apparently, such is the light in the summer, they have golf tournaments that go on through the night!



The sunset was one of the best I've witnessed anywhere on the planet and I managed to sleep well again despite it being pretty much constantly daytime and never truly getting dark — I attribute that to the epic road trips, lots of conversation and laughter and one or two beers, of course.



On the third day I did a little work (this positive news machine won't run itself) before exploring Linda and Björgvin's hometown — a peaceful little fishing village where everything is so different, from the buildings to the way of life. The air is so clean and everything seems so basic, simple and relaxed.



I particularly enjoyed a couple of pints with Björgvin at a rather plush restaurant and bar overlooking the harbour — before being treated by Linda to the most spectacular lamb dinner. You know, I think it pays to be a good person — it can result in meeting friends for life from Iceland who take hospitality to another level!



As if things couldn't get any better, my gorgeous hosts whisked me away to the Sky Lagoon for a unique and invigorating experience. We enjoyed a few drinks in the giant hot tub overlooking the ocean and indulged in a spa journey — a delight for the soul, yet what filled me with the most joy was my connection with Linda and Björgvin. With every conversation our connection became stronger and I will forever cherish these very special days we shared together.



To end this whirlwind four day VIP tour of such an awe inspiring country, Linda and Björgvin took me to Fly Over Iceland — a simulator attraction in Reykjavik that takes you on a virtual reality flight over the country. We experienced a brief tour that delved into the history and culture of Iceland before embarking upon an immersive journey above the majestic island.

As incredible as it was, the thing that struck me the most was that during the cultural tour the words *þetta reddast* were mentioned by the mystical troll narrating on the large screen. This cemented my admiration for this country and its people — an island dominated by nature yet a place where the hardy and positive can thrive.

My adventure was complete with a few drinks in Reykjavik at a couple of the bars located on the city centre square — a very cultured and sophisticated city centre square in my eyes — before heading to one of Reykjavik's highest rated restaurants. The Icelandic capital is renowned for its fine dining and grillmarkaðurinn, The Grill Market, was certainly up there as one of the best dining experiences I've had in my life!





I was tempted to opt for something exotic such as puffin, reindeer or whale but was delighted with our set menu choice! The cool, basement setting played host to a fiesta of flavours, as we enjoyed a trio of seafood starters, the finest steak I've tried in a long time and heavenly desserts alongside silky smooth Malbec — every bite and every sip a sensation!



What made this dining experience so special was, of course, the company. Linda and Björgvin truly excelled themselves during these four days — both as hosts and as human beings. Linda, a wise, strong and motherly life coach paired with Björgvin, a calm, dependable and good man with a mischievous sense of humour, make a perfect couple and I am honoured to have been their guest on this adventure. And do you know what makes this story even more special?



I write this article having just received the incredible news that Linda and Björgvin have got married — a private affair announced to an outpouring of love on social media! Having shared unforgettable memories with this beautiful couple — first in Liverpool followed by my adventure of a lifetime in Iceland — I am absolutely delighted for them both from the bottom of my heart. To be a part of your journey is an honour and to be invited to your big wedding celebration party in October even more so — it seems there are more Icelandic adventures to come!



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## LIVERPOOL JU-JITSU LEGEND SUE KING GOES INTERNATIONAL!



Sue King is a highly respected figure in the martial arts community and the highest-ranking active female Japanese Ju-Jitsu practitioner in the UK. A Shihan, 7th Degree Black Belt, and dedicated Buddhist, Sue has also served as the Regional Officer for Ju-Jitsu in Liverpool. As the founder and owner of Team Mushin CIC, she passionately dedicates her life to empowering both children and adults, helping them improve their lives through the transformative practice of Ju-Jitsu.



Her school and Community Interest Company in Norris Green has saved countless children from lives of crime — getting kids 'off the street and into the gym' and there have been too many success stories to mention. Sue and her team instil key values and ethics into the pupils — using Sue's personal experiences as inspiration to show what's possible.

As featured by the Liverpool Echo, BBC Radio Merseyside, BBC North West Tonight, BBC News and BBC Sportsday, Sue's story has touched many people. As a child, Sue's mother died when saving her from a house fire — a tragedy that caused skin grafts that made her a target for childhood bullies. She then grew up as the sole carer for her seriously ill father, who was in hospital during the fire.

Sue started self-defence classes while in high school to deal with bullies and said it gave her "an escape from my reality, from home". Her father died in 2008, leaving her with funds she used to open her Ju-Jitsu school to give children a safe space to learn and has since dedicated her life to giving them better lives. Taking this one step further, she is now sharing her skills, knowledge and experiences across the globe.

Sue explained: "The past 12 months have been nothing short of incredible. Our gym has gone from strength to strength, with new classes added to support our growing community. We're especially proud of how our children's classes have thrived. I resumed training BJJ with my lifelong friend and Mushin coach, Steven Hughes. Our Ju-jitsu journey spans over 30 years, and it's been deeply rewarding to train with him again."

"Unfortunately, early on in the year I faced a significant challenge — a knee injury sustained during training that sidelined me for many months, preventing me from training and attending some UK seminars. While it was a difficult period, it reminded me of my motto of triumph over adversity and the importance of resilience and adaptation, values I strive to share with our students."

*"I was joined on these trips by my uchideshi Sean who travelled with me as my uke and his assistance was invaluable in delivering these seminars. Next year I'll be teaching and speaking in the UK alongside seminars in Norway, Belgium, Munich, and Portugal."*



Credit Annette Hasen Nielsen

Sue summarised: "I'm really looking forward to an exciting 2025. I'm releasing two books, launching the Warrior Mindset online course, and continuing to grow the Warrior Monk Podcast, which is now available on Podbean. At the school and CIC, we're planning even more events to bring our community together and make a positive impact."

Liverpool Ju-Jitsu legend Sue King has been travelling the world teaching and giving talks about her inspiring journey overcoming adversity. Having just celebrated 40 years of martial arts, the owner of the Muga Mushin Ryu Ju-Jitsu school in Norris Green is using her story to help inspire others internationally.

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**Main image credit Michael Townsend**



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