

Southport's Journey

Lewis Nickson
The power of kindness, community & growth

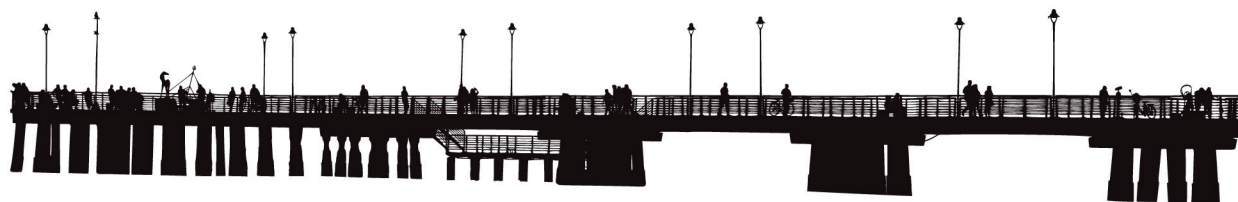
M.A.F
Loving moments captured

Southport College
An end of year show filled with talent and creativity.

What's On
Events, groups & charity support

Together, We Begin

This issue honours the courage to start again, the strength to grow, and the love that fuels every step. From bold business beginnings to quiet personal shifts—summer starts here.



Intro

Southport: The People, The Passion, The Legacy

Welcome from the editor

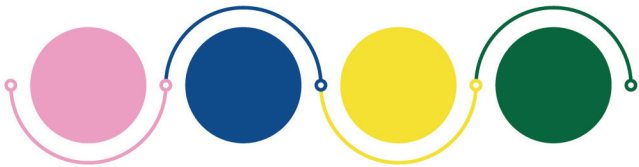


Welcome to the July edition of Southport's Journey. As summer settles in, Southport is buzzing—with sunshine overhead, exciting new developments in the air, and a renewed sense of pride throughout the town.

This issue marks a big milestone for us: we're officially launching our first ever printed edition of the magazine. To be able to hold Southport's stories in your hands—to feel the energy, creativity and colour of our town on paper—is something we're excited to share. But more than that, this moment is about legacy. It's about reconnecting with Southport's heritage and bringing back that proud feeling of being a Sandgrounder. This town has history, heart, and a spirit worth celebrating—and we're here to capture it, month after month.

We wouldn't be here without the support of you, our growing Southport's Journey community. Whether you've read along, reached out, shared your story, or supported someone else's—you've helped shape this. Thank you for being part of it—page by page, post by post, and story by story.

With pride,
Lizzie



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Your Journey starts here

Want to be featured or have an event to promote. Get in touch
southportsjourney@gmail.com

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Lewis Nickson

The Power of Kindness, Community & Growth

Lewis walks into the studio with a big smile and a warm hug, asking how I am before I even have a chance to offer him a coffee. That genuine energy? It's not for show. From the moment I first met him at a local networking event—new, nervous, and unsure—Lewis offered support, guidance and above all, friendship. He has that rare quality that makes you feel instantly at ease. No ego. Just presence.

That authenticity runs through everything Lewis does, and it's the heart behind his growing business, PolyUp. Based in Southport, PolyUp specialises in eco conscious sports, and safety surfacing—laying everything from vibrant playgrounds to commercial forecourts and football pitches. And it's growing fast. As of this summer, the team has four full-sized football pitches lined up across the country, with both national and international demand continuing to rise.

Alongside his brother Bobby and their third director Tom Bolton—who, like Lewis, lost his

father —the business has become something more than commercial. “Our dads were friends, both musicians, and now here we are, carrying that legacy forward. There’s something really special about that,” Lewis tells me. He speaks with purpose, and that energy bubbles over when he talks about helping others.

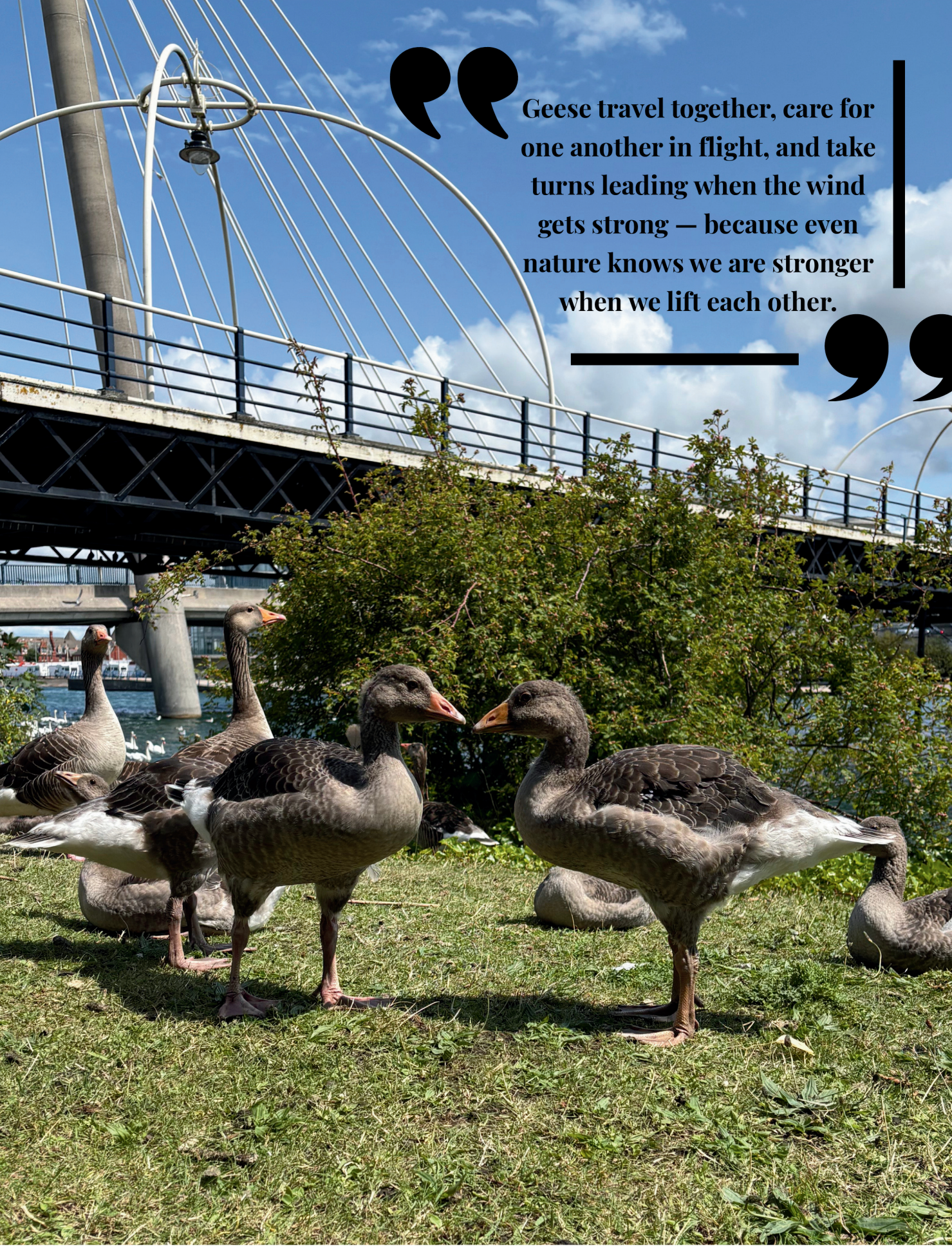
Mental health is one of those things Lewis refuses to shy away from. In recent years, he’s spoken openly about his own journey and the realities of running a business while staying emotionally grounded. He’s now speaking at The King’s Trust events, seeking to mentor 18–30-year-olds and proving that leadership and vulnerability can (and should) co-exist. “In sharing my mental health journey, I hope others feel they’re not alone—and that vulnerability can be a strength, not a weakness.”

His efforts haven’t gone unnoticed. Lewis was recently appointed as a Board Member of The British and Irish Trade Alliance, helping to strengthen trade, trust and business connections across the UK and Ireland. But ask him what excites him most? Supporting others. He lights up when talking about the walking networking group he’s launching—a space for local businesses to talk, move, and connect with people who just get it. This is a collaboration with Danny Noble from The Level Up Network, another passionate King’s Trust alum, and together they’re building something simple but powerful: real conversation, genuine connection, and support without suits or sales pitches. It’s wellness and networking, reimaged.

At his core, Lewis is a family man, a passionate Southport local, and someone who hasn’t let success distance him from his values. He’s currently championing a Disability Confident approach to hiring and making sure young people and small businesses have the tools they need to grow—just like he did.

Poly Up may be known for transforming spaces, but it’s Lewis’s capacity to transform people—with kindness, encouragement, and straight-talking support—that truly makes an impression. If you ever get the chance to meet him, you’ll know exactly what I mean.





“Geese travel together, care for one another in flight, and take turns leading when the wind gets strong — because even nature knows we are stronger when we lift each other.”

These two young geese, nose to nose in Southport's quiet wild corners, are more than just a springtime snapshot — they're a symbol of togetherness, instinctive care, and resilience. Geese migrate thousands of miles, and yet never leave one another behind. They rest, regroup, and grow — proving that the journey matters just as much as the destination, and that support, however quiet or gentle, is what carries us through.



Life's a journey

What's on this

July

Movies and Musicals

Southport Orchestra returns this summer with an exciting new concert that's bigger, bolder, and bursting with iconic tunes from the screen and stage.

Join us for Movies & Musicals: The Sequel—a follow-up to last year's amazing show—on Sunday 20th July at 2:30pm at the Oak Theatre, Scarisbrick Hall.

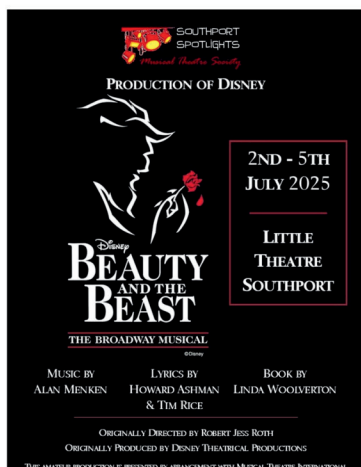
MOVIES & MUSICALS
THE SEQUEL

SOUTHPORT ORCHESTRA

Join us for an unforgettable afternoon with an incredible 60-piece orchestra, featuring sensational local singers performing beloved tunes from stage and screen!

**Sunday 20th July
2:30pm**

**Oak Theatre & Studios
Scarisbrick Hall
Southport Rd, L40 9RU**



Got something going on in Southport?
We're always on the lookout for local events to feature in our What's On page—
from community meetups to creative workshops, charity fundraisers, live
music, and everything in between. Send us the details at
southportsjourney@gmail.com and let us help spread the word!

WWW.SOUTHPORTSJOURNEY.COM

“


If trees could talk, they'd tell tales of first kisses,
childhood hide-and-seeks, whispered secrets,
and last goodbyes — and still, they'd stand
strong, asking for nothing in return.

”

”

Photograph taken in Hesketh Park in Southport

Trees are the great storytellers of the natural world – silent witnesses to the turning pages of time. They hold our memories in their rings and roots, standing tall through storms and seasons. Under their canopies, generations have played, cried, fallen in love, and found solace. They don't flinch when the world changes; they watch, they wait, they shelter. Every tree is a library of laughter, loss, and life – unwavering, grounded, and quietly majestic. When we pass beneath them, we're not just walking in shade – we're walking through stories.



Love Stories Begin Here

Every love story needs a setting. In Southport, it's the quiet dignity of Lord Street, the soft hush of the tide, the golden stretch of light across the pier. Couples don't just celebrate here—they write chapters. Proposals, anniversaries, the moments in between... this town offers a backdrop that feels honest, timeless, real.

Love in Southport isn't just witnessed—it's woven in. Into gardens, beach walks, whispered promises. A living narrative, personal and proud. Photography featured is by MAF Photography, whose work captures these stories with truth and care. Have a Southport love story to share? Send it to southportsjourney@gmail.com and you could be featured in our next issue.



Introducing MAF photography, capturing more than just moments. For Michael from MAF Photography, the path to capturing timeless moments didn't begin with a camera—it began with a second chance at life. A former painter and decorator for nearly a decade, Michael's journey into photography was sparked by a life-altering experience. In 2022, after suffering two

unexpected heart attacks, everything changed. While in recovery and feeling aimless, he picked up a drone to pass the time—and unknowingly reignited a creative spark that would lead to something far more meaningful. From there, MAF Photography was born—not just as a business, but as a mission: to capture authentic, emotional, and irreplaceable moments.



"I realised the job I was doing wasn't making me happy," Michael shares. "Life's too short not to love what you do."



Weddings quickly became Michael's speciality, each one reinforcing his belief in the beauty of connection.

"The bride and groom were so in love with their images... That's when I knew I'd found purpose," he says.

Based in Southport, Michael's camera rarely leaves his side. He has worked across the region, covering everything from intimate ceremonies to large-scale local events like

the Southport Flower Show and Southport Comedy Festival—where he now proudly stands as official photographer and sponsor. What sets MAF Photography apart is the heart behind the lens. Every photo is captured with intent, empathy, and a true understanding of what it means to freeze a feeling. For Michael, this isn't just a business—it's his second life, and he's living it doing what he loves.



Spotlight

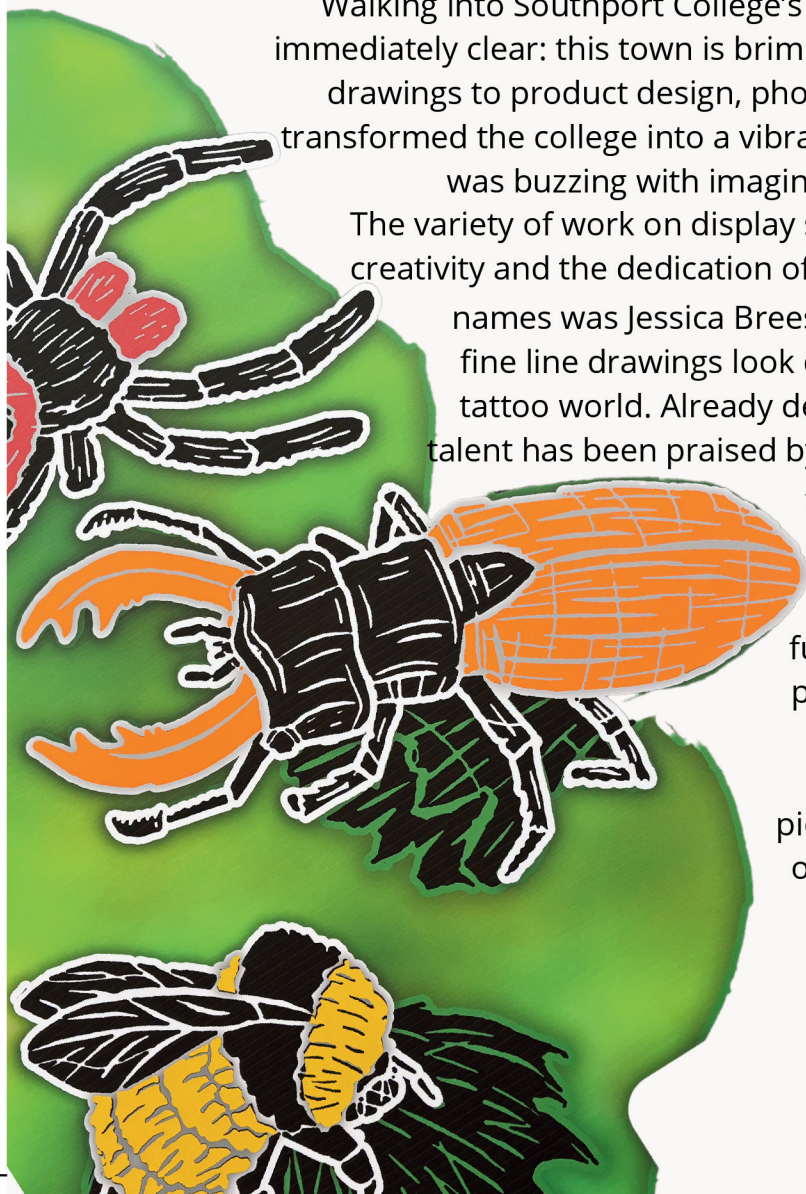
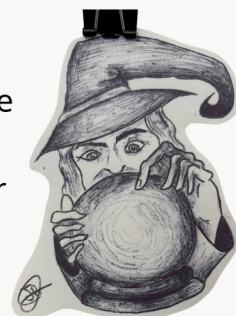


Southport College Shines

Walking into Southport College's end-of-year exhibition, one thing is immediately clear: this town is brimming with artistic talent. From fine line drawings to product design, photography to fashion, the exhibition transformed the college into a vibrant, living gallery — and every corridor was buzzing with imagination, ambition, and pride.

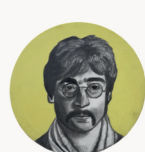
The variety of work on display spoke volumes about the students' creativity and the dedication of their tutors. Among the standout names was Jessica Breese, whose intricate, emotionally rich fine line drawings look destined to make their mark in the tattoo world. Already designing for friends and family, her talent has been praised by a working tattoo artist — a sign that her dream career is well within reach.

Alexander's work was a striking fusion of playful energy and design precision. His imaginative, childlike characters could light up any museum, while his bold, graphic pieces had the flair of album artwork or strong logo identities. You could easily see his portfolio taking over both gallery walls and modern retail spaces.



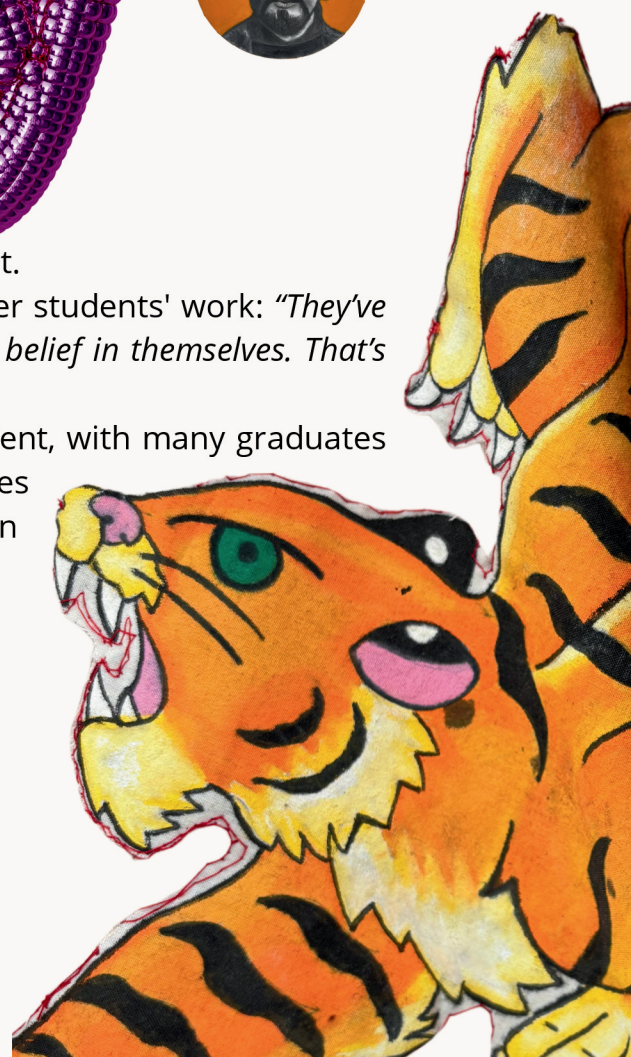


Olivia's take on Southport photography was equally delightful — quirky, clever and full of personality. Her work captured the town with humour and heart, transforming familiar scenes into something entirely new, with outstanding finishing and attention to detail.



It wasn't just the younger students impressing either. Speaking with learners from the adult classes, it was moving to hear stories of people rediscovering their creativity. Many were returning to skills they hadn't used in years, and you could sense the joy of reconnecting with art. Lesley Neely's mixed-media work — including jelly prints, screen printing and laser-cut wood pieces — was a heartfelt tribute to her family, her connection to nature, and landmarks from her time in Southport. Tutor Rebekah Smith beamed with pride as she reflected on her students' work: *"They've grown so much. The quality is amazing, but even more so is their belief in themselves. That's what we're most proud of."*

Southport College has long been a launchpad for emerging talent, with many graduates moving on to universities, creative careers, and business ventures of their own. The exhibition isn't just a celebration of what's been — it's a snapshot of a very bright future.





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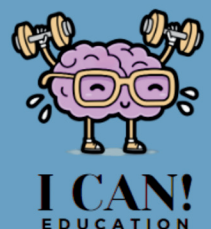
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“

Wellness begins in stillness —
when we pause long enough to
breathe, we invite clarity, calm,
and the quiet return of
ourselves.

”

This summer, give yourself permission to stop — just for a moment. In the stillness, the noise quiets, the nervous system softens, and the mind begins to settle. It's in these gentle pauses that we begin to see things differently: new ideas bloom, perspective returns, and inner calm starts to replace the chaos. Taking time to reflect isn't a luxury — it's a necessity. Whether it's five minutes under the sun or an afternoon away from your phone, every breath taken in awareness is a step toward healing. Let this season be your soft reset.

Comfortably Heard



Sarah McEntee our expert shares her guidance and knowledge

The Chewy Bits First

This month we delve into her notes on change.

C hange...

That thing we all say we're ready for... right up until it actually shows up wearing real clothes and asking for a signature.

I've just started a new job, new systems, new names, new email folders with titles like "Legacy SharePoint Migration Comms".

And while it's exciting and expansive, I'd be lying if I said I wasn't also clinging to a Starry B's coffee cup like a life raft by day three.

But here's what I know and maybe you do too:

Change is the only truly guaranteed thing in life.

(That, and the far too frequent "unexpected item in bagging area.")





“ ————— ”

Change doesn't have to be tackled all at once.

————— ”

The seasons change, our skin changes, our opinions on crocs change (sometimes back again).
And yet we often treat personal change like it needs a grand announcement:
“New year, new me!”
“Big birthday, big shift!”
“Full moon in Virgo time to finally start that vegan candle business!”
The truth? You don't need a cosmic green light to make a change.

What you do need is the reminder that:
You've done hard things before
You've survived uncertainty before
You've absolutely faced worse than that tricky new HR login
And change doesn't have to be tackled all at once.
In fact, I've found that if you can just identify the chewiest bit first the one thing that's niggling, lurking, or looming and face that bit head-on, the rest usually falls into place far more gently than you expected.
So, whether you're starting something new, ending something old, or standing somewhere in the awkward middle don't wait for a lightning bolt.
Pick up the chewy bit.
Bite down.
And trust that you'll handle the rest like you always have: one honest, human, slightly sarcastic step at a time.
Want support as you navigate change? Join **Comfortably Heard** on Facebook—where voices grow braver, together.

Comfortably Heard



A chewy bit checklist

- What's one thing I've been avoiding?
- What small step could I take today?
- When was the last time I surprised myself with my own resilience?

Need more honest nudges? Visit our wellness blog at southportsjourney.com and walk this change-filled journey with us.



It's a MATCHA!

This summer swap out sugary frappés or jittery coffee for matcha — the vibrant green tea that's taking Southport by storm. Packed with antioxidants, gentle caffeine, and calming L-theanine, it delivers smooth, focused energy without the crash. Plus, it's far lower in sugar and calories, making it the perfect summer swap.

This season, let matcha be your go-to for calm energy and clean refreshment. Whether savoured at home, enjoyed amid Victorian elegance in town, or captured in a toasty café courtyard, it's a smarter sip with real benefits. You can craft your own iced matcha at home — whisk ceremonial-grade powder with milk (dairy or plant-based), ice, and a drizzle of honey for a refreshing afternoon pick-me-up.

But Southport cafés are also stepping up with inventive matcha creations:

At Croziers, enjoy a strawberry iced matcha — a fruity, creamy fusion that's perfect for people-watching with a treat in hand.

Over at The Engine Rooms, sip a tropical iced coconut matcha — rich, refreshing, and elegantly suited to Southport's Victorian charm.

And for something truly unique, try making a Pistachio Matcha Latte at home. This blend of earthy matcha and nutty pistachio milk creates a smooth, elevated twist on the classic latte.

Matcha isn't just a trend — it's a lifestyle upgrade.

Cool, calming, and surprisingly versatile, it's the perfect companion for long afternoons, slow mornings, or a fresh summer mindset.

Visit our website to discover how to make the perfect pistachio matcha using your own homemade pistachio milk.

www.southportjourney.com



The Digital Divide in Healthcare Access

Southport is known for its charm, seafront walks, and sense of community — and with one of the oldest populations in the UK, it's a town where tradition runs deep. But quietly, many of our elderly residents are being left behind by a fast-moving digital world.

Technology: A Barrier, Not a Bridge
Booking GP appointments, renewing prescriptions, or finding care services are now almost entirely online. For many, this is convenient. But for others — those without smartphones, Wi-Fi, or digital skills — it creates a wall, not a window.



www.apollocare.co.uk/apollo-care-southport/



Debbie Dickson

A Local Voice on the Ground Debbie Dickson, owner of Apollo Care Southport, has seen the reality firsthand: “Quite a few of my clients told me they struggle to find a list of local, trusted care companies — not because they don’t exist, but because they don’t have internet access or anyone to help them.” Recognising this, Apollo Care continues to use traditional methods, distributing printed leaflets in community centres, luncheon clubs, and local coffee afternoons — making sure the information reaches those who need it most.

For many elderly people, there's no one to help them book appointments or make sense of confusing care systems. GPs are limited in what they can advise, and impartiality rules mean they often can't point patients toward private providers. Solutions must be human. Printed directories, drop-in advice sessions, care navigators, and better signposting could help bridge the gap. It's not just about information — it's about access with dignity. Let's not allow healthcare access to become a luxury. Southport's older generation deserves options — online and offline. Connection, compassion, and communication are just as vital as technology.



“

The past doesn't hold us back —
it roots us, so we know where to
grow next.

”

A black and white photograph of a historic stone building, likely a town hall or church, featuring a prominent clock tower with a spiral-patterned clock face and a spire. The building has multiple arched windows with decorative tracery. The sky is cloudy.

Small towns carry history like a heartbeat — steady, quiet, always present. In places like Southport, the past lives in the architecture, the markets, and the benches where stories have been shared for decades. Journey back with us in the Southport Nostalgia pages, where we preserve the town's rich history while shaping its future. By celebrating astonishing moments, intriguing people, and unforgettable events, we keep Southport's legacy alive. When we honour where we came from, we build a more grounded, thoughtful future.



WAYFARERS ARCADE

Nestled on Lord Street, Southport's Wayfarers Arcade first opened in October 1898 as the Leyland Arcade, designed by G.E. Bolshaw for entrepreneur John Humphrey Plummer. This elegant, Grade II listed shopping gallery took eight years to build, featuring a majestic domed glass roof, decorative ironwork, stained-glass windows and mahogany shopfronts fully intact to this day.

Originally intended as a sheltered promenade in a town plagued by muddy streets, the arcade even boasted a brass bandstand and aquarium in its early days. Renamed Burton Arcade in the 1950s under Montague Burton's ownership, it was reborn as Wayfarers Arcade in 1976 when the Pedlar family reclaimed the lease.

Carefully restored in the early 2000s—with a lovingly reconstructed glass roof, terrazzo flooring, and refurbished mahogany—the arcade remains a cherished shopping destination. Today, it's more than a retail space—it's Southport's charming, historic heart, still echoing Victorian elegance and community spirit.



Meet

APO

Give Apollo the Second Chance

Every dog deserves a second chance, and this month, we're shining a light on one very special boy who's been waiting patiently for his forever home.

Meet Apollo, a striking 2-year-old male Bully cross with a heart just as big as his 40kg frame. This handsome lad has quickly become a favourite among

staff and volunteers at RSPCA Southport, Ormskirk & District for his friendly nature and boundless enthusiasm for life.

Apollo is bright, eager to please, and thrives on the interaction that comes with his ongoing training. He loves nothing more than heading off-site for

walks and adventures, where he can sniff, explore, and enjoy quality time with his humans. We believe Apollo would be the perfect fit for an active

home—ideally with someone who enjoys the outdoors and is looking for a loyal companion to share their adventures. While he has met and interacted well with other dogs here at the centre, Apollo would flourish best as the only pet in the home, soaking up all your love and attention. Because of his size and energy, we feel a home with children aged 15 and over would be most suitable.

Apollo is just one of many wonderful dogs currently looking for a new start in life. Together, let's give Apollo, and many more like him, the happy ending they truly deserve.

LLO

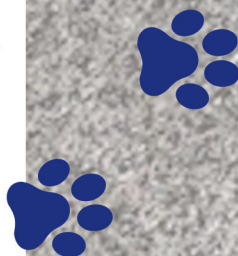
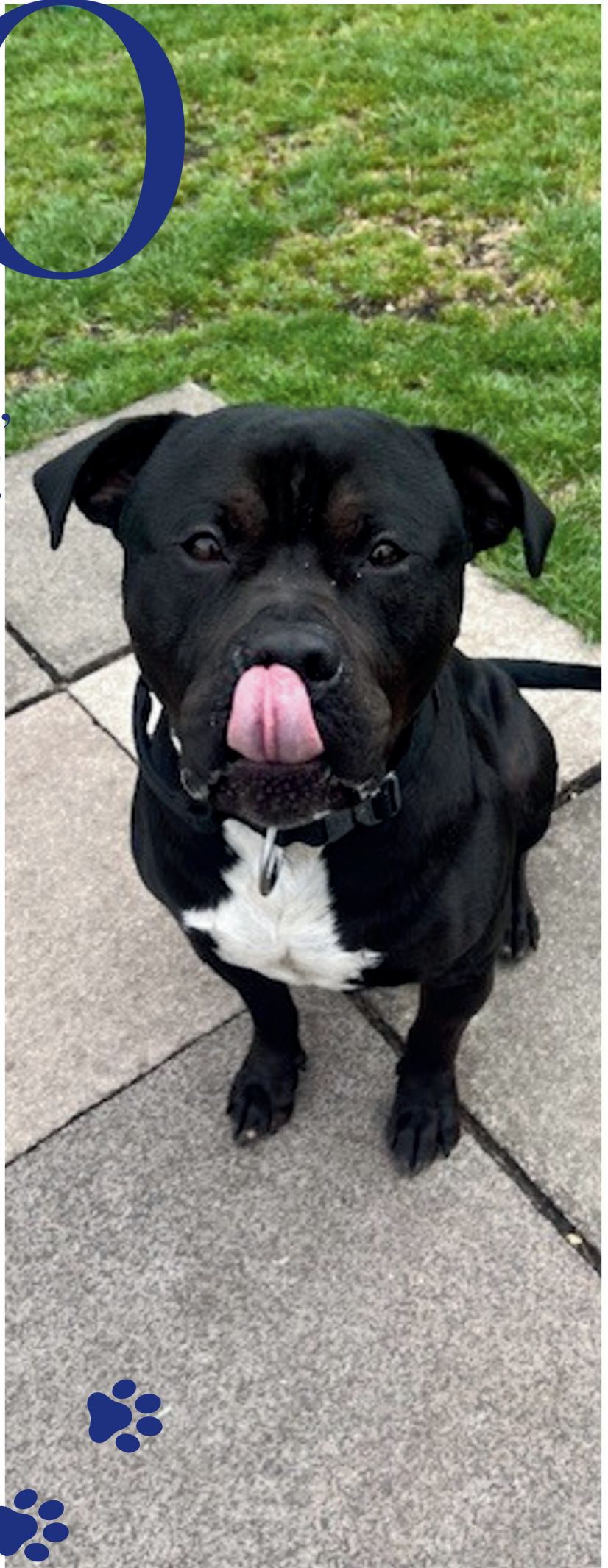
He Deserves, Adopt, Don't Shop!

More Than Just One Dog's Story

The RSPCA Southport, Ormskirk & District Branch has been at the heart of local animal welfare for generations. Based at their Animal Centre on New Cut Lane, the branch works tirelessly to rescue, rehabilitate, and rehome animals from cruelty, neglect, and abandonment across the region.

Entirely self-funded, the team relies on donations, fundraising, and shop sales to keep going—offering not only shelter but also veterinary care, neutering, microchipping, and behavioural support to every animal they help. They're open 365 days a year and are passionate about giving each pet the fresh start they deserve.

If Apollo isn't the right fit for your home, please visit www.rspcasouthport.org to meet the rest of our four-legged residents, all waiting for someone to say "yes" to their second chance.





WHO WE ARE

Art Ease is a Sefton based non-profit organisation founded in 2024. Our aim is to remove barriers to the arts, reduce isolation and loneliness, and support people with their wider wellbeing through the facilitation of accessible creative wellbeing workshops in the North West.

Based in Southport, and led by Nurse-turned-Artist **Emmy Oranges**, we are dedicated to removing barriers to the arts and reducing isolation through various art programs and initiatives.

Art Ease CIC aims to empower individuals, enhance well-being, and promote inclusivity by making art accessible to all. Emmys' leadership ensures our projects are both impactful and reflective of the community's diverse needs.

WHAT WE DO

- ★ Fully funded Mindful Drawing workshops in collaboration with Sefton Social Prescribing
- ★ Staff wellbeing workshops centred around mindfulness and connection
- ★ Private parties and corporate events
- ★ Collaborating with local businesses to run bespoke workshops and events
- ★ Work with existing community groups and local charities to provide therapeutic arts and crafts
- ★ 1-1 drawing lessons and sketchbook clubs
- ★ Monthly "Crafty Cafe" at The Engine Room and more!

FIND OUT MORE:

@artease_cic

www.ARTEASE.org.uk

arteasenorthwest@gmail.com



Art is for everyone

Southport's
Journey

Let's hear from a local

These are personal responses and an insight into the top spots in town. This month we hear from Beth at the Engine Room.



Go-to place for coffee or brunch?

Bill Rimmers does a brilliant breakfast—and you can even watch the donkeys out the window while you eat! It's easily one of the best breakfasts in town. For coffee, Station House Coffee in Birkdale serves an unbelievable chai latte. Highly recommend both.

Favourite local event or tradition?

The Green Lunch at the Wayfarers Arcade was a standout—it created such a strong community vibe. The long tables encouraged conversation between strangers, and it would be amazing to see it become a regular tradition.

Hidden gem shop or stall?

Andy at BodyMech has done all of my piercings. He's not only incredibly skilled but also really interesting to talk to. He creates a true independent vibe. A total gem.

Local business recommendation?

All About the Rolls—those freshly baked, fluffy, delicious rolls are a local treasure. (You can find All About the Rolls online!)

Groups or spaces that helped you feel connected?

Victoria Park is a favourite—it's such a peaceful place to walk. Even without a dog, people are so friendly and chatty.

Hopes for the future of Southport?

That we continue to develop and invest in what we already have. The infrastructure is here, the skills are here, and—most importantly—the passion is here. We just need to bring it all together to create something exciting for 2025 and beyond.

Quiz

What year were the Churchtown stocks last used?

Which British monarch is commemorated with a statue on Lord Street in Southport?

- A) Queen Elizabeth I
- B) Queen Victoria
- C) King George VI
- D) King Edward VII

What was the reason behind the coloured tarmac that once appeared along Lord Street in Southport?

Which well-known golfer designed Royal Birkdale Golf Course, host to many Open Championships?

- A) Jack Nicklaus
- B) Harry Colt
- C) Bobby Jones
- D) Old Tom Morris

In which year was the first Southport Air Show held?

- A) 1985
- B) 1991
- C) 1997
- D) 2003

Find the answers on our website



Southport's
Journey

Want to be featured, email southportsjourney@gmail.com