

ISSUE 8

# Southport's Journey

MAGAZINE

## SOUTHPORT YOUNG MUSICIANS FINAL

The next generation takes to the stage.

## SEPTEMBER RESET

Practical tips, new routines & fresh views.

## EATS, STAYS & SIPS

New menus, standout stays and bottles worth discovering.

# OUR TIME TO BLOOM

PEOPLE, PLACES, PROJECTS — SOUTHPORT  
SHINING BRIGHT.

BRAND  
*NEW*  
WRITERS  
INSIDE!



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# Editor's Note

## SOUTHPORT'S JOURNEY

September feels like a reset. After a summer of sunshine and small moments, this issue leans into what Southport does best: showing up for one another. You'll find stories of independent places worth a detour, the people behind the counters, and community projects that turn pride into action.

This month the Southport Flower Show was a pivot point for the magazine. We stepped off the page and into live media—filming, interviewing and listening on the ground. Volunteers shared their why; we carried those conversations into town, sitting with independent businesses to hear what keeps them going and what they need next. Print is still our heart—the camera simply let us bring those stories to life.

Inside, meet locals who are building, planting, teaching and performing; discover new places to eat, walk and unwind; and check our latest reviews when you're choosing where to relax. If a story makes you smile, tell the person behind it. If you spot a gap, tell us—we'll go looking together.

Thank you for reading, sharing and supporting independent media. It matters. See you around town.

Lizzie Barnett

Editor-in-Chief



### About Southport's Journey

We're an independent magazine celebrating the people, places and projects that make Southport proud—sharing warm, useful stories across print, digital and events. We champion independents, share what's on, and make it easier to discover something good every month.

### Get involved

Have a story or event? Want to advertise, pitch or partner? Email [hello@southportsjourney.com](mailto:hello@southportsjourney.com) or visit [southportsjourney.com](https://southportsjourney.com). We'd love to hear your story.



# Welcome your *Journey* starts here



## 7 LEVEL UP NETWORK



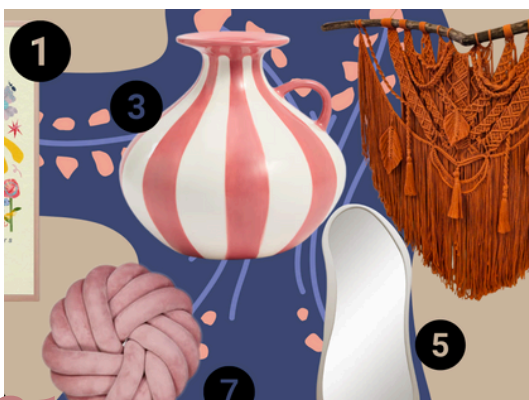
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Want to be featured in the magazine?  
We're always looking for stories big or small!

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Claire Kelly (organiser) with under 7 classical piano winner, Braxton Wen.

# A MUSICAL TRIUMPH

**Southport doesn't wait for talent to leave and be discovered elsewhere — we build the stage here.**

Outside The Grand, black tie and bright dresses mingled in the late-summer air as the Southport Young Musicians Final (2025) beckoned. Artists greeted artists with hugs and pep talks; parents lined up for photographs, pausing to admire the trophy table glinting just inside. By the time the lights dipped, the room hummed with that lovely Southport mix of nerves and pride — talent ready to shine. ➤



“This wasn’t just a trophy chase — it was about creating a space where local talent could be discovered, encouraged and celebrated.”

Winner of Southport Young Musicians 2025 - Heidi Wilkinson ( classical piano.)



Serena Silcocks- Prince with self accompaniment winners - Elamara Burdekin and Isla Goffey



MP Patrick Hurley with drums category winner - Maya Field-Cross

At the heart of this year’s event is Claire Kelly — pianist, educator and the driving force behind the Southport Young Musicians Competition, the multi-month programme that fed into the Arts Festival finale. As Principal of Southport Piano Academy, Claire designed a modern, inclusive route to the spotlight: open to pupils from local schools and private tutors, with auditions across months and a Grand Final in August.

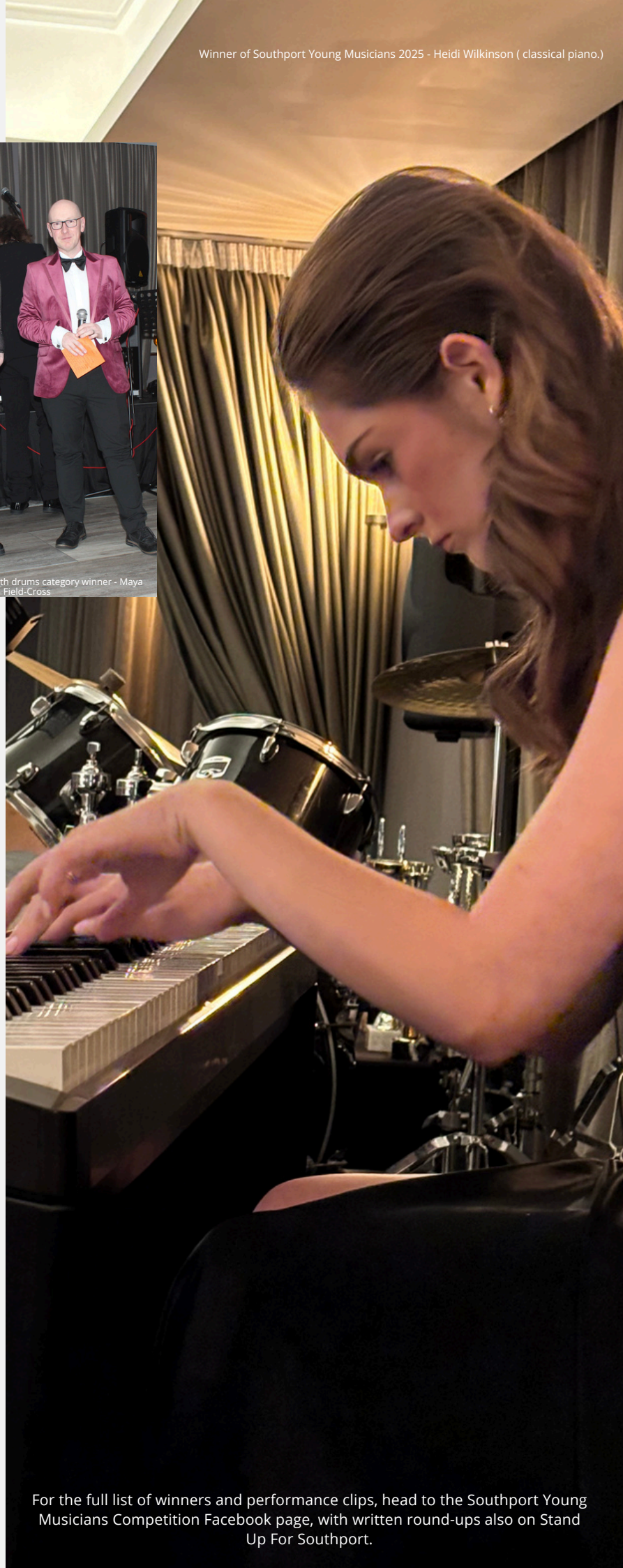
### A platform, not just a prize

Claire’s path to this point tells you why the competition feels so considered. She toured the UK in a band, holds a DipLCM in musical theatre and acting, and has TV credits in Boys from the Black Stuff and Waterfront Beat. On stage she’s taken lead roles in local productions and grew up in SONG from ages 9–16. Beyond running the Academy (now a team enterprise serving learners across ages and instruments), she judges on the local circuit and writes on theatre and performance—skills that meet neatly in an event built to be fair, stretching and kind.

And she doesn’t just work behind the scenes. In a video interview ahead of the final, she spoke about opening doors and setting a bar that young musicians can be proud to meet. After the show, her guest blog reflected on the “tough choices” judges faced — a good problem for any town to have.

### Why it matters

In an age of streams and scrolls, nights like this cut through. Presence beats metrics; courage beats algorithms. Southport’s finalists didn’t just chase applause — they earned a platform that will follow them into studios, orchestras and university auditions. Thanks to the scaffolding Claire built, they also gained something rarer: time and space to grow, with a town cheering them on.



For the full list of winners and performance clips, head to the Southport Young Musicians Competition Facebook page, with written round-ups also on Stand Up For Southport.





# Level Up

GROW MOVE CONNECT

## It starts with a walk

Southport has a brand-new way to do business — and it started with a walk. The very first Level Up Networking Walk saw over 40 local businesses come together to share ideas, spark new connections, and take networking beyond the usual four walls. Instead of boardrooms or conference tables, conversations unfolded along Southport's beautiful marine lake, with fresh air and open minds making space for genuine connection.

**“It’s about building a community that levels up, together.”**

The morning began with a warm welcome at the stunning Waterfront Southport Hotel, where the energy in the room was instantly upbeat and full of anticipation. From there, the group strolled through the marina, pairing movement with meaningful conversation, before finishing at the much-loved Roxy's Café. With iced lattes, pistachio croissants, and plenty of laughter, it was the perfect way to round off a morning of collaboration.

What made this first walk so special wasn't just the turnout, but the spirit of it. Each business championed another, details were exchanged naturally, and support flowed as freely as the coffee at the finish line. Networking didn't feel forced or transactional — it felt human.

## Spirit of communication

The success of this first event reflects a wider movement in Southport: a new generation of entrepreneurs committed to building businesses that don't just survive but thrive together. By working side by side, these companies are showing that growth is stronger when it's shared.

And this is only the start. More events are planned, each one designed to build on the momentum of this first walk and create more opportunities for Southport businesses to connect, collaborate, and level up — together.

**“We meet every month and champion a new business each time”**





Wine & Words

*By Watson*





# “Love alters not...”

from Shakespeare's Sonnet 116

... but spaces do. What began as a daydream in 2020 — a blend of books, cheese, wine, and cosy corners — is now alive and thriving on Lord Street. Wine & Words has opened its doors, and it feels like stepping into a love letter to imagination itself.

Once Café Parisien, the venue has been reborn with sultry interiors that whisper stories as soon as you walk in. Look up and you'll find an arched ceiling, grand and dramatic, the kind of historical detail you'd expect described in the pages of a novel. Soft lighting pools across velvet chairs, every corner inviting you to linger, curl up, and let the hours pass like paragraphs.

Here, you can get carried away into realms unknown with a page-turning fiction, or dive into a non-fiction that sparks new discoveries —

all while savouring a curated wine flight, a warming whisky, or a perfectly brewed pot of tea served in the kind of teapots that feel like perfect for the occasion. Completed by charcuterie boards and handpicked wines from independent suppliers, the experience reflects choices made with care and passion.

It's a place to connect, to unwind, to simply be. Whether you come solo with a book, join a club to meet kindred spirits, or share a bottle with friends, Wine & Words is more than a bar, more than a bookshop — it's Southport's newest gem, a space shaped by love, history, and imagination.

A must-try on Lord Street.







# FRIENDS OF SOUTHPORT FLOWER SHOW

A TRIBUTE TO THE VOLUNTEERS WHO MAKE  
SOUTHPORT FLOWER SHOW BLOOM.





Southport Flower Show 2025 dazzled under four days of rare, generous sunshine — but the real light came from the people in hi-vis and name badges, the ones who arrive a week early and leave with tired feet and full hearts. This is their show.

Ask Joyce, now 81, why she keeps coming back and her answer lands softly but stays with you. She last visited with her husband in 1999. The following year, newly widowed and travelling in from Manchester, she stopped at the entrance and asked, “Can I walk through those gates?” She did — and has volunteered ever since. These days she comes with a walking frame, returns to her usual spot each year, and still smiles her way through shifts at sign-in, the information cabin and the Grand Floral Marquee—enjoying every minute. “It’s a wonderful feeling to be part of something that matters in so many different ways,” she says.

# I ASKED MYSELF IF I COULD WALK THROUGH THOSE GATES AGAIN... AND I’VE BEEN COMING EVER SINCE.

Volunteering here is a patchwork of small, vital tasks: welcoming at dawn, mapping routes for first-timers, calming nerves, answering tricky questions (“Have you seen my brother? Beige anorak.”), and directing thousands of visitors with warmth and good humour.

Many volunteers have backgrounds in schools; they bring that blend of patience, organisation and care. They also bring history: friendly faces you haven’t seen “on the volunteer loop” for years reappear, and the show becomes a reunion as much as a spectacle. Sometimes it’s multigenerational — grandparents guiding guests while a granddaughter lends a hand nearby. It’s the quiet continuity that keeps volunteers returning—Lindsay even celebrates his birthday here each year, manning the merchandise stall.

Names ripple through the marquee like old friends: Fiona and Linda at the ready with maps; Richard and Barbara, three decades married, preferring information duty because “you feel you’re really helping.”



And then there’s Pauline. She started as a general volunteer, worked alongside Terry Tasker, and is now General Manager of the Floral Marquee. She begins the week before, keeps visitors flowing, and finishes on Sunday with a well-earned sit-down. “Eight to six, every day,” she laughs, “and the banter from ground staff to office team — we’re one big family. The same volunteers ask to come back year after year. They love it, and so do I.”

Underpinning it all is the reminder that the Flower Show is a charity. Alan and the wider team keep the complex machine moving, but it’s the volunteers who lend the show its heartbeat: hospitality that feels like home, answers that set you at ease, and a pride that says this town is worth the effort.

In a year when Southport shone bright, the volunteers were its steadiest light — proof that great events are grown by many hands, many hours and a shared belief that beauty is something we make together.

“WE’RE ONE BIG FAMILY  
— THE SAME  
VOLUNTEERS ASK TO  
COME BACK YEAR AFTER  
YEAR. — PAULINE,  
FLORAL MARQUEE”







# Life's a journey

# What's on this

# September

## Mini Learn & Relax Retreat

Breathe out and settle in. This small, welcoming retreat with Erica of Linden Tree Health blends calm teaching with gentle practice, so change feels doable. You'll learn how your body really works, map simple systems for meals, cravings and energy, and practise easy, repeatable habits that support digestion, hormones, immunity and mood.

Expect plain-English science, zero judgement and plenty of encouragement. Erica is Southport-based, IFM-qualified, and has helped people move from confusion to confidence since 2014.



You'll leave with clarity, a kinder routine and practical tools you can use the very next day—at home, in your kitchen, in real life. Come for an afternoon of breathing space; go home feeling steadier, nourished and ready to look after yourself.

Spaces are limited so everyone is seen and heard.

Book your place and start practising the art of health and happiness.

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Erica Gibbon BSc BANT  
Registered Nutritionist\* BANT  
Registered Nutritional Therapist CNHC  
Certified Practitioner of Functional Medicine IFMCP

## Nutritional Therapy & Functional Medicine


*The Science of Life, The Art of Living*

### Mini Relax and Learn Retreats

- Sep '25** Balancing Hormones in Perimenopause
- Oct '25** Sustainable Health, Weight & Mindset
- Nov '25** Digestive Wellness
- Feb '26** Sustainable Health, Weight & Mindset
- Mar '26** Living Well with Cancer
- Apr '26** Mood, Mind and Nervous System Health
- May '26** Staying Well with Autoimmune Conditions



[erica@lindentreehealth.co.uk](mailto:erica@lindentreehealth.co.uk)  
[www.lindentreehealth.co.uk](http://www.lindentreehealth.co.uk)





## WHAT'S ON

### Midweek Music is back

What a fabulous way to spend your lunchtime in the heart of Southport: sit back, indulge, and listen to remarkable talent across a variety of musical acts.

A free lunchtime concert

**When:** Wed 17 September, 1:00pm (doors 12:30)

**Where:** Christ Church, Lord Street, Southport

**Admission:** Free

Opening recital: Maria Stratigou (Greece) — concert pianist & researcher; Teaching Associate in Performance at the University of Sheffield.

Make an afternoon of it: Café 1821 is open — good food + good music.

Autumn programme: available at the church



# MIDWEEK MUSIC

Lunchtime concerts  
Wednesday  
1pm - 1.45pm  
Free admission

**CC** **Sili** Christ Church Southport  
christchurchsouthport.org.uk



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ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SUPPORT FOR YOUR ASD & ADHD?

ONCE A MONTH ON A WEDNESDAY AFTERNOONS 2PM - 4PM

Location: Southport Market, King St, Southport PR8 1LA (Side Entrance)

DATES 2025  
15TH SEPTEMBER  
5TH OCTOBER  
5TH NOVEMBER  
3RD DECEMBER

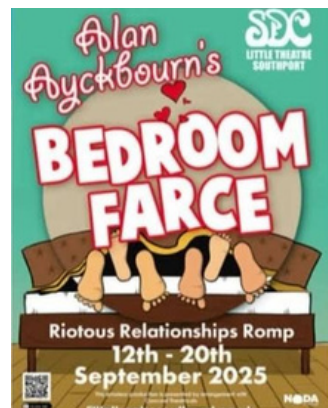
ARE YOU LOOKING TO MEET NEW FRIENDS, MAKE YOUR OWN AGE, AND GET YOURSELF OUT OF THE HOUSE FOR A FEW HOURS?

DATES 2025  
21ST JANUARY  
4TH FEBRUARY  
4TH MARCH  
15TH APRIL  
15TH MAY

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Riotous Relationships Romp  
12th - 20th September 2025

SDC LITTLE THEATRE SOUTHPORT



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WITH LOST

THURSDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER

£15 A TICKET

- A WOMEN-ONLY TENNIS SOCIAL
- SPHYNX TENNIS CLUB
- THURSDAY 11TH SEPTEMBER
- 6:30PM - 8:30PM
- PROSECCO ON ARRIVAL
- MUSIC, LAUGHS, AND A VIBE

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and Gift

Saturday 20 September  
11am to 4pm

**Southport Market Hall**  
Extravaganza Space  
Market Street PR8 1LA

Jewellery, Homeware, Textiles, Gifts and more

**Free entry, Dogs welcome**



**COASTAL JAM**

SATURDAY 13 & 14 SEPTEMBER  
A TWO-DAY FESTIVAL OF MUSIC AND FAMILY FUN IN SOUTHPORT TOWN CENTRE

**SATURDAY**

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CLOCKWORK GIBBONS  
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RECORD FAIR  
KIDS ACTIVITIES  
TRADERS  
STREET PERFORMERS

**SUNDAY**

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JAMMERMAN  
FRANK FLY  
KATIE L. SOUTHERN  
KIM MUSIC COLLECTIVE

COASTAL JAM FRINGE AT LOCAL BARS AND MUSIC VENUES

FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION AT WWW.COASTALJAM.CO.UK

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](http://WWW.SOUTHPORTSJOURNEY.COM)





with I CAN Education

**My 6-year-old is struggling to go into school. What strategies can help make mornings easier for both them and me?**

*It's completely normal for children to feel anxious about school at this age, and you're not alone. Start by establishing a predictable morning routine so your child knows what to expect. Have gentle conversations about what worries them—it helps children feel heard and understood. Using books that support attachment or school transitions can provide reassurance and spark discussions about emotions. Avoid promising rewards for going to school; instead, use positive language to reinforce their bravery and small successes. Consistent communication with teachers can also help create a supportive, coordinated approach. Over time, these steps can ease anxiety and build confidence for both your child and you.*

**My teen is anxious about going back to school after a long summer. How can I open a conversation to help them feel supported?**

*Start by gently opening the conversation: "I've noticed you've seemed a bit off lately, and it's okay to not be okay. If you want to talk, I'm here to listen." Keep routines consistent but flexible, encourage small daily goals, and celebrate little wins. Support sleep, breaks, and healthy habits. Regular check-ins help your teen feel understood and ease anxiety while boosting motivation.*

**My child is excited about school but worries about making friends. How can I support their social skills?**

*Encourage small social goals and celebrate brave attempts. Role-play scenarios, read stories about friendship, and check in with teachers for extra support. Explore clubs or activities they enjoy—games cafés, arts, or other hobbies teach turn-taking and handling losing. Also, put your phone down occasionally and spend quality playtime with your child—it models connection and attention.*





# SEPTEMBER RESET

**T**he new school year doesn't just belong to the kids — it's a chance for the whole household to hit refresh. After a summer of late nights, loose schedules, and plenty of screen time, September can feel like the perfect time to build habits that actually stick

**ROUTINE IS NOT  
ABOUT CONTROL —  
IT'S ABOUT CREATING  
FREEDOM IN THE  
REST OF YOUR DAY."**

## **Why routines matter**

Children thrive on predictability. When mornings and evenings follow a pattern, the whole family feels calmer, less rushed, and more connected. But routines aren't about being rigid — they're about creating space for balance: schoolwork, play, rest, and family time.

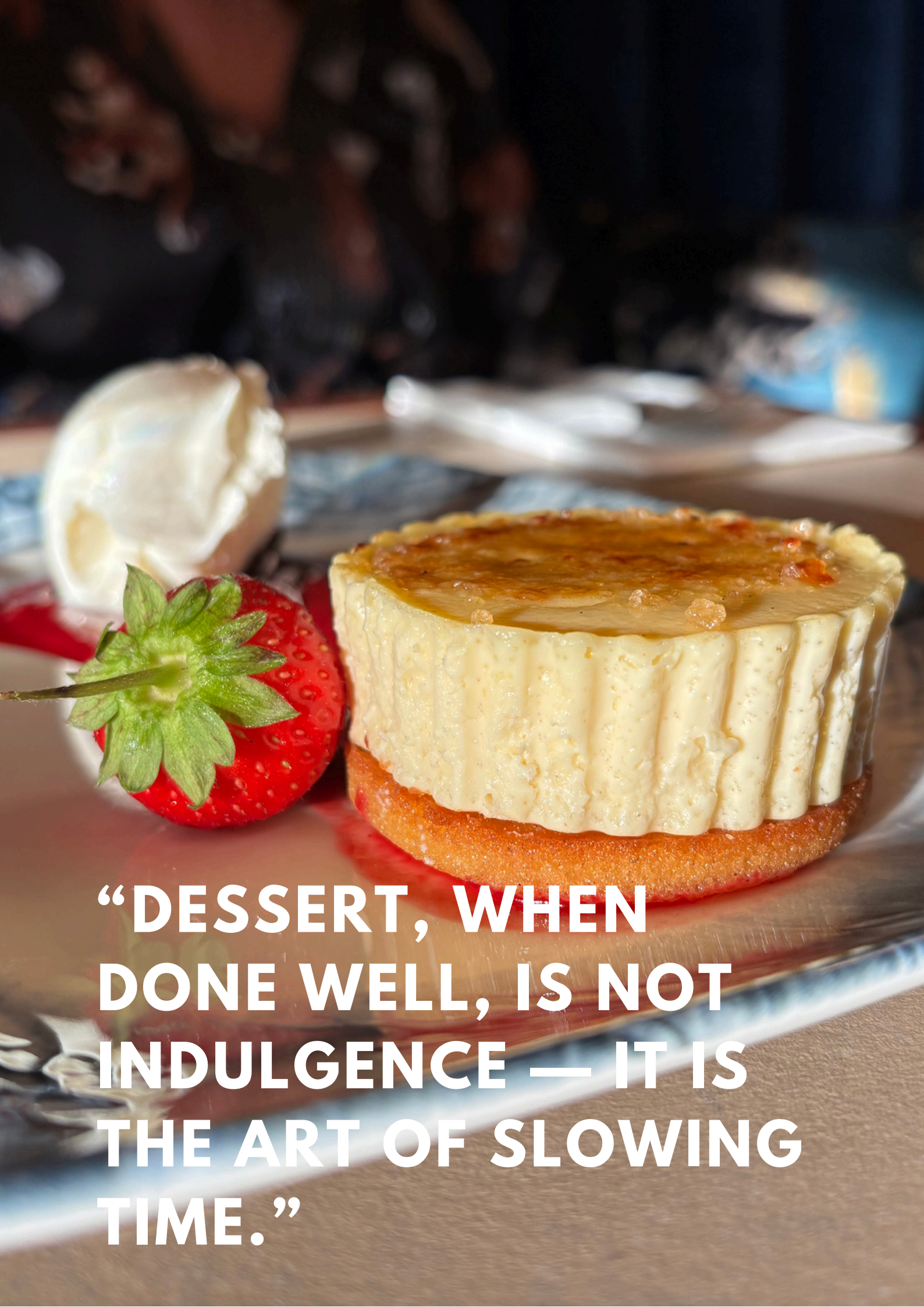
## **A moment to pause**

Think of September as a "second New Year" — the chance to gently reframe habits without the pressure of January resolutions. Small changes now can ripple out into calmer mornings, smoother evenings, and more headspace for everyone.

## PRACTICAL TIPS

Practical ideas to try  
Screen boundaries that stick – Instead of banning devices, try "tech-off times," like phones away during meals or 30 minutes before bed. It helps sleep and sparks real conversations.  
Homework without the battle – A set slot, even just 20 minutes after school, works wonders. Pair it with a snack, and make it the "normal" rather than the exception.  
Shared reset – Parents can model this by picking their own "routine goal" — whether it's no emails after dinner, a short daily walk, or reading before bed. Kids notice what we do, not just what we say.





**“DESSERT, WHEN  
DONE WELL, IS NOT  
INDULGENCE — IT IS  
THE ART OF SLOWING  
TIME.”**





# Sirocco

@ THE GRAND

Sirocco is the kind of place that knows exactly what it's doing. The atmosphere strikes the right balance — refined without being pretentious, stylish without trying too hard. It's a setting that encourages you to take your time, enjoy good company, and savour each plate as it arrives.

Starters set the tone. The whipped feta with beetroot was bright and fresh, with crisp beetroot adding texture to the smooth, tangy cheese — simple flavours handled with care. The chorizo bon bons were a highlight: smoky, rich, and deeply satisfying. For those who like a little heat, the 'nduja king prawns carried warmth and spice in just the right measure.

“Turning your ordinary evenings into something memorable”

Mains kept standards high. The pan-fried seabass was well-executed, its crisp topping of carrot adding both flavour and bite. The lamb burger, meanwhile, delivered comfort and depth — a dish that felt hearty yet well-considered.

Dessert showed the kitchen's creative side. Their crème brûlée came with a twist: a light lemon and poppyseed sponge beneath the caramel lid, finished with a scoop of ice cream. It was a clever variation on a classic — and one that worked. The drinks list is broad, offering a good choice of wines, cocktails, and non-alcoholic options to suit any preference.

Set in The Grand in Southport, its luxurious surroundings provide an elegant backdrop to a delectable evening — they're quietly perfecting an ideal. Sirocco is about elevation: familiar dishes, reimagined with a fresh twist and effortlessly polished style. It focuses on well-crafted plates and food that makes you want to return. The kind of restaurant that turns an ordinary evening into something quietly memorable — and does so with confidence.

Make a booking today and visit Sirocco at The Grand, 180 Lord St, Southport PR9 0QG . @siroccosouthport



“ —  
Be the exception,  
not the rule!  
”



**Black Swan, Marine Lake**



# Elvis,

## Comfortably Heard



Sarah McEntee our expert shares her guidance and knowledge

# AUTHENTICITY, *and your own VOICE!*

This summer I finally made the trip I'd dreamed of for a lifetime, Nashville, followed by a week in Memphis, staying at the Graceland Guesthouse. As a fan of Elvis the performer and the icon, it felt like a privilege to walk through the places where so much history was made.

What struck me most, though, wasn't the scale of his legacy but the contrast within it. Elvis started something that still lives today. He shifted culture, opened doors, and changed music forever. Yet in parts, what remains feels more like a spectacle than a truth, a theme park version of a man who was once raw, bold, and heartbreakingly real.



Elvis's appeal was never just the jumpsuits. It was his authenticity, the way he sang as though the words were pulled straight from his soul. He didn't polish himself into perfection. He gave what he had, unfiltered. And that's what people connected with.

It made me reflect on voice, not in the vocal sense but in the deeper one: how we show up in the world, how we hold to our values, how we stay true to who we are. In a culture that pressures us to conform, authenticity can feel risky. Yet it's the thing that makes us unforgettable.

So how do we find and keep that authentic voice?

A few reminders:

- Know your roots. Elvis's sound was steeped in gospel, blues, and country. Our own authenticity comes from knowing what shaped us.
- Catch yourself shrinking. You don't need to be on a stage to feel the pressure to tone yourself down. Notice when you're holding back your opinions, ideas, or quirks just to blend in.
- Stay connected to your values. When decisions feel hard, values are the compass.
- Embrace imperfection. It's the cracks that let people see the truth.
- Keep checking back in. Authenticity isn't a one-time decision; it's a practice.

Elvis reminds us that legacy doesn't come from imitation or polish. It comes from daring to stand in your own skin and let others see you as you are. And that's why I believe voice matters, because being comfortably heard starts with being truly ourselves.



# POWERFUL

MOTIVATING WOMEN TO MOVE



ANNA MCNALLY

"It's that fear of being judged or doing it wrong in a male-dominated space. I give clients simple, clear plans so they walk in knowing exactly what to do."

FEEL MOTIVATED TO MOVE  
AND HEAR THE LATEST TIPS

HOW TO CREATE A  
ROUTINE THAT STICKS

WHY MUSCLE BUILDING IS  
IMPORTANT



**Can you tell our readers a little about yourself and what led you into the world of personal training and nutrition?**

"As a teenager, I thought the goal was to be as skinny as possible," she admits. "But lifting weights completely changed my life. I went from wanting to be smaller to wanting to be stronger."

Now, with kids, a husband, and a business to juggle, she knows life doesn't pause for workouts. Her mission? Helping women build strength and confidence — without letting fitness take over their lives.

**You specialise in nutrition with support around GLPs. For those who may not be familiar, what does that mean and why is it important?**

"Mounjaro and GLP-1s are huge buzzwords right now," she says. "They're great tools, but they're not magic fixes. They work best alongside good nutrition, strength training, and sustainable habits."

Her role is helping clients avoid the trap of under-eating or relying solely on medication. "It's about building habits that last and keeping muscle mass while you're on treatment — so you can eventually step away without regaining the weight."



**FITNESS ISN'T ABOUT SHRINKING YOURSELF — IT'S ABOUT FINDING YOUR POWER.**



**"WEIGHTS MAKE YOU BULKY?" "NO — THAT'S LIKE SAYING LEARNING TO DRIVE MAKES YOU A FORMULA ONE RACER."**

**What's the most rewarding part of your work?**

"The ripple effect," she smiles. "When someone feels stronger and more confident, it doesn't just change their body — it changes how they see themselves, how they show up in life. That's the best feeling in the world."

**What misconceptions about exercise or nutrition would you love to clear up?**

She doesn't hold back here:

- "Weights make you bulky?" "No — that's like saying learning to drive makes you a Formula One racer."
- "Hours of cardio are the only way to lose weight?" "Wrong. Nutrition and muscle-building are key."
- "GLPs alone do the job?" "Not without protein and resistance training."

**Finally, if you could give women one piece of advice for starting their fitness journey, what would it be?**

"Don't wait until you 'feel ready.' Start small, stay consistent, and focus on habits you can live with. A year from now, you'll look back amazed at how far you've come."

*Anna McNally*  
[www.annamacfit.co.uk](http://www.annamacfit.co.uk)



## WELLNESS & FITNESS

Mike Settle  
PT  
@hogansettle

***DON'T WAIT UNTIL JANUARY.  
TREAT SEPTEMBER AS YOUR  
START LINE.***

# SEPTEMBER: THE NEW JANUARY

## Supplement of the Month: Creatine



When people hear "creatine," they usually think it's just for bodybuilders or elite athletes. But the reality is very different — and the latest research is showing benefits for everyone.



Creatine helps your body recycle energy at the cellular level, improving strength, endurance, and recovery. Beyond the gym it can support brain health, memory, and even reducing risks linked with age-related decline.

I've even started my mum on creatine. She doesn't train like me — she just enjoys her walks — but creatine still benefits her energy and long-term brain health.

## NEW GOALS!

*Hit a daily step count*

*Commit to one weekly gym class*

*Keep accountability*

Most people see September as the month summer ends — holidays are over, nights are drawing in, and the temptation is to let things slide until January. But here's the truth: September is the best time to reset.

The kids are back to school, life calms down, and routines start to fall back into place. That makes it the perfect time to set some new goals:

- Hit a daily step count (10k is a solid benchmark).
- Commit to one weekly gym class you won't skip.
- Cut alcohol out for a month and see how much better you feel.
- Sign up for a local event to keep yourself accountable.

It's the same mentality as New Year's resolutions — but with one big advantage: you've got momentum on your side. September, October and November are three golden months before Christmas. If you commit now, you'll roll into winter fitter, stronger and healthier, and actually enjoy the festive period guilt-free.



Southport has plenty of ways to get moving. You've got the free parkrun at Hesketh Park every Saturday morning, plus local walking groups if you prefer something steadier. Or simply make the most of what's on your doorstep:

- A walk along Ainsdale Beach or through Formby Woods for a change of scenery.
- The Marine Lake loop — roughly 5k and a brilliant way to get started if you're looking to build fitness gradually.

And of course, we've got no shortage of great gyms — Level Up Gym, From the Block Fitness, Coastline CrossFit, Marshside Gym — all offering different ways to train. Southport's an active town with something for everyone — the hardest bit is just getting started.



# This Month's Hot Spot

## Your adult-only Autumn Escape to Magical Marrakesh

Autumn is the perfect time to immerse yourself in the charm of Marrakech. Why not spend a fabulous four-nights exploring a cultured city break that promises unforgettable experiences, plenty of sunshine, and a touch of adventure. From the extreme vibrant sounds and smells in the bustling souks to the exhilarating desert discoveries or the calm sights of the city from above, in your hot air balloon, this trip will reward and inspire you in a multitude of ways, making it perfect for a romantic couple's trip or just the chance to reconnect with a friend or loved one. For the ultimate in local culture, stay in one of the many charming Riads. These traditional Moroccan houses are set around a stunning indoor courtyard (often with enclosed pool area) and are located within the old city walls of Marrakesh and will surely leave you with a feeling of true peace and tranquillity within an otherwise bustling city.

Contact me today for your own Autumn Adventure  
Cath x





*Finding the*  
**Sunnyside**  
*of Southport*





## A Welcome, A Wall of Wins — Inside Sunnyside

Step over the threshold at Sunnyside and you're met by two things: a warm smile—and a table of trophies that tell a very Southport story of graft, care and family pride.

”  
“These awards aren't ornaments; they're years of early mornings, kind hellos and doing the little things well.”

### The Sunnyside Story

Run by husband-and-wife team Anthony and Larissa Duffey—with Anthony's mum still very much part of the heartbeat—Sunnyside Guest House has turned a Bath Street townhouse into a standard-bearer for English hospitality. In 2025 they didn't just make the national stage; they topped it, taking two Golds at the Visit England Awards for Excellence: B&B & Guest House of the Year and Ethical, Responsible & Sustainable Tourism.

Those gleaming plaques at the door sit alongside earlier milestones: B&B/Guest House of the Year at the Liverpool City Region Tourism Awards 2024,

the springboard to this year's national double; and a coveted Green Tourism Gold accreditation for sustainability in action, not slogan.

### What does that look like in real life?

It starts at breakfast: free-range produce sourced locally, honey from the house's own hives, and homemade touches that feel like a friend's kitchen rather than a checklist. It shows up in thoughtful waste-reduction, refill-first habits and small, guest-focused details that add up.



Step into the rooms and you'll spot the personality: homemade cakes on arrival, artwork by local creatives, and spaces designed for slow mornings before you wander to Lord Street or the seafront. The awards table near reception isn't there to impress; it's there to reassure.

*It says: we are a business that genuinely wants you to have a good stay, to be a part of the journey with you, and ensuring that care has been put into each part of your stay.*

Sunnyside's charm isn't loud. It's the quiet efficiency at check-in, a delectable choice of breakfasts, a genuine conversation about your plans, and the sense that this house belongs to the town as much as it does to the family who runs it.

In an era of glossy promises, Sunnyside's trophies simply confirm what guests feel the moment they arrive:

**welcome home.**



Visit [www.sunnysidesouthport.co.uk/](http://www.sunnysidesouthport.co.uk/)





# LAKESIDE CHURCH

## A COMMUNITY THREAD – HOW A LOCAL CHURCH IS SUPPORTING A COMMUNITY

### A Helping Hand in Hard Times

In the heart of Southport, a quiet yet powerful initiative is making a big difference to those who need it most. The Free Clothes Store, run from Lakeside's community hub, offers good-quality, pre-loved clothes and shoes to anyone facing hardship — no questions, no judgement, just support when it's needed.

For many families and individuals, unexpected challenges can make even basic necessities feel out of reach. That's where The Free Clothes Store steps in. Stocked entirely through generous donations from local residents, it's a place where someone in crisis can find not only practical help but also dignity and kindness. The store welcomes clothing for all ages and sizes, from everyday wear to seasonal essentials. While certain items such as underwear and socks must be bought new, the team works hard to ensure these are available, thanks to financial contributions from those able to give. Each donation — whether a coat, a pair of shoes, or a monetary gift — becomes part of a network of care that stretches across the community.

### More Than Clothes

This isn't a one-way street of giving, either. Through Lakeside's Life Groups and participation projects, people connect, share skills, and create spaces where everyone belongs. Volunteers often find that in helping others, they also build friendships and discover a sense of purpose.

### The Spirit of Community

From sorting donations to offering a friendly ear, it's clear that the work here is about more than clothes — it's about restoring confidence, lifting spirits, and reminding people they are not alone.

In a time when headlines often focus on division, The Free Clothes Store is a shining example of what can happen when a community comes together with compassion at its core.

Donations Tuesdays to Fridays 9-4 and anyone can call us to arrange an appointment 01704 544419.



It's about more than  
clothes — it's about  
restoring confidence  
and lifting spirits"





# FANCY A NIBBLE CAKE CLUB

## DELECTABLE DELIGHTS

Thirteen years ago, Southport's much-loved Cake Club began with just 11 people in Pam's front room — six non-bakers and five bakers. Within a month it had already outgrown the space, moving to a coffee shop, and since then it's kept growing, now thriving in the function room at Bijou.

Held on the last Monday of every month, the club is more than just cake. Meetings begin with a fun activity — from recipe swaps to quizzes and baking demos (including special guests from Bake Off!) — before everyone tucks into a themed cake buffet. Past themes like Death by Chocolate and Traditional Favourites have proved crowd-pleasers, with bakers encouraged to bring a non-baking friend along to share the fun.

The club now attracts around 40 members each month and has raised hundreds for local causes including Queenscourt Hospice and Breast Cancer Care. They've hosted afternoon teas, baked for community events, and even featured in Sainsbury's Magazine. Professionals and Bake Off contestants regularly drop in to share tips, making every session as inspiring as it is delicious.

From juniors like Jesse, who dreams of appearing on Junior Bake Off, to seasoned bakers in their nineties, the club celebrates creativity and confidence at every level.

When I arrived at Cake Club, I was greeted with tables groaning under the weight of treats for the month's theme: Boozy Bakes. And they didn't disappoint — from rum-soaked sponges to Baileys brownies. The highlight of the evening was an expert tutorial from pro baker and Bake Off contestant, the brilliant Cake Ninja herself, Kate Molly Petrie.

It's safe to say, Cake Club is a sweet slice of Southport life.

Contact Pam to get involved:- [pamleckie@btinternet.com](mailto:pamleckie@btinternet.com)





# LENNY'S ON A MISSION

It's hard not to smile when you meet Lenny. With his soulful eyes, expressive face, and calm, steady presence, he has a way of making people feel at ease. For the past four months, this much-loved rescue dog has been spreading joy across Southport as part of Therapy Dogs Nationwide, visiting people in care homes, hospitals, and community settings.

Len's journey began at just three and a half, when he was rehomed after being born in a rescue centre. A mix of Staffy and Boxer, he has the perfect blend of curiosity and calm — sometimes laid-back, sometimes full of energy, depending on what the day calls for. His visits are simple but powerful: an hour each week offering a warm welcome, wagging tail, and the chance for people to connect.

For adults with brain injuries, older residents in wheelchairs, or even staff in busy offices, Len is a reminder of how grounding and healing the presence of a dog can be. His owner describes how, decades ago, she herself was comforted by a therapy dog during a difficult hospital visit — an unexpected moment that moved her to tears. "I felt so lucky to have Len," she says. "So why not share him?"

## **Why Therapy Dogs Matter**

Therapy Dogs Nationwide (TDN) place dogs like Len into hospitals, schools, care homes, and even workplaces across the UK. These four-legged volunteers don't need special training — what matters is their nature. Calm, friendly, and happy to be stroked, they bring comfort and connection in a way only dogs can.

## **How You Can Help**

- Share your dog: If you have a gentle, friendly dog who loves people, consider joining TDN. Visits usually take just one hour a week, but the impact can last far longer.
- Support the charity: Donations help TDN recruit, insure, and coordinate therapy dogs nationwide, meaning more Lenny-like moments for those who need them most.
- Spread the word: Talk to schools, offices, or care homes you know — therapy dog visits can make a huge difference.

Len may be a local celebrity now, but he's just one example of how an ordinary rescue dog can bring extraordinary comfort. Therapy dogs don't just change lives — they brighten days, ease loneliness, and remind us all of the healing power of connection.

“

I'm so lucky — he's so lovely, so why wouldn't I share him?

”

👉 To find out more or to get involved, visit [www.tdn.org.uk](http://www.tdn.org.uk).





# Generous Praise



**O**n Wednesday 30th July, my desktop calendar offered a simple yet striking prompt:

*Never withhold a compliment. Be generous with your praise. Exaggerate your appreciation. Make it a point to lift others up when you get the chance. We aren't always handed the opportunities to make a difference, so when you are, make the most of it.*

It stopped me in my tracks.

That day, the words felt less like a reminder and more like a call to action — especially in light of something

that had happened just days before, while my family and I were on holiday in Turkey.

## ***The Little Things That Stay With You***

We were staying near Ölüdeniz, a stunning coastal town full of sunshine and winding roads. One day, we hired a Jeep buggy — a quirky, open-air vehicle — and headed off toward Fethiye, three excited young boys in tow. Our youngest, Ben [4 and  $\frac{3}{4}$  years old], was perched between my husband and me in the front seat, grinning behind a small baseball cap that helped keep the sun at bay. As we sped down the dual carriageway, Ben's cap flew off into the road.



He was understandably upset, and while we comforted him and carried on, it felt like a small loss that had left a big impression on his little heart. Then — just moments later — something unexpected happened. A Turkish man on a scooter pulled up beside us while we were still driving. With a big smile and total grace, he reached into our buggy, and handed Ben's hat back through the window, gave a friendly wave, and zipped away.

No words exchanged. No fanfare. Just a stranger doing something utterly kind, simply because he could.

### **When Kindness Is Culture**

That moment stayed with us. Not just because it made Ben's day — which it absolutely did — but because it captured something deeper about the spirit of the country we were visiting.

So.....reminded about the importance of taking the opportunity handed to us, I wrote an email to the Secretary of Culture and Tourism for Turkey. It felt important not to let this moment fade into just another "nice story." Turkey, like many places, has faced its share of challenges — from wildfires to economic strain. And yet, what we encountered on that roadside was the kind of quiet, everyday humanity that too often goes unspoken.

Here's an excerpt from that message:

*"We were amazed and deeply touched. He didn't know us. He had no reason to go out of his way. But he did — and that small, thoughtful gesture made a big impression on us. It truly made our day... That moment in particular has stayed with us, and it perfectly summed up the beautiful spirit of your country and its people."*

And it's true. That small act of returning a child's cap told us much more about Turkey than any guidebook could.

### **Why We Must Speak Up With Appreciation**

I am a really big believer in appreciation. In my professional world, my business partner Bev and I have always embraced Nancy Kline's Thinking Environment, where Appreciation is one of the ten core components.

Kline's research shows that people think more clearly, more creatively, and more freely when they feel valued — and I've seen that play out again and again in work and life.

But appreciation doesn't just belong in the workplace or the therapy room. It belongs everywhere.

Too often, we hold back. We notice someone's effort, their kindness, their quiet brilliance — and then we move on. Maybe we tell someone else about it, maybe we just smile and let it fade. But what if we didn't?



### **What if we told them?**

What if we sent the email, left the review, gave the compliment, made the call?

What if, as my diary suggested, we exaggerated our appreciation?

### **Opportunities Are Everywhere**

Sometimes, we wait for "the big chance" to make a difference. But in truth, life hands us small chances all the time — dozens a day, most of which pass by unnoticed.

- The barista who remembered your order.
- The colleague who made your day easier.
- The stranger on the scooter who retrieved a hat.

Every single one is a moment to speak up with kindness. And every time we do, we multiply the goodness in the world.

So I'm leaving you with an invitation: think of one moment today — or this week — where someone showed you a little kindness, generosity, or care. Now tell them. Don't keep it to yourself. Because when you speak it, you don't just change their day — you change yours too.



**Every single one is a  
moment to speak up with  
kindness**





# LOCAL LOVE

## Interiors Edit

As the nights draw in and the air turns crisp, Southport's interiors are embracing a season of colour and comfort. This autumn, it's all about rust and yellow ochre for instant warmth, with playful notes of soft pink and deep, calming blues to keep things modern. The vibe is tactile and inviting—velvet cushions you want to sink into, bouclé throws draped over your favourite chair, and accents that catch the eye without overpowering the room.

The best part? You don't need to look far. Southport has everything you need to weave the season's trends into your space—whether that's a statement mirror to bounce autumn light around, or a set of locally sourced home accessories that make your whole room feel new.



1. EMMY ORANGES- ARTWORK 2. KNOT ME MACRAMÉ- WALL HANGING

3. MARKS & SPENCER- VASE 4. DREAMS- SOFA BED

5. THE RANGE- STONE ORGANIC LEAN TO MIRROR 6. DOBBIES GARDEN CENTRE- HOUSE PLANT DYPsis LUTESCENS

7. T.K.MAXX- CUSHION LUMINA LOU

MILLS  
INTERIORS



# SOUTHPORT HERITAGE

## OPEN DAYS



**Heritage Open Days in Southport invites you to step behind the scenes of our town's history**

From hidden architectural gems to community spaces filled with stories, Heather is shining a light on the places and people that have shaped Southport's character.

Heather says,

“

“As a child, I spent hours poring over books and internet articles about Southport's history, searching for information about long-lost buildings, and fascinated by the clues that remained on the ground. That curiosity has stayed with me, and it is the foundation upon which my love of Southport grew”.

”

The aim of the Heritage Open Days festival is to offer the public an opportunity to experience buildings or spaces in ways that aren't normally available to them. Our brimming festival lineup includes guided tours, heritage talks, photographic exhibitions, walking tours, and even an opportunity to watch an artist at work!

**H**eritage Open Days is England's largest festival of history and culture. This year, the Heritage Open Days festival in Southport is being coordinated by life-long resident, Heather Cook, who believes that curiosity about our local history is a brilliant way to foster home-town pride.



“

We have 25 venues generously giving their time to the festival, with over 60 individual events taking place across the ten days, all in celebration of our town and its magnificent history.

”



## Southport Heritage Open Day Venues

- The Atkinson
- Hesketh Park Observatory
- Hesketh Park Conservatory
- 'Dan in Action' Meet the Artist sessions
- Holy Family Catholic Church
- HSBC Bank
- 'Silcock's Stories of Southport'
- 'One Family, Sixty Years' Masters Golf Course talk
- Southport Masonic Hall
- Prince of Wales
- St Philip & St Paul with Wesley Church
- Walking Tours of Kings Gardens
- Marshside Fogbell
- St Johns Church (Crossens)
- Scarisbrick Mausoleum
- 'At the Cutting Edge' British Lawnmower Museum
- The Windmill Pub
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
- The Lost Street Nevill Street
- Shopping on Lord Street with Mrs Dowson

- Tours of the former Conservative Club, Stanley Street
- 'Around Birkdale and Southport in Past Times' talk
- '150 Years of Swimming & Fitness on the Promenade' Victoria Leisure
- 'The Mystery of the Seaside Garden Village' Ainsdale

### HERITAGE OPEN DAYS — SOUTHPORT 12-21 September 2025

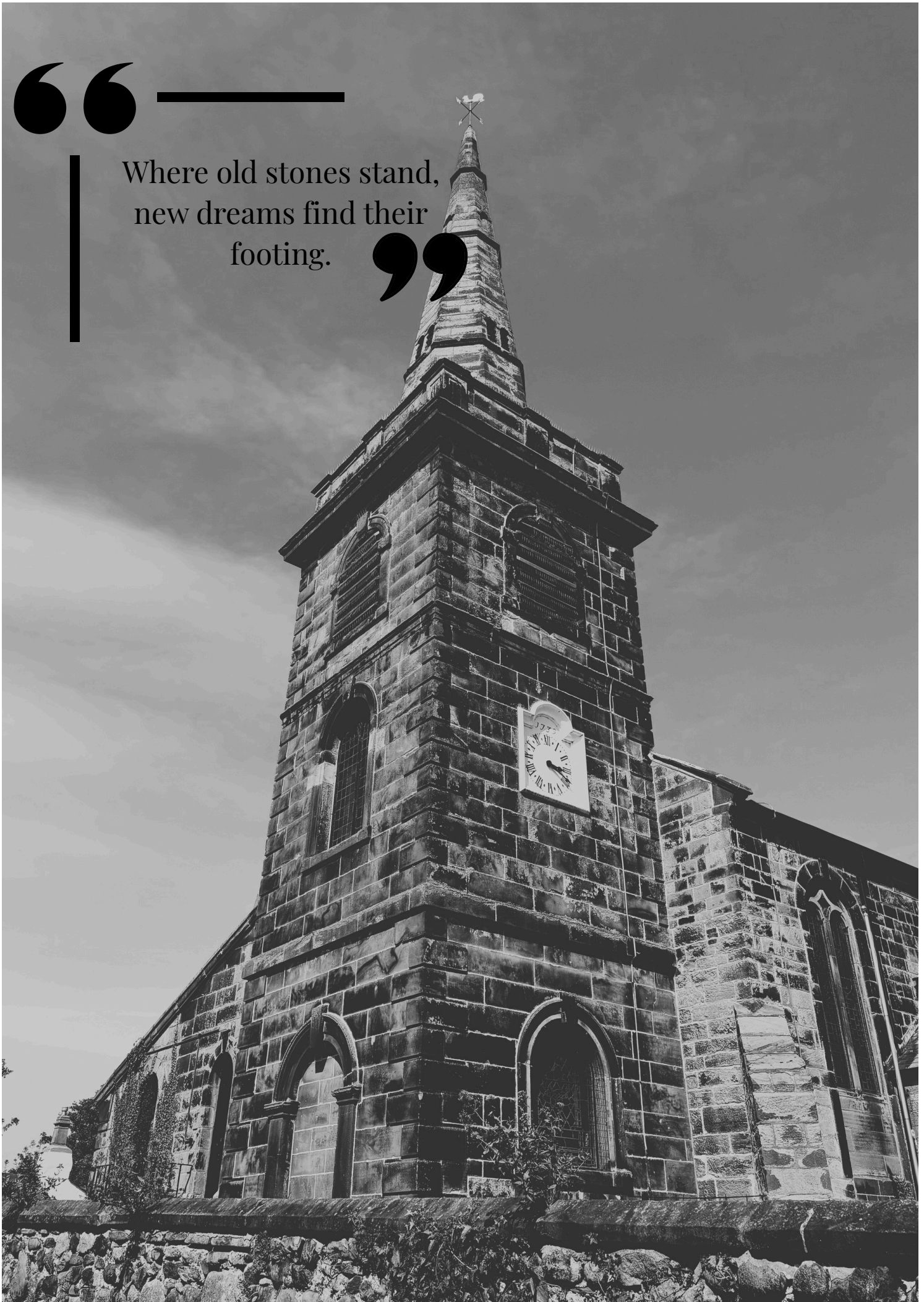
- Plan your visit:  
[heritageopendays.org.uk/whats-on](https://heritageopendays.org.uk/whats-on)  
→ search "Southport."
- Booking: some events need advance booking — please check each listing.
- Programmes: printed guides available from participating venues in the next couple of weeks.
- Updates: stay up to date via our Facebook page.



“

Where old stones stand,  
new dreams find their  
footing.

”



St Cuthbert's, Churchtown



## Let's hear from a local

Personal picks and a peek at the top spots in town. This month we hear from Daniel Kirk from Kirk Media Works Limited



### Go-to place for coffee or brunch?

I like to go to Pippins on Chapel Street for a cheap full English after the gym in the morning.

### Favourite local event or tradition?

The Royal Fireworks show in Victoria Park has always been my personal favourite locally.

### Hidden gem shop or stall?

Make It Cycles in Cambridge Walks is the best bike shop around — as I'm a keen road cyclist, I can't stop myself going in there.

### Local business recommendation?

The events held at The Waterfront Hotel in Southport are always a great shout for networking.

### Groups or spaces that helped you feel connected?

The business club run by Chris at The Big Onion, or Southport Town Hall.

### Hopes for the future of Southport?

To inspire the younger generations to fill Southport with businesses and make it a go-to destination for passers-by.

## THE QUIZ

- Where was the Southport Musician of the Year 2025 final hosted?  
A) Victoria Park B) Floral Hall C) The Grand D) The Atkinson
- Finish the name of the new venue.  
Wine and words by \_\_\_\_\_
- What event is coming to Southport in September?  
A) Glastonbury B) Flower Show C) Air Show D) Heritage Open Days
- Which famous tennis player spoke at this years Southport Flower Show?  
A) Tim Henman B) Sam Jalloh C) Serena Williams D) Andy Murray

## Meet the Team



**Mills Interiors** — Creating beautiful, functional spaces with a curated edit of local interior finds.  
[www.millsinteriors.com](http://www.millsinteriors.com)

**Sarah McEntee** — Communications coach helping people use their voice to change the world. [@comfortably\\_heard](https://www.comfortablyheard.co.uk)

**Kate Miles-Roberts** — Co-Director at The Clear Thinking Partnership; Vice-Chair, Southport Little Theatre—on clear thinking and calm leadership. [kate@clearthinkinguk.com](mailto:kate@clearthinkinguk.com) or [www.clearthinkinguk.com](http://www.clearthinkinguk.com)

**Cath Reese** — Our resident travel writer, from smart staycations to worldwide adventures.  
[cath.reese@travelcounsellors.com](mailto:cath.reese@travelcounsellors.com)

**Anna McNally** — With over 15 years as a personal trainer, I specialise in strength training, pre & postnatal coaching, and building real, lasting science based results, without the fads. [www.projectphoenixignite.co.uk](http://www.projectphoenixignite.co.uk)

**Mike Settle** — Performance coach: friendly advice for everyone from beginners to elite athletes. [@hogansettle](https://www.hogansettle.co.uk)

**ICAN Education** — Practical advice, support and helpful hints for parents. Visit [www.icaneducation.co.uk](http://www.icaneducation.co.uk)





Southport's  
**Journey**

Want to be featured, email [hello@southportsjourney.com](mailto:hello@southportsjourney.com)