

DEREHAM BLUES FESTIVAL

It's Coming - The Dereham Blues Festival 2023

Yes, it is nearly here. The 2023 Dereham Blues Festival will kick off on Wednesday 5th July at The Dereham Memorial Hall with a “foot-stompin’, hand clapping” opening concert featuring from the USA the fabulous Grammy nominated Danielle Nicole and her band [<https://daniellenicolemusic.com/>]. Danielle commands a powerful and unique blues vocal style driven along by her distinctive and inventive bass work. Grammy nominated, not once, but twice, Nicole has continued to tour the world to hone her sound. She has gained a top reputation for getting “..... down to the nitty gritty.”.

And this year, the support act on the night will be local young rising star Ross Stewart. He already plays with a maturity and generosity way beyond his years. It is fabulous to nurture a young player like Ross, and a local boy too. He is an exciting prospect and it is a super opportunity to have the chance to see and hear him play in the festival’s opening concert.

Tickets are selling fast and on course for yet another sell out show. So, to avoid disappointment get your tickets quick for your chance to see a top act from the USA. Head to Ticket Source at <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/whats-on/dereham/dereham-memorial-hall/dereham-blues-festival-2023/2023-07-05/19:30/t-dvjxkge> to buy online.

Then from Thursday 6th July for the next four days Dereham will be buzzing with sounds of 50 blues acts playing in fifteen venues around the town centre. Yes a whole lot more than 12 bars of blues.

To find out which act is playing where over the four days of the festival, head to the festival website, especially the timetable pages at <https://derehamb bluesfestival.org.uk/program/timetable> . Also from this page, follow the links for information about each of the bands and all the venues hosting them.

There will also be an open-air busking event taking place during the festival weekend on Saturday 8th July in the Ellenor Fenn garden. This event in the festival’s programme is a relaxed show featuring several acoustic blues acts. So come along with the family for some free open-air blues music.

As in previous years there is also a full printed festival programme available and these will be distributed around the venues and many other locations. So pick up your copy. With this programme or information on the website, every festival-goer can plan your entire festival visit to see as many of your favourite acts as possible.

The Dereham Blues Festival will also have a presence at “Dereham Day” on Saturday 13th May promoting the festival alongside members of Norfolk Blues Society who will be providing entertainment. This free event is a taste of the major open-air busking event taking place during the festival weekend on Saturday 8th July in the Ellenor Fenn garden.



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If previous festivals are anything to go by, all the fifteen other venues - bars, pubs, restaurants, sports clubs and the like dotted all around Dereham town centre, will again be throbbing to a rich variety of blues from bluesy rock to the more introspective but just as heart-felt forms of the blues.

Entry to each of the venues is all free. So come on in, buy yourself some refreshments and sit back (or stand back) to some of the best blues music that the region and further afield has to offer.

As Harry Collins the festival chairman put it, "It's wonderful to be back again this year with as always, a large, rich, diverse blues festival. It really is the town's festival and over the second weekend in July the festival truly puts Dereham at the heart of the region. Thank you to all in the town, the sponsors, the bands and venues who all combine to make this unique "free to attend" festival" come alive."

So put the dates in your diary, don't miss it and come on down.

Contact : Jim Niven (volunteer) 07528492288, email: rednef59@hotmail.co.uk

6th May 2023.





NOTES TO EDITORS

The 2023 Dereham Blues Festival will run from Wednesday July 5th to Sunday July 9th.

You can download high res. images from previous Dereham Blues Festivals from the website at: <http://www.derehambluesfestival.org.uk/about/media-centre>

The Dereham Blues Festival started in 2013 and in its first year attracted 500 people to the market town.

Following a two year break due to the Covid pandemic, the festival stormed back in 2022 and attracted well over 2000 music fans from across the county and beyond. The success last year maintained the festival's status as one of the go-to events on the Blues calendar.

Email: info@derehambluesfestival.org.uk

Dereham Blues Festival is a not-for-profit company under its chairman Harry Collins, who leads the devoted team of Blues volunteers, many of whom are themselves active gigging musicians. The founding members are Doreen and Stewart Aitken who have run the festival since its 2013 inauguration.

50+ acts perform in the festival, drawn from 'local-grown' talent in Norfolk and the greater East Anglia region, and from all over the rest of the UK.

The festival kicks off each year with opening concert featuring a well-known national or international blues act. Previous years have seen Paul Jones, Dr. Feelgood, Andy Fairweather Low and the Low Riders, Georgie Fame, and in 2019, Hamilton Loomis from the US. Last year the headliners were When Rivers Meet and the The Kyla Brox Band.

The opening night is held at Dereham Memorial Hall – for more information about this venue, other events held there, and the work of the Friends of Dereham Memorial Hall, please see their website – <http://derehammemorialhall.co.uk> .

The market town of Dereham in Norfolk has seen significant growth over the past few years and the town's Blues Festival reflects and supports this continued social and economic development. The estimated 2000 or so festival visitors provide a real economic boost to the town as well as bringing the place alive throughout the festival week in July.

The Dereham Blues Festival continues to be a real success story in the region thanks to its two lead organisers: Norfolk Blues Society founders Doreen and Stewart Aitken. As founding members, they remain fully involved and are determined that the festival has a long-term future.

The festival is entirely run by a volunteer group of some 12 local Norfolk blues enthusiasts and is supported by the Norfolk Blues Society, who can be found at <http://www.norfolkbluessociety.org.uk>



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We are proud to be associated with the following sponsors of the festival and we thank them for their support: Minors and Brady who are the Headline Sponsors; Dereham Taxis, who are the Main Sponsors; and business sponsors Stephenson Smart, Quote Four and Orchard Caravans. Please see our website for more details:
www.derehamb bluesfestival.org.uk/about/sponsors

Any band who wishes to play at the annual Dereham Blues Festival in July must apply via the website – <https://www.derehamb bluesfestival.org.uk/wanna-play> Applications open each September and close the following February.

