

# DEREHAM BLUES FESTIVAL

## The 10th Dereham Blues Festival Is Here (July 10th - 14th)

The 10th Dereham Blues Festival in Norfolk is here, and bigger and better than ever. Over five days from Wednesday July 10th to Sunday July 14th more bands than ever before will be playing at more town centre venues than ever before. See the full line-up and programme on line at <https://www.derehambluesfestival.org.uk/> .

As the festival has got bigger over the past decade, so the organisers are keen it involves and touches more and more of the community in Dereham in the heart of Norfolk. So not only can you go to hear wall to wall blues and soul music for free in all the town centre venues, this year people can also participate in a series of talks and workshops about the blues under a novel programme called "Community Blues Explosion". This is a brand new feature of the festival, generously supported by Dereham Town Council, Norfolk Blues Society, Geoffrey Watling Charity, BAM, Cam Trak.

Learn to sing, learn about drumming, learn about the history of the blues, even make your own cigar box blues guitar. The full workshop programme is available on line on the Blues Festival web site at festival at <https://cbe.derehambluesfestival.org.uk/> . So if you are interested, sign up today. The Community Blues Explosion programme aims to introduce a range of blues related activities inclusive for all the family and community, young and old alike.

The opening concert at the Dereham Memorial Hall on Wednesday 10th July featuring the amazing young talent Toby Lee, sold out in weeks. We regret to announce that the support act Catfish originally advertised for the concert, have sadly had to pull out of the gig due to the continuing serious illness of their lead singer and guitarist Matt Long. All involved in the festival send all our best wishes to Matt and also his family and friends, as he continues his treatment.

We are really pleased to announce that the superb and hard working James Oliver Band will now be the support act on the night, replacing Catfish. So it is sure to continue to be a superb opening concert for the festival.

At the end of May last month, The Norfolk Blues Society also put on an extra pre-festival promotional blues gig at the hall which featured the Norfolk Blues Society patron Mississippi MacDonald and also Santiago and The Soul movers. Both were huge hits at last year's festival and the concert was a cracking taster of the music to come during the festival.

The family open air busking event will feature again in the Ellenor Fenn Gardens on Saturday afternoon 13th July. Bring a picnic and enjoy the relaxed acoustic vibe for all the family.

Dereham Town hosts thousands of blues lovers and visitors over the festival weekend, putting Dereham firmly on the UK festival map as well as raising the prominence and prosperity of the town. The festival organisers thank the people of Dereham from the bottom of their blues hearts for their generosity and kind hospitality hosting this event.

In addition to thanking all the volunteers who organise and put on the festival, a special word of deep appreciation must be extended to the festival sponsors, for without them the festival could not exist. These special people are Stephenson Smart, Dereham Taxis, Minors & Brady, Quote Four and Orchard Caravans. Thank you to you all.

Of course too, a special mention goes out to the venues for hosting the bands and so help generate a special atmosphere in the town over the weekend. This appreciation goes wider this year to all those supporting the festival's new Community Blues Explosion events. Thank you so much to you all.



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Doreen Aitken, the festival secretary, says; “Fans come from far and wide across the region and from all parts of the UK and there is a truly infectious buzz throughout the town during the festival. So no matter if you are a regular visitor each year, a new fan or just plain curious, come on down and see for yourself and participate in what is one of the top annual events for the town. Entry to the venues - all listed on line and in the printed programme, is free. So get yourself a drink, relax and fill yourself with some of the very best blues music around. You won't be disappointed.”

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21st June 2024

## NOTES TO EDITORS

The 2024 Dereham Blues Festival will run from Wednesday July 10th to Sunday July 14th and is the 10th festival to be held.

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 Norfolk market town. The festival now attracts an estimated several thousand or so visitors who provide a real economic boost to the town as well as bringing the place alive throughout the festival week in July.

The continuing success last year maintained the festival's status as one of the go-to events on the Blues calendar.

A brand new feature of the 2024 festival aimed at involving and including the wider population of Dereham, is the putting on of a series of talks and workshops about the blues under a novel community programme called “Community Blues Explosion”.

This year (2024) some 60+ 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. Some 19 town venues host the acts playing well over 100+ sets over the five days of the festival. Entry to the venues is free.

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.

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 and remain fully involved and are determined that the festival has a long-term future.

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

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



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Sponsors; and business sponsors Stephenson Smart, Quote Four and Orchard Caravans. Please see our website for more details: [www.derehambluesfestival.org.uk/about/sponsors](http://www.derehambluesfestival.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.derehambluesfestival.org.uk/wanna-play> Applications open each September and close the following February.

Opening acts Info.

Toby Lee: <https://www.toby-lee.com/>

James Oliver Band: <https://www.jamesoliverband.co.uk/>

Email: [info@derehambluesfestival.org.uk](mailto:info@derehambluesfestival.org.uk) Website: <https://www.derehambluesfestival.org.uk/>

