

Leyton



The blues jam has attracted musicians from around the world

We're jamming

- Blues jam night showcases local musicians and singers
- Organisers say Coach and Horses Blues Jam is the "friendliest jam night in town"

Getting the blues doesn't necessarily have to be a bad thing - as punters at one Leyton pub can vouch.

The Coach and Horses (391 High Road Leyton, E10 5NA) has hosted a popular blues jam night on Wednesday evenings for the past two years.

The jam is one of the longest-running events of its type in London, having entertained the capital's blues fans and musicians for eight years. The jam was previously held at The Heathcoate pub.

The evening features all manner of musicians and singers, many of whom have been put together into ad-hoc bands on the night. Admission is just £1 for jammers and £2 for audience members.

Vera Duggan, who

organises the nights with husband Terry, told Waltham Forest News: "People are so friendly and supportive of each other at the jam. If you like blues music, you should come along. New people are made very welcome and we look after them."

"It has gone from strength to strength and now we think it is one of the best blues nights going. We always have a house band that do about 20 minutes on stage and from then on it's people who turn up wanting to jam. We usually have between 18 and 25 musicians turn up on the night."

The jam night was first established in 2003 by the late Ray Bartrip, a popular musician on the Essex blues scene, and his wife Sue, who approached Terry and Vera for help in running the new venture.

The house band was first made up of Terry on bass guitar, Ray on Hammond-player, saxophonist Pete Bull and Reg Patten on Drums. They decided against having a singer in favour of guest artists - a tradition they still retain.

The night relocated to the Coach and Horses in 2008 and is going from strength the strength. As well as the weekly jam there is an annual Christmas party and birthday party in May and fundraising events for the wider community.

Vera said: "We are an important part of the blues scene in London because we were the first to become established. We give new musicians the chance to show what they can do."

"We do a lot of things for the community and we're very keen to get as many

people down as possible and see what we do.

"Our musicians are superb, they are really good, some come to the night in bands and some come to meet new people and form bands and that helps create a great atmosphere."

The reputation of the night is such that performers have come from as far afield as the USA, Canada, Germany, Italy, Russia and Japan.

Vera and Terry now hope to build further on their success and continue to provide a fun packed night of blues music to the whole community.

More info

To find out more visit www.coachandhorsesbluesjam.com. Free internet access is available at all libraries in the borough.

In brief

Friends group

Tucked away in one of Leyton's most tranquil corners is St Mary's Parish Church, a local landmark that has been around since at least 1130 and was likely built on the site of an even older Saxon church. As well as offering visitors the chance for some quiet reflection, the churchyard itself is home to a variety of flora and fauna and has recently been awarded 'protected' status by English Heritage. The site is looked after by the Friends of St Mary's Nature Reserve, a local volunteer group who meet every Sunday from 12.30-4pm to preserve and enhance the site - they're always looking for new members, so if you fancy chipping in then get in touch.

• For more information phone Carmela Crute Jones on 07814 475191 or visit www.friendsofparkswf.org.



Conservation time

The British Trust Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) meet every Wednesday and Thursday from 9am-4pm at the BTCV offices (1a Connaught Close, Leyton E10) with the simple aim of making a difference to the borough's nature reserves and green spaces. Anyone can get involved and all equipment and training is supplied by the BTCV. All you need to bring is appropriate clothing and footwear, along with plenty of enthusiastic get-up-and-go. Children are more than welcome as long as they're accompanied by an adult, and if you'd like any advice please just get in touch beforehand.

• For more information visit www.btcv.org/waltham. Free internet access is available at all libraries in the borough.

Back on track

If you're struggling with your plans to get a little fitter this year and could do with some friendly spurring-on, why not give Eton Manor Athletics Club a try? This friendly community-based running club meets every Tuesday and Thursday from 7.15-9pm at the Cottage, 3 Marsh Lane, Leyton E10 7BL and welcomes men and women of all abilities. As well as getting fit you'll also get the chance to hone your competitive streak as the group takes part in track and field, road and cross country events. So what are you waiting for? Air out those sneakers, slip on your trackies and get running!

• For more information visit www.eton-manoor.com. Free internet access is available at all libraries in the borough.