

# Festivals At Every Age

*Sir Peter Bottomley MP*

*Worthing Herald and Littlehampton Gazette Article*

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Bob Dylan was not at the 1969 Woodstock Festival because 170,000 Isle of Wight Festival fans, including the Beatles, Elton John and Francoise Hardy, were listening to him. We were outside the barriers. He was attracted by local literary associations and a quiet family holiday.

I usually enjoy the full fun and variety of the East Preston Festival. The Lions Summer Worthing Seafront Festival was held over two weekends at the end of July, sponsored by Yeomans Cars, Michael Jones Estate Agents and Gardner & Scardifield, building trades suppliers.

Festivals coming in September include Worthing Food & Drink, Steyne Gardens; GreenDreams at Field Place; and Worthing Pride, Beach House Gardens.

Worthing's Rotary three days Carnival included Bank Holiday Monday: food stalls, live music, community displays with funfair and market. The popular police tent showed how paid professionals and volunteers can be indistinguishable when helping the public improve their security, offering advice and assistance.

Turning Tides is our charity ending local homelessness. They too combine staff and volunteers. See their Heroes at Harvest appeal designed for children.

My autumn Ramblers magazine has a motivational article about the contributions of volunteering. It describes the Japanese concept of 'ikigai', a reason for being, finding a sense of purpose. Most of us have a blend of what we love, what the world needs, what we can be paid for, what we are good at.

I endorse two Ramblers' sentences. 'The act of volunteering is essentially voting with your feet and doing something because it matters to you. If you love the outdoors, being with others and look to apply your skills and time to a worthwhile cause, becoming a volunteer could be the key to your own ikigai?'

Combine good diet with healthy life activities while staying connected with nature, nurturing important relationships and keeping busy, however many years go by.

It reminds me of the continuing progress at the Ferring Country Centre with the new Visitors' centre and Rangers Café at Dales Farm, the valuable educational environment where children can learn about and enjoy the animals all year round.

The outstanding Centre is an independent charity providing training and work experience for people with learning disabilities. Volunteers and expert staff assist with the Riding Therapy Unit and the brilliant Garden Centre as well as the Farm and Café. Come to the Centre at the far end of Rife Way to see how positive futures are created. The plants we bought flourished throughout the summer, just as the young people there do too.

Labour MP Wes Streeting earns praise for suggesting a list of good experiences for every young person. Join in competitive team activity, play a musical instrument, learn to swim, take part in drama and performing arts, visit the countryside and the seaside, experience museums, galleries and heritage sites, try a camping trip and overnight residential stay, learn to ride a bike, join a debate, use a library.

A commentator added: visit a retirement home, attend local council meeting or Parliament, go to a law court, and experience a truly dark star-filled sky. Just about every activity includes volunteers. I add growing a plant and caring for a pet.

Join in thanking members of Rotary and the Lions, the police and all involved in Festival committees for helping others to give and gain so much within our shared community. Bob Dylan's words in Forever Young: 'May your heart always be joyful; May your song always be sung'. He also wrote the (almost) appropriate song: Gotta Serve Somebody.