

Birchanger
November 2010



Magazine
Issue 95

FOREST HALL BOUNDARY CHANGES

There seemed to be little enthusiasm shown by the majority of those currently living in Forest Hall Park, who would be affected by the proposed boundary changes, to remain in Birchanger. All the residents of the houses on the Forest Hall estate were consulted along with some on Forest Hall Rd and the B1383. Some did not realise they were actually in Birchanger. Of those who did only one wanted to remain. Both Parish councils are broadly in favour of the move.

This is entirely understandable. Most of those living there shop in Stansted, attend the schools and Doctor's Surgery there and many go to one of the Stansted Churches. It is quite natural for them to feel more closely linked with Stansted. Birchanger Parish Council does not have a problem with this.

The residents are now to be consulted on where the boundary changes should be. For some time the residents of Forest Hall Farm have voiced their preferences to remain in Birchanger. The line could be drawn along the middle of Forest Hall Rd. However there have been concerns expressed in Birchanger about the huge land grab by Stansted from Birchanger in the past few decades, and there is a move to ask for the boundary to be adjusted to include some farmland up to the Parsonage Farm boundary.

Once again those affected will be given a list of possible options in the next few weeks. The District Council's preferred option is to take the boundary along the centre of Forest Hall Rd, down to Parsonage Lane excluding the lodge, but including Forest Hall Cottages and Farm in Birchanger. If you live in Forest Hall, please respond to this if you can. After all it will affect you most of all. There is still the opportunity to create your own parish later as well. If the boundaries are changed, the parish council elections would be postponed for a year.

However the confusion is set to continue for a while longer. As far as the District Council election boundaries are concerned Forest Park will remain in Birchanger as ward boundaries can only be changed by the Electoral Commission. It is on their "to do" list, but that takes time.

News from the Club

Grand Christmas draw tickets are now on sale £1 per book of 5 tickets. 1st prize £150 cash, 2nd prize Games Console Pack, 3rd prize Food Hamper, Plus many other prizes.

Bookings for the Club's Christmas menu are now being taken. Please see the notices in the club for the menu, opening hours and availability details.

The Annual children's party will be on Saturday December 18th from 1 till 4 for members children aged 3 to 10



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Young people are priced out of the housing market in Uttlesford

This must come as no real surprise to anyone. It has long been a sad fact that young people find it very difficult to set up home in Birchanger, and have often been forced to look elsewhere to set up their first home.

This does not do anybody any good. Family ties are weakened, grand parents do not see their grandchildren so often. This also means that they are unable to help their children as much as they would have liked. Friends become distant and moving to a different town is often a very lonely experience.

In Birchanger we do not really need any more expensive new development. What we really need is homes for younger people and young families. This often means rental accommodation from which the occupants can move on as circumstances improve.

Although Birchanger is surrounded by the Green Belt, exceptions can be made for truly affordable homes only. The question is just where exactly should these new homes go? Land owners are reluctant to part with the Green Belt land in the hope that it might eventually be released, which is highly unlikely in the current climate. What we need is a philanthropic land owner with a place where these houses could be built with agreement that this is a suitable site. A tall order. Any ideas?

A Leader and Cabinet System for Uttlesford

This now seems to be inevitable, although the system is not most people's preferred option. At the moment Uttlesford operates using a system of committees, task groups, and working groups. This system does not lead to quick decision making or overall efficiency although it is generally preferred by members as they feel that they are more involved.

Sadly there are now financial constraints and decisions need to be taken speedily. After several months research

and visits to other councils operating the cabinet system it has, reluctantly by many, been agreed that the move to the cabinet system will take place next May after the council elections.

There will be a leader from the majority party who will appoint members of the cabinet. The regulatory Development Control and Licensing committees will still remain, alongside Scrutiny Committees and Working Groups, but the other committees will go. Rank and file council members main involvement will be with these and many will feel disenfranchised.

So do we have a site for the Surgery at last?

Well not exactly. We have a new preferred option site for certain, but the actual planning consents and construction of the site are a long way off.

On September 23rd the site at the garage in Lower Street in Stansted became the preferred option, replacing the site on Forest Park. Just to confuse things and keep everyone guessing the PCT gave notice of intent to develop the site at Forest Hall Park to the builders at the same time, as a kind of insurance policy. The PCT declares that if agreements are not signed and planning agreed in principle for the Lower Street site by January 1st, then the deal is off.

This is indeed a bold statement. Although the trust is already working with the District council Planners and the developer has commissioned a traffic survey, Essex County Highways has yet to have a say. Certainly the junction at Lower Street is at capacity, and there will at least have to be a new priority traffic routing to accommodate the 400 cars expected to use the site on a daily basis.

In addition to the surgery, the developer has to make things pay. There will be flats on the top floor, retail units at the bottom with the surgery somewhere in the middle. Just what will be offered in addition to the surgery is unclear, although there is a dentist hoping to practise there as well. There will be car parking but this relies on some space taken from the council car park. Just how they will prevent commuter parking has not been worked

out yet. Parking is to be free for surgery users they claim, but how will this be differentiated?

There is clearly a long way to go. For Birchanger Village it makes little difference where the surgery is as long as we have one. Too much more procrastination will see us all having to travel to Dunmow, Elsenham, or Saffron Walden if the impasse continues.

Olympics update

Like some of the London boroughs we may be thinking that the Olympic activities are largely passing us by, and that we shall simply be a dormitory or an oversize car park while visitors attempt to struggle on to our already overcrowded train network.

There is however the small possibility that the Olympic Torch may arrive at Stansted Airport sometime in May 2012. If it does there should be a large event to support this. Just what is unknown, but ideas from local residents would be very welcome.

It might not be possible to hold the actual event in the village but surely it could be close by if not actually in Birchanger. Are there any events planned for May 2012? Please tell if you have any ideas on 812793.

Are we failing our under fives?

Last week some very uncomfortable statistics were released which showed that in the last two years our children are lacking the expected language skills when they reach primary schools by some 37% in 2008 and 29% in 2009.

The reasons for this are both several and preventable according to the child care professionals. They are caused by the manufacturers of buggies insistence that buggies should face outwards, not the person pushing the buggy. This prevents eye contact and conversation. From birth babies are exposed to too much background noise from television and radios. Spoken words are rendered meaningless. Adults talk on mobile phones very often simply ignoring their young children. Dummies are used indiscriminately, the child simply sucks on the dummy and does not bother to speak.

We can easily all do something about this. Basically it means a little more human consideration about the growing child's needs. To sit them in front of a TV set is no substitute for a talk or a story. Do they really need that dummy all the time? When your mobile phone calls afford your child the same courtesy as if they were an adult in the room with you. Explain things and above all just talk to them more about anything and everything as often as you can. Include them in.

Money to share in Birchanger

The Open Gardens Group has money to give to village groups for that special project, following their very successful Art Exhibition in the Church Hall at the beginning of September along with the Flower Show and Photographic Competition in Birchanger Church.

The money is on offer to any village group who has a project they would like to complete which will benefit those who live in the village and who use their services. It can be for a completely new project or for help with one which cannot be completed due to lack of funds. It can be for any age group.

If you have a project for which you need financial help, or are trying to raise funds to complete something you are doing which is of benefit to the village please call Sheila Devereux and tell her about it on 813843.

Fancy a Crocodile or Ostrich Steak?

Well it makes a change from steak and chips, but the question is where do you get it?

Well actually you don't exactly need to travel because the crocodile and ostrich steaks can be found right here at the club, alongside beef and gammon steaks, fish and chips, special dishes of the day as well as a full and exhaustive main course, dessert menu and snack menu.

These delights are all on offer in our own Birchanger Sports and Social club, not always with the exotic elements which are not to everyone's taste, on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday evenings, Wednesday and Friday lunchtimes with Sunday Lunch also available between 12 and 2pm. Your chef is Kim and her team.

Crocodile and ostrich may not be for everyone but they generated a lot of interest. The food is delicious whether from the wide ranging menus or the "specials" board. The specials tend to sell out quickly as does the fish and chips, which is available to eat in or take away between 6pm and 8pm on Fridays. The desserts are firm favourites. Try the menu sometime. You will be surprised at how reasonable the prices are as well.

Last month a new committee took office, the club is back in the black and it should be a good year for everyone.

Birchanger Burns Night

Most of us are just beginning to think about Christmas but an important date for your diary is Birchanger Burns Supper to be held on Saturday 22 January. It's always a sell out so you'll need to move quickly if you want a seat. The ticket price is the same as last year (£25) and ideally you should organise a party of 8. Contact the SSE Campaign Office (01279 870558) or Brian Ross (814961), Alex Stewart (812303) or Liz Godwin (812793) in the village.

School News

The Friends of Birchanger School, more commonly known as the PTA, have had a fantastic record breaking year with their support for the school. Last year not only have they raised more money than ever before, a staggering £7,422, they have run more events as well.

Not all the events are fundraisers. In addition to the Christmas Bazaar, St George's Day Celebration and Summer Fayre which all raised a great deal of the money, they have also funded the Christmas parties and the Annual Summer Ball which were run simply for the children's enjoyment. There were very welcome ice lollies for sale in the summer, Christmas Cards and diaries, and outgrown school uniforms were also some of the items sold to raise funds. The raffles were memorable.

They paid for the coach to take the children to the pantomime in Cambridge, contributed to the residential trip to London for Class 4, provided Maths games for Class 1, an outdoor adventure trip, ukuleles, picnic games, and benches and umbrellas for the playground. They have already provided 30 laptops and aim to provide one for every child over the next three years.

Congratulations to the PTA team. Your effort was fantastic and very much appreciated. The next big event is the Christmas Fayre. They are looking forward to seeing you there on Saturday November 27th at 2pm.

Tag Rugby takes off

Tag Rugby is now included in the sports offered at Birchanger School. It has proved to be a huge hit with the older children, including girls. The team is now taking part in local matches and tournaments and are performing very well already.

Personal Invitations to the Harvest Festival Service.

The children want to include everyone to their functions as far as possible. Their latest initiative was to paint and create invitations to their own Harvest Festival and to invite the senior citizens of whom they were aware in the village. Obviously not everyone was included as there is no comprehensive list to work to. They intend to repeat the exercise for other occasions. If you would like to be included in future invitations please let the school know on 812362.

Birchanger Magazine has a Rival!

The Editorial Team was in place, ideas were flowing as the first ever edition of the new Birchanger School Newspaper rolled off the presses to be distributed to all pupils and staff at the school.

This was an initiative led entirely by the children. They formed an editorial team, appointed an editor, as well as technical and reporting staff. They chose their own name, The Student Voice and went to press for the first time last month.

The paper will be published monthly. What it has to say will make very interesting reading indeed. The first edition contained an editorial from Andrew H the editor, book reviews, a poll on school matters, word search, an interview with one of the teachers, as well as a scoop interview with the explorer James Ketchell on line.

Greek day fun.

Not everyone viewed the prospect of coming to school in a toga as a good idea, but minds were quickly changed when they discovered their friends were all there in their togas with the same reservations. The whole day rapidly became interesting and a lot of fun. In the course of the day they discovered how to use olives to extract oil to light their home made lamps, to make mosaics and wax tablet, paint frescos, make medicines from herbs, to become a Greek actor or a soldier and to take part in ancient Greek sports such as throwing a javelin, wrestling, as well as running races.

There was a Greek feast to end the day, by which time everyone had forgotten the original embarrassment of coming to school in a toga. A donation of £10 per child from the PTA helped to fund the day. Class 3 will be the next class to have their own special day shortly. Once again the school is very grateful to the PTA for their support.

Birchanger Primary School PTA

Christmas Bazaar

Saturday 27th November 2010

2pm - 4pm At the School

Raffles, Santa's Grotto, Tombola, Face Painting, Refreshments, Toys & Gifts, Lots of Fun Games and Activities, Lucky Dip, Carol Singing



We look forward to welcoming you

Birchanger fete returns

Yes, there will be a fete in Birchanger in 2011

Birchanger Sports and Social club Chairman Peter Booker is going to ensure that there is a truly village fete in Birchanger this year with all the profits going to village causes. This is no mean undertaking. The fete will be held at the club and will be run by a separate fete committee which includes members from the village community as well as some from the Club Committee. The date will be Saturday September 3rd, so as not to clash with the many other village activities held earlier in the summer.

Village groups are invited to run their own stalls for a small franchise, as in previous years. This again is open to everyone as it has been in the past. Many attractions are planned and there are certain to be bands and entertainment during the afternoon and evening alongside all the old village fete favourites.

There is a great deal of work involved and a lot of help will be needed from everyone, both beforehand and on the day. Help will be needed on the stalls in setting up and taking them down on Sept 3rd, as well as perhaps contributing to the tombola, raffle, and bottle stall. Perhaps you would like to run a stall of your own. The Fete Committee would like to involve everyone in Birchanger either just by coming on the day or by helping out where they think they can.

There are two numbers to call either to help or for information. They are either Alex Stewart on 07846467575 or myself on 812793.

The hound of BirchangerLane

Birchanger has its own Littlest Hobo story as there is a stray Yorkshire terrier loose along the Lane between Duck End and Birchanger Green (not the services). The tiny fugitive was first seen (by me at least) around October 23rd on the corner opposite the Churton development and at the time of writing has evaded capture by numerous villagers. The locals have very kindly been leaving bowls of food out for it but I imagine the local foxes and cats are competing for this generosity.

As far as I can ascertain there is no hard information as to the origin of the "Yorkie" but a fair amount of dramatic speculation, it is reported to be wearing a red collar, and reacts angrily when cornered. It is known to be sheltering in the wood pile at Moorswood overnight.

I would like to report a happy outcome to this lost dog story but the cold nights and the traffic are threatening a more tragic result. So drivers please keep a look out for a bedraggled bundle of fur running up and down the lane! Any additional information will be appreciated.

Deliverer appointed

We have appointed Barbara Wilson of Birchanger Lane to join our team of deliverers. Barbara was the first person to respond to our appeal last month and we welcome her to the fold.



Look and feel fantastic on your special day!

Tel: (01279) 814037
Mobile: 07840 995848

tina@Beautifulhair4weddingss.co.uk

News from St Mary's

The Friends of St Mary's

The tenth Annual General Meeting of the Friends of St Mary's Church, Birchanger will be held in the Pavilion, Birchanger Sports and Social Club at 8.00 pm on Wednesday 8th December. Members and non members are welcome to come along to the meeting and support the village Church. Tea and coffee will be available after the meeting.

This meeting is particularly important in that the church has its Quinquennial report next year by the Diocese. This report will outline work that is needed to be carried out to keep the future of St Mary's in order so that we can meet and worship there on a regular basis. There will also be positions on the Committee that are/will become vacant and will need to be filled to support and continue this work.

Christmas Coffee Morning at Moorswood

All the usual festivities at Moorswood on Tuesday 7th December at 10.30am. Everyone is welcome so come along and bring a friend.

Confirmation

Anyone interested in being confirmed should contact the Rector on 01279 812203

Christmas Services

17th December at 7pm - Evening Carol Service with the Benefice Choir. All the old favourite carols followed by mince pies and mulled wine.

19th December at 11am - Family Christingle Service

25th Decemeber at 11am - Family Communion with the Rector

Some years ago I started knocking on doors asking people to help support St Marys by making regular payments to the church by direct debit. The response was very encouraging but I never did get round to every household. With a building as old as ours, funds are always needed to carry out repairs and renovations. So, in the coming year I shall resume my task but, in the meantime, if you would like to make a regular contribution please call me on 07702171744.

Clare's trek update

Ok its the 3rd of November today 5 years to the day that dad lost his battle to bowel cancer and I've just sat down and worked it out that I only have 16 days until I take on the Sahara desert. Now I'm getting scared, but have to say with all the training I have been doing, the gym every night, swimming and other classes I'm probably fitter now than I have ever been in my life. Also I've been having some sunbed sessions so that I don't burn to a crisp the first day I'm there.

For the first year ever since having children I have done most of my Christmas shopping, as when I get back I'm only going to have about 3 weeks which will be just enough time for me to wrap them, so I have to say my life at the moment is busy busy, busy. Just for me to do a ten day walk. Just a few more things to pack in the rucksack and write a list for Steve so he can remember what clubs and where the children have to be and at what times, and who has lunchboxes on what days and so on.

Lastly I would just like to say a BIG THANK YOU to everybody for their support (you know who you are) as without these people it would have been a lot harder for me to achieve, so on that note the next time you read about me I would have done my trek and hopefully will not be too achy and sore to tell the tale.

Thanks again to everyone,
Clare

Christmas Bazaar

On behalf of the friends of St Mary's

In the Church Hall

Saturday November 27th

Please note the change of date!

2 till 4

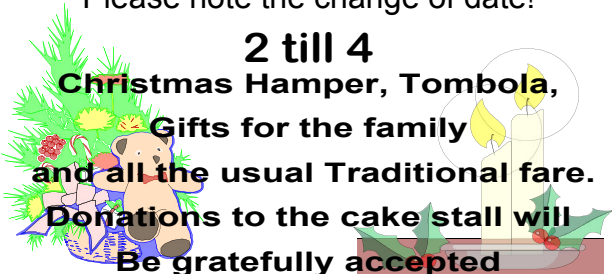
Christmas Hamper, Tombola,

Gifts for the family

and all the usual Traditional fare.

Donations to the cake stall will

Be gratefully accepted



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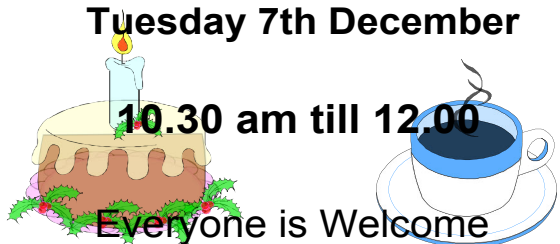
In aid of St Mary's

Moorswood 330 Birchanger Lane

Tuesday 7th December

10.30 am till 12.00

Everyone is Welcome



Birchanger Scouts

"New Years Eve Fundraising Disco"

Dear Village

There will be a fundraising "Family" Disco at the Birchanger Village Hall on Friday 31st December 2010. All proceeds from the night will be donated to The Birchanger Scouts so please come along!

There will be a professional Disco playing music to from the 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's and the best of today's well known songs. Your ticket will also be entered into a prize draw so no need to buy a raffle ticket.

Tickets are limited so don't leave it too late!

Adults £6.00, Family £15.00 (2 adults up to 3 children) and don't forget this includes a prize draw!

Tickets can be obtained from Gary or Penny at 278 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger, or phone 01279 814075 for availability.

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Village Diary November/December 2010

November

- 26th 7.30 pm At the Club
Poker Night
- 27th 2 till 4 Church Hall
St Mary's
Christmas Bazaar
- 28th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion

December

- 4th 8.00 At the Club
Julie Nevada
Social Night
- 5th 11.00 am St Mary's
Matins
- 11th 8.00 pm At the Club
Gordon Bennett
Christmas Draw
- 12th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion
- 17th 7.00pm St Mary's
Evening Carols
- 19th 11.00 am St Mary's
Christingle
- 24th 8.00 pm At the Club
Shanay on Stage
- 25th 11.00 am St Mary's
Christmas day
Family Service
- 26th 11.00 am St Mary's
Holy Communion
- 26th 12.00 At the Club
Whisky Draw
- 31st 8.00 pm At the Club
Music though the Ages

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