

Birchanger

May 2016



Magazine

Issue 160

BIRCHANGER SAVES BORDERS



Following last month's concerns relating to development of the farmland surrounding Birchanger, we are pleased to come back to you with a more positive update. As we all know Birchanger is situated very firmly in the Green Belt. For many reasons the Green Belt around Birchanger is regarded as strong, and last month the Uttlesford a Local Plan Development Committee decided to recommend to the council that there should be no change to the Green Belt in the whole of the District.

What this means is that should the council decide to ratify this decision the same rules relating to development in the Green Belt will continue as at present. There can be some exceptions to this, such as affordable homes for local people, but these would be limited in number and would have to be endorsed by the Parish Council. As we well know, certain individuals will try to fly their own particular kites, but these will be strongly resisted by the Parish Council, and the recommendation by the Local Plan Development Committee supports the Green Belt around Birchanger.

The decision does not mean that the village is safe from further development forever. it just means that the obstacles against development in the Green Belt currently in place, remain for now. Your responses to future consultations on the Local Plan in the coming months will be vital, whatever your views. Please respond when the time comes.

Should there be further applications, or further offers of sites in the Green Belt, the Parish Council would need the support of everyone who appreciates our countryside. After all, at the Annual Parish Meeting last month, all those present there bar one, voted to keep the countryside and Green Belt around the village, just the way it is.

QUEEN'S 90th GOES UP IN FLAMES



The club presided over a much anticipated beacon lighting ceremony to celebrate the Queen turning 90. Presided over by Club President William Fraser and ably assisted by our Parish Council Chair Angie Driscoll the beacon was lit to a rousing chorus of God Save the Queen and some words from Prince Charles himself. The club hosted the celebration as part of their 125th anniversary celebrations with a barbecue and promotional drinks on offer to those who braved the cold. The club has to extend its thanks to Gary Sanders who built the beacon especially for the occasion and his partner in arson Jay Levers whose incendiary incentives saw the beacon burn with a gusto the Royals would have been proud of.





a letter from the editor

Dear Birchanger,

May already. Who'd have thunk it?!? Things really are hotting up in the village as we approach summer and the club kicks into gear with a series of 125 celebrations. This is a month of bank holidays, beer festivals, the promise of sunshine and great things.

On a more serious note, however, we are approaching a rather important referendum as to the future of Great Britain in or out of the European Union. As editor I will always attempt to present local news and views in a reasoned and fair way, but personally I have very strong views when it comes to the referendum, which is why for next month's edition I would like to call on submissions from the village for and against Brexit. With so much at stake I'd like to concentrate on what it would mean for Birchanger as a village so any people willing to put their views forward even anonymously I'd be very grateful. Hopefully, it will make for some lively debate and ultimately a reminder to all of us to have our voice heard and to get to the polling station in June.

Tom Granger



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319, Birchanger Lane

DANGER TO WALKERS

Recently a member of the public has cut steps onto the Birchanger Lane from an Essex County Council footpath. These are not council maintained, lead out into the road, are slippery and inherently dangerous, as at least one walker has discovered after a fall on these steps which ended up at hospital. Neither Essex County Council, nor the Parish Council are in any way responsible for this accident, as the steps should never have been made, and are totally unauthorised. It is a reminder to all that all our actions have consequences, and redirecting a path away from our own property for seemingly selfish reasons can have serious repercussions for others.

Please do not use these steps under any circumstances. They must be removed, before someone falls and ends up under a car. The alternative is there, and it is marked.

Essex County Council maintains all the registered footpaths in Birchanger, and where there are these paths, they are marked with an small direction way marker or signpost. There are also a lot of permissive paths, as when set aside was abolished, the farmers left areas of uncropped land at the sides of their fields, to encourage wild life. If walkers use these, they are asked to use them carefully, and it must be at the walkers risk.

END TO BIRCHANGER KERB CRAWLING?



Drivers could soon be fined £70 for parking on a kerb. This could help ensure Birchanger's paths remain safe for users who can often be forced to brave the road by inconsiderate drivers parking and blocking the paths. The measures which already make it an offence within London to park on the kerb are being considered by the government for a nationwide rollout. Arguments stand for and against but the overriding force is the fact that paths should remain clear and free for those walking through the village.

Over the years there have been several near misses as young mothers try to navigate their way through the village with push chairs and young children along the paths. One inconsiderate piece of parking can often force them to take their lives in their hands as they run the gauntlet of oncoming traffic and buses. So in the meantime as we wait for it to come into law, wouldn't it be nice if we were all a little considerate of our fellow man and got into the habit of parking appropriately?



VILLAGE NEWS

Elizabeth Godwin

Litter Picks

Litter Picks have actually happened in Birchanger this Spring, not that you would actually know it, as by the next day the litter is back. If it is any consolation, the litter pickers also did the A120 and unless you had seen them, you would simply not know the litter picks had actually happened. It is also clear that the further you are away from the service station, the less litter there is to be seen.

The main culprits seem to be those who have bought takeaway food from the service station, despite the fact that the food outlets are supposed to be responsible for their own disposable products. Nobody challenges these outlets, or, if they happen to see it, take the number of the offenders car.

The District Council will successfully prosecute offenders, if they have the right details. The Travel Lodge should also take some responsibility. Their drive is littered with takeaway containers, as they do not provide food other than snacks for their guests. They direct them to the service area instead and the litter just builds up.

Their drainage system is full of it, although they have been asked to clear this and to repair the sluice which one of their employees broke last summer. This all contributes to the flooding in the lane as well. The Rangers did attempt to clear the gullies last month, but as yet the effects of this have not been properly tested. Householders in Birchanger Lane do their best to pick up litter outside their gardens, and the club regularly clears the ditch alongside Birchanger Lane. It is up to the rest of us to help with this on going problem.

Buses Leave Their Passengers Stranded

Buses are there to serve their customers, but don't if they are late, as bus passengers in Birchanger found out last month.

The problem was that the roadworks on the B1383 between Birchanger and Stansted caused delays to everyone. In order to keep to their schedules, the drivers simply gave Birchanger a miss, leaving all the waiting passengers, which included several elderly people stranded, not knowing when another bus would come.

They should not be allowed to do this. The impression which they give is that passengers come last. The roadworks might not have been their fault, but a notice warning passengers that roadworks might cause delays, but not cancellations might help everyone to understand. As it is, the bus service is deemed unreliable, leaving those who can to seek alternative transport. They then have the nerve to tell us to use it or lose it! Get real.

Village Life Saver

Along with most other villages, Birchanger has its own defibrillator, which, as at least one Birchanger resident will tell you, is a life saver. Taking the village through the installation process an officer was on hand at the Annual Parish Meeting to explain to those attending, just how the machine is used. He had brought along a dummy and went through all the stages of the resuscitation process and answered questions.

Briefly, what happens is this. When someone collapses and actually stops breathing, call the ambulance service on 999 in the usual way. The officer helped explain the situation.

Start chest compression. This just means pushing firmly and rapidly on the person's chest. If you are on your own, call a nearby friend and get them or someone who is with you, taking a mobile phone, to go to Birchanger Club. The defibrillator is situated at the front on the right of the main entrance. They must contact the 999 service from there. The person making the 999 call will need to give the post code of the club located at the front of the defibrillator unit, and in turn will be given a code to punch into the defibrillator unit. The defibrillator is inside and must be immediately taken to the patient.

On touching the red button located on the front of the defibrillator, you will be talked through every stage of the process. You will be told how to attach the defibrillator to the patient, and exactly what to do. In between using the defibrillator maintain chest compressions until the ambulance arrives, or the patient begins to breathe.

Sadly there have been some disparaging comments from a few people who clearly do not understand what it is like when someone has a heart attack, or stops breathing. They do not understand that prompt action is vital, if the person is to survive with a good quality of life after recovery. Swift action saves lives in more ways than one, and who would want to take a negative approach when a friend's life could be at stake and they could actually have done something about it?

After use, the defibrillator must be returned to the club, when open, or to myself at 330 Birchanger Lane. The thirty odd people who attended the Annual Parish Meeting in March had the whole procedure demonstrated by a representative of the Ambulance Service. They are now much clearer about the process, which has been proved to be successful with people with absolutely no medical knowledge whatsoever.

There will be another opportunity to find out more about the use of the defibrillator, as the Ambulance Service will be back for a longer session this summer.

Our Affinity Water is the Best! It is Official

Not everyone in Birchanger is with Affinity Water, but a considerable proportion of the village is. Those who are will be happy to learn that our water scores a top rating on all counts.

We know this because a householder was selected at random to have their tap water supply tested. The technicians took their samples away with them from his kitchen tap. A little while later after a very comprehensive analysis, the house holder was presented with a report, which showed that Birchanger water is highly rated, and very good for us all, in every aspect. Goodbye to mineral water it seems!

A Lovely Spring



The spring flowers started earlier this year, the weather got colder and the hardier plants bloomed for much longer it seemed.

That is, of course, if they were allowed to. The club had planted several hundred daffodil bulbs on the grass verge

surrounding the sports field to mark their 125th Anniversary.

They started to come out, looked lovely, then someone, with absolutely no appreciation of other people's forethought, planning, as well as hard work, thought he would make a very pathetic attempt to make his or indeed her, mark on the world, by pulling off a lot of the heads as they started to flower.

Yes it was windy, but the difference between a wind blown daffodil and one which has had its head pulled off is very clear to most people.

The remaining daffodils were really lovely and a big thank you to all those in the club for all the planning and planting. Let us hope that when they are blooming next year, those mindless individuals will have grown up just a little.

Why Would You Want to Vote for the Police and Crime Commissioner?

Most of us have heard of the Police and Crime Commissioner, we were asked to vote for one 4 years ago, but few of us actually did and most of us did not know what the job involved anyway.

We are being asked to vote again as the current term for the job is up. Whether the existing commissioner will chose to stand again will not be known until the list of candidates is published. You may have received some information by the time you read this, but last year only two of the candidates sent me anything, one of them being the current holder of the post.

It might help to know just what the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner is. Apparently they are responsible for running an efficient and effective police force in Essex. They hire or fire the Chief Constable. They produce a police and crime plan setting the crime objectives for Essex, set the Police Budget and determine the precept, which is the amount for policing which appears on our council tax bills each year. They are supposed to follow the national and international policing capabilities, as determined by the Home Secretary and to bring together community safety and criminal justice partners to ensure the local priorities are joined up. Now you know, your vote is entirely up to you.

Remembering the Village Shops

I have been associated with Birchanger for nearly 60 years, and during the early years, I was usually the one sent to do the shopping.

I can remember going to three different shops. The first was a very basic store in the old Parish Rooms, mainly stocking whatever sweets could be had. It was open during the war years and for a considerable period after the war ended. Nuts and raisins cost a farthing! They were used as a meeting place, and were situated on the Village Green where a house now exists today.

Then there was the Old Cedar Stores, which was something of a Tardis and where the stock was far more varied, but still very expensive compared to the shops in Bishops Stortford. It was used more regularly by those living between the Recreation Ground and the A120 junction, while those further down the lane used the Post Office Stores at Bradley Common. The Cedar Stores closed in the 1980s while the Post Office Stores closed in the winter of 1993.

I can remember the steep steps outside the post office. Difficult to negotiate with a full shopping bag. Latterly customers drifted away from using the Post Office as the supermarkets appeared and people only popped in to use the post office, or to stock up on the odd item which they had run needed to buy urgently. Closure was inevitable as customers were using the cheaper options elsewhere. These are just my families memories and perceptions. Others may have differing tales to tell.

What's On ...

May

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1 St-M - Matins Service
2 <small>May Day Bank Holiday</small>	3 VH - 09:30 - Adult Ballet, 15:45 - Junior Ballet Moorswood Spring Coffee Morning - 10:30 - 12:00	4 VH- 09:30 - Tai Chi 14:00 - Tea Room 14:00 - 16:00	5 VH- 12:45 - Line Dancing 20:30 Improvers Belly Dance	6 VH- 09:30 - SOSA - open to all BSSC - Treasure Chest 	7 BSSC - Day time Car Treasure Hunt. Live Act in evening - Adele Tribute and Rough Diamonds	8 St-M - Holy Communion
9 VH - 09:30 - Birchanger Buddies Mother and Toddler 19:30 Ballroom Dancing	10 VH - 09:30 - Adult Ballet, 15:45 - Junior Ballet	11 VH- 09:30 - Tai Chi 14:00 - Tea Room 14:00 - 16:00	12 VH- 12:45 - Line Dancing 20:30 Improvers Belly Dance 	13 VH- 09:30 - SOSA - open to all BSSC - Bottle Draw 	14	15 St-M - Family Service
16 VH - 09:30 - Birchanger Buddies Mother and Toddler 19:30 Ballroom Dancing	17 VH - 09:30 - Adult Ballet, 15:45 - Junior Ballet	18 VH- 09:30 - Tai Chi 14:00 - Tea Room 14:00 - 16:00 BSSC - Wine and Cheese Tasting from 19:30 - sign up in advance	19 VH- 12:45 - Line Dancing 20:30 Improvers Belly Dance 	20 VH- 09:30 - SOSA - open to all BSSC - Treasure Chest 	21 BSSC - Live Act in the evening - Esther	22 St-M - Holy Communion
23 VH - 09:30 - Birchanger Buddies Mother and Toddler 19:30 Ballroom Dancing <small>Victoria Day (Scott.)</small>	24 VH - 09:30 - Adult Ballet, 15:45 - Junior Ballet	25 VH- 09:30 - Tai Chi 14:00 - Tea Room 14:00 - 16:00 BAGS - Village Hall from 19:30 - Cheese and Wine	26 VH- 12:45 - Line Dancing 20:30 Improve Belly Dance 	27 VH- 09:30 - SOSA - open to all BSSC - Wheel of Fortune 	28 BSSC - Live Act in the evening - 2FBS BSSC- BEER FESTIVAL	29 St-M - Matins Service BSSC- BEER FESTIVAL
30 BSSC- BEER FESTIVAL <small>Spring Bank Holiday</small>	31					



Live Entertainment - Great Food - Excellent Bar - Snooker - Darts - Pool – Football - Cricket - Bowls

125 EVENT – Treasure Hunt



A busy May kicks off with a car Treasure Hunt which starts from the club on **Saturday 7th May** between 10.45 and 11.15. At just £10 per car, the 40 mile route promises fun for the whole family, with a special lunch and prize-giving to be held in the afternoon post-completion. Sign up today!

In the Evening, we are very excited to announce **The Legends Night** featuring Adele Tribute and Rough Diamond – another free event for members - so the whole day is covered at your local club!

Cheese and Wine Tasting – May 18th



The ever popular cheese and wine tasting night is back! Come and join us for only £ 7.50 (members) or £ 10 (guests) for an evening sampling a range of wines that could subsequently feature in the club, accompanied by a selection of cheese. A popular event, make sure you sign up before it's too late.

125 EVENT – Beer Festival

Over the second bank holiday weekend in May, the club will be hosting a beer festival for all its members. There will be a wide selection of ales available for members to try at a bargain rate. There will also be entertainment and gifts available on a first come first served basis during the beer festival. As the region's best club as awarded by CAMRA this is very much another not to be missed 125 celebration event!



HAPPENINGS - MAY

6th and 20th - Treasure Chest



7th - Legends night featuring Rough Diamond and Adele Tribute as seen on BBC



13th - Bottle Draw



18th - Cheese and Wine Tasting

21st - Live act not to be missed. Local girl Esther will sing her heart out!



28th 2FBS - back by popular demand!



28th - 30th 125th Celebrations: BSSC Beer Festival

WEEKLY EVENTS

Day	Event	When
Saturdays	Meat Draw	1.00pm
Saturdays	Bingo Lottery	Ask bar staff
Mondays	Quiz night	9.00pm
Wednesdays	Steak night	Evenings
Thursdays	Bingo night	08.30pm
Fridays	Bottle Draw	Evenings

Birchanger Sports & Social Club, 229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger CM23 5QJ
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Seasonal Advice



Gordon Blue Review: The Cork House, Stansted Mountfitchet – Three stars

Lower Street continues to be blessed with a cluster of places to eat and drink that ranges from kebabs from Flames (that's a different review entirely) to Foie Gras at the Brasserie. Tonight though we opted for an old favourite – the Cork House: part-bar, part-bistro. Although not a large venue, it didn't deter many from cramming in to the downstairs bar on the Saturday evening in question, which is where our party ventured

first for an aperitif before our 8pm booking. The bar staff are welcoming and eager to assist, criss-crossing between the split bar to make sure queues are kept to a minimum, although I was little perturbed by the only cider on tap being Strongbow Cloudy – a hideous concoction that I'm surprised a venue such as this would choose to serve. Just before we went upstairs to eat, a musical act began to set up her equipment at the far end, forcing out those who had been standing there due to the level of paraphernalia and forcing others out by the volume of what came next. Lovely voice, but too big for this venue and so we were happy to head upstairs to get some food – and peace!

We've had a positive experience with the smaller tasting plates in the past but tonight we went for the a la carte. If you do, beware that it very closely resembles a pub menu, with fish & chips, steak & chips and liver & bacon featuring, albeit with some different choices (especially fish) for some variation. At this point things take on a slightly negative note. I'm not the pickiest of people but when I go out, I invariably detest it when a restaurant fills a plate with salad and / or coleslaw when serving steak and chips as it tends to be either bland or surplus to requirements. If I wanted rabbit food, I'd wear my bunny ears. Despite requesting that neither of those items (nor mushrooms) were included I was duly presented with a plate including all three items. Granted, the steak was cooked to perfection – a true rarity these days – and was served with a mild and creamy blue cheese sauce, but it was disappointing that a simple request had been carelessly missed. Whilst on the subject of disappointment, the only two vegetarian options both contained halloumi which shows a lack of imagination and the one that our party ordered (roasted vegetables) was served swimming in an unremarkable tomato sauce. The wine list still contains a welcome variety of new and old world offerings and the service (coleslaw-gate aside) was friendly and attentive.

I had fonder memories of the Cork House which is why it's a shame that this particular meal was not up to scratch. I'd go back for sure but I would hope that next time they have upped their game to match previous visits.

The Cork House Bar & Bistro, 40 Lower Street, Stansted Mountfitchet, Essex. 01279 817474



Who spotted Obama's arrival on the 21st April? The formation of helicopters and Air Force One were quite a sight to see. I wonder what the leader of the free world thought as he looked out to see our very own pyrotechnics expert playing with the flaming beacon and letting off bangers...



STANSTED TOPS 23 MILLION PASSENGERS FOLLOWING BUSIEST EVER WINTER SEASON

London Stansted welcomed over 1.89 million passengers during its busiest ever March as the airport's annual passenger total topped 23 million for the first time since July 2008.

The record breaking month also helped Stansted register its busiest ever winter season as over 8.65 million passengers passed through the airport during the five month period ending March 2016, beating the previous season high set in winter 2006/07.

The monthly passenger total was 13.2% on the same month last year with an average load factor of 85.9% on all flights during the month, also a new record for any March in the airport's history.

The volume of cargo handled during the month increased by nearly 14% as over 22,000 tonnes of goods passed through the specialist cargo facilities. The annual total increased by nearly 5% to over 243,000 tonnes in the last 12 months.

NEW BUS TIMETABLE

Thanks to Barbara Wilson for reminding the editor to include the bus timetable. Just like Barbara did, please shout if there's anything you'd like to include.

The 07 and 7A to Bishops Stortford will call in Birchanger at the following times (Bradley Common Stop):

Monday-Saturday: 07:48; 09:34; 10:01; 11:05; 12:16; 13:30; 14:31; 15:25; 16:46; 17:50; 19:01

Sundays and Bank Holidays: No Service

The return bus to Stansted will call in Birchanger at the following times (Bradley Common Stop)

Monday - Saturday: 06:16; 06:59; 08:35; 09:20; 10:46; 11:46; 13:01; 13:46; 15:20; 16:10; 17:35; 18:31

Sundays and Bank Holidays: No Service



Birchanger All Girls Society

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Forthcoming meetings:

Wed. 25th May, 7.30 for 8.00
A Cheese and Wine Evening

Wed. 29th June, 7.30 start
An Evening Ramble

Tel. for details: Michelle - 814481,
Barbara - 813007, Rosemary - 814678

News from the School

Sport Relief



Pupils and staff at Birchanger School joined in the national fundraising event again this year. In assemblies we found out about the work that Sport Relief does - following the stories of different children in this country and around the world who have been helped with the money raised. On the day itself each class was challenged to dress up as a different sport – cricket, running, equestrian, tennis and golf. There were some very inventive outfits! The rainy day didn't put us off and we were determined to complete our sport relief mile. After a warm up led by Tom Bromley, our sports coach, the children ran laps of the playground to complete their mile. Parents and staff ran alongside and cheered them on and everyone succeeded in running a mile – well done!



Easter Activities

Over the last weeks of term the school celebrated Easter with a number of special events and activities. The Reverend Paul Wilkin welcomed us to St Mary the Virgin Church for our Easter Service. Revd Paul led the service with contributions by the children who shared the learning they had been doing in RE lessons over the half term. Children in Owls Class have been finding out about Holy Week, looking at the events of the week from different points of view. After using reading, drama and art to explore the story, they retold the story in their own words and shared these readings during the service. Children in Squirrels Class wrote prayers for the service and our youngest children, Ladybirds Class shared an Easter Song with actions and artwork they had made in class. Children in Hedgehogs and Badgers Class have been learning about the symbols of Easter. This started with their visit to Chelmsford Cathedral where they were introduced to many Christian symbols. Looking at Easter cards and pictures they found out how crosses, chicks and chocolate eggs are all used as symbols of Easter.

Back in school we were joined by 'Puppets Galore' with their Easter Show. The puppets told the Easter Story with a special egg hunt – the eggs containing objects from the story. There were lots of songs and actions for the children to join in and we always enjoy these performances. Thank you to Puppets Galore for visiting us.

We held our own Easter Egg hunt on the last day of term. Children are given a special ticket and have to search high and low around the school grounds to find the matching number and claim their chocolate prize. There was lots of racing around and cries of 'found it!' and 'wrong one again.' Eventually, with children helping each other, all the prizes were claimed – the first Easter Eggs of many I'm sure. Thank you to the PTA for providing the eggs.

Helen Coop
Headteacher

ANY MAKE, YEAR, CONDITION

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CALLING ALL CLUB MEMBERS

BSSC is run by and for its members.
Throughout the year the committee are
working hard on entertainments, drinks, food
and sports for the members, but we can't
succeed without you. If you have any ideas or
have time to dedicate to sub-committees then
get in touch!

Drop us an email at
club@birchanger.com or speak to
one of our staff

Coffee Morning

Everyone Welcome



Spring Coffee Morning at
Moorswood
Tuesday May 3rd 10.30 -noon.
Everyone is very welcome

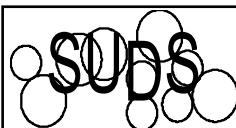
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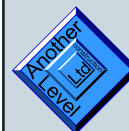


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