



# Birchanger Village Magazine

February 2018

Issue 181



## Peter Booker Says Goodbye To The Club



### Well not quite,

but he is resigning as Chairman of Birchanger's Sports and Social Club! Peter, aged 66, has held the position unopposed for almost ten years and has decided it's time to take a back seat and allow some new blood with fresh ideas to take his place. In an interview with the magazine he told me:

"It's been a wonderful time and I have enjoyed every minute as Chairman but it takes up a lot of time and energy and can be quite stressful at times. It's a bit like running a company with a lot of responsibility and I thought after nearly a decade of leading the team of officers and guiding the committee it was time to hang up my gloves".

Peter was born in Herts and Essex Hospital, Bishops Stortford and grew up in and around Widford before moving to Birchanger in 1978. He spent most of his working life as a designer for motor body assembly lines for the car industry and retired in July 2016. He has been a member of the club for around 39 years.

"The club is an important part of the community and plays a central role in the village of Birchanger, bringing together villagers of all types and ages. I feel that I have contributed positively to the success of the club during my tenure and I am proud of our achievements, none of which would have been possible without the help and support of the other officers and committee members. We managed, after a little resistance, to modernise the club's name from 'Workingman's Club' to 'Sports and Social Club' so that younger people and families would be more likely to join".

### Increased membership

"This was a very successful move, resulting in the increased membership to around 1,000 today and producing a much higher turnover which is essential to keep the club viable. In my opinion, the responsibility of Chairman is to maintain the continuity and stability of the club, giving ideas and motivation to the committee, whilst ensuring a healthy financial balance sheet. I have carried out those tasks to the best of my ability and I believe to the satisfaction of the majority of the members, although there maybe a few who may disagree," he added with a rueful smile.

"During my tenure, we have renovated and modernised the club, replaced a deteriorating roof, installed brand new toilets, including a toilet for the disabled and built a new bowls club hut. The club is currently providing a new kitchen for the steward's quarters, and is in the middle of a proposal to modernise the bar, subject to members' approval. There are also some thoughts on refurbishing the pavilion and possibly providing a football training pitch which we could hire out to local teams".

"As part of the community, we have taken on the role of organising and managing the annual village fete and we have put on special events such as the Queens Jubilee, the club's 125 Anniversary, Beerfests, Treasure Hunts, the 'Big Christmas Light Up' and the New Year's celebrations, none of which would have been possible without the help and hard work of the officers, the committee and with the approval of our members."

When asked what he intends to do in the future, Peter replied; "Well, I aim to relax a little and get more involved with the club simply as a member. I want to play snooker and join the crib club, perhaps also the bowls club and to socialise more. In the meantime I would like to thank my very good friends and fellow officers Dave Woods and Keith Robins for all the help and support they have given me. My thanks also go to the various committees for their hard work and to the members for putting up with me all these years"! *Peter Sampson*

### Coffee Morning

Coffee and Pancakes at 'Moorswood', 330 Birchanger Lane, Shrove Tuesday, February 13<sup>th</sup>. Apart from tea and coffee we are offering pancakes galore, from 10.30am to noon. Everyone welcome.



# A letter from the Editor

*Dear Readers,*

## **£60 prize to be won!**

I thought it would be a nice idea to hold a photographic competition over the next two months based on images from the village. The subject matter is entitled 'The Spirit of Birchanger'. The rules are simple; send your images to me by email to [magazine@birchanger.com](mailto:magazine@birchanger.com) before the 14<sup>th</sup> March where after the magazine team will choose a winner. The winning image will be published in April's edition and the successful photographer will receive a cheque for £60, so dust off those winter cobwebs, join in and get clicking!



## Letters to the Editor

Dear Ed, I am writing to you to relate an incident that occurred to me and my family last week. I believe that this deserves wider circulation as I believe we were nearly the victims of a very expensive scam.

On Sunday 7th January my mother found a broken roof tile in our garden. We tried to see if this had come from our roof but couldn't find anything amiss. The very next day, a young man came to the door and said he was working down the road and saw that we had a broken tile fallen from our roof. Evidently he put the tile over our garden wall and then knocked at our front door but said no one was at home. This didn't make sense as there were in fact four of us in the house at the time and we also have a functioning door bell.

He and his partner then put a ladder up against the house to inspect the roof. He claimed that a closer inspection showed more damaged tiles and rotten wood underneath. Total cost to fix: £2,000. My father then asked for a formal quote on works headed paper but heard nothing further from them. We did ask a reputable roofing company to have a look and there were some small repairs required but the wood was not rotten though.

When I returned home from work on Monday evening (I had left at 7.00 am that morning so had no knowledge on any of these events), I remembered something I had seen the previous day. Around 10.30 - 11.00am, a car and white van had pulled up outside our house. From my window at the front I saw that they were pointing at our house and in particular at what appeared to be the roof. After around a minute they drove off. I thought perhaps they had the wrong address but within minutes they were back and again pointing at the roof! I just thought I would share this experience as I would hate anyone to be the victim of what was very likely a scam. *David Carey, Birchwood.*

## Terry Ginger Passes Away Aged 95

The family of Terry are very sad to announce that he passed away peacefully on the 4th January 2018 at the age of 95.

Terry and his wife Beryl lived in the village for almost 40 years until they moved to Suffolk in 2004. He will be best remembered for the support he gave to the school and the church during his time in the village.

The family are planning on holding a memorial for Terry in St. Mary's Church, Birchanger in the near future.

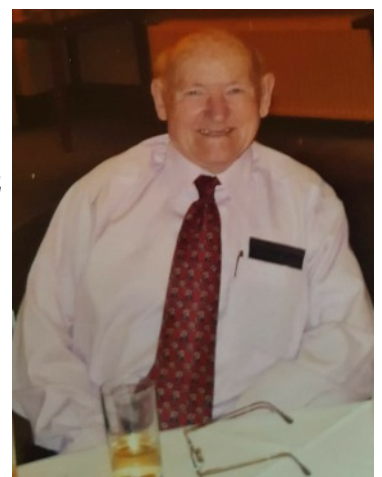
**Terry Ginger**

**21<sup>st</sup> August 1922**

**To**

**4<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

**RIP**



Don't forget, your magazine is only as good as the content it receives, so please keep sending me your news, views, notices, concerns and complaints. Advertisers are also welcome. All copy should be submitted by the 16<sup>th</sup> of the month, preferably sooner and may be edited depending on space and content. Please contact me by E-mail, phone, or letter as shown below. Thank you and Kind Regards,

*Peter Sampson*

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2 Harrisons, Birchanger



# VILLAGE NEWS

*By Elizabeth Godwin*

## The 'Big Christmas Light' Up finds a winner

Birchanger lights were better than ever this Christmas. There were whole areas of the village where it seemed that householders had coordinated their displays with lights which complemented each other. There was a great deal of artistry and creativity on display and the whole scene was cheering, even if you were suffering from a particularly nasty strain of flu which many of you were. It was traffic calming at a stroke, as people crawled through the village in their cars recording the scene. It was congratulations all round to everyone who braved the weather and lit up Birchanger for Christmas 2017.

More votes than ever were polled this year. There was a special small house in the club porch where votes were posted and thankfully there was a clear winner. It was perhaps very appropriate that the first ever 'Big Christmas Light Up Cup', donated by the club, should go to Father Christmas's number one postman in Birchanger (AKA, Evan Hills). He answered all the letters he received in the post box and was kept very busy in the run up to Christmas.



Evan was a much deserved winner. His well-coordinated display was not just lighting alone, but a handcrafted Coca-Cola lorry which stood beside the post box and reindeer with other Christmas themed decorations all of which made a truly magical scene.

The first ever 'Birchanger Big Light up Cup' was presented to Evan by the club and his name will be engraved on the trophy. However, Evan has stated that he will not stand for the vote in 2018 in recognition of all the other wonderful lighting displays throughout the village. Perhaps next time there could be a second award for the best well-coordinated light show theme as a separate group?



So, without doubt, 'The Big Christmas Light Up' will continue for years to come and I am told that some people are already at the planning stage for Christmas 2018! Something to look forward to as it has been so dark here in the last few weeks since the lights were switched off.

There are plans to have a collection from those who get to appreciate the lights which would go to benefit Birchanger charities that need money for special projects. So roll on next Christmas.

## Bin Collections in Birchanger

Some houses are having problems with their bin collections due to Uttlesford's operational difficulties. If your bins have not been collected please leave them out, even on a Sunday, they will eventually be collected. If you are worried and think you have been missed, you can call the council on 01799 510510.

## Birchanger All Girls Society

The 'BAGS' invite woman of all ages to join them on the last Wednesday of every month in the village church hall

### Forthcoming Meeting:

Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2018 7.30 for 8.00 pm

Telephone for details

Rosemary-814678 Liza-815444 Barbara-813007



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## Could you be an 'Active Citizen'?

Until recently I had not heard of 'Active Citizens' but evidently it is a new initiative being promoted by Essex Police. We all know that the lack of police in our area causes concern but while this plan will not actually put more police on the streets, it will pair existing police officers and PCSOs with volunteers from the local community. These volunteers will patrol with the officers and use their own local knowledge to help and support the officers. Volunteers could be called on with only two days' notice but this will not always be the case. In a multi-cultural society like ours, languages could be useful in the role but are not essential. Volunteers will be expected to support projects such as 'community days of action', amongst other varied duties. They will also give advice and support. The role is non-confrontational. If interested, you can find out more about this opportunity to work with our local police by logging onto the following website:

<https://www.essex.police.uk/join-the-police/volunteer/active-citizens/>

## Help for businesses

Businesses of all sizes can benefit from a new scheme which offers support and training for small and larger businesses in the Uttlesford area. It is a business growth hub which offers help and advice at many levels for vastly differing businesses and capabilities. It can assist with new ideas and give investment support. Known as the 'Best Growth Business Programme', you could benefit from giving them a call, no matter how small your business is. They can be contacted on 0330 320580.

## Recycle all your electrical items

A great many of us have been under the impression that small electrical items can be simply placed in the black bin when discarded, but this is definitely not the right thing to do. While many electrical stores will dispose of your old larger items, many smaller ones are placed in the black bin and end up as landfill. Surprisingly, many of these smaller items can also be recycled. The discarded goods are first shredded and from this valuable minerals and metals such as gold, zinc and steel are extracted.



These are eventually recycled and can be found in a wide range of items which include jewellery, musical instruments and boats. These smaller items should be taken to whichever tip you use and left in the designated place.

## Learn to drive with Essex Library Services

Did you know that Essex Library Services can help you to pass your Driving Test? Learning to drive is something which most of us find essential these days but it is becoming increasingly hard to do. Driving lessons are very expensive, have a challenging practical element and what seems to be an increasingly difficult theory test.

You can now access specimen driving test theory papers on line through Essex County Council Library Services. They will also give you a variety of test papers and many useful tips on passing your test as well. All you need to do is to log on to [essexlibraries.theorytestoro.co.uk/login](http://essexlibraries.theorytestoro.co.uk/login).

Essex libraries services also include free on line Open University Courses, digital skills, further education and much more. Definitely worth a look especially as most of this service is free.

## Garden Rescue

It may look horrible outside but it won't be long until your garden starts to wake up from its winter slumber. For most of us this is going to mean getting out there again, weeding, cutting the grass, trimming back overgrown vegetation and much more. It is not the best time if you are elderly or disabled. You feel like you should be out there doing things but you find it increasingly difficult and it is depressing to let it all go to seed. However, help is at hand, there is a team of volunteers who might be able to help. This team has been recruited over the past few months and are ready to help where needed. You just call 01371 878400.

## Congregation removed from Church!

Not for being naughty, but because of the sudden illness of one of the visiting choristers. It happened at the start of the carol



service but with pure British aplomb the service continued for a time while the stricken individual was cared for beside the altar until the paramedics arrived, at which time the congregation was thrown out en bloc. No mince pies or mulled wine for them!

Happily the first aid trained individuals in the congregation set to work making him comfortable and although the patient was eventually taken to hospital, their prompt actions and calm response meant that recovery was assured. Well done to those first-aiders and our very best wishes to the person concerned. It was no fault of the patient that the congregation were chucked out into the cold this Christmas; there was simply not enough room in the church for all of us at the same time. We wish the patient a full recovery and a healthy voice for next Christmas.



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# Health Matters

## Antibiotics, what comes next?

We have had it well and truly instilled in us that antibiotics for most minor coughs, colds and other flu viruses are ineffectual and do not help. We just have to get over it and get better on our own. There is no word of any new breakthrough to replace the current multitude of antibiotics which are gradually becoming less effective against bacteria either. However, medical research is certainly not standing still. Great breakthroughs are happening in other branches of medical science and one of the latest advances is the discovery that there are molecules which can play a huge part in reprogramming cells. What this means to the lay person is that there is the expectation that this knowledge can be used to programme cells which have "gone wrong" as in the case of MS and Parkinson's Disease for a start. It is very early days, but using this knowledge, it should be possible to treat a very wide range of seemingly intractable diseases in the future.

## Could you use a lifeline?

This lifeline is a small box which sits by your phone and can enable elderly or disabled to access help 24/7. Even the most caring of families and friends cannot be around all the time. Lifeline is installed beside your own telephone. It needs a telephone point and an electricity supply up to two metres from each other, while the user wears a small pendant or bracelet at all times. Should the user need assistance, there is a small button to press if the individual cannot get to the phone. The pendant also acts as a speaker, so the person can talk to the call minder over the phone and the appropriate assistance can be accessed. You can try this device for free for the first 12 weeks and discover if it could benefit you. After that there is a small charge, depending on the level of service you require. To find out more, call the District Council on 01799 510510 and ask about a free trial of Lifeline. It has helped many to remain living independently and confidently in their own homes. It could benefit you, or someone you know.

## A brisk walk in a built up area doesn't do you any good

That is if you are 60 or over, but apparently it is not so good for the rest of us either. Air pollution levels are of course higher in urban areas than in rural areas and the fact is the older you are, the more your lungs can be affected by the pollutants present by varying degrees in urban locations. Things can be better in town and city parks where their 'green lungs' actually manage to keep some of the pollutants at bay, assuming that they are not too close to a major road.

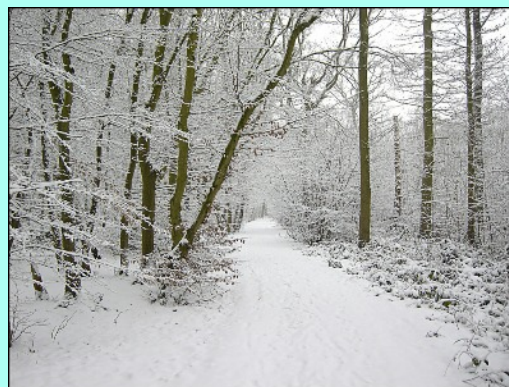


Air pollution also causes lower birth weights when other factors are considered, such as poverty migration and chronic ill health. At last it is beginning to be recognised that we have to do something about motor vehicles with combustion engines and heavy industry of all sorts inside our towns and cities, or the cost to our NHS will rise even higher in years to come.

## Don't give in to winter blues

The longest night has passed by and the dark nights are beginning to get lighter earlier in the evenings but it is still dark and cold for most days. Maybe the winter blues are beginning to kick in, you feel there is nothing worth going out for, you are tired of winter clothes, and nothing fits as your diet resolution was the first one to go. Sounds familiar? Depression is often associated with the winter months. Not all is lost! Perhaps your resolutions were unrealistic, maybe even unnecessary. They were simply not right for you. Possibly you should find something easier to try?

Scientists have recently found out that simply getting out of the house seeing parkland and trees can lift depression for up to seven hours, so if you are able, wrap up warm and go out for a nice walk in Birchanger's surrounding fields and forests.



Travel brochures have been arriving on our doorstep over the last month or so, why not try to get away for a short break; you don't have to go far away unless you want to.

Try to picture yourself in five different locations where

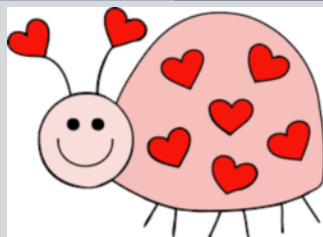
you have always wanted to go but never got around to it. If you can't afford a holiday try to socialise more, arrange to meet a friend somewhere, go to the club, cinema or simply visit the shops. Perhaps you have never thought about charity work or volunteering. It is a great way to meet new people as well as benefiting others. The Council for Voluntary Service in Uttlesford could point you in the right direction.

If you are around by day, why not go to the mobile library which is in Birchanger on alternate Tuesday afternoons although you could feel a little lonely as few people are using the service and we could easily lose it. Try a new class; line dancing for absolute beginners has started on Thursdays at 12.30 at the Village Hall. Visit the Tea Room on Wednesday afternoons. You will find a warm welcome as well as lovely homemade cakes. Ditch the old routine, try new foods, unusual clothes, perhaps a new colour. Perhaps put a different colour of paint on that wall. Whatever you do don't give in to February Blues the month will soon be over and spring will start again. You will be ready for it.

## A different take on breakfast

A lot of people skip breakfast as they simply do not think they have time. Understandable, if it is bacon and eggs you are after, but porridge prepared the night before with interesting toppings is reasonably quick, it just needs a bit of warming up and you can add a healthy topping of your choice. That will stop you snacking on the high calorie things you grab on the way to work, a lot cheaper too. You might also consider a fruit smoothie with oats. Again the ingredients can be prepared the night before, it just needs a quick turn in the blender in the morning. Some people soak Chia Seeds overnight in the fridge. That with fruit can also be a sustaining breakfast. If you are really in a hurry, 'Oats so Simple' takes 2 minutes in the microwave! Remember, if you stop snacking you could lose kilos off your weight.

# What's on in the village...



February 2018



Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
<b>Bin Collections:</b> Bradley Common collected on Fridays. Rest of Birchanger on Thursdays. Garden bin collections marked with #						
			1 <b>Black Bin</b>	2	3	4
<b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults <b>BSSC:</b> Quiz Night	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.30 Ballet for adults 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	<b>Church hall:</b> 09.30 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 18.30 Apton Dance Studio 19.00 Ballroom & Latin for beginners	<b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Alzheimer's 12.30 Line dance for beginners 13.45 Line dance 18.30 Apton Dance studio	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.00 Baby Glows for toddlers <b>BSSC:</b> Treasure Chest	<b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw 21.00 Smooth Operator LIVE	<b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 am Matins <b>BSSC:</b> 15.00 6 Nations I v EN 20.00 Special members meeting
5	6	7	8 <b>Green Bin #</b>	9	10	11
<b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults <b>BSSC:</b> Quiz Night	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.30 Ballet for adults 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	<b>Church hall:</b> 09.30 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 18.30 Apton Dance Studio 19.00 Ballroom & Latin for Beginners	<b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Alzheimer's 12.30 Line dance for beginners 13.45 Line dance 18.30 Apton Dance studio	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.00 Baby Glows for toddlers <b>BSSC:</b> Bottle Draw	<b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw 16.45 6 Nations England v Wales	<b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 am Holy Communion
12	13	14	15 <b>Black Bin</b>	16	17	18
<b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults <b>BSSC:</b> Quiz Night	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.30 Ballet for adults 15.45 Ballet for Juniors. <b>Moorswood:</b> 10.30 Coffee and pancakes	<b>Church hall:</b> 09.30 Tai Chi 1 14.00 Tea Room 18.30 Apton Dance 19.00 Ballroom & Latin for Beginners <b>Valentines Day</b>	<b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Alzheimer's 12.30 Line dance for beginners 13.45 Line dance 18.30 Apton Dance Studio	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.00 Baby Glows for toddlers <b>BSSC:</b> Treasure Chest	<b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw 21.00 Lee Rivers LIVE	<b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 am Family Service 19.00 Meditation <b>Gardens of Easton Lodge</b> Open Day 11.30
19	20	21	22 <b>Green Bin #</b>	23	24	25
<b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults <b>BSSC:</b> Quiz Night	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.30 Ballet for adults 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	<b>Church hall:</b> 09.30 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 18.30 Apton Dance 19.00 Ballroom & Latin for Beginners	<b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Alzheimer's 12.30 Line dance for beginners 13.45 Line dance 18.30 Apton Dance Studio	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.00 Baby Glows for toddlers <b>BSSC:</b> Wheel of Fortune	<b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw 14.15 6 Nations Scotland v England	<b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 am Holy Communion <b>Gardens of Easton Lodge</b> Open Day 11.30
26	27	28				
<b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Ballroom and Latin for adults <b>BSSC:</b> Quiz Night	<b>Church hall:</b> 9.30 Ballet for adults 15.45 Ballet for Juniors	<b>Church Hall:</b> 09.30 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 18.30 Apton Dance Studio 19.00 Ballroom & Latin for Beginners 19.30 BAGS Meet				





**BIRCHANGER**  
Sports & Social Club

## Sports & Social Club News



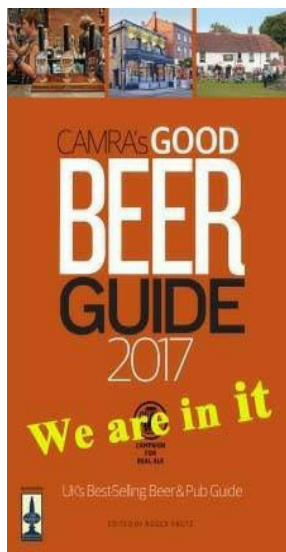
**Live Entertainment - Great Food - Excellent Bar - Snooker - Darts - Pool - Football - Cricket - Bowls**

### Special Meeting for Members

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> February at 8.00pm**

Due to a number of significant challenges facing the club, members are invited to attend a special meeting where they will be given a full appraisal and explanation of the current situation regarding the points below. The committee will also offer their proposals to overcome these issues and their strategy for going forward.

- The Dismissal of the stewards
- Closure on Christmas Eve
- Temporary closure of the kitchen
- Resignation of the Chairman
- Tough Economics
- Future strategy



### Treasure Chest

Try your luck and pick the right key, you could win some serious cash ££££!

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> February**

**Wheel of Fortune  
Friday  
23<sup>rd</sup>  
February**



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### Club Calendar at a Glance

2<sup>nd</sup> February: Treasure Chest  
 3<sup>rd</sup> February: Smooth Operator LIVE  
 4<sup>th</sup> February: 6 Nations: Italy v England 3pm  
 4<sup>th</sup> February: Special Meeting for Members, 8.00pm  
 9<sup>th</sup> February: Bottle Draw  
 10<sup>th</sup> February: 6 Nations: England v Wales 4.45pm  
 16<sup>th</sup> February: Treasure Chest  
 17<sup>th</sup> February: Lee Rivers LIVE  
 23<sup>rd</sup> February: Wheel of Fortune  
 24<sup>th</sup> February: 6 Nations: Scotland v England 2.15pm

### Weekly Events

Day	Event	When
Mondays	Quiz Night	9.00pm
Wednesdays	World Food Menu	Evening
Thursdays	Bingo Night	8.30pm
Fridays	Bottle Draw	Evening
Saturdays	Meat Draw	1.00pm

Birchanger Sports & Social Club, 229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger, CM23 5QJ  
 Tel: 01279 813441 Email: [club@birchanger.com](mailto:club@birchanger.com) [www.birchangerclub.com](http://www.birchangerclub.com)



# Birchanger Primary School



Since the beginning of the academic year, Squirrels class have taken part in a wide range of exciting and dynamic learning. We have been really lucky to be involved in many rich learning experiences outside of the classroom too! Year fives started the academic year with their residential trip to Kingswood in Overstrand, Norfolk. During the five day long trip, the children were able to test and push themselves to their physical limits, as well as stretching their problem solving skills and got to know each other better than ever before!



In addition to the residential, the children have also taken part in Roots to Food, where Darren came to our school and we had a ready steady cook competition using fresh and healthy ingredients! We have also had the opportunity to share some of our learning with parents through the harvest service which took part at the Birchanger Church and through the numerous class assemblies which have been occurring throughout the year.

During our multicultural week, our inner dancers were discovered through the workshops provided throughout the day. We ended the year on a high with our 'Birchanger Loves Talent' show (BLT) where we had the chance to show off our unique talents and skills, these included: dancing, singing, instrument playing and plate spinning! We had an amazing surprise on the day as a number of staff performed a dance to a medley of songs! It was very brave of them and the whole school were very impressed!

It has also been a great academic year (so far!) for sporting events! The year four children in Squirrels class have had the opportunity to attend the dodge ball and cross country events and will soon also be taking part in the indoor athletics event at Forest Hall School. The year five children have also taken part in the cross country, football events and an archery competition.



Further to all these exciting events and learning, we have also begun our new topic of 'Inventions'. In English, we have been reading 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes and have been using this as a stimulus for some descriptive writing. In maths,

we have been focusing on measurement and finding the perimeter and area of shapes.



Our 'Inventions' theme has continued in Science as we have been learning about electricity and again in Topic where we will be discovering how inventions and inventors have influenced the modern world.

*Claire Berry - Headteacher*





Dear Friends, I hope many of you will have participated in the Great British Bird Watch in January. I have had an interesting 'new bird' in my back garden - a Moorhen, and NO we don't have a pond, but it seems very happy digging up

food from the lawn and splashing about in the bird baths - both of which are situated on the ground. This Moorhen started visiting each day about a week or so before Christmas and it seems happy enough meandering over the lawns whilst overhead other birds fly in to visit our feeders, and it seems unfazed by the pesky wood pigeons and our squirrels, AND, yes, it can run very fast, jumping up and hiding in the branches of our surrounding hedges. Seeing it out of water you do realise what really BIG feet it has.

Much of Birchanger Wood has had the paths blown clear of leaves by our volunteers and this certainly does make for a good nippy walk around. I took a Footpaths Walk out on Boxing Day from Stansted and this took in the Birchanger side of Birchanger Wood.



The wood paths were great and certainly a lot safer underfoot than some of the local public paths and bridleways. Well the wood looked really super under the snow which also descended in December. I trust those of you who have purchased our fire wood are enjoying a lovely lot of heat from these logs. Following the many recent high winds, there are certainly a number of trees, mainly birches which are shallow-rooted and which have taken a tumble, and again our volunteers have managed to clear most of these away from the paths so as to keep them clear and open for the rest of us to use. Thank you 'Woodies' and Pat.

Daphne Wallace-Jarvis [secretary@birchangerwoodtrust.org](mailto:secretary@birchangerwoodtrust.org)  
[www.birchangerwoodtrust.org](http://www.birchangerwoodtrust.org)

## Join the BAGS

Make 2018 the year you join BAGS! It is a very friendly, lively group for all ladies in the village. We have a variety of activities including talks, socials, quizzes, craft evenings, rambles etc. and meet the last Wednesday of the month in the meeting room of the village hall at 7.30 for 8.00pm.

Further information tel: Rosemary on 01279 814678.



Firstly, we would like to wish everyone a very Happy New Year. Christmas seems a long time ago now! The children had great fun with loads of Christmas activities including a visit to see Father Christmas at the Audley End Railway, great fun was had by all. Also, a big thank you to everyone that came along to our Christmas Fair, we managed to raise over £580, thank you again for your support.

We would like to welcome the new children that joined us after the Christmas break who will, by now, be settled into and enjoying pre-school. This half term the children will be looking at 'people who help us', we have some fantastic things for the children to do around this topic, including a visit by a Fireman which we are sure the children will enjoy. If you are interested in a place at our setting please contact us via our website or give us a call on 01279 810 800. We currently have spaces available now and for September 2018 for children from 2 ½ years.

## Farewell to John and Dan Thompson



After 6 years as tenants of 'The Three Willows', John and Dan Thompson have decided to throw in their towels. They will officially hand over the keys at the end of January when it is thought that Greene King will appoint a new manager.

During their time at the popular gastropub the bar was given a full makeover and the kitchen was replaced after a fire. The pub has earned a 5 star certificate of excellence with TripAdvisor and awarded 4½ stars from customer reviews.



When asked why they had decided to quit the pub, Dan Thompson stated "rising costs and heavy competition have been the main reasons for our decision but it didn't help that my father suffered some health issues in December from which he is only now recovering".

It is hoped that Birchanger's only local pub will continue to thrive and serve the village in the future as we say farewell to the Thompsons and wish John a speedy recovery. In the meantime let's hope that Greene King think it is worth while!





## The Hundred Parishes Society

The overall population of the Hundred Parishes has increased by around 1% per year during the last two censuses from 2001 to 2011. As district councils finalise local plans for the next 15 years, and catering for an even faster population growth, there is concern that our familiar landscapes will undergo significant change.

We may be able to take comfort from the European Landscape Convention, to which the UK is a signatory. This encourages local authorities to introduce exemplary, long-lasting policies or measures to protect, manage and plan landscapes. The overall aim is to achieve sustainable landscapes that are as visually biodiverse and as culturally rich as possible, thus meeting society's social, economic and environmental needs.

The character of our villages and small towns and their setting within the wider landscape are fundamental aspects of what gives the Hundred Parishes its sense of place. Responsibility for keeping it special is vested in our elected representatives. I encourage you to observe, enjoy and perhaps photograph the seasonal changes within your surrounding countryside. Sown crops germinate, flourish and are harvested. Trees mature or are felled. Fresh leaves soften bare twigs in spring and fall again in autumn. This cyclical rhythm has inspired many local, notable artists and examples of their work can be viewed in the 'Fry Art Gallery' in Saffron Walden.

The gallery traditionally closes for the winter months, but this year there is an exhibition at 'Fry Art Gallery Too', located next to the main entrance gates of Saffron Walden Museum, in Museum Street, Saffron Walden. Gallery Too is open until 25th March 2018 on Saturdays from 11.00am to 5.00pm and Sundays from 2.15pm to 5.00pm. The Museum is always worth another visit. Winter opening times are 10.00am to 4.30pm Tuesdays to Saturdays and 2.00pm to 4.30pm on Sundays. For more information, please go to our website; [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk) *Tricia Moxey, Trustee*

## New group needed to take on BMX track

Uttlesford District Council would like to know if a community group would like to take on the responsibility for a BMX facility in Saffron Walden.



The group that ran the Hilly Bumps facility, near Herbert's Farm Playing Fields, has ended its involvement and has given notice to the council.

Interested groups have until 4pm on Friday 16 February to express an interest. Please email [uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk).

## The Gardens of Easton Lodge

So, what have we to offer you in 2018? As usual the year will start with our fabulous snowdrops. Last year, the snowdrops in the Bosquet at the front of the gardens were magnificent, some interspersed with aconites which were also in full bloom, on two cold, but sunny February open days. Many of the common single and double blooms were planted in Victorian times or before, whilst we believe others in the glade and the kitchen gardens were planted more recently.

On Sunday 18th and 25th of February our gates will be open from 11.30 - 4.00 (last entry 3.00) and we will have hot drinks, soup and bacon rolls and of course home-made cakes. We will also have some of our snowdrops for sale in the green.

Over the rest of the year our aim is to build upon our successes in 2017. We are working hard on the planting in the gardens;



to extend the seasonal range in the Italian Garden; to bring yet more colour to the Walled Kitchen Garden and to establish the planting better in the stumpery in the glade and the rill pond. For Open Days, we will have tried and tested entertainment, while continuing to introduce new elements such as new musicians, exhibitors and of course fun activities for the children.

We hope to welcome you to the gardens in 2018. If you like what you find, you might like to buy an excellent value season ticket or become a 'Friend of the Gardens'. For more information, ask at the gate or go to our website <http://www.eastonlodge.co.uk>. *Jill Goldsmith*



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## Village Services and Activities

Alzheimers	Marian	07803 115826
Art Studio & Gallery	Heather Brown	01279 815453
Art Studio & Gallery	Brian Gough	01279 815012
Ballroom Dance	Fred Winters	01763 271942
Ballet	Wendy Mitchell	01992 812781
Birchanger Magazine	Peter Sampson	01279 813193
BAGS	Liza Clarke	01279 815444
Birchanger Voices	Tony Wilson	01279 813007
Birchanger Nursery	The Manager	01279 810800
Bird Food	Lesley Robins	01279 812248
Builders	Another Level	01279 814273
BSSC Club	The Steward	01279 813441
Chiropodist	Julie Golden	01279 873492
Car Service	D. Bonney	01279 813315
Dementia	Debbie Baker	07927 011345
Dance	Maxine Williams	07854 251528
Dog Grooming	Lucy Creask	01279 799337
Dog Grooming	Fiona	07484 673179
Essex Tai Chi	Mary Dann	01376 342416
Garden Services	GWB Horticulture	01799 543483
Line Dancing	Shelley	01279 864781
Laundrette	Ian Kennedy	01279 866183
Lab Tots	Sophie Mitchell	01763 274405
Men/Boys Hair	Emma Marks	01279 814273
Over 60's club	Jean Camp	07843 707249
Painting & Décor	David Debnam	07973 861268
Parish Clerk	Keith Williams	01279 814773
Property Services	Mark Taylor	07941 357934
Public Safety	Alex Stewart	07846 467575
St. Mary's Church	Elaine Wright	01279 813474
The Three Horseshoes	Paul & Paula	01279 813429
The Three Willows	John	01279 815913
Village/Church Hall	Pam Lee	07702 171744
Zumba Gold	Tam Coxall	07783 421311

## Village Church Hall



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### Wednesday Tearoom

The tearoom is open every Wednesday in the hall from 2.00pm to 4.00pm offering tea, coffee and lovely home-made cakes, including gluten free choices. All are welcome.

For further information and bookings please contact;  
Pam Lee on 07702171744.

## St. Mary's Church News



### Church services

4th February	11:15am Matins service
11th February	11:15am Communion
18th February	11:15am Family Service
18th February	7:00pm Meditation/mindfulness/prayer
25th February	11:15am Communion

### Church News

On Friday 22nd December the church was full, with the choir and those attending the candlelight Carol service of nine lessons. This event involves village people interacting with the nativity scene placing key figures such as the 'Three Kings' within the Crib. This year's service was unfortunately cut short due to a member of the choir becoming ill. The team quickly acted with the ambulance service attending to treat the individual. We would like to thank all those who came to the service including those who helped. We can confirm that the said person is well after spending a short time at the hospital.

The Christmas Day service at St Mary's was a first for the church. Instead of the normal leader's address, the congregation was treated to a Christmas podcast by Bishop Stephen Cottrell. The service was also completed with Bishop Stephen's Christmas message read by the church warden. Those in attendance agreed it was quite special!

Did you know, that after Pancake Day (Shrove Tuesday) comes Ash Wednesday and Lent thereafter starts the 40 day period of fasting representing the time Jesus spent in the wilderness. They are all special dates before Easter and in line with tradition people give up something or choose to do something special for Lent. For example some may volunteer to support the local church on a Sunday morning giving out the hymn books, or offer to read a passage from the bible or think about giving an offering to support the daily function of the church, or even their time to help maintain the church. Whatever gift or skill you have, this time of giving up and giving is regarded as a period of spiritual preparation to grow closer to God. So what will you do this Lent?

### Dates for your Diary:

**Tuesday 13th February:** 10:30am – 12:00pm – Coffee morning at Moorswood. All are welcome and any items for sale gladly received  
**Sunday 18th February:** 7.00pm Experience a service of meditation, prayer and mindfulness, this first session will set the scene for those who want an alternative service.

#### A prayer for Lent:

Lord God,  
You who breathed the spirit of life within me  
Draw out of me the light and life you created  
Help me to find my way back to you  
Help me to use my life to reflect your glory  
and to serve others  
as your son Jesus did  
Amen

We have a Facebook page! Please look out for us! Share and like!  
If you would like to know more about the special dates leading up to Easter or you may want to offer your services or skills or that you would like to make a donation supporting the church, then please contact the Church Warden; email [stmarys.church@gmail.com](mailto:stmarys.church@gmail.com)  
*Peter Odrich & Elaine Wright*

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**Birchanger Village Church Hall**



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