



Birchanger Village Magazine

May 2020

Issue 208



Our very own unsung heroes

Every Thursday night at 8.00 pm most of Birchanger can be found on their doorsteps clapping all our NHS heroes who have been selflessly looking after those who have needed them so urgently. They all deserve our applause, every single one. They leave their home and families every day to look after us.

There are more heroes out there coming into our lives every day. The bin man, who when twelve of his colleagues failed to show up for work, took his lorry and emptied bins in Birchanger entirely on his own. Then there are the people who deliver our food from various takeaway outlets, ordinary people just doing their job, not forgetting the 16 local volunteers who have offered to collect shopping and medication for those at risk. They don't have to help but they do so willingly.

Thank You Birchanger

As one who has the red card and faces twelve weeks confined at home, Elizabeth Godwin had this to say: "I would like to say a big thank you to the volunteers. I really appreciate them doing the shopping and collecting medicines for me and many others in Birchanger. Also a big thank you to The Three Willows pub and to our social club who have provided us with cooked meals and essential supplies, including fresh fruit and vegetables on a weekly basis. You will never know just how much this is appreciated. Birchanger is a great place to live and I think it will be an even better, kinder and a closer knit community in future".

Nobody quite knows just how long the coronavirus crisis is going to last but what has happened in Birchanger so far has made so many of us feel very proud indeed to live in a village where the majority of the people have gone out of their way to look out for their neighbours. Offers of transport, shopping trips, visits to the doctors and much more have been available for those who cannot get out or need support. Most have found support within our community. The pub and club had to close for normal service but both continue to offer delicious takeaway meals which are a treat and a godsend to many. They even operate a delivery service for those who are unable to leave their house.

Delivery men and women whose services are a lifeline to many of us have quickly developed a method of delivery with no contact at all. Signing for goods has become a thing of the past, at least for the time being. More medicines are delivered directly to patients and telephone consultation with the doctor has become the norm. Life has assumed a new and strange normality.

It is not over yet and it could get worse before we see the beginning of the end of this virus. In the meantime just hang on in there! Remember, if you need help Birchanger has sixteen volunteers willing and waiting to help you. For further information, please refer to the box on the right hand side of this page. Well done Birchanger you can be proud of your community.

Businesses receive grant payments

Uttlesford District Council has issued the first grants to businesses facing financial difficulties as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. In total almost £9 million has been paid out to around 800 businesses.

Businesses which have not done so already are urged to register their details online so that their grant funding can be processed as soon as possible. <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/covid19-business-grants-fund>

Help with your council bills

If you are struggling to pay your council tax at this time due to a change in your income or employment, please contact Uttlesford District Council who can help you. To find out what support is available, including advice around rescheduling council tax payments, go to

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/counciltaxandbenefits>

Help is at hand if you are struggling

'Every Mind Matters' has advice and tips on how to look after your mental wellbeing while staying at home, as well as guidance if you're feeling worried or anxious about the coronavirus outbreak. Log online to: <https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

Other organisations such as 'Mind' also offer advice on your wellbeing and the wellbeing of others:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/>

The 'Livewell' website also has advice on looking after your wellbeing and being active whilst staying at home.

<https://www.livewellcampaign.co.uk/livewell-articles/7-steps-to-mental-wellbeing-while-at-home/>

DO YOU NEED HELP DURING CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK?

Birchanger residents needing help with shopping, collecting medication, or any other special needs, please email: peter.sampson@talktalk.net or phone 01279 813193. Alternatively you can call Elizabeth Godwin on 01279 812793.

We have 16 active local volunteers who are willing to help you with anything you need, so please don't be shy or too proud to contact us. Your safety and privacy will be secure.

Kind Regards, Peter Sampson (Editor)

VILLAGE NEWS

By Elizabeth Godwin

Staying Safe at Home in Birchanger

As I sit outside looking at my garden in spring I start to realise that I have lost all the rebellious feelings I had when told I had to be totally isolated until at least 21st June. This news did not sit well at all. I wanted to be out there, caring for people, trying to help. Instead I am finding myself on the receiving end of a lot of care which I feel totally guilty at receiving. Here am I sitting in a large garden on a beautiful spring day, I need to realise just how lucky I really am. I have so much around me compared to those people who have to live in flats. Even if they have a balcony, it is still very limiting. If you are in my category and without a garden you cannot go out at all. How do you cope? The loneliness must seem overwhelming at times but hopefully you can call friends or use the many social media apps online if you can figure out the technology!

In a way, I am going to miss all this when eventually the coronavirus goes away. It has been a time when I have learned to enjoy the things I have. To live without the things I can't get and to be thankful always for the kind people who are looking after me. I owe it to them to make this work. Thank you everyone.

A great many of us are confined to the village right now. Some are working from home but there is also a large group of people for whom time hangs very heavily indeed. People are facing loneliness which has to be overcome every day. One of the best pieces of advice is to phone a friend who you know to be home self-isolating. You probably know many others in the same boat as you, not working, just sent home for the duration. Call them and you will both feel better for your call. Pensioners in particular are feeling isolated. If you have a smart phone, iPad or tablet try using 'Facetime', or download apps such as 'Houseparty' or 'Zoom'. These apps are a great way of actually seeing and talking to your friends and family.

Keep a diary. Maybe you think you will have nothing to put in it, but we are living history and your contribution may well be of interest to future generations. Whilst we are still allowed, take a walk on Birchanger's footpaths for your daily exercise. You may well meet others on the way but most always keep their distance of at least 2 metres. The garden is demanding at this time of year and working on it now will pay dividends when the coronavirus is just a distant memory.

Birchanger All Girls Society

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

Forthcoming Meetings:

All meetings are cancelled until further notice

Please keep in contact so that we can support each other through these difficult times

Telephone for details
Olivia: 07568 574703 Rosemary: 01279 814678

Do exercise at home, there are various exercise programmes on television or maybe you have your own version.

Don't Forget the Scammers!

Be extra vigilant during this time for the scammer menace. Scammers are very active at the moment, dreaming up new scams to trap the unwary. Remember nobody ever has a free lunch. That tempting offer could be a click away from disaster. The NHS has not, and will not, ask for charitable donations. HM Revenue & Customs will not email you offering a rebate and ask for your bank details.

That knock on your door by someone offering to collect your shopping and who asks for your debit card could well be a fraudster. Always double check and be wary of strangers. If in doubt, don't answer the door. Don't click on any links in emails from an address that you aren't sure about and delete everything that is suspect. If anyone genuinely needs to contact you they will find other ways of doing it.

Some People Just Don't Get the Message!

So once again this is a reminder about the dog poo bins in Birchanger. The bins were supplied by the parish council strictly for dog walkers. They are NOT for depositing your weekly collection of dog poo from home. You must put your dog's mess in your own black bin as it occurs. The dog bins cost every single council tax payer in Birchanger an increasing amount each week as emptying has had to be increased and paid for. The council begins to wonder if the perpetrators can actually read! What part of the message; 'The bins are for dog mess on a walk only' do you fail to understand? Abuse it and you will certainly lose it. If this keeps up everyone will be taking their mess home as before.

May Coffee Morning

Sadly and for the first time ever, the Coffee Morning in May will have to be postponed. This does not apply to the lunch arranged for July 26. If circumstances improve I will arrange a Coffee Morning for June, depending on what happens in the next few weeks.

Garden waste collection service set to resume

Thanks to the hard work of the crews and the waste management team, the service will re-start in Birchanger on Thursday 30th April. Residents are advised not to put additional garden waste out for collection as the crews will not be able to take it.



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Scams and courier fraud

Door-to-door scams

Many legitimate businesses sell products door-to-door: gas, electricity and water companies need to visit to read your meters; and charities will often call seeking donations. But fraudsters may also knock on your door to part you from your money, or get into your home to steal from you.

Bogus Lifeline equipment scam

Residents are warned to be on their guard if they are contacted by someone offering to check their Lifeline equipment. It has recently been reported that elderly residents have been contacted by individuals claiming to be a representative of the council checking Lifeline equipment. Lifeline is a personal alarm service available to older or more vulnerable people who want to stay in their own homes. Given the chance, the bogus council man will enter and steal whatever he can from your home.

What to do

Due to the current Coronavirus situation the council will only be visiting Lifeline users who have told us there is a problem with their equipment. This will be by appointment and the visiting officer will show their council identification badge.

If you have any concerns about Lifeline or anyone calling on behalf of the council you should contact us on 01799 510510 or email uconnect@uttlesford.gov.uk

Other examples of door-to-door scams

Most door-to-door scams involve selling goods or services that are either not delivered or are very poor quality. You won't get value for money and you may get billed for work you didn't want or agree to.

Some scammers conduct surveys just to get your personal details or as a cover to sell you goods or services you don't want or need, such as roofing work or patio replacement.

Unscrupulous employees sometimes still act illegally even when selling a genuine product by a genuine business. If someone knocks at your front door claiming to be from a company, first check their ID. If you're not happy, don't let them in.

Never call the phone number on their ID card to check them out. Ask the salesperson to wait outside, shut the door and find the company number on the internet. If they're genuine, they'll understand.

Courier fraud: conning people out of PINs and credit card details

In most cases of courier fraud, a fraudster phones their victim and claims to be from their bank, the police or other law enforcement authority. They then con the victim into revealing their PIN and credit or debit card details. Sadly, the most common victims of courier fraud are the elderly.

Examples of courier fraud

A scammer calls you, claiming to be from your bank or a police officer. They tell you either that a fraudulent payment has been spotted on your card that needs sorting out, or that someone has been arrested using your details and cards. They'll either ask you for your PIN or ask you to key it into your phone, DON'T! No bank or other legitimate service will ever ask you for your PIN. The scammer then sends a courier or taxi to pick up the card from your home. Even the driver may not know they're being used as part of the scam. Once the scammer has both your card and PIN they can spend your money.

A different version of this scam is where you're contacted and told there's a corrupt member of staff at your bank, post office or bureau de change and the police need your help to identify them. They ask you to withdraw a large sum of your money, which the police or bank will mark, and then put back into the banking system. They say this will help them identify the corrupt person. Once you hand the cash over, the scammers simply take it.

Another example is when a fake police officer phones or approaches you and asks you to buy an expensive watch or other high-value item, to try to find out if counterfeit goods are being sold. Once you've bought the item, the scammer tells you to hand it to a taxi driver for transfer to the police. The expensive item is, of course, taken instead to the scammer's partner.

The latest variation is where the scammer contacts you and says your bank account has been taken over and you need to transfer all the funds into a 'safe account'. Of course, the new account is operated by the scammers, who then steal the funds.

What to do

For more information and help or to report this and many other types of fraud go to Action Fraud, the UK's national fraud and cybercrime reporting centre: <https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/>

Tesco Scam

Emails have been received claiming to be from Tesco saying that Tesco Bank are offering 'a chance to shop for free' if you have a Tesco savings account. You're given a link to register your claim. The email is crude and doesn't even have a Tesco logo. The 'from address' is 'tess0@tess.co.uk' and the link leads to somewhere on a games site that appears to redirect to a site with an obscure name. As always the advice is never click on a link in the email. If the email (or text/WhatsApp etc.) mentions a bank, product or service you don't use then it's almost certainly false. Just delete it. Even if it does look as if it came from your bank don't click any link. If you're at all concerned check your account by calling your bank through the usual number or use their online banking service.

The National Shielding Service

You may potentially receive a call from the National Shielding Service Helpline on: 0333 3050466 – this is NOT a scam. However, the phone line is not live and you may receive a message saying they will try again soon. When they call back, the caller may ask for some details such as your name and NHS number to confirm they are speaking to someone who is deemed as vulnerable, but they will never ask you for details such as your National Insurance Number or bank details.

There are concerns that this service has not been widely publicised and therefore people are leaving reviews on trust sites saying that this is a scam due to the caller asking whether the person is vulnerable or not. It is important that this misinformation is not spread as it could lead to vulnerable individuals missing out on essential support. If you are considered at a higher clinical risk from Covid-19 then you should also have received a letter. If you have concerns about a Covid-19 related scam you can report this via the Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 2231133 or on their website.



Take-away menu and essentials shop

Dear club members & villagers,

We hope all of you and your families are safe and well at this difficult time. As with many businesses, the club is taking stock of events and implications surrounding COVID-19 virus. The club committee and management are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of the staff; protecting the financial stability of the club and also in continuing to provide a service to the village.

The club building continues to be closed until further notice. However, we will continue to offer our food & drink take-away and 'essentials sales service' to all Birchanger villagers. Villagers and club members can order take-away food or essential groceries by calling the club on 01279 813441 and collecting from the club reception area at an agreed time. A limited delivery service may also be available within the village to our most vulnerable customers, please ask when you order. Further details can be found on the following link: http://www.birchangerclub.com/documents/Menu_template_FINAL.pdf

Daily

You can order from 9.00 am and collect anytime between 4.00 pm and 9.00 pm (except Mondays - closed).

Food and essentials are subject to availability from our suppliers. Please place telephone orders in advance on 01279 813441. Limits on purchases may apply. Your patience is appreciated.

Take-Away Meals

All Day Breakfast (Large), 2 sausages, 2 bacon, beans, mushrooms, tomato, hash browns, toast or bread & butter. £5.95

All Day Breakfast (Small), 1 sausage, 1 bacon, beans, tomato, hash brown, toast or bread & butter. £3.95

Lasagne & Chips with peas & garlic ciabatta £6.95

Chilli con carne with chips or pilau rice & pitta bread £6.25

Steak & Ale Pie with chips & peas £6.25

1/4lb Cheeseburger, Beef burger or Chicken burger with chips & salad garnish £6.95

Beer Battered Fish & Chips with mushy peas & tartare sauce £6.95

Chicken Tikka Masala with pilau rice & garlic & coriander naan £6.25

Jacket Potatoes choice of Tuna Mayo, Coleslaw, Beans & Cheese £3.95

Sides: Chips £1.95, Cheesy chips £2.95, Garlic Ciabatta £1.95, Cheese Garlic Ciabatta £2.45, Onion Rings £2.45

Kids

Fish Fingers & Chips with beans or peas £4.25

Chicken Nuggets & Chips with beans or peas £4.25

Sausage & Mash with peas or sweetcorn £4.25

Desserts

Caramel cheesecake with ice cream & caramel sauce £4.95

Apple Crumble with vanilla ice cream or custard £4.95

Sticky Toffee Pudding with custard £4.95

Trio of Ice Cream strawberry, vanilla & chocolate £1.95

Some vegetarian options are available – please ask.

Drinks

Alcoholic and soft drinks including beers, lagers, wines, ciders and cans are available to buy as take-away whilst in stock. Prices are the same as sold in the club.

Essentials Shop

Subject to availability, you can purchase basic grocery items from the club such as; bread, sugar, chips, bacon, sausages, eggs, flour, milk, beans, toilet paper, hand sanitizer and coffee etc. Please call the club to order.

Birchanger Sports & Social Club
229 Birchanger Lane, Birchanger, CM23 5QJ
Tel: 01279 813441 Email: club@birchanger.com
www.birchangerclub.com



Birchanger Primary School

Our 122 children, parents and staff are all getting used to life away from the school and learning at home during this unprecedented school closure. We have kept in regular contact with our families and they have shown their resilience and creativity with their regular activities. One of our children is even holding a daily assembly, organising the chairs at the home to replicate our school hall. Most of our families are keeping fit with Joe Wicks who is supporting the nation each morning with his fitness programme and Ross, our PE specialist, has sent us clips that we have put on our website that can be accessed at any time to help our families to keep fit.

The children and our families are very aware of the hard work and dedication of those who are supporting the country now, in particular the care workers and all the staff of the NHS. To show their appreciation the children have made posters of thanks and have sent them to school so that they can be shared on our website. We have also managed to send a selection of these posters to Broomfield Hospital in Chelmsford, the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow and several local doctors' surgeries and pharmacists. Some posters have even gone as far as the USA where they have been sent to say well done to nurses working there. If you get the chance, then please have a look at our website where the posters and thank you cards can be seen in full. <https://www.birchanger.essex.sch.uk/>



At the end of March, we had planned to plant 100 trees at our school that have been donated by the Woodland Trust. Towards the end of April, we had also hoped to invite the community to an open day to help us plant up the nature garden to

support the learning and mental health of our school community. Both events were cancelled because of the lockdown of the nation. However, once the children return to school and gatherings are allowed, we intend to hold several events to give us an opportunity to mark this time of health emergency and school closure and to give our thanks to those who have supported us through these challenging times. It would be lovely to be joined by members of the community for some of these events so that we can join as a whole community once it is allowed. We shall share any dates with you including notices on our school website, so please keep a look out once the country and schools are back to normal.

Claire Berry - Headteacher



It's Time to End the Uncertainty

It seems that the Manchester Airports Group (MAG), who own Stansted Airport, have not yet come to terms with the fact that Covid-19 has had a serious impact on the health of the aviation industry which is likely to last far longer than the immediate 'lock-down' crisis.

MAG still won't say whether or not it will accept the decision of Uttlesford District Council (UDC), on 24 January, to refuse its planning application for further expansion of Stansted Airport. MAG had sought approval for a throughput of 43 million passengers a year compared to last year's 28 million and its current limit of 35 million.

Stansted has been in decline since the middle of last year and Covid-19 has decimated its business for the time being at least. Opinions differ as to how long the aviation industry will take to recover. However, it is absolutely clear that there is no urgent need for a further tranche of expansion to be approved.



Legally, MAG is allowed six months to appeal to the Secretary of State and ask him to overturn the UDC refusal. So far, three months have passed with no word from MAG as to whether or not it will appeal. This uncertainty could last another three months. An appeal would mean a lengthy public inquiry involving

barristers, consultants and other expert witnesses.

It could be a year or more before the outcome was known, thereby prolonging the uncertainty. If UDC lost, it would have to pay MAG's costs as well as its own costs. UDC has set aside £1.7 million to allow for this. This money could be far better spent on assisting local people and businesses during the current crisis.

SSE has called upon MAG to respect the Uttlesford decision. MAG has always insisted on its planning application being dealt with locally rather than nationally. Just because MAG has not obtained the result it wanted should not mean that it can now simply reverse its position and ask for national intervention.

Meanwhile, in case MAG presses on regardless and tries to force a public inquiry, SSE is continuing with its legal challenge and on 16th April SSE submitted a formal application to the Court of Appeal. The objective is to obtain a legal ruling which would prevent MAG's planning application being considered by a public inquiry. *Brian Ross*



The Hundred Parishes Society

Many of us are familiar with pillboxes: those squat concrete buildings dotted around the countryside, often overgrown and merged with the landscape. Many will be aware of their connection to the Second World War but their origins go further back.

The purpose of the pillbox was to protect a gunner while offering him a good line of vision. The concept was developed in the First World War and first used in 1917. Early constructions were of a circular shape, hence the term pillbox. In the Second World War they were first used by the British Expeditionary Force in Flanders.



The last batch of pillboxes was built almost 80 years ago to resist a possible invasion of this country. Thousands were installed in 1940-41, many in coastal

locations or in defensive lines across the south and east of England. Others were built to form a box around London, but stray examples appear in other places.

Pillboxes varied from the one-man Tett Turret to big emplacements for two pounder anti-tank guns. The most common shape was hexagonal. The Royal Engineers decided on the sites and they were built to government specifications by local contractors, although in practice the work was often carried out by volunteers who were paid a "dole". It is thought that about 15,000 were constructed, of which perhaps two-thirds survive.



Within the Hundred Parishes about 45 were built, mainly as part of a line stretching between Chelmsford and Cambridge, often beside the Chelmer and Cam rivers which formed a natural anti-tank barrier. In Great Waltham parish a "World War Two Trail" of around 4 miles passes thirteen surviving pillboxes around Hartford End with informative interpretation panels. The pillboxes were virtually obsolete as soon as they were built, being designed for an invasion that never came. *Mike Young, Trustee. The Hundred Parishes Society - www.hundredparishes.org.uk*

THE FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE

Who knows what our daily routine will be by the time you read this in May? We have closed the Gardens to volunteering days and open days until further notice.

In May the Gardens are still fresh and bedecked with pink and white lupins and geraniums in the Italian Garden; cow parsley and the first orchids in the Glade with the handkerchief tree wafting overhead; and foxgloves and campion everywhere.

Looking back, in 2017 we were starting to bring new features to the Glade, with the rill running over its new flint bed and the stumpery taking shape. Since then we have welcomed additional volunteers, so May's volunteering hours increased from 458 in 2017 to 753 in 2019. We have maintained and filled out the planting across the Gardens, and the new Japanese Garden at the bottom of the Glade now has structures and acers are becoming established. In 2018 we fully planted the walled kitchen garden with vegetables for the first time, and now we have cleared the final section and the dahlia border, fruit trees and a full range of fruit and vegetables provide interest through the season.



In May 2017 we were busy fundraising for the treehouse, with a fun quiz, while its stilts were being erected, ready for the platform to be built. The treehouse was open to visitors in June. In 2018 we held our first

fun day for dogs and realised how appropriate it was, given the Countess of Warwick's love of dogs. Our visitors loved the dog classes so much that we moved the fun day to June in 2019, and instead our May open day explored nature in the Gardens, with Jono Forgham, local naturalist, leading children on bug hunts, Uttlesford Badger Group, Essex Bat Group and our beekeepers.

We look forward to welcoming you back to the Gardens when we are all allowed out of our homes; and we hope we will be able to step straight back into fundraising for restoring the balustrade. For further insight into the Gardens and our latest news, go to our website: www.eastonlodge.co.uk. *Jill Goldsmith*

The Three Horseshoes



P. D. Tucker & P. Stapleton

Hazel End Road, Hazel End, Bps Stortford, Herts CM23 1HB

Tel: 01279 813429

Mon-Sat: 12noon - 3pm & 6 - 11pm Sunday: 12noon - 3pm



The Three Willows Take-Away Service

Opening Times

We are open for takeaway food from Thursday to Saturday from 5:30 pm till 8:30 pm and on Sunday from 12.00 pm till 4.00 pm.

Orders can be placed from 5:00 pm onwards for collection at an agreed time. Alternatively, leave a message at any time and Mark will call you back. You can also pre-order for the weekend if you wish. Card payments can be made over the phone or on collection.

'Limited' Delivery Service

For those at high risk and self-isolating, we will take your order and payment over the phone and deliver to your door step. We will ring the doorbell and step back at least 2 meters. The pub is still at a high standard of sanitising, with extra measures in place because of the virus.

Take Away Menu/Delivery

**Thursday, Friday and Saturday
5.30-8:30 pm Sunday 12-4.00 pm
01279 815913**

- Battered Fish and Chips £9.50
- Breaded Scampi and Chips £9.50
- Cottage Pie and Vegetables £9.50
- Beef Lasagne and Salad £9.50
- Vegetable Lasagne and Salad £8.50
- Chicken Curry and Rice £8.50
- Prawn Curry and Rice £9.50
- Prawn and Avocado Salad £8.50
- Bacon Cheese Burger and Chips £9.50
- Chicken Burger with Chips £9.00
- Sausage and Mash and Vegetables £8.50

Sides

- Chips £2.50 Salad £1.50 Curry Sauce £2.00
- Mushy Peas £2.00 Peas £1.50 Gravy £1.50

Smaller Size/ Children's Take Away Menu

- Battered Fish and Chips £7.00
- Breaded Scampi and Chips £6.50
- Cottage Pie and Vegetables £7.00
- Cheese Burger and Chips £6.50
- Chicken Burger with Chips £6.00
- Sausage and Mash and Vegetables £6.50

Please inform staff members of any allergies or intolerances upon placing orders. All fish may contain some small bones. We do offer gluten free options upon request.

St. Mary's Church News



Dear All,

As I am writing this entry for the magazine I am interrupted by a trill of birdsong from my garden. Isn't nature amazing? Unfortunately, the church and church hall will remain closed, until otherwise directed by the Government.

Some breaking news: Our chalice that was stolen in 2018 has been returned and is currently in safe keeping until the church is re-opened. Our thanks go to Essex Police for their hard work in returning it.

As these unprecedented times continue, we must reflect on what this time has meant to us. For many it has given hope and a time to reflect on what has been happening and what will happen in the future. Some of us have found new friendships by embracing technology; some have been generous with their time and have supported those who are vulnerable. Whatever you have experienced I'm sure it will have a lasting effect on you.

Our Facebook page for St Mary's Church has continued to grow with many accessing the site - on one day alone we had 196 views! A daily prayer and a beautiful photo of nature is posted bringing some comfort and hope to those who may be alone. The page also contains links to other Christian and meditative sites for support and information.

Paul, our rector has been reflecting this week on Bunyan's pilgrimage. He states; "we are all on a journey at the moment and we're passing through uncharted territory. We are not sure where the path will lead us but we know we need to keep going. Even if we are isolated we are not alone". When Bunyan's Pilgrim finds his situation most desperate he turns to his most powerful weapon, 'All Prayer'. That weapon is there for us to wield too. Please stay safe and stay at home.

If you need any help and don't know where to turn, or if you feel able to offer help to those who are self-isolating, please email me at stansted.lector@gmail.com. Below are ways to interact in worship.

Online Services

Join in our worship on every Sunday Morning online at: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/109066258>.

Join in our worship of Morning Prayer which takes place online from Monday to Saturday at 9.00 am: <https://us04web.zoom.us/j/459441774>. You shouldn't need the Meeting ID but if you do it is 459 441 774

The service of Morning Prayer is published on the Church of England Website: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/join-us-service-daily-prayer>.

Just follow the link to Morning Prayer (Contemporary) for the day.

Telephone links to services

It is possible to join in with 'Zoom meetings' by telephone if you don't have access to the Internet. You will need the meeting ID 459 441 774. You can connect on any of the following telephone numbers: 0131 460 1196, 0203 481 5240, 0208 080 6591, 0208 080 6592, 0330 088 5830

Useful links: The Chelmsford Diocese Web Site, The Church of England Web Site, and NHS Coronavirus Pages.

Like many other charities, our village church is also feeling the effects of the lockdown as it relies on donations. If you would like to help in some way to support the church then please email me, Elaine Wright Churchwarden stmaryschurch.birchanger@gmail.com.

Take care, stay safe, and stay home. *Elaine Wright*

Village Church Hall



For information and bookings contact:
Barbora Dragoskova 01279 815243
st.johns.church@btinternet.com
Key Holder - Elaine Wright 01279 813474
stmaryschurch.birchanger@gmail.com

THE THREE WILLOWS



During the coronavirus outbreak
we are open for take-away food.
Please call 815913 to order.

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