



# Birchanger Village Magazine

March 2021

Issue 218



## Electronic School Warning Signs Are On The Horizon

After years of discussion, Essex Highways have finally agreed to install electronic school warning signs in the village – providing Birchanger Parish Council pays for them!

Originally, the council asked for flashing speed warning signs of 20 or 30 mph in order to reduce the speed of vehicles driving through the village, a long time wish of most villagers. However, after several trials monitoring traffic speeds in Birchanger Lane, Essex Highways refused to allow any new speed signs to be installed as they determined that traffic speed measured over a period of days failed to reach their criteria.

Undeterred, the parish council together with county councillor Ray Gooding persisted with the claim that some vehicles continued to speed through the village, especially at school pick-up and drop-off times, where current school warning signs were inadequate for motorists. One example given was the school sign outside the village hall when driving from the Stansted Road end of Birchanger Lane. This sign is right on top of the school entry point outside the village hall (where parents park to drop off their children) and gives virtually no warning to motorists to slow down for the school.

Essex Highways agreed to investigate the claim and met with councillors last year outside the village hall. They finally understood our concerns and although we did not meet their criteria for electronic speed warning signs and would not fund the project, agreed to install electronic school warning signs, providing Birchanger Parish Council were willing to pay for the installation.



The signs offered are called 'Wig Wag' signs and are programmed to switch on during school drop-off and pick-up times. Each sign shows the school warning text and has two flashing lights which are solar powered. The signs will be positioned well in advance of the school entrances. It is hoped that the new signs will be installed before the end of 2021.

The parish council has now agreed to pay for project which is expected to cost around £10,000.

The signs offered are called 'Wig Wag' signs and are programmed to switch on during school drop-off and pick-up times. Each sign shows the school warning text and has two flashing lights which are

## Flood Repair Has Council's Approval!

After many months of negotiations, Essex Council and Birchanger Parish Council have come up with a plan to reduce the constant flooding in Birchanger Lane adjacent to the social club's playing field.

Flooding in the lane has persisted over several years despite efforts by the council and the club keeping the ditch and drain clear of debris. The club had the ditch cleared several times and even our county councillor Ray Gooding, who lives opposite, has on several occasions taken it upon himself to clear the drain in the kerb when a small lake starts to appear. Despite these efforts, flooding has continued after each heavy rainfall.

A recent inspection however has found the real issue behind the flooding. It is now understood that the main problem is due to a blocked or damaged drainage pipe that runs underground at the end of the club playing field after a house was built over it. The drainage pipe was never repaired or replaced and so the water from the ditch has nowhere to go.

The cost of the repair is estimated at a little over £2,000 and although the drainage is primarily the responsibility of the club, they are not in a position to fund the repairs due to the Covid-19 restrictions. Councillor Ray Gooding expects to get the lion's share of the funding required from Essex County Council and Birchanger Parish Council will come up with the rest.

Subject to final approval, the work is expected start in the spring.

## Covid-19 - Walk-in And Get Tested

People without Covid-19 symptoms who live and work in Essex are now being offered walk-in appointments for a rapid test at their local test centre. Tests had initially been available by booking an appointment in advance. The new option brings more flexibility, especially for those who are unable to work from home and want to get tested for peace of mind.

Around a third of people with Covid-19 have no symptoms and could be spreading the virus unknowingly. Although case numbers are declining, there is still a worrying number of people with Covid-19 in Essex. Health officials in the county advise figures could go down even quicker if together we break the chain of transmission by getting tested regularly.

Walk-in or book an appointment via the Essex County Council website or by calling 0333 772 6144. Anyone with symptoms should book a test via [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test).



# Editors Letter Box

## Letters to the Editor

*Dear Ed,*

**Email reply to UDC's Development Manager, Nigel Brown, regarding travellers' site development**

"Reading the magazine issue 217 February 21<sup>st</sup>, I would like to express my utter dismay at Nigel Brown's letter to the Birchanger Parish Council.

All I can say is Shame on you, Shame on you. Utter violation of the law is obviously something the minority thrive on and the majority pay the price. I cannot put in to words my complete dismay at the council's inability to do the right thing - MOVE THEM ON".

*Yours totally disgusted. - J. Wilkinson*



## School Governor Wanted

Birchanger Church of England Primary School is a small school with 103 wonderful children and we are looking for a governor to help us. The children are proud of the school and said, "Our school is full of tenacity and excellence and we would love a new school governor, so please come to our school because it is amazing!"

Taking on the role as a governor is extremely rewarding. We only hold two meetings per term, one full governing body meeting and one sub-committee meeting, to help form decisions about our buildings, human resources and the curriculum.

Being a governor provides an opportunity to work with our dynamic governing team who have a shared vision that our children should strive for excellence whilst embracing the values of love, care, courage, and truth. Currently our meetings are held virtually.

If you are interested in finding out more about the role and joining the leadership of our school where "everyone in the school loves everything about it and takes care of it!" then please contact the school or either of our Chairs of Governors below:

School Telephone 01279 812362  
Elaine Wright [elaine.wright@birchanger.essex.sch.uk](mailto:elaine.wright@birchanger.essex.sch.uk) or  
Ben Stickley [ben.stickley@birchanger.essex.sch.uk](mailto:ben.stickley@birchanger.essex.sch.uk)

**We would love it if you came to support our school**

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,

Join us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/birchanger/](http://www.facebook.com/birchanger/)

*Peter Sampson*



[magazine@birchanger.com](mailto:magazine@birchanger.com)



07817 904333



2 Harrisons, Birchanger



# VILLAGE NEWS

By Elizabeth Godwin

## Nearly a Year of Lockdown

When we first went into Lockdown last year, we would have been shocked to be told that this would be the way we would be living for most of the following year. Perhaps it was just as well that we did not know what was in store for us. The new rules brought out the best in most of us, although there were a few who found that they could not forego their nights out, their shopping trips, their package holidays and so much more. And the result? A second round of Covid which has taken so many lives and brought so many more to breaking point. There is no excuse possible for endangering anybody's life ever, but that is what so many perhaps unwittingly chose to do.

People in Birchanger by and large respected the rules which was why our Covid rates were low. Unfortunately, in Harlow, Basildon, and Brentwood there was a minority who chose to disobey which ensured that their neighbours paid the price. Due to a sudden rise in cases, it didn't take long before we were back in lockdown again but happily, the new vaccines have brought us hope. Children should soon go back to school, shops will open and we will be able to eat out and get our hair done again. Freedom is in sight. We had it before. This time we must respect it.

## Thank You to Our Two Unique Birchanger Takeaways

We are incredibly lucky to have two takeaway outlets in Birchanger open again through the current lockdown. The unique Birchanger Club offers takeaway suppers from 5.30 pm to 8.30 pm on Thursday Friday and Saturday, while the Three Willows is open for takeaway meals on Friday and Saturday evenings between 5.30 and 8.30 and for Sunday lunches between 12.00 and 4.00 pm. Both cater for dietary needs and there are plenty of gluten free and vegetarian options on offer. Our takeaways provide a treat to look forward to at the end of yet another strange and often boring week. The Willows menu includes delicious pizzas and the Club has a range of vegetarian options such as Halloumi Fingers, Bean Chilli and curries to try. I really rate the pizza at the Willows and the interesting vegetarian dishes on offer at the club. Eat your heart out pizza palaces and vegetarian establishments, our outlets are doing it better. We are really lucky and the message once again is use it or lose it. Prices are good, so it is up to you. Personally, I can't wait until the end of the week comes round again.

## Birchanger All Girls Society

The 'BAGS' regret that due to the effect of corona virus, all future meetings are cancelled until further notice.

For further details telephone:

Olivia: 07568 574703

Rosemary: 01279 814678

## March 21st - Census Goes Online

Census year has come round again, and the date is the same as ever, March 21st. We have had a census every year on March 21st since the first census in 1801. This year's census will be a little bit different as you will have the option to complete your form online using your unique census number. There will be a paper alternative for those who do not wish to use the internet. Not completing the form is not an option and those who refuse to complete the form face a fine which will continue until compliance is achieved. The website is claimed to be secure and confidentiality is assured. The results will be used to inform planning, provision of doctor's surgeries, bus services, schools and facilities across the board until the next census in 2031.

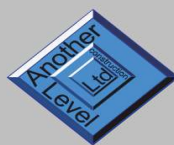
## How to Make Your Home Feel Warmer

For many people, the hopefully soon to be departing winter has felt awfully long and very cold. We have probably used the heating much more this winter because many of us have spent a lot of time working at home and home schooling our children. It has been very cold at times and that thermostat has been set a great deal higher for longer than in previous years.

As ever, the time is fast approaching when the reckoning will have to be made and most of us will be facing bills which are a great deal higher than usual. You might be able to negotiate staggered payments to the fuel companies over the summer, but how can we protect ourselves from these soaring bills next year? None of us can be certain that we have actually said goodbye to the Coronavirus. It could be back and we could be spending next winter in a similar style to the one we are just hopefully coming out of.

Essex County Council has received a large grant which it is distributing to all its local councils solely with the purpose of updating our heating systems and helping us to insulate our properties efficiently and replacing our old highly inefficient boilers.

To qualify for a grant to help meet the cost claimants need to have an income which is under £30,000 a year and have a home heating performance rating of D and under. The scheme is being rolled out in Essex by Aran insulation and you can check your eligibility with them on [Info@arangroup.co.uk](mailto:Info@arangroup.co.uk) or call them 0800 587 7795.



**ANOTHER LEVEL**  
**CONSTRUCTION Ltd**

Don't just build .....create!

- New Build
- Extensions
- Conversions
- Renovations
- Roofing
- Brickwork
- Plastering
- And more



TELEPHONE 01279 814 273  
MOBILE 07710 099 284



[info@anotherlevelconstruction.co.uk](mailto:info@anotherlevelconstruction.co.uk)

[www.anotherlevelconstruction.co.uk](http://www.anotherlevelconstruction.co.uk)

### Problems in the Bus System

Last year when the Coronavirus first struck, we mostly abandoned the buses as parents took any children attending school by car and it took some time for the network to function again to its normal schedules. Many services had been redirected for school transport as social distancing meant more buses were required for the school run. With no extra buses to spare, the necessary buses were taken from the normal bus services. Buses then failed to turn up and people lost faith in the system.

Now we are in the third lockdown with the return to school currently scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup>. It is again likely that the same scenario will return bringing uncertainty to the bus schedules. There are simply not enough spare buses to maintain the service. All passengers are advised to check on Traveline or [www.essexbus.info](http://www.essexbus.info) before they travel. Those who rely on the bus system most will be the hardest hit. They may find other means of transport and this must raise doubts as to whether the bus system can ever fully recover.

### Would the Big Switch Help You?

Three times a year Essex County Council invites Essex residents who are interested in lowering their electricity and gas bills to come together as a large group to find the best deal. The major gas and electricity companies will bid against each other to offer a special low group tariff. The provider who offers the lowest tariff wins the group bid and all those who signed up for the scheme are invited to have a painless switch to this lower tariff. Participants in the scheme make worthwhile savings on their fuel bills throughout the year. As someone who uses the scheme it has always been very well worth doing for our family. At any time, you can switch from the new provider but the savings are always good for at least a year, by which time you will have the opportunity to participate in another auction. Entering the group auction does not mean you are under any obligation to accept any offer.

Some people think that switching energy providers is difficult and means a lot of work but using this scheme is remarkably simple and easy. Visit the Essex Energy Switch Campaign on the ECC website under Essex Energy. You also will be offered to sign up to a 100% Renewable Energy Tariff as well.

### Foster Carers Urgently Needed

Life continues despite Coronavirus. The worry is that many things we should be concerned about get kicked to one side as the virus crashes through our lives. Virus or not, there are some young lives who need our help whatever else is happening. Perhaps more than at any other time families have reached the limits of their endurance and need extra help. If you have been considering fostering now is the time to see if it is for you. Call 0800 801 530 to find out when the next online information sessions are and talk to someone about what fostering a child in need could mean. There will be no obligation and you will never know what it could mean if you don't make that call.

### Vaccination Scams Continue

One of the latest scams looks highly convincing. It comes complete with convincing NHS logos, but it could wreck your entire computer system contacts, bank accounts and more if you do not hit the delete button immediately. The email is in poster form with very convincing styling and at first sight appears to be inviting you for a Coronavirus jab. It appears they want you for some kind of project and later it appears that they are asking for payment. The NHS will never ask for payment. This latest one claims it is for a genetics project and the vaccine offer depends on your medical history. The NHS will never ask for that. They have it already. If you receive anything like this, delete it immediately. You can always check with your surgery afterwards. If it looks a bit suspicious, it probably is.

### Foods That Help You Live Longer

Take a new look at the food in your cupboards, you may be surprised at what foods can be healthy for you. Apparently dark green and yellow varieties of food are the richest in nutrients, bring on spinach and bananas! Fresh fruit and vegetables feature in many people's diets these days. Okinawa people have the highest longevity in the world, their diet consists mainly of sweet potatoes. Eat a square of dark chocolate daily, (anything above 70% cacao is fine) milk chocolate is banned. Go for oily fish such as salmon for essential oils. 6 cups of green tea a day can extend your lifespan. Use good oils for cooking that are low in saturated fats such as olive oil which also has anti-inflammatory properties. Garlic contains compounds which are anti-viral and can also break down carcinogens. Regular consumption can reduce the risk of stomach cancer. Cranberry juice is full of antioxidants, is anti-inflammatory, antibacterial and boosts the immune system. Laboratory tests have shown that cranberry juice and coffee kill cancer cells. Coffee is also good for reducing heart disease, regardless of whether it is decaf or not. Most of us have a medicine cupboard in our own larders, we just need to use the good things more.

### And While We Are Talking About Food

Is your fridge too warm? Apparently, most fridges are. This means that food goes off quicker than it should. The average temperature of most fridges in the UK is 7 degrees C. It should be no more than 5 deg. If that is the case it is no wonder that the food caddies are full to bursting point every week. It is estimated that a family of four wastes £70 a month on food, they would not be throwing it away if it been stored at the right temperature. Sounds extreme? Research shows that for the average household it is amazingly true. Our electricity bills may go up a little if we do this, however, our food bills will take a tumble.

### Look after Your Pooch

The increased demand for dogs means that those with young families or the elderly are finding it increasingly difficult to buy a dog. Now, unscrupulous breeders are helping themselves, stealing dogs for breeding purposes, and selling the pups on at an exorbitant price. Dogs have been found by rescue societies exhausted and malnourished and dumped once their breeding days are over. So, watch out for your dog and keep an eye open for these thieves!



### Emma Marks Men and Boy's Haircuts

Tel: 01279 814273  
Mob: 07527227943

99 Birchanger Lane,  
Birchanger,  
Herts.  
CM23 5QF



### Taylor Landscapes

Landscapes For Living

07941357934

mark.taylor@taylorsvc.net

@TaylorLandscapesLtd



# Village Church Hall Appeal

By Pam Lee

For the past few months, I have informed residents that both the church and hall finances have been badly affected by the pandemic and having just finished putting together the year end accounts, I am increasingly concerned that unless things drastically improve neither will be viable. So far as the hall is concerned income has halved. I have set out the figures here below.

Income from all sources

2017	£11431
2018	£12300
2019	£13145
2020	£6722

We have cut back as much as we can on our outgoings, but they usually come out at around £10,000, not including any improvements which are done when finances allow. In 2020 we had a shortfall of £4,000 which has been met from last years excess profit and a little help from church reserves. Sadly, church finances have taken a hit this last twelve months and the church is not in a position to help out at this time. Whilst the church is closed it is losing £80 per week in plate collection income and alongside that, we cannot undertake any of our usual fundraising activities.

At the moment covid restrictions mean that we cannot allow any of our regular hirers to use the hall, nor can we do any fundraising there. The result is that we currently have no income at all. We have researched grant funding, but they all seem to require that applicants are rate payers and as a community resource we do not pay this. For the coming year we need £8500 to cover all unavoidable expenses including insurance premiums, utilities, maintenance, cleaning and repairs. This sum will allow the hall to be kept at a reasonable standard ready for when it can be open again for general use.

In these unusual circumstances we are asking you for your help. If every household in the village donated £10 then the funds raised would secure the maintenance of the hall for this year. Then hopefully, as covid restrictions lift and hirers return, there would be less pressure on finances allowing a little recovery time.

In 1935 the hall was given to the village as a community resource and the Parochial Church Council was entrusted to maintain and manage it. Over the years we have done our best to keep the hall in the best condition possible and with the help of the Parish Council we feel that we have done just that. Now we need your help so that we can continue to have a venue to be proud of.

If you would like to make a donation, you can contact Pam Lee by telephone on 07702171744 or email [pam.mark2@btinternet.com](mailto:pam.mark2@btinternet.com).

Alternatively, and perhaps the easiest method of making a donation is online through the 'Just Giving' website following this link:

[https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/birchanger-church-hall?utm\\_term=M6e59jgZk](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/birchanger-church-hall?utm_term=M6e59jgZk)

*I do hope you can help - Thank you. Pam Lee*

## THE FORGOTTEN GARDENS OF EASTON LODGE

My optimism last month has been dashed! As you will appreciate, covid restrictions meant we were not able to open the gardens in February to let visitors enjoy the snowdrops. The upside of this was not worrying about hundreds of people tramping over grass that has struggled with the record amount of rainfall in recent months and this year's 'beast from the east'. But it was so sad not to be able to share the joy of the snowdrops looking better than ever, pooled under trees at the front of the gardens, covering the banks at the side of the glade and colonising the grass in the walled kitchen garden. It is not yet clear what will be possible in March. Last year I was



naïve about the looming impact of the pandemic and we didn't start getting volunteers back into the gardens until May, with visitors first allowed in July. This year, we remain hopeful that the roll-out of the vaccine will mean we will be well ahead of those dates, but you will need to keep an eye on our website or Facebook pages to get the up-to-date news on when we will be open. You will also find there our latest pictures of the gardens.



In the meantime, we have managed to get a little essential winter work done between the storms and by March the early spring should be lifting our spirits. We should have finished our planting of new fruit trees in the walled kitchen garden and the pruning of the older apples and pears. The blossom should be coming out on the peaches and nectarines and the bees should be settling into their new home. We should also have the stonemasons on site, restoring the balustrade in the Italian garden. And of course, we will have a host of daffodils in the lime walk and the glade. So, we keep on smiling and hope you can too!

*Jill Goldsmith*

# What's on in the village...



March 2021



Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

Sun

**Bin Collections:** Bradley Common collected on Fridays. Rest of Birchanger on Thursdays. **Garden bin collections marked with #**

**Birchanger Parish Council Meetings:** Meets on the first Tuesday of each month at 7.30 pm in the church hall - **Open to the public.**

1 <b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Apton Dance Studio	2 <b>Church hall:</b> 12.00 Tap Dance 16.45 Ballet 18.30 Apton Dance Studio	3 <b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 14.00 Fencing 15.30 Apton Dance Studio	4 <b>Black Bin #</b> <b>Church hall:</b> 11.00 Line dance 19.30 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 20.00 Bingo	5 <b>Church hall:</b> <b>BSSC:</b>	6 <b>Church Hall:</b> 09.00 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw	7 <b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 am Matins <b>BSSC:</b> Sunday Roast
8 <b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Apton Dance Studio	9 <b>Church hall:</b> 12.00 Tap Dance 16.45 Ballet 18.30 Apton Dance Studio	10 <b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 14.00 Fencing 15.30 Apton Dance Studio	11 <b>Green Bin</b> <b>Church hall:</b> 11.00 Line dance 19.30 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 20.00 Bingo	12 <b>Church hall:</b> <b>BSSC:</b>	13 <b>Church Hall:</b> 09.00 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw	14 <b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 <b>BSSC:</b> Sunday Roast
15 <b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Apton Dance Studio	16 <b>Church hall:</b> 12.00 Tap Dance 16.45 Ballet 18.30 Apton Dance Studio	17 <b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 14.00 Fencing 17.45 Apton Dance Studio	18 <b>Black Bin #</b> <b>Church hall:</b> 11.00 Line dance 19.30 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 20.00 Bingo	19 <b>Church hall:</b> <b>BSSC:</b>	20 <b>Church Hall:</b> 09.00 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw	21 <b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 Family Service <b>BSSC:</b> Sunday Roast
22 <b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Apton Dance Studio	23 <b>Church hall:</b> 12.00 Tap Dance 16.45 Ballet 18.30 Apton Dance Studio	24 <b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 14.00 Fencing 17.45 Apton Dance Studio	25 <b>Green Bin</b> <b>Church hall:</b> 11.00 Line dance 19.30 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 20.00 Bingo	26 <b>Church hall:</b> <b>BSSC:</b>	27 <b>Church Hall:</b> 09.00 Apton Dance Studio  <b>BSSC:</b> 13.00 Meat draw	28 <b>St Mary's Church:</b> 11.15 am Communion - <b>BSSC:</b> Sunday Roast
29 <b>Church hall:</b> 19.30 Apton Dance Studio	30 <b>Church hall:</b> 12.00 Tap Dance 16.45 Ballet 18.30 Apton Dance Studio	31 <b>Church hall:</b> 10.00 Tai Chi 14.00 Tea Room 14.00 Fencing 17.45 Apton Dance Studio	<div> <p><b>All events are subject to Covid-19 restrictions. Please contact the event organisers for information.</b></p> </div>			



## Sports & Social Club News



### NEWS FROM THE CLUB!

We continue to wait for news when we can reopen! We are sure there are many of us looking forward to a nice cold pint or a G&T with our friends when some form of normality returns. In the meantime the club committee are doing what they can and have received some of the grants available to us and are continually looking for any other government or industry funding available.

The club takeaways continue and the feedback has been very good – If you haven't yet tried it please do so. Menus can be found on our website. [www.birchangerclub.com](http://www.birchangerclub.com) or follow on Facebook.

We have now reintroduced the popular Sunday Roast Takeaway which has various meat and vegetarian options - prices starting at £8.95 – With Gluten Free available too – this is a great value Sunday treat without the washing up.

For those of you who love a Full English we have launched a Breakfast Takeaway service too. Prices starting from £3.50 for a Breakfast Bap and two options on the Full English with a small breakfast and a Birchanger Big Breakfast. Omelettes are available too and of course vegetarian and gluten Free offerings are also available.

All menus are on our website and if you are interested in ordering, please speak to Terry who can tell you all about the specials that we change regularly too!

As always at the start of the year we request Membership Renewals and this year is no different with the exception that we have held open the renewal window for a longer period so if you haven't yet renewed there is still time!

Everyone at the Club hopes that we will be able to reopen soon and hope see you all in the near future for a long awaited drink.

Cheers!

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

### School Works on Regardless of Covid-19

By Headteacher Claire Berry

Hello once again from our school. As this edition goes to press, we are a school on multiple sites with roughly 30% of children learning in school whilst the remainder are learning from home supported by school staff and of course an army of mums, dads, and grandparents.

In line with our school ethos of supporting the health of our children we took part in Children's Mental Health Week recently. This week was supported by a range of organisations all over the country to support children during an incredibly challenging time. We were able to build on the regular leaning that we deliver to the children during our mental health mornings each half term, as well as launching some competitions to inspire our children.

The theme for the week was 'express yourself'. Mrs. Cook, our mental health leader, thought long and hard about how we could

create a range of experiences and opportunities using self-expression for our wonderful children's sessions at home and at school. The sessions early in the week gave the children a chance to join in with an art and craft. This was so popular that it overran the time allocated by 45 minutes! Also, Mrs. Miles ran a 'dough disco' for our younger children which was a great laugh and a fantastic way to do some exercise whilst being creative.



Staff also ran baking sessions where the children made cookies with different toppings and fillings. I was lucky enough to taste some of them and I can say that they were delicious! We also had a session from Anthony Bennet, a motivational speaker, who has links to our school and who is passionate about improving the mental health of others following his own personal challenges.



Later in the week the children at school and at home came together with their teaching teams for some fun. Classes held quizzes and scavenger hunts which gave them the chance to enjoy being together with their classmates as it has been a long time since we have been allowed to be together. The week ended with our BLT (Birchanger Loves Talent). Generally, we hold these sessions in our hall when we can get together and watch others perform in a variety of different ways. This time we watched each other over the Internet. However, the talent and ingenuity of our children was as strong as ever.

Our thanks go to the children who took part this week and the families who supported them. Mrs Cook is now busy planning some extra sessions to build on the success of a week where the Birchanger children really did express and enjoy themselves.





# Disagreement Between Uttlesford District Council and SSE on Fight Against Airport Expansion



## Geof Driscoll - Rebuffs Last Month's SSE Comments

Geof Driscoll, Birchanger Parish Councillor and UDC District Councillor for Broad Oak and the Hallingburys Ward disagreed with last month's comments by Brian Ross, Deputy Chairman of Stop Stansted Expansion (SSE) that UDC had "behind the scenes agreed to approve the airport's expansion plans subject to a few hollow concessions".

Cllr. Driscoll made the following statement in answer to SSE's comments:

"The airport appeal was set to run for approximately 29 days, from 12<sup>th</sup> January 2021. This was reduced from the original estimate of 40 days, due to the Inquiry being held remotely and without the inspectors, legal representatives and witnesses being present in person. Also, SSE had forwarded a lot of their evidence in writing".

"Uttlesford District Council is still 100% looking to win the appeal as the legal team have briefed the members on several occasions. UDC were required by the Inspectors to submit the Condition 15 paper before the hearing began. Should the Inspectors be of a mind to grant the appeal, the paper is there as a backup alternative to the main objections which would, if necessary, and if agreed upon by the Inspectors, oblige MAG/STAL to comply with very strict emissions and carbon requirements etc., before being able to proceed as they propose. UDC can check on compliance with any conditions at each stage".

"Philip Coppel QC, the barrister acting for UDC, has been asked why the district council have not teamed up with SSE. Unfortunately, this is not allowed, as UDC and SSE must make their own cases. Furthermore, UDC can only defend their case on the 4 points listed in their refusal notice, whereas SSE can submit evidence and points of view on as many topics as they wish under Section 6 of Planning Act 2008 (108 (b) - whereby the Secretary of State thinks that as a result of a change in circumstances since the national policy statement was first published, or (if later), the statement, or any part of it was last reviewed, all or part of the statement should be reviewed before the application is decided)".

## Brian Ross – UDC is working under a white flag?

In answer to Cllr. Driscoll's comments, Brian Ross made the following comments:

"As I write this, we are about halfway through the Stansted Airport Public Inquiry, which should now finish by mid-March. SSE continues to battle it out with the Manchester Airports Group (MAG) on a daily basis".

"Meanwhile, the other main party, Uttlesford District Council (UDC), can occasionally be seen beneath a white flag in a distant trench, busy preparing its latest set of appeasement conditions to offer MAG as the formal terms of surrender".

"Despite all of that, SSE continues to make progress day-by-day in exposing the weaknesses in MAG's case and the many misrepresentations made in its desperation to secure planning permission. We are by no means pessimistic and, if UDC had been fighting alongside us, we would have already won this Inquiry".

"Some have suggested that UDC is legally restricted and that its best strategy is to concede, subject to planning conditions. We respectfully disagree. You only need to walk to one end of the village to see how ineffective UDC is when it comes to enforcing planning conditions. Whenever difficulties arise, our Council stands idly by whilst the unlawful travellers encampment becomes more permanent by the day".

"Or you could take a stroll over the footbridge to the old airport terminal area where, in clear breach of a fundamental planning condition which allows only airport-related businesses to operate on the airport site, Wren's Kitchens have a major logistics centre. UDC has known about this for two years but does nothing. UDC does not enforce planning conditions unless, of course, you change the height of your garden wall".

"Returning to the subject of the Public Inquiry, SSE is realistic enough to understand that MAG could win its appeal, and, in those circumstances, we will be prepared to discuss meaningful conditions which could help offset the worst impacts. For the time being, however, SSE is 100% focused on its daily battle with MAG at the Inquiry. We are in it to win it. This is a completely different approach from UDC's 'Munich' strategy".

For more information about the Public Inquiry and to watch live or on catch-up – go to <https://programmeofficers.co.uk/ssairport/>



**The Hundred Parishes Society**

## The Art of the Thatched Roof

At this difficult time, we are fortunate to live in such a lovely area where we can take exercise close to home in attractive and interesting surroundings. One of the local delights is the number of thatched buildings.

**Hatfield Heath - Thatchers**



Thatch was once the roofing choice of the poor as it was locally sourced, inexpensive and sustainable; now it seems that only the better-off can afford the necessary regular servicing and replacement. Most roofs are thatched with long wheat straw and many are topped out with a decorative straw feature on the apex. These are called straw finials.

**Ugley - Flying pig thatch finial**



Pheasants and foxes are still among the favourites for this tradition that goes back centuries. These finials may once have been installed to keep away birds or even witches, while some may have been the trademark of the individual thatcher. Today, they are more likely chosen by the customer from an online catalogue.

**Aythorpe Roding - eagle**



They seem to be more abundant and varied than ever.

I have spotted some fine examples around The Hundred Parishes such as the two running hares on a cottage at Ashdon. In Finchingfield and Radwinter you may find families of ducks and there is a large, thatched cow on the barn of the Red Cow pub at Chrishall.

**Chrishall - Red Cow Pub**



You may see a hare on Dick Turpin's Cottage at Hempstead or a galloping horse at Great Bardfield. High Roding has a delightful cat stretching up the chimney stack and a fox chases a hare in Brent Pelham. An eagle has landed in Aythorpe Roding and there is a flying pig in Ugley.

**Great Bardfield - thatched horse**



The 16th-century Thatchers pub at Hatfield Heath is appropriately situated on a road that was once part of the route for horse-drawn cartage of wheat from Suffolk to London. Do keep looking up!

*Ken McDonald, Secretary* [www.hundredparishes.org.uk](http://www.hundredparishes.org.uk)

## 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



## Village Services and Activities

Alzheimer	Marian	07803 115826
Art Studio & Gallery	Heather Brown	01279 815453
Art Studio & Gallery	Brian Gough	01279 815012
Ballroom Dance	Fred Winters	01763 271942
Ballet for kids	Philippa McMeechan	01763 271010
BAGS	Rosemary Wheatley	01279 814678
Beauty Therapist	Sarah Whiting	07887 638359
Birchanger Magazine	Peter Sampson	07817 904333
Birchanger Voices	Tony Wilson	01279 813007
Birchanger Nursery	Karen Reilly	01279 810800
Bird Food	Lesley Robins	01279 812248
Builders - Another Level	Matt Marks	01279 814273
BSSC Club	Steve Hopkins	01279 813441
Car Service	D. Bonney	01279 813315
Chiropodist	Julie Golden	01279 873492
Dance - Apton Studio	Maxine Williams	07854 251528
Dementia	Debbie Baker	07927 011345
Garden Services	GWB Horticulture	01799 543483
Hairdresser Men/Boys	Emma Marks	01279 814273
Holistic Therapist	Shelley Williams	07476 279262
Landscaping Services	Mark Taylor	07941 357934
Laundrette	Ian Kennedy	01279 866183
Line Dancing	Shelley	01279 864781
Neighbourhood Watch	Peter Sampson	07817 904333
Over 60's club	Jean Camp	07843 707249
Painting & Décor	David Debnam	07973 861268
Parish Clerk	Keith Williams	01279 814773
Petals Children's Play	Hana Hainsby	07730 619522
Police Special	Martin Halls	<a href="mailto:Martin.Halls@essex.police.uk">Martin.Halls@essex.police.uk</a>
Public Safety	Peter Sampson	07817 904333
Speed Watch	Peter Sampson	07817 904333
St. Mary's Church	Pam Lee	07702 171744
Tai Chi	Cait Goddard	07415 628935
The Three Horseshoes	Paul & Paula	01279 813429
The Three Willows	Mark Boden	01279 815913
Village Church Hall	Barbora Dragoskova	01279 815243

## Bonnets and Palms Parade Palm Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2021

Children are invited to make colourful bonnets and palms, as fancy as you like, and display them in various short walks about the village starting at 10.30 am and ending at the church (Subject to Covid-19 restrictions)



You do not have to make both a bonnet and a palm as prizes will be given separately for best bonnet and best palm. If your child would like to take part, please email:

[pam.mark2@btinternet.com](mailto:pam.mark2@btinternet.com) or message 07702171744

**Children must be accompanied by an adult.**

## St. Mary's Church News



Although the church is currently closed for services we have still been searching for Paul's replacement and we are pleased to say that a suitable candidate has been found. There are still some formal processes to go through but hopefully Colin Fairweather will be joining us by the end of March.

As we move from a three-parish benefice to a five-parish benefice, Colin will be very busy getting involved in all aspects of church life.

Colin is a 48-year-old, single priest who has a great sense of humour and bundles of enthusiasm. He was born in Sidcup, Kent and educated at Cambridge and Liverpool universities completing a PhD in Elizabethan love poetry in 2000. He subsequently trained to be a teacher and from 2003 to 2014 he worked at Leyton Sixth Form college in the east end of London. During this time came his call to ministry and he returned to Cambridge to train for ordination at Ridley Hall college. He was ordained in 2016 and served out his curacy at St Paul's church in Braintree. Having failed his driving test ten times, he eventually gave up and took to driving a motorcycle instead.

Colin jogs every day, likes Star Trek and is looking forward to pubs reopening as he enjoys a pint. He is very excited about joining us. With five parishes to cover he knows that he will have his hands full but he is keen to get stuck in and he asks for our prayers at this time of challenge and transition. We are hopeful that he will be here by the end of March ready for Easter.

Over the coming months we will be well served clergy wise as Colin will be supported by our curate, Helen Flack, and Hugh Mascetti, a local lay reader and possibly another lay reader – details to follow.

Easter is only a few weeks away and with that in mind, subject to the then prevailing covid restrictions, we are inviting children from the village/school to make either bonnets or palms and to parade them around the village on Palm Sunday 28th March with the parade ending at the church at about 11.15am. If you want to take part, please message, or email Pam Lee at [pam.mark2@btinternet.com](mailto:pam.mark2@btinternet.com).

## Prayer for the month

Our souls are weary, strengthen us according to your word  
Your word is a light to our path  
Lord, you are our refuge and our shield and we put our hope and dreams in you

Amen

Pam Lee (Church Warden)  
Tel: 07702 171744  
[pam.mark2@btinternet.com](mailto:pam.mark2@btinternet.com)

## Village Church Hall



For information and bookings contact;

Barbora Dragoskova 01279 815243

[st.johns.church@btinternet.com](mailto:st.johns.church@btinternet.com)

Key Holder: Cat Roberson Tel. 07475092658

[stmaryschurch.birchanger@gmail.com](mailto:stmaryschurch.birchanger@gmail.com)

## THE THREE WILLOWS



TAKEAWAY SERVICE AVAILABLE

Call: 01279 815913

Friday: & Saturday: 5.30 to 8.30 pm

Sunday: 12.00 to 4.0 pm

# ADVERTISE HERE

If you are reading this,  
so are your  
potential customers!  
Contact us for details.

## D. Bonney & Sons



**Motor  
Engineers**

MOT Testing - Servicing - Diagnostic  
Mechanical Repairs  
Selection of New and Used Cars

Yew Tree Corner, Manuden  
Ring Malc or Niel on  
01279 813315 or 01279 815946

## State Registered Chiropodist

Mrs. Julie Golden S.R.Ch.

Home Visiting Practice

Est 1994

Tel: 01279 873492

Mob: 07916075451

Dunmow Road  
Takeley CM22 6SH

A

## Painting & Decorating



Bring new life to  
your home  
Interior - Exterior  
General  
Maintenance  
No job too small

**David Debnam**

Tel: 01279 815214 Mob: 07973861268

## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

St. Therese of Lisieux  
High Lane, Stansted CM24 8LQ

[www.sttheresasstansted.org](http://www.sttheresasstansted.org)

<https://www.facebook.com/StTheresaStansted>

Priest Father Lee Bennett

Tel: 01279 814349

Email:

[frleebennett@dioceseofbrentwood.org](mailto:frleebennett@dioceseofbrentwood.org)



WASH & IRON SERVICE  
CLOTHES  
BEDDING  
DUVETS

Open 7 days a week 10.00 am - 3.00 pm

Hockerill Lights, Bishop's Stortford

Large car park at rear

Tel: 01279 866183



## Aerial Satellite AV Security

- Aerial Installations
- Sky Installations & Subscriptions
- CCTV & Security Alarms
- Freesat Installations & Receivers
- Audio Visual Installations
- Multiroom Music & TV Distribution
- Wireless & Wired Networks
- TV Wall Mounting Services
- Family Run Business



01279 656 983 - 0800 587 2556

Unit 1, Suite 1 Peak Business Centre, Woodside Industrial Estate, Bishops Stortford CM23 5RG

## Wireless Security Intruder alarms



Intruder alarms have never been so  
simple to install,  
operate, maintain and clean.

Mediacoms uses the latest  
technology to keep you & your  
property secure.

YOUR HOME AND COMMERCIAL SECURITY INSTALLER  
ALARMS CCTV DOOR ENTRY GATE AUTOMATION

[www.mediacomms.co.uk](http://www.mediacomms.co.uk)

[info@mediacomms.co.uk](mailto:info@mediacomms.co.uk)



## Perfectly Pampered

Complementary & Holistic Therapies  
By Shelley Williams MGHT

07476 279262

Birchanger CM23 5QT

The natural approach to the Wellbeing of  
Women

Focusing on relaxation, improving sleep,  
relieving stress, fatigue and anxiety  
through facial and body massage therapy

MGHT Accredited & Insured



Friendly, Professional & Reliable  
Sustainable Garden Services Provider  
Gardening, Landscapes & Tree Works

Tel: 01799 543483 Mob: 07866 752713

- |                              |                                    |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| One off Garden Tidies        | Regular Garden Maintenance         |
| Hard & Soft Landscaping      | Tree Pruning, Felling & Reductions |
| Hedge Cutting & Trimming     | Fencing & Timber Structures        |
| Advice & Planning            | Traditional Countryside Crafts     |
| Planting and Plant Sourcing  | Leaf & Snow Clearance              |
| Log Splitter & Operator Hire | Soil, Log & Aggregate Delivery     |
| Chipper & Operator Hire      |                                    |

Free No Obligation Quotes

[www.gwbhorticulture.co.uk](http://www.gwbhorticulture.co.uk)

The Birchanger Village Magazine is published on behalf of the people of Birchanger and distributed free to 450 households in Birchanger. The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, the magazine or any organisations or institutions represented. Material sent to the editor will generally be printed as received providing it is considered suitable by the magazine team. The editor reserves the right to edit content if considered unsuitable or where insufficient space is available. All material should be submitted by the 16th of the month to be published the following month.

Printers: Keeley & Lowe Tel: 020 7729 3350 - Email: [info@keeleylowe.com](mailto:info@keeleylowe.com)

Editor: Peter Sampson Tel: 0781 7904333 Email: [magazine@birchanger.com](mailto:magazine@birchanger.com)

Chairman: Elizabeth Godwin.

Treasurer: Ken Wheatley.